



MAINE
SCENIC BYWAYS

ST. JOHN VALLEY CULTURAL BYWAY

Corridor Management and Partnership Plan



St. John Valley, Maine

June 2014

Acknowledgements

The Corridor Management and Partnership Plan for the St. John Valley Cultural Byway was prepared from a two-year public process to provide the Byway Management Committee and the people of the St. John Valley with insight, guidance, and resources to manage and build success for the byway.

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We acknowledge the contribution of everyone who contributed to the shaping of this management plan, including members of the working group, volunteers on the byway planning committee, stakeholders who participated in meetings, and many others throughout the region who provided their insight and guidance. Additional input by staff of the Maine Department of Transportation, the Northern Maine Development Commission, Maine Office of Tourism, and educators from universities from both sides of the international border, was invaluable and enriched this plan immensely.

Cover photo: *St. John River* by Daniel Picard

For more information on the St. John Valley Cultural Byway
www.sjvculturalbyway.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

Executive Summary	4
1.0 Introduction	
1.1 Background	6
1.2 Planning team	9
1.3 Planning methodology	11
1.4 Mission, vision and values, goals	15
2.0 The Byway Experience	
2.1 Intrinsic Qualities Assessment	17
2.1.a Cultural and Historic Intrinsic Qualities	18
2.1.b Scenic and Natural Intrinsic Qualities	20
2.1.c Recreational Intrinsic Qualities	22
2.1.d Maintaining and enhancing intrinsic qualities ...	23
2.2 Market analysis, target market and opportunities	24
2.3 Visitor services and amenities	31
2.4 Interpretation: wayside exhibits	32
2.5 Shaping the byway story	36
2.6 Tour the byway: the traveler experience	40
3.0 Managing the Byway	
3.1 Protection techniques, land use, zoning	44
3.2 Road safety issues	48
3.3 Roadway improvements and design standards	55
3.4 Outdoor advertising and signage	59
4.0 Goals, Objectives and Actions	61
5.0 Building Our Future: Sustaining the Byway	
5.1 Implementing our goals and future steps	67
5.1.a Working with community and business	67
5.1.b Public agencies and institutions	68
5.1.c Funding and Partnerships	69
5.2 Schedule	71
6.0 Appendices	72

Executive Summary

On April 4, 2010, the St. John Valley Cultural Byway was designated a Maine Scenic Byway by the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT). What followed designation was a two-year public process of planning in preparation for a Corridor Management and Partnership Plan. With designation, the byway becomes one of 14 Maine Scenic Byways that together cover more than 500 miles of roadway through coastal and inland landscapes. The process to achieve the management plan was a highly public and collaborative one, which involved residents, business owners, local government officials, state and regional agencies, and consultants.

Rich History, Bright Future

The culture and history of the St. John Valley, and the people's enduring sense of identity and place, shape the byway story. Commonly referred to as "The Valley, this rural region with a population of about 14,000 people is situated at the northernmost tip of Maine on the border with the Canadian provinces of New Brunswick and Québec. Notably, the St. John Valley's French heritage of Acadians and French Canadians (85% of the population) was at the forefront of consideration for designation. With selection of the region as the location of the 2014 *Congrès mondial acadien* (World Acadian Congress), which would attract tens of thousands of people from around the world to the region, staff at MaineDOT and Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) discussed a strategy to develop an application for designation and to secure funding for planning and project development. With the 2010 designation, the St. John Valley Cultural Byway was born.

There is much to work with in this region – a rich history, numerous museums and historic sites, the French language, intact and vibrant traditions, festivals – all building the foundation from which a distinct collection of stories and treasured places can be shared with residents and visitors. The 104-mile byway builds upon over 40 years of efforts by regional, state and national groups as well as the ground swell of community engagement, planning, and projects around the region's distinct culture and history.

These efforts celebrate the predominant Acadian and French-Canadian¹ people, along with the Scots-Irish and Native American cultures. The byway is a manifestation of all of these efforts. As a kind of synthesizer, it helps to coalesce these efforts and leverage regional assets, providing a tangible, interactive, and experiential way for residents and visitors to experience the culture of the region.

Celebrating Culture

Planning for the creation of this corridor management and partnership plan was an extensive public process involving a wide range of people from throughout the St. John Valley. For two years, a planning team, comprised of a professional working group and a volunteer planning committee, worked together to shape the byway and this management plan. Additional insight was provided by byway stakeholders and scholars. As planning for the byway progressed, a parallel initiative for the creation of interpretative panels was undertaken. Close to 30 wayside exhibits placed in public spaces along the byway reflect the byway story share and enrich the visitor's experience.

The planning committee was tasked with providing input on the region's intrinsic qualities, shaping byway themes, establishing a purpose, values and goals, and offering guidance on next steps for sustainability. The National Scenic Byways Program defines intrinsic quality as: "features that are

¹ For this plan we primarily use the term French-Canadian. Though interchangeable with Québécois, the term French Canadian better represents the region's French heritage and connection with Québec.

Executive Summary continued

considered representative, unique, irreplaceable, or distinctly characteristic of an area.”² The byway planning committee identified the Cultural Intrinsic Quality as the primary intrinsic quality. The byway’s mission is to:

celebrate the region’s distinct international blend of French heritage, care for our cultural and natural assets, foster tourism opportunities to attract visitors from around the world, and enrich the quality of life for residents.

Values reflect the highest priority in shaping the byway, which included being inclusive, authentic, and truthful, as well as remembering the international context and stewarding the region’s culture, heritage, and land. The planning committee identified four goals for the byway:

1. Raise awareness of the region’s diverse cultural heritage.
2. Preserve, enhance, and protect our cultural, historical, scenic, and natural assets.
3. Foster growth of regional tourism and economic opportunities.
4. Establish byway management and communications that reflect our values.

The byway goals and objectives embrace a high level of stewardship, preservation, support, and celebration, of the intrinsic qualities of the byway. Besides these essential considerations, byway management also includes attention to land use, zoning, signage, road safety and improvements, and design standards.

Sharing with the World

Through a combination of direct programming and collaboration with existing groups, the byway will be part of the solution for maintaining and enhancing the region’s key assets. The byway’s target market includes visitors at the local and state, national, cross-border and international levels. Success in marketing will be possible through collaborative efforts with local entities and NMDC (specifically Aroostook County Tourism), a strong online presence, print material and affinity marketing arrangements (bilingual in English and French when appropriate and possible).

How to keep the byway alive? Without a doubt, the byway’s sustainability will be dependent upon strong leadership, collaboration, and funding. It could be said that by virtue of the abundance of assets and the region’s strong sense of culture and identity, the byway will endure. However, it would be neglectful and shortsighted to not seize the opportunity to invest in practical and on-hands implementation of the byway goals, bound to a visionary and daring approach. These efforts will help to achieve the vision of the St. John Valley Cultural Byway as a:

world destination for residents and visitors to enjoy our rich history, vibrant culture, and beautiful landscape. Communities along the byway’s 104-miles of road work together to share authentic and unparalleled tourism experiences about who we are – our diversity, traditions, French language, and ways of life. The byway is integral to building a better quality of life for residents through insightful management, quality products and services, collaboration with public, private, and nonprofit groups, and investment in preservation and stewardship. We strive to build a lasting legacy that fosters a sense of regional pride, inspires international cooperation, and establishes our place within the story of our nation.

² National Scenic Byways Program, FHWA Interim Policy, May 18, 1995. It identifies six intrinsic qualities: Archaeological, Cultural, Historic, Natural, Recreational, and Scenic.

Introduction

1.1 Background

Scenic Byway: a public road having special scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archaeological, and/or natural qualities that have been recognized as such through legislation or some other official declaration.

The St. John Valley Cultural Byway was designated a Maine Scenic Byway by the Maine Department of Transportation on April 14, 2010. The 104-mile byway is located in the St. John Valley of northeastern Maine, a rural region neighboring the Canadian provinces of New Brunswick and Québec. Its population of approximately 13,000 people are 85% of French heritage (Acadian and French-Canadian).

Designation of a byway is the state’s formal recognition of the community partnership dedicated to developing and implementing a Corridor Management and Partnership Plan. The planning process to achieve this management plan is a highly public and collaborative one, which involved residents, business owners, local government officials, state and regional agencies, and consultants.

The culture and history of the St. John Valley, and the people’s enduring and strong sense of identity and place, shape the byway story. There is much to work with – a rich history, numerous museums and historic sites, the French language, intact and vibrant traditions, festivals – all building the foundation from which a distinct collection of stories and treasured places can be shared more directly with residents and visitors.

With designation, the byway becomes one of 14 Maine Scenic Byways that together cover more than 500 miles of roadway through coastal and inland landscapes. The Maine Scenic Byway Program was established by the Maine State Legislature in 1969. The State Highway Commission led an interagency committee, called the Scenic Highway Board, to review and designate scenic highways. The Commission and Scenic Highway Board were abolished in 1971 with the creation of the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT). The authority to designate Scenic Byways was given to the Commissioner of Transportation. Four of Maine’s Scenic Byways have been designated as National Scenic Byways with Acadia Scenic Byway having the added distinction of being designated an All-American Road.

The St. John Valley, locally known as “the Valley,” is a rural, bilingual, and international region in Aroostook County at the northernmost tip of Maine, bordering the Canadian provinces of New Brunswick and Québec. There are about 13,000 people (85% of French heritage) in the twenty towns and townships that comprise the Valley. This region is considered the heart of the Acadians and French-Canadians who came to the shores of the St. John River in 1785. This was one territory, divided into two countries in 1842 when the dispute between the British and Americans was settled with the St. John River becoming the international border. Today, the Valley is where French is spoken daily, interwoven with English, and home to Native Americans, the Scottish, Irish, and many other people from around the world. (Source: *SJV Creative Economy Report*)

Creating the St. John Valley Cultural Byway

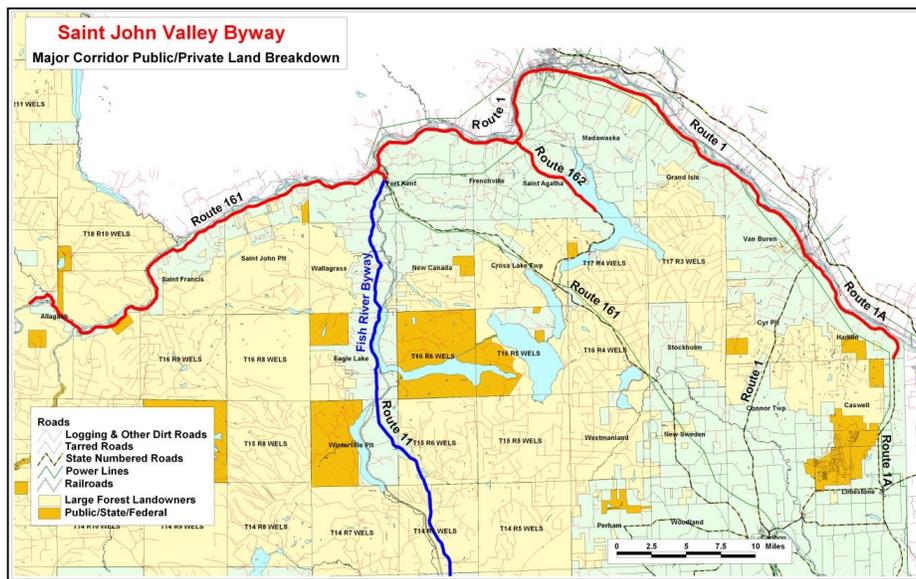
The impetus to create the St. John Valley Cultural Byway came from a simple notion: the time was right. The western part of the region had already received designation on June 28, 1971 for the Fish River Scenic Byway of Route 11 from Portage Lake to Fort Kent. With selection of the St. John Valley as the location of the *Congrès mondial acadien* (World Acadian Congress) in 2014, staff at the MaineDOT and the Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) discussed a strategy to develop an application for designation and to secure funding for planning and project development.

The *Congrès* is a Canadian-led celebration of Acadian culture that takes place every five years in different locations. In August 2014, tens of thousands of people from around the world will gather for family reunions, performances and conferences in the international region of the St. John Valley, which includes northeastern Maine, northwestern New Brunswick, and southeastern Québec.

With the April 2010 designation, the St. John Valley Cultural Byway was born. Notably, the region’s French heritage was at the forefront of consideration for designation. It is the distinctive blend of the Acadian and French-Canadian culture that resonated strongly. MaineDOT reviewers noted that this significant intrinsic asset would make it distinct from all other Maine byways.

Ultimately, however, the byway builds upon over 40 years of efforts by regional, state and national groups. These include the region’s historical societies, the National Park Service, Maine Acadian Heritage Council, and the Acadian Archives at the University of Maine at Fort Kent, as well as numerous cultural initiatives and studies. The region benefits from a ground swell of community engagement, planning and projects around the region’s distinct culture and history. These efforts celebrate the predominant Acadian and French-Canadian³ culture, along with the Scots-Irish and Native American cultures.

The byway is a manifestation of all of these efforts. It is an initiative that comes from the source. As a kind of synthesizer, the byway helps to coalesce these efforts and leverage regional assets, providing a tangible, interactive, and experiential way for residents and visitors to experience the culture of the region.



The 104 miles of the St. John Valley Cultural Byway encompasses the entire stretch of the region from Allagash to Hamlin primarily along the St. John River on U.S. Route 1, and including the communities of Cyr Plantation, St. Agatha, and Sinclair.

³ We use the term French-Canadian in this plan. Though interchangeable with Québécois, the term French Canadian better represents the region’s French heritage and connection with Québec.

What is a Byway?

Though the St. John Valley byway is not yet designated a national byway, it is still part of a national network of other state byways.⁴ The National Scenic Byways Program was established in 1991 through the U.S. Secretary of Transportation. The program recognizes certain roads as National Scenic Byways or All-American Roads based on their archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic qualities. The program's mission is to provide resources to the byway community to create unique travel experiences and enhance local quality of life through efforts to preserve, protect, interpret and promote the intrinsic qualities of designated byways.

The National Scenic Byways Program defines a “scenic byway” as:

A public road having special scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archaeological, and/or natural qualities that have been recognized as such through legislation or some other official declaration.

The term “byway” refers not only to the road or highway itself but also to the region through which it passes.⁵ Byways offer on-byway driving experiences that lead to many “off the beaten path” roadways where drivers can explore and experience the scenery, culture, history and special features of an area, that provide opportunities that might otherwise be missed. Essentially, byways could be considered as roads that tell a story—gateways to unique adventures and paths to better understand the nation's history and cultures.

The benefits of becoming a designated byway are numerous. Being part of a state and national network in itself is enormously helpful to promote the region and access invaluable resources. A byway helps to promote the region, build partnerships within the region as well as outside, focus in on issues such as preservation and stewardship of intrinsic qualities, and is contributes to fostering a sense of local pride.

A designated byway creates a legacy and offers opportunities to preserve special places. The visitor is at the core of the byway program. For the St. John Valley Cultural Byway, the goal is to offer an experience for residents to love and enjoy, and one that will also attract visitors from around the world.

⁴ Maine's Scenic Byways – www.exploremaine.org/byways; National Scenic Byways – www.fhwa.dot.gov/byways

⁵ FHWA Interim Policy, May 18, 1995

1.2 Planning Team

Planning the byway was a team effort, which included a working group, byway planning committee, stakeholder group, and various organizations and individuals who provided insight and resources. Consultant services were provided and coordinated by the Northern Maine Development Commission.

Working Group

The working group was composed of professionals from the MaineDOT, NMDC, and independent consultants. It was responsible for initiation of the planning process, management of the project, which included direction, planning, research, outreach, writing, and implementation. With oversight of the byway planning committee, it gathered information about intrinsic qualities, organized and facilitated meetings, and wrote the plan.

Working group members

Brian Longstaff, (former) Program Director, NMDC
Fred Michaud, Scenic Byway Program Coordinator, MaineDOT
Sheila Jans, Cultural Development Consultant, CultureWorth
Bruce Hazard, PlaceWorks Consulting

Additional support was provided by:

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Jay Kamm, Senior Planner, NMDC
Alain Ouellette, Planning and Development Division Director, NMDC
Jon Gulliver, Director of Investor and Community Relations, NMDC
Leslie Jackson, (former) Regional Tourism Developer and IT Design Developer, NMDC
Larry Johannesman, Landscape Architect, MaineDOT
Nancy Montgomery, Principal, Montgomery Design

Planning Committee

The byway planning committee (formally referred to as the Corridor Advocacy Group) was composed of volunteers from throughout the St. John Valley representing a broad range of regional businesses, nonprofits and institutions. It was the “roll up your sleeves” group. Its primary role focused on identifying and assessing the region’s intrinsic qualities, discussing cultural identity, and defining the purpose and values of the byway. The committee provided oversight of the project, setting its direction, and providing comments and approval of the elements included in the plan.

Over the year of planning, the committee met seven times for two-hour meetings in varying locations in the region. Committee members offered substantive information about the region’s sites and resources, selected themes and high priority projects, and helped to establish a clear purpose, goals and priorities for the byway.

Issues considered include: *What are the unique intrinsic qualities of the byway and region through which it passes? What is our primary message and essential stories to share? Where are key sites and what are the activities best suited to display and tell unique stories that will engage visitors in a meaningful way? What is their condition and quality?*

Planning committee members

Donald Cyr, Director, Musée culturel du Mont-Carmel, Lille
Norman Cyr, (former) President, Maine Chapter, *Congrès mondiale acadien*, Madawaska
Rachelle DeFarges, Co-founder, Acadian Culture Exchange, Madawaska
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Donald Guimond, Town manager, Fort Kent
Bruno Hicks, Professor of Education, University of Maine at Fort Kent, Fort Kent
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Lise Pelletier, Director, Acadian Archives, University of Maine at Fort Kent, Fort Kent
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Louis Pelletier III, Owner, Allagash Wood Products, Allagash
Daniel Picard, Principal, Majuscule Design, Madawaska
Therese Provenzano, Art Lecturer, University of Maine at Fort Kent, Wallagrass
Judy Paradis, Board member, Maine Acadian Heritage Council, Frenchville
Rosaire Paradis, Board member, Association Française de la Vallée St-Jean, Frenchville
Kathy Kelly Rioux, Retired educator, St. Francis
Christy Sirois, Town manager, St. Agatha
Raymond (Butch) Thibodeau, Board member, Aroostook Agency on Aging, Sinclair

Additional contributors (*locations in Maine unless otherwise noted*)

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Beatrice Craig, PhD, Professor of History, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario
Guy Dubay, History consultant, Madawaska
George Dumond, President, Maine Chapter, *Congrès Mondiale Acadien*, Fort Kent
Nicole Lang, Professor of History, University of Moncton, Edmundston, New Brunswick
Reverend Jacques Lapointe, OFM, Notre-Dame du Mont-Carmel Parish, Madawaska
Richard Lyness, (former) Assistant Coordinator, Maine Chapter, *Congrès Mondiale Acadien*, Madawaska
Lisa Ornstein, Former Director, Acadian Archives, University of Maine at Fort Kent, Fort Kent
David Putnam, Lecturer of Science, University of Maine at Presque Isle, Presque Isle
Mariella Squire, Assoc. Professor, Anthropology/Sociology, University of Maine at Fort Kent, Fort Kent

Stakeholder Group

Another important group that helped to shape directions of the byway plan was the stakeholder group. The stakeholder group represented the general public of the St. John Valley such as landowners, cultural and nature-based groups, government officials, business people, and individuals who were consulted in the process of developing the byway. Meeting twice over the span of the year, its role was to respond and offer insight to the planning outcomes of the byway planning committee.

1.3 Planning Methodology

Planning for the creation of this corridor management and partnership plan was an extensive public process involving a wide range of people from throughout the St. John Valley. For two years, a planning team, comprised of a professional working group and a volunteer planning committee, worked together to shape the byway and this management plan.

The next step after the MaineDOT approved the byway application was to complete the Corridor Management and Partnership Plan (CMPP). The strong focus on collaboration and public process provided a wide range of voices and insight. According to the National Scenic Byway Program, the CMPP recognizes and represents three essential ingredients:

- the plan is a voluntary multi-community agreement;
- each community has a set of goals and objectives to support its own individual expectations;
- all the expectations collectively support the common vision for the corridor.

Our Path of Planning

The path of planning the byway spanned from April 2012 to June 2014. First steps included identifying volunteers for the planning committee and engaging stakeholders. The stakeholder meeting oriented the general public to the byway program and was intended to cultivate participation. Once the planning committee was in place, it focused on identifying and assessing the region's intrinsic qualities, discussing the region's cultural identity, and defining the purpose and values of the byway. By fall 2012, work products included key themes for the byway story, a narrative that framed the traveler experience, and identifying the byway's target market.

By early 2013, the planning committee began shaping the byway goals, strategies and actions for a five-to-ten-year period. Final steps included the creation of a byway mission and vision statement. In parallel with these efforts was the planning and creation of byway interpretative panels. Committee members and experts from the community helped to ensure that the wayside exhibits were consistent with the planning effort and depicted the byway's intrinsic values.

Once a draft of the management plan was written and adopted by the byway planning committee, the plan was presented to the region's stakeholders. These final steps were critical in establishing a vision for the implementation of the plan, as well as the organizational and fiscal sustainability of the byway effort.

Outreach and Communications

Outreach with the region consisted of close to a dozen press releases and newspaper articles written about the progress of the byway planning effort, a regional gathering of historical societies and cultural groups to discuss their role in the byway, and many one-on-one conversations with local town managers and other stakeholders. For example, as a result of this outreach, the towns of Fort Kent and Frenchville in discussion with members of the working group, were able to advance key initiatives in their towns that complemented the byway. An extensive planning website was designed for the planning committee to access materials from the planning process, which included a rich collection of meeting agendas, Powerpoint presentations, drafts of narratives, and support material. The website also provided an opportunity to the general public and interested agencies to learn about the output of the process. Press coverage and outreach materials are included in the appendix.

Resources

This management plan relied heavily on important resources, reports, and studies that had already been produced in the region. Some include:

Regional Cultural Groups and Historical Societies – The decades of efforts by the region’s museums, cultural groups, and historical societies provide invaluable insight. A range of resources helped to enrich the byway story, such as books like *Where the Heck is Wheelock, Maine*, by Faye O’Leary Hafford; *Les Filles de la Sagesse*, produced by the Ste-Agathe Historical Society, and *Memories Grow on Trees*, by Gene N. Perreault, along with the French library at the Centre Français de la Vallée St-Jean, and members of the organizing committee of Maine’s chapter for the *Congrès mondiale acadien*.

“Acadian Culture in Maine” – This publication is one of many that grew out of extensive ethnographic studies of the St. John Valley in the early to mid-1990’s by the National Park Service (NPS). Mandated by the U.S. Congress to provide for the preservation and interpretation of Acadian culture in Maine, the NPS and the Maine Acadian Culture Preservation Commission, provided an invaluable series of studies and reports about the culture and history of the region. (<http://www.nps.gov/maac/index.htm>)

The Voici the Valley Audio Story and Guidebook – Accompaniments to the Voici the Valley Cultureway, an international cultural route between northern Maine and New Brunswick, this 80-minute cultural audio documentary shares a story about the people and events of the area from the 1600’s to today. The guidebook is a 27-page publication with photographs, information about museums, historic and natural sites, touring opportunities, and details about the area. (<http://www.voicithethevalley.org>)

“The Land in Between” – This book is an extensive account of the Upper St. John Valley from prehistory to World War I, the first volume of a new history of Madawaska. The second volume, *The Land Divided*, will cover the period from World War 1 to present day.

St. John Valley Creative Economy Project – This two-year research initiative was a collaborative effort of the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center at the University of Maine and the University of Maine at Fort Kent. The research focused on how to strengthen the region’s communities and economy through culture and place. (<http://www.umfk.edu/economy/>)

Parallel Effort

As planning for the byway progressed, a parallel initiative for the creation of interpretative panels was also underway. It is unusual to develop interpretative panels (wayside exhibits) simultaneously with the creation of the byway and its management plan. Usually, efforts of this magnitude are done after the plan is completed. However, because of the visitor drawing power of the *Congrès mondiale acadien* (tens of thousands of visitors from around the world for two weeks in August, 2014), planners considered it ideal timing to create close to 30 bilingual (English and French) panels along the byway.

These wayside exhibits are placed at public access areas such as on sidewalks, parks, town offices, and museum sites. They will enrich the visitor’s experience to the byway and share the stories of the region’s culture and place. More detail about the wayside exhibits project can be found in section 2.4.

Planning Meetings

As a team, the working group and the planning committee met seven times at varying locations throughout the St. John Valley. Since travel distances, cost for fuel, and investment of time were factors in volunteer participation, every effort was made to link people in to the meetings electronically. For example, some meetings were held in two locations at the same time, one being the primary location where the working group met, and the secondary location linked in electronically with volunteers.

Some members could not attend the meetings in person, so they were able to participate through video conferencing either in their home or at satellite locations, such as the NMDC offices in Caribou. Because of the amount of content to discuss and the time and resource restrictions, meetings were rigorous. They usually lasted two hours, with a great deal of pre-meeting preparation and post-meeting follow up.

The following is an overview of the meetings that took place in the planning process for this management plan. This includes those with the planning committee, stakeholders, a gathering of historical societies, and discussions that focused on a specific issue that involved planning committee members. The working group met close to 25 times in separate planning meetings, mostly by telephone.

April 19, 2012 – Kick-Off Meeting for Stakeholders, St. Agatha

- General public invited from throughout region; introduction of working group
- Presented scope of byway program, planning process, and goals
- Open discussion and gained insight from stakeholders
- Received applications of interest to serve as volunteers on byway committee

June 22, 2012 – Secondary Stakeholder Meeting, Allagash

- Working group meet with western byway towns unable to attend kick-off meeting in St. Agatha.

August 22, 2012 – Planning Committee Meeting, Fort Kent

- Review of byway program, process for planning, CMPP, tourism market data, maps
- Discussed sites, resources, and groups
- Identified preliminary goals, potential themes for byway and lead intrinsic qualities
- Received update of the *Congres mondial acadien (CMA)*

September 25, 2012 – Planning Committee Meeting, Madawaska

- Discussed byway purpose and values; set preliminary goals for both
- Further identified intrinsic qualities, resources, conservation needs and approaches
- Discussed structure of byway, how to build the experience, and what visitors will see
- Began discussing potential partners, putting key sites on a map

October 30, 2012 – Planning Committee Meeting, Fort Kent

- Discussed investment, infrastructure, networks, business development, marketing, etc.
- Expanded upon framing/mapping the visitor's byway experience
- Focused on purpose statement; discussed cultural identity, what "Acadian" means locally
- Overview of interpretative panels project and creation of subcommittee
- Launching of byway planning website

December 3 and 6th, 2012 – Teleconference meetings

- Teleconference meetings with working group, committee members and additional scholars to discuss aspects of cultural identity of the region to help shape the byway purpose statement

Planning meetings continued

December 11, 2012 – Planning Committee Meeting, Van Buren

- Presentation of purpose statement and adopted by planning committee
- Discussed first draft of goals and strategies for the future of the byway
- Discussed resources and sites on maps, linking with existing initiatives

January 29, 2013 – Planning Committee Meeting, Fort Kent

- Review of process, discussion of scope of CMPP
- Finetuning of themes, subthemes, maps, and stories for the byway experience

April 10 and 16, 2013 – Teleconference meetings

- Teleconference meetings with planning committee to review text for traveler experience

April 18, 2013 – Planning Committee Meeting, Fort Kent

- Presented overview of shaping a vision
- Reviewed goals, strategies and actions, discussed high priority projects
- Overview of status of interpretative panels

May 15, 2013 – Regional gathering of museums and cultural groups, St. Agatha

- Discussion of cultural activities in the region
- Update of byway progress, discussion of how to build regional collaborations
- Presentation of byway themes
- Introduction of state agencies

June....2014

- Review and feedback on key components of management plan
- Approval of plan by committee, roll out with stakeholders

1.4 Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission

The mission statement describes the byway's fundamental purpose. It provides the byway management committee with an essential framework for future planning and success.

The mission of the St. John Valley Cultural Byway is to celebrate the region's distinct international blend of French heritage, care for our cultural and natural assets, foster tourism opportunities to attract visitors from around the world, and enrich the quality of life for residents.

Vision

In shaping the vision statement, the byway planning committee crafted a compelling and vivid image of the desired future for the byway.

The vision of the St. John Valley Cultural Byway is a world destination for residents and visitors to enjoy our rich history, vibrant culture, and beautiful landscape. Communities along the byway's 104-miles of road work together to share authentic and unparalleled tourism experiences about who we are – our diversity, traditions, French language, and ways of life. The byway is integral to building a better quality of life for residents through insightful management, quality products and services, collaboration with public, private, and nonprofit groups, and investment in preservation and stewardship. We strive to build a lasting legacy that fosters a sense of regional pride, inspires international cooperation, and establishes our place within the story of our nation.

Values

Identifying what the byway planning committee cherishes and considers the highest priority was a critical step in shaping the byway's purpose, mission, and vision. Values help to guide the planning process and form the foundation for going forward. The byway planning committee identified the following values as the guiding principles in the planning and managing the byway:

- *Promote a unifying and distinguishing regional cultural identity*
- *Be inclusive, authentic and truthful*
- *Steward and honor our culture, heritage, and land*
- *Create accessible, appealing, and enduring experiences*
- *Be attentive to how we market the byway*
- *Remember our international context*
- *Build in sustainability*

Goals

There are four byway goals with attendant objectives. For a full narrative on the goals, objectives and

actions, see Section 4.0.

1. Educate – Raise awareness of the region’s diverse cultural heritage.

- Strive to sustain important qualities and key assets unique to each byway community and collaborate with organizations to raise public awareness and foster community pride about the region’s identity and cultural heritage.
- Develop approaches that reflect, bring forth, and support the bilingual character of the region.
- Be open and attentive to cooperating on promotional and awareness-building initiatives of the region’s international nature.
- Build on and link with, regional and external cultural development efforts that benefit the byway.

2. Steward – Preserve, enhance, and protect our cultural, historical, scenic, and natural assets.

- Broaden awareness of the importance of preservation, protection and stewardship of cultural, historical, scenic, and natural intrinsic assets. Encourage individual and collaborative efforts for preservation and stewardship that support byway integrity and sustainability.
- Enhance and protect the scenic quality of the region’s landscape, including downtowns.

3. Develop – Foster growth of regional tourism and economic opportunities.

- Enhance the visitor experience through safe access to the byway, wayfinding and interpretive information, investment in infrastructure, and product development.
- Coordinate with Aroostook County Tourism and Maine Office Tourism to enhance market and tourism opportunities.
- Foster a better quality of life in communities along the byway by educating municipalities, businesses and nonprofit groups, of the potential opportunities that the byway can provide.

4. Sustain – Establish byway management and communications that reflect our values.

- Create an entity to oversee the management and sustainability of the byway.
- Foster cooperation and build relationships to enhance visibility and sustainability of the byway.
- Develop effective communications strategies that promote the byway and surrounding areas as a unique destination worth the drive.

The Byway Experience

2.1 Intrinsic Qualities Assessment

An essential step in the planning process for the St. John Valley Cultural Byway was identifying the intrinsic qualities of the region. This important step of assessment helped to set the stage for further byway development efforts, such as the parallel interpretative panels initiative for wayside exhibits.

The National Scenic Byways Program defines intrinsic quality as: “features that are considered representative, unique, irreplaceable, or distinctly characteristic of an area.”⁶ Intrinsic qualities arise from a byway’s particular combination of resources that define its character, interest and appeal. These resources are the special views, places, buildings, sites and other features that residents enjoy and that provide the byway’s drawing power and interest for travelers. A resource can be natural, such as a gorge, mountain or lake; or it may be the result of human activity, such as a historic building, battle site, or well-designed parkway.

According to the national byways program, there are six intrinsic qualities: Archaeological, Cultural, Historical, Natural, Recreational, and Scenic. The St. John Valley Cultural Byway planning committee identified the **Cultural Intrinsic Quality** as the primary intrinsic quality. Because of the close connection of the historic intrinsic quality with the cultural, it was decided to merge the two. The other intrinsic qualities serve to support and complement the cultural and historic intrinsic qualities.

Maine’s First Cultural Byway

The St. John Valley Cultural Byway is the first cultural byway in Maine, setting it apart from all other byways in the state. Further, because of its distinct characteristics, it is argueably one of the most unique cultural byways in the nation. From the early 1900’s scholarly attention was given to the history and culture of the St. John Valley with numerous studies and books, followed by a blossoming of historical societies in the 1960s.

By the early 1990’s Congress passes the Maine Acadian Culture Preservation Act and ethnographic studies by the National Park Service began. Efforts continued in the shape of assessments, research (e.g., *St. John Valley Creative Economy Project*) and dissertations on culture and language (e.g., French language research by Geneviève Massignon, Marie-Anne Gauvin, and Joe Price); the creation of an international cultural route (Voici the Valley Cultureway), and the writing of innumerable books and articles (e.g., *The Land in Between, Voyages*).

For years, travel writers have written about the distinct cultural experience of the St. John Valley. Articles in *The New York Times*, *Yankee Magazine*, *Portland Press Herald*, or *DownEast Magazine*, for example, underscore the special character of the place. A 2013 visit by *The Lonely Planet*’s U.S. Editor, Robert Reid, emerged from his interest to experience the region firsthand after the renowned global travel organization identified northern Maine as one of the top ten US travel destinations for 2013.

The following pages in this plan provide an overview of the intrinsic qualities completed as part of an initial planning exercise completed in October 2012. These lists are not definitive; they served as planning purposes, and illustrating the richness of the region’s assets.

2.1.a Cultural and Historic Intrinsic Qualities

⁶ National Scenic Byways Program, FHWA Interim Policy, May 18, 1995. It identifies six intrinsic qualities: Archaeological, Cultural, Historic, Natural, Recreational, and Scenic.

The byway planning committee determined that the Cultural Intrinsic Quality as the predominate quality that illustrates the essence of the byway. This quality overlaps significantly with the Historic Intrinsic Quality, and as a result, the following narrative combines both.⁷

The Cultural Intrinsic Quality refers to:

- Evidence and expressions of customs or traditions;
- Crafts, music, dance, rituals, festivals, speech, food, special events, vernacular architecture, etc.;
- Activities and expressions currently practiced.

The Historic Intrinsic Quality refers to:

- Legacies of the past associated with physical elements of landscape, natural or human-made;
- Possess historic significance that educates and stirs appreciation for the past;
- Reflects actions of people and may include buildings, settlement patterns, etc.

Elements that contribute to the Cultural and Historic Intrinsic Qualities:

- Early settlement
- Peoples: Acadian, French Canadian, Native American, Scots-Irish
- Faith, character and values
- French language
- Folk arts and traditions
- Traditional occupations and activities
- Collections, historic and cultural sites
- Festivals and events
- Vernacular architecture
- International boundary and connections
- Resources and services

On an Edge

The St. John Valley has been described as a land on the edge – “on the edge of two countries, the edge of two cultures, the edge of past and future.”⁸ This evocative description is about a place like no other. Before the creation of the international border in 1842, this was one territory, called the Madawaska Settlement. This large territory included parts of southeastern Québec, northwestern New Brunswick, and northeastern Maine where early Acadian and French-Canadian settlers merged with first inhabitants.

The territory was founded on the experiences of the Native Americans and First Nations, the French founding families (whose ancestors live in the region today), impact of wars (like the French-Indian, 1812, Northeast Boundary Dispute), and the establishment of the border with its ensuing impact on the social, cultural, and economic fabric of the Maine side of the border.

There are four primary indigeneous groups in the St. John Valley: the Acadians, French-Canadians, Scots-Irish, and Native Americans. The predominant group is of French heritage – Acadians and French-Canadians. In spite of great adversity, the French language has survived in the region, flourishing with its own regional particularities (e.g., idioms, syntax, pronunciation). The Scots-Irish settled primarily in the western part of the region. The Native Americans (Maliseet) have been strongly assimilated today, but their early presence significantly impacted this area through survival, transportation, food, language, and

⁷ See the appendix for more details on all intrinsic qualities. The Archaeological Intrinsic Quality is not treated separately in this plan.

⁸ “Madawaska Down East with a French Accent,” Perry Garfinkel, *National Geographic Magazine*, Volume 158, No. 3, September 1980, p. 380.

ways of life. The St. John Valley Cultural Byway celebrates the blend of these cultures and how their interconnection contribute to a distinct regional culture.

The region's strong ties to Canada are essential in defining the culture. There are strong family connections, shared French language and values, deep historical ties, commercial, cultural and recreational activities. Moreover, the ties that bind the people of Maine's St. John Valley with their Canadian neighbors, also extend to communities of French heritage in the rest of Maine, the Cajuns in Louisiana, and the French-speaking world in general. ⁹

The region's strong sense of identity is shaped by the culture, language, and traditions. Clearly evident is the character of the people of this region, considered hardworking, inventive, modest, attentive to maintaining tidy properties, with strong connections to family and community. Many of these characteristics are strongly rooted in the values of the Roman Catholic religion. Sisters, like the *Soeurs du Bon Pasteur, Filles de la Sagesse*, Sisters of the Holy Rosary, especially played a fundamental role in health, education, and social fabric of communities in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The region is home to six historic churches (three on the National Register of Historic Places) along with historic cemeteries. Roadside crosses and grottos are in every community, and people continue to participate in religious observances (e.g., *Mardi gras*).

These religious observances merge with the traditional crafts and foods, such as the braiding of palm leaves for Easter Sunday (called *rameau tressé*) and dishes like *tourtière* (meat pie). These traditions have continued to today, along with many other expressions including various handwork and craft, such as rugbraiding and weaving, woodworking (carving, basket and snowshoe making); cuisine (canning, maple syrup, buckwheat pancakes called *ployes*); storytelling, dancing, and music (*complaintes* from 16th century France). There is a rich array of historic place names for roads and towns that are still used today, and traditional moon-sign gardening is still practised today.

Since early settlement in the late 1700's, the people of the St. John Valley have been strongly connected to the land. Occupations grew from logging and farming, helping to shape an economy for the region. The museums in Allagash and St. Francis, for example, celebrate the region's deep logging history, lumber camps, river drives, boatmaking and lumbering adaptations. The region's railway and its important role of transporting logs and potatoes is illustrated in many of the region's museums, such as the St. Francis Historical Museum and the Fort Kent Historical Museum, a former railway station. The St. John Valley's long lot farms and rich, fertile soil were ideal for success in farming. The region was a world leader in the potato industry from the 1930's to the 1970's, which opened up the nation to the region.

Along with potatoes, traditional crops like oats, buckwheat and flax flourished and continues to be grown today and harvest time in the fall continues to be recognized as a region-wide effort. Vernacular architecture is entwined with the economy of the region with the creation of double barns, potato houses, and specific architectural devices. There remains pioneer hand-hewn square log houses (most are privately owned and disguised under modern architecture), farm houses, and specific design elements such as ship's knees, roof design, summer kitchens, outdoor ovens.

Considered by some as the "gatekeepers to the memories of our communities," the inordinately large number of historical societies for such a small region, undertake a herculean task to preserve and celebrate the region's diverse history and culture. Thirteen historical museums are home to impressive collections on the region's lumbering and farming industry, railways, religion, language, furniture,

⁹ This section on intrinsic assets is significantly sourced from the *Upper Saint John Valley Cultural Assessment*, by Sheila Jans, Senior Fellow of the Quebec-Labrador Foundation, 2003, and the *St. John Valley Creative Economy Project*, author Sheila Jans et al, Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center, 2010.

textiles, and daily ephemera. They also feature historic buildings, photographs and documents, textiles, furniture, genealogical information, and war memorabilia.

Seven of these museums are on the National Register of Historic Places, in addition to six private residences and three churches. The Fort Kent Block House in the town of Fort Kent is a National Historic Landmark and State Historic Site. A regional cultural group dedicated to the French language is home to one of the state's largest French libraries. The area boasts many historic churches and private residences (some with traditional handhewn log construction), commemorative sites and monuments, and nine libraries and archives with extensive collections on genealogy, language, and history.

Over 30 annual festivals and events bring the region's love of culture and place to life. These include local, regional, and international events for skiing, snowmobiling, fishing, language, maple syrup and harvest, music, traditional arts, sled dog races, cycling, and family reunions. The majority are completely volunteer-operated, some organized through the local chambers of commerce.

Besides the on-the-ground nature of so many individuals and groups, the region also benefits from the support and participation of regional and state institutions like the University of Maine at Fort Kent, county-wide nonprofits such as the Northern Maine Development Commission, state departments such as the Maine DOT, and federal agencies such as the National Park Service.

2.1.b Scenic and Natural Intrinsic Qualities

We recognize that the Scenic and Natural Intrinsic Qualities support and enhance the byway and provide value to the visitor experience. For the purposes of planning and this narrative, these two intrinsic qualities are merged. See the appendix for more details.

The Scenic Intrinsic Quality refers to:

- Heightened visual experience from the view of byway's natural and human-made elements;
- Characteristics are strikingly distinct and offer pleasing and memorable visual experiences (such as landforms, water, vegetation, human-made development).

The Natural Intrinsic Quality refers to:

- Features in visual environment that are in relatively undisturbed state;
- Predate arrival of human populations;
- Geological formations, fossils, landform, water bodies, vegetation, and wildlife.

Elements that contribute to the Scenic and Natural Intrinsic Qualities in the St. John Valley:

- St. John River and river valley with rolling hills, farmland, plateau
- Waterways - wetlands, lakes, rivers, streams, forests, bogs, falls
- Twisting roads, vistas from the plateaus
- Open, clear skies
- "Tidy" properties
- Vernacular and religious architecture
- Flora and fauna
- International setting

Full Splendour

The byway moves through a distinctive geography. The region is a river valley, part of the St. John River watershed, benefiting from rolling hills, curving roads, fertile fields and a broad plateau. The undulating St. John River is the longest free-flowing river east of Mississippi at 435 miles, one of the largest watersheds in the eastern North America. Its significance is its history as an historical highway, serving as a communications and travel route for hundreds of years, and its function as an international border. As one drives through the region, well-groomed properties stand out, as do the numerous historic churches, cemeteries and intact barns.

Near the northern evergreen boreal forest and considered part of the Acadian or Laurentide Forest, the region is rich with cedar, pine, spruce, fir, beech, birch, and aspen. It experiences a moderately humid climate with short, cool summers and long, cold winters with an average snowfall of 100 inches, usually starting in November and lasting until April. The coldest months are from November to March with an average of 50 days of below zero degrees F. Daily high temperatures for June, July and August fall between 70-80 degrees F. The autumn's warm days and crisp nights contribute to a fantastic display of foliage.

The Valley is home to beautiful rivers, expansive forests, wetlands, and lakes, waterfalls (like the 40-foot drop of cascading water at the Allagash Falls). There is an abundance of fauna, such as moose, snowy owl, deer, and landlocked salmon. Because the St. John River remains undammed through most of the region, rare plants of regional, state and national significance can flourish. The banks of the river are home to the greatest number and variety of rare and distinct plant species of any other place in Maine, second only to Mount Katahdin.

One of the Valley's prized rare plants is the Furbish Lousewort (*Pedicularis furbishiae*), currently on the U.S. Endangered Species list. Other rare plants include the St. John Oxytrope (*Oxytropis campestris* var. *johannensis*), New England Violet (*Viola novae-angliae* House), St. John Tansy (*Tanacetum bipinnatum*), and the Northern Painted Cup (*Castilleja septentrionalis*). The 10-acre St. John Quaking Bog in Fort Kent is home to wild orchids and bog laurel.

The byway is close to the deep North Maine Woods, world-famous Allagash Wilderness Waterway, numerous hiking areas and the Fish River Scenic Byway. The spring thaw on the St. John River, provide a rare and dramatic experience. Stunning vistas of the St. John River, the undulating hills, expansive forest and farmland, are found everywhere, like on Morneault Road and the Lavertu Settlement in Grand Isle, near Lille and Cyr Plantation into Van Buren, Star Barn Road in Frenchville, Flat Mountain Road in St. Agatha, or Violette Settlement Road in Fort Kent. Because of the international nature of the St. John Valley, the region benefits from the rich scenic and natural assets in New Brunswick and Québec.

2.1.c Recreational Intrinsic Quality

We recognize that the region's Recreational Intrinsic Qualities support and enhance the byway and provide value to the visitor experience.

The Recreational Intrinsic Quality refers to:

- Outdoor recreational activities associated with/dependent upon natural and cultural elements;
- Provide opportunities for active and passive experiences (skiing, rafting, hiking, boating, etc.);
- Driving the byway itself may qualify as a pleasurable recreational experience.

Elements that contribute to the Recreational Intrinsic Quality in the St. John Valley include:

- Rivers, lakes, waterways
- Forests, fields, wildlife
- U.S. Route 1 along the St. John River
- Four season experiences

Natural Paradise

The St. John Valley's abundant rivers, lakes, brooks, fields and forests, flora and fauna, provide rich, four-season outdoor experiences. Local residents and visitors enjoy a wide range of activities such as snowmobiling, all-terrain vehicle riding, fishing, hunting, boating, canoeing and kayaking, motorcycling, Nordic and down-hill skiing, hiking, bikeriding, birdwatching, and camping.

The region offers several state rest areas, numerous campgrounds, and the North Maine Woods of over 3.5 million acres of top quality commercial forest with camping, hunting and recreational opportunities. Nearly 2,500 miles of maintained trails throughout the entire region await snowmobilers in the winter and all-terrain vehicles in the summer. Touring enthusiasts can enjoy the main and secondary roads that follow the St. John River and plateau rising from its shores. Motorcyclists are especially welcome at the Four Corners Park in Madawaska.

Trails like the Four Seasons Trail in Madawaska and the Fort Kent Heritage Trail are excellent for non-motorized activities such as hiking and snowshoeing, along with cycling. Nordic skiing takes place on trails throughout the region, notably on groomed and biathlon standard trails in Fort Kent and Madawaska. Downhill skiing is available in Fort Kent at the 10th Mountain Ski Lodge, sled dog racing in Eagle Lake and Fort Kent (the 250-mile Can-Am Crown in Fort Kent is a qualifying race for the Iditarod). Cyclists enjoy mapped cycle tours as part of the Tour de la Vallée race and other organized tours.

Access to the St. John River, the longest free flowing river east of the Mississippi River, and region's lakes provides high quality fishing and boating. The 92-mile Allagash Wilderness Waterway, for example, attracts people from around the world, and is canoeable throughout the entire summer, surrounded by mountains and lush forest. The region is also home to part of the Northern Forest Canoe Trail, a 740-mile paddling trail across the Adirondacks and northern New England connecting Allagash and Fort Kent.

Besides excellent boating, the Fish River Chain of Lakes is home to some of the best wild brook trout (Brookies) and Lake Trout (Togue) in Maine and New England, and Long Lake is rated one of the top landlocked salmon waters in New England. Other species include lake trout, chubs, yellow perch, shiners and minnows. Winter fishing is popular on the lakes. Muskellunge (Muskie) is now part of the St. John River system celebrated by International Muskie Derby attracting hundreds of anglers.

Maple trees are plentiful, yielding delicious maple syrup, enjoyed at various events and traditional maple-sugar camps and events. Populations of deer, moose, coyote and other mammals such as black bear, fisher, marten, fox, lynx, beaver, porcupine, are abundant. Bird watchers find rough grouse, spruce grouse, nuthatches, winter wrens, chickadees, the common loon, osprey and bald eagle. The region has many registered Maine Guides who provide high quality services.

2.1.d Maintaining and Enhancing Intrinsic Qualities

Fortunately, the byway is situated in a region that has a long history of maintaining and enhancing its intrinsic qualities. The strong sense of pride and dedication in the region's culture and heritage by institutions and individuals ensures that stories are told, museums remain open, buildings are restored, collections are promoted, and festivals are held. Even though a lack of funding, overreliance on volunteers, and lack of leadership, puts a strain on these efforts, there is an enduring commitment to maintenance and enhancement.

The byway planning laid a strong foundation for understanding the intrinsic qualities in greater depth. Building upon earlier efforts of assessment, the planning for the byway produced comprehensive inventories of key cultural and historic assets, as well as scenic and recreational. Stakeholders of the byway include the institutions, businesses and individuals who have historically held true to maintaining and enhancing intrinsic qualities of the region. It would not be disingenuous to not be confident in relying on these same sources for continued support.

For example, the Maine Acadian Heritage Council, a byway stakeholder, receives annual funds from the National Park Service to re-grant to museums to support tour guides, restoration, events, and collection maintenance. They also participate in the creation of publications that help to generate additional revenues to support itself and its membership. The Acadian Archives at the University of Maine at Fort Kent is another major byway stakeholder. Over the past several years, the Archives has become more than an essential service for research – it has become a cultural center, one that sponsors exhibitions, performances, and various activities that advance the region's diverse heritage groups. Other byway-supporting entities include municipalities, chambers of commerce, historical societies, cultural groups, and nature-based and recreational groups such as the Four Seasons Association.

The four goals of the byway as outlined in this plan clearly embrace a high level of stewardship, preservation, support, and celebration, of the intrinsic qualities of the byway. Through a combination of direct programming and collaboration with existing groups, the byway will be part of the solution for maintaining and enhancing the region's key assets. For example, byway management will capitalize on the momentum of the *Congrès mondiale acadien*, namely the level of awareness it has raised about the culture and heritage of the region. Additionally, the close to 30 wayside exhibits that were created in tandem with the byway planning, will make tangible key themes and stories for the visitor.

2.2 Market Analysis, Target Market and Opportunities

The Maine Office of Tourism (MOT) conducts annual visitor research to provide information on tourism activity in Maine and to explore the motivations of visitors. The following is a summary report on the findings from that research for the state of Maine, followed by Aroostook County.¹⁰

Visitors to Maine

In 2012-2013 Maine entertained close to 40 million visitors – over 20 million overnight, and 18 million day trip visitors. More than half came to Maine for leisure visits, while retail, food and lodging made up the bulk of spending by overnight visitors.

When planning a visit to Maine, decision time is generally within three weeks of arriving to Maine. People under the age of 35 are more likely to turn to friends, relatives and coworkers for advice on trip planning, and Canadians (74%) are more likely than U.S. travelers (64%) to use the Internet in planning an overnight trip to Maine. Online search engines, regional websites, and VisitMaine.com are the most popular choices for online trip planning. Over one-third of visitors still order a hard copy of the *Maine Invites You* destination guide. More visitors are conducting research on activities using mobile devices while in Maine. This presents an opportunity for them to modify their itinerary (this trend applies more to first time visitors than repeats, those families with children, and day trippers).

Repeat visitors are more likely than first time visitors to not consider another destination aside from Maine (i.e., if they come once it will be easier to encourage their return). In 2011, the number of first-time visitors declined, but those who came to visit friends and relatives experienced a slight increase in travel party size. There was also a decline in the use of free campground usage, while other types of unpaid accommodations remained stable. Personal vehicle is still the predominant method of traveling to and within Maine. Travelers with children and first time visitors use state visitors centers most often.

Visitors without children were more likely to come to Maine for friends and relatives, while Canadians were more likely to come for shopping. The states of Massachusetts and New York continue to comprise the majority of overnight visitors, though the number of visitors from Pennsylvania is on the rise.

- Kittery and Houlton visitor centers are the most visited in the state for day visitors;
- There is a general increase of day visitors to Maine than in the past;
- New Brunswick is the 4th leading location from where day visitors come;
- Touring is the 3rd most popular activity for leisure day visitors; cultural experience is last;
- Day visitors rate Maine high on overall experience and friendliness of the people.

Visitors to Aroostook County

In 2011, Aroostook County was the least popular of the eight Maine tourism regions as a place to visit overnight, but saw a significant year-over-year (YOY) increase from 2010.¹¹ This presents both a challenge and an opportunity. Day visits trended similarly, except there was no YOY increase. For overnight visitors, the primary purpose of the trip was for outdoor recreation (#1), and touring (#2); cultural experiences were rated last.

¹⁰ Source: the Maine Office of Tourism Visitor Tracking Research. Statistical material in this section represents a combination of 2011-2012 data.

¹¹ Due to the small available sample size of leisure visitors to the region, results for 2011 and 2012 have been combined. Statistics are based on 63 overnight visitors and 74 day visitors. For directional purposes only.

Effort must be made to increase the levels of promotion of the region in order to gain net visitors. Visitors were surveyed on 14 other trip activities in addition to the primary purpose of the trip. The most popular responses for overnight visits included sightseeing (#5), pleasure drives (#7), searching for local cuisine/hotspots (#8), and historic sites/museums (#12). These are activities that can be promoted along the St. John Valley Cultural Byway.

Overnight visitors to Aroostook County tend to be relatively young and less affluent than those who visit other parts of the state, while day leisure visitors tend to be older, male and married. New Brunswick supplied 21% of all overnight (and day trip) visitors in 2011, while 15% came from New York; 14% came from Pennsylvania and 13% from Massachusetts. Overnight visitors reported outdoor recreation and touring as the primary purpose for their trip; activities were similar to Maine as a whole with outdoor recreation at 63%, and shopping at 56%.

A high number of overnight visitors listed searching for local cuisine and dining hot spots (24%); enjoying mountain views (21%); and pleasure driving (20%), as popular overnight trip activities. The top three outdoor activities were hiking/climbing (25%); going to the beach (17%); and lake, stream or river fishing (14%). Presque Isle (26%) continued to be the top place visited, but Madawaska (22%), Eagle Lake (20%), Fort Kent (19%), and Allagash (16%) were close behind, indicating that a healthy share of overnight visits occur in the St. John Valley.

In terms of day visitors, it may be difficult to take advantage of the large number of general shoppers (70%) that visit Aroostook County daily as 56% of them visit Houlton. However 69% of them are from New Brunswick and could possibly have family ties to, or an interest in, byway activities in the St. John Valley. This would generally require making a separate trip since most of the prime shopping activity occurs in Presque Isle and Houlton. There may be an opportunity to focus on outdoor enthusiasts to experience the lakes and rivers of the St. John Valley. Aside from shopping, golfing was the most popular activity for day visitors in Aroostook County, followed by going to the beach at 5%; and boating activities third at 4%. Since the St. John Valley has numerous golf courses, lakes and rivers, efforts could be made to develop strategies to link those activities to the byway.

Fort Kent and Madawaska were the only byway communities visited by leisure day visitors to Aroostook County. Of the two, Madawaska had a greater number of visitors than Fort Kent (Houlton was the top town visited, while Presque Isle was a distant second at 41%). Houlton is home to the second busiest visitor information center in the state, and is staffed by the Maine Tourism Association. Efforts can be made to utilize this valuable resource more fully in order to raise awareness of opportunities for day and overnight visitors seeking activities other than shopping, and maximize audience awareness of byway activities and experiences.

Northern Maine Tourism Action Plan 2011-2016

In 2011, the Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) and Aroostook County Tourism (ACT) released the Northern Maine Tourism Action Plan 2011-2016.¹² The plan was shaped through extensive community engagement with sector businesses and nonprofits, committee participation, and general research. The plan includes all of the towns, townships and communities within Aroostook County of northern Maine.

To develop a strong and effective marketing component of the St. John Valley Byway, it will be important to align byway-specific objectives with broader regional strategies wherever possible. The following points from the Northern Maine Tourism Action Plan are relevant to the byway:

¹² Download the plan at: www.nmdc.org/Development/NM_Tourism_Action_Plan_2011-2016.pdf

Partnerships and Networks

- Become more global, not so territorial and insular
- Establish more formal and sustained relationships with businesses and groups
- Continue, nurture and maintain existing collaborative relationships
- Explore how to leverage other infrastructures and proximity to Canada
- Build stronger connections to other agencies for resources and support
- Expand beyond existing partnerships to include colleges and universities
- Ensure that more voices are part of the solution

Sector Effectiveness

- Sustained and effective training for customer service and hospitality for business and nonprofits
- Annual regional tourism summits
- Cooperative marketing and incentive packaging
- Link related businesses/nonprofits by creating trails
- Build upon tourism opportunities and related studies
- Gain better grasp of target markets with current research and assessment

Visitor Market

- Within northern Maine and rest of state
- Canadian Maritimes and Québec
- Focus more on Europe
- Attract more group and motor coach bus tours
- Cultural tourist, independent outdoors tourist
- Family-oriented activities based around natural resources

Organizational and Infrastructure

- Conduct internal assessment on structure
- Be attentive to nurturing leadership
- Promote ACT as an entity more effectively; gain better and more consistent visibility
- Establish additional reliable sources of revenue
- Research other models of tourism development
- Revolving loan fund to help finance tourism sector
- Higher level of data collection and information on tourism trends, models, etc.
- Assessment of the regional tourism sector: inventory and stats
- More formalized network system between ACT and chambers and other organizations

Creative Economy and Market Research

In 2010, the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center of the University of Maine released a report after two years of extensive research on the creative economy of the St. John Valley.¹³ Through market intercept surveys, researchers were able to identify the kinds of visitors coming to the region for cultural and outdoor recreation events. The annual events studied included the Acadian Festival; Can-Am Crown International Sled Dog Race; North American Cup and National Biathlon Championship, and the Tour de la Vallée cycling race.

It was found that the majority of people attending these events were local residents from the St. John Valley and from across the border in New Brunswick, with fewer participants from other parts of

¹³ *St. John Valley Creative Economy Project: Strengthening Our Communities and Economy Through Culture and Place*, Sheila Jans et al, Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center, 2010 – available at www.umfk.edu/economy

Aroostook County, Maine, New England, and Québec. On average, people who attended these events had higher than average income levels and educational attainment, but were not as diverse in age.

There were high levels of satisfaction expressed about the friendly and helpful nature of the local people, the beauty of the landscape, and the overall experience of the region. However, there were low levels of satisfaction for the quality of accommodations and dining. Visitors were attracted to the area because of the uniqueness of the events, quality of the cultural and historical experience, and for visiting friends and relatives.

With the exception of the lack of choice in lodging and dining, most of the identified weaknesses also present opportunities. For example, in an effort to increase visitors to the region from within the state, strategies should be developed that market these and other cultural events to the rest of Maine, with a particular focus on French-speaking communities. A survey response from the Acadian Festival indicated that in staging events, location and proximity are important considerations, particularly if public transportation is not available and parking is difficult to find. “Walkability” should be a design consideration whenever new events are created or existing events are bundled.

The surveys revealed the opportunity to develop “shoulder” trip activities that would appeal to well-educated and relatively affluent visitors. Such events would favor cultural “experiential” activities, or history & heritage tourism, which have both grown in interest in the New England region over the last decade, and for which the St. John Valley has ample intrinsic resources.

The Can-Am Crown and the Biathlon events drew a younger and somewhat less affluent audience, opening the door to attracting the older and higher income visitor. Conversely, the Acadian Festival with its higher percentage of 44-year old+ attendees, has an opportunity to develop activities appealing to a younger audience. Shoulder activities developed as part of a strategic marketing program can inspire these visitors to come earlier and stay longer.

Some of these strategies may apply to the cycling audience for the summer’s Tour de la Vallée. Survey data indicate that unlike the Acadian Festival and Can-Am Crown International, these two events were the primary reason that visitors came to the area. Marketing strategies will need to respond to that targeted audience. There is an opportunity to develop and sell more locally crafted goods and area-specific memorabilia celebrating the Valley and its treasures. This may be a way to help offset some of the cost of offering cultural experiences at the museums and historical sites during these events, particularly the two winter attractions.

Creating additional lodging and dining choices is difficult to do unless enough extra volume can be generated through successful tourism activities. To some degree, successful tourism activity is made more difficult without desirable accommodations. It is worth the effort to incrementally create additional bed & breakfasts or small scale lodging to reduce the outlay necessary and increase the return on investment. Additional research at future events may be able to better determine what types of accommodations visitors are looking for, so that the right type and scale of lodging can be developed with lower risk.

A creative marketing campaign will need to combat the fact that Aroostook County is the least visited tourism region in the state. It must recognize that the bulk of the visitors to this region are and will continue to be Canadian, and therefore things such as the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative policies and regulations, bilingual signage, and currency exchange will remain priorities in making a better visitor experience.

Target Market and Opportunities

The St. John Valley Cultural Byway is firmly rooted in the region’s culture and scenic landscape. It offers an experiential opportunity to the visitor. The byway’s mission is to:

celebrate the region’s distinct international blend of French heritage, care for our cultural and natural assets, foster tourism opportunities to attract visitors from around the world, and enrich the quality of life for residents.

The marketing message will focus on this mission. Four primary markets have been identified for the byway:

1. Regional residents and expatriots
2. Aroostook County and Maine (especially French heritage communities)
3. New England, expatriot states (especially Louisiana)
4. Canada (especially Québec and Atlantic Canada) and other French-speaking countries

Undoubtedly, the cultural enthusiast will be attracted to the byway. The cultural tourist will benefit the region’s economy significantly since statistically, they are better educated, more affluent, tend to be older, and spend an average of \$62/day more than other travelers.¹⁴ Families, nature lovers, touring enthusiasts, and senior travelers are amongst target markets. Ultimately, a traveler interested in an atypical, intimate, and authentic experience of a people and place will be attracted to the byway.

Though the byway is open year-round, it functions at a higher level from June until October. It is during these months that the visitor can engage more fully with the region. Essentially, things are more accessible. Just the same, winter months also present possibilities by taking advantage of skiing, snowmobiling, ice-fishing, and events like the Can-Am Sled Dog Races, all of which attract hundreds of visitors from within and outside of the region.

‘Why would anyone come here?’ is a valid question to ask. Creating strategic messages to invite visitors to the byway opens many possibilities and opportunities for the region. Unfortunately, being considered “remote and isolated,” “too far from anywhere,” or well off the beaten track, can discourage strategic planning for tourism development. The chronic lack of resources and infrastructure to champion the kind of work required has historically derailed efforts. All too often, people in the Valley look southward to the New England coast line for its market. Though that approach may align with the state’s strategy (and will still be considered in byway marketing), there are many opportunities awaiting the St. John Valley as a result of its offer and geographic location.

Local and State – The sense of identity and place and the international nature of the region, resonates strongly for people who live here as well as family members who live in other parts of the United States and Canada. Moreover, residents of the Valley have an interest in one another. From one side of the region to the next, including the larger territory extending south of the region, there are strong family connections, a dedicated interest in genealogy, and a desire to become more acquainted with one another. Though the population of the region has diminished significantly in the past 50 years, a large market for the byway includes those people who either used to live in the Valley or have long-standing family ties here.

The region is seeing an increase in senior activities, such as a senior college, tours, and exchanges. The byway can capitalize on this older generation of cultural enthusiasts, especially those living in the region.

¹⁴ Source: Maine Office of Tourism

Additionally, there are already established destinations within the region. For example, Madawaska is one of the four corners of the United States, a notion that attracts a loyal and enthusiastic following from residents and visitors from the rest of the U.S. and around the world. The Allagash Wilderness Waterway and Northern Forest Canoe Trail attract local residents as well as people from around the world.

National – As a result of being part of a state and national byway system, the St. John Valley Cultural Byway will gain visibility. An important target market within the United States are people of French descent (Acadian) in Louisiana. This also applies to communities in Maine (mostly French-Canadian), the Canadian Maritime provinces, and Québec. However, Louisiana is particularly connected to the St. John Valley through a direct lineage of Acadians and have sustained a strong relationship through family reunions and the creation of sister towns. The *Congrès mondiale acadien* has also played a critical role in strengthening that relationship further.

Based on statistical research and assessments, the byway can take advantage of an already healthy visitorship of people from within the nation. Each summer there is a steady stream of people from the New England states, including Arizona, Florida, and California, who used to live in the region or have family ties here. They come to reconnect with family, for school reunions, and various events. Communities are linked through the museums and cultural groups, historic sites, churches and cemeteries and traditional farms (providing excellent niche tour opportunities) as well as through events such as the Tour de la Vallée, a cycling competition which includes several communities and outdoor recreational experiences.

Cross-border and international – The cross-border experience provides multiple opportunities. These opportunities include markets directly across the international border in New Brunswick and Québec. Because of the region's shared history, French heritage and language, the byway can take advantage of the region's Canadian neighbors as well as a European market of French-speaking countries. The byway's wayside exhibits are bilingual, many tourism-related publications include French (like *Voici the Valley Audio Story*), and services are available in French.

Entities such as Centre Français de la Vallée St-Jean and the Acadian Archives at the University of Maine at Fort Kent are destinations for people from Canada (and from around the world) doing scholarly research or wanting to know more about the heritage of the region. The byway can also leverage the outcomes of the *Congrès mondiale acadien*, which strengthened old friendships and forged new alliances with Acadian and French-speaking people.

Additionally, the TransCanada Highway, only a mile from the Maine border, is a major conduit for thousands of travelers from Canada and around the world. The location of the St. John Valley is strategically situated between what is considered central Canada (Ontario and Québec) and eastern Canada (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland/Labrador). There is a large market of Canadians and visitors to Canada driving by the St. John Valley who can experience the distinct culture and story of this little corner of the United States.

Additionally, the byway can capitalize on the international biathlon and Olympic-level skiing competitions that take place at the Maine Winter Sports in Fort Kent (10th Mountain) and an hour away in Presque Isle. These events are especially appealing to an existing fan base that travels the circuit of North American events. The biathlon is a popular sport in Europe, especially in the northern countries.

Marketing the Byway

The St. John Valley Cultural Byway is the destination. Everything along the byway is the experience. Promoting and marketing the byway will be incremental and highly collaborative; it will be a team effort. Efforts to attract the byway's target market will include collaboration with entities throughout the region and county who already attract visitors to the area (e.g., North Maine Woods, Aroostook State Park, Allagash Wilderness Waterway, Maine Winter Sports). This also includes connecting with the regional chambers of commerce and linking with the ongoing promotional efforts of Aroostook County Tourism. The byway goals identify the importance of creating a solid and authentic message and branding. Concentrated focus will be on an online presence, print material, and affinity marketing with regional organizations (stakeholders of the byway), and events.

As outlined in the byway goals, every effort will be made for cross-sector collaboration and supporting experiences for niche audiences, such as touring circuits of museums, farms, historic churches and cemeteries. The byway management committee will be responsible for building strong networks and collaborations throughout the region and beyond. One of the most important entities that will be key to the successful promotional efforts of the byway is Aroostook County Tourism.

Aroostook County Tourism

Aroostook County Tourism (ACT) is a standing committee of the Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC). Its responsibility is to support tourism in Aroostook County, Maine's northern county, by promoting the county's greatest assets, activities and services on its website, through social media, tourism summits, and trade shows.¹⁵

ACT recognizes the significance of the St. John Valley Cultural Byway, not only for the Valley, but also for the entire county and state. The byway is located in a distinct geography with a connecting capacity for all communities within the region as well as to other parts of Aroostook County. This sets the stage for multiple opportunities. ACT will implement the following strategies to support and market the byway:

- inclusion in ACT's marketing plans and promotional print materials;
- ensure byway brochures are in Maine Tourism Visitor Centers throughout the state;
- frequently post information about the byway on social media sites;
- inclusion as a separate destination on ACT's website (visitaroostook.com);
- directly link off of the tourism page of NMDC's website (nmdc.org);
- appoint a member of ACT's committee to be attentive to, and report on byway matters;
- access and make available tourism research that will benefit the byway;
- provide visibility of the byway at trade and travel shows regularly attended by ACT.

Local Area Chambers of Commerce

The Chambers of Commerce in the Saint John Valley (SJV) region are of primary importance to promoting the Cultural Byway in-region and to those inquiring about their community for business, tourism or living purposes. They must be aware of the cultural history of the region and how that underpins the Byway designation and purpose. The SJV Cultural Byway should be incorporated into their community information materials as a way of differentiating and broadening the community's appeal. Finally, the Chambers must be one of the key supporters of the sustainability of the SJV Cultural Byway efforts – both financially and communally.

An online presence is recognized as a key strategy for marketing since it is the most widely used trip planning source for overnight trips to Maine and well as an online resource for potential visitors to select

¹⁵ For more information on ACT, visit www.visitaroostook.com

destinations. ACT’s commitment to a strong social media presence aligns with the five-year marketing plan of the Maine Office of Tourism (MOT). Released in March, 2014, the plan also targets “experiential travel” with an increase in social, cultural heritage, and environmental awareness, as well as trends toward matching a visitor’s personal identity and values. Clearly, the byway complements the MOT’s strategy. Additionally, ACT will be attentive to granting opportunities that will support byway efforts. For example, ACT is willing to provide technical expertise and resource information for the MOT’s “Special Projects” program and or other funding opportunities which will promote the byway as a destination experience in Aroostook County.

2.3 Visitor Services and Amenities

The St. John Valley Cultural Byway benefits from a variety of existing venues that provide visitor services and amenities. These venues include the three chambers of commerce in Van Buren, Madawaska, and Fort Kent. Open to the public generally during weekdays and office hours, the chambers offer information on sites and activities in their offices, their website, and through production of chamber brochures. The chambers of commerce have traditionally assumed the role in this region as the “tourist bureaus” and have been integral in the presentation of tourism-related events, such as the Acadian Festival in Madawaska, the Scarecrow Festival in Fort Kent, or the Oats and Barley Festival in Van Buren.

Town offices, museums, and other cultural sites, also play an essential role in sharing tourism information. Though most chambers and towns provide information that focus primarily on their own area, most venues offer a wide range of regional and even county-wide tourism-related information. Museums, for example, often carry a wide range of brochures about the region, and as with the chambers, have guest books for visitors to sign.

Visitor amenities are interspersed fairly evenly throughout the region. There are over 250 beds in 13 hotels and motels; five campground/RV parks with 165 sites, close to 50 restaurants (predominantly family-style dining),¹⁶ numerous gas stations, one major department store and dozens of small chain and privately owned stores, either for convenience or a full range of goods, including grocery stores in almost every town; two hospitals and several medical clinics. More information on these services and facilities can be obtained at local chambers of commerce or on the county tourism website (www.arostook.com).

A designated visitor center for the St. John Valley does not currently exist. The Houlton Visitor Information Center, owned by the city of Houlton and staffed by the Maine Tourism Association, is the sole official State of Maine tourism bureau in northern Maine. It is situated two-hours south from the northeastern most point of the St. John Valley. Aroostook County Tourism provides county-wide information on tourism-related amenities and services. It promotes and supports four-season county-wide tourism through various publications, a website, and conferences.

Because of the international nature of the St. John Valley, it would be remiss to not reference resources across the border in Canada. The New Brunswick communities that parallel Maine communities offer a wide range of restaurants, accommodations, retail, events, and services. In fact, the City of Edmundston, which is a consolidation of several smaller communities, is the largest center between Fredericton, NB and Rivière-du-Loup in Québec. Edmundston is the location of a provincial and regional tourist bureau, and only minutes from Maine, is the Québec provincial tourist bureau.

¹⁶ Data from Northern Maine Development Commission.

2.4 Interpretation: Wayside Exhibits

As planning for the byway progressed, a parallel initiative for the creation of interpretative panels was also underway. The primary intent of this project was to make visible the work of byway planning and to enrich the visitor's experience by sharing stories of the region's culture and heritage. A wide variety of Valley residents, historians, residents, civic leaders and educators, also provided input into the creation of the exhibits. The panels graphically depict and describe unique cultural and historical people, places and events. They are placed at public access areas such as on sidewalks, parks, town offices, and museum sites along the byway.¹⁷

Because of the 2014 *Congrès mondiale acadien* (CMA) attracting tens of thousands of visitors to the international region, planners considered it perfect timing to create 26 bilingual (English and French) panels along the byway. Tens of thousands of people from around the world are anticipated to visit the international region. This presents an ideal opportunity to make visible the work of byway planning. Not only will visitors to the CMA benefit from them, but also because the panels will last for up to 20 years, there will be a lasting effect for other visitors and residents to the region for many years to come.

Exhibit Criteria and Methodology

Strategically located along the 104 miles of byway, the exhibits are located in public places with easy access for the traveling or walking public. A number of the sites are open or accessible only during the summer months and have limited hours of operation due to funding constraints and a largely volunteer staff.

A rigorous site assessment process was undertaken by the MaineDOT landscape architect, interpretive planners and community members. Written agreements between municipalities and non-profit groups assure that the landowners will own and maintain the sign for 20 years as required by the funding. This approach contributes to building local-state partnership for maintaining the roadside exhibits. Other exhibits for the future of the byway may follow this model.

Selecting sites for byway signage required the following considerations. The exhibit sign:

- should not be placed on private property;
- should be accessible to the public during peak visitor seasons;
- ideally should interpret something the visitor can see or experience at the site;
- can be placed readily without interfering with existing utilities or other site uses;
- is visible from the roadway so travelers can identify it as a byway exhibit;
- should be placed with permission or acceptance from nearby landowners;
- should be placed in locations that will not impede and road maintenance operations;

¹⁷ Interpretative panels, wayside exhibits, exhibits, and exhibit signs, are interchangeable and refer to the same thing.

- will be ADA compliant;
- should be for local residents and byway travelers alike;
- should not conflict with other signage;
- should not be placed to obstruct a beautiful vista or the item it is intended to interpret;
- should consider winter snow removal and be mark for plow and snow blower drivers to see;
- should have a life span of 10 years or greater and maintenance is handled by the owner of the property upon which they are placed;
- should be vandalism resistant to the extent possible.

Additionally:

- the site should be open to the public during peak visiting seasons;
- the site must have safe pedestrian and vehicle access and not create a circulation problem once located.

The interpretive panels project is only one phase of many interpretive signage or exhibits that can be placed along the byway. For example, many potential sites were not included because of accessibility issues or because the final themes and stories selected were not relevant. There is an opportunity to expand the themes and stories for additional interpretive signage.

Themes for Exhibits

The wayside exhibits will benefit visitors and residents by providing regionally important information using the themes and stories developed in the creation of the byway. The nation will benefit from the telling of these stories, which are integral to its history, and yet so unfamiliar to most Americans. The sum is greater than its parts.

The St. John Valley Cultural Byway is home to 12 historical museums (one is a National Historic Landmark and State Historic Site; seven are on the National Register of Historic Places). Half of the museums offer distinctly different collections and focus. There are many other important cultural and historic points of interest such as ten sites that commemorate significant locations, private residences, cemeteries, and three churches on the National Register of Historic Places. Additionally, the Acadian Archives at the University of Maine in Fort Kent and the Centre Français de la Vallée St-Jean in Madawaska, offer resources for people interested in the heritage and language of the region. Below are additional concepts considered in the creation of the wayside exhibits:

- People of the Valley are part of the national French culture and heritage from the 1600's and continue to thrive in a sea of English;
- The region is significant to U.S. history because this was a crossroads for the movement of the British, French, and Americans in wars for the struggle of territory in the 1800's;
- The Valley is an example of a fairly intact homogeneous culture that has not been completely diluted – it is a living culture with language, traditions and collective identity;
- For such a small region, there are many historical museums and cultural groups that preserve and celebrate the international story that includes France, Québec and the Canadian Maritimes;
- In Maine, this region is distinct, not only geographically, but also culturally because of a population of 85% French heritage continuing to live in French through day-to-day activities, traditions, cuisine, etc;
- The region's remoteness from major Maine population centers may be considered a barrier to development, but it has contributed to preserving a distinct culture and language;

- The region's predominant French heritage culture (a mixture of Acadian and French-Canadian) are "cousins" to Cajuns of Louisiana;
- The French language continues to be spoken and written daily. After creation of the international border, the French language evolved differently on the U.S. side, which experienced numerous challenges including racism and anti-French legislation; Regardless, the language survived and is testimony to the people's resilience;
- In the early 1990's ethnographic studies by the National Park Service resulted in two publications, "Implementing the Maine Acadian Culture Preservation Act" and "Acadian Culture in Maine;"
- The St. John River was a critical transportation route for communication between the French in Québec City and the Maritimes during the wars in the 18th and 19th centuries;
- The byway is significant for Maine because its is easily accessible to Canada, with many entry points, and because of its strategic location between Québec and the Maritimes;
- The National Endowment for the Arts provided funding for a major cultural project (Voici the Valley Cultureway) because they believed the story of this region should be told to the nation;
- Along with the Valley's connection to the Acadian deportation in 1755, other notable themes and cultural intertwinings include:
 - The Northeast Boundary Dispute and the Webster-Ashburton Treaty (boundary disputes with Great Britain and the Bloodless Aroostook War);
 - The Scots-Irish settlers: migration to the Allagash Wilderness;
 - The St. John River as an early transportation corridor for people, goods, log drives, the life-blood of the region's early agrarian society;
 - The French Catholic Church and its important role in the lives of Valley residents for hundreds of years;
 - The railroad opened up the northern wilderness to commerce and infamous activities like smuggling.

Exhibit Design, Fabrication and Installation

The creation of the wayside exhibits was accomplished over 10 months under the guidance of a Maine DOT project manager and consultant interpretive planner. Planning included meetings with the byway planning committee, one-on-one consultations, and meetings with small community groups to gather information, examination of sites for safety and public access concerns, and determination of best sites for exhibits. Coordination with town officials to select sites and public meetings provided insight on the work status. Exhibit drafts were presented for review and revision, and additional exhibit content was gathered. The exhibits incorporate both French and English text to complement the pictorial stories.

The exhibit signs are warrantied for ten years. The materials holding them in place are stainless steel and granite, which will last for 50 years. Signs ranged in sizes: 42"x 24" and 42" x 48". They are constructed in parts and the entire exhibit can be moved to another location if necessary. Security fasteners are used in all cases to deter and prevent theft of the valuable signs. The exhibit final designs were transferred to a durable, non-fading sign medium. The results are a high-resolution product that is nearly indestructible and fade resistant. Once the fabrication was completed, exhibits were installed by according to the MaineDOT standards.

Use of technology enhancements were explored and integrated when possible, such as QR Codes, read by mobile phones. These codes direct the traveler to a URL link where they can learn more about the exhibit's theme and find additional content or places to visit.

Wayside Exhibit Sites

Exhibit Name	Location	Size
Educating farm children; One room schools	Roosevelt School, Hamlin	42" x 24"
Banning French in schools: past language struggles	Governor Brann School, Cyr Plantation	42" x 24"
Traditions of faith and church architecture	St. Bruno Catholic Church (sidewalk), Van Buren	48" x 26"
French business boom	Downtown Van Buren (sidewalk)	42" x 24"
Long lots & land use in French/Acadian settlements	Acadian Village, Van Buren	42" x 24"
Work the woods in winter	Acadian Village, Van Buren	42" x 24"
French/Acadian home and family life	Acadian Village, Van Buren	42" x 24"
Catholic: A strong religious presence among French/Acadians	Rest area, Grand Isle	42" x 24"
French settlers, Acadian cross and genealogy (kiosk)	Tante Blanche Museum, Madawaska	N/A
Tante Blanche Story	Tante Blanche Museum, Madawaska	42" x 24"
French-Acadian/English architecture	Tante Blanche Museum, Madawaska	42" x 24"
Tools: French/Acadian cultural values: <i>patenteur</i> (kiosk)	Tante Blanche Museum area, Madawaska	48" x 28"
Catholicism, education and French/Acadian communities	Town gazebo area, St. Agatha	48" x 24"
Traditions passed down through the generations	Ste-Agathe Historical Society, St. Agatha	48" x 24"
Champlain: early religious explorers	Frenchville boat launch, Frenchville	42" x 24"
Smuggling in the Valley	Near Frenchville Historical Museum, Frenchville	42" x 24"
How rail affected farming	Near Frenchville Historical Museum, Frenchville	42" x 24"
Farming then and now	Near Frenchville Historical Museum, Frenchville	42" x 24"
Who is a Maine Acadian and byway map (kiosk)	Acadian Archives entrance UMFK, Fort Kent	N/A
The river never divided us/ferries	Riverside Park, Fort Kent	42" x 24"
One people/two countries	Near international bridge, Fort Kent	42" x 24"
How railroads affected economic health of Valley	Fort Kent Historical Museum, Fort Kent	42" x 24"
International border markings	Town office, St. John Plantation	42" x 24"
The end-of-the-line	St. Francis Historical Museum, St. Francis	42" x 24"

The Allagash – a unique Scots-Irish community	Allagash Historical Museum, Allagash	42” x 24”
Allagash river drivers and logging	Allagash Historical Museum, Allagash	42” x 24”

2.5 Shaping the Byway Story

The St. John Valley Cultural Byway is a remarkable 104-mile cultural journey on winding roads in a beautiful rural river valley in northern Maine. Travelers drive along the St. John River next to Canada, traversing through fertile farmland, deep forest, and small communities from Allagash to Hamlin.

Visitors will discover cultural and historic treasures of the region’s distinct international blend of French heritage as shaped by Acadians, French-Canadians, Scots-Irish, and Native Americans.

Little towns and villages welcome visitors to experience the region’s deep history, rich traditions, the French language, and a unique way of life, like no other.

According to the National Scenic Byway Program, a byway story is “the intentional, coordinated message that the byway conveys to visitors to help them make connections with the byway’s resources and qualities.” Shaping the story of this region so that it can be shared with visitors, was not an easy task. With such rich and abundant material available in the region, the planning committee recognized the importance of being precise. Diligent efforts were made to identify byway themes and stories that reflected the region and resonated strongly.

The planning committee also recognized that the outward manifestations of the region’s culture may not be as readily apparent and accessible to a visitor. In fact, culture has been considered by many local residents as “invisible.” Moreover, since the byway program is an American initiative, but so much of the region’s culture includes Canada, it was important to be attentive to how the international blend would be included as part of the byway story.

Regional Cultural Identity

As part of the planning process, the byway planning committee tackled elements of the complex issue of regional identity. This was considered an essential step to reflect upon before the planning committee could proceed with planning the byway, notably, to shape its purpose and vision.

There are four main groups that significantly shaped the culture of the Valley: Native American, Acadian, French-Canadian, and Scots-Irish. Since the region’s population is predominately of French heritage, the committee focused on two things:

1. Merging of the Acadian and French-Canadian culture as the primary story, and;
2. Common use of “Acadian” as a collective term.

Committee members and regional scholars from both sides of the international border joined the working group to discuss these issues. Answers to three questions were sought:

1. What do we mean when we use the word “Acadian?”
2. Is it appropriate to use “Acadian” to represent the region?
3. Is the mix of Acadian and French-Canadian who we are - is the blend our story?

Discussion began with early French settlement of both sides of the St. John River in the late 1700’s with the merging of immigrant Acadian and French-Canadian families. Once the international border was formed in 1842, the Maine and New Brunswick sides evolved differently in terms of politics, education, language and culture. New Brunswick experienced cultural distinctions, becoming more politicized because of its ties to modern Québec (New Brunswick Acadians became a cultural *and* political force. The Maine side quickly embraced new allegiances with the New Maine and the United States, but it still retained cultural connections to Old *Acadie* and Old Québec. What emerged was a less politicized identity with stronger links to New Brunswick Acadians. Though both sides of the border are “firmly grounded in North America,” people of both Acadian and French-Canadian descent on the Maine side of the St. John River, are also Americans. Clearly, the St. John Valley is not a monolithic culture. Eventually “Acadian” emerged as a collective term. Scholars explained that using “Acadian” to represent both Acadians and French-Canadians is not intended to exclude anyone – the term is considered emotionally unifying and is recognizable throughout the world.

“Acadian” represents shared values, the French language, reflects a deep and enduring part of history, and is ultimately, a compelling story with marketing appeal. In fact, it could be said that an Acadian today in the St. John Valley is thought to be someone who is both Acadian and French-Canadian, speaks French, is of French heritage, prays in French, and exhibits and possesses “the culture”¹⁸

However, the scholars also agreed that there is “no easy answer to using the term Acadian” since there are definite cultural nuances between Acadians and French-Canadians. Moreover, many people of a shared Acadian and French-Canadian heritage in the region do not identify themselves as exclusively Acadian. The term means different things to different people (“it depends”); no one really knows the distinction (“we don’t really question it”); it is used for convenience (“there’s a strong drive to belong”), and it is considered an imposed and restrictive term, which may promote myths.

Some consider that using “Acadian” denies a part of “who we are in the Valley,” which is a *blend* of Acadian, French-Canadian, Native American, and Scots-Irish. However, there was unanimous agreement that there is common ground on many fronts, such as being of French descent influenced by other cultures, and that we are a living, evolving culture.

This historical perspective helped to shape an understanding of how the region evolved into its contemporary blend of people. It was recognized that even though the region is predominantly of French heritage and that “Acadian” is used as an inclusive term, *all* peoples infuse the culture, which has contributed to creating a strong regional identity. Ultimately, it was agreed that the key story for this region is a *distinct blend of people of French heritage – Acadian and French-Canadian – enriched by other peoples and cultural influences.*

Those responsible for byway management have a “balancing act.” They must be thoughtful and respectful about how to talk about the people of the St. John Valley, and to be especially attentive to the use of “Acadian” as an inclusive term. It will be important to be authentic, timeless, practical, and remember the byway’s audience near and far.

¹⁸ “An American of French descent connected by heritage to the Upper St. John Valley, including but not limited to genealogical descendants of early Acadian settlers of the valley.” (Source: *Acadian Culture in Maine*, National Park Service, 1994)

Bilingualism and the Byway

Another key point in shaping the byway story is recognizing the significance of the French language in the region. Maine's St. John Valley is an international region, neighboring the Canadian provinces of New Brunswick and Québec. The official languages of Canada are English and French; New Brunswick is one of two provinces to fully adopt bilingualism, and Québec is the only official unilingual French-speaking province.

Settled by French-speaking people in the late 1700's, the Maine part of the international region has remained a French-speaking region for more than two hundred years. This is remarkable, given the region's geographic, political and educational challenges. Though many people from throughout the world make the St. John Valley their home, the population is of predominantly Acadian and French-Canadian descent (85%).¹⁹

Because of this shared common heritage, French language and geography, it is essential to consider both sides of the international border when shaping a full visitor experience. The French language, spoken and written daily, and the mother tongue for most, constitutes the fiber of the people who live here. The interaction between French and English languages make for rich and interesting idioms, and a vocabulary particular to this place.

Thanks to geographic "isolation" and an oral tradition continued by the people of the Valley, the French pronunciation and vocabulary retains aspects of 16th century France no longer spoken in that country today. Its distinct character draws the interest of linguists from around the world, numerous magazine and newspaper articles, studies, books, films, and documentaries.

Regional efforts celebrate the language and cultural heritage such as publications like *Traditions d'icite: Traditions of Maine's Saint John Valley*, the Voici the Valley Cultureway and audio documentary called the *Voici the Valley Audio Story*, and annual events like the Acadian Festival. Various entities such as Centre Français de la Vallée St-Jean, a regional nonprofit cultural organization, and the Acadian Archives at the University of Maine at Fort Kent, support the language through public programming. The fact that such a large part of the Valley's population can function in French was undoubtedly a contributing factor for the Canadian-led *Congrès mondiale acadien* to include Maine in its 2014 event.²⁰

The St. John Valley Cultural Byway reflects the French-heritage majority, and therefore, the use of the French language will be an important element in its marketing and promotion. Translation services are available at the Centre Français de la Vallée-St-Jean, free-of-charge or at a minimal cost. There will be a mindful approach to including French in communications materials (e.g., website, printed pieces, signage, etc.) as a reflection of the bilingual character of the region, and also as a means to welcome an important target market for the byway.

Themes and Stories

After extensive work on regional identity, establishing a strong purpose, and identifying intrinsic qualities, byway planners set their focus on how to best share these resources and qualities. They identified what themes and stories distinct and compelling for the visitor to engage with and experience in some way. It was important to create a byway that offered stories and experiences that were worth talking

¹⁹ This section on language is significantly sourced from the *St. John Valley Creative Economy Project* report, authors Sheila Jans, Kathy Hunt, and Caroline Noblet; Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center, University of Maine, 2010 and the *Upper Saint John Valley Cultural Heritage Assessment*, Sheila Jans, Report to the Quebec-Labrador Foundation, October, 2003.

about, spoke to target markets, and were very much of this region. Planning explored how the region's culture evolved and was enhanced by its place in North America.

Criteria included ensuring that these stories were interesting and compelling, authentic, did not perpetuate myths, were memorable, inclusive, and distinct for our region. In fact, what was important to tell? Even though the byway is on the U.S. side of the border, it was critical for byway planners to consider the entire international area in order to tell the story of this region. Further, it was important to bring the region's history to life with stories that resonated and have relevance today.

Byway planners first identified an overarching theme, which was broad, inclusive, suggestive, and multi-faceted. Following the theme were more concrete and focused sub-themes. This exercise helped to set the stage to identify stories, which were very detailed, precise and particular and were essential in helping to shape the creation of the interpretative panels.

The primary theme of the byway story is: ***The distinct international blend of French heritage as shaped by Acadian and other cultural influences.*** The five sub-themes are:

1. Homeland – First Inhabitants and Early Settlement
2. Fabric – Language, Family and Faith
3. Traditions – From Hand and Land
4. Borderland – “The Land in Between”
5. Place – Shaping Who We Are

Homeland – First Inhabitants and Early Settlement focuses on the notion of legacy – where we have been, where we are, and where we would like to go. Stories included the Maliseet (*Wolusteguiik*) connection to the land and their influence on early settlers, not only for survival and food, but on language.²¹ Other stories included the emergence of French in North America (e.g., mapping of the St. John River by Samuel de Champlain in 1612), immigration of the French settlers to the region in the late 1700's and the founding of Madawaska Settlement, as well as the settling of the western part of the region by the Scots-Irish in the mid-1800's.

Fabric – Language, Family & Faith focuses on issues of adaptation, the vulnerability and resilience of the French language and culture, and the effects of isolation that bring a sense of strength, creativity, and self-sufficiency. Stories include regional pronunciations and idioms of the French language, the effects of anti-French legislation, and the significant role of the Catholic religion, and how it shaped values, architecture, learning, and the arts. There are rich stories in this theme about inventiveness, leadership, and the strong and enduring connection to family and community.

Traditions – From Hand and Land celebrates tangible and intangible creative and cultural expressions. This theme includes those traditions that are still alive today, but also recognizes how they have transformed into new ways of expression. Stories include the relevance of storytelling throughout the region, especially in the Allagash area, how legends and superstitions like burying a shoe in a wall brings luck, the significance of music, handwork with textiles and wood, architectural design (like the double barn and ship's knee), cuisine (especially the iconic *ploye*), and how the region's museums safeguard and share treasures. This theme also focused on the historical use of land to make a living in the farming and logging industries.

Borderland – “The Land in Between” sets the context of this region as one of duality shaped by culture, wars and the creation of the international border. Captivating stories celebrate the ferment of the past, but also the notion of creating something new as a result of division. There is reference to old trade

²¹ A full outline of the stories and sites identified is available in the appendix.

routes, how wars pre-1842 impacted the region and the decisive Northeast Boundary Dispute, which decided the international border. The effects of the border are diverse, like Prohibition in the early 20th century with smuggling stories, coming of the railroads, and “crossing over” today.

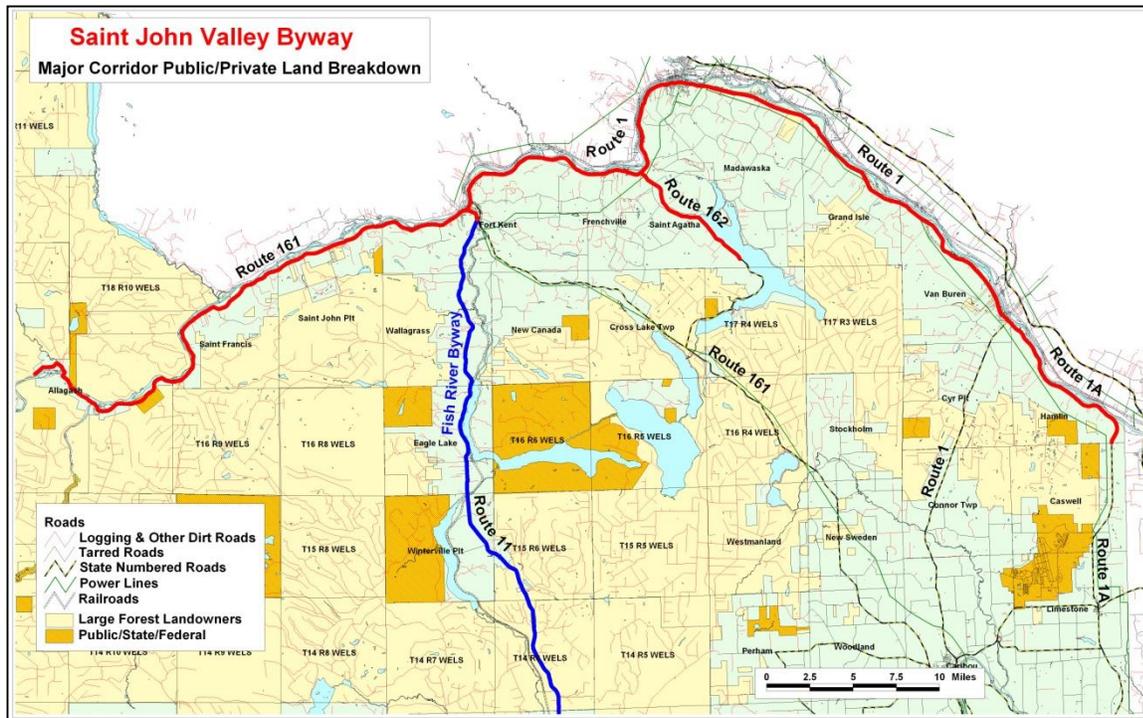
Place – *Shaping Who We Are* explores how the region’s landscape has shaped the people – the harsh and haunting beauty of the land, its forests, field and waterways, its abundant flora and fauna. This theme celebrates the sense of “splendid isolation” with stories about the region as one of the last frontiers for wild, undivided forestland in the U.S., the expansive, dark skies, the harshness of winters and the magnificent St. John River, the longest river in the Northeast, and the rich abundance from the land, like fiddleheads and maple syrup.

2.6 Tour the Byway

Shaping the visitor experience of the byway focused on imagining the traveler moving through the corridor. The experience of a visitor can take many forms, from the tangible to the intangible. Besides identifying high priority cultural sites, activities, and themes, consideration was given to issues like traveler safety, accessibility of the sites, potential intrusions, and how to enhance the overall traveler experience. By understanding visitor desires and their overall experience, the byway planning committee was better able to develop goals and strategies that could meet their needs. The committee explored:

- What do we want visitors to see and do?
- What are high priority sites and stories?
- What is the best way to share these with visitors?
- What is the experience we want them to have?
- How will they interact and experience the byway?

The result of the planning effort is a narrative that illustrates the range of experiences one may enjoy as they travel along the St. John Valley Cultural Byway.



The St. John Valley Cultural Byway. The byway includes segments of four roads: U.S. Route 1, State Route 1-A, State Route 161; and State Route 162.

Experience the St. John Valley Cultural Byway

The St. John Valley Cultural Byway invites today’s travelers to follow the St. John River along the northeastern most portion of the international border between the United States and Canada. The river was used for centuries by the indigenous Wabanaki, then by early French colonizers, for travel between the St. Lawrence River to the north and the Bay of Fundy to the south. By the late-eighteenth century, a small group of French-speaking Acadians migrated from today’s New Brunswick northward along the St. John River to settle the upper part of the river valley. Family members from nearby villages in present-day Québec soon joined them. In the western portions of the byway where the Allagash River flows into the St. John, the Scots-Irish settlers arrived by the mid-1800’s, drawn by the promise of harvesting timber.

Today’s traveler can enter the over 100-mile byway via four main roads from the U.S. and four international crossings from Canada. No matter where the traveler enters or which direction they drive, the byway offers an experience like no other. Five themes are celebrated along the entire byway through the region’s people, museums, historic sites, events, and wayside exhibits:

- Homeland – First Inhabitants and Early Settlement
- Fabric – Language, Family, and Faith
- Traditions – From Hand and Land
- Borderland – “The Land in Between”

- Place – Shaping Who We Are

As we envision it, the byway experience is an immersion in the historically based cultural heritage of the St. John Valley. All along the corridor, the traveler will be introduced to stories about early settlement. Forestlands at the western end of the byway may give travelers a sense of the landscape that the indigenous Wabanaki people once inhabited. Contemporary byway communities in central and eastern portions of the corridor, through their long-lot farms, towering churches, and local celebrations, provide travelers rich evidence of traditions and values of early French immigrants.

Here, as in most parts of the byway, use of the French language in everyday affairs is still widespread. Its daily use is testimony to the resilience and dedication of the region's predominately French heritage population. The traveler can hear an evolved blend of words from 16th century France, Acadian and French Canadian, Native terms, English, and words invented or adapted by early settlers for their new home.

The St. John River, one of the most outstanding natural features of the northeastern United States holds cultural and historical significance. Once a busy thoroughfare connecting a unified valley with the outside world, today the river serves as an international boundary dividing communities and families that long pre-existed its establishment.

At the eastern reaches of the St. John Valley are the byway gateway communities of Hamlin and Cyr Plantation. At Cyr Plantation, byway travelers experience open skies and an agricultural landscape where oats, buckwheat and Maine potatoes are grown. Here, the Governor Brann Schoolhouse museum built in the 1930's Arts and Crafts architectural style is an example of the once prolific one-room schoolhouses of the region. In Hamlin, the river and tree-lined roads greet the traveler as they come across the nationally registered historic Roosevelt Schoolhouse; only a stone's throw away from Canada.

The neighboring town of Van Buren is home to the international municipal flag of Grand Rivière, the only one of its kind in North America, which celebrates Van Buren's pre-boundary union with St. Leonard, its sister community in Canada. Both communities belong to the community of Grand Rivière. The bustling days as an international railroad trade hub in the 1930's are captured in the original railway lines running through the nearby village of Keegan. Also at the western reaches of town, the Acadian Village provides a glimpse into the life and times of the region's French heritage. This open-air museum offers a rare collection of artifacts and buildings of the region, like the original Roy House from the 1790's.

As the traveler moves along the byway, impressive churches in almost every community indicate the profound role of the Catholic faith in the development of the region. One can visit an outstanding former Catholic Church with Baroque exterior and Roman interior, now the nationally recognized Musée culturel du Mont-Carmel. Emerging from the agrarian village of Lille, part of the town of Grand Isle, this museum is home to arguably the nation's largest collection of Acadian artifacts.

Cyclists will especially love the paved shoulders as the byway winds through forest, farmland, and open fields. A large island in the middle of the St. John River inspired the naming of the town of Grand Isle. The area's family histories are celebrated at the local museum and at the town line, travelers can relax at the site of a former Catholic mission across from the Acadian Pioneer Memorial.

In the neighboring town of Madawaska the traveler will learn about the early Maliseet homeland called *Madoueskek*, where the present-day *Rivière Madawaska* flows from *Lac Témiscouata* into the St. John River. Considered the cradle of the original French settlement, the traveler will also learn about the early

Acadians and French Canadians, the creation of the international boundary, and the pulp and paper industry. Madawaska is linked to its sister city, Edmundston in New Brunswick, by not only a shared heritage, but also with pipes that at one time flowed duty-free pulp across the international bridge.

At the Acadian Cross Historic Site, a 14-foot marble cross commemorates the landing of the first Acadians onto the shores of the St. John River in 1785. Nearby is the Tante Blanche Museum and historic St. David Catholic Church. Within town, travelers can take a hike or cross-country ski at national competition level trails, or enjoy delicious traditional Acadian chicken stew and buckwheat pancakes, called *ployes*, at local restaurants.

Madawaska's neighbor is the town of Frenchville, situated alongside the St. John River. In its heyday, steam locomotives rolled through the little town, honored today at the local museum's railway caboose, station house, and nationally recognized 50,000-gallon redwood water tank. The cemetery near the St. Luce Catholic Church offers a record of the past with naming conventions on many tombstones reminiscent of old France. A lingering visit at the town's boat launch on the St. John River will please boating enthusiasts and nature lovers.

Byway travelers can enjoy a side trip south of Frenchville to the village of St. Agatha, a farming community built along Long Lake. Its lake and farming heritage are celebrated at the town's historical museum, along with the rich history of the *Filles de la Sagesse* (Daughters of Wisdom), a teaching order of nuns originally from France who enriched the lives of people in northern Maine for 100 years. Not far from St. Agatha is the small town of Sinclair, one of the byway's entry points.

West from the St. Agatha/Frenchville area is one of the most scenic stretches of the byway, embraced by rolling hills, fields and forest, the winding St. John River, and scenic vistas of Canada. The road follows a path that at times defies the border division, pulling us back to not long ago when this was one land, split only by a river. The byway traveler needs only a moment to glimpse across the present-day international border at New Brunswick to picture John Baker, the fiercely independent American activist, declare part of that former British territory, the "American Republic of Madawaska" in the early 1800's.

The byway's western gateway is the town of Fort Kent, nestled in the valley along the winding St. John River. The early Wabanaki people were attracted to the confluence of the St. John and Fish Rivers in the center of town. The Wesget Sipu, a group of Maliseet, Mi'kmaq and Acadian descent, celebrates its heritage with an annual Pow-Wow. Travelers can touch the timber walls of the Fort Kent Blockhouse, a military fort built in the mid-1800's due to ranging conflicts between Britain and the United States.

The original blockhouse brings alive the "Bloodless Aroostook War" and eventual formation of the international boundary. Today a university town, Fort Kent offers a rich array of events, services, dining experiences of local foods, and biathlon-level Nordic ski trails. At the university's Acadian Archives, the traveler will learn about the enduring contribution of the region's diverse cultures in shaping the region today. Fort Kent is also a northern gateway to the Fish River Scenic Byway.

West of Fort Kent, fields eventually merge with the North Maine Woods, the largest expanse of undeveloped forest in the eastern United States. Here, communities are oriented toward lumbering and backcountry adventures. In St. Francis, the St. John River ceases to be the international boundary. The town was the terminus for the railroad built in the early 1900's, where vestiges of its vital role are still alive at the local museum. The byway traveler can also arrange a visit of St. Paul's Congregational Church, the oldest church in the region.

Further along the road to the town of Allagash, the byway's western terminus, the town's local museum presents the rich history of the Scots-Irish who settled the area in the 1840's, life in the lumbercamps, and

dangerous river drives with agile *bateaux* (river boats) navigating the frigid spring waters of times past. Here, the byway traveler can hike to the stunning Allagash Falls, or canoe the Northern Forest Canoe Trail and 92-mile world famous Allagash Wilderness Waterway.

Managing the Byway

3.1 Protection, Land Use, Environment, and Zoning

Six of the ten municipalities located along the St. John Valley Cultural Byway have Growth Management Comprehensive Plans. These municipalities have identified scenic, historic, and cultural areas within their communities so that some level of protection can be afforded to them either through easements, the development of ordinances, or the update of existing land use regulations. In one case, Fort Kent is looking at a differing tax rate structure for those wishing to locate in significant viewshed areas.

Several communities (Frenchville and Madawaska) have also adopted wind energy ordinances that are designed to protect the scenic qualities of the byway, while allowing wind energy to be developed in appropriate locations. The Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) reviewed plans developed under the current Growth Management Act and those plans developed in the 1990's or 2000's. Several communities whose plans expired in December, 2012, are planning to update them in the near future.

During the comprehensive planning process, municipalities have the opportunity to identify archeological, pre-historic, and historic sites and building located within the town. These sites may or may not be listed on the National Register of Historic Places through the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. In many cases, these sites are locally or sub-regionally important. All of the plans identify sites that are not listed in a statewide or national database. Several towns are requesting that the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) review these sites to determine their regional importance.

While all of the comprehensive plans generally identified the scenic quality of the region, the towns of Allagash, Fort Kent, Van Buren, Grand Isle, and Madawaska, identified specific scenic locations. Fort Kent also highlighted significant viewsheds that were mapped in a 2009 project completed by students in the GIS program at the University of Maine at Fort Kent. All plans listed specific historic or archeological sites that were either identified locally or through studies completed by the MHPC.

The following table provides an overview of each of the comprehensive plans and ordinances that were reviewed.

Municipality	Comprehensive Plan*	Identify Scenic Areas	Zoning Ordinance	Comments
Allagash	Yes	Yes	Yes. There are no specific provisions to protect the scenic or cultural resources in town.	Allagash is located at the western terminus of the byway. There are many scenic and recreational areas.
St. Francis	No	N/A	No	N/A
St. John	No	N/A	No	N/A
Fort Kent	Yes (draft)	Yes	Yes. Subdivision and Site Design Review have review criteria that identify scenic and cultural resources. No specific standards in the town-wide zoning ordinance. No access management standards however there are road design and parking provisions.	The comprehensive plan identified a large number of rare natural communities. However, no location of these communities was given. There has been an identification of scenic areas and several strategies are listed that call for the increased protection of scenic, cultural, and historic areas.
Frenchville	Yes	No	Yes. Subdivision and Site Design Review have review criteria that identify scenic and cultural resources. No specific standards in the town-wide zoning ordinance.	Comprehensive plan lists a large number of historic and cultural sites located in town. There is no identification of scenic areas. The plan includes a goal to develop a level of protection of scenic, historic and cultural sites in a land use ordinance. Town officials are looking to update this plan.

Municipality	Comprehensive Plan*	Identify Scenic Areas	Zoning Ordinance	Comments
Madawaska	Yes	Yes	<p>Yes. Subdivision and Site Design Review have review criteria that identify scenic and cultural resources. There are also provisions for the protection of natural features, rare natural areas, and wildlife habitat in the town wide zoning ordinance.</p> <p>Madawaska also contains access management, road design and construction, and on-street parking stands in the town-wide zoning ordinance.</p>	The comprehensive plan lists six locations in town that offer scenic views. The views listed include those accessible from a public way. They include: Town View Road, Riverview Street, 11th Avenue, Fournier Road, the Acadian landing, and Mount-Carmel. There was no identification of strategies to protect these views. Town officials are looking to update this plan.
Grand Isle	Yes	No	No	Comprehensive plan often states the importance of tourism to the town. It also identifies the importance of scenic views along the St. John River, but does not identify specific locations. There are a number of strategies that promote the protection of the St. John River and its view-sheds. There are no local ordinance provisions to prevent development in scenic areas.
St. Agatha	Yes	Yes	Yes. Subdivision and Site Design Review have review criteria that protect scenic and cultural resources. St. Agatha has specific access management standards in place.	The comprehensive plan does not identify specific scenic areas. It does identify cultural and historic resources and public access locations to Long Lake.

Municipality	Comprehensive Plan*	Identify Scenic Areas	Zoning Ordinance	Comments
Van Buren	Yes	Yes	<p>Yes. Subdivision and Site Design Review have review criteria that identify scenic and cultural resources. There are also specific standards protecting archeological sites and development impact on Natural Beauty, Aesthetics, Historic Sites, Wildlife Habitat, Rare Natural Areas, or Public Access to the shoreline.</p> <p>Van Buren has specific access management standards in place.</p>	<p>The comprehensive plan identifies four scenic areas with the Town, three of which are related to the region. These include the: Lake Road area, Gateway area on U.S. Route 1 with panoramic views of the St. John Valley, and the view of seven church steeples from the Lake Road. The plan also identifies a number of historic structures and sites.</p>
Hamlin	No	N/A	No	<p>Hamlin is the gateway to the St. John Valley on Route 1-A. There are numerous scenic vistas and several historic sites. There is no level of protection for the scenic views in Hamlin.</p>

Unorganized Plantations and Townships

Unorganized plantations and townships fall under the jurisdiction of the Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC). LUPC has implemented a statewide zoning ordinance for its entire jurisdiction and there are land use protection and structural standards designed to protect scenic resources and viewsheds. The ordinance also contains protection measures for historic and archeological resources. LUPC is currently in the process of revamping the way they conduct land use planning and ordinance development. Their goal is to make plans and ordinances more pertinent to local issues in each region of the state. There may be an opportunity to identify and protect scenic, historic and cultural resources at a greater level in the future.

For example, NMDC, along with a steering committee, is currently undertaking a community guided planning and zoning project in the unorganized townships and plantations of Aroostook County. The goal is to develop prospective zoning for areas within that region (i.e., planning to proactively direct growth in certain areas of the jurisdiction). Prospective zoning identifies areas within a community or region that are most appropriate for additional growth based on existing development patterns, natural resources, infrastructure and natural constraints, and the information and general policies contained in the Maine Land Use Planning Commission's "Comprehensive Land Use Plan."

Protection Techniques

Five of the eleven communities along the byway have some form of review criteria within Subdivision and Site Design Review Ordinances that provide a level of protection for the corridor segments within their towns. They include Fort Kent, Frenchville, Madawaska, St. Agatha, and Van Buren. Of the seven byway towns that have comprehensive plans, only Fort Kent, Madawaska, St. Agatha and Van Buren identify specific resources that should be protected along the byway corridor, while Frenchville and Grand Isle have strategies to protect natural, cultural/historic, or scenic resources. The State of Maine regulates outdoor advertising through what is known as the "billboard law", and the regulatory authority of MDEP under Title 38 § 484.3 in reviewing applications for development that fall under their jurisdiction. Also the MaineDOT Access Management Rules regulating driveways and entrances are in effect for the entire proposed corridor outside of the urban compact zones.

3.2 Road Safety Issues

A review of local comprehensive plans did not cite many specific safety issues other than normal snow drifting issues. To support an increase in tourism, it may be necessary to improve pedestrian and non-motorized transportation through a combination of bicycle lanes, sidewalks, and shoulder widening projects. Several communities are undertaking bicycle and pedestrian planning projects within their communities. For example, the town of Fort Kent will soon complete a bicycle and pedestrian plan that identifies a number of safety improvements. The town has applied for funding to complete several of these projects. Additionally, the National Park Service recently announced that it awarded the community a technical assistance grant to complete projects around the Fish River Greenway.

A new commercial Port of Entry was recently opened in Van Buren. While the reconstruction was initiated due to road and structure damage sustained during the 2008 floods, new road geometric and intersection construction leading to the Port was designed to improve traffic safety and flow, especially heavy truck traffic, in Van Buren's downtown.

The only other notable safety issue is crash incidences involving wildlife, which is impossible to eliminate. These incidences may be reduced, however, through improved roadside visibility measures and additional signage. The MaineDOT and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife are currently working on a number of pilot projects that would help increase visibility of animals along the roadside and have placed signs alerting motorists of “High Deer Concentrations” and moose crossings at appropriate locations in Allagash, Grand Isle, and Van Buren. Additionally, the MaineDOT has placed reflectors along roadsides on U.S. Route 1 in Van Buren and Cyr Plantation where a high number of moose collisions have occurred. Preliminary results indicate that these reflectors have reduced the number of accidents in these locations. The following table lists safety issues cited by communities in their comprehensive plans.

Table 1 - Safety Issues Cited by Community

Town	Safety Issues Cited
Allagash	Wesley Brook Culvert and corner freezes before rest of pavement and is improperly crowned. Deer in road during the winter months. Signage needed to alert travelers.
St. Francis	None cited.
St. John	None cited.
Fort Kent	Corner located near the municipal golf course is improperly crowned. All railroad crossings are in need of upgrades. New pedestrian trails in the downtown will require better signage and striping.
Frenchville	Drainage problems were identified around Dickey Brook Bridge. Snow drifting problem area was identified on Route 1 on top of the hill by Queen Village, past Forest Ave. The Church Road and Route 1 intersection was identified as having sight distance problems. Other intersections with identified problems are Starbarn Avenue and Route 1, and Hill Avenue and Route 1.
Madawaska	General condition of Route 1 west of Madawaska’s downtown was cited as a safety issue. Intersection of Bridge and Main St. has high Critical Rate Factor.
Grand Isle	None cited. There were no locations with high Critical Rate Factors. However, there has been a higher than expected number of accidents between the Van Buren Townline and the MMA (now Northern Maine Rail) rail crossing. Speed in the village area has also been cited as a safety issue.
Van Buren	High incidence of car/moose collisions north of Keegan. Poor road conditions along U.S. Route 1, north of Keegan.
St. Agatha	None cited on Route 162.
Hamlin	None cited.

Traffic accident information was gathered from the MaineDOT Traffic Engineering Accident Records to determine any serious issues with traffic safety along the length of the corridor. During the study period of January 2006 to December 2012, there were a total of ten (10) fatal accidents along the Route 161/Route 1/Route 1-A/Route 162 corridor. On Route 161, there were two (2) fatal accidents, one in 2006 (Fort Kent), and one in 2010 (St. John). The St. John accident occurred in February; slippery road conditions were considered the cause. The Fort Kent accident occurred in July; the weather was clear at the time of the accident. During the same time frame, there were no fatal accidents on Route 1-A in Hamlin.

Between 2006 and 2012, U.S. Route 1 had six fatal accidents with a total of seven people killed. Fatal US Route 1 accidents occurred in Fort Kent (1), Frenchville (1), Madawaska (2), Grand Isle (1), and Van Buren (1). Accidents occurred during winter and summer with two accidents being attributed to snowy road conditions. Fatal accidents in Fort Kent and Madawaska involved pedestrians in the downtown area.

Overall there were 1,071 accidents along the proposed corridor between 2006 and 2012. A review of the data does not indicate any one location with higher than expected number of accidents. U.S. Route 1 had the highest number of accidents with 627, followed by Route 161 with 328. Crash rates along the proposed byway are highest in the most heavily congested areas, particularly Madawaska and Fort Kent. However, those accidents that are considered the most severe are higher where traffic speeds are at their maximum, including sections of U.S. Route 1 in Fort Kent, Van Buren and Grand Isle, and Route 161 in Allagash.

Safety and Private Enterprise

Traffic Volumes/User Types

The Maine DOT's Traffic Engineering Division and Traffic Monitoring Section, are responsible for the collection of all types of traffic data and maintenance of a statewide traffic volume database. The reduction and reporting of traffic volumes and vehicle classification data are accomplished through two types of count programs.

The following tables show traffic counts for byway communities. MaineDOT had completed counts in 2012 which were published in April, 2013. Communities along U.S. Route 1 (i.e. Fort Kent to Van Buren) on average had the highest traffic counts, Madawaska had the three highest AADT with 9,440 located at the intersection of U.S. Route 1 and 16th Avenue; 9,260 at 12th Avenue; and 8,970 at Bridge Street. Fort Kent followed closely with 8,200 located at the U.S. Route 1 and Route 161 intersection. Both Fort Kent and Madawaska, on average had the highest traffic counts along the proposed byway. As a result, both of these communities can be considered service centers for the subregion. Additionally, Madawaska is home to the region's largest employer, Twin Rivers Papers, thus generating significant commuter and freight traffic.

Table 2 – U.S. Route 1 Traffic Volumes²²

Town	Station	Road	Location	Type	Group	AADT
Cyr PLT.	50802	0001X	US 1 NE/O IR 440 (MADORE) @ VAN BUREN TL	C	I	2200
Cyr PLT.	50806	0001X	US 1 SW/O IR 440 (MADORE RD)	C	I	1990
Cyr PLT.	51102	0001X	US 1 NE/O IR 1040 (ABEL CYR RD)	C	I	1860
Cyr PLT.	54105	0001X	US 1 S/O IR 5030 (S JCT)	C	I	1790
Fort Kent	00105	0001X	US 1/SR 161 (E MAIN) S/O SR 161 (MARKET)	C	I	8100
Fort Kent	00602	0001X	US 1/SR 161 (W MAIN) NE/O US 1 (CUSTOMS)	C	I	5180
Fort Kent	00608	0001X	US 1 (CUSTOMS BR) NW/O SR 161 (W MAIN)	C	I	940
Fort Kent	01702	0001X	US 1/SR 161 (E MAIN) NE/O MONUMENT SQ	C	I	8200
Fort Kent	01707	0001X	US 1/SR 161 (W MAIN ST) W/O ELM ST	C	I	8060

²² An explanation of abbreviations used in these charts is in the appendix.

Fort Kent	02000	0001X	US 1/SR 161 (E MAIN ST) @ FISH RIVER BR	C	I	7890
Fort Kent	02101	0001X	US 1 (E MAIN ST) .25 MI N/O BOLDOC AVE	C	I	4450
Fort Kent	02301	0001X	US 1 (E MAIN ST) N/O HIGHLAND AVE	C	I	5580
Fort Kent	03506	0001X	US 1 (E MAIN ST) SW/O KENT ST (IR 1071)	C	I	3700
Fort Kent	57100	0001X	US 1 @ FRENCHVILLE TL	C	I	2270
Frenchville	35903	0001X	US 1 E/O IR 2124 (CHURCH AVE) @ BR# 2213	C	I	2780
Frenchville	35907	0001X	US 1 W/O IR 2124 (CHURCH AVE)	C	I	2540
Frenchville	52300	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) @ MADAWASKA TL	C	I	4220
Frenchville	52402	0001X	US 1 NE/O IR 334 (PELLETIER AVE)	C	I	3130
Frenchville	52405	0001X	US 1 S/O IR 334 (PELLETIER AVE)	C	I	3380
Frenchville	56602	0001X	US 1 NE/O SR 162	C	I	3780
Frenchville	56607	0001X	US 1 W/O SR 162 @ BR# 2087	C	I	3320
Grand Isle	30304	0001X	US 1 SE/O IR 327 (WILL CYR RD)	C	I	1680
Grand Isle	52008	0001X	US 1 NW/O IR 673 (GRIVOIS RD)	C	I	1520
Grand Isle	78400	0001X	US 1 @ MADAWASKA TL	C	I	1740
Grand Isle	78504	0001X	US 1 SE/O IR 340 (MORNEAULT RD)	C	I	1820
Grand Isle	78508	0001X	US 1 NW/O IR 340 (MORNEAULT RD)	C	I	1820
Grand Isle	78600	0001X	US 1 @ VAN BUREN TL	C	I	1550
Madawaska	00103	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) E/O 11TH AVE	C	I	8820
Madawaska	00203	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) E/O IR 343 (GAGNON RD)	C	I	3520
Madawaska	00503	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) E/O 26TH AVE	C	I	5960
Madawaska	00507	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) W/O 26TH AVE	C	I	4720
Madawaska	00607	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) W/O 22ND AVE	C	I	7610
Madawaska	00803	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) E/O 20TH AVE	C	I	8160
Madawaska	01003	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) E/O 19TH AVE	C	I	7890
Madawaska	01803	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) E/O MILL ST	C	I	8240

Madawaska	01806	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) SW/O 16TH AVE	C	I	9440
Madawaska	02407	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) W/O 13TH AVE	C	I	8840
Madawaska	02703	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) E/O BRIDGE ST	C	I	8970
Madawaska	02707	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) W/O 12TH AVE	C	I	9260
Madawaska	02903	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) E/O 10TH AVE	C	I	8450
Madawaska	03003	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) E/O LEGION AVE	C	I	8180
Madawaska	03307	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) W/O N 6TH AVE	C	I	6860
Madawaska	03503	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) E/O 4TH AVE	C	I	5900
Madawaska	03807	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) W/O 1ST AVE	C	I	5020
Madawaska	33103	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) E/O IR 339 (FOURNIER)	C	I	2520
Madawaska	33108	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) NW/O IR 339 (FOURNIER)	C	I	2600
Madawaska	78308	0001X	US 1 NW/O IR 2210 (OLD PO RD) (S JCT)	C	I	1870
Van Buren	00104	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) SE/O BRIDGE ST	C	I	6390
Van Buren	00108	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) NW/O HIGH ST	C	I	5850
Van Buren	00306	0001X	US 1 (STATE ST)(NB) SW/O US 1A (MAIN ST)	C	I	1550
Van Buren	00308	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) NW/O US 1 (STATE ST)	C	I	4700
Van Buren	00606	0001X	US 1 (STATE ST) SW/O TOWER DR	C	I	2310
Van Buren	01208	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) NW/O LAFAYETTE ST	C	I	6050
Van Buren	01708	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) NW/O POPLAR ST	C	I	5930
Van Buren	02301	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) N/O PARK ST	C	I	5870
Van Buren	02601	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) N/O SCHOOL ST (N JCT)	C	I	5550
Van Buren	03005	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) S/O FERRY ST	C	I	4810
Van Buren	03101	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) N/O PIERCE ST	C	I	3700
Van Buren	03801	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) N/O WRIGHT ST	C	I	3220
Van Buren	03908	0001X	US 1 (MAIN ST) NW/O CHURCH ST	C	I	2140

Van Buren	51208	0001X	US 1 NW/O IR 386 (PARENT RD)	C	I	1660
Van Buren	78804	0001X	US 1 SE/O IR 390 (MARTIN RD) (PW)	C	I	1300
Van Buren	78808	0001X	US 1 NW/O IR 390 (MARTIN RD) (PW)	C	I	1610

Route 1-A

Traffic counts were available only for Route 1-A in Hamlin. Highest counts were located at the Van Buren townline (1,190 AADT). These counts indicate traffic generated by commuters living in Hamlin and working in either Van Buren or in communities along the U.S. Route 1 corridor. Route 1-A serves as a heavy haul truck route for products shipped to or from the St. John Valley.

Table 3 - US Route 1A Traffic Volumes

Town	Station	Road	Location	Type	Group	AADT
Hamlin	49504	0001A	US 1A SE/O IR 454 (ALBERT CYR RD)	C	I	730
Hamlin	50700	0001A	US 1A @ VAN BUREN TL	C	I	1190
Hamlin	49908	0001A	US 1A NW/O IR 718	C	I	720
Hamlin	78700	0001A	US 1A @ BR# 2349 (Hammond BK)	C	I	840

Route 161

Traffic volumes drop off precipitously along the Route 161 corridor (Fort Kent to Allagash). Allagash has the lowest volume of all sites with an AADT of 60. This route serves as a major heavy haul freight route, a tourism route, and a route for commuters and residents to access Fort Kent or other communities. It is also the only major route into and out of the western portion of the St. John Valley. Traffic on this route can be heavily influenced by the amount of timber harvesting occurring in the North Maine Woods located to the west of Fort Kent.

Table 4 - Route 161 Traffic Volumes

Town	Station	Road	Location	Type	Group	AADT
Allagash	35008	00940X	IR 940 (FRANK MACK RD) NW/O IR 1513 C II	C	II	60
Allagash	35708	00940X	IR 940 (FRANK MACK RD) NW/O IR 1519	C	II	450
Allagash	77600	00940X	IR 940 (FRANK MACK RD) @ BR# 2014	C	II	720
Fort Kent	00104	0161X	SR 161 (MARKET ST) SE/O US 1 (E MAIN ST)	C	I	6070
Fort Kent	00500	0161X	SR 161 (MARKET ST) @ CUL @ POLE #17	C	I	2900
Fort Kent	00606	0161X	SR 161 (W MAIN ST) SW/O US 1 (CUSTOMS)	C	I	4450
Fort Kent	00906	0161X	SR 161 (MARKET) SW/O N PERLEY BROOK RD	C	I	5210
Fort Kent	02806	0161X	SR 161 (W MAIN ST) SW/O PEARL ST	C	I	3730

Fort Kent	03404	0161X	SR 161 (MARKET) SE/O W MARKET ST (S JCT)	C	I	6520
Fort Kent	77700	0161X	SR 161 @ ST JOHN TL	C	I	1600
Fort Kent	77803	0161X	SR 161 E/O IR 1053(DEMPSEY CURVE)(W JCT)	C	I	2650
Fort Kent	77807	0161X	SR 161 W/O IR 821 (VIOLETTE SETTLEMENT)	C	I	2130
St. Francis	59102	0161X	SR 161 NE/O IR 901 (DEAD END RD)	C	I	760
St. Francis	59106	0161X	SR 161 SW/O IR 936 (SUNSET DR)	C	I	1130
St. Francis	59200	0161X	161 @ ST JOHN TL	C	I	1130
St. Francis	59007	0161X	SR 161 W/O IR 1633 (PW) @ ALLAGASH TL	C	I	590
St John	35102	0161X	161 NE/O IR 9056 (DUMP RD)	C	I	1050
St. John	77903	0161X	SR 161 E/O IR 855 (JALBERT RD) (PW)	C	I	1270

Route 162

Counts were available only for Route 162 in St. Agatha. Highest counts were located around the intersection of the Dumais Cross road (1470 and 1480 AADT). These counts indicate traffic generated by commuters living in St. Agatha, and working in either Madawaska or Fort Kent. It is also indicative of heavy truck traffic serving the Twin Rivers Paper mill in Madawaska and the subregion's agricultural industries from St. Agatha.

Town	Station	Road	Location	Type	Group	AADT
St. Agatha	32604	0162X	SR 162 SE/O IR 9126 (JAMES ST)	C	II	770
St. Agatha	55803	0162X	SR 162 E/O IR 3126	C	II	1350
St. Agatha	55907	0162X	SR 162 W/O IR 3023 (FLAT MOUNTAIN RD)	C	II	1290
St. Agatha	56204	0162X	SR 162 SE/O IR 369 (DUMAIS CROSS RD)	C	II	1470
St. Agatha	56208	0162X	SR 162 NW/O IR 369 (DUMAIS CROSS RD)	C	II	1480

3.3 Roadway Improvements and Design Standards

The Maine Department of Transportation’s (MaineDOT) new work plan for 2013-2014-2015 supports its mission, which is "to responsibly provide our customers with the safest, most reliable transportation system possible, given available resources." The work plan contains projections of transportation resources (federal, state, other) and the MaineDOT’s strategy to apply them to the planning, engineering, construction, operation and maintenance of transportation infrastructure of all modes throughout Maine. The plan emphasizes focusing scarce transportation resources on existing critical infrastructure needs, primarily roads and bridges, to the greatest extent possible.

The following projects located along the St. John Valley Cultural Byway were listed in the updated Maine DOT work plan. There is approximately 9.24 miles of road work plus the construction of a new bridge and the removal of the old international bridge in Fort Kent at an estimated cost of \$9,002,998. There are three projects listed in the work plan for the Northern Maine Regional Airport in Frenchville, totaling \$298,072. Projects include crack sealing, hangar construction, and taxiway extensions.

Town (s)	Route	Work Plan Year	ID #	Description	Estimated Cost
Fort Kent	Rt. 1	2013	016842.00	Large culvert replacement: 4.28 miles north of Frenchville town line.	\$320,000
Fort Kent	Rt. 1	2014-15	010042.10	Construct approach associated with bridge replacement at the international bridge (No.2398).	\$5,199,593
Fort Kent	Rt. 1	2014-15	010042.30	Bridge removal: demolition of the old Fort Kent international bridge.	\$1,000,000
Fort Kent	Rt. 1	2014-15	020430.00	Highway resurfacing: beginning 0.02 of a mile north of Pine Street and extending north 0.81 of a mile.	\$341,250
Frenchville	Rt. 1	2013	017994.00	Highway resurfacing: beginning 0.26 of a mile east of Route 162 and extending west on Route 1 for 1.44 miles.	\$561,220
Madawaska, Houlton, Presque Isle, Fort Fairfield	Rail	2013	018388.00	Signal improvements: Along several points on Maine Northern Railway.	\$362,179
St. Agatha, Van Buren	Rt. 162	2013	019913.00	Light capital paving in the region	\$724,756

Van Buren	Rt.1	2013	019229.00	Drainage improvements: Located 0.02 of a mile north of Saint Francis St. on Main St./ U. S. Route 1.	\$244,000
Van Buren	Rt. 1	2014-15	020421.00	Highway improvement: beginning 1.00 mile south of Parent Rd, extending north 2.71 m.	\$250,000
Total				9.24 miles of road work	\$9,002,998

Protection Techniques

Five of the ten byway communities have some form of review criteria within subdivision and site design review ordinances that provide a level of protection for the corridor segments within their towns (refer to Table 1 – Existing Land Use Matrix). They include Fort Kent, Frenchville, Madawaska, St. Agatha, and Van Buren. Of the seven byway towns that have comprehensive plans, only Madawaska, St. Agatha and Van Buren identify specific resources that should be protected along the byway corridor, while Frenchville and Grand Isle have strategies to protect natural, cultural/historic, or scenic resources.

The State of Maine regulates outdoor advertising through what is known as the “billboard law”, and the regulatory authority of MDEP under Title 38 § 484.3 in reviewing applications for development that fall under their jurisdiction. Further, the MaineDOT Access Management Rules regulating driveways and entrances are in effect for the entire proposed corridor outside of the urban compact zones.

Environmental Conditions

The most visible natural elements of the byway corridor are the St. John, St. Francis and Allagash Rivers; the vast timberlands, farmland and pastoral landscapes; wildlife habitat associated with the aforementioned; and natural areas such as the St. John Bog and public reserve land. Their relationship to the proposed corridor is primarily twofold, 1. a working byway with farm equipment and log trucks using the road to access the fields and forests, and 2. a recreational byway displaying signs and services of interest to fishers, hunters, ATV and snowmobile enthusiast, and other outdoor recreational activities.

Roadway Modifications

There are currently no planned modifications to the byway corridor in the next two year period other than normal maintenance. The MaineDOT does not have different standards for Scenic Byways, but often introduces different elements such as turnouts, rustic guard rail, or other context sensitive treatments (no longer use Cor10 steel), landscaping, etc. The roadway widths and geometric elements remain the same. The following guidance for Scenic Byways was provided by Maine DOT Region 5. *[From the National Design Guide]*

Several other types of guardrail are approved for use in specific situations. Steel backed timber guardrail may be used in areas where aesthetic requirements exist, such as on scenic highways or in historic districts. Corrosion resistant steel guardrail (rusty rail), a variation of the “W” Beam, may be used in similar situations. There are several cable guardrail systems that meet current standards which may be considered. These can only be used when large deflection distances can be accommodated, and when exposure to significant snowplow contact is not expected. Cable guardrail may be considered when visibility through the guardrail is necessary or desired.

Cedar Rail Fence - Linear Foot

The amount of Cedar Rail Fence to be estimated shall be that amount noted on the profile portion of the plans. This item will generally be used only for scenic turnouts, picnic areas and replacement in kind.

[From the State Design Guide, under Section B Design Considerations, I. Project Scoping]

Physical Characteristics

The physical constraints within the limits of a project on an existing highway will often determine what geometric improvements are practical and cost-effective. These include topography, adjacent development, available right-of-way, utilities, and environmental constraints. The designer also should examine the geometric features and design speeds of highway sections adjacent to the proposed project to provide design continuity with the adjacent sections.

This involves a consideration of factors such as driver expectations, geometric design consistency and proper transitions between sections of different geometric designs. Other considerations should be the aesthetic, scenic, historic and cultural characteristics. *[Under Section E, Environmental]*

Natural and cultural resources often exist along highway projects. Many of these resources such as wetlands, public parks, and historic sites are protected by law for public benefit. Planning and design decisions such as setting roadway alignment and widths, replacing and rehabilitating culverts, and altering drainage patterns or volumes can all directly affect these resources by degrading or destroying them. Such impacts can usually be permitted under specific circumstances but, as impacts increase, permit requirements become more costly and time-consuming.

Design elements can also indirectly affect resources and abutting private property by disturbing or exposing a hazardous substance, such as an abandoned, damaged gasoline tank; by channeling storm water toward a wetland or water body, carrying and depositing pollutants and sediment; or by impeding an established travel corridor for moose (land) or fish (water). These conditions can also affect structural integrity, safety or scenic quality of a roadway. *[Also, in the Utility Accommodation Policy]*

Scenic Areas

Certain lands are acquired or set aside for scenic enhancement and natural beauty. Such areas include Scenic Byways, scenic strips, overlooks, rest areas, recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, historic sites, public parks, and landscaped areas. The Utilities website indicates the designated state and federal Scenic Byways within the State of Maine. To protect the aesthetic quality of these areas, new Facility installations are not permitted within scenic areas unless the following criteria are met:

[23 CFR 645.209]

- A. The installation does not require extensive removal or alteration of trees or other natural features visible to the highway user, or impair the aesthetic quality of the lands.
- B. New aerial installations are permitted only if:
 1. Other locations or underground construction are not technically feasible, cost prohibitive or less desirable from a visual quality standpoint;
 2. The design provides adequate attention to the protection and preservation of the visual qualities of the area in location, materials and methods of construction.
- C. Installations for highway purposes: all criteria set forth in A and B shall also apply to facilities needed solely for highway purposes, such as continuous lighting or services to a safety area, rest area or recreational area.

The segment of Route 161 includes sections in Allagash, St. Francis, St. John Plantation, and Fort Kent. It was originally constructed in the 1800's and has a typical R.O.W. of 66 feet for the entire study segment. The western terminus is located at the Little Black River Bridge in Allagash and extends east to Fort Kent where it then heads south toward Caribou and Fort Fairfield. The paved travel surface has a uniform shoulder width and type for right and left margins, although shoulder construction varies as one proceeds west from the residential area in Fort Kent. Generally there are no paved shoulders outside of Fort Kent with the exception of a few short segments in St. Francis and Allagash.

Conditions include no shoulder with curbing at edge of pavement; 8-foot paved with no curb; and 4-foot gravel surface. With the exception of a small area in the village of Allagash, there are no sidewalks along this section of Route 161. The town of Fort Kent, however, is examining the potential of connecting the existing sidewalk system near the town office and extending it further west towards the St. John Valley Heritage Trail, a multipurpose recreational trail.

Pavement conditions are generally fair to good for the segment of Route 161 under assessment. However, instances of potholes, frost heaves, longitudinal cracking, "alligator" cracking, and unraveling can be found specifically in the more rural sections where road maintenance has been limited to re-surfacing and drainage activities. The area from the Fort Kent Municipal golf course to the St. Francis town line is in the poorest condition. The MaineDOT is replacing culverts along the corridor but no specific work items to reconstruction or maintenance appear in the MaineDOT's Work Plan for 2013, 2014, and 2015.

U.S. Route 1 comprises the longest segment of the byway (47 miles) with a western terminus located at the international bridge in Fort Kent. A large granite sign marks "America's First Mile" indicating the beginning of historic U.S. Route 1. The eastern terminus is located at the intersection of Route 1-A in Van Buren, continuing south towards Caribou and Presque Isle, ultimately ending in Key West, Florida. The byway terminates at the Cyr Plantation/Connor townline.

U.S. Route 1 between Fort Kent and Madawaska, is classified as a major collector, while from Madawaska to Van Buren, it is a principle arterial. The section between Madawaska and Van Buren is also part of the National Highway System. Also originally constructed in the 1800's, R.O.W widths range from 75-150 feet depending on location. R.O.W's widths from Fort Kent to Madawaska range from 75-100 feet while widths from Madawaska to Van Buren with two exceptions are 125-150 feet.

Sidewalks are located in the downtown areas of Fort Kent, Frenchville, Madawaska, and Van Buren. They are generally in good repair. The town of Fort Kent is in the process of removing utility poles located in the sidewalks along U.S. Route 1 (Main Street) near the international bridge and near the Route 11/ U.S. Route 1 intersection. The town is also in the process of improving sidewalks on U.S. Route 1 near the Northern Maine Medical Center.

Outside of all downtown areas, no sidewalks exist nor are any planned. Between Fort Kent and Madawaska, two to 4-foot gravel shoulders are the norm, while the segment from Madawaska to Grand Isle has 8-foot paved shoulders. Overall, U.S. Route 1 is in good to excellent condition with many improvements recently completed by MaineDOT. Route 1-A from Van Buren to Hamlin is classified as a major collector. This segment is 10.3 miles long, is considered to be in good condition, and terminates at the historic Roosevelt School House Museum in Hamlin.

The six mile segment of Route 162 is also a major collector and connects U.S. Route 1 in Frenchville with Route 161 in Cross Lake. The Route 162 R.O.W. is typically 66 feet with gravel shoulders of two to four feet in width. Pavement surface and road conditions are generally fair to good with some recently re-surfaced sections in St. Agatha. The segment between Frenchville and St. Agatha exhibits frequent frost heaves and undulation of road profile and cross sections.

3.4 Outdoor Advertising and Signage Plan

Clearly outlined in the byway's goals and objectives is the commitment to enhancing and protecting the scenic quality of the region's landscape, including downtowns. This speaks to a number of issues, such as zoning and signage, design standards and other regulations that impact the byway. Future planning will be needed to develop a set of design guidelines for the byway. This will require attention to understanding the byway's focus, theme and stories, the use of certain materials for signage and their aesthetic application, collaborations with our communities, other major roadway projects and traveler amenities. In the section on the byway's wayside exhibits in this plan, we address current signage and future possibilities. Additionally, byway goals include reference to the importance of signage that reflects not only the intent behind the byway, but also its values.

Currently, signage along the proposed byway corridor is relatively well-designed and attractive. Of note are the bilingual "Welcome to the St. John Valley" signs placed at four entry points to the region. Way-finding signage currently exists to help travelers find points of interest, but additional way-finding signage may be needed as intrinsic resources are further identified and prioritized. The State of Maine, Title 23 Chapter 15 *Protection of Highways*, regulates the size, type, and form of signage along state highways.

The following is an overview of existing signage regulations of the towns along the St. John Valley Cultural Byway:

Frenchville and Grand Isle – The towns of Frenchville and Grand Isle both developed land use ordinances that contained a very detailed section on sign regulation. However, the legislative bodies of the towns never enacted the ordinances, and therefore no sign regulation exists. It would be possible for these towns to enact some acceptable form of signage regulation as they each have an approved comprehensive plan that provides the legal basis for such an ordinance.

Fort Kent – Section 7.14 of the Fort Kent Zoning Ordinance includes sign regulations with reasonable design standards governing size, illumination, placement, and content. Both permanent and temporary signs are regulated. The Code Enforcement Officer has sole authority for reviewing and permitting all signs that require a permit. The list of prohibited signs includes:

- Billboards and off-premise signs;
- Sign(s) erected on utility owned poles and erected on trees;
- Searchlights;
- Hot air or gas filled balloons, or umbrellas used for advertising;
- Sign(s) mounted or painted on a vehicle for advertising purposes, parked, and visible from the public right-of-way, except signs identifying the related business when the vehicle is being used in the normal day-to-day operations of that business;
- Sign(s) designed to be transported by trailer on wheels;
- "A" frame signs;
- Any sign extending or protruding over public property within two (2) feet of the curb line. Signs extending or protruding over public property shall be approved by the Code Enforcement Officer;
- Signs hung from another sign;
- Any noise making sign;
- Any colored sign so located as to attract attention from or obstruct traffic control lights so as to reduce its visibility and effect;
- Any sign within twenty five (25) feet of an intersection of two (2) roads so placed in any way as to obstruct clear vision in any direction;
- Any device illuminating a sign which directs light toward a public way in such a manner as to cast its beam in the eyes of oncoming motorists or pedestrians.

Madawaska – Section 11 of the Madawaska Land Use Ordinance contains sign regulations, including a table of permitted signs and corresponding reviewing authority. The ordinance states that it is the intent of this section to establish standards for signs within the town. It is further intended that signs shall not detract from the visual environment of a property; that they maintain and enhance the aesthetic environment; they create and maintain an attractive business climate; minimize the possible adverse effect of signs on nearby public and private property; encourage the effective use of signs as a means of communication; and improve and maintain pedestrian and traffic safety. Prohibited signs in Madawaska are very similar to those listed in Fort Kent’s ordinance.

Van Buren – The town of Van Buren’s sign ordinance is almost identical to that of Madawaska, so uniformity as to size, location and setbacks, illumination and prohibited signs is achievable.

St. John Plantation, Hamlin, Cyr Plantation – St. John Plantation, Hamlin, and Cyr Plantation fall under the land use jurisdiction of the Maine Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC), which regulates signs in unorganized townships and plantations through a zoning ordinance. LUPC’s ordinance regulates sign setback, size, location, and type. Any applicant, through a permitting process, must demonstrate that the proposed sign shall be erected and maintained in a manner, which produces no undue adverse impact upon the resources and uses in the area. There are signs that do not require permit applications to the LUPC that generally include temporary signage, directional signage, memorial signage, governmental signage, and kiosks near trail intersections.

St. Francis and St. Agatha – The towns of St. Francis and St. Agatha have no local land use ordinances that contain sign regulations.

4.0 Byway Goals

The following goals, objectives and actions represent direction for byway management and development over a five to ten year period. Details on implementation is discussed in Section 5 in this document. We identified four goals:

1. *Educate*: Raise awareness of the region's diverse cultural heritage
2. *Steward*: Preserve, enhance, and protect our cultural, historical, scenic, and natural assets
3. *Develop*: Foster growth of regional tourism and economic opportunities
4. *Sustain*: Establish byway management that reflect our values

GOAL 1 **EDUCATE – RAISE AWARENESS OF THE REGION'S DIVERSE CULTURAL HERITAGE.**

1.a ***Strive to sustain important qualities and key assets unique to each byway community. Collaborate with organizations to raise public awareness and foster community pride about the region's identity and cultural heritage.***

- 1) Expand educational and interpretive opportunities for residents and visitors through seminars, workshops, enhanced community events, wayside exhibits, historical markers, and other interactive opportunities.
- 2) Foster community pride and quality of life for residents of the St. John Valley through initiatives and collaborations that celebrate, raise and support regional identity. Efforts may include:
 - Offer or collaborate in front-line hospitality and visitor experience training;
 - Promote and support work of historical societies, cultural groups, community groups (e.g., boy scouts) artists, creative entrepreneurs, etc.;
 - Develop programs that involve local schools (e.g., link with programs and help enhance curricula; create programs that connect youth with elders);
 - Acknowledge success stories and achievements that contribute to the byway and region (e.g., through an award or some form of public recognition).
- 3) Explore ways to use traditional and new technology for building cultural awareness.

1.b ***Develop approaches that reflect, bring forth, and support the bilingual character of the region.***

- 1) Develop a visible language strategy that encourages the bilingual use of French and English in a variety of applications, such as on signs for businesses and public buildings, street signs and other municipal applications, translation services, print and electronic media, and at events.
- 2) Be consistent and attentive to the use of French in byway programs and products. Include the French language into byway programs and products when possible and appropriate.
- 3) Support efforts that encourage French language education in schools and community education programs.

1.c *Be open and attentive to cooperating on promotional and awareness-building initiatives of the region's international nature.*

- 1) Continue and foster international cooperation by building upon past and existing international efforts (e.g., *Congr s mondiale acadien*, Voici the Valley Cultureway). Create a clearinghouse for information for residents and travelers about tourism-related activities and services that are relevant and beneficial to the byway.
- 2) Encourage the creation of an international experience in collaboration with regional groups, Aroostook County Tourism, and Maine Office of Tourism.
- 3) Be attentive to cross-border issues, advocate for accessible border crossings, be vigilant to changes in laws, and apply pressure to different levels of government when required.

1.d *Build on and link with, regional and external cultural development efforts that benefit the byway.*

- 1) Consider applicability for nomination of the St. John Valley Cultural Byway as a National Byway , National Heritage Area designation, and other related programs that can benefit and expand the byway.
- 2) Maximize use of regional studies, reports, projects related to art, culture, tourism, and development that may benefit the byway. Create compendium of relevant regional efforts and make these available online or through local libraries and cultural groups.
- 3) Support awareness-building activities of nonprofit groups and businesses by helping to leverage funds for opportunities (e.g., collaborate with artists, musicians, etc. in the region).

GOAL 2 **STEWARD – PRESERVE, ENHANCE, AND PROTECT OUR CULTURAL, HISTORICAL, SCENIC, AND NATURAL ASSETS.**

2.a *Broaden awareness of the importance of preservation, protection, and stewardship of cultural, historic, scenic, and natural intrinsic assets. Encourage efforts that support byway integrity and sustainability*

- 1) Assess and keep vigilant of high-value intrinsic regional assets of the byway that are at risk, or may become endangered. Establish a system for monitoring changes in the condition of these key assets and a methodology to respond to these changes.
- 2) Link with entities concerned with preservation and stewardship and play a role in sensitizing and educating residents. When possible integrate these efforts into byway programs. Efforts may include:
 - Preservation, restoration, maintenance, and enhancement of historic buildings and vernacular architecture (e.g., regional groups, Maine Historic Preservation, Maine Downtown Program, etc.);
 - Environmental restoration, maintenance, and enhancement of native plants/trees and other natural resources (e.g., MaineDOT, Dept. of Parks and Lands, etc.)

- Preservation of cultural traditions (e.g., language and apprenticeship initiatives);
- Small farm preservation efforts that preserve agricultural landscape (e.g., Maine Farmland Trust).

3) Encourage safe, multi-modal forms of transportation to vary byway experience and reduce dependency on automobiles (bikepaths, boats, walking, horseback riding, rail).

2.b *Enhance and protect the scenic quality of the region’s landscape, including downtowns.*

1) Work directly with communities and tap into state programs to encourage participation and cooperation in keeping the byway beautiful. Efforts may include:

- Advocate for local scenic enhancements that benefit the byway (e.g., comprehensive plans, local zoning, signage ordinances), be mindful of state laws that impact the byway;
- Offer suggestions to communities to enhance design standards and other regulations that impact the byway;
- Create an “adopt part of the byway” program;
- Encourage service groups to collect litter along the byway;
- Connect with the Maine Downtown Program and other related agencies to support revitalization of byway communities.

2) Enhance views and vistas along the byway and its character overall for residents and visitors. Support efforts for a visual resource assessment that will lead to managing roadsides that benefit the byway (e.g., vegetation management, turnouts, signage, kiosks, utility lines, overlooks, etc.).

3) Make an effort to create corridor-specific design guidelines to ensure that visible roadside elements along the byway maintain and enhance its unique character, are of lasting quality, and unobtrusive. This may include a design manual that inspires and provides suggestions to property owners to beautify their properties along the byway.

GOAL 3 *DEVELOP – FOSTER GROWTH OF REGIONAL TOURISM AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES.*

3.a *Enhance the visitor experience through safe access to the byway, wayfinding and interpretive information, investment in infrastructure, and product development.*

1) Create a coordinated effort to enhance facilities and programming of sites and groups to ensure stronger visitor experience (e.g., site expansion, washrooms, docent training, interpretation, communications, etc.), and link with existing programs (e.g., elder tours, “passports” for visiting museums, etc.).

2) Remember our international context and be realistic with what we can achieve when it comes to international collaboration. Efforts may include:

- Explore ways to increase cross-border experiences that complement the byway and support efforts by municipalities, nonprofits and businesses for the same;
- Identify and act on promotional opportunities associated with international events and other cross-border development initiatives with New Brunswick and Québec;

- Consider strength in numbers: “one territory of three regions”;
- Link with tourism agencies and cultural nonprofits, visit websites, subscribe to relevant materials.

3) Develop diverse ways to tell the byway story (e.g., interpretative panels, way-finding signage, print materials, videos, kiosks, guides, and electronic media). Design these products in a way that reflects byway character, represents a consistent message, and are clear, safe, and usable by all people. Access the support of agencies that complement and/or can assist our efforts, such as the National Park Service, whenever relevant and possible.

4) Encourage cross-sector marketing opportunities with nature/recreational tourism activities and support their enhancement, particularly those that connect to byway themes (e.g., early travel along the St. John River, the Allagash, etc.).

5) Provide and enhance opportunities for safe, multi-modal travel and touring programs along the byway that are diverse and engaging (e.g., trails, pathways, biking, etc.).

6) Promote and manage the byway in ways that do not interfere with resident’s quality of life and minimize impacts on non-tourism aspects of local economies and/or sensitive natural resources.

3.b *Coordinate with Aroostook County Tourism and Maine Office Tourism to enhance market and tourism opportunities.*

1) Collaborate with Aroostook County Tourism (ACT) and Maine Office Tourism (MOT) to maximize and strengthen the visitor experience and perception of the byway’s character especially at gateways, visitor centers, and key service center communities. This may also include helping to establish new facilities and services. Link with ACT and MOT programs and electronic technology that benefit the byway (e.g., other state byways, WebTours).

2) Be attentive to tourism trends to learn about techniques and best practices that would enhance the byway (e.g., marketing, visitor services, etc.). Participate in regional and state tourism meetings and trainings; keep abreast of tourism information on industry websites, print materials, etc.

3) Integrate components of county and state tourism strategies that complement and support byway efforts and also advance their efforts (e.g., travel itineraries; keeping visitors longer, and encouraging day trips to other parts of the byway and throughout all seasons).

3.c *Foster a better quality of life in communities along the byway by educating municipalities, businesses and nonprofit groups, of the potential opportunities that the byway can provide.*

1) Encourage opportunities for municipalities, nonprofits and tourism-related businesses along the byway to support the byway and take advantage of the byway experience. Efforts may include:

- Workshops and mentoring program on signage, marketing, customer service, and leadership skills;
- Inclusion of the byway in municipality comprehensive planning;
- Collaboration in developing ways to increase length of time that visitors stay in the region.

2) Be attentive to development studies and projects which identify opportunities for the creation of products and services based on intrinsic qualities and make efforts to implement what is relevant to the byway (e.g., French immersion programs, cycling trail, touring itineraries, venues to showcase handmade goods, shared marketing, etc.).

3) Be part of the solution for regional job creation. Support, respect, and use the skills and talents of the people living and working in the region to advance the byway.

GOAL 4 SUSTAIN – ESTABLISH BYWAY MANAGEMENT THAT REFLECT OUR VALUES.

4.a *Create an entity to oversee the management and sustainability of the byway.*

1) Establish a management structure with its leadership firmly situated in the region. This structure may be in the form of a community group, coalition, or network of existing agencies, aligned with a supporting anchor administrative agency.

2) Define purpose, organizational parameters, and decision-making processes that are inclusive, flexible, realistic, and reflective of the values and goals of the byway. This includes being attentive to:

- Hiring locally, respecting and supporting the skills and talents of people who live in the region;
- Nurturing leadership, creative approaches, and public processes, including relationships with local media, that advance the byway and engage residents in future programming.

3) Prepare and submit grant proposals to fund byway coordination and projects. Collaborate with other organizations or agencies on related initiatives when appropriate to raise funds. Advocate for state and federal byway program sustainability.

4) Establish ways to periodically review and update the Corridor Management and Partnership Plan (CMMP), measure impacts of the byway, and improve byway quality and safety.

4.b *Foster cooperation and build relationships to enhance visibility and sustainability of the byway.*

1) Ensure that the CMMP is consistent with applicable local, state, and federal plans and regulations. Be attentive to byway community visions, plans, and programs that complement the CMMP, and when/if possible coordinate efforts and encourage its adoption by each byway community.

2) Foster public interest, involvement, and sense of ownership in the success of the byway through effective communications and direct engagement. Efforts may include:

- Creating effective and efficient ways to communicate, promote, and share information (e.g., releases, e-newsletter, television, social media, etc.);
- Identifying, strengthening or forming new partnerships that can benefit the byway through providing programs and expertise, raising visibility, leveraging funding, etc. This includes individuals (e.g., artists, creative entrepreneurs), and groups at a community, regional, state, national and international level.

4.c

Develop effective communications strategies that promote the byway.

- 1) Develop an internal and external communications strategy that reflects the byways' character and goals, as well as being attentive to visitor preferences and expectations. Be mindful communication strategies that promote Aroostook County and the State of Maine.
- 2) Build and maintain a cohesive brand identity with a distinctive byway name and logo, signage strategy, and promotional materials using a combination of print and electronic materials. (e.g., website, driving tours, brochures, videos, software applications, etc.)
- 3) Coordinate with regional stakeholders and other entities to leverage marketing opportunities to promote the byway.

Building Our Future: Sustaining the Byway

5.1 Implementing our Goals and Future Steps

The Corridor Management and Partnership Plan is a guiding document. Its intent is to provide guidance and reference for management of the byway. Those involved in the planning of the byway recognize that its success depends on a number of factors: realistic goals and objectives, competent people to carry out efforts, buy-in and enthusiasm from stakeholders, strong collaboration, adequate and sustainable funding, methods to measure success, and the ability to grow and adapt.

5.1.a Community Participation

How to keep the byway alive? Without a doubt, community participation is the key. This participation comes in a variety of forms – through a management committee, professionals, stakeholders, and organizations within the St. John Valley.

The byway’s mission, along with its value and vision, should be broad and inclusive. Some things already work well in the Valley: making a dollar stretch countless directions, cooperative alliances, casual gatherings, and meeting face-to-face. Similarly, there are many challenges to community participation, such as the overuse of volunteers, perceived “turf/territory” impediments, lack of leadership skills, and difficulty securing funds. It will be the job of any group involved in the byway management to integrate diverse interest groups, constructive techniques and be mindful of the challenges.

By virtue of the abundance of assets and the region’s strong sense of culture and identity, we believe that the byway will endure. However, it would be remiss and shortsighted not to seize the opportunity to invest in practical and hands-on implementation of the byway goals, merged with a bold, visionary approach. Byway management needs to be grounded in high levels of idea exchange, information sharing, spanning boundaries and building solid relationships. These efforts will help to achieve the vision of the byway, which is worth repeating:

The vision of the St. John Valley Cultural Byway is a world destination for residents and visitors to enjoy our rich history, vibrant culture, and beautiful landscape. Communities along the byway’s 104-miles of road work together to share authentic and unparalleled tourism experiences about who we are – our diversity, traditions, French language, and ways of life. The byway is integral to building a better quality of life for residents through insightful management, quality products and services, collaboration with public, private, and nonprofit groups, and investment in preservation and stewardship. We strive to build a lasting legacy that fosters a sense of regional pride, inspires international cooperation, and establishes our place within the story of our nation.

Components of a byway management committee

To ensure short and long-term success for the byway, its volunteer management committee, will be a fluid coalition composed of people from throughout the region, ideally directed by a professional and supported by an anchor organization, which provides technical assistance. Many members will have already served on the byway planning committee, with additional members carefully selected. Because of the overabundance of nonprofit organizations already in the region, there is no need create another; but rather to work creatively with existing organizations and leverage their assets. In describing the aspects of a collective approach that brings organizations together and establishes a cooperative agreement based on a shared effort, the following is a suggested guide:

- 12-15 person committee (e.g. members of the byway planning committee plus new members);
- loose coalition, collective, citizens group, cooperative agreement;
- develops charter, but organized in such a way to minimize high levels of organizational management;
- an established organization acts as an anchor, providing assistance and guidance;
- mandate is byway focused, and embraces its mission to foster larger tourism, economic, and environmental development that serve the byway and the region;
- could become a membership that welcomes a wide cross-section of the population;
- seek people who are passionate about living in the St. John Valley and advancing it.

5.1.b Public Agencies, Nonprofits and Private Enterprise

To ensure success for the byway, the management team will need to build and maintain networks of public agencies, businesses, and nonprofits within the region and beyond. The byway’s relationship with these entities will vary depending on the kind of support required, such as funding, resource, technical assistance, or affinity marketing.

The St. John Valley, with a population of only 13,000 people enjoys an abundance of public agencies, institutions, and nonprofits. There are dozens of businesses that benefit from the byway, such as hotels, restaurants, gas stations and other tourism-related services. Each with its own mission and responsibilities, they often intersect with one another around common interests and goals. The St. John Valley Cultural Byway is one of those common interests and goals.

Some examples: the many communities along the Fish River Scenic Byway, which radiates southward from Fort Kent in the western part of the region, are potential collaborators with the St. John Valley Cultural Byway. Both byways can benefit from their connection to one another by promoting and sharing resources whenever possible.

Because the St. John River is an essential part of the byway experience, another entity that can benefit the byway is the St. John Aroostook Resource, Conservation and Development (RC&D). This organization helps residents care for and protect natural resources in a way that will improve the area’s economy, environment, and living standards. In 2002 it was a major partner in sponsoring *The St John – a River Without Borders* conference.

Additionally, as part of the byway planning, a regional gathering of historical societies and cultural groups was convened. Besides a sharing information about one another, they also expressed their willingness to promote and support the byway through their websites and programming.

These organizations know about each other and have a history of mutual support that can be tapped into by the byway management committee . The following lists of entities (in no particular order) can support the byway in a variety of ways, such as technical assistance, promotions, resources, and funding.

Regional

- Historical societies and regional cultural groups
- Fish River Scenic Byway
- Chambers of Commerce
- Restaurants, lodging establishments, gas stations
- Outdoor recreation and nature-based groups
- St. John-Aroostook Resource Conservation & Development Area
- Acadian Archives
- University of Maine at Fort Kent
- Municipalities
- Outgrowth of CMA

County

- Northern Maine Development Commission
- Aroostook County Tourism
- Aroostook Partners for Progress
- Women, Work and Community Centers
- Northern Maine Community College
 - Aroostook County Government

State

- Maine Department of Transportation
- Other Maine Scenic Byways
- Maine Office of Tourism
- Maine Department of Environmental Protection
- Maine Downtown Center
- Bicycle Coalition of Maine
- Maine Department of Public Safety
- University of Maine System

Federal

- Federal Highway Administration
- Scenic America
- National Park Service

5.1.c Funding and Partners

It would be unreasonable to assume that securing a direct and steady stream of funding to sustain the byway will come easy. The byway management committee must possess an understanding of fundraising, keep up-to-date with existing and potential funding entities, and consider creative approaches to fundraising. For example, some of the entities listed below may not necessarily have granting programs, but may be able to partner with the byway to help access or serve as a pass-through for funds from another source.

Funding the byway with multiple sources can provide leveraging power between private and public sector partners and increase the byway's chances for success over single-source funding. Efforts will be made to connect to grant writing resources, such as the Grantsmanship Center and the Maine Philanthropy Center. Additionally, there is a growing number of online fundraising websites that offer an alternative funding source for specific initiatives. These include CauseVox, Fundly, Kickstarter, to name a few. Below is a list of potential funding agencies and partners in alphabetical order.

State Public Agencies

Maine Arts Commission
Maine Department of Economic and Community Development
Maine Department of Transportation
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
Maine Office of Tourism

State Private Foundations

Betterment Fund
Davis Family Foundation
Environmental Funders Network (Maine)
Libra Foundation

Maine Community Foundation
Margaret E. Burnham Charitable Trust
Morton Kelly Foundation
Quimby Family Foundation
Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation

Federal Public Agencies

Grants.gov (resource for federal sources)
Northern Border Regional Commission Grant Program
National Endowment for the Arts (Traditional Arts, Your Town, Citizen’s Institute on Rural Design)
National Endowment for the Humanities
National Park Service (Preserve America, Save America’s Treasures)
National Trust for Historic Preservation (Share your Heritage)
United States Department of Agriculture (Rural Development, Preserve America)

National Private Foundations

ArtsPlace America
Foundation Center (national fundraising resource)
Foundation for Rural Service
J. M. Kaplan Fund (historic preservation)
Jane’s Trust
Kresge Foundation
Musser Fund
Nathan Cumming Foundation
Northern Forest Center
Northeastern States Research Cooperative
Sewell Foundation
Surdna Foundation
Tiffany Foundation
Tourism Cares
Wallace Foundation

5.2 Schedule

Six-Year Action Plan (2014-2020)

This Corridor Management and Partnership Plan is a guiding document that provides invaluable information for a byway management committee to consider for future development. Given that, the timeline for the implementation of goals and objectives are suggestions, and are not intended to function as a definitive action plan.

Website for the byway: webpage links to chambers, museums, organizations, MOT, ACT, etc. used as a kind of clearinghouse, platform to talk about tourism and the byway.

Acronyms

BMC – Byway Management Committee
 MDOT – Maine Department of Transportation
 ACT – Aroostook County Tourism
 NPS – National Park Service
 MOT – Maine Office of Tourism

YEAR ONE

Task	Timeline	Who
Expand educational and interpretive opportunities for residents and visitors	On-going	
Develop programs that involve local schools	By 2015	Byway committee, schools, MDOT, NPS
Create award/recognition program	By end of 2014	Byway committee, MDOT
Collaborate in offering front-line hospitality and visitor experience training	By end of 2014 (and on-going)	Byway committee, NMDC, MDOT, NPS, MOT
Develop French language strategy	By 2015	Byway committee, Centre Français de la Vallée-St-Jean, UMFK Acadian Archives

Appendices

6.1 Corridor Management and Partnership Plan

The *Interim Policy* for the National Scenic Byways Program states that the corridor management and partnership plan for a National Scenic Byway must include 14 items, with an additional three items that must be addressed for byways seeking designation as an All-American Road.²³

1. A map identifying the corridor boundaries and the location of intrinsic qualities and different land uses within the corridor.
2. An assessment of such intrinsic qualities and of their context.
3. A strategy for maintaining and enhancing those intrinsic qualities. The level of protection for different parts of a National Scenic Byway or All-American Road can vary, with the highest level of protection afforded those parts that most reflect their intrinsic values. All nationally recognized scenic byways should, however, be maintained with particularly high standards, not only for travelers' safety and comfort, but also for preserving the highest levels of visual integrity and attractiveness.
4. A schedule and list of all agency, group and individual responsibilities in the implementation of the corridor management plan, and a description of enforcement and review mechanisms, including a schedule for the continuing review of how well those responsibilities are being met.
5. A strategy describing how existing development might be enhanced and new development might be accommodated while still preserving the intrinsic qualities of the corridor. This can be done through design review, and such land-management techniques as zoning, easements and economic incentives.
6. A plan to assure ongoing public participation in the implementation of corridor management objectives.
7. A general review of the road's or highway's safety and accident record to identify any correctable faults in highway design, maintenance or operation.
8. A plan to accommodate commerce while maintaining a safe and efficient level of highway service, including convenient user facilities.
9. A demonstration that intrusions on the visitor experience have been minimized to the extent feasible, and a plan for making improvements to enhance that experience.
10. A demonstration of compliance with all existing local, State and Federal laws on the control of outdoor advertising.
11. A signage plan that demonstrates how the State will ensure and make the number and placement of signs more supportive of the visitor experience.
12. A narrative describing how the National Scenic Byway will be positioned for marketing.
13. A discussion of design standards relating to any proposed modification of the roadway. This discussion should include an evaluation of how the proposed changes may affect the byway corridor's intrinsic qualities.
14. A description of plans to interpret the significant resources of the scenic byway.

CMPPs and All-American Road Designation

Corridor management and partnership plans for routes nominated for designation as an All-American Roads must include specific items in addition to the 14 points required for National Scenic Byways nominations.

²³ FHWA Interim Policy, May 18, 1995

1. A narrative on how the All-American Road would be promoted, interpreted and marketed to attract travelers, especially those from other countries. The agencies responsible for these activities should be identified.
2. A plan to encourage the accommodation of increased tourism, if this is projected. Some demonstration that the roadway, lodging and dining facilities, roadside rest areas, and other tourist necessities will be adequate for the number of visitors induced by the byway's designation as an All-American Road.
3. A plan for addressing multilingual information needs. Further, there must be a demonstration of the extent to which enforcement mechanisms are being implemented in accordance with the plan.

6.2 Intrinsic Qualities

The following is a list of intrinsic qualities identified by the byway planning committee as part of an initial exercise completed in October 2012. This list, which is not definitive, informed the creation of the byway and wayside panels.

Cultural and Historic Intrinsic Quality

Peoples

- Acadian/Québécois - predominant group, collectively known as “Acadian,” settled throughout the region
- Scots-Irish - settled mostly in western part of the region
- Native (First) American/First Nation (Maliseet, Mi'kmaq, Métis)

Settlement

- Madawaska Territory settlement - Founding families (genealogy); written history (Thomas Albert, Bérnice Craig, etc.)
- Wars - Northeast Boundary Dispute, Aroostook, French-Indian, 1812, etc.
- Establishment of international border, 1842 (Webster-Ashburton Treaty); relationship with Canada, educational system, Prohibition, smuggling, etc.

French Language

- Idioms, syntax, sayings, pronunciation, literature, etc.

Folk arts and Tradition

- Oral – French language, storytelling and legends (smuggling during Prohibition, logging); Music (complaintes, ballads, etc.); Place, road names
- Dance
- Cuisine - Ploye recipes, preserving food, outdoor ovens, etc.
- Craft - Basketmaking, costume, wood carving, snowshoe making, boatmaking, textile work (rugbraiding, weaving, etc.)
- Gardening - traditional methods, moon-sign gardening

Connection to Land, traditional occupations/activities

- Farming - potato farming and harvest time (world leader in the potato industry in the 1930-1970s), long lot farms structures (e.g., Dan Cyr farm in St. David; Chassé farm in St. David), growing practices (e.g., moon sign gardening), equipment, traditional crops (flax, buckwheat, etc.)
- Maple syrup cultivation

- Logging - Allagash Museum, St. John River, river drives (existing artifacts, physical existence), boatmaking, pulp and paper industry
- Railway - Frenchville cabooses and water tank; St. Francis Historical Society cabooses and turnaround; Fort Kent Historical Society train station
- Hunting - tradition of hunting and Maine Guides

Catholic Religion

- Sisters and convents - *Soeurs du Bon Pasteur, Filles de la Sagesse*, Sisters of the Holy Rosary
 - Roadside crosses and grottos
 - 6 historic churches (3 on National Register) and historic cemeteries
 - Religious observances (e.g., *Mardi gras*)
 - Madawaska Training School
- (St. Luce Catholic Church, St. David Catholic Church, St-Louis de France, St. Paul's Congregational Church, St. John's Catholic Church, Christ Church Congregational)

Vernacular architecture

- Farm houses, double barns, potato houses, pioneer hand-hewn square log houses (most are privately owned and disguised under modern architecture), and architectural design elements such as ship's knees, roof design, summer kitchens, outdoor ovens

Museums, Monuments, Historic Sites

- Museums - 12 historical museums (one is a National Historic Landmark and State Historic Site; 7 are on the National Register of Historic Places); extensive collections of traditional artifacts, buildings, photographs and documents, textiles, furniture, genealogical information, war memorabilia, etc.
 - Historic Properties - private residences and Churches on National Register of Historic Places; historic privately owned properties and several more within museum complexes; historic churches (3 on National Register) and historic cemeteries
 - Monuments - Close to 10 sites commemorate historically significant locations, such as Acadian Landing Site in Madawaska, marker for the beginning of US Route 1.
- (Acadian Village, Van Buren;* Allagash Historical Museum; Centre Francais de la Vallée St-Jean; Frenchville Historical Museum;* Fort Kent Historical Museum;* Fort Kent Block House;* Governor Brann School House;* Greater Grand Isle Historical Museum; Isaie and Scholastic Martin Family Homestead;* Musée culturel du Mont-Carmel,* Roosevelt School House;* Ste-Agathe Historical Museum;* St. Francis Historical Museum, Tante Blanche Museum* * National Register of Historic Places)

Events

• Annual Festivals - Over 20 annual festivals and events throughout the region that celebrate a range of activities such as skiing, snowmobiling, fishing, art and culture, language, maplesyrup and harvest, music, sled dogs, cycling, family reunions, etc. These are all volunteer-operated, some organized through the local chamber of commerce.

Other

- Character (hardworking, inventive, modest, clean properties, values)
- Proximity to Canada (cultural activities, goods and services, transportation, port connections, etc.)
- Proximity to Swedish colony
- Connection to French-speaking world
- Connection to Cajuns
- Community (family traditions, spring cleaning tradition, mowed lawns, etc.)
- Community gathering locations (e.g. Mizpah)

Resources and Services

Historical Societies and Cultural Groups - 11 registered historical societies and 2 regional cultural groups; Libraries and archives/cultural center (Acadian Archives, UMFK); Regional airport; Transport companies; Railways; International border; Hospitals; Educational institutions (elementary, secondary, trade); Chambers of Commerce (tourism); NMDC/ACT; NPS; Canada (goods and services, transportation, port connections, etc.)

Scenic and Natural Intrinsic Quality

Waterways

- St. John River, basin and watershed - Longest free-flowing river east of Mississippi at 435 miles (also historical highway), one of the largest watersheds in the eastern North America
- Wetlands, rivers, brooks, lakes - Fish River Chain of Lakes – Long Lake, Mud Lake; St. Francis River (good for canoeing); Allagash Wilderness Waterway (92 mile wilderness waterway, attracting people from around the world)
- Falls - Fish River Falls; Allagash Falls (40-foot drop of water cascading over thin-leaved slate)

Land and Forest

- Distinctive geography - River valley, farmland, plateau, undulating hills, curving roads, prehistoric glacial patterns
- Near northern evergreen boreal forest (confirm this)
- Forest with spruce, fir, beech, maple, birch, aspen
- Bogs - St. John “Quaking” Bog near Fort Kent
- Vistas - Morneault Road, Grand Isle (of valley); Lavertu Settlement (360 degree view); Route 1 near Lille (of river, floodplain, Musée culturel du Mont-Carmel); Marquis Road (Van Buren); Route 1, from Cyr Plantation into Van Buren (valley and St. John River); Route 1, in Cyr Plantation near Governor Brann School (farmland and distant landscape); Route 1A, coming from Caswell into Hamlin (valley, St. John River); Island in St. John River (near Upper Frenchville, other views East Frenchville); Star Barn Road (Frenchville of St. John River); Flat Mountain Road (Long Lake and farmland – Aroostook Plateau); Charette Hill (Fort Kent); Violette Settlement Road (Fort Kent); Allagash (several areas)

Flora

- Furbish Lousewort, wild orchids, bog laurel, fiddleheads, hazelnuts

Fauna

- Moose, deer, snowy owl, black bear, eagles, brook and lake trout, landlocked salmon, muskie

Special Features

- International region - St. John and St. Francis Rivers form international boundary between ME and NB – river follows ME-QC boundary before passing through ME and then flows along ME-NB boundary before heading to the sea
- Unpolluted, quiet, uncrowded
- Dark skies (aurora borealis)
- Driving on US Route 1 along the St. John River
- Proximity to Route 11, Fish River Scenic Byway
- Spring thaw on the St. John River (and confluence of Allagash and St. John)
- Maple syrup production
- Groomed properties, large expanses of mowed lawns
- Religious artifact and architecture (e.g., roadside crosses and churches)
- Vernacular architecture (e.g., potato houses, etc.)

Recreational Intrinsic Quality

Fishing

Angling - Fish River Chain of Lakes, lakes on St. John and Allagash watersheds, some of the best in Maine and NE. Native/wild brook trout (Brookies), Lake Trout (Togue) in lakes of Allagash River/Fish River Chain of Lakes, landlocked salmon in Long Lake (rated one of top landlocked salmon waters in NE), Muskellunge (Muskie) part of the St. John River system (celebrated by International Muskie Derby attracting 400-600 anglers); Winter fishing (Long Lake Ice Fishing Derby in January)

Boating

- Boat launching sites - Access to St. John River and lakes, Black, Gardiner, Deboullie, Denny, Crater, Perch, Upper and Togue Ponds; Motorized boating on Fish River Chain of Lakes (7)
- Paddling - Includes canoeing and kayaking: 6,000 acres of Long Lake, St. Francis River, Allagash Wilderness Waterway (State Park); St. John River (longest free flowing river east of Mississippi River – canoeable spring and early summer; Allagash Wilderness Waterway – a State Park canoeable all summer – 92-mile-ribbon of lakes, streams and rivers, surrounded by mountains and lush forests); Northern Forest Canoe Trail (740-mile paddling trail connecting major watersheds across the Adirondacks and Northern New England, including New York, Vermont, Quebec, New Hampshire, and Maine. Connecting communities are Allagash for the Allagash Wilderness Waterway and Fort Kent for the St. John River)

Parks, Public Lands, Camping, Golfing

- State rest stops - Town operated stop in Grand Isle
- Parks - Riverside Park, Fort Kent; Long Lake Campground, O’Leary Memorial Park, Allagash, etc.
- Camping - North Maine Woods – over 3.5 million acres of top quality commercial forestland with camping, hunting and recreational opportunities. Included within its boundaries are two of the most famous wild rivers of the Northeast; the St. John and the Allagash. North Maine Woods completely surrounds the Allagash Wilderness Waterway; Allagash Wilderness Waterway (connected to North Maine Woods with vehicle shuttle services and canoe liveries in St. Francis and Allagash)
- Golfing -Fort Kent Golf Club, Long Lake Country Club in Madawaska

Trails (primarily non-motorized)

- Hiking - Four Seasons Trail in Madawaska, Fort Kent Heritage Trail, Deboullie Trail - leads to Fire Tower in Maine Public Research Land, Allagash Falls (40-ft drop over thin-leaved slate).
- Nordic skiing - Four Seasons Trail, 10th Mountain Ski Lodge/Maine Winter Sports Center-22 km of trails, Olympic standards
- Downhill skiing - Lonesome Pine Ski Area, Fort Kent, has rental shop, food service, lounge
- Snowshoeing - Four Seasons Trail, 10th Mountain Ski Lodge, etc.
- Sled dog racing - Can Am Crown Sled Dog Race, Fort Kent, 250 mile run, qualifying race for Iditarod
- Bike riding - mapped cycle tours: Tour de la Vallée and Century Ride, 10th Mountain and Four Seasons: mountain bike trails; Heritage Trail, Fort Kent (former rail bed)

Motorized

- Snowmobiling and ATV riding - Operated by clubs, premier destination especially for snowmobiling, 2200 miles of maintained trails, rentals; Fort Kent Heritage Trail –18 m from Fort Kent to St. Francis
- Motorcycling - Four Corners Park, Madawaska

Wildlife

- Bird watching
- Hunting - Moose (and shed antlers) large quantities of black bear and deer, grouse and woodcock; Allagash has one of region’s largest deer wintering areas; North Maine Woods

Flora

- Maple sugar season - traditional sugar camps
- Exploring rare plants - Furbish Lousewort – endangered in US and Canada
- St. John Quaking Bog - Fort Kent, 10 acre bog with orchids and bog laurel

6.4 Stories for Sub-themes

Potential stories for the sub-themes were used only for planning purposes. This list, which is not definitive, informed the creation of the byway and wayside panels.

Early inhabitants

- Native American territory (First American/First Nation); in this area since about 8,000 BC; Maliseets call themselves *Wolustequiik*
- Use of and connection to the land
- Influence on settlers re. survival, food, language (terms from the indigenous Wabanaki languages borrowed into English, such as moccasin, skunk, moose, canoe, and toboggan)

Early settlement

- French roots (e.g., French arrive at Ste-Croix Island, Maine in 1604; first map of St. John Valley by Samuel de Champlain in 1612, etc.)
- Immigration (the journey – *Le Grand Dérangement* of Acadians in Nova Scotia, 1755; Acadians arrive to St. John Valley from Ste-Anne-de-Pays-Bas, NB in 1785 followed by French Canadian relatives)
- Madawaska settlement; founding families
- Scots-Irish settlement
- Wars and old trade routes (related to Borderland theme)
- Origin of communities

French language

- Identity and resilience (retaining French language and identity through family)
- Pronunciations and idioms (e.g., Geneviève Massignon, linguist from France, does indepth study of French in the Valley in 1946 followed by many other studies by other researchers)
- Anti-French legislation (e.g., Maine enacts anti-French language laws in 1919, repealed 1969; influence of KKK)
- Place names (e.g., *Croche de dinde*, *Brise culotte*, etc.)

Religious heritage

- Missionaries, connection to Québec Diocese, etc.
- Architecture – churches (impact on landscape, town planning, etc.)
- Learning and the arts (impact of Church on education and artistic training)
- Values, work ethic
- Observances, convents, cemeteries

Family and community

- Genealogy
- Attitudes about life and community – cohesiveness, character, social movements, tidy properties, etc.
- Inventiveness (*patenteurs*), leadership (e.g., Marguerite Thibodeau – Tante Blanche)

Oral traditions and expressions

- Storytelling (e.g., poem *Evangeline*, Allagash stories)
- Legends, superstitions and idioms (e.g., burying a shoe in the wall)

- Music (use of the mouth harp/*bombard*, spoons, *complaintes*)
- Dance (arrangements, use of wooden clogs)

Material culture

- Architecture and design (double barns, “Madawaskan” design)
- Textiles (basketmaking, rugbraiding, etc.)
- Cuisine (variations of ploye recipe as indication of a healthy culture)
- Woodwork (carving, snowshoemaking) and furniture
- Historical museums as (faces of) gatekeepers to the past

People on the land

- Historical land use and building of an economy/making a living (extraction and production: farming techniques, potato industry; harvest time; long lot structures; traditional crops (buckwheat, flax – grist mills were flourishing on banks of river by 1790)
- Railway system (opening of American markets with the Bangor & Aroostook Railway in 1899)
- Woods work: pulp industry; milling, logging/lumbering/river drives (e.g., lumber camps in St. John Valley open around 1826 - practices, food, community, legends, carving, boatmaking, music)
- Hunting and gathering
- Technology created as a result of culture, industry and place

Pre-1842

- Wars ranging in Northeast (e.g., war between US and Britain in 1812-15 left sovereignty over Madawaska territory uncertain - Boundary Dispute; fort at Fort Kent erected at confluence of St. John River and Fish River in 1839; Fort Fairfield as a military based during the Aroostook War in 18390.

One people, two nations – creation of the international border

- Webster-Ashburton Treaty ratified, the international border established in 1842
- Land of duality: French/English; Canadian/American; connections with Canada
- Old trade routes (e.g., the Great Communication Route between Saint John and Québec)
- Effect of Prohibition in 1930s with smuggling stories (booming business in the Valley)
- Coming of the railroads (e.g., becoming a part of the United States at that point)
- Participating in WWI and II
- “Crossing over” today, effects of border on economy (e.g., out-migration to Connecticut in 1950s)

Landscape

- Natural history and how the landscape has been shaped (the river created a valley – *one* valley, not two)
- Region as a last frontier of forest; forest primeval
- Beautiful vistas, dark skies
- River valley, plateaus, geography, flood plains
- Climate (e.g., effects of harsh winters can be told through the story of *L’année de la misère noire* (Year of the Great Famine) and the heroics of Marguerite Thibodeau (Tante Blanche) in 1797)
- St. John River: its geography (watershed, floodplains) and historic, social, cultural, economic, political relevance (historically used as a transportation highway)
- Rivers (Allagash), lakes (Fish River Chain of Lakes), wetlands, falls (Fish River Falls)

Flora and Fauna

- Rare plants (furbish lousewort)
- Harvesting indigenous (mint, fiddleheads, maple syrup, hazelnuts)
- Wildlife (fish, birds, moose, deer, bear, etc.)
- Recreation and connection to the land (Maine Winter Sports Center formed in 2000)

The final stage in evolving the stories was to identify the sites where a visitor can experience these stories along the byway. Please note that this itemization is not comprehensive nor definitive and was used only for planning.

THEME 1: Home- First Inhabitants and Early Settlement

Town	Site	Story
Hamlin	Roosevelt School House	Early French settlement – long lot farm structure
Van Buren (Keegan)	Acadian Village	Early French settlers - architecture, ways of living, agriculture, domestic life, geneology
Lille (Grand Isle)	Musée culturel du Mont-Carmel	Native peoples -handcrafted items; Early French settlers - way of life, faith, genealogy
St. David (Madawaska)	Tante Blanche Museum Complex	Native peoples; Early French settlers - Madawaska settlement, first families, genealogy; old trade routes
Madawaska	Centre Français de la Vallée St-Jean	Native peoples - language impacting French; Early French settlement - language, genealogy
Madawaska	Martin Family Homestead	Early French settlement – architecture (original pioneer hewn log home), ways of living
Frenchville	Frenchville Historical Museum	Early French settlement
St.Agatha	St.Agatha Historical Museum and Preservation Center	Early French settlement
Fort Kent	Acadian Archives, University of Maine at Fort Kent	Native peoples: Fish River and Early settlement, Wars
Fort Kent	Fort Kent Blockhouse	First inhabitants: settlement
Fort Kent	Riverside Park	Native peoples settlement at Fish River
St. Francis	St. Francis Historical Museum	Early Scots-Irish and French settlement
Allagash	Allagash Historical Museum	Native peoples - artifacts at Maine State Museum from Black River; Early Scots-Irish/ French settlement

THEME 2: Threads That Weave – Language, Family & Faith

Town	Site	Story
Hamlin	Roosevelt School House	Education and community
Cyr Plantation	Governor Brann School House	Education and community
Van Buren (Keegan)	Acadian Village	Family, faith, character, social movements
Lille (Grand Isle)	Musée culturel du Mont-Carmel	Catholic religion, architecture
Grand Isle	G. Grand Isle Historical Museum	French language

St. David (Madawaska)	Tante Blanche Museum Complex	Genealogy, religion, French language
Madawaska	Centre Français de la Vallée St-Jean	French language
Madawaska	Martin Family Homestead	Family, community
Frenchville	St. Luce Catholic Church	Faith
Frenchville	Frenchville Historical Museum	French language and family
St.Agatha	St.Agatha Historical Museum and Preservation Center	Learning and the arts, education, convents, community
Fort Kent	Acadian Archives, UMFK	French language, family & faith
Fort Kent	Fort Kent Historic Museum	Family, community, railway
St. Francis	St. Francis Historical Museum	French/Scot-Irish language, family
St. Francis	St. Paul's Congregational Church	Faith
St. Francis	St. John's Catholic Church	Faith
Allagash	Allagash Historical Museum	French/Scot-Irish language, family

THEME 3: Traditions – From Hand and Land

Town	Site	Story
Hamlin	Roosevelt School House	Farming
Cyr Plantation	Governor Brann School House	Farming
Van Buren (Keegan)	Acadian Village	Logging and railway system Material culture
Lille (Grand Isle)	Musée culturel du Mont-Carmel	Material culture – furniture, domestic articles, etc.
St. David (Madawaska)	Tante Blanche Museum Complex	Farming, logging, material culture, architecture
Madawaska	Martin Family Homestead	Architecture (private dwelling)
Frenchville	Frenchville Historical Museum	Railway – transport of potatoes, logs; Material culture – domestic artifacts?
St.Agatha	St.Agatha Historical Museum and Preservation Center	Farming (implements, etc.) Material culture – religious and domestic artifacts
Fort Kent	Acadian Archives, UMFK	Material culture
Fort Kent	Fort Kent Historic Museum	Railway – transport of potatoes and logs, etc. Material culture – domestic artifacts, town festivals that celebrate food, music
St. Francis	St. Francis Historical Museum	Railway – transport of potatoes, etc; logging, (storytelling, artifacts); Material culture – domestic artifacts
Allagash	Allagash Historical Museum	Railway – transportation of potatoes and logs, etc. Logging,

		Storytelling; Material culture – domestic artifacts
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THEME 4: Borderland – “The Land in Between”

Town	Site	Story
Hamlin	Roosevelt School House	International boundary, crossing
Van Buren (Keegan)	Acadian Village	International cooperation – Grand Rivière, crossing over today
Lille (Grand Isle)	Musée culturel du Mont-Carmel	Smuggling stories (Prohibition)
St. David (Madawaska)	Tante Blanche Museum Complex	Land of duality, smuggling stories, old trade routes, crossing over today, commerce today
Frenchville	Frenchville Historical Museum	Land of duality
St.Agatha	St.Agatha Historical Museum and Preservation Center	World Wars (role of US soldiers with Canada in WWI, etc)
Fort Kent	Acadian Archives, University of Maine at Fort Kent	Resource only (Wars, international boundary)
Fort Kent	Fort Kent Blockhouse	Wars, international boundary
Fort Kent	Fort Kent Blockhouse	Wars, international boundary
Fort Kent	America’s First Mile Park	International boundary
St. Francis	St. Francis Historical Museum	Land of duality, smuggling , World Wars
Allagash	Allagash Historical Museum	World Wars, Land of duality

THEME 5: Place – Shaping Who We Are

Town	Site	Story
Hamlin	Roosevelt School House	St. John River – the river valley
Cyr Plantation	Governor Brann House	St. John River – the river valley, large vistas, big sky
Lille (Grand Isle)	Musée culturel du Mont-Carmel	Farmland, twisting river, ice jams
St. David (Madawaska)	Tante Blanche Museum Complex	St. John River, flood plains, boat launch nearby, eco-recreational
Frenchville	Frenchville Historical Museum	St. John River (boat launch and views), rare plants, MDOT potential park project
St.Agatha	St.Agatha Historical Museum and Preservation Center	Big sky, open field (plateau of Flat Mountain), Long Lake (boat launch and public park)
Sinclair	Entrance to byway	Long lake, wildlife, thoroughfare boat landing/park
Fort Kent	Riverside Park	Eco-recreational, all seasons
Fort Kent	America’s First Mile Park	Eco-recreational, all seasons, Heritage Trail

St. Francis	St. Francis Historical Museum	Part of Heritage trail, old MDOT rest area (?), O'Leary Memorial Park
Allagash	Allagash Historical Museum	St. John & Allagash Rivers, Allagash Wilderness Waterway, wildlife (primeval forest), public boat launch, Northern Forest Canoe Trail

6.5 Headings, Symbols and Abbreviations

The following is a description of the column headings, symbols, and abbreviations used for the Coverage Count Section, [page](#)

Town: The town in which a count was taken

Route: The road or highway on which the count was taken.

Non-Interstate Highways and Roads

- X indicates a Routed Highway (0196X = SR 196 0001X = US Route 1)
- A or B indicates an Alternate Routed Highway (0001A = US Route 1A 0009B = SR 9B)

Location: A description of where the count was taken.

BK = Brook; BR = Bridge ; CL = County Line; CNR = Corner; CTR = Center; CUL = Compact Urban Line; DR = Drive; EB = Eastbound; HWY = Highway; IR = Inventory Road; LN = Lane NB = Northbound; OW = One Way; PK = Park; PKWY = Park Way; PL = Place; PT = Point PW = Private Way; RD = Road; RDG = Ridge; RV = River; SB = Southbound; SL = State Line SR = State Route; ST = Street; STR = Stream; TL = Town Line; US = United States Route; WB = Westbound; N/O, NE/O, E/O, etc. = North of, Northeast of, East of, etc.

Type: Category for each count taken.

A = Permanent Recorder Count
 B = BACTS Count
 C = Coverage Count
 T = Turning Movement Count

Group: The factor group assigned to the location.

- I = Urban Group - Roadways which carry commuter traffic and exhibit little seasonal change in traffic volumes.
- II = Arterial Group - Roadways which carry commuter traffic but exhibit moderate seasonal changes in traffic volumes.

AADT: Annual Average Daily Traffic