

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the Fall of 2005, WMTH Corporation was selected by the Town of Bluffton to work with Town Staff and the community to develop a corridor management plan for SC 46. SC 46 was designated as a state scenic byway in 1987, but without an adopted corridor management plan, the route was at risk of being de-designated. A corridor management plan (CMP) is a document developed and supported by those who have an interest in protecting and preserving a particular section of road. This particular Corridor Management Plan would be unique in that it had to meet the fourteen (14) requirements set forth by the Federal Highway Administration which oversees the National Scenic Byway program since one of the goals of the Town of Bluffton was to apply for National Scenic Byway designation for SC 46 in 2007.

In January 2006, WMTH Corporation signed a contract with the Town of Bluffton and attended the Old Town Master Plan charettes which specifically focused on transportation and tourism. This helped to determine what might have relevance in the big picture of developing a plan for the rest of SC 46.

In March, WMTH met with Town and County Planners, Department of Transportation, Heritage Council, and key leaders in the community and held the first of five town meetings in which nearly 50 citizens were in attendance. During that time, an analysis of the road was conducted as well as an inventory of resources found along the route to determine if SC 46 had the intrinsic qualities required to be designated a national scenic byway. To qualify as a national scenic byway, a road system must include at least one of six intrinsic qualities. It was determined that SC 46 possessed all six intrinsic qualities with tourism being recognized as a seventh quality.

In May, two more town meetings were held and goals were set. The five primary goals of the CMP are listed on the following page.

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- Goal 1: Conserve and enhance the natural and scenic resources that make this area such an important place to protect and a privilege to visit.
- Goal 2: Preserve and protect archaeological, cultural and historic qualities of the region that reflect the way of life.
- Goal 3: Maintain and improve services and facilities, for residents and visitors, that are consistent with small town, rural character and local values.
- Goal 4: Improve safety along the Scenic Byway for all users without jeopardizing intrinsic qualities.
- Goal 5: Continue to build partnerships and foster cooperation among agencies and organizations to ensure that the goals of the Scenic Byway are in harmony with existing programs that protect and enhance the intrinsic qualities along the roadway.

Specific objectives and strategies were developed to achieve the five goals. These are included in Chapter 9 of this document.

On July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2006, a fourth town meeting was held in which interested citizens came to discuss final details of the Corridor Management Plan and offer their support. Over 400 signatures on petitions in support of SC 46 becoming a scenic byway and the recommendations and goals set forth in the corridor management plan were submitted.

On July 26<sup>th</sup>, a final meeting was held with representatives from the Town of Bluffton Planning Commission in which WMTH Corporation presented a PowerPoint highlighting many of the recommendations included in the CMP. An overview of the primary goals and objectives included in the CMP are provided on the following pages.

**OVERVIEW OF PRIMARY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**Goal #1**

**Conserve and enhance the natural and scenic resources that make this area such an important place to protect and a privilege to visit.**

Objectives:

- 1:1 Protect the trees of note along the Scenic Byway. Develop an overall planting program for all areas along the route, not just those under development. Encourage native species and focus on those plantings that will also serve as food plots for wildlife.
- 1:2 Protect the wildlife and natural habitat along the Scenic Byway, especially unique riparian habitat, marshes, forests and grasslands and the flora and fauna they support.
- 1:3 Protect the watershed and enhance the water quality with a focus on streams, swamps and riparian areas along the Scenic Byway and throughout the area.
- 1:4 Protect the beautiful vistas and open spaces experienced along the Scenic Byway, and minimize those areas and activities that detract from the area's beauty and natural character.

**Goal #2**

**Preserve and protect archaeological, cultural and historic qualities of the region that reflect the way of life.**

Objectives:

- 2:1 Continue to identify, map, and protect archaeological sites along the Scenic Byway.
- 2:2 Identify, map, preserve and interpret the historical features along or near the Scenic Byway.
- 2:3. Preserve the Bluffton Oyster Company in Bluffton, it is one of the last oyster shucking factories in South Carolina. This tradition needs to continue.

**Goal #3**

**Maintain and improve services and facilities, for residents and visitors, that are consistent with the small town, southern character of Bluffton and local values.**

Objectives:

- 3:1 Emphasize an economic base that focuses on resource conservation and clean industry.
- 3:2 Promote cultural and recreational activities for residents and visitors that associate with community values.
- 3:3 Develop "educational" opportunities along the scenic byway to better educate the public (both local and visitors) of what lies

- along its corridor and in the area.
- 3:4 Protect and promote access to existing recreational areas and establish more public parks and green space along SC 46, providing areas to walk, hike and bike.
  - 3:5 Create functional and welcoming opportunities for experiencing the prioritized intrinsic qualities along the SC 46 National Scenic Byway.
  - 3:6 Improve “gateways” (entranceways) onto SC 46 Scenic Byway.
  - 3:7 Promote the “park and ride” concept at both visitor centers as an alternative to originating trips by private vehicles.
  - 3:8 Encourage historic preservation.
  - 3:9 Create a marketing plan the focuses on attracting those interested and appreciative of outdoor recreation, eco-tourism and/or the “arts”.
  - 3:10 Improve and expand recreational opportunities.
  - 3:11 Expand water sport activities.

### **Goal #4**

#### **Improve safety along the Scenic Byway for all users without jeopardizing intrinsic qualities.**

##### Objectives:

- 4:1 Provide better safety conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- 4:2 Reduce the number of through trucks and vehicles.
- 4:3 Balance roadway safety with roadway aesthetics and community values.
- 4:4 Discourage vandalism and littering and provide protection for those sensitive areas and features worth preserving.
- 4:5 Lower speed limit considerably along the Scenic Byway
- 4:6 Encourage appropriate signage along the Scenic Byway.

### **Goal #5**

#### **Continue to build partnerships and foster cooperation among agencies and organizations to ensure that the goals of the Scenic Byway are in harmony with existing programs that protect and enhance the intrinsic qualities along the roadway.**

##### Objectives:

- 5:1 Increase public awareness of the Scenic Byway as a valuable asset to the community, the region and to agencies.
- 5:2 Work with agencies and other planning organizations to ensure the goals, objectives, and strategies of this CMP are included in future planning documents and projects.