

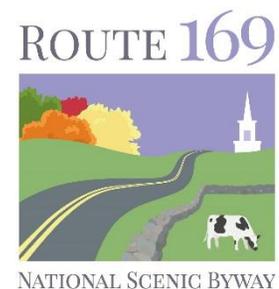
2016 – 2026 Corridor Management Plan:
Connecticut State Route 169 National Scenic Byway



2016 – 2026 Corridor Management Plan: Connecticut State Route 169 National Scenic Byway

prepared by
the Scenic Route 169 Advisory Committee
and
the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments

Cover photo: The Old Brooklyn Meeting House (now the First Unitarian Universalist Congregational Society of Brooklyn's church), taken from the intersection of Canterbury Road (Route 169) and Brooklyn Common
Source: *Unitarian Meeting House* | State Historic Preservation Office, Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development <http://www.ctfreedomtrail.org/trail/underground-railroad/sites/#!/unitarian-meeting-house>



necog

Thank you, to the active and dedicated members of the Scenic Route 169 Advisory Committee *as well as* the numerous residents of byway communities that attended public workshops and advisory committee meetings.

Scenic Route 169 Advisory Committee

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Photo Sources

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Abbreviations

CTDOT- Connecticut Department of Transportation

FHWA- Federal Highway Administration (U.S. Department of Transportation)

NECCOG- Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments

NNECAPA- Northern Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association

NPS- National Parks Service (U.S. Department of the Interior)

Page	Photographer	Title or <i>Description</i>	Link
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ix	NECCOG	<i>A field on the byway</i>	
2	NECCOG	<i>Close-up of an annotated byway map</i>	
3	Johanna Kaplan	<i>Old Trinity Church in Brooklyn</i>	http://www.thesizeofconnecticut.com/2015/05/putnam-elms-old-trinity-church.html
3	NPS	<i>First Congregational Church of Canterbury</i>	http://focus.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/97001446
3	Town of Woodstock	<i>Cows in a field</i>	http://www.townofwoodstock.com/index.php/boardscommissions/commissions/new-roxbury-village/75-agriculture/woodstock-grown.html
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12	FHWA	River Road Scenic Byway	http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/byways/byways/10781/photos/all
12	NECCOG	<i>Route 169 in Pomfret with sign superimposed</i>	
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22	Linda Orloski	Canterbury Cows	http://www.mouseski.com/
22	NECCOG	<i>Cemetery in Woodstock</i>	
22	NECCOG	<i>Route 169 in Pomfret</i>	
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25	NECCOG	<i>Old Trinity Church</i>	
26	<i>Wikipedia user:</i> Cathy Cline	Captain John Clarke House, Canterbury, CT	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capt._John_Clark_House#/media/File:Capt._John_Clark_House,_Canterbury,_CT.JPG
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27	Johnna Kaplan	Prudence Crandall School House	http://www.thesizeofconnecticut.com/2014/07/prudence.html
27	NPS	<i>Samuel May House</i>	http://focus.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/82004401
28	John Phelan	First Congregational Church, Woodstock, CT	https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:First_Congregational_Church,_Woodstock_CT.jpg
28	NPS	<i>Anshei Israel Synagogue</i>	http://focus.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/95000861
28	<i>Wikipedia user:</i> Jbailhe	Pomfret School Building	https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pomfret_School_School_Building.jpg
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30	Johnna Kaplan	Cows can have Initiate Conversations	http://www.thesizeofconnecticut.com/search?q=cows+can+have
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31	NECCOG	<i>Shops in South Woodstock</i>	
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35	Cathy Cline	View of Thames from Jail Hill in Norwich	https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:View_of_Thames_from_Jail_Hill_in_Norwich.JPG
35	Robert James Hughes	The Wauregan	https://www.flickr.com/photos/rhughes411/11333095613
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35	New England District of the Army Corps of Engineers	<i>Aerial view of Norwich</i>	http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Media/Images.aspx?igphoto=2000723980
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36	Doug Kerr	Baltic, Connecticut	https://www.flickr.com/photos/dougstone/8427646803
36	Morrow Long	Remains of Old Mill on Beaverdam Brook taken from Northern End of Foot Bridge	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natchaug_State_Forest#/media/File:Remains_of_old_mill_dam_on_Beaverdam_Brook_taken_from_northern_end_of_foot_bridge.jpg
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37	<i>Flickr user:</i> billandkent	Mashapaug Pond	https://www.flickr.com/photos/billandkent/5047084303
37	Morrow Long	Yale-Myers Forest Sign and Northern Entrance to Nipmuck Trail on Bigelow Hollow Road	https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/de/Yale-Myers_Forest_Signs_and_northern_entrance_to_Nipmuck_Trail_on_Bigelow_Hollow_Road_AKA_CT_Route_197_near_Bigelow_Hollow_State_Park.jpg
37	Morrow Long	Bigelow Hollow State Park on Mashapaug Pond View Trail on Southern Shore of Mashapaug Pond	https://www.flickr.com/photos/morrowlong/5218739413
37	Linda Orlomoski	Union	http://www.mouseski.com/
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40	Canterbury Historical Society	<i>Canterbury Green schoolhouse restoration</i>	http://canterburyhistorical.org/?paged=2&author=2
43	CTDOT	<i>Merritt Parkway guardrail</i>	http://www.ct.gov/dot/cwp/view.asp?a=4109&q=474562
43	NECCOG	<i>Guardrail in Pomfret</i>	
43	NECCOG	<i>Stone wall near Bush Hill</i>	
43	NECCOG	<i>Stone wall on the byway</i>	
44	Aimee Linedell	Woodstock Orchards 10	https://www.flickr.com/photos/beautifullemons/6251534224
44	Christopher Harrison	DSC_7861 (from "85 Main Shuck-Off '10)	https://www.flickr.com/photos/christopherharrison/4580315300
48	NECCOG	<i>Hop River Trail bridge in Andover</i>	
49	NECCOG	<i>Route 169 in Pomfret with sign superimposed</i>	

Contents

Contents	i	Chapter Two: Assessment of Intrinsic Qualities	19
Commonly Used Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Initials	ii	Assessment of Intrinsic Qualities	20
Title and Authority	iii	Key Issues	21
Statement of Purpose	iii	Scenic Qualities	22
Drafting a Corridor Management Plan	iv	Cultural and Historic Qualities	26
The National Scenic Byway Program	v	Natural and Recreational Qualities	32
Connecticut State Scenic Roads	v	Byway Detours	34
Executive Summary	vi		
Introduction	vi	Chapter Three: Ten-Year Strategy	39
Assessment of Intrinsic Qualities	vii	Ten-Year Strategy	40
Ten-Year Strategy	vii	Planning Recommendations	45
Marketing and Signing the Byway (Annex)	viii	Special Projects	48
Scenic Road Land Use and Maintenance Considerations (Annex)	ix		
		<i>Appendix</i>	
Chapter One: Introduction	1	<i>Appendix 1: Significant Resource Inventory</i>	
Introduction	2	<i>Appendix 2: Document Maps</i>	
Scenic Designation	5	<i>Appendix 3: Meeting Information</i>	
Past Planning	8		
Most Recent Planning Process	9	Plan Annex A: Marketing and Signing the Byway	<i>Attached</i>
Byway Interpretation	11		
Current Byway Characteristics	13	Plan Annex B: Scenic Road Land Use Considerations	<i>Attached</i>

Commonly Used Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Initials

CMP	Corridor Management Plan
CTDOT	Connecticut Department of Transportation
DOT	United States Department of Transportation
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act
NECCOG	Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments
NSBP	National Scenic Byways Program
POCD	Plan of Conservation and Development
RCOG	Regional Council of Governments
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users

Title and Authority

The 2016 – 2026 Corridor Management Plan: Connecticut State Route 169 National Scenic Byway (“the Plan”) was prepared by the Scenic Route 169 Advisory Committee and staff at the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments. The Connecticut State Route 169 National Scenic Byway is a federally designated National Scenic Byway under 23 U.S. Code §162. The byway runs along Connecticut State Route 169 between Rocky Hollow Road in Lisbon, Connecticut and the Massachusetts-Connecticut border in Woodstock, Connecticut.

The Plan is advisory in nature and does not carry with any regulatory authority. The Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (NECCOG) is a Regional Council of Governments (RCOG), organized under by the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management.

Statement of Purpose

This Plan is intended to recommend strategies for preservation, enhancement, and growth of the landscape along and around the Connecticut State Route 169 National Scenic Byway, as well as create a framework for future marketing efforts of the byway and its scenic, cultural, historic, recreational, and natural resources. An initial plan for the byway was completed in 1995; although a valuable resource and well-formed document, the 1995 plan is felt to no longer be relevant to the evolved needs of the byway.

Drafting a Corridor Management Plan

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) of the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) requires that a corridor management plan include the following 14 items:

(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 which 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 a **listing 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 on-going 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 insure 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**. [[Page 26762]] (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 on the intrinsic qualities of the byway corridor. (14) A **description of plans to interpret the significant resources of the scenic byway**.

The National Scenic Byway Program

The National Scenic Byway Program (NSBP) was formed in 1991 under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and continued under the 1998 Transportation Equality Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), in 2005. The NSBP is administered by the Federal Highway Administration of the United States Department of Transportation. A basic requirement of the NSBP is that a road for which an application to the program is being made must be part of its state's scenic road program, unless a special circumstance exists.

Connecticut State Scenic Roads

Connecticut's own scenic road program was formed in 1989 and is administered by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT). Scenic designation is available to State Highways and portions of State Highways that abut agricultural lands, historic buildings, or scenic vistas of shorelines, marshes, or forests with mature trees, or that possess other unique geologic or natural features. Scenic designation helps protect a road against improvements and maintenance that may detract from its character; including but not limited to, widening, changes in grade, removal or straightening of stone walls, or removal of mature trees. Proposed maintenance and improvements are reviewed by the State Scenic Road Advisory Committee and, if a project is deemed to be an "improvement", public notice is given in a local newspaper, along with a 30-day comment period.

The 32.1 miles of Connecticut State Route 169, between Rocky Hollow Road in Lisbon, and the Connecticut-Massachusetts border in Woodstock, was designated a State Scenic Road in April of 1991. It is the second-longest scenic road in the State, behind the Merritt Parkway (Route 15), which is the only other Connecticut State Highway in the NSBP.

Executive Summary

Introduction

Background

Following Route 169’s designation as a Connecticut State Scenic Road, the Connecticut Department of Transportation made a number of applications to the National Scenic Byway Program. A requirement of the application process was the creation of a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) for each scenic road. The original corridor management plan, the Route 169 Corridor Management Plan (“the 1995 Plan”) was prepared in 1995. The Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments—being the Regional Council of Governments for the majority of towns along the byway—was granted the responsibility of keeping and updating that plan.

The Current Plan

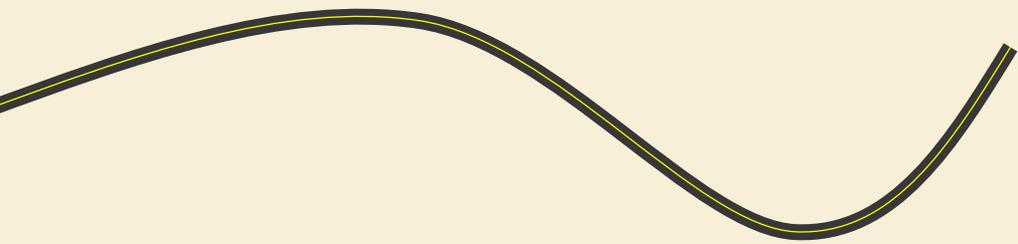
The current plan seeks to build upon the policy recommendations of the 1995 Plan, a large number of which were left unimplemented. A major focus of this updated plan is the implementation of an ongoing, regularly meeting advisory committee, charged with continually reviewing the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the Plan. Additional focus was also placed on marketing, signage, and land use policy.

A major recommendation of the Plan is the possibility that the byway be extended to Taftville, a section of the city of Norwich, Connecticut, in the south, and to downtown Southbridge, Massachusetts, in the north. The intention of these proposed extensions is to capture two mill villages that were vital to New England’s position in United States’ industrial economy. The inclusion of those two areas would make the byway more characteristic of the Quinebaug-Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor—in which the entire byway currently lies. A number of additional, potential detours were also identified.

Assessment of Intrinsic Qualities

An essential component of corridor management plan is the assessment of the scenic, historic, cultural, recreational, natural, and archaeological resources that are, or may be, present along a byway, and that are unique that byway's experience. In the case of Route, the byway achieved National Scenic Byway designation primarily for its scenic qualities: it is a winding country road, lined with stone walls, forests, vistas of farmland, and New England villages. Route 169, however, is also extremely rich in colonial and early-American history and modern and historic cultural experiences. Further, the byway corridor is home to a number of ecologically important natural landscapes that offer a number of recreational opportunities.

Moving outward to Taftville and Southbridge, the byway may acquire two historic manufacturing powers: Ponemah Mill in Taftville was once the largest textile manufactory in the United States, and potentially the world, and the American Optical mill building in Southbridge was the largest optical manufactory in the world.



Ten-Year Strategy

Byway Vision

“Each year, following the implementation of the Plan, the Connecticut State Route 169 National Scenic Byway will prove to be a more valuable scenic, cultural, and economic resource than it was in the previous year.”

Corridor Management Plan Goals

- Goal 1: Communicate and plan on the local, regional, and State levels, to ensure that the vision of the Corridor Management Plan is realized
- Goal 2: Guide the future and planned growth of towns along the byway corridor in a way that does not diminish the rural character of the byway, but rather seeks to enhance aesthetics and sense of place, protect open spaces and farmland, and preserve historic buildings, sites, and patterns of development
- Goal 3: Collaborate with CTDOT, utility companies, public works departments, and landowners to achieve context-sensitive approaches to future maintenance and improvements that may alter the scenic character of Route 169 and diminish the road's relationship with its rural surroundings
- Goal 4: Position Route 169 as an economic driver by unifying area businesses and attractions, promoting the image of the region as a whole, and spurring tourism investment

Marketing and Signing the Byway (Annex)

Annex A: Marketing and Signing the Byway has a three missions: to establish and control the use of the of a newly introduced byway logo, to suggest a program for directional signage in the byway corridor, and to make recommendations toward the creation of a future marketing strategy.

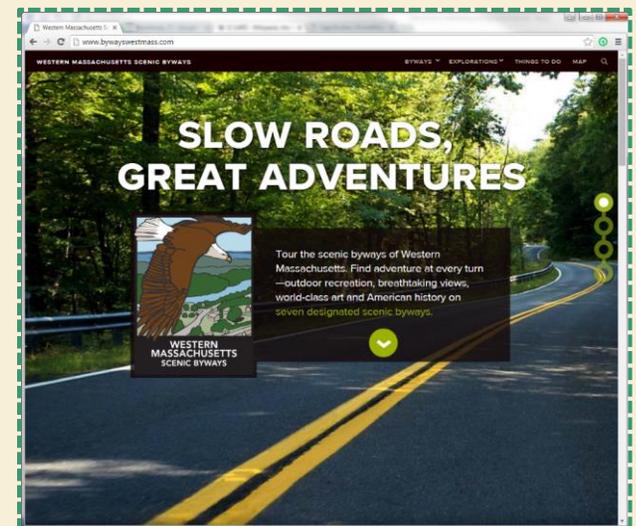
As part of the planning process, nine alternatives for byway logos were developed with one chosen for use in future promotions and signage. Byway signs are proposed to be used throughout the length of the byway, and at intersecting roads, but in a manner that does not impact the rural aesthetics of the corridor. The purpose of a signage program is to elevate awareness of the byway, both locally and to out-of-town travelers.

The purpose of a future marketing plan is to specifically guide marketing efforts that may be taken by NECCOG and a regularly meeting Marketing Committee. Annex A provided the initial planning guidance for those efforts and reflected marketing initiatives taken by other National Scenic Byways. It was suggested that a marketing plan should include inexpensive and easily implemented strategies that capitalize off of the byway's current resources. A marketing plan should provide for specific recommendations as to the use of social media, a byway website, informational maps and brochures, and partnerships amongst area businesses and tourist destinations.

ROUTE 169



NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY



Scenic Road Land Use and Maintenance Considerations (Annex)

Annex B: Scenic Road Land Use and Maintenance Considerations provides direction to local land use commissions as to best practices for preserving, through local regulations and guidance documents, the scenic character of the villages and rural lands along the byway. Additionally, the annex provides guidance to municipalities, the Connecticut Department of Transportation, utility companies, and private landowners for ways in which maintenance and improvements to Route 169 itself, and lands within and abutting the public right-of-way, can be tailored to preserve the aesthetics of the road.

It is strongly recommended that planning and zoning commission update the municipal plan of conservation and development (POCD) to include a vision statement for the preservation and enhancement of byway as a scenic and cultural resource, to recommended changes to zoning regulations and other land use regulations, if needed, and to identify priority areas for environmental and historic preservation or aesthetic enhancement.

Additional recommendations included in Annex B include:

- Agriculture-friendly ordinances, regulations, and practices
- Ways in which the aesthetic and economic burden of new residential subdivisions may be reduced
- Housing styles that reflect the history of the byway
- The benefits of Village District zoning and Local Historic Districts
- Land uses that are compatible with rural villages
- Building types and site layouts compatible with the traditional development of rural villages
- Elements such as signs and lighting that may protect the aesthetics and character of a village
- Ways in which tree canopies, scenic vistas, stone walls, and the character of the road may be preserved
- Suggestions for design and materials used in bridges and guardrails



Chapter One: Introduction

Contents

Introduction	2	Most Recent Planning Process	9
<i>Connecticut and Massachusetts State Route 169</i>		<i>Scenic Route 169 Advisory Committee</i>	
<i>History of the Route</i>		<i>Public Outreach</i>	
<i>Significance Today</i>		<i>Plan Finalization and Implementation</i>	
Scenic Designation	5	Byway Interpretation	11
<i>State and Federal Scenic Road Programs</i>		<i>Branding, Marketing, and Tourism</i>	
<i>Designated Byway Length</i>		<i>Turnoffs</i>	
<i>Extended Byway Length</i>		<i>Signage and Wayfinding</i>	
<i>Potential Byway Detours</i>			
Past Planning	8	Byway Characteristics	13
<i>Route 169 Corridor Management Plan (1995)</i>		<i>Land Use and Land Cover</i>	
<i>Managing Development along Scenic Roads</i>		<i>Traffic</i>	
		<i>Speed</i>	
		<i>Non-motorized Users</i>	
		<i>Commerce</i>	

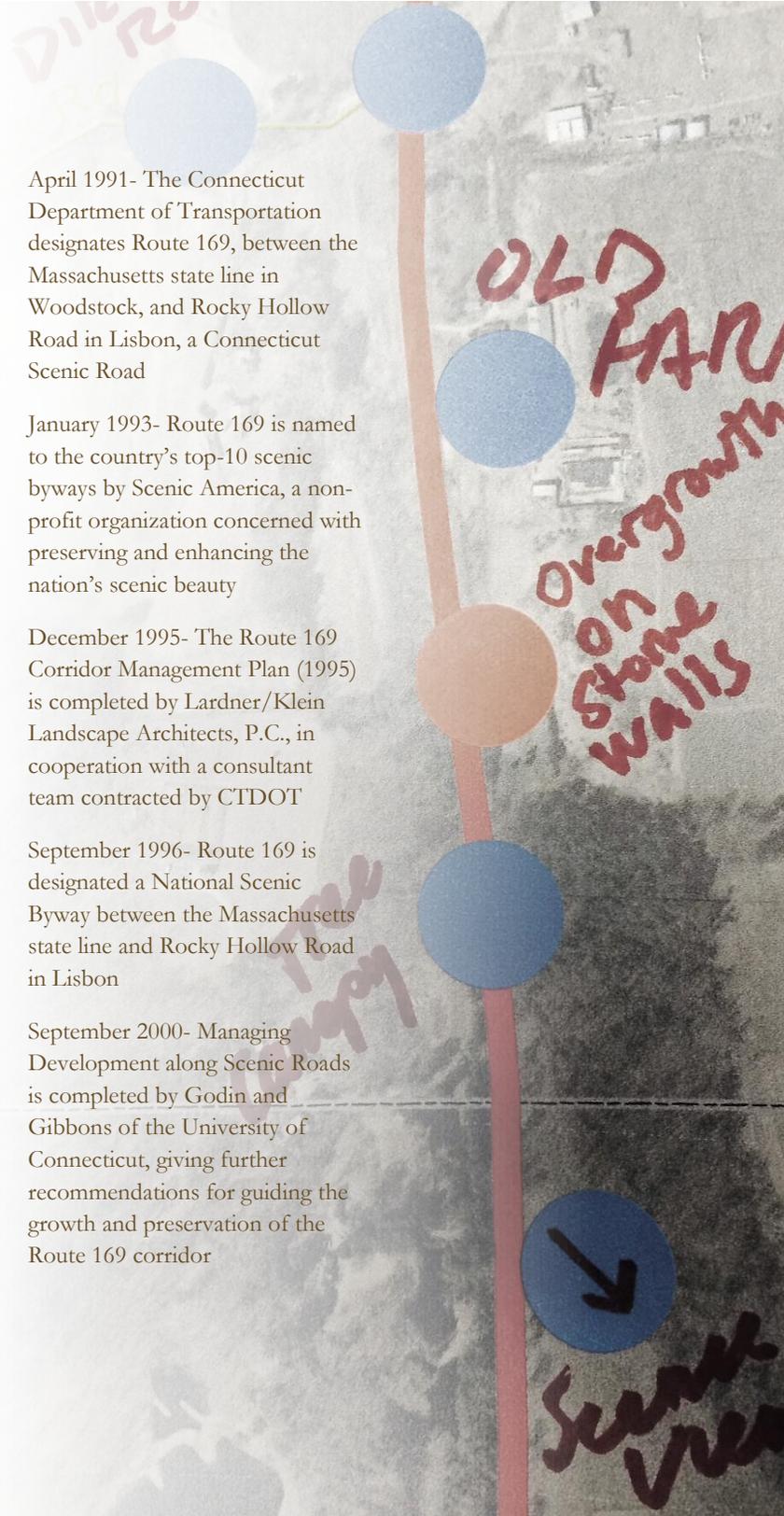
Introduction

Connecticut and Massachusetts State Route 169

Route 169 is a bi-state highway running between Norwich, Connecticut and Charlton, Massachusetts. From south to north, Route 169 begins in the Connecticut city of Norwich, then passes through the towns of Lisbon, Canterbury, Brooklyn, Pomfret, and Woodstock, then into the Massachusetts city of Southbridge and ends in the town of Charlton.

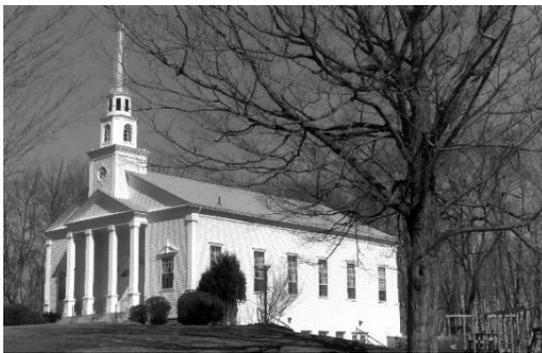
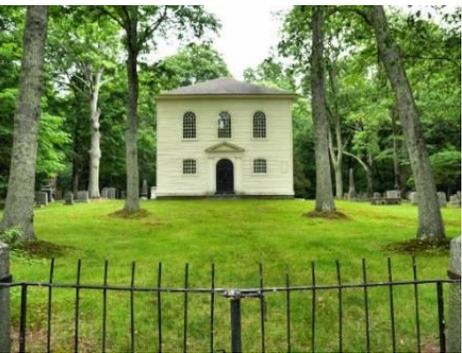
Also known as the Norwich and Woodstock Turnpike or Norwich and Worcester Turnpike, Route 169 was a valuable artery linking the Worcester, Massachusetts urban area with points south, including shipping ports in southeastern Connecticut. Today, Route 169 is used less for interstate commerce, and more as a means of local travel in a region still holding on to its history and scenic beauty.

- April 1991- The Connecticut Department of Transportation designates Route 169, between the Massachusetts state line in Woodstock, and Rocky Hollow Road in Lisbon, a Connecticut Scenic Road
- January 1993- Route 169 is named to the country's top-10 scenic byways by Scenic America, a non-profit organization concerned with preserving and enhancing the nation's scenic beauty
- December 1995- The Route 169 Corridor Management Plan (1995) is completed by Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C., in cooperation with a consultant team contracted by CTDOT
- September 1996- Route 169 is designated a National Scenic Byway between the Massachusetts state line and Rocky Hollow Road in Lisbon
- September 2000- Managing Development along Scenic Roads is completed by Godin and Gibbons of the University of Connecticut, giving further recommendations for guiding the growth and preservation of the Route 169 corridor



History of the Route

State routes were designated in Connecticut and Massachusetts in 1923, and Route 169, as it exists today, was divided amongst other state-owned routes, which were then renumbered, with most of the road belonging to former Route 93. In 1959, Route 169 was officially designated. In its entirety, Route 169 is over 47 miles long. The route developed over time, likely following trails used by Native Americans, with hilltop villages emerging around farmable land as early as the 17th century. Between 1801 and 1846, the then Norwich and Woodstock Turnpike was incorporated as a private toll road.

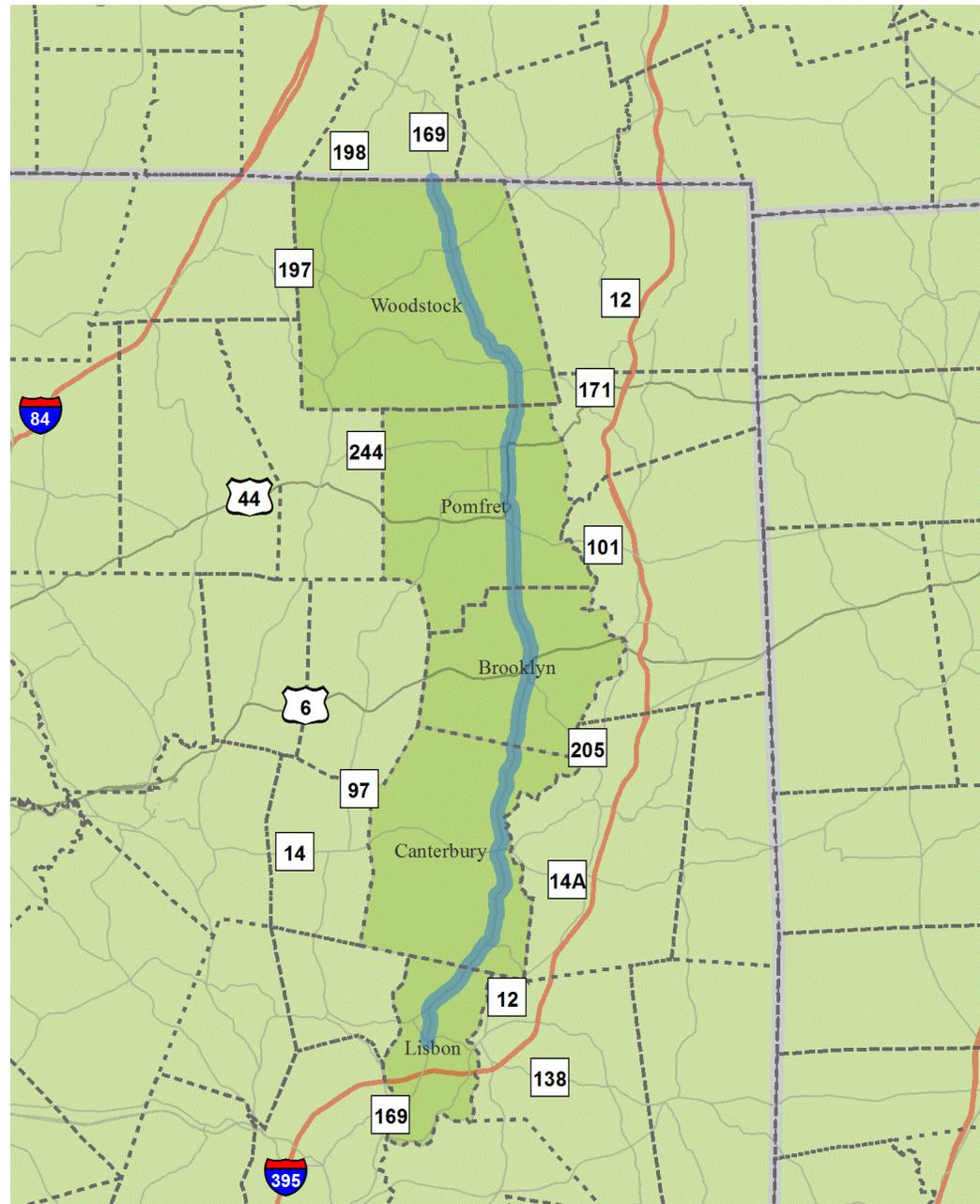
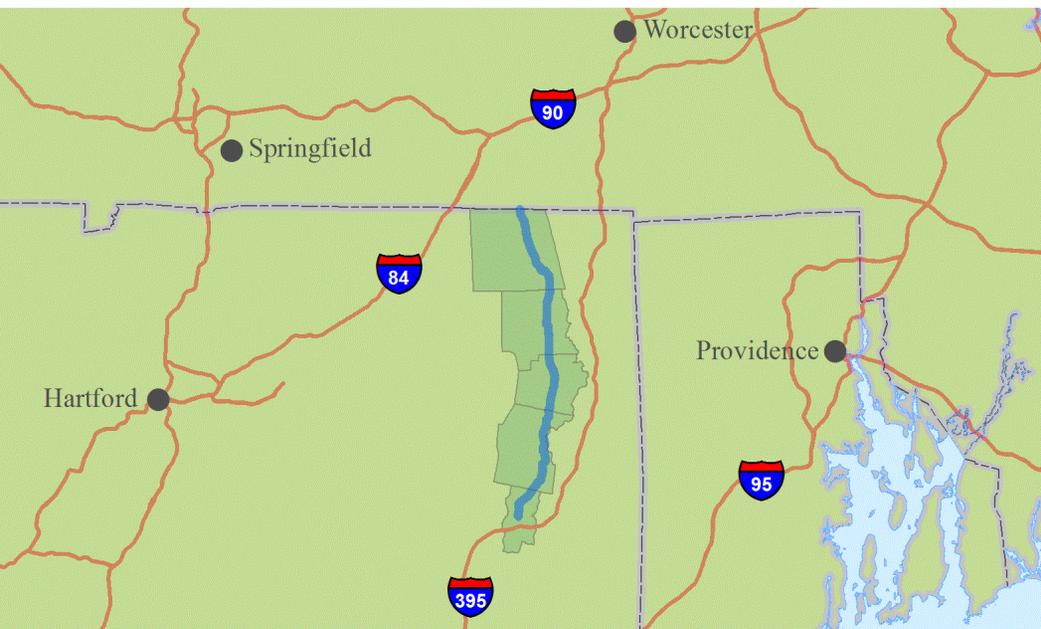
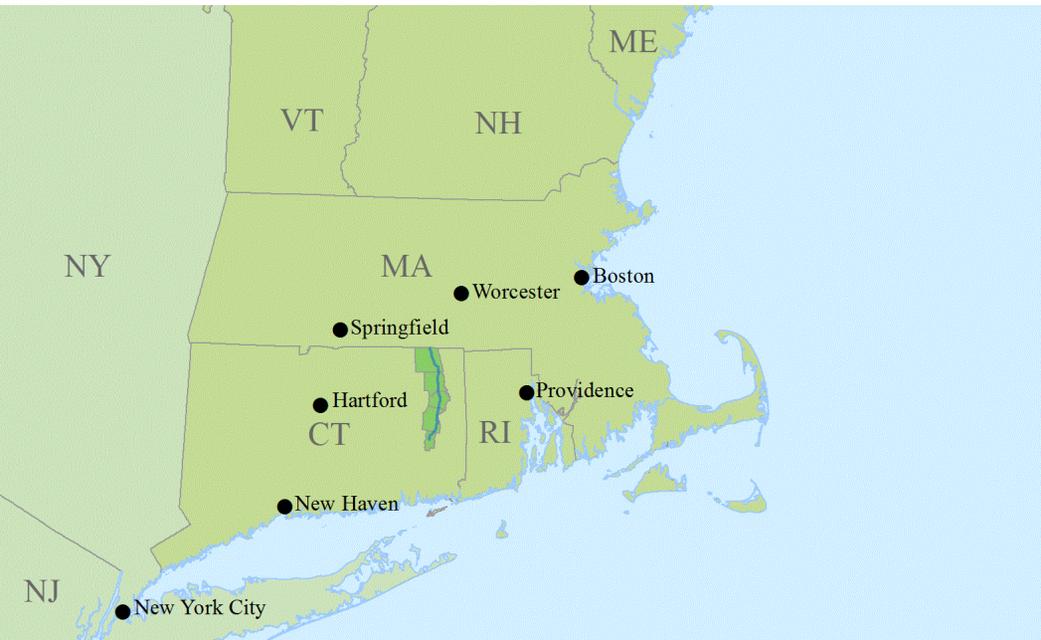


Significance Today

The national significance of the Connecticut State Route 169 National Scenic Byway rests primarily in its intimate scenic character and historic features and points of interest. Stone walls, mature trees, colonial village centers, industrial-era mill villages, farmsteads, and consistent patterns of land use over time, allow the traveler to sample the landscape and culture of southern New England.

Route 169 is entirely within the Quinebuag-Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor, a bi-state region in Connecticut and Massachusetts, managed by The Last Green Valley, Inc. The Last Green Valley is a regional leader in preservation, environmental protection, and recreational programming.

OVERVIEW OF THE REGION AND THE BYWAY (HIGHLIGHTED IN BLUE)



Scenic Designation

State and Federal Scenic Road Programs

At the request of municipalities, regional councils of governments, organizations, and citizens, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) designates sections of its state-owned, two-lane highways as Connecticut Scenic Roads. Highways must abut significant natural and cultural landscapes and landmarks to be considered. The Connecticut Scenic Roads program encourages tourism through signage and protects roads from improvement that may detract from scenic value.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) of the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) administers the National Scenic Byway Program (NSBP), which was originally established by Congress as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). Congress recognizes National Scenic Byways as embodying one or more of the following intrinsic qualities: archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and scenic. The NSBP formerly provided discretionary grants for promoting safety, tourism, and economic growth along byways and in their corridors.

Designated Byway Length

The length of Route 169 recognized as a National Scenic Byway and Connecticut Scenic Road stretches approximately 32.1 miles between Rocky Hollow Road in Lisbon and the Massachusetts state line in Woodstock. A National Scenic Byways program application and corridor management plan was prepared for Route 169 in 1995.



Extended Byway Length

Possible north and south extensions of the designated scenic portion of Route 169 were explored as part the planning process for this document. Extending the byway north, into Southbridge, and south, into Norwich’s village of Taftville, would “bookend” the byway with two historically significant mills: the former American Optical Mill and the Ponemah Mill. These extensions would also make the byway more characteristic of the Quinebaug-Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor, which was designated a National Heritage Corridor not only because of the region’s rural lands, but also because of its industrial history.

Downtown Southbridge

Southbridge, Massachusetts is a town of approximately 17,000 people, bordering Woodstock, Connecticut. It has an urban downtown area which developed because of the town’s position as a manufacturing center along the Quinebaug River. Among other mills, the former American Optical Company mill, now a hotel and conference center, is the most historically significant—it was once world’s largest manufactory of optical products.

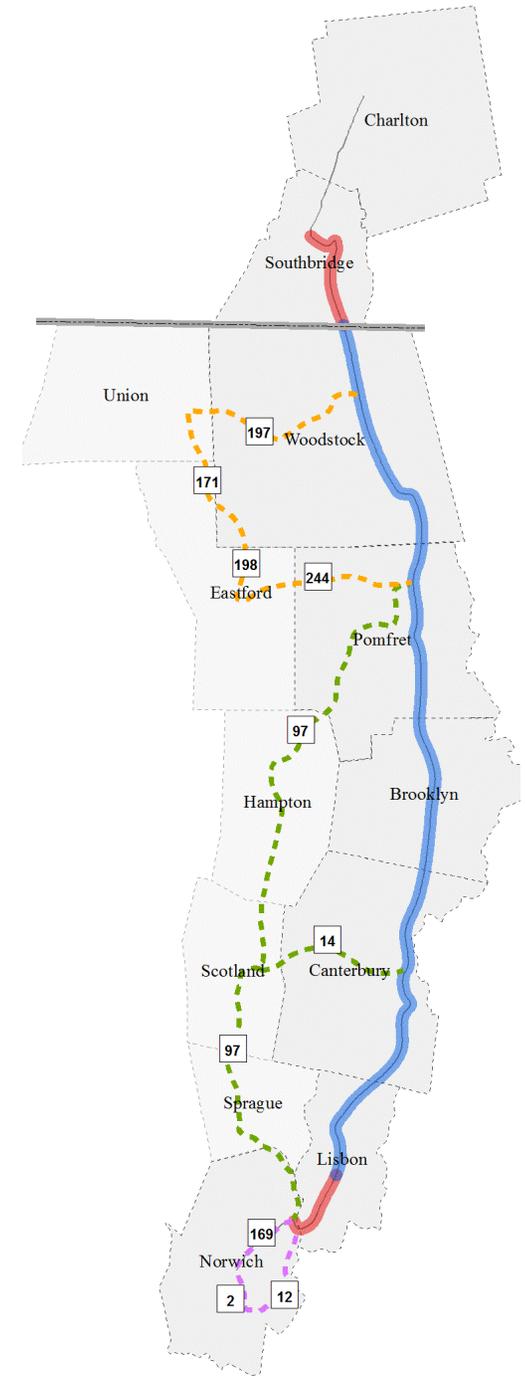
Taftville

Taftville developed as an important manufacturing hub in the northeastern section of the City of Norwich, along the Shetucket River. The village is an example of a planned, 19th century mill village, with rows of duplex housing surrounding Taftville Mill—now Ponemah mills. At its height, Ponemah mills’ largest structure was the largest, single cotton manufactory in the United States.

Potential Byway Detours

Although not originally identified in the 1995 Plan, a number of scenic drives, on Connecticut State Routes, are accessible from Route 169 and an even greater number are within a short drive. Additional spurs and detours can also connect the byway with downtown areas and places of great historic and cultural significance. It may become appropriate to market these routes as part of Route 169 experience because they are representative of the region, as a whole. Pictured right and described below are three concepts of detour loops, identified for their contribution to the historic, scenic, and natural features.

Additional information on spurs and detours is given in Chapter 2, on page 34.



<p>Connecticut Routes 244, 198, and 171</p>	<p>Towns: Pomfret, Eastford, Union, Woodstock</p>	<p>Villages: Pomfret Center, Eastford, Kenyonville, North Ashford, North Woodstock</p>
<p>Connecticut Route 97 (and 14)</p>	<p>Towns: Norwich, Sprague, Scotland, Hampton, Pomfret (and Canterbury)</p>	<p>Villages: Taftville, Occum, Baltic, Scotland, Hampton Hill, Abington, Pomfret Center</p>
<p>Connecticut Routes 169, 2, 12, and 97</p>	<p>Towns: Norwich</p>	<p>Villages and Neighborhoods: Taftville, Ox Hill, Norwichtown, Little Plain, Jail Hill, Chelsea, Greeneville</p>

Past Planning

Route 169 Corridor Management Plan (1995)

Under the supervision of CTDOT and NECCOG, an initial corridor management plan was completed by Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C. and a planning team consisting of local leaders, consultants, and Scenic America, the non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the country's scenic byways through sound corridor management. The 1995 document outlined recommendations for corridor towns, NECCOG, and CTDOT and set the following goals:

1. **Scenic Beauty:** Preserve the Route 169 Corridor's scenic beauty and the quality of its natural and cultural resources that contribute to that beauty.
2. **Safety:** Ensure the safety of Route 169 for motorists and pedestrians, while preserving options for future appropriate transportation needs throughout Northeastern Connecticut.
3. **Economic/Tourism Development:** Encourage the region's prosperity through appropriate economic and tourism development along the Route 169 Corridor.

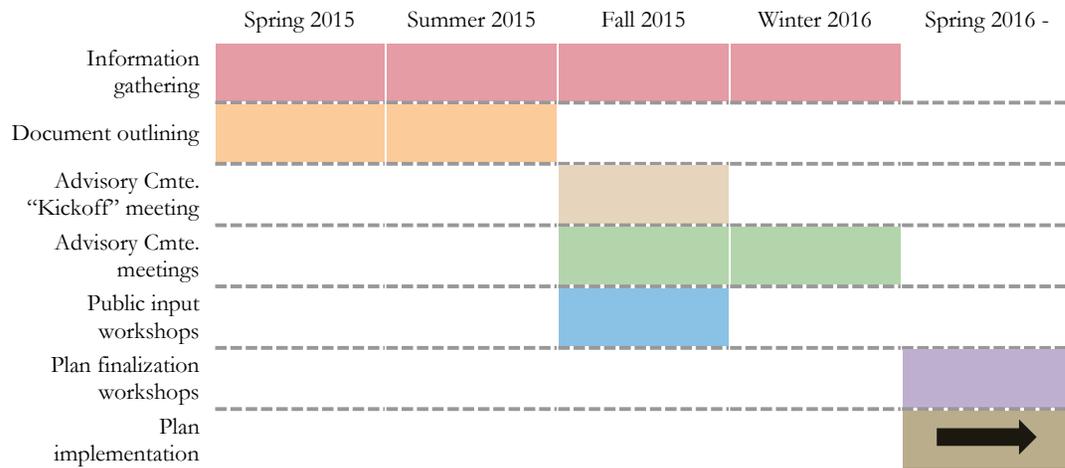
4. **Cooperation and Management:** Assure that all perspectives are considered in developing and implementing scenic corridor strategies and that all are active partners in its management.

5. **Information and Education:** Engage in an active program of information and education geared towards teaching individuals about the corridor's heritage and how they can contribute in a positive way, to retain the scenic and historic values along Route 169.

Managing Development along Scenic Roads

Managing Development along Scenic Roads was completed in 2000 by Karen Godin and James Gibbons of the University of Connecticut College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The document examined the Route 169 Corridor Management Plan and elaborated on its recommendations, acting as a guidebook for municipal and regional policy makers and planners, and may apply to other scenic routes. The document presented guidelines and strategies falling into four categories: *Focusing Development*, *General Site Planning*, *Scenic Roadway Planning*, and *Village Area Planning*.

Most Recent Planning Process



Scenic Route 169 Advisory Committee

The Scenic Route 169 Advisory Committee met with NECCOG six times throughout the fall and winter of 2015-2016 and acted as the primary source of input throughout the planning process. The Advisory Committee was chosen by NECCOG and local chief elected officials to represent the diverse interests of the byway community. Advisory Committee members included business owners, planners, members of municipal commissions, and a First Selectman.



Public Outreach

Public Workshops

Public workshops were held at Woodstock and Lisbon Town Halls in November 2015. These workshops centered on public comment and an exercise involving an oversized, 40-foot map of the byway corridor. Participants were able to identify sites along the corridor that they felt added or detracted from the byway experience (*pictured on the previous page is a photo taken at a public workshop held in Lisbon in November 2015*).

Other Outreach

The NECCOG webpage was used to notify the public of updates to the Plan and ways in which they could get involved. All Advisory Committee meetings were open to the public and noticed on the webpage. Meeting summaries were added to the webpage after each meeting. After a draft plan was completed, the draft was added to the webpage for comment.

Plan Finalization and Implementation

Following the completion of a drafted plan, three additional public meetings were held in the towns of Woodstock, Brooklyn, and Lisbon, in April 2016, to gain final input into the content and recommendations of the plan.

Plan implementation will involve the appointment of a regularly meeting and ongoing committee. It is intended that the advisory committee will meet semiannually or quarterly to work toward implementing recommended actions in Chapter 3 of the plan. Like the advisory committee used to draft the plan, this committee will represent the broad interests of the byway, to include: chief elected officials, land use personnel and commission members, business owners, farmers, residents, and non-profit leaders. Emphasis will be placed on involvement of each community's elected officials and zoning commissioners.

Byway Interpretation

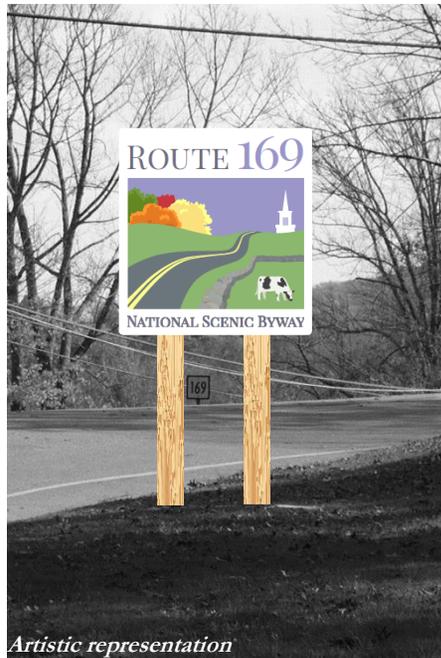
Branding, Marketing, and Tourism

While the 1995 Plan was an important first step in identifying the qualities of Route 169 and offering needed recommendations for the preservation of corridor's scenery, the document offered little in the way of positioning the byway as a driver of economic development in the region. It is the intention of this plan that future efforts be more holistic and that a marketing plan be produced to include:

- Ongoing guidance from a standing committee dedicated only to marketing
- The consistent and controlled use of an identifiable logo
- Web and social media presence for distributing information to tourists
- Tourist brochures
- A consortium of businesses and tourism destinations

Additional recommendations and guidance for marketing and tourism can be found in [Annex A: Marketing and Signage Guidelines](#).





Artistic representation

Turnoffs

There have historically been no plans to engineer scenic “turnoff” locations—designated lots where visitors may park their car to capture views of rolling farmland and faraway hills. Few locations beyond the road’s shoulder, however, have acted as de facto turnoffs, which presents safety issues (*see center photograph on previous page*).

Signage and Wayfinding

Signing a National Scenic Byway is not only fundamental to its marketing and branding, but it also generates greater local awareness which leads to increased community pride, so that preservation efforts at all levels are politically and socially feasible. There are currently no road signs signifying Route 169’s designation as a National Scenic Byway; however, there are four signs showing that Route 169 is part of the Connecticut Scenic Roads system. It is the intention of this plan that different types of signage be placed to direct drivers to Route 169, show that drivers are traveling a National Scenic Byway, and act as *trail markers* to guide drivers while on the byway.

Recommendations and guidance for signage can be found in [Annex A: Marketing and Signage Guidelines](#).

Current Byway Characteristics

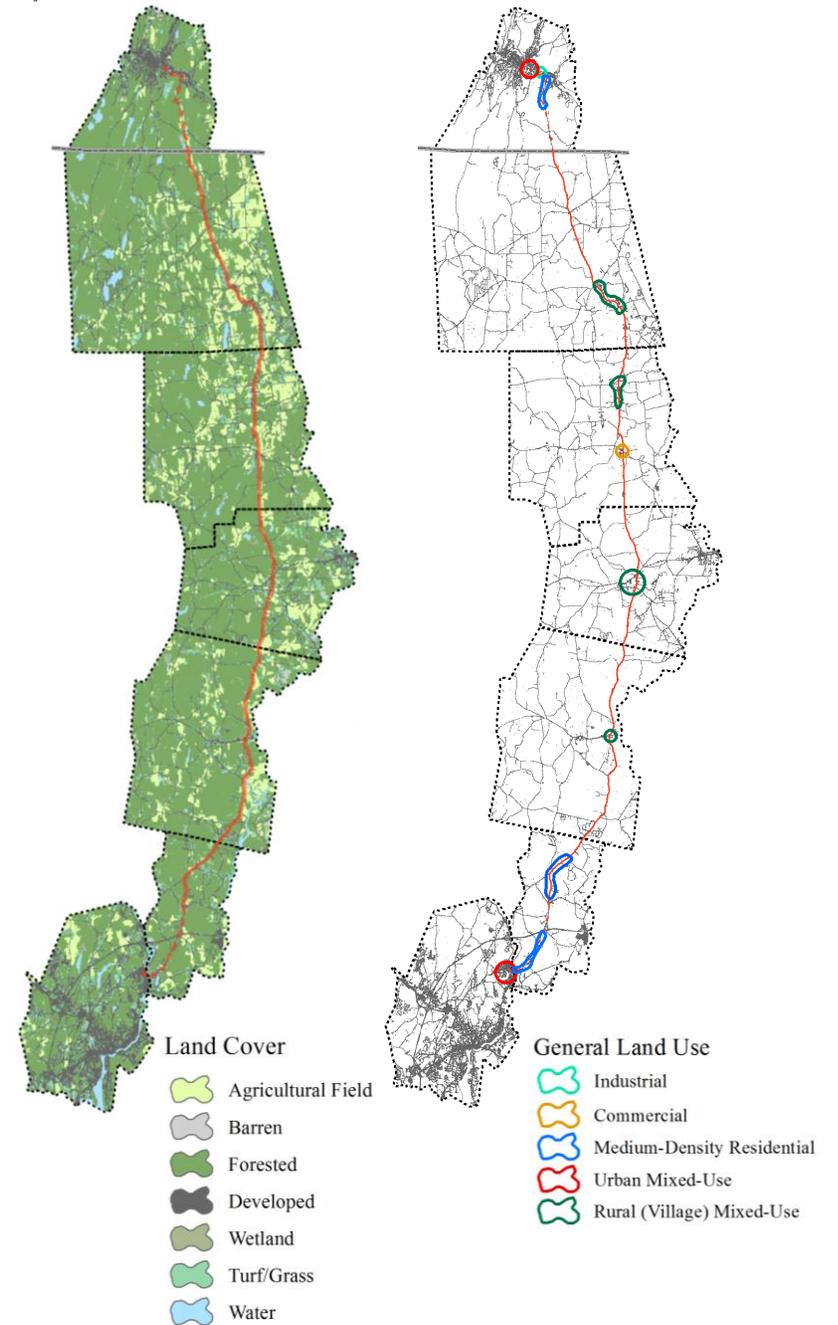
Land Use and Land Cover

The majority of the corridor of the currently designated byway is rural, especially when compared with the State of Connecticut as a whole; it consists of single-family housing units, forests, and farmland. More urban lands exist to the east, north, and south of the byway.

See Appendix 3 for a complete list of zoning designations and allowed land uses along the byway.

Rural Lands

Since the 1995 Plan, the most visible change to the byway corridor has occurred in the rural lands away from village centers. These areas are normally zoned to accommodate agriculture while permitting large-lot, single-family residences. Subdivision of land and subsequent development led to a proliferation of housing in the nineteen nineties and early 2000's. Demand for housing has since slowed; however, it is an issue that demands proper planning.



Villages

The byway's village centers often contain a mix of land uses but maintain a rural character and feel. This differs from village centers in Connecticut's more suburban towns, some of which have grown to become regional centers of commerce. Still, zoning in some villages may be aimed at expanding commercial and service opportunities in town. If that is the goal of a town, it is critical to consider which uses are appropriate for each setting, as well as the form that new buildings should take to match the character of that village.

Taftville and Downtown Southbridge

The development patterns of Taftville and Southbridge contrast greatly with the rural lands of the currently designated byway corridor. New England's importance in American manufacturing allowed these areas to develop early, and the unfortunate decline in that sector of the economy had two contrasting outcomes: preservation of development patterns and historic structures, as they existed, and economic depression preceding chronic disinvestment in the beautification and maintenance of structures and neighborhoods. In both cases, the "bones" of historically and architecturally significant mills and worker housing still exist, with a growing demand for neighborhood investment and "placemaking". This includes preserving the urban layouts of neighborhoods, reusing deteriorating structures, and zoning for a mix of appropriate uses that meet the needs of residents.

Commerce

Most of the commercial properties that *do* exist in the byway current byway corridor are small-scale and include restaurants, specialty retailers and antique shops, and businesses related to agriculture. These businesses tend to draw little traffic but provide services to byway travelers that complement the byway experience.

Route 169 is open to commercial freight traffic throughout its length; however, because the road parallels Interstate 395 and Connecticut State Route 12, and because the little commercial activity along the byway is small-scale in nature, there is little freight traffic.

Off-site Advertising

The Highway Beautification Act of 1965 created a framework for the control of outdoor advertising along the Interstate system and Federal-aid Primary System. Because Route 169 is not part of those system of highways, control of outdoor, off-site advertising signs—commonly referred to as, “billboards”—is left to local zoning powers. All towns in the byway corridor currently use zoning regulations to control the size and placement of outdoor advertising signs, including billboards. No commercial advertising signs are allowed in a state-owned right of way.

	Off-site directional signs specifically regulated	Number of signs allowed	Maximum dimensions	Setback from road
Lisbon	Yes- Prohibited throughout town	NA	NA	NA
Canterbury	Yes- Prohibited throughout town	NA	NA	NA
Brooklyn	No- Effectively prohibited throughout town	NA	NA	NA
Pomfret	No- Effectively prohibited in residential districts	Not specified	32 sq ft; 10' width	10'
Woodstock	Yes- Allowed in all districts	2/establishment; 2/parcel	10" height; 60" width	Not specified
Norwich	Yes- Allowed in General Commercial and Industrial zones except in or within 200ft of districts and properties on National Register of Historic Places*	2/sign structure (1 structure per 100ft of street frontage, up to two structures)	12' height; 24' width	Not specified
Southbridge	Yes- Prohibited throughout town	NA	NA	NA

*Because Taftville is a Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places, billboards are not permitted, per Norwich’s zoning regulations

Traffic

Route 169 is used primarily for local travel, and for many drivers, it is the main connection to work in nearby employment centers. The highest-traffic area along the byway is located in South Woodstock, where Route 169 joins Route 171 (*see maps in Appendix 2*). In 2014, 59 car accidents occurred on the byway¹. The greatest number of crashes occurred in Canterbury (19); however, there were no significant, geographic clusters of accidents along the byway and the majority of accidents did not result in injuries or deaths.

Speed

Designated Byway

Posted speed limits reach 40 and 45 miles per hour (mph) along most of the byway. In village areas, speeds are typically 35mph (*see maps in Appendix 2*). Road intersections with Routes 197, 171 (northern intersection), 101, 6, 14, and 138 are signaled.

Possible Extensions

South of Rocky Hollow Road in Lisbon, the byway's southern terminal, the posted speed limit increases to 45mph, then decreases to 40mph and 30mph, approaching Taftville. The posted speed limit in Taftville is 30mph. In Southbridge, the posted speed limit is 35mph from the Connecticut-Massachusetts state line and the former American Optical mill.

¹ University of Connecticut, Connecticut Transportation Institute, *Connecticut Crash Data Repository*

Non-motorized Users

Pedestrians

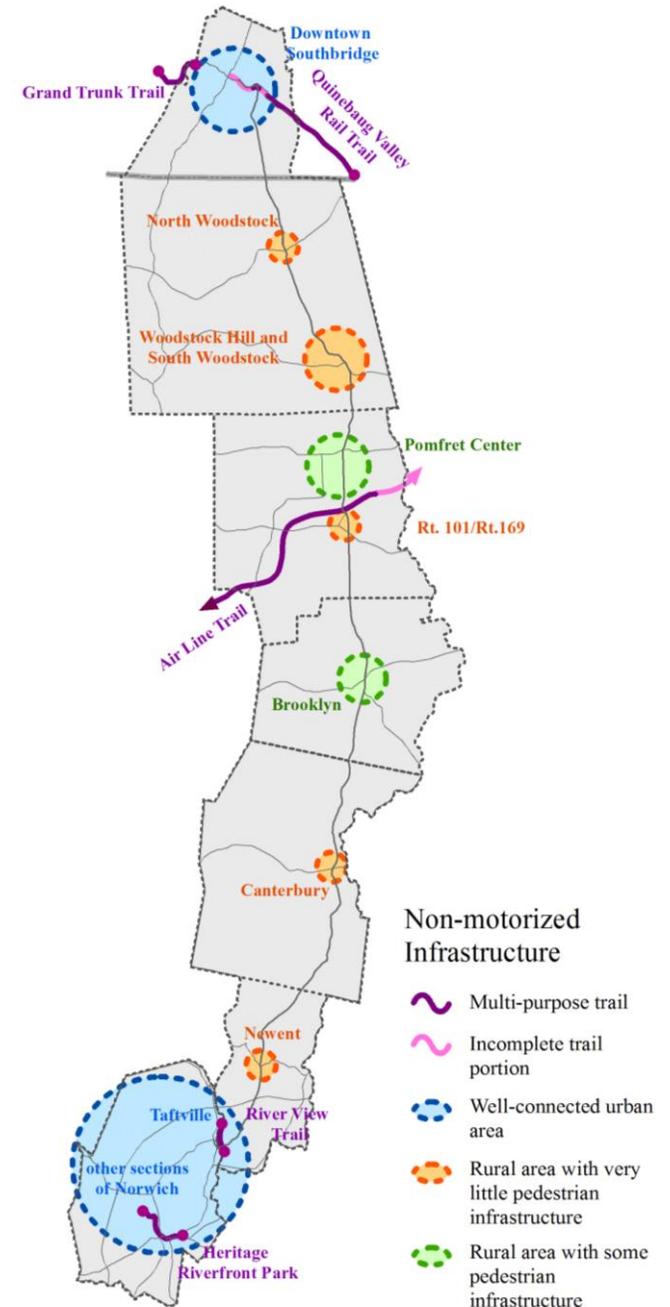
Pedestrian traffic is greatest in village areas, where there may be sidewalks, and is almost non-existent in more rural areas of the byway due to the spacing of homes, vehicle speed, shoulder width, and sight lines.

Bicyclists

Bicyclists are seen on the byway year-round but are greater in warmer months. Large groups are known to routinely ride Route 169 because of its technical difficulty, scenery, and access to additional routes. There are currently no dedicated bike lanes on the byway; however, the byway is crossed by Connecticut's Air Line Trail

Multi-use Trails

The Air Line Trail crosses Route 169 in Pomfret and is the only multi-use trail that crosses the originally designated byway. This section of the Air Line Trail is frequently used by bicyclists, pedestrians, cross-country skiers, and equestrians, and is a part of the East Coast Greenway, a collection of trails which extends from Maine to Florida. Poor sight lines at the trail's crossing point create a potential hazard for motorists and trail users. If the byway is to be extended to the north and south, a number of multi-use paths would cross the byway or be within a travelable distance.



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Chapter Two: Assessment of Intrinsic Qualities

Contents

Assessment of Intrinsic Qualities	20	Cultural and Historic Qualities	26
<i>Original Management Plan</i>		<i>Historic Sites and Buildings</i>	
<i>Consideration of the Byway Corridor and Possible Byway Detours</i>		<i>Modern Experiences</i>	
Key Issues	21	Natural and Recreational Qualities	32
<i>Historic Preservation</i>		<i>Landscape</i>	
<i>Land Use</i>		<i>Parks and Trails</i>	
<i>Road Engineering and Maintenance</i>			
Scenic Qualities	22	Possible Byway Detours	34
<i>Villages</i>			
<i>Vistas</i>			
<i>The Roadway</i>			
<i>Agriculture</i>			
<i>Fall Foliage</i>			

Assessment of Intrinsic Qualities

Following federal guidance for the creation of National Scenic Byway corridor management plans, Route 169's "intrinsic qualities"—attributes which positively contribute to a byway's scenic, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and archaeological appeal—were identified and inventoried as part of this plan.

Original Management Plan

The 1995 corridor management plan and original application for the byway identified intrinsic quality locations that were immediately abutting the road, such as scenic areas, historic and architecturally significant buildings, and natural lands.

Consideration of the Byway Corridor and Possible Byway Detours

It is likely that, to most visitors and locals, the "Route 169 experience" includes important sites and sights that can be found off of the roadway but still within the road's general corridor. Whereas the 1995 corridor management plan only considered sites immediately abutting the road, this plan considered the locations of sites within a broader area when assessing the road's intrinsic qualities.

Scenic quality is the heightened visual experience derived from the view of natural and manmade elements of the visual environment

Cultural quality is evidence and expressions of the customs or traditions of a distinct group of people. Cultural features include, but are not limited to, crafts, music, dance, rituals, festivals, speech, food, special events, and vernacular architecture

Historic quality encompasses legacies of the past that are distinctly associated with physical elements of the landscape, whether natural or manmade, that are of such historic significance that they educate the visitor of a past event and stir an appreciation of the past

Natural quality applies to those features in the visual environment that are in a relatively undisturbed state. These features predate the arrival of human populations, and may include geological formations, fossils, landforms, water bodies, vegetation and wildlife

Recreational quality involves outdoor recreational activities directly associated with, and dependent upon, the natural and cultural elements of the corridor's landscape

Archaeological quality involves those characteristics of the scenic byway corridor that are physical evidence of historic or prehistoric life that are visible and capable of being inventoried and interpreted

-National Parks Service, *National Scenic Byways Guide* (2002)

Key Issues

Route 169 has experienced changes since its designation as a National Scenic Byway. Some changes have enhanced or permanently preserved historic and scenic features of the road, while others detracted from its character and charm. Throughout the planning process for this document, the question was often raised, “If an application for National Scenic Byway designation were placed today, would Route 169 qualify for that designation?” *What about 10 years from now? 20 years?*

Historic Preservation

- Lack of funding for rehab of historic homes and buildings
- Local Historic Districts or Village District Zoning are/is often not politically feasible
- Selling-off of stone walls
- Overgrowth of brush and small trees around stone walls
- Little interest in younger generations to connect with local history

Land Use

- “Cookie-cutter” residential subdivisions overtaking open space
- Lack of permanently preserved land
- Many uses allowed in towns by Special Permit; this provides an illusion of protection against inappropriate development
- Design Guidelines often not developed or, if developed, not implemented by planning and zoning commissions
- Overhead utility wires
- Inconsistent levels of planning from town to town

Road Engineering and Maintenance

- Realignment of curved sections and road widening; this detracts from its scenic character and may reinforce faster driving speeds
- Aggressive tree trimming; this detracts from a sense of enclosure and rural feel in more forested areas of the road

Scenic Qualities

Connecticut State Route 169 was originally recognized for its scenic significance and, in 1993, was named one of the country’s top-10 scenic drives. But unlike Appalachia’s Blue Ridge Parkway or Utah’s Scenic Byway 12, where the designation, “scenic” is justified in 100-mile vistas, the scenic quality of Route 169 is intimate and personal. Excellent views may extend miles into forested and farmed land or to distant hillsides, but the up-close connection with the New England landscape is Route 169’s hallmark.

Maps of highly scenic areas along Route 169 and the Route 169 are located in [Appendix 2: Document Maps](#).



Villages

Village scenery along Route 169 is tied to the road's culture and history. Daily drivers of the byway and those lucky enough to live in proximity to these environments often take for granted the visual appeal of old structures and development patterns, stone walls, town greens, and old churches. These features, however, would be immediately apparent to a traveler from a western state or an area where the human landscape is more dominated by modern structures, auto-oriented development, and is lacking the intense sense of place felt in a New England village.

Vistas

From Canterbury to Woodstock Hill, Route 169 roughly follows a north-south ridge, east of which is the Quinebaug River Valley. Throughout this length, scenic vistas exist where topography and roadside vegetative growth permit, and many turnoffs and detours can provide greater views of the valley. One of the most notable scenic vistas can be experienced looking east, northeast, and southeast from Woodstock Hill. From here views stretch into Massachusetts and Rhode Island.





The Roadway

The visual character of the road itself is equally significant to the quality of its vistas and villages. Route 169 is a winding, stone wall-lined, narrow path, following a ridge, paralleling a river, connecting two historically significant New England cities. When the road was widened to accommodate carts and eventually automobiles, it was likely never intended to serve large traffic volumes operating at high speeds. Even today, the road winds and dips—it is still tied to its landscape and its history.



Agriculture

Agriculture greatly enhances the scenery along Route 169, both because of its inherent beauty and nostalgia, and because open fields can create vistas that may otherwise be obstructed by trees. Farms abutting the road include dairy farms, silage corn farms, turf farms, and specialty agriculture, such as alpaca farms.

Barns are another distinct feature of the byway corridor. Numerous new and historic barns can be seen from the byway, many built close to the road.

A map and inventory of historic and architecturally significant barns can be found at <http://www.connecticutbarns.org/>.



Fall Foliage

“Leaf peeping” continues to be a seasonal driver of tourism in New England states, and the Route 169 corridor’s rich mix of hardwoods creates a vibrant array of fall colors. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) markets fall foliage driving routes in the State of Connecticut. Eastern Connecticut’s two driving loops, Yankee Roots (approximately 100 miles) and CT Heritage (approximately 90 miles) partially follow Route 169 and additional State routes within the broader region.

Fall foliage driving routes can be found at <http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2697&q=322758>.



Cultural and Historic Qualities

The corridor is an excellent representation of New England’s cultural landscape due to its juxtaposition of modern life and early-American history.

Maps of historic and culturally significant sites can be found in Appendix 2: Document Maps.

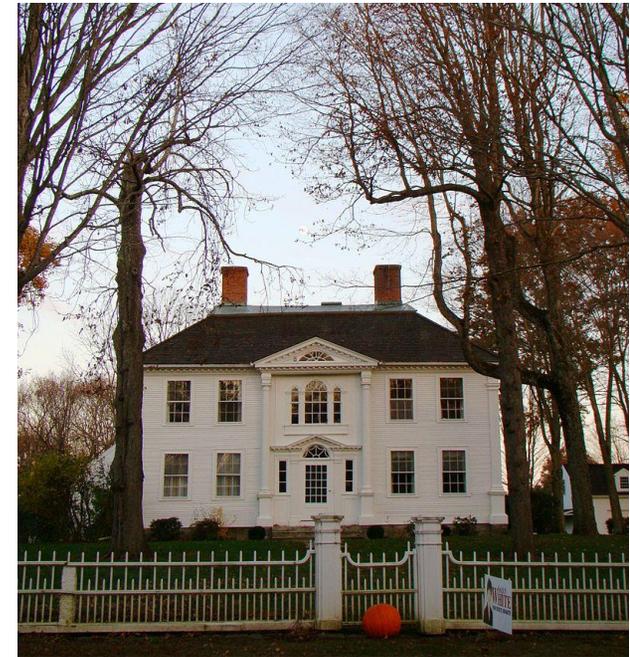
Historic Sites and Features

The density of historic sites found along Route 169, and in the byway’s general corridor, rivals that of almost any rural region in the country.

Architecture

Villages and neighborhoods have evolved over time and architecturally significant buildings in the byway corridor range from the very old—First Period architecture—through the more modern. The common architectural styles found along Route 169 are Federal, Georgian, and Greek Revival; however, excellent examples of rarer styles, such as Gothic Revival, Italianate, and Queen Anne architecture are also present. Woodstock Hill’s Roseland Cottage (*see bottom-right*) is a stand-out building a unique and iconic example of Gothic Revival architecture. Taftville and downtown Southbridge take a largely dissimilar architectural form; standout historic buildings include mills, row houses, Victorian-era homes, and triple-deckers.

Most significant, however, is an elegant and detailed brand of Federal-style architecture endemic to Canterbury and surrounding towns—commonly called the Canterbury-style of architecture. The two greatest examples of this style are the John C. Clark House (*see top-right*) and Prudence Crandall House, both on the byway in Canterbury.



Abolitionism

One of the most historic features of the byway is the Prudence Crandall House—once the Prudence Crandall School for Negro Girls and originally the Canterbury Female Boarding School (*see top-right*). Prudence Crandall, the school’s owner, admitted an African-American student in 1832. Following community backlash, Crandall began recruiting African-American students, exclusively, until she was arrested for violating Connecticut’s “Black Law”, which prohibited African-American students from outside states from attending schools in Connecticut, without the permission of the town. Crandall was tried at the nearby Windham County Courthouse, now the Brooklyn Town Hall. In 1834, after a year of litigation, the Connecticut Supreme Court of Errors reversed the lower courts’ decisions that Crandall had violated the “Black Law”, due to a procedural error. Later that year, the townspeople in Canterbury set fire to the school, forcing it to close.

The Connecticut Freedom Trail identifies a number of other byway locations that played a role in the United States’ abolitionist movement. Brooklyn resident, Reverend Samuel May, the first minister at the Unitarian Meetinghouse, was one of the original members of the National Anti-Slavery Society and an active proponent of Prudence Crandall. May lived north of Brooklyn’s village center along present-day Route 169 (*see bottom-right*). Across the road from Samuel May’s home was the Friendship Valley House, owned by George Benson, father-in-law to William Lloyd Garrison, founding of the abolitionist newspaper, *The Liberator*. The Friendship Valley House housed escaped slaves following the Underground Railroad.

Connecticut Freedom Trail locations can be found at <http://www.ctfreedomtrail.org/>.



Churches and the Anshei Israel Synagogue

Religion was the dominating social force in the lives of Connecticut's Puritan settlers, and the agricultural villages that they settled were appropriately centered around a church—and may have grown to accommodate more than one church. The historic, often white-colored churches were built in Georgian, Greek Revival, or Federal architectural styles, and the church or churches of each of the byway's villages possess a unique character. For instance, the Old Brooklyn Meetinghouse, also known as the Unitarian Meetinghouse, is very large, Georgian structure with conservative features, built in 1771. This structure contrasts with the First Congregational Church of Woodstock (*see top-right*), a more-ornate, Federal-style building, built in 1821.

In Lisbon, along Route 138, one mile east of the village of Newent, is the historic Anshei Israel Synagogue (*see middle-right*). No longer with a congregation and owned by the town of Lisbon, the Anshei Israel Synagogue is a very small and rare, rural synagogue, built in a similar style to the region's churches. Because of its unique architecture, the synagogue was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1995.

Schools

A distinct feature of the northern reaches of the byway is a clustering of historic secondary education institutions, directly abutting Route 169, between Pomfret Center and Woodstock Hill. Pomfret Center is home to Pomfret School (*see bottom-right*) and The Rectory School. Further along the byway are the relatively new Hyde School and the historic Woodstock Academy, which is now a combined, public-private school which serves six towns in the region.



Cemeteries

An additional, and distinct feature of the byway corridor are its cemeteries. Cemeteries are an iconic piece of Connecticut’s landscape and many along the byway are visibly old, with gravestones that date as far back as the seventeenth century. Cemeteries are commonly found with churches; for instance: the First Congregational Church of Woodstock features a large cemetery. The most visible and most scenic cemeteries along the byway, however, are large plots, built away from the village centers. These include, Carey Cemetery in Canterbury, South Cemetery in Brooklyn, and Sabin Cemetery in Pomfret.

Seventeenth and eighteenth century gravestones in New England were simple in nature but typically ornamented with motifs of the heads of humans, angels, or skulls, and sometimes included hymn or Bible verse inscriptions that spoke to the Puritans’ fascination with death.

Native American History

Native American culture is ubiquitous in Connecticut because a large number of Native American place names—villages, hills, waterbodies, and other geographic features—are still used. The majority of the byway was originally home to the Nipmuck Indians, a tribe in northeastern Connecticut and Massachusetts, while the southern portion of the byway enter the historic Mohegan and Pequot tribal lands.

The Quinebaug River Prehistoric Archaeological District in Canterbury is a Native American hunting and fishing camp on the Quinebaug River. The camp estimated to be used primarily from 2,700 years ago, until the colonial era¹. Not far upstream, along the Quinebaug River in Killingly, is another archaeological site: the LeBeau fishing camp and weir. This site was estimated to be between 6,000 and 8,000 years old.

¹ National Register of Historic Places, *Quinebaug River Prehistoric Archaeological District*



Modern Experiences

Agriculture and Agritourism

The region's agricultural portfolio was traditionally dominated by dairy and poultry. Today, agriculture is very diverse and also includes a number of specialty products like maple syrup, heirloom vegetables, fruits and orchards crops, wine, flowers, and specialty meat products. The production of these foods coincides with a growing market for "agritourism": a burgeoning sector of the tourism economy which offers visitors an opportunity to interact with, sample, and learn about, farm production and a region's agricultural history. Farms in the Route 169 Corridor currently offer pick-your-own products, corn mazes, concerts and festivals, hay rides, wine or food tasting, and interaction with farm animals, such as horseback riding.

Events

Annual events like the Woodstock and Brooklyn agricultural fairs are representative of the heritage and traditions of the region. Other yearly events include The Last Green Valley's Walktober, St. Patrick's Day parades, a New England staple, Putnam's Fire and Ice and Great Pumpkin Festivals, and Norwich's River Fest. Downtown Putnam also hosts the monthly event, First Fridays, May through October, a street festival centered on the area's rising arts scene, with vendors live entertainment.

The Brooklyn Fair is the oldest, continually running agricultural fair in the United States. It takes place in the final weekend of August, every year, while the Woodstock fair takes place on Labor Day weekend, in September. Both fairs attract large crowds of people both within and outside of the region.

Shopping and Antiques

Those seeking high-end retail or outlet malls may be disappointed to learn that the Route 169 corridor offers little more in the way of shopping than antiques, artisan crafts, art studios, and boutiques. The antiques market along the byway is a growing one, with stores capitalizing off of the proximity to towns with particularly strong groupings of antique stores, like Putnam, Norwich, Southbridge, and Sturbridge.

Dining

All throughout the byway corridor are opportunities to sample traditional Connecticut fare, such as seafood, New Haven-style pizza, and farm-to-table, local cuisine. Fine dining is also present, and establishments such as the Inn at Woodstock Hill and the Golden Lamb Buttery, in Brooklyn, offer first-class, locally sourced food.



Natural and Recreation Qualities

Eastern Connecticut offers a landscape with diverse environments and natural resources. Recreational opportunities in the byway corridor are primarily related to these resources and include hiking, paddling, bicycling, fishing, cross-country skiing, and hunting, as well as activities like horseback riding and bird-watching, which may be less-common elsewhere.

Maps of historic and culturally significant sites can be found in [Appendix 2: Document Maps](#).

Landscape Features

Route 169 is entirely within the Thames River drainage basin, and its two main tributaries, the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers, create the larger picture of eastern Connecticut's landscape. The region's hills are drained by these rivers and their tributaries, which are typically rocky brooks. Much of the Route 169 corridor also belongs to Connecticut's Eastern Uplands physiographic region. Within this region are three distinct landscape types: Glacial Till Uplands—ridges and hillsides; Drumloidal Glacial Till Uplands—more rounded and oblong uplands; and Glacial Outwash Plains—lowlands along rivers.

Hardwood forests predominate and mainly consist of oak and maple species but are interspersed with stands white pine, hemlock, and cedar. The nearby Nipmuck State Forest features an old-growth forest whose largest features are towering white pines.

Parks and Trails

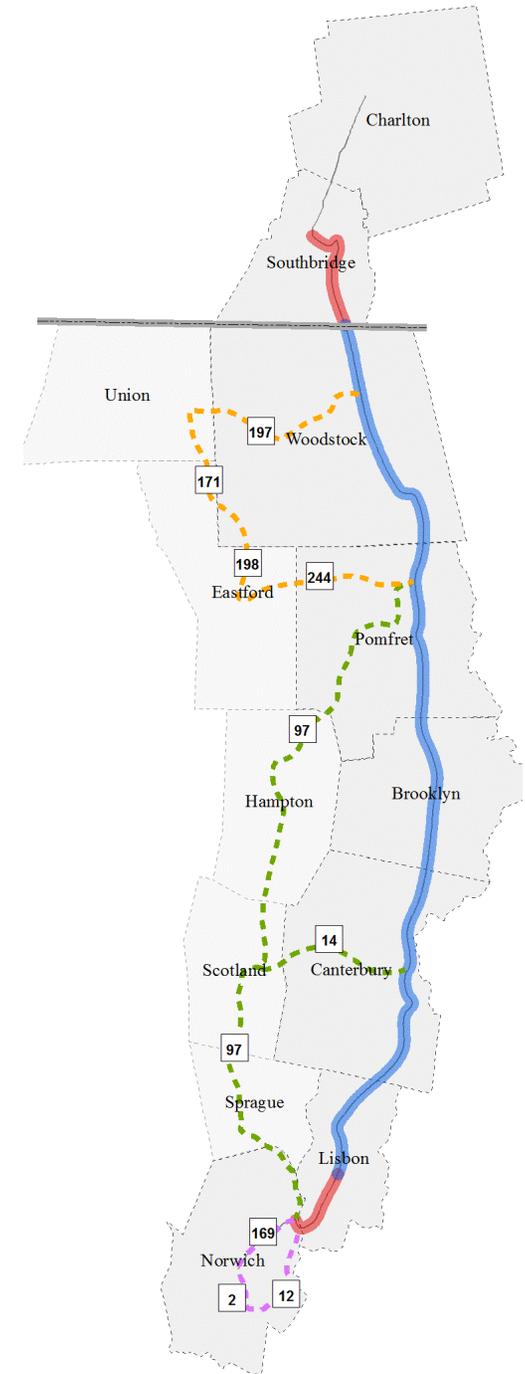
Recreation in the Route 169 corridor is largely tied to the natural environment. Most recreational opportunities are for passive recreation and the region has many acres of land preserved in land trusts, state forests and parks, and municipal parks. The multi-purpose trail, the Air Line Trail State Park, crosses Route 169 in Pomfret. The trail runs adjacent to another significant recreation area on the byway, the Connecticut Audubon Society's Bafflin Sanctuary, which is approximately 700 acres of preserved farm and forest lands. Additional public and preserved lands along the byway corridor include Pomfret's Mashamoquet Brook State Park in the Natchaug State Forest, State-owned hunting land along the Quinebaug River in Canterbury, Lisbon Meadows Park, the Lester B. Williams Memorial Forest, C. Vaughan Ferguson, Jr. Conservancy, and Milo Appley Conservation Showcase in Brooklyn.



Possible Byway Detours

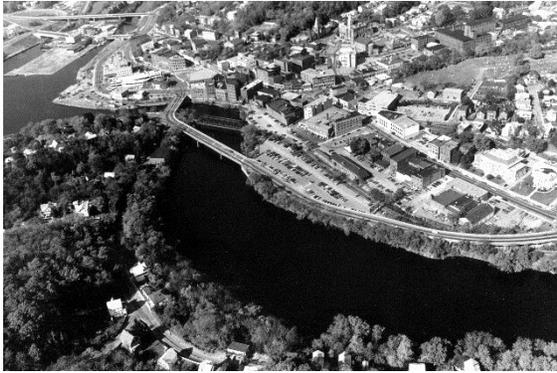
The factors that contribute to Route 169’s uniqueness and special designation as a National Scenic Byway are in fact present throughout the broader eastern Connecticut region. Detours and spurs along State routes can connect travelers to dense forests, farmland, rural villages, mill villages, and cultural events. See pages 35, 36, and 37 for images of three identified loops.

<p>Connecticut Routes 244, 198, and 171</p>	<p>Description: This loop that connects Pomfret and Woodstock with the neighboring towns of Eastford and Union. This loop is characterized mainly by Yale-Myers forest, Natchaug State Forest, and Nipmuck State Forest forests, but also farmland and village areas.</p>
<p>Connecticut Route 97 (and 14)</p>	<p>Description: Route 97 runs from Taftville, north, through the mill villages of Occum and Baltic (Sprague), through Scotland and Hampton’s village centers and Pomfret’s village of Abington. North of Baltic, the route is very rural and features historic buildings and views of large tracts of farmland. Route 14 also connects Route 97 to Route 169 in Canterbury, passing the village of Westminster.</p>
<p>Connecticut Routes 169, 2, 12, and 97</p>	<p>Description: Accessible from Taftville, Routes 169, 2, and 12 form a loop through Norwich, connecting a proposed byway extension with the historic and well-preserved village of Norwichtown, Chelsea (Norwich’s downtown area), Jail Hill and the mill village of Greenville. This route features many architecturally significant buildings from different time periods.</p>
<p>Other Possible Connections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Downtown Putnam; ▪ Mill villages along Route 12 in Thompson, Putnam, Killingly, Plainfield, and Griswold; ▪ Route 49 (State Scenic Route) and the Pachaug State Forest in Sterling, Voluntown; ▪ Old Sturbridge Village, Sturbridge, Massachusetts





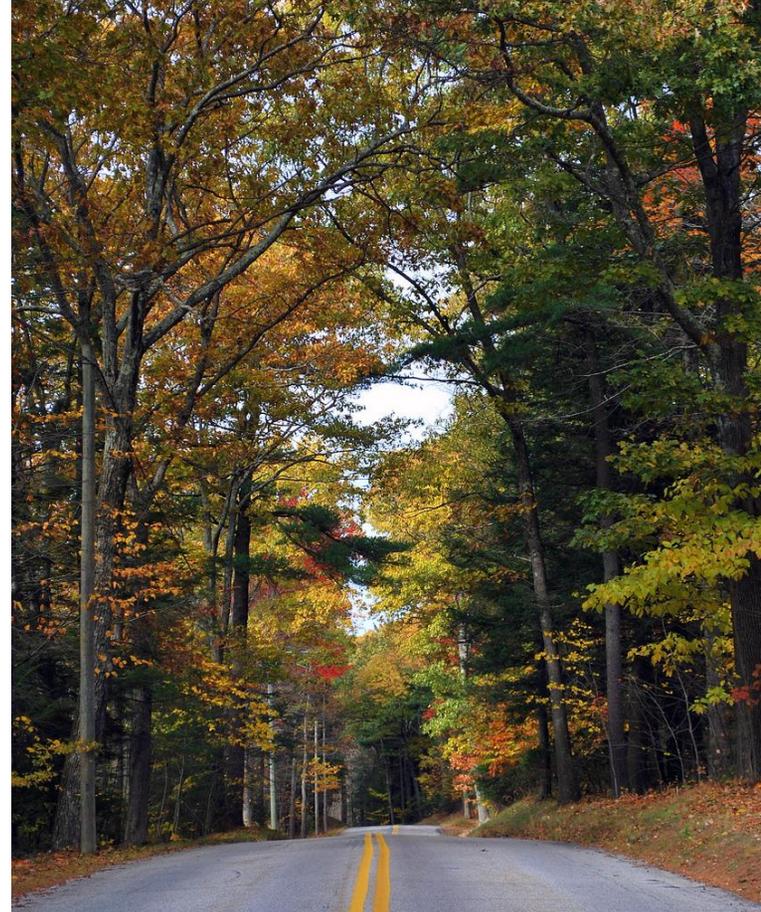
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97 (and 14)





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Chapter Three: Ten-Year Strategy

Contents

Ten-Year Strategy	40	Planning Recommendations	45
<i>Byway Vision</i>			
<i>Goal 1: Communicate and plan...</i>		Special Projects	48
<i>Goal 2: Guide the future and planned growth...</i>		<i>Covered Pedestrian Bridge Carrying the Air Line Trail over Route 169/44 in Pomfret</i>	
<i>Goal 3: Collaborate with local...</i>		<i>Signage Implementation</i>	
<i>Goal 4: Position Route 169 as an economic...</i>			

Ten-Year Strategy

Four corridor management goals were developed as part of this Plan to broadly capture its intentions and lay a foundation for strategies and plan recommendations.

Byway Vision

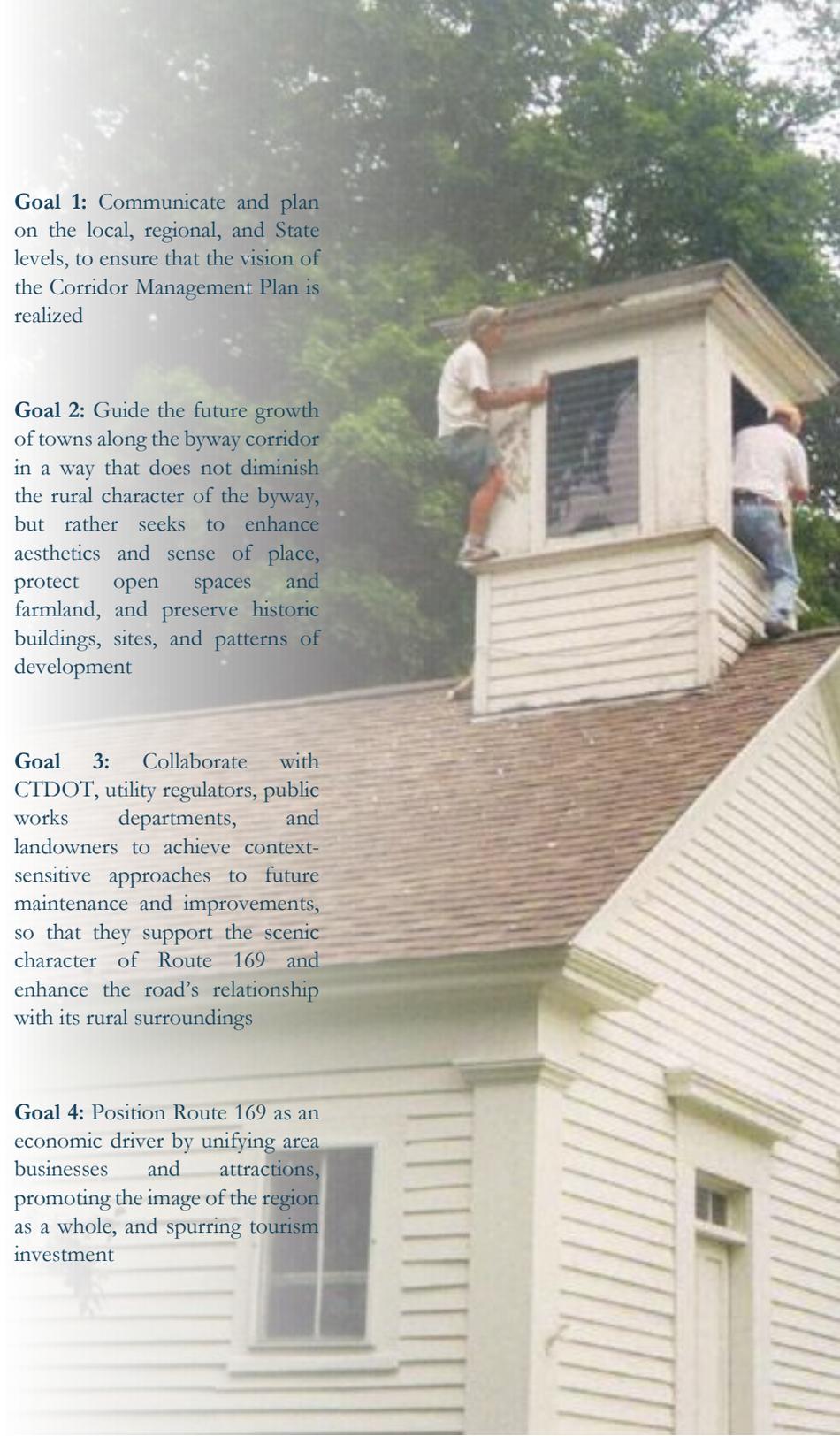
“Each year, following the implementation of the Plan, the Connecticut State Route 169 National Scenic Byway will prove to be a more valuable scenic, cultural, and economic resource than it was in the previous year.”

Goal 1: Communicate and plan on the local, regional, and State levels, to ensure that the vision of the Corridor Management Plan is realized

Goal 2: Guide the future growth of towns along the byway corridor in a way that does not diminish the rural character of the byway, but rather seeks to enhance aesthetics and sense of place, protect open spaces and farmland, and preserve historic buildings, sites, and patterns of development

Goal 3: Collaborate with CTDOT, utility regulators, public works departments, and landowners to achieve context-sensitive approaches to future maintenance and improvements, so that they support the scenic character of Route 169 and enhance the road’s relationship with its rural surroundings

Goal 4: Position Route 169 as an economic driver by unifying area businesses and attractions, promoting the image of the region as a whole, and spurring tourism investment



Key

	Education and community outreach
	Land use planning and regulations
	Land preservation
	Future planning and collaboration
	Marketing, branding, signage, and tourism
	Road character preservation or enhancement
	Historic preservation
AC	Permanent advisory committee, to be established (see Goal 1 objectives)
CCs	Northeastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce as well as other chambers of commerce with ties to regional businesses
CMRPC	Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission
CTDOT	Connecticut Department of Transportation*
Mu.	Municipal Governments, boards, commissions, and committees
NECCOG	Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments
PURA	The Connecticut Public Utility Regulatory Authority*
SCCOG	Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments
TLGV	The Last Green Valley, Inc.
TMC	Tourism and Marketing Committee, to be established (see Goal 1 objectives)

**and equivalent agencies if Southbridge is to be included in as part of the byway*

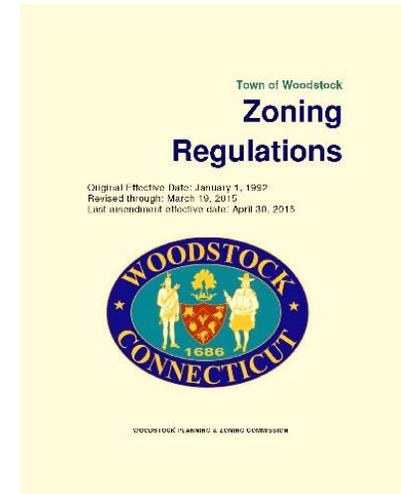
Goal 1: Communicate and plan on the local, regional, and State levels, to ensure that the vision of the Corridor Management Plan is realized

- NECCOG and local, regional, and State-level stakeholders must not only monitor the progress of the Plan, but create a framework for implementation that allows interested parties to take ownership of initiatives
- Too often, planning recommendations are not implemented because the onus for implementation rests on a single party without an ongoing committee of involved persons

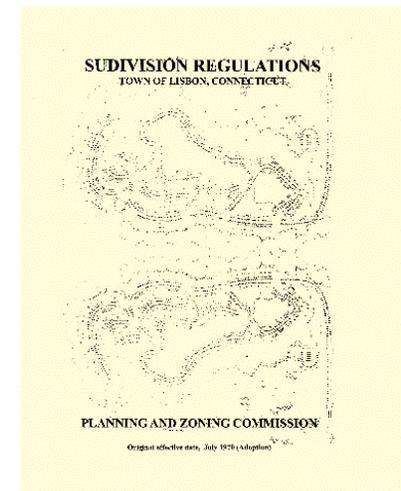
Objectives	Parties	Timeframe
Establish a permanent Advisory Committee consisting of municipal chief-elected officials or their designees, Planning Commission or Planning and Zoning Commission chairpersons, CTDOT, NECCOG, The Last Green Valley, businesses, land trusts, the public, and additional partners to be identified	NECCOG	2016
Establish a permanent Tourism and Marketing Committee that represents the economic interests of business owners	NECCOG, AC	2016
Assign a staff person to coordinate meetings of the Advisory Committee and the Tourism and Marketing Committee, as well as advocate with municipal and State governments for the implementation of Goals and recommendations of the Plan	NECCOG	2016
Develop a detailed plan for tourism, marketing, and signage	NECCOG, AC	2016 - 2018
Advocate for and pursue extension of the byway to terminate in Taftville (Norwich) and Southbridge, making the byway more characteristic of the Quinebaug-Shetucket region	NECCOG, AC, Norwich, Southbridge, SCCOG/CMRPC	2016 - 2026

Goal 2: Guide the future growth of towns along the byway corridor in a way that does not diminish the rural character of the byway, but rather seeks to enhance aesthetics and sense of place, protect open spaces and farmland, and preserve historic buildings, sites, and patterns of development

- Rapid residential growth has always been the most significant threat to the rural and scenic character of Route 169
- Responsibility lies with individual municipalities to adopt future land use plans and regulations that treat Route 169 as a national and local *treasure*, deserving of special attention
- NECCOG is able to educate land use commissions and help to coordinate inter-municipal cooperation on land use matters

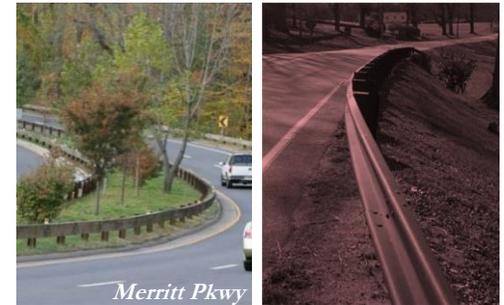


Objectives	Parties	Timeframe
Work with towns to amend plans of conservation and development to address local priorities for the byway's intrinsic qualities and incorporate goals and recommendations of the Plan	NECCOG, Mu.	2016 - 2026
Make recommendations for changes to current Plans of Conservation and Development to address Route 169	NECCOG, Mu.	2016 -2026
Adopt local design guidelines and/or utilize the Scenic Road Land Use and Maintenance Considerations (Annex B) to aid in the preservation of rural lands, villages, and mill villages	NECCOG, Mu.	2016 - 2026
Advocate and plan for the use of an overlay zoning districts to protect scenic vistas along the byway	NECCOG, Mu.	2016 -2026
With Planning or Planning and Zoning Commissions, annually identify sensitive resources along the byway and explore regulatory options for their protection	NECCOG, Mu.	2016 -2026
Educate municipalities on Village District zoning (C.G.S §8-2j) for identified villages along the byway and advocate for its use	NECCOG, Mu.	2016 - 2026
Prioritize property and development rights acquisition for parcels abutting or visible from the byway	NECCOG, Mu.	2016 - 2026
Assist towns in prioritizing historic properties for preservation and applying for funding for restoration	NECCOG, Mu.	2016 - 2026



Goal 3: Collaborate with CTDOT, utility regulators, public works departments, and landowners to achieve context-sensitive approaches to future maintenance and improvements, so that they support the scenic character of Route 169 and enhance the road's relationship with its rural surroundings

- The merits of geometric road improvements, upkeep of guiderails and signs, and cutting of overhanging tree limbs must be balanced with a need to preserve Route 169’s unique character and discourage increased driving speeds
- Features like bridges and guardrails can complement the scenic character of the byway if properly constructed
- The stone walls and scenic vistas visible from the roadway were instrumental in Route 169’s designation as a National Scenic Byway
- Working with CTDOT, municipalities, and private landowners, scenic views and the intimate character of the roadway can be maintained



Objective	Parties	Timeframe
Petition responsible parties to consider context-sensitive approaches outlined in the Route 169 National Scenic Byway Land Use Guidelines	NECCOG, CTDOT, Mu., PURA	2016 -2026
Develop a program to educate landowners to improve landscaping practices that enhance the scenery of the byway	NECCOG, TLGV	2016 - 2026
Promote low-cost, local efforts for beautification and site maintenance by garden clubs or through beginning an initiative similar to “Green Up Day” in Vermont	NECCOG, Mu., Garden clubs or other organizations	2016 - 2026
Work with responsible parties to remove overgrown vegetation from key scenic areas	NECCOG, CTDOT, Mu., PURA	2016 - 2026

Goal 4: Position Route 169 as an economic driver by unifying area businesses and attractions, promoting the image of the region as a whole, and spurring tourism investment

- A National Scenic Byway presents a real opportunity for economic development¹
- Signage and marketing suggestions (Annex A: Marketing and Signing the Byway) were developed as part of this plan
- The use of branding elements and signage can elevate the image of the byway



Objective	Parties	Timeframe
(Repeat) Establish a permanent Tourism and Marketing Committee that represents the economic interests of business owners	NECCOG, AC, CCs	2016
Develop and maintain a calendar of cultural events	NECCOG, TMC, TLGV, CCs	2016
Identify locations for possible scenic pull-offs and visitor information	NECCOG, CTDOT, TLGV, Mu.	2017
Increase tourism and wayfinding signage along the byway	NECCOG, TMC, CTDOT, CCs	2017
Develop a dedicated, promotional website for the byway, its corridor, and the region	NECCOG, AC TMC, CCs	2017
Implement a marketing plan after development	NECCOG, TMC	2018 - 2026

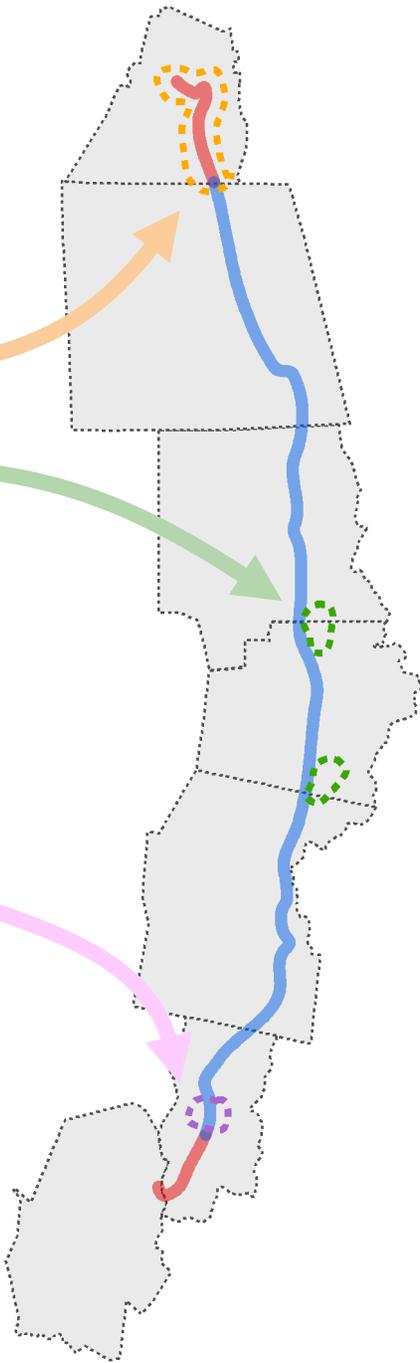
¹Economic Development Research Group, *A Review of Impact Studies Related to Scenic Byway Designation*

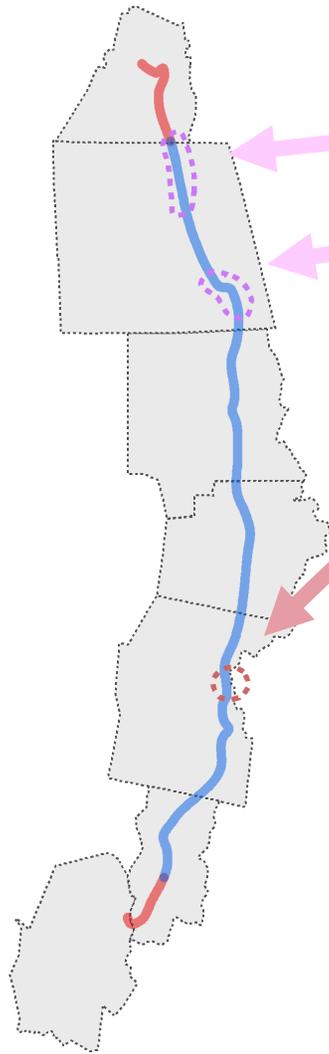
Planning Recommendations

Annex A to this plan, Marketing and Signing the Byway, contains detailed direction for future efforts to brand and market, as well as implement a signage program, along the byway. Annex B to this plan, Scenic Road Land Use and Maintenance Considerations, contains detailed guidance to be used by municipal land use commissions, CTDOT, and utility regulatory authorities, with the intent of unifying efforts to preserve the special character of the byway and its communities.

Key	Recommendation	Jurisdiction
Education and community outreach	Develop a unique vision for the conservation and development of land along Route 169, and incorporate that vision into the municipal POCD and land use regulations	All Towns
Land use planning and regulations	Review, through the Planning and Zoning Commission(s), Annex B of this Plan, and consider adopting its recommendations into land use regulations and guidelines	All Towns
Land preservation	Identify and prioritize open space areas visible from the byway, as well as throughout town, and plan for their preservation	All Towns
Future planning and collaboration	Encourage property owners with land abutting the byway to trim overgrowth blocking important vistas	All Towns
Marketing, branding, signage, and tourism		
Road character preservation or enhancement		
Historic preservation		

Recommendation	Jurisdiction
Plan for the preservation and reuse of mill structures and housing	Norwich, Southbridge
Assist in the pursuit of a lengthening of the current National Scenic Byway into Taftville and downtown Southbridge	Norwich, Southbridge
Acquire development rights or help seek conservation easements for land in high quality scenic vistas east of the byway, near the Canterbury town line and Pomfret town line	Brooklyn
Connect municipal buildings, parks, and historic buildings in the center of town with sidewalks	Canterbury
Consider adopting a scenic road ordinance to protect the character of scenic town roads	Canterbury
Acquire development rights or help seek conservation easements for land in high quality scenic vistas east of the byway, near the Brooklyn town line and south of Route 14	Canterbury
Connect municipal buildings, parks, and historic buildings in Newent with sidewalks, per the 2004 plan of conservation and development	Lisbon
Investigate and prioritize possible locations for a new town green in Newent	Lisbon
Amend subdivision regulations to encourage developers to preserve existing stone walls, trees, and other features	Lisbon
Investigate the creation of a pedestrian connection between Pomfret Community School and the Bafflin Wildlife Sanctuary	Pomfret





Recommendation	Jurisdiction
Consider the creation of a new zoning district, or the use of Village District zoning, for the Woodstock Hill Historic District and South Woodstock	Woodstock
Encourage ConnDOT and property owners with land abutting the byway, especially between Woodstock Hill and North Woodstock and North Woodstock and the Massachusetts state line, to trim overgrowth on stone walls	Woodstock
Investigate sidewalk connections between Woodstock Hill and South Woodstock (from the Post Office to the Middle School)	Woodstock
Investigate how and where sand and gravel operations are permitted in town, along the byway, and what the town can do to limit the long-term impact of those operations on open land and scenery	Canterbury, Brooklyn
Amend subdivision regulations to allow for “cluster subdivisions” that award a density bonus for greater opens space set-aside	Canterbury, Lisbon, Pomfret
Consider the appropriateness of Village District zoning	Canterbury, Pomfret, Woodstock

Special Projects

Covered Pedestrian Bridge Carrying the Air Line Trail over Route 169/44 in Pomfret

Description

Air Line Trail State Park crosses Route 169 in Pomfret, roughly 200 feet north of its southerly junction with U.S. Route 44, and 475 feet south of Railroad Street. Poor sight lines in this area make crossing dangerous for pedestrians, cyclists, and horseback riders using the trail. Although the posted speed limit is 25 miles per hour, actual traffic speeds tend to be higher at the trail crossing.

Where the Hop River Trail, another State-owned multi-use trail, crosses U.S. Route 6 in Andover, Connecticut, a covered Howe Truss bridge was completed in 2012. It is envisioned that the bridge carrying the Air Line Trail will be built in the same style.

Possible Funding

This project is eligible for funding through the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program, administered by the Federal Department of Transportation (DOT). NECCOG applied for TIGER grants to fund bridge engineering and construction in 2013 and 2016.



Signage Implementation

Description

The Connecticut State Route 169 National Scenic byway is currently without characteristic signage. A unique and consistent signage program may allow for greater awareness of the byway by visitors as well as local drivers. It is expected that a new, official logo, which was designed to be colorful, easily identifiable, and memorable, will be used for the byway signage program.

Funding

Funding for a signage program would be possible through a number of different DOT programs and would require approval from the Connecticut Department of Transportation.



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