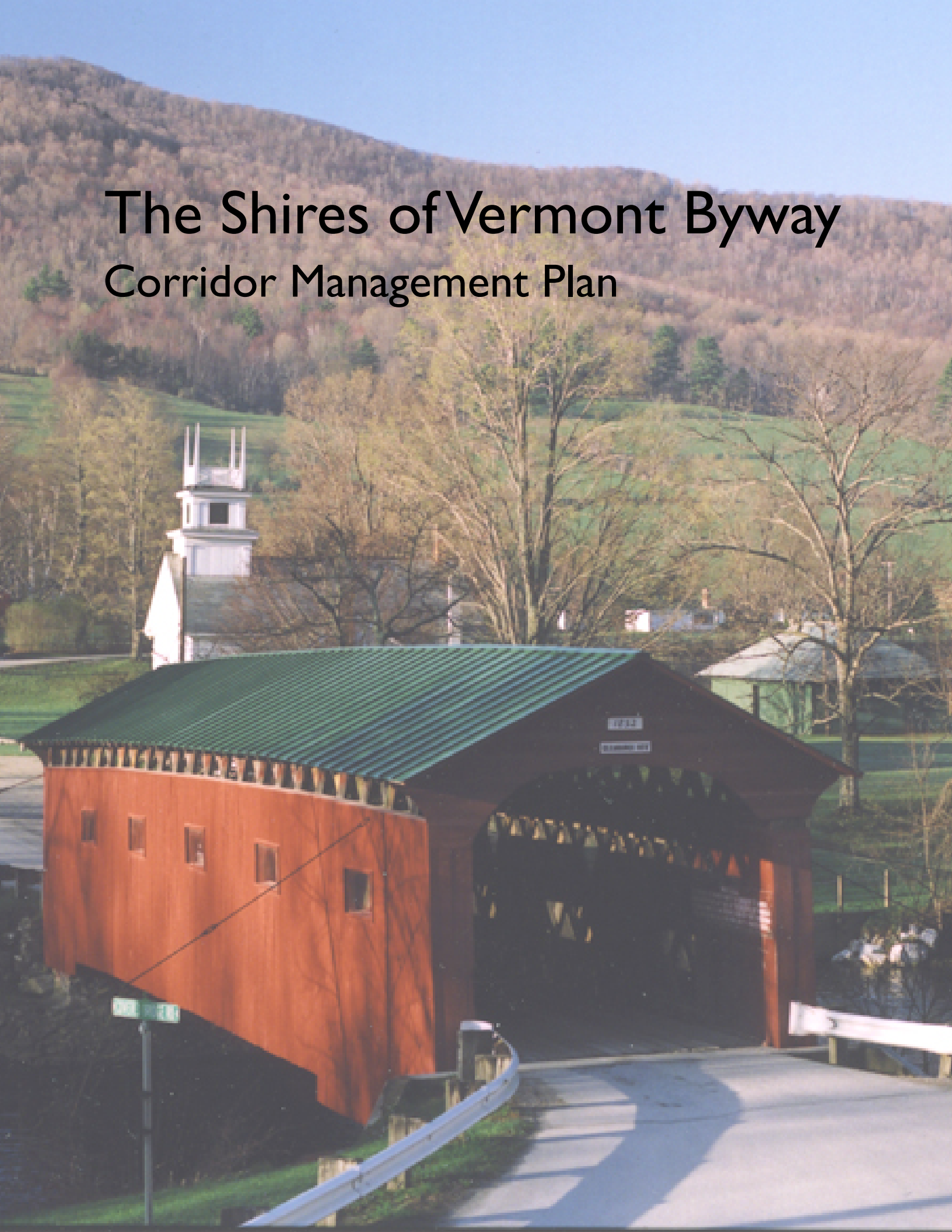


The Shires of Vermont Byway Corridor Management Plan



Nomination Package and Corridor Management Plan

Presented on behalf of:

Municipalities

Town of Pownal
Town of Bennington
North Bennington Village
Town of Shaftsbury
Town of Arlington
Town of Sunderland
Town of Manchester
Village of Manchester

Chambers of Commerce

Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce
Manchester and the Mountains Regional Chamber of Commerce

Regional Planning Commission:

Bennington County Regional Commission

Submitted to:

Vermont Scenery Preservation Council
Vermont Byways Program Manager, Vermont Agency of Transportation



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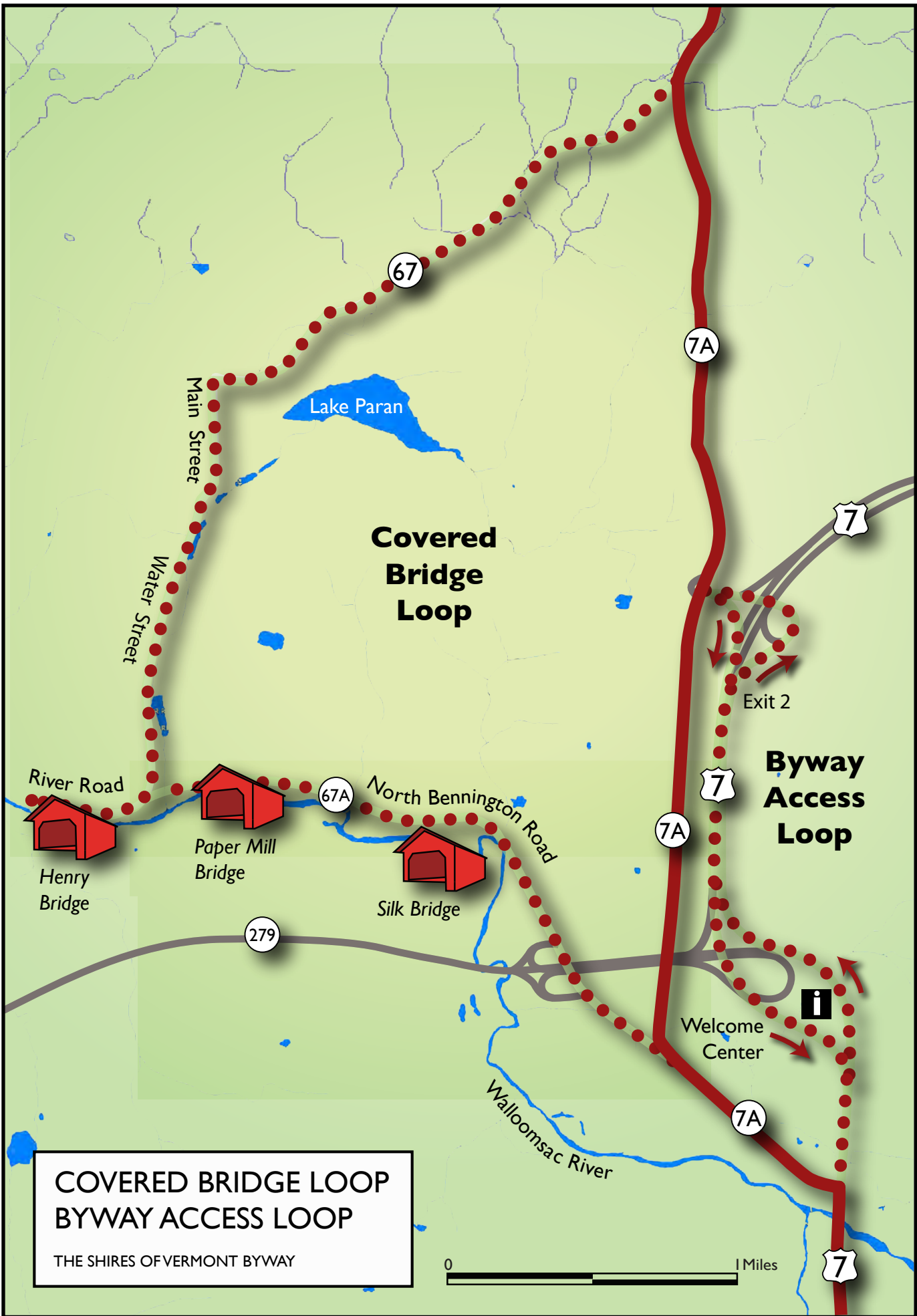
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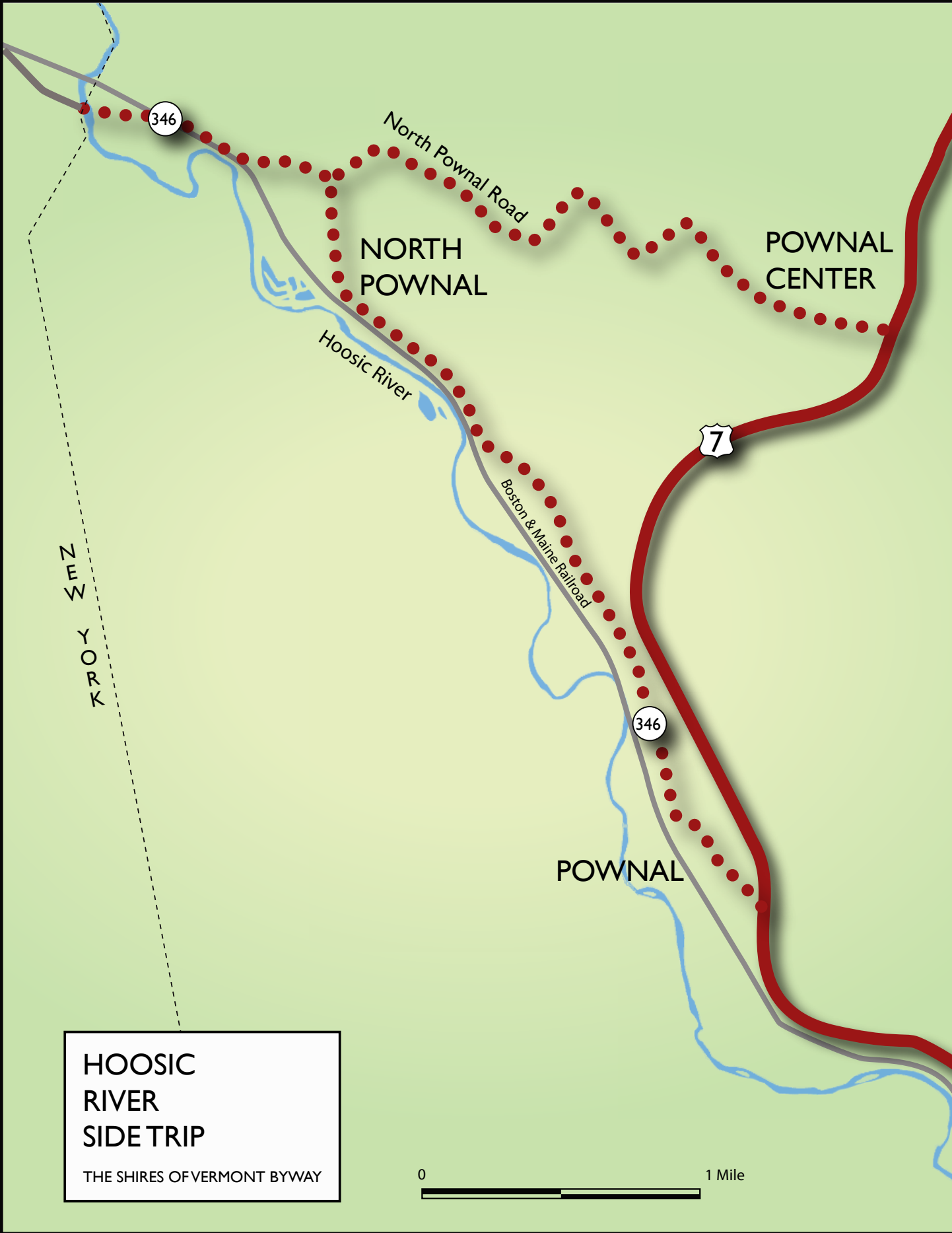


THE SHIRES OF VERMONT BYWAY
(proposed)



**COVERED BRIDGE LOOP
BYWAY ACCESS LOOP**
THE SHIRES OF VERMONT BYWAY

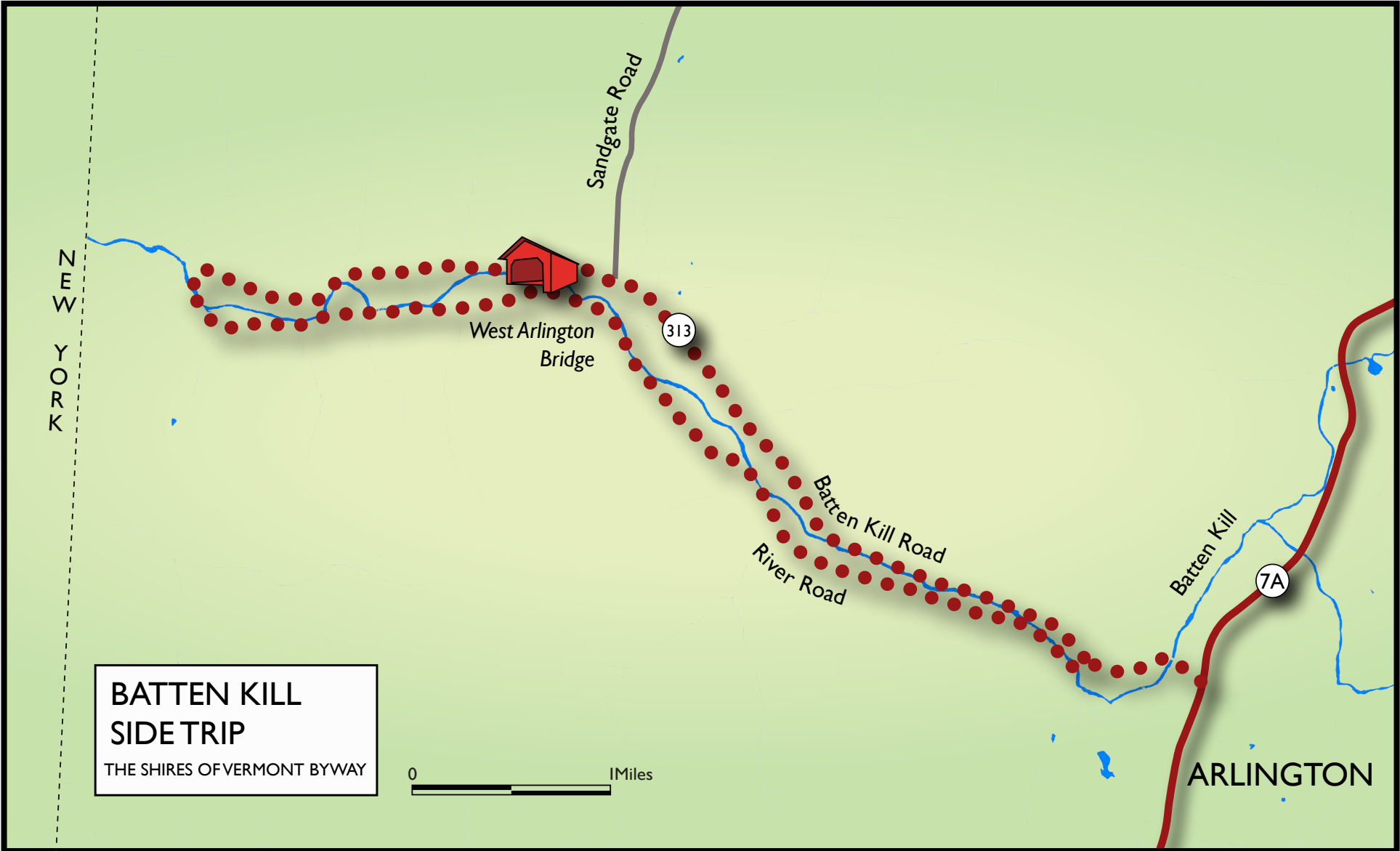
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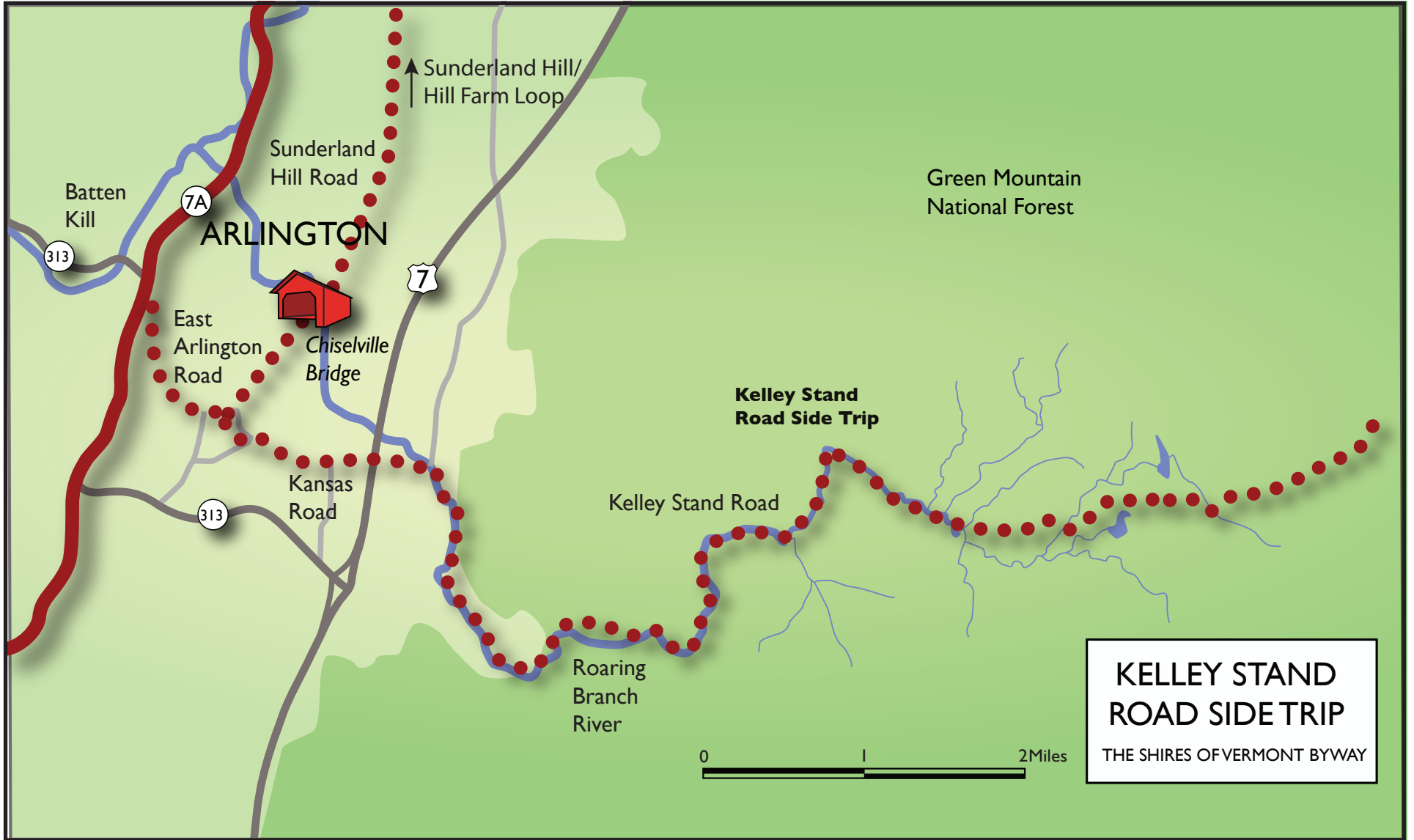


HOOSIC RIVER SIDE TRIP
THE SHIRES OF VERMONT BYWAY

0 1 Mile







Introduction

This Corridor Management Plan is the work of community partners with a common goal—the designation of Route US 7 from Pownal to Bennington, and Route VT 7A from Bennington to Manchester, as a Vermont Byway. Byway designation will benefit our region in many ways: It will help visitors discover and interpret our area; It will qualify the Byway corridor for grants and funding opportunities; It will link and compliment the existing Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways. Most importantly, designation will strengthen both residents’ and visitors’ appreciation of the Shires’ wealth of scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historical, agricultural and local entrepreneurial resources.

Program Overview

What is a Byway?

A Byway is a designated route or network of routes that gives travelers access to significant resources. Byways can be roads with spectacular scenery or quiet roads rich in local history. They can be urban, rural or suburban. The common thread is that a Byway must be a road that a community regards as a special resource to be promoted and managed.

The National Scenic Byways Program

The National Scenic Byways Program was established in 1991 under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and is administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The legislation that created and developed the National Scenic Byways Program is intended to:

- Assure that Americans know and appreciate scenic, cultural and natural resources.
- Induce economic development in communities and regions.
- Manage and enhance scenic, cultural and natural resources.
- Manage traffic by diverting and channeling tourist traffic.
- Encourage visitors to come, stay, and travel.

The National Scenic Byways Program is not regulatory. Its purpose and mission is to promote recognition of “distinctive roads, their stories and treasured places,” and “provide resources to the Byway community to preserve and protect the intrinsic qualities of designated Byways.”¹

The National Scenic Byways Discretionary Grants Program awards grants annually for programs and projects that support the program’s mission. Applications are submitted through the State of Vermont Byways Program and authorized by the FHWA.

The National Scenic Byways Advisory Committee determined that for the Byways Program to be effective, the following guidelines should apply:

- The Byways must be significant in at least one of the six intrinsic value categories: scenic, historic, natural, cultural, recreational, and archaeological.
- A Scenic Byway Program should focus on the recognition, interpretation, maintenance, enhancement, and preservation of the Byway’s intrinsic qualities.
- A management plan should be prepared which demonstrates a commitment to preserve and manage identified resources. The expectation is that designation as a Byway will increase tourism, create new jobs, and foster economic development. As such, the management plan should have a narrative describing proposed marketing efforts.
- Designated Scenic Byways must accommodate two-wheel drive autos and should ensure safe access for bicycles and pedestrians.

The Vermont Byways Program

The Vermont Byways Program is administered by the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTTrans) and is overseen by the Vermont Scenery Preservation Council (VSPC) whose mission is to “preserve and enhance Vermont’s scenic resources through planning, education and collaboration with public and private organizations.”

The National Scenic Byways Program allows states to define their own programs. As stated in *The Vermont Byway Program Manual*, “The Vermont Byways Program establishes a process to integrate growth management, economic development, and transportation

¹ <http://www.Byways.org/learn/program.html> (US Department of Transportation)

investments so Vermont will continue to be a good place to live, operate a business and to visit as a tourist.”

The Vermont Byways Program is non-regulatory and should not be confused with the State Scenic Roads Program. As stated in The Vermont Byways Program Manual, “The Program provides protection for owners of private property in that:

- (1) Existing land use regulations need not be modified.
- (2) The Program does not have powers of zoning or condemnation.
- (3) Residents in or along the corridor are not required to participate.
- (4) The Program is intended to promote economic growth and development in a balanced manner.
- (5) The Program and/or data collected as part of the Program are not intended to be used in an Act 250 hearing, nor would it preclude any land development otherwise permitted by zoning.”

The Designation Process

The first step in Byway designation is the creation of a committee that develops the specific Byway concept, establishes stakeholder support and creates a Corridor Management Plan (CMP), which is presented to the Byway communities’ governing bodies for approval. The application is then presented to the Vermont Scenery Preservation Council for review. A public meeting is held by the Council to gauge public support for designation. The Council then makes a recommendation to the Vermont Transportation Board, which holds two community meetings. The board then approves or denies Byway designation. As of March 2011, there are seven designated Vermont Byways.

Benefits of Byway Designation:

- Establishes a committee to develop ideas and identify opportunities to improve the Byway corridor.
- Establishes local, regional and statewide relationships with partners who share common goals.
- Organizes public meetings to engage the Byway population and promote regional cooperation.
- Creates efficiencies and cost savings and reduces the duplication of efforts.
- Gives access to grant funding and marketing campaigns:
 - National Scenic Byways Discretionary Program – annual program

- National Scenic Byways Program – marketing campaign website
- Vermont Byways Program – marketing campaign website
- Printed cards and brochures at distribution centers, trade shows, welcome centers, chambers of commerce and state parks
- Develops a plan to integrate economic development and economic growth with preservation of the area’s unique qualities and resources.
- Creates a brand identity for the corridor.

The Corridor Management Plan

Purpose and Requirements

A Corridor Management Plan (CMP) addresses the objectives, vision, goals and management of the Byway and presents strategies to achieve and sustain those objectives.

The FHWA requires that state-designated Byways seeking national designation address these elements in the CMP:

- A map identifying the corridor boundaries and different land uses within the corridor.
- An assessment of such intrinsic qualities and of their context.
- A strategy for maintaining 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 that most reflect their intrinsic values. All nationally recognized scenic Byways should, however, be maintained with particularly high standards, not only for traveler’s safety and comfort, but also for preserving the highest levels of visual integrity and attractiveness.
- 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 met.
- 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.

- A plan to ensure ongoing public participation in the implementation of corridor management objectives.
- A general review of the road's safety and accident record to identify any correctable faults in highway design, maintenance or operation.
- A plan to accommodate commerce while maintaining a safe and efficient level of highway service, including convenient user facilities.
- A demonstration that intrusions of the visitor experience have been minimized to the extent feasible, and a plan to make improvements to enhance that experience.
- A demonstration of compliance with all existing Local, State and Federal laws on the control of outdoor advertising.
- A signage plan that demonstrates how the State will ensure and make the number and placement of signs more supportive of the visitor experience.
- A narrative describing how the National Scenic Byway will be positioned for marketing.
- A discussion of design standards relating to any proposed modification of the roadway. This discussion should include an evaluation of how proposed changes may affect intrinsic qualities of the Byway corridor.
- A description of plans to interpret the significant resources of the Scenic Byway.

Purpose of the Shires of Vermont Corridor Management Plan

This plan represents the Shires of Vermont Byway Planning Committee's efforts to state the vision, theme and goals of the Shires of Vermont Byway and specific objectives and strategies to realize them. It defines the Byway's management structure, which will be a partnership between the Shires of Vermont Byway Planning Committee and local, regional and state government. The plan documents and assesses the corridor's intrinsic qualities, identifies a theme that reflects the corridor's resources and characteristics, establishes goals and strategies to protect and enhance the corridor, and outlines measures to provide an optimal experience for travelers and quality of life for community members.

This plan conforms to the Bennington County Regional Plan and the municipal plans of the eight towns in the Byway corridor, which are: Pownal, Bennington, North Bennington Village, Shaftsbury, Arlington, Sunderland, Manchester and Manchester Village. All eight municipalities, the Bennington County Regional Commission, the Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce and the Manchester and the Mountains Regional Chamber of Commerce, have reviewed the plan.

The Shires of Vermont Byway: Overview

Theme: *The Destination for the Authentic Vermont Experience*

The Shires of Vermont Byway earns its name from the area's unofficial designation. Historically, a "shire town" was a county seat, the governmental center of the county. In Vermont at the beginning of the 19th century there were three counties with two seats, but now only Bennington County has that distinction with the North Shire of Manchester and the South Shire of Bennington.

The Shires of Vermont Byway will take visitors through the heart of the Shire towns and surrounding villages where they will discover the historical, cultural, natural, scenic, recreational, agricultural and entrepreneurial assets that make the Shires an attractive destination for those seeking an authentic Vermont experience.

Byway Objectives

The objectives articulated in this Corridor Management Plan are the result of a partnership between the corridor's municipalities, chambers of commerce, and regional planning commission. This partnership ensures representation of the three key Byway populations: residents, businesses and visitors.

Unify the communities along the Byway corridor

Strengthen the role of the Byway as an important travel corridor by promoting tourism and economic development. Overcome jurisdictional barriers through regional marketing, resource management, and interpretive products.

Strengthen the economy of the Byway corridor

Encourage regional tourism, marketing, and educational initiatives. Maximize the experience for travelers through the region, and entice visitors to stop and stay. Utilize branding for regional products.

Promote enterprises that contribute to the area's identity and unique character

Support and promote local businesses, particularly agriculture, food production, forestry, local manufacturing and entrepreneurial enterprises. Encourage efforts to preserve the corridor's working landscape and recognize its value as a scenic resource and economic asset.

Improve and maintain quality of life along the Byway corridor

Rejuvenate communities for the benefit of both visitors and residents. Develop programs and events that can be shared throughout the region. Improve safety and comfort for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Develop tourism and the local economy to benefit, not harm, residents' quality of life.

Ensure that visitors "see and do" The Shires of Vermont Byway

Improve pedestrian, bicycle and intermodal facilities to reduce visitors' dependence on automobile travel and enable visitors to more directly experience the Byway and its resources. Establish a network of themed routes for various modes of transportation that links sites throughout the region—i.e. Birding Trail, Geology Trail, Cultural Heritage Trail, etc.

Ensure that the traveler's experience along the Byway meets or exceeds expectations

Designate a network of communities to serve as focal points for Byway activities and provide visitor information and services. Provide interpretive products that tell the region's story in a lively and meaningful way. Encourage establishment of public restrooms throughout the corridor.

Provide for local and self-sustaining management of corridor resources

Manage roadsides to enhance community character and qualities (stonewalls, wildflower plantings, pull-offs with historic markers) through public/private partnerships. Support efforts to protect and restore natural resources including lakes, rivers, forests, agricultural lands and scenic views. Ensure local support for Byway programs and events. Improve recreational opportunities while respecting private property and minimizing user conflicts.

Byway Route Overview

The Shires of Vermont Byway consists of a main corridor and seven side trips for travelers who wish to explore more extensively. The total length of the main corridor and side trips is 75.8 miles.

Shires of Vermont Byway—Main Corridor

The Byway begins at the Massachusetts State Line on US 7 and continues for 35 miles up the "Valley of Vermont," through Pownal and into Bennington, where it intersects the Molly Stark Byway (VT 9) and continues north to the Kocher Drive intersection, crosses to VT 7A/Northside Drive, and then follows VT 7A north through Arlington,

Sunderland and Manchester, where it ends and connects to the Stone Valley Byway (VT 30).

Byway Access Loop/Route

This is a 2.3-mile loop on US 7 from Kocher Drive in Bennington to Exit 2 in Shaftsbury. This allows tourists to access the Byway from the Bennington bypass (Route 279) and uses the future Welcome Center as an anchor point, and facility for information and restrooms.

Hoosic River Loop

This is an 8.6-mile loop along VT 346 and North Pownal Road in Pownal. Visitors will experience the beauty of the Hoosic River and the dramatic juxtaposition of farmland, mountains and a historic mill village. The route is also popular with train buffs, because it has many good spots to watch passing freight trains on the busy Boston and Maine Railroad.

Covered Bridge Loop

This 5.5 mile-loop along VT 67 and VT 67A will lead visitors to three covered bridges spanning the picturesque Walloomsac River, through the Village of North Bennington with its period architecture, shops, restaurants and historic mill buildings.

Batten Kill Loop

This 11.5-mile loop will take visitors along the scenic Batten Kill, a designated significant Water Resource and popular destination for trout fly-fishing, swimming, canoeing, and kayaking. The Batten Kill Loop follows the river along both the south and north sides past the picturesque West Arlington Green. This is one of the most photographed and painted iconic landscapes in Vermont with a covered bridge (1854), A church (1804) and attached grange hall, a former one-room schoolhouse (1936), and Norman Rockwell's home and studio. To begin, the route turns off the primary Byway route on VT 7A and heads west on VT 313 (Batten Kill Road). The route turns left at the first bridge over the Batten Kill onto River Road and then turns right to follow the river. Along this section is the popular, scenic setting of West Mountain Inn, the location of the early marble quarry (1812), and a highly photogenic view of Red Mountain across the river. The West Arlington Green is on the right, and the road continues until the River Road Bridge crosses the Batten Kill to rejoin VT 313. Turning right onto VT 313 brings visitors back to the main Byway route on the north side of the river.

East Arlington Loop

The 3.2-mile East Arlington Loop begins on East Arlington Road and leads visitors through the East Arlington Historic District, which includes Arlington's first grist and saw mill and two classic New England style churches.

Sunderland Hill/Hill Farm Loop

This 4.1-mile route continues north on Sunderland Hill Road, crosses the Chiselville Bridge, the second highest bridge in Vermont, and past scenic fields and woods. The route ends on Hill Farm Road past the Ira Allen Cemetery where it rejoins VT 7A.

Kelley Stand Road Side Trip

This 5.6-mile side trip will show visitors the beauty of the Green Mountain National Forest and the thrill of a truly rural road. The historic gravel road runs along the banks of the dramatic Roaring Branch and ascends the Green Mountains to the Kelley Stand, the site of a thriving mountain community now long gone and the place where Daniel Webster addressed more than 15,000 people in the 1840's. This side trip is seasonal because the road is closed in winter.

Traffic Volume

Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volume on the Byway's roads varies. The highest volumes and the only road segments with significant traffic congestion are in the commercial districts of Bennington and Manchester. The Byway's side trips are its least traveled segments. Traffic on the unpaved Kelley Stand Road is particularly sparse with an average of just 70 vehicles a day.

Main Corridor (US 7)

High: 13,100 AADT at Kocher Drive, Bennington

Low: 5,300 AADT at Barber Pond Road, Pownal

Main Corridor (VT 7A)

High: 11,200 AADT at Mountain View Terrace/Hillvale Road, Manchester

Low: 3,100 AADT at Warm Brook Road, Arlington

Hoosic River Loop (VT 346 and North Pownal Road)

High: 2,600 AADT VT 346 at Church Street, Pownal

Low: 790 AADT North Pownal Road at VT 346

Covered Bridges Loop (various roads)

High: 11,000 AADT on VT 67 at the VT 279 ramps, Bennington

Low: 1,200 AADT on 67A at Church Street, Shaftsbury

Batten Kill Side Trip (VT 313)

High: 2,800 AADT at Sandgate Road, Arlington

Low: 1,500 AADT at the New York State Line, Arlington

Kelley Stand Road Side Trip (various roads)

High: 2,100 AADT on Arlington Road, Arlington

Low: 70 AADT on Kelley Stand Road, Sunderland

Source: VTrans 2007 Route Log AADTs Major Collectors, VTrans 2007 Route Log AADTs State Highways

Roadway Safety and Crash History

To analyze the safety of the Byway's roads the committee examined two sets of safety records tabulated by VTrans: High Crash Locations (HCLs) Years 2003 – 2007, and General Yearly Summaries 2005 – 2009. HCLs are used to identify road segments and intersections with higher than average crash rates. It is important to note that HCLs are based on the number, not the severity, of crashes. General Yearly Summaries identify fatal crashes not captured by HCL records.

US 7-Safety

There are six HCLs sections on US 7 between the Massachusetts State Line and Main Street in Bennington. From 2003 – 2005 those HCLs had 69 crashes resulting in 25 injuries. There were also two fatal accidents, both in 2005.

A project to improve this section of road was canceled by VTrans with FHWA. New engineering standards, intersecting roads and driveways made the decades old project design obsolete. Limited reconstruction work was done at high crash locations to improve safety. For example, a passing lane was added near Cross Road, but significant safety problems remain. Lack of shoulders for cyclists to ride on is also a problem, particularly because there is no alternate route. Safety improvements along this section are warranted.

The highest concentrations of crashes on the Byway are on US 7 as it passes through Bennington's downtown and commercial district. There are two HCL intersections

here: US 7/North Street had 104 crashes and 39 injuries, US 7/VT 7A and Kocher Drive had 70 crashes and 42 injuries. There were no reported fatalities.

Bennington's downtown has significant pedestrian and bicycle traffic, but the town has no bike lanes and in many places lacks adequate pedestrian facilities. For example, along US 7 near Kocher Drive, there are no sidewalks, crosswalks or pedestrian signals, despite the location's proximity to residential neighborhoods and businesses. HCL records do not identify how many of the crashes recorded involved pedestrians or bicyclists, but the lack of facilities and the high number of pedestrians and bicyclists, some of whom are tourists, justify projects to make this segment of the Byway more pedestrian and bicycle friendly.

VT 7A-Safety

There are 7 HCL sections on the Byway portion of VT 7A. In these sections there were 86 crashes resulting in 33 injuries and 1 fatality in the five-year study period. There was also one fatality outside of the HCL locations reported in the 2008 General Yearly Summary. One HCL section on VT 7A is in Manchester Center, a major tourist attraction. It is not known how many of the HCL crashes involve pedestrians, but the area has significant tourist pedestrian traffic.

VT 67 and VT 67A-Safety

On the "Covered Bridges Loop" covering portions of VT 67 and VT 67A there were 4 HCL sections and one HCL intersection. Those HCL locations had 58 crashes resulting in 38 injuries but no fatalities.

Of particular concern is the HCL section from mile .5 to .8 which had 22 crashes resulting in 22 injuries during the study period. This segment is curvy and has many intersecting roads and driveways. Access management, speed enforcement and clear signage to direct visitors to the covered bridges are among the possible strategies to improve visitor safety.

The 5-legged intersection of VT 67A, Silk Road, Mattison Road and Bennington College Access Road is a HCL intersection. Its complexity and poor sight lines make it particularly dangerous for visitors who must turn onto Silk Road to visit the Silk Covered Bridge. A public scoping process identified reconstruction of the intersection as a roundabout as the preferred alternative. A roundabout combined with clear signs directing visitors to the Silk Covered Bridge are among the possible strategies to improve visitor safety at this intersection.

VT 313 Safety

The “Batten Kill Side Trip” has one HCL section between miles 6.9 and 7.2 where there were 6 crashes resulting in 2 injuries and 1 fatality. Better access management, speed enforcement, shoulder and guardrail construction, pull-off areas and signage are among possible projects to improve visitor safety along the “Batten Kill Side Trip.”

VT 346 Safety

There are no HCL locations or reported fatalities during the study period along the “Hoosic River Side trip.” Further study is needed to identify dangerous conditions and projects to improve visitor safety.

Kelley Stand Road Safety

This side trip does not have any HCL intersections locations or fatalities reported in the General Year Summaries during the study period. It is important to note that in the winter the Town of Sunderland blocks vehicle access near the National Forest entrance as a safety measure. More study is needed to identify hazards and to develop strategies to improve visitor safety on Kelley Stand Road.

History of the Shires of Vermont Corridor

The first town in the Shires region was Bennington, chartered in 1749 by Benning Wentworth, the governor of New Hampshire. Wentworth sought to establish New Hampshire's claims in the area because New York considered the land under its jurisdiction and control. Colonization however, was not deemed safe until hostilities with the French and Indians ceased in 1760. Manchester and several other area towns were chartered soon after, in 1761.

Early residents shaped their new communities by clearing land for homes and crops, building sawmills and gristmills and erecting important public buildings. A school and church were built in each town within a few years of initial settlement. The region's natural resources supplied the settler's basic needs and supported the earliest industries. The most productive land was cleared for agriculture; forests were harvested for lumber, potash, and maple products.

A major dispute surfaced in 1765 when New York attempted to confiscate land grants from the new inhabitants. The "Green Mountain Boys," led by Ethan Allen and Seth Warner, formed to resist New York's aggression. The conflict was soon superseded by the war between the American colonies and England. In 1777, at the Battle of

Bennington, Warner and John Stark won a critical encounter that set the stage for the American victory at Saratoga. An independent State of Vermont was declared in 1777.

Over the next several decades, communities in the region grew steadily, particularly Bennington and Manchester. Both towns were named Shire towns in 1781. Industries sprang up around the region; first grist mills, saw mills, and blacksmith shops; then tanneries, shoemakers, paper mills, cloth manufacturers, iron works, a manufacturer of carpenter's squares, and the renowned Norton and Fenton potteries.

A favorable climate and protective tariffs gave a strong boost to Vermont's wool industry, which became important in Bennington County in the first decades of the 19th century. Many hillsides were cleared of trees to provide pasture for the region's sheep, which by 1840 numbered in excess of 100,000. An economic depression in 1837 closed many businesses and manufacturers, and removal of the tariffs on wool products in the 1840s sent the wool industry into decline.

In the mid-1800s several shifts set future trends in the region. First, many sheep farmers switched to dairying, which has remained one of the region's dominant agricultural activities. This spawned a thriving cheese industry, with nine cheese factories operating in the area by 1880. The arrival of rail service in 1852 was another significant development. Trains brought in people into the region in ever-increasing numbers, leading to the birth of the tourism industry. The Equinox House opened in Manchester in the 1850s to accommodate summer visitors, and many similar establishments followed. The railroads also brought the industrial revolution. Several factories and mills were converted to new uses and many large, new factories were built. The marble industry flourished too with the greatest quantity of marble milled near Manchester.

As new communities grew roadways were laid out to connect them. An important early road (the future VT 7A) linked Bennington, Shaftsbury, Arlington, Sunderland, and Manchester. Before long, regular stagecoach routes were established and private entrepreneurs built toll roads to facilitate travel.

The Civil War depleted the work force but boosted local textile and machinery manufacturers. By the early 20th century, textile manufacturing was Bennington's dominant industry. A nationwide economic depression slowed growth and caused some factories to close in the 1870s. The arrival of telephone service (1881) and electrical service (1887) had a profound effect on people's lives. Among the many changes brought by electricity was a new trolley car system that connected villages. The arrival of the automobile at the turn of the century ended the trolley era. Most of the region's main roads were paved by 1940.

Tree harvesting, which was first undertaken to get timber for construction and to clear land for settlements and cropland, became a major area industry in the early 20th century when large lumber companies cleared vast acreages in the Green Mountains and sent the logs down rail lines and rivers to feed sawmills in cities and towns below. The Rich Lumber Company operated during this time in Manchester, logging in the Lye Brook and Bourn Pond areas east of town; the clustered houses of "Richville" stand as an interesting reminder of this time. Commercial logging remains an important local industry.

The post-World War II era has been a time of rapid change and growth in the region. New industries (automobile parts, batteries, specialized fabrics, plastics, computer supplies) have replaced outmoded ones. Some traditional industries remain important to the region's economy (dairy products, lumber, and wooden furniture). The region is accessible to major cities and tourism has continued to grow in importance. Skiers, hikers, kayakers, "leaf-peepers," history buffs and shoppers all contribute to the region's economic health.

In recent years there has been a keen interest in the region and in the state in conserving natural resources and planning for the future. The growth of the Green Mountain National Forest, the establishment of a state park at Lake Shaftsbury, and creation of the Merck Forest and Farmland Center are manifestations of this concern. Municipal plans and ordinances, and a number of State laws such as Act 250 and Act 200, were enacted to encourage economically advantageous growth while protecting the open spaces and natural environment that have been so important to the region's history.

The Bennington County region has seen profound changes over the last 230 years. More information on the region's history can be found in the book: [The Shires of Bennington](#), by Tyler Resch, the source of information presented in this section.

Planning Committee History

The effort to win designation for the Shires of Vermont Byway began in 2006 when community leaders attended a summit hosted by Hildene on the branding of southwestern Vermont. A steering committee formed to pursue the ideas generated at the summit meeting. The following year residents and visitors were surveyed on their perceptions of the county. The press publicized the initiative, and committee members fanned out to get input from local boards, rotaries and chambers.

In 2007, the summit group reconvened, discussed survey results, identified target markets and gauged the economic benefits of establishing a successful regional brand. The name The Shires of Vermont was then adopted, and a logo was designed. The steering committee melded with the regional marketing group (RMO), and renamed it The Shires of Vermont RMO. The group, comprised of representatives from both ends of the county, has successfully collaborated on a lure piece, web presence, public relations initiatives and events. While working on a map to depict the geography and major highways of the area it became apparent that one stretch of VT 7A connected The Connecticut River, Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways. That stretch was the missing link to connect all the Byways in southern Vermont.

The Executive Director of the Bennington Chamber of Commerce was involved with The Shires RMO and had just completed work with her southeastern Vermont partners on the Molly Stark Byway. Paula Maynard, a Shires RMO committee member and an appointee to the Vermont Travel and Recreation Council, was attending one of the group's monthly meetings in Montpelier. There she heard a presentation by Vermont Byways Project Manager, John Labarge on the process and benefits of Byway designation. It soon became obvious to The Shires Regional Marketing Organization (RMO) that designating the VT 7/7A corridor should be a priority.

Soon, the effort to win designation coalesced. The Bennington County Regional Commission agreed to provide planning and technical support. The RMO contributed start up funds for the project and representatives from communities along the corridor, chamber executives and even legislators attended committee meetings. Following several meetings the group eventually voted on the name The Shires of Vermont Scenic Byway, and those in attendance became the ad hoc The Shires of Vermont Byway Planning Committee.



Pownal

Introduction to Towns along the Byway Corridor

Pownal–History

Approximately 8,000 years ago Pownal was the site of an ice dam that formed a lake stretching south across Massachusetts into Connecticut. 4,000-5,000 years ago the area was first inhabited. More recently, the Mahican people lived along the Hoosic River where they fished and cultivated corn. The Mohawk people also used the river as a thoroughfare. Numerous stone arrow and spearheads have been found in Pownal

In the 1730's the first European Settlers arrived. On January 28th, 1760 New Hampshire Governor Benning Wentworth chartered Pownal, which he named after his fellow royal governor, Thomas Pownall of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Once founded, settlers, mostly of English descent, arrived from Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut, but control of the land was in dispute. The Province of New York claimed the land was theirs. In protest, 185 male heads of households in Pownal

signed a petition to George III, asking that their land claims be recognized. The dispute intensified, and many Pownal residents joined the Green Mountain Boys under Ethan Allen to fight New York.

At the beginning of the American Revolution, Pownal was deeply divided between the “Yankees” and the “Tories.” Many Tories were arrested and imprisoned, and by the war’s end most had fled to Canada.

In the early 19th century the Industrial Revolution took root in Pownal with the opening of both cotton and woolen mills. On the Hoosic River in North Pownal an 18th-century gristmill was replaced by a woolen mill, which operated from 1849 until it burned down in 1863. Plunkett & Baker Co. built a cotton mill at the site in 1866, which became a tannery in 1937. The tannery closed in 1988, was demolished, and then remediated as a superfund site.

An electric trolley came to Pownal in 1907 linking Pownal to The Berkshires to the south and Bennington to the north. The brick power station still stands on US 7. In the late 19th century the town had 11 schools, each sited to be easily reached by foot. Two US presidents taught in North Pownal—James Garfield and Chester A. Arthur.

Lime quarries operated in North Pownal until 1936. A rail car line linked the quarries to a mill on VT 346, where the stone was crushed and packaged. In 1963 the Green Mountain Race Track opened, but closed in 1992.

Pownal—Demographics and Economy

In the year 1900, 1,976 people lived in Pownal. In the year 2000, the town had 3,560 residents, an increase of 80%. Despite this increase, the town has retained its rural character and has a low population density of 76.3 people per square mile.

The cotton mill, tannery and racetrack are gone but agriculture remains strong. There are 2,200 acres of active farmland spread across the town’s 33 farms and orchards. There are also numerous logging and related businesses. Other important sectors are service, manufacturing, trade and construction.

Pownal–Physical Geography

Pownal is very scenic. It has farmland, open fields, and the backdrop of the Green Mountain and Taconic Ranges. The meandering Hoosic River is another major feature of the landscape. It enters from Williamstown, Massachusetts, flows through a valley of level rich alluvial land averaging half mile in width, and exits northwesterly into New York State.

In the southwestern portion of town, the Taconic Range rises abruptly to over 2,300 feet above sea level. Along Pownal's eastern boundary, the southern end of the Green Mountain Range reaches similar elevations. The Vermont Valley separates the Green Mountains from the Taconic Range, and spreads northward from Pownal Center extending one-third the length of the state.

There are three distinct villages in Pownal: Pownal Center, North Pownal, and Pownal Village. Pownal Center is 400-500 feet higher in elevation than the other settlements and borders US 7. North Pownal is in the valley by the Hoosic River, and Pownal Village is at the crossroads of US 7 and VT 346, just north of the former Green Mountain Race Track.



Bennington

Bennington–History

Benning Wentworth, the New Hampshire governor, founded the town in 1749. A village site was planned and was eventually established where Old Bennington Village is today. Development spread to the north and east, attracted by abundant waterpower and level ground. What is now the crossroads of downtown Bennington, the intersection of US 7 and VT 9, is one mile to the north of the original village site.

Mills and factories sprang up along the Walloomsac River and Paran Creek, and by the mid-19th century Bennington was an important manufacturing center. The textile industry was particularly strong. Agriculture also grew rapidly, and many of the surrounding valleys and hillsides were cleared for pasture.

Transportation improvements were key to the town's development. New roads connected Bennington to surrounding villages and to towns and cities to the west, north, and south. In the mid-19th century the railroad arrived and spurred growth and economic development. The main line passed through North Bennington. A spur connected downtown and its important rail yards and train station. Other lines included the "Corkscrew" line and a line from Glastenbury in the Green Mountains.

The beginning decades of the 20th century ushered in many important changes. The first hospital, Putnam Memorial, now known as Southwestern Vermont Medical Center, opened in 1918. Automobiles replaced horses and streetcars, and by 1940 most of the town's main roads were paved. The stock market crash of 1929 idled many local factories, but after World War II new industries emerged.

Bennington–Demographics and Economy

Bennington has the largest population in southwestern Vermont and is an important center of economic activity. It is the seat of the South Shire and has governmental, medical and cultural institutions that serve not only Bennington County, but also areas of rural Massachusetts and New York.

Of its total population of 15,737 reported in the US Census 2000, 1,428 residents lived in North Bennington Village and 232 resided in Old Bennington Village. Both villages are separate incorporated municipalities but share some municipal functions.

Manufacturing, agriculture, forestry and leisure hospitality provide many of the town's jobs. Higher education is also an important sector. Bennington College and Southern Vermont College are both here. According to 2008 data from the Vermont Department of Labor, Bennington's total resident workforce was 8,260. The total number of jobs in Bennington at that time was 10,511 indicating that Bennington is a regional employment center.

Bennington–Physical Geography

Physically the town occupies 26,700 acres. The Walloomsac River and its tributaries tie together Bennington's diverse landscape as they flow from forested mountains and rural fields through residential neighborhoods, the historical downtown, and past mills and factories. Two major valleys intersect in Bennington: the north-south Valley of Vermont and the Walloomsac Valley, which follows the Walloomsac River west towards New

York State. The escarpment of the Green Mountains lies near the town's eastern border, rising about 2,000 feet above sea level. Mount Anthony, a peak in the Taconic Range, dominates the landscape in the southwestern part of town, and Whipstock Hill rises near the state line at the town's western edge.

Attractive homes and trees line many of the local streets in Bennington's traditional neighborhoods. The most densely developed part of town is located near its geographic center, in and around the historic downtown. A grid of residential streets surrounds downtown. Agricultural areas are found in the southern and western valleys.



Paran Creek, Village of North Bennington

North Bennington Village–History

North Bennington was settled by Joseph Haviland in 1761, and named Haviland's Mills. The waterpower from Paron Creek drew mills and people to the area. In 1776 Haviland's Tory status caused villagers to rename the community Sage City, after his

son-in-law, Moses Sage. The center of the village developed at the north end of Water Street. Early mills produced flax, paper, textiles, lime, marble, iron ore, lenses, furniture, and carpenter squares.

Lake Paran was created in the 1850s by a dam built under a new rail line crossing the valley to Bennington. Tragically, the dam burst in 1852, destroying factories and residences downstream.

Trenor Park built the “Park-McCullough House” in 1864 on a large tract of farmland owned by his family on the valley’s west side. He also built the school, bank, Congregational Church, and the rail station. East of the valley, Bennington College was built on a large portion of the Jennings’ farm and estate. Today the college occupies 18 percent of Village’s the total land area.

Two Vermont governors were from North Bennington: Hiland Hall served from 1858 through 1860 after five terms in Congress, and John G. McCullough became governor in 1902 and resided at the Park- McCullough House.

An excellent timeline of North Bennington’s history can be found in the publication, “North Bennington & the Paran Creek – Past and Future: 1739-2005.”

North Bennington Village–Demographics and Economy

North Bennington’s population is 1,428 (US Census 2000) and has a population density of 763 people per square mile, nearly 10 times the population density of many other towns in the region.

For a small municipality, North Bennington has a remarkably diverse economy. The village’s industrial heritage lives on, although there are fewer manufacturing jobs than in the past. The Bennington County Industrial Corporation is housed in an industrial building on lower Water Street and is an industrial “incubator” for several small manufacturers. National Hangar occupies both historic and new buildings adjacent to Paran Creek. Bennington College is also a major employer.

North Bennington Village–Physical Geography

North Bennington is in the northwestern portion of the Town of Bennington, but is a separate municipality. Its total land area is just 2.1 square miles. Commercial

development is limited to the area in and around the village center, and industrial development lines much of the low valley along Paran Creek. The highest density of residential development is around the village center and in the southern part of the village along and near VT 67A. The Bennington College campus occupies much of the high ground on the east side of the valley. The eastern part of the Village consists of scattered residential development and patches of open fields and woodland lying along a terrain of gently rolling hills. Lake Paran is at the northeastern extreme of the Village.



Shaftsbury

Shaftsbury–History

Benning Wentworth, governor of the province of New Hampshire, established the Town of Shaftsbury in 1761. The town was named after the third Earl of Shaftesbury, England. Eighteen settlers had taken up residence in Shaftsbury by 1765, and its the first recorded birth was in 1766. The town's population grew rapidly. By the end of the 18th century, close to 2,000 people resided there.

Shaftsbury's first church (and Vermont's second) was the First Baptist Church, established in 1768. Town meetings were held from 1779, where decisions were made that ranged from establishing school districts to raising tax revenues to laying out new roads.

There was considerable agricultural and industrial development in the community's early years. Early manufacturing focused on small home-based enterprises that produced potash (from burning hardwood trees), flax, maple sugar, and similar products. Shaftsbury's first factory was a small tannery. In the early 1800s the Town became well

known for its wool that was derived from Merino sheep. Large areas of forest were cleared for pasturing (by 1840 there were nearly 25,000 sheep kept in Shaftsbury). Between 1936 and 1940, 46 Shaftsbury farms went out of business. Nonetheless, today a number of farmers continue to work some of the most productive agricultural soils in Vermont.

Forests were cleared for cropland and pasture and to feed logs to the town's sawmills (there were 12 in Shaftsbury in 1840) and paper mills (2 in 1840), and eventually to produce charcoal for the Burden Iron Works, which operated from 1850 to the 1870's. Most of the land was cleared of trees by the late 1800s.

A number of small industries have contributed to Shaftsbury's economy over the years. In addition to the tannery, iron works, and saw and paper mills noted above, grist mills, a woolen factory, cider and flax mills, carriage and wagon makers, a gunsmith, a boot and shoe manufacturer, a cheese factory and creamery, and ochre, marble, iron and stone mining have operated in Shaftsbury. David Millington, inventor of grafting wax, operated a prosperous business that kept many townspeople busy each spring in the mid-1800s, as they traveled throughout the northeast grafting apple trees. The Eagle Square Company was a major employer in Shaftsbury from about 1820 until it closed in 2002.

More about the history of Shaftsbury can be found in [Ordinary Heroes: The Story of Shaftsbury](#) by Ruth Levin and Tyler Resch, the source for information presented in this chapter.

Shaftsbury–Demographics and Economy

Shaftsbury has a population of 3,693 (Vermont Department of Health, 2007) and a population density of 87.4 people per square mile.

A major employer is Peckham Industries, which mines the town's abundant sand and gravel. Unfortunately for the Town, the Stanley Tools Eagle Square Plant closed its doors in April 2002. The Eagle Square Company was originally established in the 1820's when it pioneered the manufacture of metal carpenter's squares. The former Eagle Square Plant is now occupied by Bernstein Displays, a manufacturer of mannequins and retail display fixtures.

Shaftsbury–Physical Geography

There are two villages in Shaftsbury designated by the Vermont Downtown Program: South Shaftsbury and Center Shaftsbury, which is also a designated historic district. Both villages are along VT 7A and are an important part of the Byway.

Most of Shaftsbury’s development is on the gentle slopes in the center of town, between Lake Shaftsbury in the north and Lake Paran in the south. The steep slopes and high elevations on West Mountain, and the slopes of the Green Mountains to the east are mostly devoid of permanent development. There is substantial agricultural acreage south and west of Center Shaftsbury and scattered residential development in the hills and valleys east of VT 7A.



West Arlington Green, Arlington

Arlington–History

Arlington was chartered by New Hampshire Governor Benning Wentworth, to a group of 62 investors on July 28, 1761. The first meeting to organize the town was held in nearby Pownal in October 1762 when the proprietors agreed to survey lots for distribution. By 1763 the first three families began to clear land, build cabins, and plant crops. A second wave of settlers, most of them from Newtown, Connecticut, arrived in 1763. The third wave of early settlers arrived between 1765 and 1780, many from the New Milford area in Connecticut. Settlement was encouraged through the offer of land to the first person to build and operate a gristmill and sawmill.

In the land grants dispute with New York, Remember Baker and Jehiel Hawley played major roles defending the lands from the 'Yorkers:' Hawley through negotiation and Baker through threats and force of arms. Baker was elected the first town clerk for Arlington, and finished the first grist and sawmill in the eastern part of town. Because of his opposition to New York authority, Baker was surprised by a New York sheriff one winter night and taken by sled in his nightclothes to Albany. Fortunately, he was saved

by his Arlington neighbors and other Green Mountain Boys, but not before his thumb was cut off in the initial fight.

When the Revolutionary War started Arlington probably had a majority of Tories in the town. The British sentiment was so strong that the first governor of Vermont, Thomas Chittenden, and most of the state governing council moved into town in order to closely monitor the Tory residents. Ethan Allen lived within sight of Chittenden's house, confiscated from town founder and Tory, Jehiel Hawley. Ardent Patriots, John Fassett and Matthew Lyon, lived nearby. Arlington was the de facto capital of the independent Republic of Vermont for the nearly ten years Governor Chittenden lived there.

Much of the town is rocky and consists of steep slopes on the Taconic Mountains to the west and the Green Mountains to the east. Large-scale farming was limited, so lumber and sheep became important industries. Arlington was blessed with abundant waterpower to run mills, and this drove industrial progress for the next 100 years. A variety of wood products were produced in the mills, ranging from sawn lumber, shoe pegs, and brush handles to quality furniture. The densely wooded mountainsides also supplied the potash, charcoal, and lime industries.

When the railroad was routed through Arlington and the first station was built in the 1850s, local industry began to change from serving local markets to serving worldwide markets. For example, a shoe peg factory was erected on the site of today's Miles Lumber Company. Almost all of the output was shipped overseas to German and Russian markets. Two Canfield brothers founded the Arlington Car Manufacturing Company to build cars for the growing railroad industry. When the company failed its building was reoccupied by the Arlington Refrigerator Company from 1910 to 1929. The company closed its doors for various reasons including the stock market crash and the popularity of electric refrigerators over traditional ice-boxes. Ten years later the plant was purchased, renovated, and expanded by Mack Molding, and it has remained in use ever since.

Arlington's tourist industry grew with the advent of train service. New hotels, bed and breakfasts, and inns opened. Between 1920 and 1950, local author Dorothy Canfield Fisher drew a number of talented, internationally known artists to the town. Norman Rockwell, Don Trachte, Carl Ruggles, Meade Shafer, John Atherton, Rockwell Kent and others lived in Arlington.

Arlington–Physical Geography

Arlington has 2,397 residents (Census 2000) and a fairly diverse economy for a small rural community. Its main employers are manufacturing (Mack Molding and Quadra-Tek), retail trades, services and construction. Natural resources provide some employment in forestry, agriculture and recreation.

Arlington–Landscape and Geology

Arlington has two distinct village centers: Arlington Village and East Arlington. The town's topography is hilly to mountainous. Over half of its area consists of steep hills and mountains at elevations higher than 1,200 feet. The highest elevation is the summit of Grass Mountain at 3,109 feet. The five highest peaks—all in the Taconic Range—are Red Mountain, 2,846 feet; Ball Mountain, 2,755 feet; Spruce Peak, 3,033 feet; Grass Mountain, 3,109 feet; and Big Spruce Mountain, 2,338 feet. The Batten Kill is the master stream draining the area. Much of the river valley is flood plain suitable only for farming and recreation, although many residences were constructed there prior to the enactment of local flood hazard zoning regulations. Above the flood level, homes dot the valley and hillsides north and south of the river.



Roaring Branch, Sunderland

Sunderland–History

Sunderland’s first inhabitants were nomadic Native Americans who camped and had villages along the Batten Kill. The majority of the town’s first European settlers, including Ethan Allen, came from Connecticut. According to historic documents and town records the town was chartered on July 29th, 1761. There were 64 original grantees. At “proprietors meetings” the town was organized and parcels of land were distributed.

Sunderland’s “Founding Fathers” were very active in the long struggle over land grants between New York and New Hampshire. While in Sunderland, Ethan Allen penned various controversial works of literature, but primarily he was a land speculator. The Allen’s homestead was near the Batten Kill just north of the intersection of VT 7A, Hill Farm Road and Bentley Hill Road. Ira Allen is buried in the cemetery on the hill across the river from the homestead.

Sunderland–Demographics and Economy

Sunderland has a population of 850 (Census 2000) and a population density of just 18.7 people per square mile—the lowest of all seven towns in the Byway corridor.

Sunderland serves as a principle access point to the Green Mountain National Forest via the Kelley Stand Road. The town has attracted many second homeowners, retirees and families with children due to its close proximity to Manchester and easy access to major resort, shopping and art destinations.

The town’s central location in the region and commercial-industrial zoned land bordering the VT 7 interchange has attracted several businesses in recent years including: Central Vermont Public Services Corporation, Verizon, K&E Plastics and the headquarters of the Orvis Company.

Sunderland–Landscape and Built Environment

Approximately 86% (21,884 acres) of Sunderland is within the Green Mountain National Forest and owned by the federal government. The remaining portion of the town is bisected by the Batten Kill, a railroad and VT 7A. The newer, limited access US 7 creates a loose boundary with the National Forest. This corner of town has valleys and lowlands and is wedged between the Green Mountains and the Mount Equinox foothills. At the junction of the four adjoining towns there stands a historic marble monument to the “four corners” of Sunderland, Arlington, Sandgate and Manchester.



Hildene, the Lincoln Family Home, Manchester

Manchester and Manchester Village–History

From 1761 to 1850, Manchester was primarily a crossroads with numerous taverns and inns. After the end of the Revolution and the resolution of land title disputes with New York, Manchester grew rapidly and reached a population of about 2,200 by 1800. Local industry developed, particularly marble mills, which took advantage of the nearby marble quarries and abundant water.

Growth slowed in Manchester after the War of 1812. Thin topsoil and harsh climate proved unfriendly to farming. The mountainous terrain made transportation difficult and discouraged industry. The raising of sheep had a brief boom in the 1840s, but the introduction of wool from Australia brought an end to this success.

From 1850 into the 1920s, Manchester entered its resort phase. The natural beauty of the area and its relative lack of development drew tourists. Franklin Orvis opened

Manchester's most famous hotel, the Equinox, in 1853, which became the centerpiece of Manchester's tourist industry.

At the turn of the 20th century an atmosphere of boom and optimism, and an emphasis on health and sports and architecture was expressed in Manchester. Mr. E.J. Hawley, a longtime resident and substantial landowner, saw a great future in attracting more wealthy summer residents. Fast and luxurious railroad service from New York City was in place. The "Green Mountain Flyer" and the "Mount Royal," featuring daily parlor and sleeping cars, made the trip from New York City in five and one half hours. Abraham Lincoln's son, Robert T. Lincoln, president of the Pullman Palace Car Company, often traveled by private rail car to Hildene, his Manchester Village estate.

In 1974 the Equinox closed and remained closed until 1984 when the 26-acre property was restored, including the development of a restaurant and tavern, a business conference facilities, a recreational center and swimming pool, and construction of 150 guest rooms. A 121-unit condominium cluster home community was built along a portion of the 18-hole championship Equinox golf course.

Manchester and Manchester Village–Demographics and Economy

Manchester, including Manchester Village has a population of 4,100 (Census 2000). Of that population, 602 residents live in Manchester Village.

Manchester is the regional service and economic center for the North Shire. In the past its landscape was dotted with iron mines, marble mills, and lumber companies. One enterprise that remains is The Orvis Company. Founded in 1856, Orvis is a leading manufacturer of quality fishing equipment and an international retailer of sporting goods and clothing.

Factory outlet clothing stores are popular in Manchester. The town has a vibrant commercial core that remains active throughout the year. Despite the town's relatively small size its retail segment generates more state sales tax revenue than all but four other Vermont municipalities.

Manchester and Manchester Village–Physical Geography

Manchester lies in a broad valley with the Green Mountains to the east and the Taconic Mountains to the west. Through the center of this valley flows the Batten Kill. Mount Equinox rises 3,000 feet behind the town. Manchester Village lines VT 7A just to the south of Manchester Center, which is oriented around the intersection of VT 7A, VT 30 and VT 11.

Intrinsic Quality Resources

Intrinsic Quality Categories

The National Scenic Byways Program identifies defines six intrinsic qualities:

Archeological

This resource includes physical evidence of historic or prehistoric human life or activity that is visible and capable of being inventoried and interpreted. Ruins, structural remains and artifacts and other physical evidence that has scientific significance, can educate the viewer and stir an appreciation of the past, are qualities of an archeological resource.

Cultural

Cultural resources are evidence and expressions of the customs or traditions of a distinct group of people. Cultural features include visual arts, crafts, vernacular and secular architecture, music, dance, rituals, festivals, speech, food and special events.

Historic

This resource encompasses landscape elements, natural or manmade, of such historic significance that they can educate the viewer and stir an appreciation of the past.

Natural

These resources are visual features of the natural world that are in a relatively undisturbed state. They may include geological formations, fossils, landforms, water bodies, vegetation and wildlife.

Recreational

This encompasses outdoor recreational activities that are associated and dependent on the corridor's natural and cultural elements. The activities can be passive or active.

Scenic

This resource includes natural and manmade elements that give a pleasing, distinct and memorable visual experience.

This corridor management plan has added two additional intrinsic quality categories:

Agricultural/Food Production

This includes local farming and local food production.

Local Entrepreneurial

This includes enterprises that contribute to the area's unique character.



The Tubbs, Pownal

Pownal–Resource Narrative

Pownal's dramatic river valley, rolling hills covered with forests and pastures and mountainous backdrop make it one of the most scenic Byway towns. The town has a total of 2,400 acres of active farmland and 33 active farms and orchards. Its rich history has also left many evocative buildings and sites. Settled in the 1730's as part of Rensselaerwyck (Albany, NY) it has the oldest houses in Vermont.

The Industrial Revolution is particularly redolent in the tiny mill village of North Pownal, with its rows of petite mill houses near the site of the former Plunket & Baker Company cotton mill. It was at that mill that Lewis Hine took his famous photograph of a child laborer, which was later featured on a US postage stamp commemorating the passage of the first child labor laws. The

Museum of Black World War II History is another historic and cultural resource in Pownal.

Pownal has many outdoor recreational resources. The Taconic Crest Trail crosses

through the town's higher elevations to the west. Another popular trail ascends The Dome, the highest mountain in Pownal. The Hoosic is an excellent river for canoeing and kayaking. There are also many beautiful fields for cross-country skiing in the winter.



Downtown Bennington

Bennington–Resource Narrative

Bennington has much to offer the Byway visitor. It has a historic and vibrant downtown, the iconic Bennington Monument, three covered bridges, museums, numerous cultural events and great scenery.

The Downtown Bennington Historic District is lined with architecturally beautiful and historic buildings, which now contain lively cafés, restaurants, shops and offices making it a good place for visitors to explore on foot.

A few blocks to the west is the Old Bennington Historic district, the site of the original town settlement. Monument Avenue, lined with stately historic houses and the Old First Church of Bennington, culminates at the Bennington Battle Monument, the most visited monument in Vermont.

The scenic landscape is one of Bennington's most important assets. Valleys, farm fields, wooded hills and church spires are framed by the Green Mountains and Mount Anthony. The Walloomsac River and its three covered bridges are also important scenic resources.

Bennington's cultural resources include the Oldcastle Theatre Company, which offers live performances, and the Bennington Museum, renowned for its collection of paintings by the great American folk artist Grandma Moses, the Bennington Center for the Arts, and the New England Tropical Conservancy.

Bennington has many traditional Vermont businesses such as Southern Vermont Orchards and True Love Farm. Many of the town's 30 local farms and orchards sell their goods at the Walloomsac Farmer's Market. Craft traditions are alive in Bennington too. Bennington Potters has carried on the pottery legacy that began in Bennington in the 18th century. The town also has many cutting-edge businesses such as Vermont Composites, which makes many products including aircraft interiors.



Park-McCullough Historic House, Village of North Bennington

Village of North Bennington–Resource Narrative

The Village is a unique and special piece of Vermont with a historic village center surrounded by a rural landscape and attractive residential neighborhoods.

The scenic quality of the landscape is one of North Bennington’s most important assets. One highlight is Park Street, a designated “scenic road” because of its unpaved surface, narrow profile, canopy of trees, and the rural landscape it traverses. Park Street intersects with West Street near the Park-McCullough Historic House (open to the public), where historic stonewalls and elegant lawns and gardens backed by the mansion create a unique and attractive streetscape.

The North Bennington Historic District encompasses much of the village center and includes 178 buildings of architectural or historical significance. The village achieved the pinnacle of both its architectural development and its commercial and industrial expansion around 1880, the year also marked by construction of the Second Empire-style train depot that has been restored and today houses the Village offices. Historic

buildings line Paran Creek. The combination of stream, historic architecture, and natural landscape create an exceptionally scenic resource at the heart of the village.

Mile-Around Woods and adjacent properties west of Park Street are available for public use and have networks of popular hiking trails and outstanding vistas.

Lake Paran is an important resource and is a popular spot for swimming, fishing, non-motorized boating, ice-skating, hiking, and aesthetic appreciation.



Shaftsbury

Shaftsbury–Resource Narrative

Shaftsbury is a unique yet quintessential Vermont town. It has a historic and picturesque village center, working farms, spectacular views, extensive forests and businesses large and small.

Center Shaftsbury is an area of particular historical and archeological importance, containing a number of historic buildings including the Old Center Shaftsbury Meeting House, the Hickory Stick Center Shaftsbury School, and the Old Baptist Church and Cemetery, all of which are surrounded by open fields and orchards. The view of the valley to the south is particularly scenic.

Distinctive topographic features of the Shaftsbury landscape include: West Mountain, an elongated ridge in the Taconic Range rising to 2,401 feet; the low central Valley of Vermont containing south-flowing Paran Creek, north-flowing Warm Brook, Lake Paran and Lake Shaftsbury, and a number of wetlands, particularly in the "Tunic" area east of Center Shaftsbury; a number of small peaks and "cobbles" (Hale Mountain, Bucks Cobble, Harrington Cobble, Trumbull Mountain, Maple Hill) east of the valley; Shaftsbury Hollow; and the very level "Flats" and wetlands along VT 67.

Extensive forests cover much of Shaftsbury, particularly on West Mountain and the ridges and hills in the eastern part of the town. Numerous small woodlots dot the landscape in and around village and agricultural areas.

Agriculture is a vital part of Shaftsbury's rural and scenic character. The mix of fields and woodlands also provide habitat for a diverse wildlife community.



Batten Kill, Arlington

Arlington–Resource Narrative

Arlington’s three historic areas have 140 structures on the National Register of Historic Places. The town's first residents settled in Arlington Village in 1763. Over the next two centuries it has remained a commercial and civic center. As the early families became established they built more comfortable and stately dwellings. Most of the village’s historic buildings were constructed by 1869.

East Arlington Road leads to Arlington’s first major industrial site, now occupied by the Mack Molding Company, past the Masonic lodge, the most recent train depot (1911), and the former West and Canfield store. Ethan Allen lived near the station during the Revolutionary War, and the first governor of Vermont, Thomas Chittenden lived at the corner of East Arlington and Chittenden roads. This was also the location of the first frame house built in town in 1769 by Capt. Jehiel Hawley. The tree-lined road continues past the high school on the left and the elementary school on the right. The Martha Canfield Free Library is also on the left, and provides Wi-Fi access and local history resources.

As visitors enter the East Arlington Historic District there are several sights, including the town's first gristmill and sawmill (1769). The cluster of business and residential buildings include an old tavern that served as the end of the stagecoach line from the mountains to the east, local stores and other mills along Peter's Brook that used the available waterpower to run wood-working mills. Two classic New England style churches are in the district. Located across the street from each other they were originally separate Congregational and Methodist fellowships. In 1946 they joined and became the East Arlington Federated Church.

The picturesque West Arlington Green is one of the most photographed and painted scenes in Vermont with its covered bridge (1854), church and attached grange hall (1804), a former one-room schoolhouse (1936), and Norman Rockwell's home and studio. Also along the Batten Kill is the popular, scenic setting of West Mountain Inn, the location of the early marble quarry (1812), and a highly photogenic view of Red Mountain across the river, the classic Wayside Country Store, views of Ball Mountain to the south, and a number of early homes. Nearer to the village is the Crofut/Hawley Tavern built about 1770, the oldest building in Arlington. Ethan Allen and some of the Green Mountain Boys met here, as did the local Tories during the Revolutionary War. The only fatality in Arlington during the Revolutionary War took place along what is now VT 313. The inspiration for the Vermont State seal is also found on VT 313 where the State Seal Pine is still marked.

Arlington has varied and rich natural resources. The forested peaks and ridges of the Taconic Range, the Batten Kill, Green River, and the Roaring Branch, the lush valley floor between the mountains, farm fields, and abundant wildlife typify the scenic beauty of Arlington. The Batten Kill, a trout stream of national significance, is one of the town's most prominent and important natural features. The river's characteristics in Arlington – a swift current, cool clear water from mountain tributaries, a gravel substrate, and the unspoiled beauty of the surrounding landscape – make it an ideal resource for fishing, swimming, canoeing, "tubing," sightseeing, and other recreational activities.



Chisville Bridge, Sunderland

Sunderland–Resource Narrative

Sunderland has numerous historic structures. The Chisville Covered Bridge, built in 1870, spans the Roaring Branch. The bridge has large timber truss supports and the highest pier supports of any bridge in the county. Other notable historic buildings include: The Ira Allen Homestead, The Hill Family Farm and Inn Complex (1820), Sunderland Church (1880), Pennock’s Store, which dates from the 19th century, the Hayden Homestead (1777), and Sunderland Borough, the town’s earliest residential cluster.

Sunderland has several high quality streams and brooks that are a critical resource for the town and region including: the Batten Kill, Roaring Branch, Brook at Beaver Meadow, Cole Brook, and Fayville Branch. The importance of the town’s water resources was highlighted when residents united to save Hill Farm along the Batten Kill, which was subsequently named an Outstanding Water Resource (OWR).

The historic turnpike and Byway side trip, Kelley Stand Road is one of Vermont’s earliest roads and an important resource for Sunderland. It is a true country road, unpaved, narrow, curvy and canopied by ancient trees. It ascends into the Green Mountains closely following the Roaring Branch. The road offers continuous views and is the best vehicle access to Sunderland’s important scenic, natural, and recreational resource—the Green Mountain National Forest. Along the road’s lower section there are a few cottages along the stream bank, one of which belonged to the artist Norman

Rockwell who went there to “get away from it all” and be close to nature. At the road’s summit is the Kelley Stand—the site of a long gone thriving mountain community with its own hotel and logging camp. In winter, the road is closed at the entrance to the National Forest, but snowmobiling is permitted.



Southern Vermont Art Center, Manchester

Manchester and Manchester Village–Resource Narrative

Manchester, seat of the “North Shire,” has many important resources and much to offer the traveler. The town has five historic districts: Main Street Historic District, Bonnet Street Historic District, Manchester Depot Historic District, Manchester Village Historic District and the North Main Street Historic District. Within these historic districts are numerous historic commercial, residential and institutional buildings including the Equinox Hotel, Hildene, the Lincoln Family Home, and the Bennington County Court House. The town’s cemeteries also reveal an interesting story of early settlement. The Manchester Historical Society maintains a building and exhibit near downtown.

Cultural resources abound in Manchester. The town’s bustling downtown is a cultural

attraction in itself. The Town Green that borders a millpond and waterfall is at the center of it all. The Southern Vermont Art Center has permanent and visiting exhibits, a theatre and a botany trail. Riley Rink at Hunter Park doubles as a venue for concerts and internationally known performers, when not in use by ice skaters. Other events take place at Hildene, the theatre at Burr and Burton Academy and the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

Manchester also has significant natural and scenic resources. The entire town sits between the Taconic Mountains, dominated by Mount Equinox, and the long plateau of the Green Mountains. The slopes and summit ridge of Mount Equinox contain some important natural features. The Table Rock Natural Area, Equinox Spring, Cook

Hollow, Lookout Rock and Skinner Hollow Cave are all fascinating natural features valued by the community. The Dryer Quarry is an abandoned marble quarry and there are extensive sand and gravel deposits that date to a time when streams deposited sediments to a vast inland sea that extended throughout the area.

The east and west branches of the Batten Kill converge near the center of town and flow southward through the Valley of Vermont. Other notable water resources in Manchester include: Bourn Brook, Bromley Brook, Downer Glen, Lye Brook Falls and Bullhead and Equinox Ponds.

Manchester has many recreational facilities—both man-made and natural. There are numerous access points to the Green Mountain National Forest, including hiking trails to Lye Brook Falls and Prospect Rock. The Long Trail/Appalachian Trail traverses the east side of town. The Equinox Preservation Trust maintains an extensive network of trails around and above Equinox Pond, including a trail that reaches the summit after a steep 3,000-foot climb. Other trails traverse the Pew Forest, Isham Forest, and the grounds of the Southern Vermont Art Center. Hildene operates a ski touring center over several miles of trails on its property.

Implementation

Local Management Structure

The Shires of Vermont Byway Committee will pursue and implement the strategies and goals outlined in the Corridor Management Plan. Meetings will be open to the public and Committee membership is open to all interested individuals. It is expected that key regional partners and stakeholders will be represented on the Committee. Each of the region's towns will also be invited to designate a representative. The Committee will meet regularly and may establish sub-committees to develop initiatives and projects to fulfill the Byway's goals. The Committee will meet every five years to revise and update the Corridor Management Plan. Regional and state organizations with complementary missions will provide assistance and support as appropriate.

The Vermont Agency of Transportation will contribute technical support through its Byway Project Coordinator. The Vermont Scenery Preservation Council will review plans and strategies and offer suggestions prior to forwarding a request for designation to the Transportation Board. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) can offer

assistance in formulating national program policy and content, with financial accountability, and with investment and research.

The mission of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) is "To protect, sustain, and enhance Vermont's natural resources for the benefit of this and future generations." To meet this mission, the Agency works to protect and enhance Vermont's air, water, forests, and other natural resources. The Byway Committee will consult with ANR and coordinate improvements with any projects being implemented by them to protect or promote natural resources in the corridor.

The Vermont Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) assists in the sustainable development of Vermont communities. DHCA accomplishes this through development of state housing policy and coordination of state housing programs; awards of federal Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to municipalities; development of state land use policy and support for local and regional planning; identification and protection of historic and archeological resources; and through delivery of programs to preserve the health of Vermont's downtowns and village centers. Such programs can complement the efforts of the Byway Committee to ensure that the Shires of Vermont Scenic Byway remains an attractive and economically viable region.

The region's chambers of commerce and regional marketing organization (RMO) serve to promote new and existing tourist attractions throughout the Byway corridor. It is expected that The Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce, the Manchester and the Mountains Chamber of Commerce, and The Shires of Vermont Regional Marketing Organization will be represented on the Byway Committee to facilitate inter-agency coordination and represent the many businesses and organizations they serve.

The Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) provides technical planning support to municipalities in the areas of land use, transportation, economic development, housing, and natural resources. The commission also encourages coordinated development throughout the region through their regional plans and will ensure that implementation strategies are consistent throughout the corridor and address common needs and objectives.

Goals & Strategies

The following goals and strategies were developed collaboratively between The Shires of Vermont Byway Committee, the Bennington County Regional Commission, corridor communities, and interested citizens and organizations. Many of the long-term strategies are adopted from approved town and regional plans.

Five general categories of goals have been developed to assure that the vision of the Shires of Vermont Byway is achieved. The categories are:

- Transportation
- Access
- Sustainable tourism and visitor services
- Economic development
- Preservation

Transportation

Goal: Improve safety for all travel modes in accordance with Town and Regional plans.

Strategy: Maintain the quality and functionality of Byway roads for all users.

Strategy: Improve safety at High Crash Locations (HCLs).

Strategy: Implement traffic calming measures in village and town centers.

Strategy: Install additional guardrails (designed to fit the character of the area) where needed.

Strategy: Use contemporary best practices and design standards for all transportation projects.

Strategy: Cooperate with the Vermont Agency of Transportation to maintain the quality and functionality of the roadway. This includes compliance with the MUTCD and Vermont State signage laws.

Goal: Improve the safety and comfort for pedestrians and bicyclists in accordance with Town and Regional plans.

Strategy: Provide additional bicycle and pedestrian facilities (both roadway or separated facilities).

Strategy: Install and maintain sidewalks and pedestrian amenities in village centers to encourage tourists and citizens to park and walk.

Strategy: Widen and pave roadway shoulders, consistent with Vermont Design Standards, for use by bicycles and pedestrians.

Access

Goal: Make the Byway user-friendly, comfortable and safe in accordance with Town and Regional plans.

Strategy: Encourage the development and maintenance of public facilities (such as public restrooms, picnic tables and waypoints) that make the Byway comfortable for visitors.

Strategy: Improve signs and access at trails, pull-offs, and other resource sites.

Strategy: Create and maintain safe and accessible pull-offs and scenic lookouts.

Strategy: Improve parking at important activities and destinations.

Strategy: Work with cultural institutions and businesses to improve parking and access.

Strategy: Encourage and support development of public transportation along the route and to corridor trails, destinations and resource sites.

Goal: Improve access to outdoor recreation in accordance with Town and Regional plans.

Strategy: Provide public access to rivers, lakes and other resources, which have limited or poor access.

Strategy: Develop, build, maintain, and promote historic, cultural and scenic trails, as well as boardwalks, viewing blinds, and observation platforms either on public land or with acquisition of easements on private land. These may be hiking, biking, walking or skiing trails.

Strategy: Make school recreation facilities safely accessible and user-friendly.

Strategy: Hire or encourage businesses offering naturalists and historians to educate visitors and lead guided tours through natural and historic areas.

Strategy: Facilitate recreational opportunities for all ages including the elderly and the disabled.

Strategy: Work with private landowners to maintain and acquire public access points to recreation lands and water resources by helping to minimize potential impacts.

Sustainable Tourism and Marketing

Goal: Brand, promote and market the Byway corridor in accordance with Town and Regional plans.

Strategy: Develop a Byway logo.

Strategy: Create informational brochures, maps, and an interactive website to promote the Byway. These materials also may advertise activities and businesses along the Byway.

Strategy: Employ social media and emerging technology to promote the Byway.

Strategy: Develop a signature event or events, and invite sponsor participation to promote and finance the Byway.

Goal: Inform travelers about the Byway corridor and its resources in accordance with Town and Regional plans.

Strategy: Install a unique and easily identifiable informational sign system to help travelers navigate the Byway and locate its resources.

Strategy: Construct and improve visitor centers and waypoints to provide information about the Byway and its resources.

Strategy: Develop interactive websites to inform visitors about the Byway's resources.

Strategy: Create brochures, videos, and Internet media that encourage travelers to visit resource sites and to enhance their experience once there.

Strategy: Install welcome signs at village center entrances.

Strategy: Improve information, signs, and other features that promote safety and proper visitor use at recreational facilities.

Preservation

Goal: Preserve and protect natural and scenic resources in accordance with Town and Regional plans.

Strategy: Protect and improve the quality of water resources.

Strategy: Support policies that promote protection of open space and scenic resources for their aesthetic, historic and economic value.

Strategy: Encourage acquisition of land or conservation easements for areas identified as critical to natural, scenic, or recreational use.

Strategy: Encourage zoning and site development standards that preserve the region's character.

Goal: Preserve and protect important cultural, historic, and archeological resources in accordance with Town and Regional plans.

Strategy: Protect historic, archeological, architectural and cultural resources from activities that damage their quality or character.

Strategy: Develop town plans and land use regulations that enhance and protect the architectural integrity and character of towns and villages.

Strategy: Preserve and reuse architecturally or historically significant industrial buildings.

Strategy: Work with local, regional, and state historical preservation interests to maintain and update historic site inventories.

Strategy: Encourage the development and efforts of local historical societies.

Economic Development

Goal: Increase tourism and economic activity along the Byway corridor in accordance with Town and Regional plans.

Strategy: Develop, maintain and promote the Byway in accordance with the Corridor Management Plan.

Goal: Preserve and promote culturally significant economic activities in accordance with Town and Regional plans.

Strategy: Preserve and protect agricultural land and forests.

Strategy: Promote locally produced food, local farmers markets, and local fairs and festivals.

Goal: Encourage entrepreneurial activity in accordance with Town and Regional plans.

Strategy: Encourage the development of new businesses that increase the region's economic base but that don't negatively impact its existing resources. Preferably, these businesses will represent the "green" technologies of the future.

Conclusion

The Shires of Vermont Byway will connect the communities of the South and North Shires—communities with a shared history. The Byway designation will bring many benefits to our region: It will strengthen both residents' and visitors' appreciation of the Shires' scenic, recreational, cultural and historic resources; It will qualify the Byway corridor for grants and funding opportunities; It will link and compliment the existing Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways. Designation will also establish goals, strategies, a management structure and a plan to ensure that visitors and residents will enjoy the region's scenic, natural, historic and cultural resources for many years to come.

Appendix

Links to Town and Regional Plans

Town of Pownal

<http://www.bcrct.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/PownalTownPlan10-12-06.pdf>

Town of Bennington

<http://www.bcrct.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/BennTownPlan2010.pdf>

North Bennington Village

<http://www.bcrct.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/NorthBennTownPlan2008.pdf>

Town of Shaftsbury

<http://www.bcrct.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/ShaftsburyTownPlan09.pdf>

Town of Arlington

<http://www.bcrct.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/01/arlingtonplanupdate08.pdf>

Town of Sunderland

<http://www.bcrct.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/SundTownPlan10.pdf>

Village of Manchester

<http://www.bcrct.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/ManchVillagePlan.pdf>

Manchester

<http://www.bcrct.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/ManchTownPlan2007.pdf>

Bennington County Regional Plan

<http://www.bcrcvt.com/bennington-county-regional-commission/regional-plan/>

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North Bennington Village Plan. Adopted February 12, 2008. Bennington County Regional Commission.

Pownal Town Plan. Adopted October 12, 2006. Bennington County Regional Commission.

Shaftsbury Town Plan. Adopted May 4, 2009. Bennington County Regional Commission.

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The Regional Plan. Adopted May 17, 2007. Bennington County Regional Commission.

Vermont Byways Program website. Vermont Agency of Transportation. Accessed January 14, 2011. <<http://www.vermont-Byways.us/>>

Village of Manchester Plan of Development. Adopted September 4, 1998. Amended September 7, 2004. Bennington County Regional Commission.

Significant corridor resource matrix

Local significant resources include:	Scenic	Natural	Recreational	Cultural	Historical	Agriculture/food production	Local	Entrepreneurial
Pownal								
Snow Hole	x							
Red Pines	x	x						
Swamp of Oracles	x	x						
Maple Grove School Swamp	x	x						
Cranberry Bog	x	x						
Middle Pownal Road Swamp	x	x						
Peckham Hill	x	x	x					
Hoosic River	x	x	x					
Hoosic Valley	x	x	x					
The Tubbs	x	x	x					
The Dome	x	x	x					
Hemlock Gorge	x	x	x					
Barbers Pond	x	x	x					
South Stream Waterfowl Area	x	x	x					
Chalk Pond	x	x	x					
Reservoir Hollow	x	x	x					
Taconic Crest Trail			x					
Pownal Elementary School				x				
Solomon Wright Public Library				x				
Pownal Community Fair				x				
Pownal Center Village				x	x			
North Pownal Village				x	x			
Pownal Village				x	x			
Pownal Historic District				x	x			
Pownal Center Community Church				x	x			
Museum of Black WW II History				x	x			
Moore Wright Dafoe Home					x			
Petrs (Peter) Vosburgh Farm					x			
Pitt Hogel-Sebastian Diehl House					x			
Plunket & Baker Company cotton mill site					x		x	
Mighty Food Farm						x	x	
Starter Orchard						x	x	
Wildstone Farm						x	x	
Two Spoon Farm						x	x	
Hill Top Farm						x	x	
Peckham's Farm and Greenhouses						x	x	
Avonlea Bakery						x	x	
Dairy Farms (6)						x	x	
Meat Producers (4)						x	x	
Produce Farms (5)						x	x	
Horse Farms (2)						x	x	
Maple Syrup Producers (3)						x	x	
Christmas tree farms (2)						x	x	
Tree & logging operations (numerous)						x	x	

Significant corridor resource matrix

Local significant resources include:	Scenic	Natural	Recreational	Cultural	Historical	Agriculture/food production	Local	Entrepreneurial
Bennington								
Putnam Wetlands	x	x						
New England Tropical Conservancy								
Duck Preserve		x						
Mount Anthony	x	x	x					
Greenberg Nature Center	x	x	x					
Walloomsac River	x	x	x					
Roaring Branch	x	x	x					
Harmon Hill	x	x	x					
White Rocks	x		x					
Long Trail/Appalachian Trail			x					
Snowmobile trail system			x					
Bennington Recreation Center			x					
Prospect Mountain XC Ski Center			x				x	
Oldcastle Theatre Company				x				
Community College of Vermont				x				
Mt. Anthony Union High School				x				
Southern Vermont College				x	x			
Bennington Museum				x	x			
Covered Bridge Museum				x	x			
Bennington Battle Monument				x	x			
First Congregational Church of Bennington				x	x			
Bennington Free Library				x	x			
Bennington Center for the Arts				x	x			
Cora B. Whitney School				x	x			
Bennington Potters				x	x		x	
Walloomsac Farmers Market				x		x	x	
David Mathews House					x			
Pratt-McDaniels LaFlamme House					x			
Cloverleaf Archaeological Site					x			
W.H. Bradford Hook & Ladder Fire House					x			
Bennington Post Office					x			
The Corkscrew Railroad					x			
Bennington Railroad Station					x			
Frederick Squires House					x			
Carrigan Lane Historic District					x			
The Orchards					x			
William Henry House					x			
Furnace Grove Historic District					x			
Ritchie Block					x			
Monument Avenue					x			
Old Bennington Historic District					x	x		
Holden-Leonard Mill Complex					x		x	
Downtown Bennington Historic District					x	x	x	
Bennington Fish Hatchery						x		

Significant corridor resource matrix

Local significant resources include:	Scenic	Natural	Recreational	Cultural	Historical	Agriculture/food production	Local Entrepreneurial
Red Comb Farm						x	x
Community Farm at Bennington College						x	
True Love Farm						x	x
Bennington Bakery						x	x
Southern Vermont Orchards						x	x
Maplebrook Farm						x	x
Fairdale Farms						x	x
Vermont Composites, Inc							x
Abacus Automation							x
Global Z							x
Hemmings Motor News							x
NSK Steering Systems							x
Plasan USA							x
North Bennington							
Mile-Around Woods	x		x				
Paran Creek	x	x	x				
Lake Paran	x	x	x				
Lake Paran Recreational Park and Trails	x		x				
Park Street	x				x		
Willow Park			x				
Mount Anthony Golf Course			x				
Shopping and dining			x	x			x
Bennington College				x			
North Bennington Historic District				x	x		x
Park McCullough House				x	x		
North Bennington Depot					x		
Paper Mill Covered Bridge					x		
Silk Road Covered Bridge					x		
Henry Covered Bridge					x		
Porta Brace							x
Shaftsbury							
Bucks Cobble	x	x	x				
Hale Mountain	x	x	x				
Harrington Cobble	x	x	x				
Trumbull Mountain	x	x	x				
Maple Hill West Mountain	x	x	x				
Shaftsbury Hollow	x	x	x				
Lake Shaftsbury State Park	x	x	x				
Paran Creek	x	x	x				
Warm Brook	x	x	x				
Lake Paran	x	x	x				
Governor Galusha Homestead	x			x	x	x	
Howard Park			x				
Robert Frost House Trails			x	x			
Redeemer Lutheran Church				x			

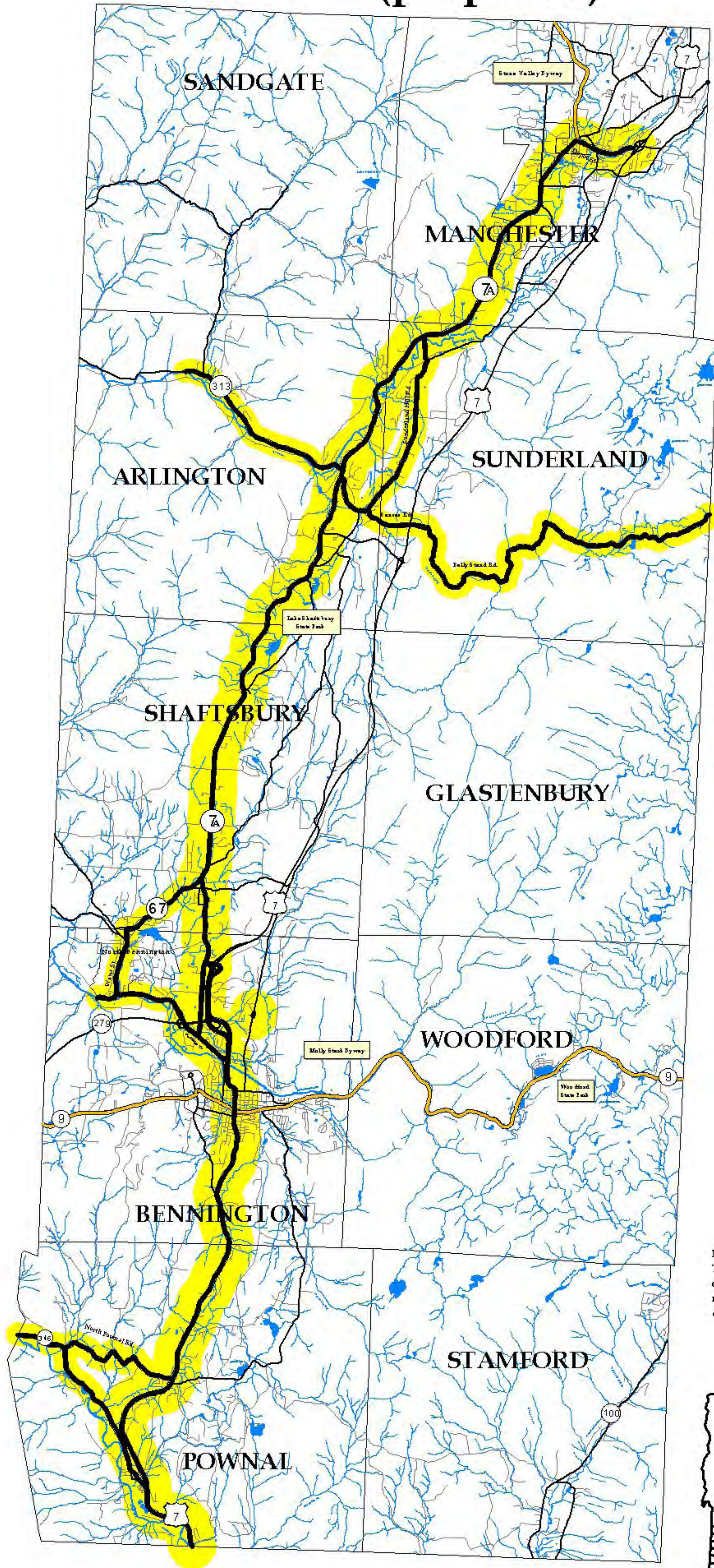
Significant corridor resource matrix

Local significant resources include:	Scenic	Natural	Recreational	Cultural	Historical	Agriculture/food production	Local	Entrepreneurial
Shaftsbury Elementary School and Playground				x				
South Shaftsbury Village				x	x			
Shaftsbury United Methodist				x	x			
Center Shaftsbury Historic District				x	x			
Old Center Shaftsbury Meeting House				x	x			
Shaftsbury Historical Society Museum				x	x			
Hickory Stick Center Shaftsbury School				x	x			
Old Baptist Church and cemetery								
Robert Frost Stone House and Museum				x	x			
Munro-Hawkins House					x			
Jacob Meritt Howard Birthplace					x			
Eagle Square factory building					x			
Cole Hall					x			
Healing Springs Farm						x	x	
Green Mountain Farmers Market						x	x	
Clear Brook Farm						x	x	
Appleberry Farm						x	x	
Polymeadows Farm & Creamery	x				x	x	x	
Arlington								
Green River Valley	x	x	x					
Batten Kill	x	x	x					
Green River								
Roaring Branch								
Green Mountain National Forest	x	x	x					
Spruce Peak	x		x					
Ball Mountain and Cedar Rock	x		x					
Red Mountain and Flag Rock	x		x					
State Seal Pine Tree	x				x			
Canfield Pines	x				x			
Wagon Wheel Fishing Access Area			x					
Red Mill on the Batten Kill Fishing Access Area			x					
Waterworks Bridge Fishing Access Area			x					
Arlington Recreation Center				x				
Arlington Memorial High School				x				
Martha Canfield Fisher Library				x				
Yellow Barn Farm Community Garden & Orchard				x		x		
Arlington Village Historic District				x	x			
East Arlington Village				x	x			
West Arlington Green				x	x			
Norman Rockwell's house				x	x			
St. James Church				x	x			
East Arlington Village Historic District				x	x		x	
Arlington Community House				x	x			
West Arlington Covered Bridge					x			
West Arlington Grange Hall					x			






Significant corridor resource matrix

Local significant resources include:	Scenic	Natural	Recreational	Cultural	Historical	Agriculture/food production	Local	Entrepreneurial
Benedict Crossing Wood Truss Bridge					x			
Governor Chittenden's Home					x			
Wildfarm						x	x	
Long's Road Farm						x	x	
Mack Molding							x	
Sunderland								
Green Mountain National Forest	x	x	x					
Branch Pond	x	x	x					
Bourn Pond	x	x	x					
Beebe Pond	x	x	x					
Roaring Branch	x	x	x					
Batten Kill	x	x	x					
Brook at Beaver Meadow	x	x	x					
Cole Brook	x	x	x					
Fayville Branch	x	x	x					
Kelley Stand Road	x		x					
Equinox Skyline Drive	x		x					
Commercial Village			x	x				
Church on Hill Farm Road				x	x			
Chiselville Covered Bridge				x	x			
Ira Allen Homestead					x			
Hill Family Farm and Inn					x			
Pennock's Store					x			
Hayden Homestead					x			
Sunderland Borough								
Vermont Stained Glass				x			x	
Manchester								
Batten Kill	x	x	x					
Bourn Brook	x	x	x					
Bromley Brook	x	x	x					
Downer Glen	x	x	x					
Spruce Peak	x	x	x					
Lye Brook Falls	x	x	x					
Equinox Preservation Trust:	x	x	x					
Green Mountain National Forest	x	x	x					
Equinox Pond	x	x	x					
Bullhead Pond								
Mount Equinox Hollow and Trail	x		x					
Equinox Spring	x	x	x					
Cook Hollow	x		x					
Dryer Quarry	x	x	x					
Lookout Rock	x		x					
Prospect Rock	x		x					
Table Rock	x		x					
Hildene	x		x		x	x		
Equinox Trail Network			x					

Shires of Vermont Byway (proposed)



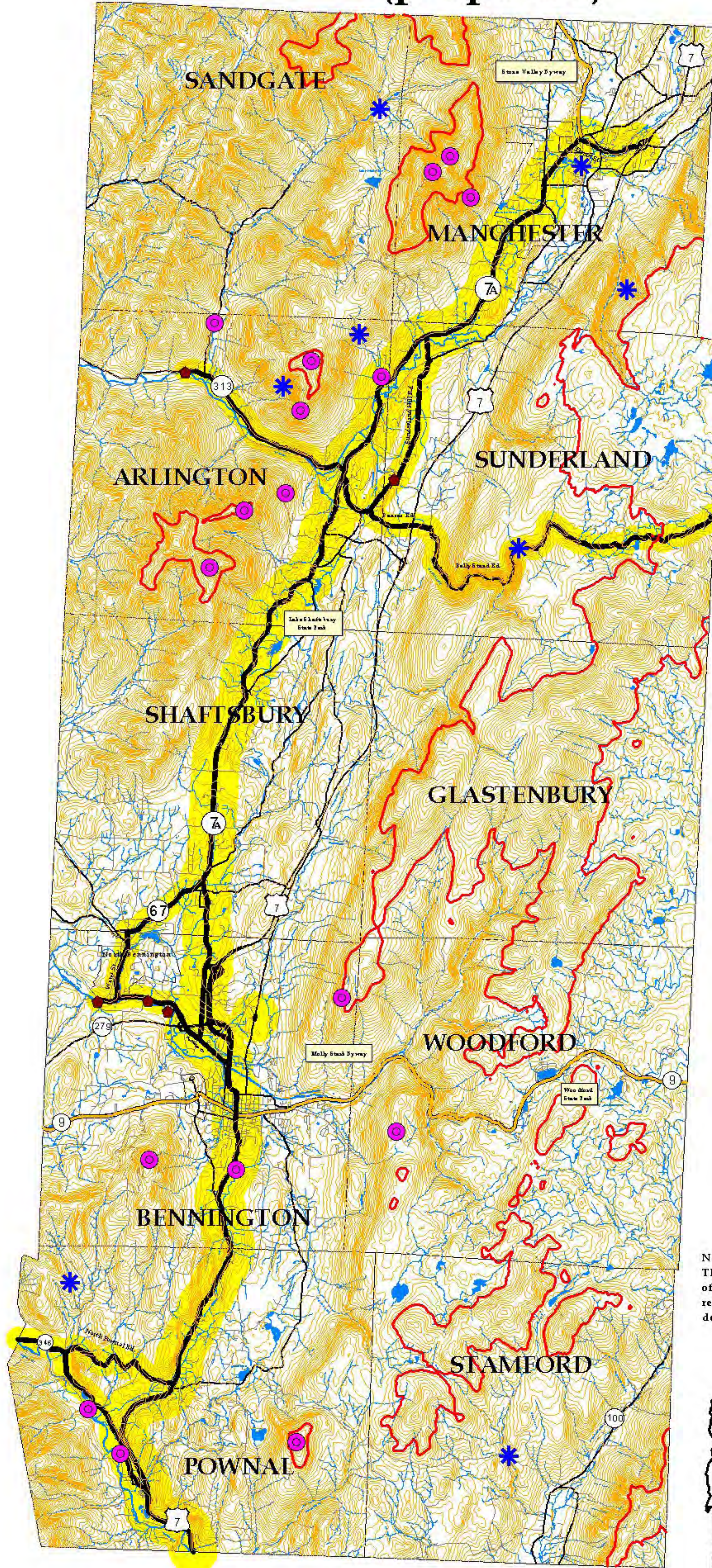
Byway Corridor

-  Shires of Vermont Byway
-  Major Roads
-  Rivers and Streams
-  Lakes and Ponds
-  Corridor Boundary

NOTES: This map is for planning purposes only. The BCRC make no warranty as to the accuracy of this data. The data is believed to be a good representation of the information upon which it was derived, however, errors and omissions may exist.



Shires of Vermont Byway (proposed)



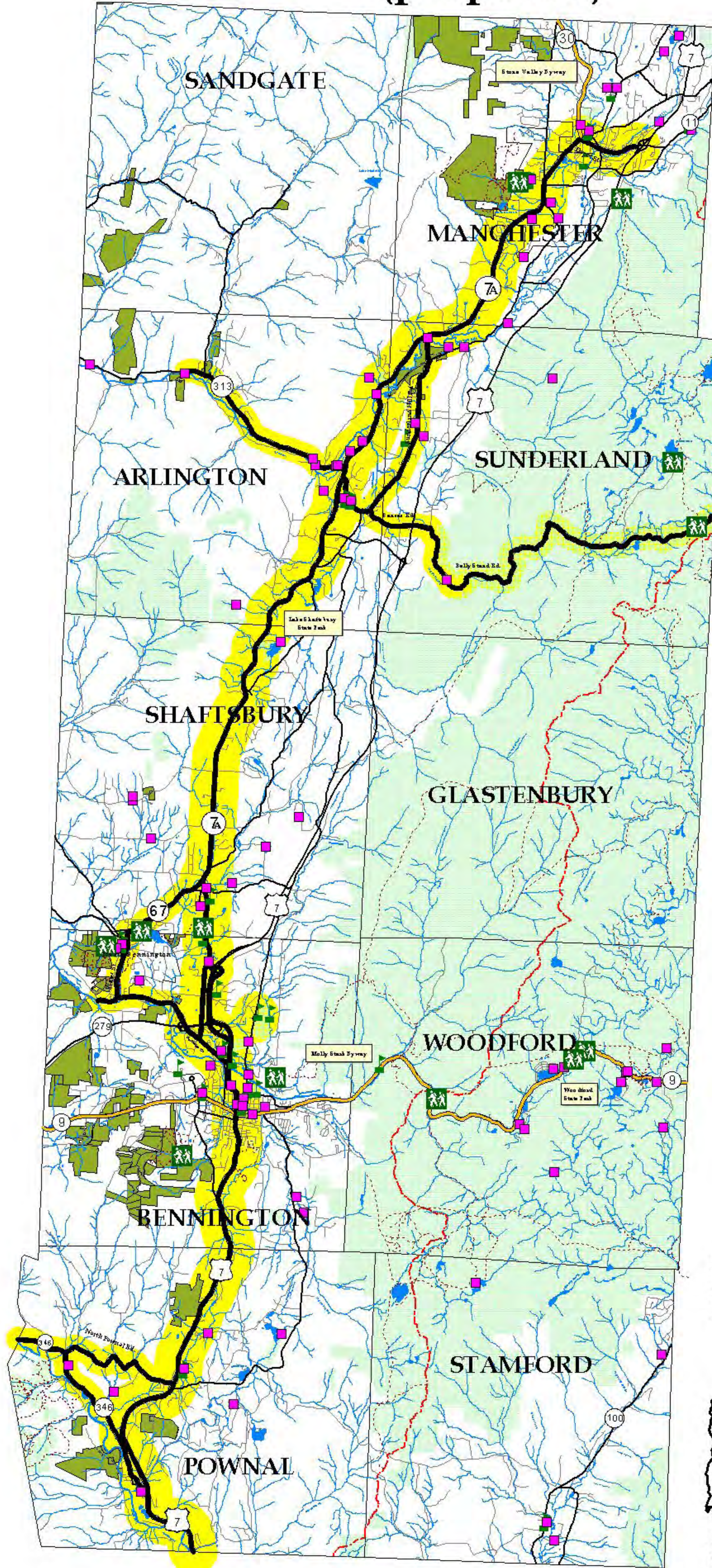
Scenic Resources

- Covered Bridge
- Waterfall
- Scenic Resource
- 2500 Foot Elevation
- Shires of Vermont Byway
- Major Roads
- Rivers and Streams
- Lakes and Ponds
- Corridor Boundary

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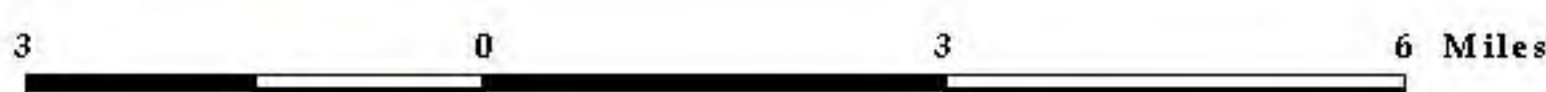
Shires of Vermont Byway (proposed)



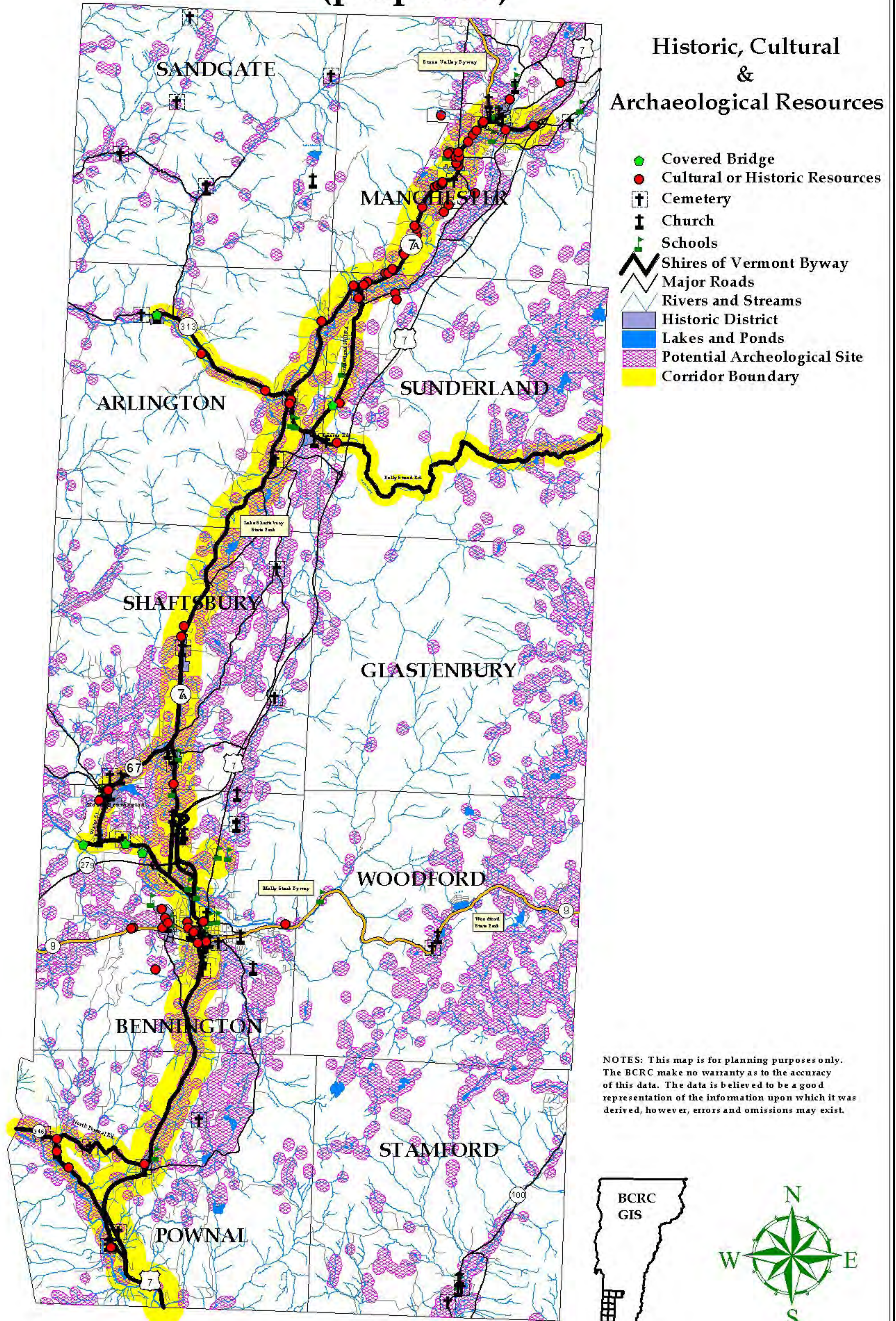
Recreational and Natural Resources

- Trailhead
- Recreation Site
- Schools
- Trails
- Appalachian - Long Trail
- Shires of Vermont Byway
- Major Roads
- Rivers and Streams
- Lakes and Ponds
- Conserved Lands
- Public Lands
- Corridor Boundary

NOTES: This map is for planning purposes only. The BCRC make no warranty as to the accuracy of this data. The data is believed to be a good representation of the information upon which it was derived, however, errors and omissions may exist.



Shires of Vermont Byway (proposed)



3 0 3 6 Miles



TTOWN OF POWNAL PO BOX 411, POWNAL, VERMONT 05261
TOWN CLERK 802.823.7757 • SELECTMEN 802.823.0132 • FAX 802.823.0116

March 11, 2011

Jim Sullivan, Executive Director
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street
Bennington, VT 05201

RE: Byway Designation

Dear Jim:

The Town of Pownal, Vermont, by vote of the Pownal Selectboard on March 9, 2011 endorsed the designation of US Route 7, Burrington Rd. (old Route 7) and VT Route 346 through Pownal as part of "The Shires Byway".

The Town of Pownal supports the joint effort of The Shires Byway Committee and the Bennington County Regional Commission to secure a "Byway" designation for US Route 7, Burrington Rd. and VT Route 346 through Pownal.

We look forward to following the progress of this byway initiative.

Sincerely,

Nelson Brownell, Chairman Pownal Selectboard



TOWN OF POWNAL PO BOX 411, POWNAL, VERMONT 05261
TOWN CLERK 802.823.7757 • SELECTMEN 802.823.0132 • FAX 802.823.0116

May 6, 2011

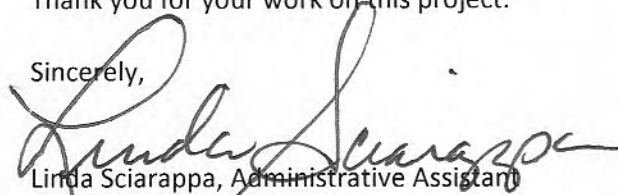
Jim Sullivan, Director
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street, Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

RE: The Shires of Vermont Byway Corridor Management Plan

Dear Jim:

The Selectmen and others have reviewed the draft and are satisfied with its contents.
Thank you for your work on this project.

Sincerely,



Linda Sciarappa, Administrative Assistant
Town of Pownal



TOWN OF BENNINGTON

February 8, 2011

Mr. Jim Sullivan, Executive Director
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05210

Re: The Shires Scenic Byway

Dear Jim:

The Town of Bennington, by unanimous vote of the Bennington Select Board, on Monday February 7, 2011, endorsed the designation of Route 7A through Bennington as a part of The Shires Scenic Byway.

The Town of Bennington supports the joint effort of The Shires Scenic Byway Committee and the Bennington County Regional Commission in their efforts to win the “Scenic Byway” designation for Route 7A from Pownal to Manchester.

Not only is Route 7A a byway that connects the communities of the south and north shires, who share a common history, but it also provides access to a wealth of scenic, recreational and cultural opportunities. Designating it will help strengthen the residents’ and visitors’ appreciation of the shires’ natural and historic resources, and help create a sustainable approach to tourism.

Respectfully submitted
for the Bennington Select Board

Stuart A. Hurd
Town Manager



TOWN OF BENNINGTON

May 18, 2011

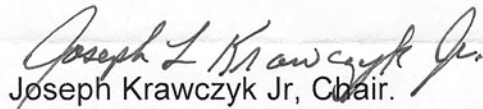
Mark Anders
Regional Planner/Transportation Manager
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street, Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

Re: Shires of Vermont Byway

Mr. Anders,

The Town of Bennington, by unanimous vote of the Bennington Select Board on May 9, 2011, enthusiastically endorses and approves the Corridor Management Plan for The Shires of Vermont Byway.

Sincerely,


Joseph Krawczyk Jr, Chair.

Bennington Select Board

March 1, 2011

Mr. Jim Sullivan
Assistant Director
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05210

Mr. Sullivan:

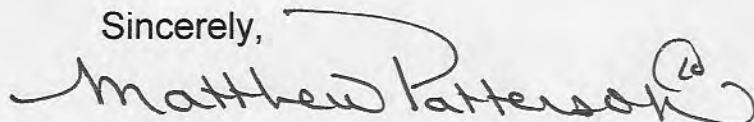
The Village of North Bennington, by unanimous vote of the North Bennington Trustees on March 1, 2011, endorsed the designation of Route 67A through North Bennington as a spur of The Shires Scenic Byway along Rt. 7.

The Village supports the joint effort of The Shires Scenic Byway Committee and the Bennington County Regional Commission to secure a "Scenic Byway" designation for Route 7A from Pownal to Manchester.

Not only is Route 7A a byway that connects the communities of the south and north shires, who share a common history, but it also provides access to a wealth of scenic, recreational and cultural opportunities. Designating it will help strengthen the residents' and visitors' appreciation of the shires' natural and historic resources, and help create a sustainable approach to tourism.

We look forward to following the progress of this byway initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew Patterson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "M" and a circled "10" at the end of the signature.

Matthew Patterson
Chair, North Bennington Trustees

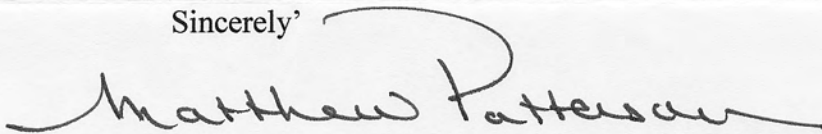
May 18, 2011

Mark Anders:

The Village of North Bennington, by vote of the Village Trustees on May 10, 2011, endorsed the designation of of VT Route 7 as a scenic byway to be called the "Shires of Vermont Byway".

The Village is excited to be included in this important historical and cultural endeavor and will continue to offer any support we can to this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Matthew Patterson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Matthew Patterson
Chair, Village of North Bennington Trustees



WWW.SHAFTSBURY.NET

TOWN OF SHAFTSBURY

MUNICIPAL OFFICES AT COLE HALL

P. O. Box 409
61 BUCK HILL ROAD
SHAFTSBURY, VT 05262-0409
FAX 802-442-0955

February 8, 2011

Mr. Jim Sullivan
Assistant Director
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05210

Mr. Sullivan:

The Town of Shaftsbury Selectboard took formal action February 7, 2011 to formally endorse the designation of Route 7A through Shaftsbury as a part of the Shire Scenic Byway.

The Town of Shaftsbury supports the joint effort of The Shires Scenic Byway Committee and the Bennington County Regional Commission to secure a “Scenic Byway” designation for Route 7A from Pownal to Manchester. As the major connector between communities of the south and north shires, Route 7A also provides access to a wealth of recreational and cultural opportunities.

The Selectboard hopes that designation of Route 7A in Shaftsbury as part of the Shires Scenic Byway will enhance residents’ and visitors’ appreciation of the shires’ natural and scenic resources and help create a sustainable approach to tourism.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our appreciation for this project. We look forward to following the progress of this scenic byway initiative.

Sincerely,

SHAFTSBURY SELECTBOARD

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lon McClintock". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

By Lon McClintock, Chair

Cc: Planning Commission
Selectboard



WWW.SHAFTSBURY.NET

TOWN OF SHAFTSBURY

MUNICIPAL OFFICES AT COLE HALL

P. O. Box 409
61 BUCK HILL ROAD
SHAFTSBURY, VT 05262-0409
FAX 802-442-0955

May 17, 2011

Mr. James Sullivan, Director
Bennington County Regional
Planning Commission
111 South Street, Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

**RE: Shires Scenic Byway and
Corridor Management Plan**

Dear Jim:

Thank you for providing the Shaftsbury Selectboard an opportunity to express its support for the initiative to include Rtes. 7A and 67 in Shaftsbury as part of the proposed Shires Scenic Byway. The objectives of a Scenic Byway - enhancing sustainable approaches to tourism and strengthening the understanding and appreciation of agricultural, natural and historic resources - are consistent with the goals and objectives of our Town Plan.

The Selectboard also appreciates the fact that a Corridor Management Plan is necessary to preserve and manage these important resources. Rte. 7A comprises our "Main Street". The Plan will also provide additional tools for economic development and traffic management in the Village. The Board is therefore is very supportive of adoption of the CMP in the near future.

Sincerely,

Lon McClintock
Chairman

TOWN OF ARLINGTON
Selectboard
P.O. Box 268
Arlington, Vermont 05250
Telephone 802-375-6474
Fax 802-375-6474
Email: arladmin@comcast.net

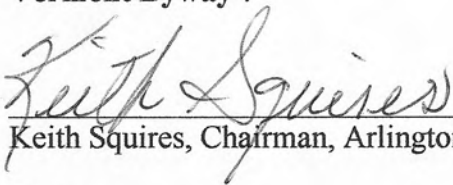
May 23, 2011

TO: Mark Anders, Regional Planner/Transportation Manager
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street, Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

Mark:

The Town of Arlington Selectboard has, on two occasions, reviewed, discussed, and approved the preliminary proposal for the '**Shires of Vermont Byway**'.

At their June 1, 2011 Selectboard meeting – the Board will vote to formally endorse the designation of Vermont Route 7A through Arlington, Vermont as part of the '**Shires of Vermont Byway**'.



Keith Squires, Chairman, Arlington Selectboard

KS/m
cc: files

TOWN OF ARLINGTON
Selectboard
P.O. Box 268
Arlington, Vermont 05250
Telephone 802-375-6474
Fax 802-375-6474
Email: arladmin@comcast.net

February 9, 2011

TO: Jim Sullivan, Executive Director
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street, Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05210

Jim:

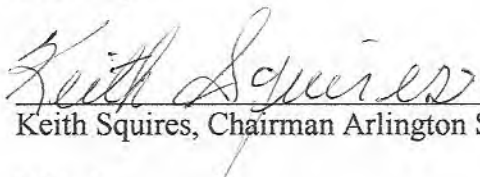
The Town of Arlington, Vermont, by vote of the Arlington Selectboard on February 7, 2011 endorsed the designation of Route 7 and Route 7A through Arlington as part of 'The Shires Scenic Byway'.

The Town of Arlington supports the joint effort of The Shires Scenic Byway Committee and the Bennington County Regional Commission to secure a "Scenic Byway" designation for Route 7 and Route 7A from Pownal to Manchester.

Not only is Route 7/7A a byway that connects the communities of the south and north shires, who share a common history, but also provides access to a wealth of scenic, recreational, and cultural opportunities. Designating it will help strengthen the residents' and visitors' appreciation of the shires' natural and historic resources, and help create a sustainable approach to tourism.

We look forward to following the progress of this byway initiative.

Sincerely


Keith Squires, Chairman Arlington Selectboard

KS/mh

cc: Selectboard files, Scenic Byway Committee

TOWN OF ARLINGTON
Selectboard
P.O. Box 268
Arlington, Vermont 05250
Telephone 802-375-6474
Fax 802-375-6474
Email: arladmin@comcast.net

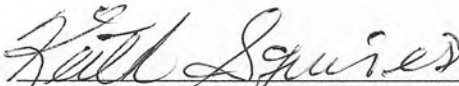
June 2, 2011

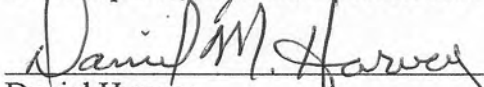
TO: Mark Anders, Regional Planner/Transportation Manager
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street, Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

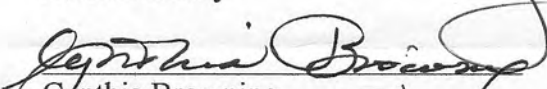
Mark:

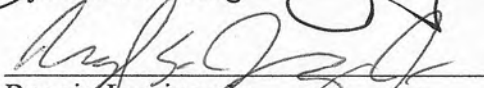
The Town of Arlington Selectboard voted at the June 1, 2011 meeting of the Board - to fully endorse the designation of Vermont Route 7A through Arlington, Vermont as part of the **'Shires of Vermont Byway'**.

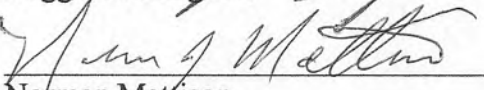
It is hoped that this will increase tourism interest in our community and serve to strengthen the economics of the region as well.


Keith Squires, Chairman Selectboard


Daniel Harvey


Cynthia Browning


Reggie Jennings Jr.


Norman Mattison

m

cc: files, William Budde



TOWN OF SUNDERLAND, VERMONT
P.O. Box 295, East Arlington, Vermont 05252

February 16, 2011

Mr. Jim Sullivan
B. C. R. C.
111 South St. – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05210

Mr. Sullivan:


The Town of Sunderland, by vote of the Select Board on February 15, 2011 endorsed the designation of Route 7A through Sunderland as part of the “Shires Scenic Byway”.

Sunderland supports the joint effort of the Byway Committee and the B.C.R.C. to secure a “Scenic Byway” designation for Route 7A from Pownal to Manchester Vermont.

Route 7A is a byway that connects the communities of the South and North shires, who not only share a common history, but it also provides access to a wealth of scenic, recreational and cultural opportunities.

Designating it will help strengthen the residents’ and visitors’ appreciation of the shires’ natural and historic resources to create a sustainable approach to tourism.

Respectfully yours,



John Stuermer
Sunderland Select Board (Chair)



TOWN OF SUNDERLAND, VERMONT
P.O. Box 295, East Arlington, Vermont 05252

Mark Anders
Regional Planner / Transportation Managers
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street, Suite 203
Bennington, VT. 05201

May 3, 2011

Mark Anders

The Town of Sunderland by vote of the Select Board on May 3, 2011 endorsed the designation of Route 7A through Sunderland as part of the "Shires Scenic Byway". Sunderland supports the joint effort of the Byway Committee and the B.C.R.C. To secure a "Scenic Byway" designation for Route 7A from Pownal to Manchester Vermont. Route 7A is a byway that connects the communities of the South and North shires, who not only share a common history, but provides access to a wealth of scenic, recreational and cultural opportunities.

Designating it will help strengthen the residents' and visitors' appreciation of the shires to create a sustainable approach to tourism.

Respectfully yours,

Steven Bendix
Town of Sunderland Select Board (Chair)

Village of Manchester

P.O. Box 482
Manchester, Vermont 05254
(802) 362-1515 • Fax (802) 362-5858

May 4, 2011

Mr. Mark Anders
Regional Planner/Transportation Manager
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street, Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

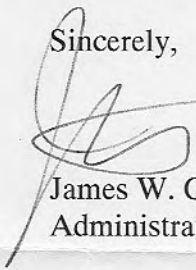
Re: Route 7A Scenic Byway Designation

Dear Mark:

The Board of Trustees of Manchester Village have instructed me to advise you of their unqualified support of the formal designation of Route 7A as a Vermont Scenic Byway.

The members of the Board believe that such a designation will certainly prove to be of significant benefit to the region.

Sincerely,



James W. Carter
Administrative Officer

cc: Jonah Spivak

Town of Manchester Selectboard
6039 Main Street
Manchester Center, VT 05255
802.362.4824
l.krohn@manchester-vt.gov

February 24, 2011


Jim Sullivan, Director
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street, Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05210

Dear Jim:

The Manchester Selectboard supports the effort to designate Historic Route 7A from Manchester to Pownal as the "Shires Scenic Byway". By linking the Stone Valley Scenic Byway with the Molly Stark Scenic Byway, we can work together to strengthen appreciation for and tourism interest in the recreational, cultural, historic, and scenic attributes that make our community and our region unique. These efforts are consistent with Manchester's Town Plan, and will complement our own efforts to diversify and strengthen our economic base.

Thank you for your work on this project. We look forward to a successful outcome.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "John R. O'Keefe", written over the typed name.

John R. O'Keefe, Town Manager
for the Manchester Selectboard

Town of Manchester
Planning & Zoning Department
6039 Main Street
Manchester Center, VT 05255
802.362.4824
l.krohn@manchester-vt.gov

May 16, 2011

Paula Maynard and Jonah Spivak, via email

RE: SHIRES SCENIC BYLAW

Dear Paula and Jonah:

Thank you for everyone's continued efforts toward the creation of the Shires Scenic Byway. As you know, the Town of Manchester supports initiatives like this that help create a sustainable approach to tourism, and to strengthen residents' and visitors' understanding and appreciation for our natural and historic resources. These goals and outcomes are consistent with the goals and policies of the Manchester Town Plan, and are perhaps more relevant now than when this project began.

The Manchester Selectboard offers unanimous support for the Shires Scenic Byway and its Corridor Management Plan. We look forward to following the progress of this project, and working with you in support of our Town and region.

We wish you all the best in both process and outcome; please let us know how else we can help.

Respectfully,

Lee A. Krohn, AICP

Planning Director and Zoning Administrator

Arlington Recreation and Park Committee, Inc
Arlington, BT 05250

Mailing address: PO Box 218, Arlington, VT 05250

Executive Board

Andy Heikaus, President
Betty Baker, Treasurer
Rob Faley, Vice President
Rich Goodfellow, Secretary

Dick Bailey
Dot Closs
Mary Kerner
Elizabeth Berger

May 11, 2011

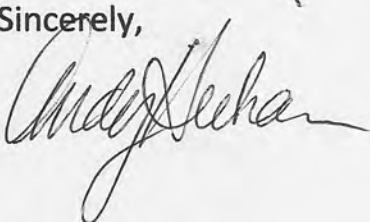
Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

Dear Mr. Anders:

This letter is written in support of the proposed designation of Route US7 from Pownal to Bennington, and Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester as a Vermont Byway. The community partners who are working with BCRC to acquire the designation for The Shires of Vermont Byway believe it will benefit our region in many ways as indicated in the Corridor Management Plan: "It will help visitors discover and interpret our area; It will qualify the Byway corridor for grants and funding opportunities; It will link with and complement the existing Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways."

Designation will strengthen both residents' and visitors' appreciation of The Shires' wealth of scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historical, agricultural and local entrepreneurial resources. I am in agreement with the designation of The Route 7/7A corridor from Pownal to Manchester as The Shires of Vermont Byway because I also believe it will highlight the recreational resources available in Arlington.

Sincerely,



Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

Dear Mark:

On behalf of the Manchester and the Mountains Regional Chamber of Commerce this letter is written in support of the proposed designation of Route US7 from Pownal to Bennington, and Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester as a Vermont Byway.

We are highly enthusiastic about this designation for The Shires of Vermont Byway and believe it will benefit our region in many ways as indicated in the Corridor Management Plan. We look forward to the designation which we see as a significant way to communicate with our visitors as to the assets of this extraordinary corner of Southern Vermont. The connection it provides with the existing Molly Stark and Stone Valley byways is exciting and we envision joint marketing opportunities with these two entities.

Our Chamber unanimously agrees with the designation of The Route 7/7A corridor from Pownal to Manchester as The Shires of Vermont Byway.

Sincerely,

Berta W. Maginniss
Executive Director
Manchester and the Mountains Regional Chamber of Commerce

Dear Scenic Preservation Commission,

The Bennington Area Chamber of Commerce supports the Shires Byway. Speaking for the future management team who will operate the Bennington State Welcome Center at the intersection of three streams of traffic I am very interested in the creation and success of the Route 7a scenic byway (the Shires). There are a tremendous amount of cultural resources in Bennington County. There are more historic sites in our county than in others around the state. Many of these sites are accessible from the Shires Byway. Having just driven down Route 7 from Burlington yesterday I can attest to its incredible beauty and rural aspect here in The Shires of Vermont.

There is a unique opportunity in Bennington County to connect two Byways (Molly Stark and the Shires) and tell the story of a region steeped in Vermont's history. The impending Welcome Center will be a Gateway to the state, connecting three streams of traffic (northbound, southbound, and westbound). That is our responsibility to engage the visitor and provide a sense of place. By presenting the Byway System we can help the traveling public not only find their destinations but follow scenic roads that enhance their experience. That the Shires Byway also has historic and cultural attractions as well as recreational facilities along its path just makes the experience so much more memorable.

Thank you for working with The Shires to help create a true connection to scenic interpretation through the Byways of Vermont.

Best regards,
Joann

Joann Erenhouse, Esq.
Executive Director
Bennington Area Chamber Of Commerce
(802) 447-3311



Shaftsbury Economic Development Committee
PO Box 409
Shaftsbury, VT 05262
May 10, 2011

Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

Mr. Anders:

This letter is written in support of the proposed designation of Route US 7 from Pownal to Bennington, and Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester as a Vermont Byway. The community partners who are working with BCRC to acquire the designation for The Shires of Vermont Byway believe it will benefit our region in many ways as indicated in the Corridor Management Plan: “It will help visitors discover and interpret our area; It will qualify the Byway corridor for grants and funding opportunities; It will link with and compliment the existing Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways.”

Designation will strengthen both residents’ and visitors’ appreciation of The Shires’ wealth of scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historical, agricultural and local entrepreneurial resources. I am in agreement with the designation of The Route 7/7A corridor from Pownal to Manchester as The Shires of Vermont Byway because I also believe it will affect the Town of Shaftsbury and its businesses positively by drawing more people to our roadside commercial businesses and may qualify us for grants to improve the streetscape of our village.

Sincerely,



Art Whitman
Chair,
Shaftsbury Economic Development Committee

May 27, 2011

Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street - Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

Dear Mark:

Hildene, The Lincoln Family Home supports designation of Route 7 from Pownal to Bennington and Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester as a Vermont Scenic Byway. As stated in the Corridor management Plan, "It will help visitors discover and interpret our area; It will qualify the Byway corridor for grants and funding opportunities; It will link with and compliment the existing Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways."

Hildene is a 412 acre cultural heritage site with enormous potential to help the Shires be economically, socially and educationally successful. The Shires is a beautiful part of Vermont. It also has fabulous, and unique, scenic, recreational, cultural, historical, agricultural attributes, as well as entrepreneurial endeavors. Between the Allen brothers and their cousins, Vermont was born in the Shires. Designation will help us build on that legacy at the same time it allows us to build on our intervening history and present day efforts. As one of Vermont's leading cultural heritage sites, Hildene will benefit from a deepened understanding of the area's rich landscape and history. We strongly support designation.

Sincerely,

Seth B. Bongartz
Executive Director



Friday, May 06, 2011

Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

Mr. Anders:

This letter is written in support of the proposed designation of Route US7 from Pownal to Bennington, and Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester as a Vermont Byway. As a committee member of The Shires of Vermont RMO working with BCRC to acquire the designation for The Shires of Vermont Byway I believe it will benefit our region in many ways as indicated in the Corridor Management Plan: “It will help visitors discover and interpret our area; It will qualify the Byway corridor for grants and funding opportunities; It will link with and complement the existing Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways.”

Designation will strengthen both residents’ and visitors’ appreciation of The Shires’ wealth of scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historical, agricultural and local entrepreneurial resources. I am in agreement with the designation of The Route 7/7A corridor from Pownal to Manchester as The Shires of Vermont Byway because I also believe it will positively affect our business, The Arlington Inn. As a Restaurant and a lodging property we see this designation as a positive increase to the volume of our business; because this will be a weighing factor in the myriad of choices a visitor has when making vacation plans.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Berger
Co-owner

Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203

Bennington, VT 05201

Mr. Anders:

This letter is written in support of the proposed designation of Route US7 from Pownal to Bennington, and Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester as a Vermont Byway – The Shires of Vermont Byway. The community partners who are working with BCRC to acquire the designation for The Shires of Vermont Byway believe it will benefit our region in many ways as indicated in the proposed Corridor Management Plan. Most importantly it will help visitors discover and interpret our area, it will qualify the Byway corridor for grants and funding opportunities which can be used to implement important projects and it will link with and compliment the existing Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways.

Designation will strengthen both residents' and visitors' appreciation of The Shires' wealth of scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historical, agricultural and local entrepreneurial resources.

I am in agreement with the designation of The Route 7/7A corridor from Pownal to Manchester as The Shires of Vermont Byway because it will assist with positioning our area as a more identifiable leisure destination increasing tourism and maximizing associated revenues that our visitors spend. The positive overall impact to the local economy and tax contribution to our county and state would enjoy a significant boost as a result.

Regards,

Michael Chagnon

The Equinox, a Luxury Collection Golf Resort & Spa, Vermont
Director, Sales & Marketing

May 6, 2011

Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

Dear Mr. Anders,

The Robert Frost Stone House Museum, located in Shaftsbury on Historic Route 7A, is happy to support your efforts to make this road an official Vermont Byway to be designated “The Shires of Vermont Byway.”

The beauty of the road between Bennington and Manchester, along with its varied history, makes 7A an excellent choice for such a designation. Paraphrasing Frost’s famous poem, “The Road Not Taken, the one that has made all the difference, 7A should definitely be a “road taken” by visitors who want to see the real Vermont. I am sure the Byway will strengthen tourism along 7A, which benefit the cultural and historical attractions along the route.

The Frost museum has been open to the public since 2002, and since then we have welcomed over 30,000 people to Frost’s home. They come from all over the world. We began and continue very much in a grass roots situation. It was a shoe string start, but that would make Frost proud because he thought that was the most American way to begin. We believed it into existence, as Frost said we must, and belief is better than anything.

We wish you great success in your endeavor. We especially appreciate the hard work of the committee headed by Jonah Spivak.

Yours in Frost,

Carole Thompson, President

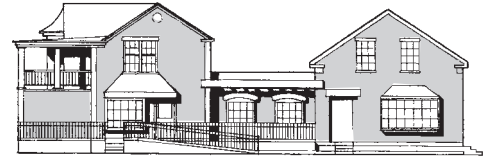
Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

Dear Mark:

The proposed Shires Byway is an important and necessary link up to the Molly Stark byway. It will provide another Vermont scenic road to enhance the economies of Bennington and Manchester. It will encourage visitors to not take Route 7 and bypass our communities.

Bruce R. Laumeister

CEO, CTC Corporation
Chair, Bennington Center for the Arts



Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

RE: Support for The Shires of Vermont Byway

Mr. Anders:

I'm writing this letter to strongly support the creation of a byway, The Shires of Vermont Byway, along Route 7 and 7a, from Pownal to Manchester.

As the owner of a retail business along the proposed route, I understand the value that having byway designation will have. I encourage the Scenic Preservation Council, and the Vermont Transportation board to approve this project. We applaud our local select board in Bennington for their unanimous vote in favor of this project and look forward to it's speedy designation.

Sincerely,

Jonah Spivak
—owner, Hawkins House

Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission

111 South Street – Suite 203

Bennington, VT 05201

Mr. Anders:

This letter is written in support of the proposed designation of Route US7 from Pownal to Bennington, and Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester as a Vermont Byway – The Shires of Vermont Byway. The community partners who are working with BCRC to acquire the designation for The Shires of Vermont Byway believe it will benefit our region in many ways as indicated in the proposed Corridor Management Plan. Most importantly it will help visitors discover and interpret our area, it will qualify the Byway corridor for grants and funding opportunities which can be used to implement important projects and it will link with and compliment the existing Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways.

Designation will strengthen both residents' and visitors' appreciation of The Shires' wealth of scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historical, agricultural and local entrepreneurial resources.

I am in agreement with the designation of The Route 7/7A corridor from Pownal to Manchester as The Shires of Vermont Byway!

Sincerely,
Frank Hanes

Frank & Julie Hanes
The Inn at Manchester
3967 Main Street
Manchester, Vermont 05254
802-362-1793
www.innatmanchester.com
innkeepers@innatmanchester.com

"A Gem in the Green Mountains"

Dear Mark

I am writing in support of the proposed designation of Route US 7 from Pownal to Bennington, and Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester as a Vermont Byway. The community partners who are working with BCRC to acquire the designation for The Shires of Vermont Byway believe it will benefit our region in many ways as indicated in the Corridor Management Plan: It will help visitors discover and interpret our area; It will qualify the Byway corridor for grants and funding opportunities; It will link with and compliment the existing Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways.

Designation will strengthen both residents' and visitors' appreciation of The Shires' wealth of scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historical, agricultural and local entrepreneurial resources. I am in agreement with the designation of The Route 7/7A corridor from Pownal to Manchester as The Shires of Vermont Byway because I also believe it will a positive impact on the health of our entire region, from travel and hospitality to the service sectors.

We appreciate whatever you can do to help this project become a reality.

Sincerely,
Lee Romano

Romano Publishing
968 Rte 30 / P. O. Box 85
Dorset, VT 05251 802 362-7200
lee@romanopublishing.com

**SCHOOLHOUSE MARKETING GROUP
PO Box 400
NORTH BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05257**

May 8, 2011

Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

Dear Mr. Anders,

This letter is written in support of the proposed designation of Route US7 from Pownal to Bennington, and Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester as a Vermont Byway. The community partners who are working with BCRC to acquire the designation for The Shires of Vermont Byway believe it will benefit our region in many ways as indicated in the Corridor Management Plan: “It will help visitors discover and interpret our area; It will qualify the Byway corridor for grants and funding opportunities; It will link with and complement the existing Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways.”

Designation will strengthen both residents’ and visitors’ appreciation of The Shires’ wealth of scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historical, agricultural and local entrepreneurial resources.

Thank you for your time and efforts on this project,

Sincerely,

Judith Brower, Owner

Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

Mr. Anders:

This letter is written in support of the proposed designation of Route US7 from Pownal to Bennington, and Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester as a Vermont Byway. The community partners who are working with BCRC to acquire the designation for The Shires of Vermont Byway believe it will benefit our region in many ways as indicated in the Corridor Management Plan: “It will help visitors discover and interpret our area; It will qualify the Byway corridor for grants and funding opportunities; It will link with and complement the existing Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways.”

Designation will strengthen both residents’ and visitors’ appreciation of The Shires’ wealth of scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historical, agricultural and local entrepreneurial resources. I am in agreement with the designation of The Route 7/7A corridor from Pownal to Manchester as The Shires of Vermont Byway because I also believe it will affect my (business, museum, historic site, etc.) positively by bringing more visitors to our area.

Sincerely, John Hytten

Serenity Motel
4379 Route 7A
Shaftsbury, VT 05262



May 6, 2011

Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

Mr. Anders:

This letter is written in support of the proposed designation of Route 7 from Pownal to Bennington, and Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester as Vermont Byways.

I am in agreement with the designation of The Route 7/7A corridor from Pownal to Manchester as The Shires of Vermont Byway because I also believe it will affect my business positively by helping to promote local tourism, which has a widespread positive impact on our local economy.

Sincerely,

Karen Lee

Owner, Solar Pro Vermont

Solar Pro, LLC, P. O Box 974, Arlington, VT 05250 Jim and Karen Lee, Owners
(802)375-6462 keyslees@msn.com www.HotOnSolar.com

Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

Mr. Anders:

This letter is written in support of the proposed designation of Route US7 from Pownal to Bennington, and Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester as a Vermont Byway. The community partners who are working with BCRC to acquire the designation for The Shires of Vermont Byway believe it will benefit our region in many ways as indicated in the Corridor Management Plan: “It will help visitors discover and interpret our area; It will qualify the Byway corridor for grants and funding opportunities; It will link with and complement the existing Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways.”

Designation will strengthen both residents’ and visitors’ appreciation of The Shires’ wealth of scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historical, agricultural and local entrepreneurial resources. We are in agreement with the designation of The Route 7/7A corridor from Pownal to Manchester as The Shires of Vermont Byway because we also believe it will have a positive affect on our business.

Hill Farm Inn has been operating continuously as an Inn since 1905, even while the surrounding acreage was still being farmed by members of the Hill Family. Part of this acreage, the last operating farm in Sunderland, has now been incorporated into the Inn and is preserved as open space, enjoyed by guests, visitors and our neighbors.

Sincerely,

Lisa & Al Gray
Hill Farm Inn
Sunderland, Vermont

I think the Shires byway proposal and concept is terrific and will support it any way I can. The 7A corridor is the same route taken north from Bennington to Manchester that Ethan Allen took north to capture Fort Ticonderoga May 10, 1775 for America's First Victory. Places the expedition stopped are still in existence along the route. It is also the route taken to go south from Manchester by the Green Mountain Boys and John Stark to the Battle of Bennington.

This byway should help tourism and awareness.

Dick Smith

Manchester SmithRDur@aol.com



Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

Ron and Anne Weber, Innkeepers 332 E. Arlington Road Arlington, VT 05250
toll free: 800-796-2585; 802-375-0019
<http://countrywillows.com> cwillows332@comcast.net

Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

Mr. Anders:

This letter is written in support of the proposed designation of Route US7 from Pownal to Bennington, and Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester as a Vermont Byway. The community partners who are working with BCRC to acquire the designation for The Shires of Vermont Byway believe it will benefit our region in many ways as indicated in the Corridor Management Plan: “It will help visitors discover and interpret our area; It will qualify the Byway corridor for grants and funding opportunities; It will link with and complement the existing Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways.”

Designation will strengthen both residents’ and visitors’ appreciation of The Shires’ wealth of scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historical, agricultural and local entrepreneurial resources. We are in agreement with the designation of The Route 7/7A corridor from Pownal to Manchester as The Shires of Vermont Byway and we also believe it will affect our Bed and Breakfast business, located just 1 block east of Historic Route 7A in Arlington, VT in a positive manner.

Sincerely,
Anne and Ron Weber, Innkeepers/Owners

Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street – Suite 203
Bennington, VT 05201

Mr. Anders:

This letter is written in support of the proposed designation of Route US7 from Pownal to Bennington, and Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester as a Vermont Byway. The community partners who are working with BCRC to acquire the designation for The Shires of Vermont Byway believe it will benefit our region in many ways as indicated in the Corridor Management Plan: “It will help visitors discover and interpret our area; It will qualify the Byway corridor for grants and funding opportunities; It will link with and compliment the existing Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways.”

Designation will strengthen both residents’ and visitors’ appreciation of The Shires’ wealth of scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historical, agricultural and local entrepreneurial resources. I am in agreement with the designation of The Route 7/7A corridor from Pownal to Manchester as The Shires of Vermont Byway because I also believe it will affect my several business projects positively. I am the inn-keeper of the Wilburton Inn in Manchester Village. I am the founder and director of the Museum of the Creative Process on the grounds of the Wilburton Inn. I operate with my son Oliver Levis the organic farm with its farm stand: Earth Sky Time located on Rt 7A in Manchester.

Sincerely,
Albert Levis MD

May 13, 2011

Mr. Mark Anders
Transportation Planner
Bennington County Regional Commission
111 South Street Suite 203
Bennington VT 05201

Mr. Anders:

I am writing you in support of the proposed designation of Route 7 from Pownal to Bennington and Route 7A from Bennington to Manchester as a Vermont Byway. Many communities that are working with the BCRC to attain the designation for The Shires of Vermont Byway believe it will benefit the county and region in several ways. Accessibility by various media links will help visitors to our region discover and appreciate the many historic sites and natural beauty provided by this area. It will qualify the Byway corridor for grants and other funding possibilities and it will link our area with the Molly Stark and Stone Valley Byways.

Such a designation will strengthen visitors' appreciation, understanding and use of the many scenic, recreational, historical and local business resources. I support the designation of The Route 7 and 7A corridor from Pownal to Manchester as "The Shires of Vermont Byway" because of the reasons mentioned above and hope I may count on your support of this important issue.

Sincerely,

Larry Lee