



Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Program

2019 Annual Meeting - NOTES

Time: Wednesday, October 2, 2019, 8:30 am – 1:30 pm
Location: Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade
1600 Broadway #2500, Denver, CO 80202

In attendance:

Amanda Barker, Commission Chair, Colorado Preservation, Inc.
Bob Fulton, Westcliffe, Frontier Pathways, and Westcliffe PC
Grace Shephard, Tracks Across Borders Byway and Visit Durango
Sheila Sears, OEDIT Colorado Creative Industries, Commission executive board
Nathan Boyless, Metcalf Archaeology, History Colorado, Commission executive board
Rebecca White, CDOT Director of Planning
Anna Scott, South Platte River Trail
Ilana Moir, Colorado West Land Trust, (includes 6 byways)
Susan Nies, Collegiate Peaks
Kathleen Murphy, Creede Chamber Director, Silver Thread Byway
Gary Thorson, Commission member, CPW
Bill Zwick, Frontier Pathways Byway
Heidi Pankow, Commission member, Western Byways
Debra Malone, Highway of Legends
Judy Walden, Walden Mills Group
Jane Leche, USFS Rocky Mountain Regional Office
Daniel Cressy, Commission member, USFS Rocky Mountain Regional Office
Steve Friesen, helped found Pawnee Pioneers Trail and the Lariat Loop
Sally Pearce, National Scenic Byway Foundation
Jill Corbin, Commission member, Destination Development Director at CTO, OEDIT
Sandra Patton, Guanella Pass and Mt. Evans
Nate Boschman, Pawnee Pioneer Trail
Sen. Jeanne Nicholson, Byways champion and former commission member
Kelli Hepler, Dinosaur Diamond and Grand Mesa Byway, private sector
Wells Howe, TravelStorys
Lenore Bates, Colorado Byways Program Manager
Julie Chacon, Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area
Lisa Labin, Clear Creek County, Guanella Pass and Mt. Evans Byways

Betsy Markey, Executive Director, Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, welcomed the group to the building and OEDIT office.

Summary and Notes:

Welcome and Introductions (30 minutes)

Amanda Barker (Commission) and Lenore Bates (Program Manager)

The group introduced themselves and each person shared a memorable or favorite “Byways Moment.”

Update of Commission Goals and Lenore’s Work Plan (30 minutes)

Amanda Barker (Commission) and Lenore Bates (Program Manager)

Amanda reviewed the recent history of the strategic planning that has occurred. Recent administration and CDOT executive director and federal progress have reinvigorated the program and it is now funded and secured at CDOT again. The Executive Order to establish the Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Commission was last updated in 2014. The Commission’s [2017 Strategic Plan](#) states 3 major goals for the program:

GOAL 1: Maintain the Colorado Byways system that is second to none.

GOAL 2: Elevate the Colorado Byways system to become an important state asset for economic development and livability.

GOAL 3: Ensure that each local byway is a fully functioning part of an excellent statewide system.

The Commission will work on four areas of focus in 2020:

1. Program sustainability (e.g., broaden political support)
2. Technical solutions (e.g., Travel Stories, CoTrex, etc)
3. Nonprofit arm/Friends group or seek an administrative change to allow the CDOT program to accept “Gifts, Grants, and Donations.” The goal is to establish a long-term fiscal agent for donations that come through from time to time and a desire to create a small grants program.
4. Marketing (e.g., brochures, CTO and Byways website)

Lenore shared elements of the 30th Anniversary of the Byways program celebration:

- The traveling Byways Photo Exhibit doubled as anniversary event 6/27 at History Colorado.
- New promotional poster and 30th Anniversary decals placed on front of brochures; shared with Welcome Centers
- Creating and placing feather banners to Welcome Centers (delivered this week)
- Brochures and rack cards
- Press coverage includes Westword, 5280, and local media outlets.

Lenore’s work plan for the upcoming year will include working with:

- Individual byways, particularly a few key groups to reestablish and reinvigorate
- The National Scenic Byways Foundation and state program coordinators as the call for additional National Scenic Byways comes out in the near future
- The environmental team at CDOT where programs impact local Byways
- New federal legislation and the forthcoming nominations. The Commission will be able to give feedback to Lenore to submit on national level.
- ***Please share and use the Byways Program's 2019 economic impact infographic:***
<https://www.codot.gov/travel/scenic-byways/assets/infographicposter2019.pdf>

Reviving America's Scenic Byways Act of 2019 Update (30 minutes)

Sally Pearce, National Scenic Byways Foundation (NSBF)

The bill was passed into law on September 22. In the next 90 days, FHWA will open up the process. Corridor management plans will likely be required again and the work plan is critical. At least 44 byways in 17 states are interested so competition will be tight. Important to focus on what's unique about each nomination. There is no new funding for grants, but there is a longer term plan to support funding, possibly USDOT adding funding in the next funding bill. We do not know yet if FHWA will continue the nomination process each year or if this will be a one-time opportunity.

Likely FHWA Division office will be coordinating the nominations from states and may follow former process and streamline it since they don't have admin funding to support this program. CDOT will connect our program with the regional FHWA office. In the previous national nomination process, the Colorado's Byways Commission, but not the CDOT Transportation Commission, weighed in on nominations. Amendments to existing national byways (extend/add a section need to go through state commission first, then go through national process.

The Foundation is holding a Byway Leader 2 day training, in Oregon (October 30-31) with a focus on management planning, authenticity, wayfinding, funding/donor management, marketing, etc. Kelli Hepler is attending. [More information here.](#) We will explore if Colorado could host this training in 2020.

Website Preview and Timeline (30 minutes)

Ashley Hughes, Miles Partnership

We previewed the micro-site that will be housed online at Colorado.com. This project was made possible through a grant from Colorado State Historical Fund. The site will guide travelers to experience and be inspired by treasured places that comprise byways. Each byway will have a page of videos, trip tips, side trips, itineraries, and photos. There will be links to existing Byways sites, Colo road conditions, historic societies, museums, etc.

Ashley demonstrated the landing page with tiles representing each Byway (tiles rotate every time page refreshes). There are filters to select Byways and includes a map. A highlighted road trip will be included (per the standard road trips element of the Colorado.com site). One section on every page is the travel tip section. This is where you can put things like great camping opportunities. Content is still being created and finalized.

Local Byways can link to their pages to their page on this [Colorado.com](#) Byways site. Redirection may not be advisable if local sites are used for other, additional information (e.g., administrative issues).

Byways can be represented on [Recreation.gov](#) as well. The USFS reps will look into steps to links added when the new website goes live..

Timeline/Process: Content audit and asset survey; content outline with photo/video shot list and storyboards; photo/video shoots; currently in website development and content development with basic framework created. Next phase is video editing. Hoping to push website live in time for summer trip planning. All new pages to be live by the end of January 2020.

Looking forward, we hope to have the capability to activate designations of electric byways as they are developed (including possibly a landing page map). Once the project is complete and the grant is closed, CTO will continue to receive and respond to comments to keep the site current, complete, and correct.

Wayfinding Assessment of Colorado Scenic Byways

(30 minutes)

End of Project Report, Judy Walden

Visitor experience is affected by wayfinding and showing, and it's important to continue to protect and preserve the important assets along the Byways (include this messaging in your wayfinding). You can't separate wayfinding from visitor management. Use a context sensitive approach (see Colorado Sun [article](#) about Vail Pass).

CDOT is an important resource- they take care of signage maintenance and replacement, they have signage plans. Now focus on a multimodal approach, charging stations etc- changing transportation landscape. Shift emphasis from the pleasure of the drive (old paradigm) to the great things to see and do once you get there (and how can you get around using different modes of transportation).

Shuttle options. Panasonic City (easy mile autonomous shuttle) option. Test autonomous shuttles on one of our byways. Low impact multimodal option. If you walk in front of it it will stop and let you get on. Contact Lisa, Clear Creek County for more information. lleben@co.clear-creek.co.us

Next steps- We will engage the 26 byways with this info. This should be discussed at the 30th anniversary symposium in Ouray April 2020. [Slides available online here.](#)

Funding Structure Examples from Colorado Byway Groups

(30 minutes)

Lariat Loop, Steve Friesen - business and individual membership

Lariat started as Colo Heritage Area. Created Alliance as 501c3. No paid staff. Board members do the work. Memberships at varying fees/rates based on member type (e.g., govt, business). Certain benefits for members, esp business. Organizational costs covered by budget (board insurance, newsletter, postage, etc). Sometimes budget covers the costs of small projects. Have used pay to play projects (members get recognition or benefits to contribute to certain projects, such as additional fee for ads in brochure). Have accessed government/byways grants in the past to construct kiosks, based on CMP. Sometimes local govts contributed money and/or collaborated on projects. Ongoing maintenance of the signs remains an issue; hoping to use some of admin budget. Currently fundraising for marketing. Themed itineraries which will link to existing members and maybe attract new business members (e.g., breweries - microbrew itinerary; art galleries, etc). With this model, fundraising through membership recruitment (or at least pay to play options), esp businesses, is key.

Scenic Highway of Legends, Debra Malone - community partnerships and signs

7 Tips for creating community partnerships:

1. make a list of who needs to be engaged with your byway (e.g., museums, govt partners, USFS, etc);
2. tailor your communications to fit their lens or mission/understand your partners;
3. be authentic and ask open questions;
4. build trust and be a reliable source of information;
5. set expectations for what you need- establish an agreed set of rules in the beginning;
6. sign an MOU or otherwise put it in writing;
7. be consistent/communicate consistently. Slides online here:

3 rules of outdoor advertising on signs:

RULE # 1: Generally, a sign that advertises an activity, service or product not conducted on the property upon which the sign is located, must obtain a permit from CDOT.

RULE # 2: If a permit cannot be obtained, then that sign would be considered illegal if erected at that location.

RULE # 3: If in doubt see RULE # 2.

Contractor of CDOT runs this program. Anthony.Lovato@state.co.us is the contact for all outdoor advertising signage. 303.512.4496

West Elk, Kelli Helpler - County partnerships

Committee members are 90% govt employees or officials, and the rest are self-employed, so raising money can be difficult. Grant writing was key. Delicate balance of marketing v. protection/interpretation/conservation. 501c3. Govt entities (Delta, Montrose, Gunnison, Pitkin, GarCo) must contribute at different levels to create about a \$4000 budget per year, which will be used to replace interpretive panels, print brochures, and web updates. No real administrative costs.

Creating a 501c3 to support CO Byways program, Amanda Barker

The Colorado Byways program can't directly accept gifts, grants, and donations in its current structure at CDOT. Do we push for legislation to allow this or utilize a 501c3 to process donations (e.g., \$400 received this year) and to work toward building a small grant program for local byways? Must define the purpose of the 501c3, what their connection would be to the commission and CDOT, and many other questions need to be explored.

Feedback: One concern could be that a state 501c3 would compete with local groups also going for the same funding. Advantage- tax benefits of donations. Crowd funding for specific Byway projects can be used (used successfully in Japan's byways programs). Colorado Gifts Day, if statewide nonprofit, could be helpful. 1% for Trailbuilding (example from Fremont Co)- can this be applied to byways in other communities? Other communities use hotel taxes, sometimes optional, that can go toward trails or other uses. If you create a 501c3, need to consider administration and start-up and ongoing costs. Also, executive order could it be updated to allow the option to access grants/donations? Legislative funding options to start up grant program? At the least, legislative solution could be created to allow Byways in CDOT to be able to accept grants/donations. Continuing to use a local byway to accept and spend funds creates potential for lack of transparency. Discussion ensued about the significant challenges of managing an all volunteer nonprofit.

Lunch (60 minutes)

Updates from Agencies and Partners (30 minutes)

TravelStorys, Wells Howe

This is a free mobile app (android or iphone) for place-based interpretation. They will partner with groups to match up content with the technology. Triggers audio stories using GPS (don't need cell service- can be downloaded ahead of time). Rack cards that market these tours (free to users) can be placed in welcome centers. Partner with tour sponsor. Send analytics each quarter. Pricing info avail. Eligible for CTO grants. Online at travelstorys.com or wells@travelstorysgps.com

Electric Vehicles and the Byways, Jill Corbin (Colorado Tourism Office) and Addison Phillips (Colorado Energy Office)

Two kinds of EV charging- corridor/fast charging (100 miles or more in 30 minutes, commonly called Level 3 charging) and destination charging (Level 2 charging- e.g., hotels, downtowns). There are universally compatible stations. Cost is \$1-2 per gallon roughly for destination charging.

An “Electrified Byway” is being defined as an EV driver must never be more than 50 or 60 miles away from a fast charging station. In some locations that are more rural, the standard could be that the Byway traversable by EV w/ overnight destination charging. CEO and CTO are targeting 5 Byways based on gap analysis on every byway. They are working with businesses and groups. Lariat Loop and Peak to Peak are electrified now.

Charge Ahead Colorado- grant round open all of October. 850 stations to date have been funded. CleanAirFleets.org Funding 3 rounds per year. ReCharge Colorado- coaching including on-site visit to help determine best locations or to help answer other questions. Addison.Phillips@state.co.us Colo Energy Office. [Presentation slides online here.](#)

Main Street communities and certified Creative Districts

Connect with your Main Street communities and certified Creative Districts to help partner on this and other projects!

- Sheila Sears, Deputy Director, Colorado Creative Industries, sheila.sears@state.co.us
- Andy Hill, Community Development Office, Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Andy.Hill@state.co.us

Marijuana Grows and Impacts of Lighting

Anyone had trouble with marijuana grows and the lighting impacts? Contact Bill Zwick to share lessons learned. Hotchkiss just disallowed a permit along Byway. There are typically guidelines you could apply from the Byway program.

Byways Volunteer Wins CTO Award

Bill Miller with Grand Mesa Byway won the Jack Snow Award for Outstanding Volunteer at the 2019 Governor’s Tourism Conference. You can watch the video that was shown during the awards presentation here: <https://youtu.be/KANI6neq0M4> Congratulations!

End of Meeting - 1:30pm