

FOREWORD

In Beaufort County, SC 46 from the Jasper County Line in South Carolina to Hwy 278 in Bluffton was designated a state scenic byway in 1987. To maintain its status, a corridor management plan (CMP) had to be developed and adopted by the community, the goal being to develop a CMP that provided a comprehensive understanding of the route and the local community's plan to enhance and preserve it.

In the Fall of 2005, the Firm of "We Make Things Happen" (WMTH) Corporation was hired by the Town of Bluffton to work with the community and stakeholders in preparing a corridor management plan for SC 46 and, in the process, apply for National Scenic Byway designation.

Becoming a National Scenic Byway**What is a Scenic Byway?**

The National Scenic Byways Program is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. The program is a grass-roots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States. Since 1992, there have been nearly 1500 state and nationally designated byway projects in 48 states. The U.S. Secretary of Transportation recognizes certain roads as All-American Roads or National Scenic Byways based on one or more archeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and/or scenic qualities.

The vision of the National Scenic Byways Program is to create a distinctive collection of American roads, their stories and treasured places.

The purpose of the program is to recognize and protect roads that have outstanding scenic, historic, cultural, natural, recreational and archaeological qualities, and to support state scenic byway initiatives.

The definition of "scenic" reaches beyond breathtaking vistas. All of America's Byways® are "scenic", representing the depth and breadth of scenery in America-- natural and man-made panoramas; electrifying neon landscapes; ancient and modern history coming alive; native arts and culture; and scenes of friends, families and strangers sharing their stories. All of that qualifies.

Requirements for designation

- I. Can be no less than 8 miles
 - a. Staying with the original State SC 46 Scenic Byway Route from the county line to Hwy 278 is no longer possible. One section of SC 46 is now four-lane. Four-lane roads do not qualify for scenic byway designation.
 - b. Working with planners, DOT and interested citizens, a route was determined which starts at the Jasper/Beaufort County Line and continues east then turns south onto Calhoun Street, east on Bridge Street, north on Boundary Street to the four-way stop at the corner of Bruin and SC 46. Travelers will then be directed to turn right (east) onto Bruin Street, ending at the intersection of Burnt Church Road.

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More details of what one will find when one travels on Calhoun Street, and Boundary Street are included below and further addressed in Chapter III:

- i. .5 miles south on Calhoun Street, also known as “Artisan’s Row” past numerous shops and historic homes including Church of the Cross, ca. 1893 to the public dock.



“Artisan’s Row”



Church of the Cross



Fishing off the public dock

- ii. At the corner of Boundary and Bridge Street is the historic Heyward House which serves as both a museum and visitor center for the downtown area. Continuing north .5 miles on Boundary Street takes one past a few shops, a few historic churches and the art gallery.



*Heyward House, ca. 1840
Museum/Visitor Center*



Two of the historic churches on Boundary Street

- c. At the corner of SC 46 and Boundary Street, SC 46 turns sharply and heads north to SC 278. It is our recommendation to turn right and continue east on Bruin Street for 1 mile which takes one past a new commercial/ residential development and a number of smaller restaurants and shops, ending the route at Burnt Church Road.
- d. One “must see” side trip includes traveling:
 - i. .5 miles south on Wharf Street to Historic Bluffton Oyster Company, one of the few remaining Oyster-shucking companies in South Carolina.



One of the few remaining Oyster-shucking companies

2. Must have at least two intrinsic qualities
 - a. SC 46 features all six.
*See Chapter VII for list of **intrinsic qualities** along the route*
3. Must only be two lanes (turning lanes are allowed).
4. Must develop an inventory of resources found in every ½ mile segment on each side of the proposed route.
*See Chapter VI for **complete inventory***
5. The community must work together with Transportation Planners and Engineers, City and County Planners, City and County Officials, Legislators and Federal Government to:
 - a. Develop and adopt a Corridor Management Plan for SC 46.

*See Chapter III for a few of the **opportunities** which may result from developing and implementing a Corridor Management Plan.*

- b. Assist and support alternative options for traffic flow because the traffic must go somewhere.
 - i. Currently work is underway to complete the Bluffton Parkway which will serve as an alternative east/west route as well as widen the existing US 278.

SC 46 meets the following criteria of a National Scenic Byway.

CHECKLIST FROM SC DOT FOR DESIGNATION AS A SOUTH CAROLINA SCENIC HIGHWAY AND EVENTUALLY A NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY

- Must be a SC Highway, not a city street or county roadway; with legal public access.
See Chapter II for description of road.
- Highway must be of a design that preserves and protects the natural beauty or scenery of the area and reflects positively on the State of South Carolina.
See Chapter II for history of road.
- The Highway should accommodate two wheel (motorcycle and bicycle), four wheel cars, vans and touring buses safely.
See Chapter IX for goal, objectives, strategies.
- The Highway must be a minimum length of eight (8) miles.
The proposed route meets this requirement.
- The Highway must have significant natural or aesthetic features visible from and adjacent to the highway such as: outstanding vegetation, notable geographic characteristics, vistas of marshes, rivers, lakes, shorelines, forest and agricultural land.
See Chapter VII for list of intrinsic qualities.

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- The Highway should have significant historical, cultural or recreational resources that are visible from and adjacent to the highway.
See Chapter VII for list of intrinsic qualities.
- The Highway preferably provides linkage and access to significant scenic, historical, cultural and recreational points of interest.
See Chapter VII for list of intrinsic qualities.
- The Highway preferably provides a minimum of hospitality resources such as: route markers, accommodations, dining facilities, tasteful signage and other tourism related services and facilities.
See Chapter VII for list of tourism-related intrinsic qualities.
- The Highway preferably bypasses major roads or provides opportunity to leave high speed routes for variety and leisure motoring.
See Chapter IX for goals, objectives and strategies.
- The Highway preferably provides access in a close vicinity to attractions and entertainment opportunities.
See Chapter VII for list of intrinsic qualities.
- The Highway preferably avoids areas of distraction such as: heavy industrial sites, commercial strip development, lumbering scars, mining operations, utility line corridors, dilapidated buildings, large and inappropriate signage, junk yards, landfills, storage yards and tanks, trailer parks, non landscaped major parking lots, heavy traffic and polluted air and water.
See Chapter II for a list of current detractors and Chapter IX for goals, objectives and strategies of how each will be addressed.
- There is a demonstration and evidences of strong local support for designation by local government, civic groups, environmental organizations, chambers of commerce, convention and visitor bureaus, business, industry and individuals.
Copies of letters of support and petitions are available upon request.
- Designation of a highway as a scenic highway shall not be construed to require any modification in local land use regulations, require any change in commercial or agricultural activity, or affect future highway rehabilitation, development, or the need to maintain or improve the roads.
See Chapter III for Corridor Management Plan.
- The proposed highway must have a minimum evaluation score of +0.01 as rated by the SC Scenic Highways Committee in order to be considered for SC Scenic Byway designation.
See Chapter IX for goals, objectives and strategies.
- Only two lane highways can be considered for SC Scenic Byway designation.
See Chapter II for description of road.

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The following chapters show SC 46 deserves to be designated a national scenic byway and that, through the adoption and implementation of the following Corridor Management Plan, the community is ready and willing to accept the responsibility.



Just a few of the scenic views along SC 46