

Pilot Project

ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR AMERICA'S BYWAYS

AMERICA'S BYWAYS RESOURCE CENTER

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VERSION 2.1

PILOT



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Introduction to the Byway Assessment Tool

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

To help you evaluate technical assistance needs and priorities, America's Byways Resource Center and its contractor, Louise K. Stevens, ArtsMarket Inc., have developed this Assessment Tool as an aide to your organizational development. We recommend that you invite all those in your organization – staff, board, advisory groups, parent organization and others who may be important to your work – which are invested in moving your organization and your Byway work forward -- to use the assessment or portions of it. We also urge you to involve your external partners to assist in the assessment. It can be very valuable for the State coordinator, the State tourism office, hosting organizations, local government partners that work on project implementation, CVBs and others to use the assessment to provide valuable input to your organization – their views of how you are doing.

The tool is organized around topics of fundamental importance – topics where technical assistance can make a great difference to the health and future strength of your group. Not all topics are applicable at the same time, and not all are applicable to every Byway: come back to the tool as needed over time, as your organization grows, expands capacity, changes, and takes on new challenges. After you have filled out the applicable portions, we urge you to contact the Resource Center, or use the tool to initiate dialogue with other specialists and consultants you know. By sharing your responses to the questions asked in this tool, you will be able to start a fruitful conversation with specialists who can recommend appropriate next steps that will be most helpful in meeting your needs.

Each section of the assessment tool has a scoring component. Your organization may want to score your capacity on the overall tool, then go back to focus on those areas where you have the lowest score. Or, you may want to have a number of people in your group take the assessment independently, and then compare the scores you assign to each section: this can be a great way to focus your organization's governance team and staff around key priorities, and can also be a good tool to use in preparing to update your goals and strategic plans. Finally, the scoring within each section can be helpful in pinpointing areas to discuss with your Byway Specialist. By sharing your perceptions and scores, you can help your specialist know where to start in providing assistance.

When you share your assessment with your Byway Specialist at the Resource Center, your scores and findings on each topic remain confidential information, and will not be shared with anyone outside of your organization unless permission is granted in written form.

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

1. Organizational Development, Capacity, and Adaptability

Turn to this section if you are evaluating anything from the viability of your mission and organizational vision, to leadership succession and governance; strategic planning; and capacity to sustain and grow as an entity.

2. Finance, Fundraising and Sustainability

Are you evaluating whether your financial model is sustainable? How successful have you been at fundraising? Does your byway entity have a development plan? Use this section to consider overall financial capacity and planning.

3. Outreach, Partnerships, and Advocacy

Turn to this section if you are evaluating ways to ensure strength through partnerships and positioning, or if you are in need of stronger partnerships, new funding sources, and new strategies to sustain the work of your group.

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

Take this portion of the assessment if you are contemplating ways to strengthen the image, identity, and the brand of your byway, or if you are seeking strength in marketing and communicating.

5. The Visitor Experience

From pre-visit to post-visit, planning for and implementing a Visitor Experience is the fundamental work of byways. Consider your technical assistance needs in shaping visitor expectations, delivering effective wayshowing and creating authentic interpretation.

6. Documenting Impact

If your funders, partners, and communities seek documentation of economic and overall visitor experience feedback, use this section of the tool.

Part 1: Organizational Development, Capacity, and Adaptability

In the right-hand column, enter the number that corresponds to the condition that best describes your organization. If the item does not match your organization, enter N/A.

Capacity Topic	1	2	3	4	
1. Organization Mission & Vision	<p>Your byway entity does not have a formal mission statement.</p> <p>It is something you have discussed;</p> <p>Perhaps a variety of quasi-mission statements have been tested.</p>	<p>There is a limited expression of organizational/operational mission.</p> <p>There may be an articulated mission for the physical Byway itself, but the entity which supports the byway has a mission and/or vision that is unclear or not articulated.</p>	<p>A basic or founding mission exists but hasn't been used effectively to strengthen your byway entity and its relationship to funders, partners, and other stakeholders.</p> <p>You would like to think about ways to use a well articulated mission and vision to better communicate and position your byway entity.</p>	<p>Mission and vision statements for your byway entity are updated and clearly reflect the purpose and long term desired outcomes for the organization and the Byway.</p> <p>These are used consistently to communicate your byway entity's purpose.</p>	
2. Corridor Management Plan (CMP)	<p>Your byway and/or byway entity does not have a current, approved corridor management plan.</p>	<p>You have difficulty using your CMP as a planning tool because you tend to operate project to project.</p> <p>It still seems overwhelming to address multiple elements of the CMP.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has an approved CMP and you make use of it to set your priorities and review your accomplishments, but you feel it could be more fully used internally and by your partners.</p>	<p>Your CMP is up to date and evaluated on a regular basis. It is well used and well communicated.</p> <p>It is used both internally to guide organizational goals and actions.</p> <p>Your CMP is used to unify partners and inform colleagues and agencies, funders and sponsors about the plans and work of the Byway.</p>	

<p>3. Leadership</p>	<p>Currently, there is no dedicated staff (volunteer or paid) responsible for implementing byway activities.</p>	<p>There is limited staff/organizational leadership capacity to implement actions that meet strategies and goals.</p> <p>Your byway entity may be between leaders, or there may not be a good fit with people who are in leadership roles.</p> <p>You do not have a current knowledge-capacity leader who guides and represents the byway entity.</p>	<p>The leader or staff operate largely on a task-by-task basis, and may be responsive to governance and outside requirements and requests but are not initiators.</p> <p>You may not have the knowledge or expertise to guide the implementation of goals or lead the byway entity forward.</p> <p>You may have limited ability or availability to effectively represent the byway entity to all its constituents and partners.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has a leader, staff or team that initiates, provides knowledge and expertise to guide the implementation of strategies, builds organizational strength and capacity, and represents the organization effectively.</p> <p>Your byway entity may be seeking evaluation and advancement tools to guide your leadership team's on-going development and growth.</p>	
<p>4. Governance Oversight</p>	<p>Your byway entity's founders or leaders decide on priorities as they go, and "self govern" without independent oversight by a separate governance entity.</p> <p>There are little or no governance and/or decision making policies.</p>	<p>Roles for your governance leaders or chairs may be unclear; there may be policy addressing this, but that policy is unclear or not available.</p> <p>There may be one or two individuals who are highly active and hold de-facto responsibility. Your byway entity may be seeking assistance in leveraging governance change, and in shaping strategies to build a stronger group.</p> <p>There is little or no thought on how future leaders will be chosen or recruited.</p>	<p>There are essential board committee and chairs. They may be more focused on annual responsibilities than on keeping the byway entity fresh and agile.</p> <p>The byway entity may seem to need a new vision and enthusiasm.</p> <p>You have thought about future leadership succession, but have not acted.</p> <p>You have policy regarding oversight, governance and decision-making; but is only used during crises or not totally effective.</p>	<p>Mechanisms such as annual planning meetings and retreats are used to keep the organization focused and fresh, and your byway entity may seek facilitation of planning retreats and updates to keep your governance group fresh and vital.</p> <p>Your governance policy provides for the effective and non-biased analysis of accountability of your leadership and decision making structure.</p>	

<p>5. Annual Strategies</p>	<p>There are no organizational (operational) strategies at present.</p>	<p>Strategies may exist, but are more ad hoc or personal-interest driven than driven by set organizational goals or desired outcomes.</p> <p>Strategies may also be reactive and based on specific opportunities or grant requirements, alone.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has worked from a strategic plan but is ready for something more comprehensive.</p> <p>Or, it is ready to undertake a comprehensive strategic plan for the first time.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has a current strategic plan that defines priorities and actions and that is used to measure byway organizational and programmatic/functional progress.</p> <p>Your strategic plan has specific goals, objectives and performance measures.</p>	
<p>6. Organization al Diversity</p>	<p>Your organization, volunteers, and leadership consists of basically the same people who initiated the byway activities.</p> <p>There is no diversity in your organization, volunteers, and partners, in terms of ethnicity, age, gender, skill sets, personality, location on the byway and socio— economic status.</p>	<p>There is little diversity in your organization, volunteers, and partners, in terms of ethnicity, age, gender, skill sets, personality, location on the byway and socio— economic status.</p> <p>Any diversity that exists, exists because of chance.</p>	<p>You have a fairly diverse organization, stakeholder list, volunteer base and partnership set.</p> <p>This diversity is more by chance than by strategy. You really do not consistently talk about diversity as a key principle to your organization.</p>	<p>Diversity is a key principle in how your organization operates. Your organization is highly diverse.</p> <p>You strategically look at who's 'at the table' and who is 'not at the table'; and proactively address where holes might exist.</p>	

<p>7. Adaptability and Sustainability</p>	<p>Your byway has no byway entity or formal entity responsible for byway actions.</p> <p>As such, your byway has no structural way to address sustainability.</p>	<p>Your byway entity sees itself or operates as task-based, without a long term sense of what type of structure or mechanisms will be most effective.</p> <p>There may be more than one idea about how to sustain the group – or even if it should be sustained in its current structure.</p> <p>There may be comfort with an ad hoc approach to getting work done on behalf of the Byway. Or, you may not see a long term organizational need.</p> <p>You may want assistance in evaluating how or if to develop a more formal or sustainable organization.</p>	<p>Your byway entity is actively questioning structure and mechanisms that will enable it to be more effective. You may be in a time of transition such as leadership succession or in need of accomplishing more with less funding.</p> <p>These transitions or considerations are leading to discussion about how the group can adapt and change in response to current realities, while sustaining the group to accomplish its goals for years to come.</p>	<p>Your byway entity is in the process of or has found ways to ensure its ability to adapt to new circumstances. You are flexible operationally and financially so that you can sustain yourself for the long term.</p> <p>You have a financial plan which includes long range operational contingencies.</p> <p>You complete annual reports which describe how you've coped with change and uncertainties.</p>	
<p>Score</p>					

Self Scoring:

- Score of 1-7: **Starting Point.** Your organization should begin a multi-step approach to evaluating and undertaking actions that will enable the group to flourish. Small steps may be the best approach to building an effective organization.
- Score of 8-15: **Basic.** Your organization has a CMP, but beyond that has limited capacity to respond to changing or new circumstances and challenges. To become sustainable, it is important to consider how to create a fundamental capacity beyond the volunteer work of a few dedicated individuals.
- Score of 16-23: **Intermediate:** Your organization has some real strengths on which to build, but would benefit from a T.A. plan that enhances organizational capacity in one or two key areas.
- Score of 24-28: **Advanced:** Your organization can build on strengths and has depth of capacity to develop and adapt to new circumstances and challenges.

Part 2: Finance, Fundraising and Sustainability

In the right-hand column, enter the number that corresponds to the condition that best describes your organization. If the item does not match your organization, enter N/A.

Capacity Topic	1	2	3	4	
1. Operating Budget and Diverse Revenue Stream	You have no annual or project budget for non-capital work.	<p>Budgets are project based, depending more on grants that may be received than on an annual strategy or plan.</p> <p>You may be looking for basic budgeting tools, examples, and guidelines.</p>	<p>Your byway entity works to set operating budgets but may be constrained by lack of defined revenue streams, and may need to evaluate new ways to build a revenue budget/plan that can enable it to implement its goals.</p> <p>You may need examples of how other Byways have diversified revenue streams.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has revenue streams that allow it to implement an annual strategic plan. But your byway entity may be seeking information on how to leverage growth to take on major new initiatives.</p> <p>You may be interested in how other organizations handle significant budgetary growth?</p>	
2. Capital versus Operating	Capital funding has not been received.	<p>Your byway entity may be relying primarily or only on project funding that is largely capital in nature, with very little funding for non-capital work.</p> <p>You may benefit from information on best practices for sustainability at all budget sizes.</p>	<p>Your budget may still be dominated by capital projects but there is some/limited funding for the accomplishment of non-capital goals and for operations and overhead.</p> <p>You may be examining ways to limit fixed expenses or other non-capital exposure while still being able to implement strategies and goals, and could benefit from an outside expert to assist.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has revenue streams in place to support its non-capital and operations needs so that it remains sustainable as an organization between rounds of capital funding.</p> <p>You may be looking for additional ways to diversify revenue or limit expense exposure to ensure long term sustainability.</p>	

<p>3. New and Diversified Revenue Streams</p>	<p>Your byway entity has not considered or has not been successful in finding ways to develop new or diversified revenue streams.</p>	<p>Your byway entity relies on funding from Federal or State Highway Department grants, only. It may not have investigated – or may have had limited luck – with finding other revenue sources.</p>	<p>Your byway entity is in the process of working to diversify annual revenue streams and sources, and may be exploring a range of new funding contracts, partnerships, and grants/sponsorships.</p> <p>You may be looking for assistance in building a sustainable business and revenue model.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has a revenue diversification strategy or plan that is regularly expanded or updated to ensure it is able to meet operations through a range of revenue sources.</p> <p>You may be looking for ways to evaluate the long term viability of your revenue plan.</p>	
<p>4. Fundraising Strategies and Capacity</p>	<p>Your byway entity has limited or no experience fundraising (not including seeking capital/project grants from the National Scenic Byways Grants program).</p>	<p>Your byway entity has some on-going fundraising mechanisms, such as memberships or contributions, but has not yet developed a multifaceted funding plan that will sustain your group and the Byway.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has proven strength, going beyond basic fundraising events and contributions.</p> <p>Tips, tools, and new skills in donor development, grant writing, and identification of funding sources and interests will be helpful to you.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has strong fundraising capacity and annual fundraising plan.</p> <p>You have demonstrated ability to successfully win grants and major gifts, and have leveraged funds from various sources to maximize the impact of each contribution.</p>	
<p>5. Fund-use Stewardship Image and Reputation</p>	<p>Your organization (separate from the Byway) does not have visibility or reputation as a grantee or recipient of grant and contributed funds.</p>	<p>Partners and a limited constituency – members, some communities – are aware of your organization’s capacity to effectively steward grants and contributions.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has established a good reputation as a fund steward. You have used this reputation as a foundation for seeking contributions and funds, but you still need to become more competitive within the state and region.</p>	<p>Your byway entity makes use of a full portfolio of image and reputation materials, such as annual reports published online, newsletters to donors, regular events and meetings for donors and funders. You have a sterling reputation as a fund steward.</p>	

6. Maintenance and Operations of Capital Projects	Your byway entity has little experience in managing and operating capital projects.	<p>You have applied for grants to begin capital projects, but are just beginning that process.</p> <p>Your efforts have focused on the final built project, not necessarily on the maintenance and operational aspects.</p>	You have implemented capital projects along your byway. But you have struggled with the maintenance and operational aspects.	<p>Your byway considers long-term operational and maintenance costs before entering into capital projects.</p> <p>You have experience in delivering capital projects.</p> <p>The anticipated operational and maintenance costs are considered in decision-making and fundraising efforts before grant writing efforts begin.</p>	
7. Reserves	Your byway entity has not considered holding or building cash reserves.	<p>There are no reserves and your byway entity has not yet or is not currently considering strategies for reserves.</p> <p>You may be looking for basic information on how to begin building reserves, or on the level of reserves that are appropriate for your organization.</p>	<p>There may be an opportunistic or ad hoc approach to building up some reserves, but your organization may not have been able to regularly budget for or find ways to develop operating reserves.</p> <p>You may be developing policies and plans for creation and maintenance of operating reserves.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has worked toward or has accomplished having operating reserves or liquid net assets of about 180 days of its total operations.</p> <p>Reserve policies and plans have been implemented, and it may be useful to review these and ensure that they will offer the level of sustainability your organization needs.</p>	
Score					

Self Scoring:

- Score of 1-7: **Starting Point.** Your organization has limited capacity to sustain itself, and needs to begin planning how to develop revenue.
- Score of 8-15: **Basic.** Your organization has done fundamental work to ensure sustainability, but wants to diversify revenue sources and create increased financial operating capacity.
- Score of 16-23: **Intermediate.** Good progress has been made to good fiscal policy and approaches. This may be a good time to consider even more emphasis.
- Score of 24-28: **Advanced.** Your organization has strong financial sustainability systems and strategies in place. Your goals are focused on expanding reserve capacity and long term strength.

Part 3: Outreach, Partnerships, and Advocacy

In the right-hand column, enter the number that corresponds to the condition that best describes your organization. If the item does not match your organization, enter N/A.

Capacity Topic	1	2	3	4	
1. Public Engagement	You have no mechanisms in place for public input regarding your byway activities, such as meetings, forums, or blogs.	There is some periodic outreach and organized meetings for public input, but it isn't regular or extensive.	You are effective at involving communities about byway projects and initiatives, and you have a consistent and repeatable approach gathering public input.	<p>You have provided multiple opportunities for input every year, through a variety of mechanisms ranging from surveys and interviews to public meetings and forums.</p> <p>You have a specific plan that you implement for early and continuous input, for projects, events, etc.</p> <p>You assess the effectiveness of your public engagement efforts on an annual basis.</p>	
2. Outreach	Outreach is something your group does not consider or implement on a regular or strategic basis.	<p>Your byway entity understands that outreach is important; however you have been busy focusing on other goals or projects.</p> <p>You have difficulty engaging in formal outreach to community groups and others – i.e. other local and state nonprofits, planners, and agencies.</p>	<p>Outreach is something that may be done when there is time or need, but you have found it difficult to sustain.</p> <p>You may lack of staff or dedicated board time to focus on outreach and to finding communications mechanisms that support outreach.</p> <p>Outreach often ends up as being one of those things that falls off the table.</p>	<p>Your byway entity uses various communication and outreach methods to inform and shape your own programs and priorities, avoid duplication, and continuously build new informal and formal partnerships, and the collaboration with those partners.</p> <p>These efforts are based on your public involvement plan. The input you receive is consistently used to inform practices and planning.</p>	

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<p>3. Partnerships</p>	<p>Your byway entity hasn't established partner groups or organizations.</p> <p>You are seeking guidance on how to build working relationships with other groups that can help it advance the Byway goals.</p>	<p>Your byway entity may have a preliminary or limited assessment in the types of partnerships that it can develop and maintain to help it accomplish key goals.</p> <p>You may not have a 'network' approach or other formalized means of communicating with and working together with partners.</p>	<p>Your partnerships are for the most part informal and a mix of ad hoc and consistent relationships; but there is room for additional planning, dialogue, and development of shared visions and values among the group.</p> <p>There may be informal or periodic ways to bring partners together.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has developed a solid and multi-year group of partners, and may still be adding new partners over time. You have identified areas where there are shared goals and opportunities to work together, and have defined ways to bring the partners together periodically to discuss shared issues and opportunities, gaps, and priorities that each is working on.</p> <p>You have ways of communicating with the partners throughout the course of the year, and can depend on them to advocate on your behalf.</p> <p>You and your partners identify areas where there are shared goals and opportunities to work together.</p> <p>Your group may want to compare your partnership approaches to other peers to ensure you are using all possible best practices.</p>	
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<p>4. Assessment of External Priorities</p>	<p>Your byway entity has not had the chance to assess the priorities of other groups working to advance travel and tourism in your byway region.</p>	<p>Your byway entity may have conducted listening exercises in setting or updating your CMP, but may not be able to regularly or systematically collect information about needs and opportunities that can be met through your own or partner work on behalf of the Byway.</p>	<p>You have some informal ways of learning and listening to assess external priorities – those set by others – that pertain to the Byway and issues or priority to your own organization.</p> <p>It may be useful to learn ways to enhance your internal organizational assessment skills.</p>	<p>Your organization uses a process of collecting input from partners and groups and of sharing your own insights on needs and priorities to work effectively with partners and communities to meet new and evolving needs.</p> <p>The process is on-going and dynamic, but your byway entity may seek additional information about best practices.</p>	
<p>5. Advocacy</p>	<p>Advocacy is a skill your byway entity would like to learn and develop.</p> <p>It is a challenge to get started.</p>	<p>Your byway entity may be successful in advocating for your byway, but may still have difficulty articulating advocacy messages for your own work and having those messages be heard by a large enough groups of prospective stakeholders.</p> <p>For what could be a range of reasons, your group hasn't yet benefited from advocacy. Your group could benefit from basic training in advocacy.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has made and sustained inroads in advocacy, and your group regularly meets with and advocates for your mission and for the goals you have set for the Byway.</p> <p>Still, advocacy tasks and roles are hard for some in your organization, and advocacy may be more about short term achievements rather than long term positioning, and your group would benefit from training and even from more partners that advocate for your own work and operations.</p> <p>Your may be seeking ways to be more effective in advocacy.</p>	<p>Others such as elected officials and other community leaders are advocating for the byway.</p> <p>Your organization has tools in place to assist these leaders as they advocate for the byway. Your organization has updated qualitative and quantitative data and information to support advocacy, and ways to measure the success of your advocacy efforts.</p> <p>Your byway entity feels that advocacy efforts have paid off and continue to pay off, and your staff and board have developed a high level of capacity in advocacy as a result.</p> <p>CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE</p>	

				<p>Your byway entity regularly updates your approach to advocacy, and makes effective use of measurements such as economic impact and visitor feedback to support advocacy.</p> <p>Your partners and stakeholders have become instrumental in being advocates for you.</p>	
	Score				

Self Scoring:

- Score of 1-5: **Starting Point.** Your byway entity needs to work on building capacity in outreach, partnerships, and advocacy.
- Score of 6-11: **Basic.** Your organization has some capacity, but may benefit from more strength in implementing an annual outreach and advocacy strategy.
- Score of 12-16: **Intermediate.** Your organization has begun to see the benefits of building a strong partnership network and to the use of effective outreach and advocacy. Consider ways to formalize outreach and begin using advocacy tools such as economic impact and visitor feedback.
- Score of 17-20: **Advanced.** Congratulations on having built and maintained strong and effective partnerships, outreach, and advocacy that benefits and supports your work. You may want to look at the best practices of other types of organizations that are as successful as yours to keep refining and adding to your outreach and advocacy tools and methods.

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

In the right-hand column, enter the number that corresponds to the condition that best describes your organization. If the item does not match your organization, enter N/A.

Capacity Topic	1	2	3	4	
1. Marketing Plan	Your organization does not have a marketing plan.	You have set some basic marketing goals and have some strategies in place. You are working on a more detailed multi-year marketing plan with benchmarks.	Your organization has made progress implementing and measuring the impact of a marketing plan.	Marketing planning is on-going, utilizes research and measurements (see Part 6), and responds to changes in your market. In a larger sense, you have a joint marketing plan that you address together with your partners.	
2. Visibility	Your Byway has limited visibility or identity. The Byway has yet to develop some of the visibility that you seek.	Your Byway has achieved a basic level of visibility and name recognition, but your group is looking for ways to jump start the process of building broader regional and national name recognition and attention.	Your byway entity has developed a moderate level of name recognition. You would like to see the Byway achieve even greater name recognition and become even better known but need to broaden your marketing skills or portfolio to gain this next level of visibility.	Your Byway has a high level of regional and national recognition, and even international visibility. You would like to make sure you are on-track and are always looking for new ways to enhance your presence and standing.	

<p>3. Byway Brand Identity</p>	<p>Building and maintaining a brand identity means shaping a promise and then delivering on that promise.</p> <p>There is little to no byway brand identity – a consistent application of a branding strategy.</p>	<p>There is some signage, some use of branding on print and web materials, but it is unevenly and inconsistently applied.</p>	<p>Your group needs assistance in building a strong and consistent brand identity. You may also be ready to gather visitors’ perceptions of quality offered by your brand, and to use this feedback to ensure your brand identity is strong from promise through to post-experience.</p> <p>You may be looking for some assessment of how well you are doing and ways to continue to strengthen the brand.</p>	<p>Your byway has built and maintained an excellent brand, and you know that it works because you have collected data that demonstrates this, such as from visitor intercept surveys.</p> <p>The Americas Byways brand has been incorporated into your brand.</p> <p>Your byway has collected specific data that demonstrates the brand recognition of your brand the America’s Byways brand.</p>	
<p>4. Branding Tools, Signage, Materials</p>	<p>Your byway entity has not created a suite of consistent branding tools.</p>	<p>Your byway entity together with partners is beginning to shape or renew the brand identity for your Byway, with the goal of it gaining recognition and shaping overall concept awareness your byway’s visitor experience.</p> <p>You’d like to make sure you use the right process.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has made progress in wayshowing, with maps, orientation sites, exhibits, and materials.</p> <p>You know there is more to do, but wonder how to prioritize these.</p> <p>You may want to undertake a wayshowing and branding audit or assessment.</p>	<p>Your byway is well signed and branded, but you may want to do more GPS / GIS technology and applications; or may be evaluating ways to further enhancing wayshowing media, exhibits, narratives, or maps.</p> <p>You may be seeking ideas that can assist in training hospitality and visitor information personnel and volunteers.</p> <p>If you are an America’s Byway, you have considered and incorporated the America’s Byways brand into your materials in a consistent manner.</p>	

<p>5. Commun – ications / Public Relations</p>	<p>Your byway entity has very limited Communications and Public Relations skills.</p> <p>You rarely deliver proactive messages about your byway to the greater public.</p>	<p>You struggle with your Communications and PR activities which get your byway noticed. You are not sure how your byway entity can effectively communicate its unique qualities and the value of visitation?</p> <p>Your group may be looking for ways to implement a fundamental, consistent communications and PR plan.</p>	<p>There may be new ways to boost the communication strategies for your Byway.</p> <p>You may be seeking new ideas to getting the messages out there, ways to boost the usefulness of your social media marketing to facilitate broader visitor access.</p>	<p>Your entity may be seeking evaluation of the effectiveness of your communications plan, or may want to benchmark your communications strategies against those of other organizational best practices.</p>	
<p>6. Portfolio of Marketing Materials</p>	<p>You are unsure what marketing tools and materials should be a top priority for an emerging or re-emerging byway.</p> <p>It is unclear what would be the best way to start building a portfolio for your byway?</p>	<p>Your byway entity is in the early or evolving stages of work with formal partners on signage, wayshowing, entrances/exits, and a consistently used/displayed graphic identity and could benefit from tools and planning assistance to help focus your efforts.</p> <p>You may be working with partners to expand your portfolio, or may be considering new marketing tools that build on the foundation of approaches and materials now in use.</p>	<p>You may have realized some or considerable success in achieving an integrated, Byway-specific portfolio of marketing materials, images, and offers between your byway entity and partners, but still may seek ways to improve.</p> <p>Your byway entity may be looking for ways to assess and evaluate next steps to building a strong and uniform portfolio and identity, across organizations, communities, jurisdictions, and agencies.</p> <p>Your byway entity may be looking for new information on integrating and maximizing mobile marketing, technology or other tools.</p>	<p>Your organization has developed an outstanding portfolio of marketing materials as evaluated and judged by peers in your region, such as others in hospitality marketing or local advisory panels of experts.</p> <p>You have used your research on target markets to define your messaging and images. Your organization has mechanisms in place to measure the effectiveness of the portfolio of materials you have, and regularly and appropriately updates the portfolio.</p>	

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

Self Scoring:

- Score of 1-7: **Starting Point.** Marketing should be a top priority, and your organization should seek TA assistance to begin the process.
- Score of 8-15: **Basic.** Consider priorities for your Byway to enhance the overall success of its marketing, possibly involving a marketing audit or assessment.
- Score of 16-22: **Intermediate.** It is time to advance marketing through elements such as multi-web site consistency, new mobile apps, or other specific steps. You are looking for guidance on best practices and effective strategies.
- Score of 23-28: **Advanced.** Your organization is ready to focus on refining and adding to the marketing mix, to fully optimize tourism and positioning marketing.

Part 5: The Visitor Experience

In the right-hand column, enter the number that corresponds to the condition that best describes your organization. If the item does not match your organization, enter N/A.

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

<p>2.</p> <p>Wayshowing and Orientation</p>	<p>Wayshowing is something you want to advance, but haven't yet been able to tackle beyond basic signage.</p> <p>You'd like to develop a plan and priorities.</p>	<p>Your Byway has implemented basic entrance and exit signage and other basic orientation that help visitors understand the Byway.</p> <p>You may be seeking assistance in building relationships with all the road management agencies along your byway. You may be seeking assistance in positioning route markers, directional signage, entrance and exit signs or in negotiating speed zones, pedestrian crossings, or other aides to visitors.</p>	<p>Visitor orientation includes up-to-date information about detours and road conditions, guidance to attractions and back to the Byway, and your byway entity may be seeking assistance in best ways to keep visitors informed and up to date through changing conditions.</p> <p>Or your byway entity may be considering ways to expand orientation via mobile technology, compliance with Universal Design, or seeking other improvements.</p>	<p>Your byway entity may be adding orientation stops, new exhibits and narratives, additional orientation maps and other wayshowing aides.</p> <p>You have sought the outside evaluation of the "visitor's eye perspective" for all visitors, and may be acting on Universal Design improvements to enhance the visitor experience.</p> <p>Your wayshowing approach is holistic and implements the eight principles of effective wayshowing.</p>	
<p>3.</p> <p>Intrinsic Qualities</p>	<p>Your byway entity does not have on-going strategies in place to protect the intrinsic qualities of your Byway.</p>	<p>There has been some identification of roles and responsibilities in protecting intrinsic qualities between partners, but there is not yet a working implementation of this.</p>	<p>There is clarity in roles and responsibilities in protecting and enhancing the intrinsic qualities of the Byway. Partner roles are known and there is at least basic on-going work by a number of partners to protect and steward intrinsic qualities.</p>	<p>There is proven capacity and teamwork in protecting all the intrinsic qualities of the Byway.</p> <p>Partners and the byway entity work effectively and consistently together to steward the Byway intrinsic qualities.</p> <p>Your CMP provides the plan and impetus for preservation and visitor access for your intrinsic qualities.</p>	

<p>4. Interpretive Planning</p>	<p>You have no general plan for interpretation along your byway. You would like to gain knowledge in effective ways to provide interpretive assistance to visitors.</p>	<p>Your byway entity may be evaluating fundamental interpretive elements, or adding to your baseline interpretation.</p>	<p>Your byway entity may be formalizing an interpretive plan or seeking feedback on the effectiveness of your interpretive plan, and you may be seeking advice regarding your ideas and strategies. You want to expand your interpretive efforts to include a more diversified/cultural approach.</p>	<p>Your byway entity may be adding to the Byway interpretation with face-to-face and/or oral interpreters along the Byway, and you may be seeking ways to leverage more involvement from partners to make this possible. You have approached all cultural points of view in the story telling of your byway; including Native American and other cultural stories which may have never been considered. A wide range of professionals have been consulted during the interpretive planning process.</p>	
<p>5. Interpretive Delivery</p>	<p>There are no interpretive sites for travelers along your byway.</p>	<p>There are a few interpretive sites along your byway. These locations are random, few, and/or outdated. These interpretive efforts do not reflect your byway brand or identity.</p>	<p>You have many interpretive sites along your byway. The interpretive sites are all delivered in one or two mediums (i.e. Kiosks or publications). There is general theme that can be evidenced from one interpretive site to the next; however, independent sites (i.e. museums, parks, etc.) have interpretation which may not reflect that theme.</p>	<p>You have a themed interpretive experience along your byway. That experience is reflected at all sites, stops, and locations, regardless of operating agency. Interpretation is delivered in many mediums, including story telling. You have considered and implemented the most recent technological advances in the delivery of interpretation. You consistently monitor the success of your interpretive efforts.</p>	

PILOT

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

PILOT

Self Scoring:

- Score of 1-6: **Starting Point.** You need basic guidance in wayshowing and in implementing key steps to establish a good visitor experience.

- Score of 7-13: **Basic.** Your Byway needs to pay top attention to creating and shaping a positive visitor experience. You may want T.A. to set a multi-year approach to improvement.

- Score of 14-19: **Intermediate.** Select key priorities for in-depth work to foster an even better visitor experience.

- Score of 20-24: **Advanced.** Congratulations, your Byway has a great and comprehensive approach to ensuring a great visitor experience. Audit it periodically to keep it at top quality.

Part 6. Documenting Impact

In the right-hand column, enter the number that corresponds to the condition that best describes your organization. If the item does not match your organization, enter N/A.

Capacity Topic	1	2	3	4	
1. Visitor Input and Feedback	<p>This is an area that you haven't worked on at all.</p> <p>You have some informal comments from visitors, but that's about it.</p>	<p>Your byway entity may be looking for basic and simple ways to collect visitor impressions of the Byway – sample surveys and tools you can modify and use.</p>	<p>Your byway entity may be implementing a periodic visitor satisfaction survey, and you may be seeking advice in implementing the research or in evaluating the findings. Your byway entity may want to benchmark the feedback from your visitors with those of other Byways, or your organization may seek assistance in validating and sharing the findings in a proactive way with your partner agencies.</p>	<p>Your byway makes consistent, regular use of visitor input and feedback in strategic and corridor management planning. You share information with your partners and use the information together with them to steer partnership planning.</p>	
2. Quantifying Visitors, Studying Visitors	<p>Your byway entity has no visitor data.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has rudimentary and anecdotal data about your visitors. You are interested in seeking advice on basic information gathering and database creation.</p>	<p>Your byway entity has some experience in quantifying visitors and the nature of their stay: time spent, destinations visited, nature of the visitors. Your byway entity is considering periodic significant measurements of visitors, demographics, the nature of their visit, and related topics. You are considering ways to conduct this visitor research and analysis to increase visitors.</p> <p>CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE You'd like assistance in pulling</p>	<p>Your byway has methods and tools in place to gather and make effective use of quantitative and qualitative studies to improve the overall byway experience, to use for advocacy, and to build stronger partnerships. Research is an ongoing function of your byway organization.</p>	

			it together, or in expanding upon what you can do in-house.		
3. Economic Impact	Your byway entity has not gathered nor has immediate plans to gather economic impact data.	Your byway entity is considering some sort of economic impact analysis but you don't know how to get started.	Your byway entity is evaluating how to undertake regular economic impact analysis and would benefit from assistance and help in benchmarking your Byway's impact to others.	Your byway entity has regularly used tools and measures such as economic impact analysis and may be looking for ways to maximize the promotion value of the findings.	
4. Market Analysis	Your byway entity has limited knowledge of who your visitors are, where they come from, what they seek, and what will bring them back. You do not know where to gather that information.	Your byway entity has gathered some visitor data from your state or from local CVBs or others, but not information that can guide gaining additional visitors.	Your byway entity has some visitor data, but not enough to define the overall Byway visitation. You may be seeking additional advice or methods to broaden your market analysis.	Your byway entity has undertaken broad-based market analysis and has the mechanisms in place to regularly update market studies against your baseline. You understand the nature of your current market for visitors and have assessed ways to broaden or deepen your potential market share. You may be seeking ways to maximize the benefit of the analysis and use it for long term planning.	
Score					

Self Scoring:

Score of 1-4: **Starting Point.** Your organization needs to develop a basic knowledge of your visitors and market.

Score of 5-9: **Basic.** Your organization should begin contemplating ways to collect basic visitor data to use in planning and positioning.

Score of 10-14: **Intermediate.** You have established effective data collection systems. Now focus on maximizing this capacity.

Score of 15-16: **Advanced.** You have excellent systems in place to collect, assess, and use data to enhance the Byway.

Overall Findings

The maximum potential score on this tool is 144.

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

If your score is 86 to 115, you have achieved an **intermediate** level of overall capacity. You have much to build upon and is ready to prioritize new ways to enhance your capacity, sustainability, and excellence. Don't try to do everything at once! Use this tool to evaluate areas in which you can work toward significant improvements that will strengthen your overall capacity and success.

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

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

Do not be surprised if your byway scores very high in one section of the tool, and shows need for work in other areas. This is normal in the continuous improvement cycle of any organization. Seeing the areas of particular need at any moment in time can help your organization focus and prioritize actions.