

A Self-Assessment Tool for Byways

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Introduction to the Assessment Tool for Byways

Byway entities come in all sizes and types. Responsibilities and opportunities are equally challenging. With so much to do, where do you start thinking about the best ways to ensure longevity and strength for your byway? What are you doing now that could merit the use of outside technical assistance? Sometimes it is even hard to begin a conversation about technical assistance, without knowing how to define the need or define the type of help most needed.

This Assessment Tool is designed to help you begin to understand in what direction you should proceed. It is organized around topics of fundamental importance to help you evaluate your byway group's needs and priorities, where specialized consultation can make a great difference to the health and future strength of your group. Not all topics are applicable at the same time, and not all are applicable to every byway.

The tool is organized in six sections to assess each of these topic areas. Combined, the sections address the majority of capacity stages and needs of most byway organizations. Your organization or group may be most familiar with those portions of this assessment that you have addressed within your Corridor Management Plan (CMP). A goal of this assessment is to further your group's thoughts about what is important in keeping the energy, excitement, and strength of your byway at optimal capacity.

There are a number of ways that you or your group may use this self-assessment.

- Several people in your group can take the assessment independently and then get together to discuss it as a group.
- You could work as a team and discuss each category before arriving at a group response.
- You can assign sections to different groups. We recommend that you invite all who are invested in moving your organization and your byway work forward to assist in the assessment or portions of it. These may include staff, board, advisory groups, parent organization and others who may be important to your work. We also urge you to involve your external partners to assist in the assessment. By having these partners assist in completing the assessment, you can gain valuable input and learn their views on how your organization is functioning. External partners may include: state or tribal byway coordinator, state/tribal tourism office, hosting organizations, local/regional government partners, Convention and Visitors Bureaus (CVBs) and others.

Areas of Assessment

1. Organizational Development, Capacity and Adaptability

This section assists you in evaluating anything from the viability of your mission and organizational vision, to leadership succession and governance; strategic planning; and capacity to sustain and grow as an entity. **Page 4**

2. Finance, Fundraising and Sustainability

This section will help you assess whether your financial model is sustainable. How successful have you been at fundraising? Does your byway entity have a development plan? Complete this section to consider overall financial capacity and planning. **Page 8**

3. Outreach, Partnerships and Advocacy

This section evaluates ways to ensure strength through partnerships and positioning, or to discover if you are in need of stronger partnerships, new funding sources, and new strategies to sustain the work of your group. **Page 12**

4. Byway Recognition, Identity, Marketing, Image and Communications

This portion of the assessment will help you contemplate ways to strengthen the image, identity, and the brand of your byway, or seek strength in marketing and communicating. **Page 16**

5. The Visitor Experience

Planning for and implementing a Visitor Experience is the fundamental work of byways. Consider your technical assistance needs in shaping visitor expectations, delivering effective wayshowing and creating authentic interpretation. **Page 20**

6. Documenting Impact

If your funders, partners, and communities seek data on economic impacts or visitors information, this section of the tool will assist you in reviewing your capacity to obtain and provide it. **Page 24**

Part 1. Organizational Development, Capacity, and Adaptability

In the right-hand column, enter the number that corresponds to the condition that most closely describes your organization. If the item does not match your organization, enter N/A. Try to answer all questions, even if it is not a priority to your organization.

1 Organization Mission & Vision

1	2	3	4	
<p>Your byway entity does not have a formal mission statement.</p> <p>It is something you have discussed.</p> <p>Perhaps a variety of quasi-mission statements have been tested.</p>	<p>There is a limited expression of organizational/operational mission.</p> <p>There may be an articulated mission for the physical byway itself, but the entity which supports the byway has a mission and/or vision that is unclear or not articulated.</p>	<p>A basic or founding mission exists but hasn't been used effectively to strengthen your byway entity and its relationship to funders, partners and other stakeholders.</p> <p>You would like to think about ways to use a well-articulated mission and vision to better communicate and position your byway entity.</p>	<p>Mission and vision statements for your byway entity are updated and clearly reflect the purpose and desired long-term outcomes for the organization and the byway.</p> <p>These are used consistently to communicate your byway entity's purpose.</p>	

2. Corridor Management Plan (CMP)

1	2	3	4	
<p>Your byway and/or byway entity does not have a current, approved corridor management plan.</p>	<p>You have difficulty using your CMP as a planning tool because you tend to operate project to project. It seems overwhelming to address multiple elements of the CMP.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has an approved CMP and you make use of it to set your priorities and review your accomplishments, but you feel it could be more fully used internally and by your partners. .</p>	<p>Your CMP is up-to-date and evaluated on a regular basis. It is well used and well communicated. It is used internally to guide both organizational goals and actions. Your CMP is used to unify partners and inform colleagues and agencies, funders and sponsors about the plans and work of the byway.</p>	

Part 1. Organizational Development, Capacity, and Adaptability continued

3. Leadership

1	2	3	4	
Currently, there is no dedicated staff (volunteer or paid) responsible for implementing byway activities.	<p>There is limited staff/organizational leadership capacity to implement actions that meet strategies and goals.</p> <p>Your byway entity may be between leaders, or there may not be a good fit with people who are in leadership roles.</p> <p>You do not have a current leader with knowledge-capacity who guides and represents the byway entity.</p>	The leader or staff operate largely on a task-by-task basis, and may be responsive to governance and outside requirements and requests but are not initiators.	<p>Your byway entity has leader, staff or team that initiates, provides knowledge and expertise to guide the implementation of strategies, builds organizational strength and capacity, and represents the organization effectively.</p> <p>Your byway entity may be seeking evaluation and advancement tools to guide your leadership team's on-going development and growth.</p>	

4. Governance Oversight

1	2	3	4	
<p>Your byway entity's founders or leaders decide on priorities as they go, and "self-govern" without independent oversight by a separate governance entity.</p> <p>There are little or no governance and/or decision-making policies.</p>	<p>Roles for your governance leaders or chairs may be unclear; there may be policy addressing this, but that policy is unclear or not available.</p> <p>There may be one or two individuals who are highly active and hold de-facto responsibility. Your byway entity may be seeking assistance in leveraging governance change, and in shaping strategies to build a stronger group.</p> <p>There is little or no thought on how future leaders will be chosen or recruited.</p>	<p>There are essential board committee and chairs. They may be more focused on annual responsibilities than on keeping the byway entity fresh and agile.</p> <p>The byway entity may seem to need a new vision and enthusiasm.</p> <p>You have thought about future leadership succession, but have not acted.</p> <p>You have a policy regarding oversight, governance and decision-making; but it is only used during crises or is not totally effective.</p>	<p>Mechanisms such as annual planning meetings and retreats are used to keep the board focused and fresh, and your byway entity may seek facilitation of planning retreats and updates to keep your governance group fresh and vital.</p> <p>Your governance policy provides for the effective and non-biased analysis of accountability of your leadership and decision-making structure.</p>	

Part 1. Organizational Development, Capacity, and Adaptability continued

5. Annual Strategies

1	2	3	4	
There are no organizational (operational) strategies at present.	Strategies may exist, but are more ad hoc or personal-interest driven than driven by organizational goals or desired outcomes. Strategies may also be reactive and based on specific opportunities or grant requirements, alone.	Your byway entity has worked from a strategic plan but is ready for something more comprehensive. Or, it is ready to undertake a comprehensive strategic plan for the first time.	Your byway entity has a current strategic plan that defines priorities and actions and that is used to measure byway organization and programmatic/functional progress. Your strategic plan has specific goals, objectives and performance measures.	

6. Organizational Diversity

1	2	3	4	
Your organization, volunteers, and leadership consists of basically the same people who initiated the byway activities. There is no diversity in your organization, volunteers, and partners, in terms of ethnicity, age, gender, location on the byway and socio-economic status.	There is little diversity in your organization, volunteers, and partners, in terms of ethnicity, age, gender, location on the byway and socio-economic status. Any diversity that exists, exists because of chance.	You have a fairly diverse organization, stakeholder list, volunteer base and partnerships. This diversity is more by chance than by strategy. You really do not consistently talk about diversity as a key principle to your organization.	Diversity is a key principle in how your organization operates. Your organization is highly diverse. You strategically look at who's 'at the table' and who is 'not at the table'.	

Part 1. Organizational Development, Capacity, and Adaptability continued

7. Adaptability and Sustainability

1	2	3	4	
<p>Your byway has no byway entity or formal entity responsible for byway actions.</p> <p>As such, your byway has no structural way to address sustainability.</p>	<p>Your byway entity sees itself or operates as task-based, without a long-term sense of what type of structure or mechanisms will be most effective.</p> <p>There may be more than one idea about how to sustain the group - or even if it should be sustained in its current structure.</p> <p>There may be comfort with an ad hoc approach to getting work done on behalf of the byway. Or, you may not see a long-term organizational need.</p> <p>You may want assistance in evaluating how or if to develop a more formal or sustainable organization.</p>	<p>Your byway entity is actively questioning structure and mechanisms that will enable it to be more effective. You may be in a time of transition such as leadership succession or in need of accomplishing more with less funding.</p> <p>These transitions or considerations are leading to discussion about how the group can adapt and change in response to current realities, while sustaining the group to accomplish its goals for years to come.</p>	<p>Your byway entity is in the process of or has found ways to ensure its ability to adapt to circumstances. You are flexible operationally and financially so that you can sustain yourself for the long-term.</p> <p>You have a financial plan which includes long-range operational contingencies.</p> <p>You complete annual reports which describe how you've coped with change and uncertainties.</p>	

Self-Scoring: To obtain your score for Part One, total the numbers in the far right column for all questions in Part One then find your rank below. _____

Score of 1-7: **Starting Point.** You are estimated to be at a starting point in your organization development, capacity and adaptability. Your organization should begin a multi-step approach to evaluating and undertaking actions that will enable the group to flourish. Small steps may be the best approach to building an effective organization.

Score of 8-15: **Basic.** Your organization has a basic level of capacity. You have a CMP, but beyond that have limited capacity to respond to changing or new circumstances and challenges. To become sustainable, it is important to consider how to create a fundamental capacity beyond the volunteer work of a few dedicated individuals.

Score of 16-23: **Intermediate.** You have an intermediate capacity for organizational development, capacity and adaptability. Your organization has some real strengths on which to build, but would benefit from a technical assistance plan that enhances organizational capacity in one or two key areas.

Score of 24-28: **Advanced.** Your level of capacity in this area is estimated to be advanced. Your organization can build on strengths and has depth of capacity to develop and adapt to new circumstances and challenges.

NOTE: If you entered N/A or failed to answer any question – the rankings above are not applicable.

Part 2. Finance, Fundraising and Sustainability

In the right-hand column, enter the number that corresponds to the condition that most closely describes your organization. If the item does not match your organization, enter N/A. Try to answer all questions, even if it is not a priority to your organization.

1. Operating Budget and Diverse Revenue Stream

1	2	3	4	
You have no annual or project budget for non-capital work.	<p>Budgets are project-based, depending more on grants that may be received than on an annual strategy or plan.</p> <p>You may be looking for basic budgeting tools, examples, and guidelines.</p>	<p>Your byway entity works to set an operating budget but may be constrained by a lack of defined revenue streams, and may need to evaluate new ways to build a revenue budget/plan that can enable it to implement its goals.</p> <p>You may need examples of how other byways have diversified revenue streams.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has revenue streams that allow it to implement an annual strategic plan. But your byway entity may be seeking information on how to leverage growth to take on major new initiatives.</p> <p>You may be interested in how other organizations handle significant budgetary growth.</p>	

2. Capital versus Operating

1	2	3	4	
Capital funding has not been received.	<p>Your byway entity may be relying primarily or only on project funding that is largely capital in nature, with very little funding for non-capital work.</p> <p>You may benefit from information on best practices for sustainability at all budget sizes.</p>	<p>Your budget may still be dominated by capital projects but there is some limited funding for the accomplishment of non-capital goals and for operations and overhead.</p> <p>You may be examining ways to limit fixed expenses or other non-capital exposure while still being able to implement strategies and goals, and could benefit from an outside expert to assist.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has revenue streams in place to support its non-capital and operations needs so that it remains sustainable as an organization between rounds of capital funding.</p> <p>You may be looking for additional ways to diversify revenue or limit expense exposure to ensure long term sustainability.</p>	

Part 2. Finance, Fundraising and Sustainability continued

3. New and Diversified Revenue Streams

1	2	3	4	
<p>Your byway entity has not considered or has not been successful in finding ways to develop new or diversified revenue streams.</p>	<p>Your byway entity relies only on funding from Federal or State Highway Department grants. It may not have investigated - or may have had limited success - with finding other revenue sources.</p>	<p>Your byway entity is in the process of working to diversify annual revenue streams and sources, and may be exploring a range of new funding contracts, partnerships, and grants/sponsorships.</p> <p>You may be looking for assistance in building a sustainable business and revenue model.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has a revenue diversification strategy or plan that is regularly expanded or updated to ensure it is able to meet operations through a range of revenue sources.</p> <p>You may be looking for ways to evaluate the long term viability of your revenue plan.</p>	

4. Fundraising Strategies and Capacity

1	2	3	4	
<p>Your byway entity has limited or no experience fundraising (not including seeking capital/project grants from the National Scenic Byways Grants program).</p>	<p>Your byway entity has some on-going fundraising mechanisms, such as memberships or contributions, but has not yet developed a multifaceted funding plan that will sustain your group and the byway.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has proven strength, going beyond basic fundraising events and contributions.</p> <p>Tips, tools, and new skills in donor development, grant writing, and identification of funding sources and interests will be helpful to you.</p>	<p>You byway entity has strong fundraising capacity and an annual fundraising plan.</p> <p>You have demonstrated ability to successfully win grants and major investments, and have leveraged funds from various sources to maximize the impact of each contribution.</p>	

Part 2. Finance, Fundraising and Sustainability continued

5. Fund-use, Stewardship Image and Reputation

1	2	3	4	
<p>Your organization (separate from the byway) does not have visibility or reputation as a grantee or recipient of grant and contributed funds.</p>	<p>Partners and a limited constituency - members, some communities - are aware of your organization's capacity to effectively steward grants and contributions.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has established a good reputation as a fund steward. You have used this reputation as a foundation for seeking contributions and funds, but you still need to become more competitive within the state and region.</p>	<p>Your byway entity makes use of a full portfolio of image and reputation materials, such as annual reports published online, newsletters to investors, regular events and meetings for investors and funders. You have a sterling reputation as a fund steward.</p>	

6. Maintenance and Operations of Capital Projects

1	2	3	4	
<p>Your byway entity has little experience in managing and operating capital projects.</p>	<p>You have applied for grants to begin capital projects, but are just beginning that process.</p> <p>Your efforts have focused on the final built project, not necessarily on the maintenance and operational aspects.</p>	<p>You have implemented capital projects along your byway. But you have struggled with the maintenance and operational aspects.</p>	<p>Your byway considers long-term operational and maintenance costs before entering into capital projects.</p> <p>You have experience in delivering capital projects.</p> <p>The anticipated operational and maintenance costs are considered in decision-making and fundraising efforts before grant writing efforts begin.</p>	

Part 2. Finance, Fundraising and Sustainability continued

7. Reserves

1	2	3	4	
Your byway entity has not considered holding or building cash reserves.	<p>There are no reserves and your byway entity has not yet or is not currently considering strategies for reserves.</p> <p>You may be looking for basic information on how to begin building reserves, or on the level of reserves that are appropriate for your organization.</p>	<p>There may be an opportunistic or ad hoc approach to building up some reserves, but your organization may not have been able to regularly budget for or find ways to develop operating reserves.</p> <p>You may be developing policies and plans for creation and maintenance of operating reserves.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has worked toward or has accomplished having operating reserves or liquid net assets of about 180 days of its total operations.</p> <p>Reserve policies and plans have been implemented, and it may be useful to review these and ensure that they will offer the level of sustainability your organization needs.</p>	

Self-Scoring: To obtain your score for Part Two, total the numbers in the far right column for all questions in Part Two, then find your rank below. _____

Score of 1-7: Your Finance, Fundraising and Adaptability capacity is estimated to be still at a **starting point**. Your organization has limited capacity to sustain itself, and needs to begin planning how to develop revenue.

Score of 8-15: You are estimated to have the **basic** capacity for finance, fundraising and adaptability. Your organization has done fundamental work to ensure sustainability but wants to diversify revenue sources and create increased financial operating capacity.

Score of 16-23: It is estimated that you have an **intermediate** capacity for finance, fundraising and adaptability. Good progress has been made in developing good fiscal policy and approaches. This may be a good time to consider even more emphasis in this area.

Score of 24-28: Your capacity in this area is estimated to be **advanced**. Your organization has strong financial sustainability systems and strategies in place. Your goals are focused on expanding reserve capacity and long-term strength.

NOTE: If you entered N/A or failed to answer any question – the rankings above are not applicable.

Part 3. Outreach, Partnerships, and Advocacy

In the right-hand column, enter the number that corresponds to the condition that most closely describes your organization. If the item does not match your organization, enter N/A. Try to answer all questions, even if it is not a priority to your organization.

1. Public Engagement

1	2	3	4	
You have no mechanisms in place for public input regarding your byway activities, such as meetings, forums, or blogs.	There is some periodic outreach and organized meetings for public input, but it isn't regular or extensive.	You are effective at involving communities about byway projects and initiatives, and you have a consistent and repeatable approach gathering public input.	You have provided multiple opportunities for input every year, through a variety of mechanisms ranging from surveys and interviews to public meetings and forums. You have a specific plan that you implement for early and continuous input, for projects, events, etc. You assess the effectiveness of your public engagement efforts on an annual basis.	

2. Outreach

1	2	3	4	
Outreach is something your group does not consider or implement on a regular or strategic basis.	<p>Your byway entity understands that outreach is important; however you have been busy focusing on other goals or projects.</p> <p>You have difficulty engaging in formal outreach to community groups and others - e. g. other local and state non-profits, planners, and agencies.</p>	<p>Outreach is something that may be done when there is time or need, but you have found it difficult to sustain.</p> <p>You may lack staff or dedicated board time to focus on outreach and to finding communications mechanisms that support outreach.</p> <p>Outreach often ends up as being one of those things that falls off the table.</p>	<p>Your byway entity uses various communication and outreach methods to inform and shape your own programs and priorities, avoid duplication, and continuously build new informal and formal partnerships, and the collaboration with those partners.</p> <p>These efforts are based on your public involvement plan. The input you receive is consistently used to inform practices and planning.</p>	

Part 3. Outreach, Partnerships, and Advocacy continued

3. Partnerships

1	2	3	4	
<p>Your byway entity hasn't established partner groups or organizations. You are seeking guidance on how to build working relationships with other groups that can help it advance the byway goals.</p>	<p>Your byway entity may have a preliminary or limited assessment in the types of partnerships that it can develop and maintain to help it accomplish key goals.</p> <p>You may not have a 'network' approach or other formalized means of communicating with and working together with partners.</p>	<p>Your partnerships are for the most part undefined and a mix of ad hoc and consistent relationships; but there is room for additional planning, dialogue, and development of shared visions and values among the group.</p> <p>There may be informal or periodic ways to bring partners together.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has developed a solid and multi-year group of informal partners, and may still be adding new partners over time. You have identified areas where there are shared goals and opportunities to work together, and have defined ways to bring the partners together periodically to discuss shared issues and opportunities, gaps, and priorities that each is working on.</p> <p>You have ways of communicating with the partners throughout the course of the year, and can depend on them to advocate on your behalf.</p> <p>You and your partners identify areas where there are shared goals and opportunities to work together.</p> <p>Your group may want to compare your partnership approaches to other peers to ensure you are using all possible best practices.</p>	

Part 3. Outreach, Partnerships, and Advocacy continued

4. Advocacy

1	2	3	4	
<p>Advocacy is a skill your byway entity would like to learn and develop.</p>	<p>Your byway entity may be successful in advocating for your byway, but may still have difficulty articulating advocacy messages for your own work and having those messages be heard by a large enough groups of prospective stakeholders.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has made and sustained inroads in advocacy, and your group regularly meets with and advocates for your mission and for the goals you have set for the byway.</p> <p>Still, advocacy tasks and roles are hard for some in your organization , and advocacy may be more about short-term achievements rather than long-term positioning, and your group would benefit from training and even from more partners that advocate for your own work and operations.</p> <p>You may be seeking ways to be more effective in advocacy.</p>	<p>Others such as elected officials and other community leaders are advocating for the byway.</p> <p>Your organization has tools in place to assist these leaders as they advocate for the byway. Your organization has updated qualitative and quantitative data and information to support advocacy, and ways to measure the success of your advocacy efforts.</p> <p>Your byway entity feels that advocacy efforts have paid off and continue to pay off, and your staff and board have developed a high level of capacity in advocacy as a result.</p> <p>Your byway entity regularly updates your approach to advocacy, and makes effective use of measurements such as economic impact and visitor feedback to support advocacy.</p> <p>Your partners and stakeholders have become instrumental in being advocates for you.</p>	

Part 3. Outreach, Partnerships, and Advocacy continued

5. Assessment of External Priorities

1	2	3	4	
Your byway entity has not had the chance to assess the priorities of other groups working to advance travel and tourism in your byway region.	Your byway entity may have conducted listening exercises in setting or updating your CMP, but may not be able to regularly or systematically collect information about needs and opportunities that can be met through your own or partner work on behalf of the byway.	You have some informal ways of learning and listening to assess external priorities - those set by others - that pertain to the byway and issues or priority to your own organization. It may be useful to learn ways to enhance your internal organizational assessment skills.	Your organization uses a process of collecting input from partners and groups and of sharing your own insights on needs and priorities to work effectively with partners and communities to meet new and evolving needs. The process is on-going and dynamic but your byway entity may seek additional information about best practices.	

Self-Scoring: To obtain your score for Part Three, total the numbers in the far right column for all questions in Part Three, then find your rank below. _____

- Score of 1-7: You are estimated to be at a **starting point** with Finance, Fundraising and adaptability. Your byway entity needs to work on building capacity in outreach, partnerships, and advocacy.
- Score of 8-15: You are estimated to be at a **basic** level in this area. Your organization has some capacity, but may benefit from being stronger in implementing an annual outreach and advocacy strategy.
- Score of 16-23: Your level of capacity is estimated to be **intermediate**. Your organization has begun to see the benefits of building a strong partnership network and having effective outreach and advocacy. Consider ways to formalize outreach and begin using advocacy tools such as economic impact and visitor feedback.
- Score of 24-28: Your capacity in this area is considered **advanced**. Congratulations on having built and maintained strong and effective partnerships and outreach and advocacy that benefits and supports your work. You may want to look at the best practices of other types of organizations that are as successful as yours to keep refining and adding to your outreach and advocacy tools and methods.

NOTE: If you entered N/A or failed to answer any question – the rankings above are not applicable.

Part 4. Byway Recognition, Image, Brand Identity, Marketing, Communications

In the right-hand column, enter the number that corresponds to the condition that most closely describes your organization. If the item does not match your organization, enter N/A. Try to answer all questions, even if it is not a priority to your organization.

1. Marketing Plan

1	2	3	4	
Your organization does not have a marketing plan.	You have set some basic marketing goals and have some strategies in place. You are working on a more detailed multi-year marketing plan with benchmarks.	Your organization has made progress implementing and measuring the impact of a marketing plan.	Marketing planning is on-going, utilizes research and measurements (see Part 6), and responds to changes in your market. In a larger sense, you have a joint marketing plan that you address together with your partners.	

2. Visibility

1	2	3	4	
Your byway has limited visibility or identity.	Your byway has achieved a basic level of visibility and name recognition, but your group is looking for ways to jump start the process of building broader regional and national name recognition and attention.	Your byway entity has developed a moderate level of name recognition. You would like to see the byway achieve even greater name recognition and become even better known but need to broaden your marketing skills or portfolio to gain this next level of visibility.	Your byway has a high level of regional and national recognition, and even international visibility. You would like to make sure you are on-track and are always looking for new ways to enhance your presence and standing.	

Part 4. Byway Recognition, Image, Brand Identity, Marketing, Communications continued

3. Byway Brand Identity

1	2	3	4	
<p>Building and maintaining a brand identity means shaping a promise and then delivering on that promise.</p> <p>There is little to no byway brand identity - a consistent application of a branding strategy.</p>	<p>There is some signage, some use of branding on print and web materials, but it is unevenly and inconsistently applied.</p>	<p>Your group needs assistance in building a strong and consistent brand identity. You may also be ready to gather visitors' perceptions of quality offered by your brand, and to use this feedback to ensure your brand identity is strong from promise through to post-experience.</p> <p>You may be looking for some assessment of how well you are doing and ways to continue to strengthen the brand.</p>	<p>Your byway has built and maintained an excellent brand, and you know that it works because you have collected data that demonstrates this, such as from visitor intercept surveys.</p> <p>The America's Byways brand has been incorporated into your brand. Your byway has collected specific data that demonstrates the brand recognition of your brand with the America's Byways brand.</p>	

4. Branding Tools, Signage, Materials

1	2	3	4	
<p>Your byway entity has not created a suite of consistent branding tools.</p>	<p>Your byway entity together with partners is beginning to shape or renew the brand identity for your byway, with the goal of it gaining recognition and shaping overall concept awareness your byways's visitor experience.</p> <p>You'd like to make sure you use the right process.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has made progress in wayshowing, with maps, orientation sites, exhibits, and materials.</p> <p>You know there is more to do, but wonder how to prioritize these.</p> <p>You may want to undertake a wayshowing and branding audit or assessment.</p>	<p>Your byway is well signed and branded, but you may want to do more GPS/GIS technology and applications; or may be evaluating ways to further enhancing wayshowing media, exhibits, narratives, or maps.</p> <p>You may be seeking ideas that can assist in training hospitality and visitor information personnel and volunteers.</p> <p>If you are an America's Byway, you have considered and incorporated the America's Byways brand into your materials in a consistent manner.</p>	

Part 4. Byway Recognition, Image, Brand Identity, Marketing, Communications continued

5. Communications/Public Relations

1	2	3	4	
<p>Your byway entity has very limited communications and public relations skills.</p> <p>You rarely deliver proactive messages about your byway to the greater public.</p>	<p>You struggle with your communications and public relations (PR) activities which get your byway noticed. You are not sure how your byway entity can effectively communicate its unique qualities and the value of visitation.</p> <p>Your group may be looking for ways to implement a fundamental, consistent communications and PR plan.</p>	<p>There may be new ways to boost the communication strategies for your byway.</p> <p>You may be seeking new ideas to getting the messages out there, ways to boost the usefulness of your social media marketing to facilitate broader visitor access.</p>	<p>Your entity may be seeking evaluation of the effectiveness of your communications plan, or may want to benchmark your communications strategies against those of other organizational best practices.</p>	

6. Portfolio of Marketing Materials

1	2	3	4	
<p>You are unsure what marketing tools and materials should be a top priority for an emerging or re-emerging byway.</p> <p>It is unclear what would be the best way to start building a marketing portfolio for your byway.</p>	<p>Your byway entity is in the early or evolving stages of work with formal partners on signage, wayshowing, entrances/exits, and a consistently used/displayed graphic identity and could benefit from tools and planning assistance to help focus your efforts.</p> <p>You may be working with partners to expand your portfolio, or may be considering new marketing tools that build on the foundation of approaches and materials now in use.</p>	<p>You may have realized some or considerable success in achieving an integrated, byway-specific portfolio of marketing materials, images, and offers between your byway entity and partners, but still may seek ways to improve.</p> <p>Your byway entity may be looking for ways to assess and evaluate next steps to building a strong and uniform portfolio and identity, across organizations, communities, jurisdictions, and agencies.</p> <p>Your byway entity may be looking for new information on integrating and maximizing mobile marketing, technology or other tools.</p>	<p>Your organization has developed an outstanding portfolio of marketing materials as evaluated and judged by peers in your region, such as others in hospitality marketing or local advisory panels of experts.</p> <p>You have used your research on target markets to define your messaging and images. Your organization has mechanisms in place to measure the effectiveness of the portfolio of materials you have, and regularly and appropriately updates the portfolio.</p>	

Part 4. Byway Recognition, Image, Brand Identity, Marketing, Communications continued

7. Websites, Social Media, and Apps

1	2	3	4	
<p>Your byway has no standalone web site, dedicated to your byway and its visitor experience.</p>	<p>Your byway entity uses one or two websites to market and communicate information about the byway and provide visitor information.</p> <p>You'd like to evaluate how to boost your web presence.</p> <p>Your byway entity has begun working with partners to provide different variations on how wayshowing and visitor information is contained on your websites.</p>	<p>Your byway entity and partners may have effective and multifaceted online presence but are ready to add higher levels of visitor information, including downloadable and mobile maps, byway-specific apps, more links, multiple languages, online reservations, etc.</p> <p>Consistency and accuracy may be concerns, and you may want to learn how to build a consistent web presence.</p> <p>What are the best ways to proceed? Best practices, models, and how-to information may be useful.</p>	<p>You have a dedicated online strategy.</p> <p>Your organization has staff time and dedicated staff to update and maintain your website, and post and work with social media and applications.</p> <p>You consistently refer to metrics that measure the success of your online strategy.</p>	

Self-Scoring: To obtain your score for Part Four, total the numbers in the far right column for all questions in Part Four, then find your rank below. _____

- Score of 1-7: You seem to be at a **starting point** in this area. Marketing should be a top priority, and your organization should seek technical assistance to begin the process.
- Score of 8-15: Your byway has a **basic** capacity. Consider priorities for your byway to enhance the overall success of its marketing, possibly involving a marketing audit or assessment.
- Score of 16-23: You are estimated to have an **intermediate** capacity to use these topics. It is time to advance marketing through elements such as multi-web site consistency, new mobile applications, or other specific steps. You are looking for guidance on best practices and effective strategies.
- Score of 24-28: Your capacity is estimated to be **advanced** on this area's topics. Your organization is ready to focus on refining and adding to the marketing mix, to fully optimize tourism and positioning marketing.

NOTE: If you entered N/A or failed to answer any question – the rankings above are not applicable.

Part 5. The Visitor Experience

In the right-hand column, enter the number that corresponds to the condition that most closely describes your organization. If the item does not match your organization, enter N/A. Try to answer all questions, even if it is not a priority to your organization.

1. Pre-Visit

1	2	3	4	
<p>Your byway entity relies on very basic web site information that you have posted to your own site or another site.</p> <p>You don't yet have partners that have joined in on creating and distributing pre-visit information.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has developed and has encouraged partners to develop descriptive materials, maps, and materials.</p> <p>You are seeking models and best practices that can help you make sure the pre-visit information is uniformly high quality and effective, but are still working to get partner buy-in. You may need assistance in winning their buy-in.</p>	<p>You'd like to ensure that the promised visitor experience is accurately and consistently defined and promoted.</p> <p>Your byway entity wants to evaluate maps, materials, brochures in use and distributed by all partners and agencies along the byway. You could use an outside eye and expert opinion.</p> <p>You have dedicated phone numbers and e-mail addresses that can provide information to potential travelers.</p>	<p>Your byway entity is evaluating ways to boost visitation through specific pre-visit campaigns, themes, event offers, or other major boosts.</p> <p>You may be seeking ideas from other byways or destinations that can help you evaluate effective mechanisms. You may also be evaluating all media representation as related to how effective it is in motivating expanded visitations.</p> <p>You have dedicated phone numbers and e-mail addresses that can provide information to potential travelers. Phone and e-mail inquiries are answered within one business day.</p> <p>Your CMP provides the plan for implementation of all pre-visit experiences.</p>	

Part 5. The Visitor Experience continued

2. Wayshowing and Orientation

1	2	3	4	
<p>Wayshowing is something you want to advance, but haven't yet been able to tackle beyond basic signage.</p> <p>You'd like to develop a plan and priorities.</p>	<p>Your byway has implemented basic entrance and exit signage and other basic orientation that help visitors understand the byway. You may be seeking assistance in building relationships with all the road management agencies along your byway.</p> <p>You may be seeking assistance in positioning route markers, directional signage, entrance and exit signs or in negotiating speed zones, pedestrian crossings, or other aids to visitors.</p>	<p>Visitor orientation includes up-to-date information about detours and road conditions, and guidance to attractions and from attractions back to the byway. Your byway entity may be seeking assistance in best ways to keep visitors informed and up-to-date through changing conditions.</p> <p>Or your byway entity may be considering ways to expand orientation via mobile technology, compliance with Universal Design, or seeking other improvements.</p>	<p>Your byway entity may be adding orientation stops, new exhibits and narratives, additional orientation maps and other wayshowing aids.</p> <p>You have sought the outside evaluation of the "visitor's eye perspective" for all visitors, and may be acting on Universal Design improvements to enhance the visitor experience.</p> <p>Your wayshowing approach is holistic and implements the eight principles of effective wayshowing.</p>	

3. Intrinsic Qualities

1	2	3	4	
<p>Your byway does not have on-going strategies in place to protect the intrinsic qualities of your byway.</p>	<p>There has been some identification of roles and responsibilities in protecting intrinsic qualities between partners, but there is not yet a working implementation of this.</p>	<p>There is clarity in roles and responsibilities in protecting and enhancing the intrinsic qualities of the byway. Partner roles are known and there is at least basic on-going work by a number of partners to protect and steward intrinsic qualities.</p>	<p>There is proven capacity and teamwork in protecting all the intrinsic qualities of the byway.</p> <p>Partners and the byway entity work effectively and consistently together to steward the byway intrinsic qualities.</p> <p>Your CMP provides the plan and impetus for preservation and visitor access for your intrinsic qualities.</p>	

Part 5. The Visitor Experience continued

4. Interpretive Planning

1	2	3	4	
<p>You have no general plan for interpretation along your byway.</p> <p>You would like to gain knowledge in effective ways to provide interpretive assistance to visitors.</p>	<p>Your byway entity may be evaluating fundamental interpretive elements, or adding to your baseline interpretation.</p>	<p>You byway entity may be formalizing an interpretive plan or seeking feedback on the effectiveness of your interpretive plan, and you may be seeking advice regarding your ideas and strategies.</p> <p>You want to expand your interpretive efforts to include a more diversified cultural approach.</p>	<p>Your byway entity may be adding to the byway interpretation with face-to-face and/or oral interpreters along the byway, and you may be seeking ways to leverage more involvement from partners to make this possible.</p> <p>You have approached all cultural points of view in the storytelling of your byway; including Native American and other cultural stories which may have never been considered.</p> <p>A wide range of professionals have been consulted during the interpretive planning process.</p>	

5. Interpretive Delivery

1	2	3	4	
<p>There are no interpretive sites for travelers along your byway.</p>	<p>There are a few interpretive sites along your byway.</p> <p>These locations are random, few, and/or outdated.</p> <p>These interpretive efforts do not reflect your byway brand or identity.</p>	<p>You have many interpretive sites along your byway.</p> <p>The interpretive sites are all delivered in one or two mediums (i.e. Kiosks or publications).</p> <p>There is a general theme that can be evidenced from one interpretive site to the next; however, independent sites (i.e. museums, parks, etc.) have interpretation which may not reflect that theme.</p>	<p>You have a themed interpretive experience along your byway.</p> <p>That experience is reflected at all sites, stops, and locations, regardless of operating agency.</p> <p>Interpretation is delivered in many mediums, including storytelling.</p> <p>You have considered and implemented the most recent technological advances in the delivery of interpretation. You consistently monitor the success of your interpretive efforts.</p>	

Part 5. The Visitor Experience continued

6. Visitor Readiness

1	2	3	4	
<p>Your byway has some facilities to serve travelers, such as restaurants and fueling stations, but has limited to no facilities for hotels/motels, rest areas, parking areas and turnouts, or visitor information centers.</p>	<p>Your byway has hotels/motels, adequate rest-room facilities, fueling stations, parking areas, turnouts and visitor information centers in some major destination locations along the byway.</p>	<p>Your byway has hotels/motels, adequate rest-room facilities, fueling stations, parking areas, turnouts and visitor information centers consistently along the entire byway.</p> <p>It has started working on Universal Design standards. It has consistently implemented ADA compliance.</p>	<p>Your byway has safe biking and pedestrian trails and facilities along and/or near the corridor.</p> <p>Your byway has incorporated safety improvements/measures to ensure travelers are accommodated at major points of interest (i.e. crosswalks, shoulders, turn lanes, turn-outs).</p> <p>Your CMP provides the plan for all projects relating to visitor readiness of all visitors.</p> <p>Not only are there adequate services (i.e. hotels, fueling stations, etc.) but staff at these service locations have been given hospitality training.</p>	

Self-Scoring: To obtain your score for Part Five, total the numbers in the far right column for all questions in Part Five, then find your rank below. _____

- Score of 1-7: You seem to be at a **starting point** in this area. You need basic guidance in wayshowing and in implementing key steps to establish a good visitor experience.
- Score of 8-15: It is estimated that you have a **basic** capacity for planning and implementing your byway's visitor experience. Your byway needs to pay top attention to creating and shaping a positive visitor experience. You may want technical assistance to set a multi-year approach to improvement."
- Score of 16-23: This area indicates that you may have an **intermediate** capacity for visitor experience. Select key priorities for in-depth work to foster an even better visitor experience.
- Score of 24-28: You seem to have an **advanced** capacity in this area. Congratulations, your byway has a great and comprehensive approach to ensuring a great visitor experience. Audit it periodically to keep it at top quality.

NOTE: If you entered N/A or failed to answer any question – the rankings above are not applicable.

Part 6. Documenting Impact

In the right-hand column, enter the number that corresponds to the condition that most closely describes your organization. If the item does not match your organization, enter N/A. Try to answer all questions, even if it is not a priority to your organization.

1. Visitor Input and Feedback

1	2	3	4	
This is an area that you haven't worked on at all. You have some informal comments from visitors, but that's about it.	Your byway entity may be looking for basic and simple ways to collect visitor impressions of the byway - sample surveys and tools you can modify and use.	Your byway entity may be implementing a periodic visitor satisfaction survey, and you may be seeking advice in implementing the research or in evaluating the findings. Your byway entity may want to benchmark the feedback from your visitors with those of other byways, or your organization may seek assistance in validating and sharing the findings in a proactive way with your partner agencies.	Your byway makes consistent, regular use of visitor input and feedback in strategic and corridor management planning. You share information with your partners and use the information together with them to steer partnership planning.	

2. Quantifying Visitors, Studying Visitors

1	2	3	4	
Your byway entity has no visitor data.	Your byway entity has rudimentary and anecdotal data about your visitors. You are interested in seeking advice on basic information gathering and database creation.	Your byway entity has some experience in quantifying visitors and the nature of their stay; time spent, destinations visited, nature of the visitors. Your byway entity is considering periodic significant measurements of visitors, demographics, the nature of their visit, and related topics. You are considering ways to conduct this visitor research and analysis to increase visitors. You'd like assistance in pulling it together, or in expanding upon what you can do in-house.	Your byway has methods and tools in place to gather and make effective use of quantitative and qualitative studies to improve the overall byway experience, to use for advocacy, and to build stronger partnerships. Research is an ongoing function of your byway organizations.	

Part 6. Documenting Impact continued

3. Economic Impact

1	2	3	4	
Your byway has not gathered nor has immediate plans to gather economic impact data.	Your byway entity is considering some sort of economic impact analysis but you don't know how to get started.	Your byway entity is evaluating how to undertake regular economic impact analysis and would benefit from assistance and help in benchmarking your byway's impact to others.	Your byway entity has regularly used tools and measures such as economic impact analysis and may be looking for ways to maximize the promotional value of the findings.	

4. Market Analysis

1	2	3	4	
Your byway entity has limited knowledge of who your visitors are, where they come from, what they seek, and what will bring them back. You do not know where to gather that information.	Your byway entity has gathered some visitor data from your state or from local convention and visitors bureaus (CVBs) or others, but not information that can guide you in gaining additional visitors.	Your byway entity has some visitor data, but not enough to define the overall byway visitation. You may be seeking additional advice or methods to broaden your market analysis.	Your byway entity has undertaken broad-based market analysis and has the mechanisms in place to regularly update market studies against your baseline. You understand the nature of your current market for visitors and have assessed ways to broaden or deepen your potential market share. You may be seeking ways to maximize the benefit of the analysis and use it for long term planning.	

Self-Scoring: To obtain your score for Part Six, total the numbers in the far right column for all questions in Part Six then find your rank below. _____

Score of 1-7: You seem to be at a **starting point** in this area. Your organization needs to develop a basic knowledge of your visitor and market.

Score of 8-15: You probably have **basic** capacity in this area. Begin contemplating ways to collect basic visitor data to use in planning and positioning.

Score of 16-23: Your capacity is estimated to be **intermediate**. You have established effective data collection systems. Now focus on maximizing this capacity.

Score of 24-28: Your capacity is estimated as **advanced** in this area. You have excellent systems in place to collect, assess and use data to enhance the byway.

NOTE: If you entered N/A or failed to answer any question – the rankings above are not applicable.

Overall Findings

Add up the total scores for each of the six sections. This is your overall score. _____

The maximum potential score on this tool is 144.

If your score is under 43, then your byway is at a **starting point**. Carefully evaluate the most effective ways to move into a basic, fundamental level of sustainability.

If your organization scored 43 to 85, your organization has achieved a **basic** level of sustainability and capacity. Strongly consider evaluating fundamental ways to strengthen and sustain your efforts. Your group may be new or may have gone through a period of reorganization, or may be ready to take off after a period of relative inactivity. Discuss how you can move forward toward strength and excellence in a structured, logical way that makes the best use of your time and efforts.

If your score is 86 to 115, you have achieved an **intermediate** level of overall capacity. You have much to build upon and your organization is ready to prioritize new ways to enhance your capacity, sustainability, and excellence.

If your score is 116 or above, you have achieved an **advanced** level of sustainable excellence. Focus on ensuring that your group's high level of capacity is maintained. Maintain your knowledge base and build upon your key strengths.

Remember: The scores you calculate are only valid if you've filled and answered every question. Further, the scores only provide an indication of your sustainability strength.

The true value of this assessment lies in your organization's willingness to discuss how you've answered the Assessment.

Talk through each question and your responses to each one. This will help you begin to prioritize your strengths and weaknesses.

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