

NORTH RIDGE SCENIC BYWAY ***CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN— 2015-2020***

1. INTRODUCTION

The ***North Ridge Scenic Byway*** is located in northern Lorain County, Ohio, traversing the communities of Avon, Sheffield Village and Sheffield Township along Ohio Route 254. In August 2007 the Ohio Department of Transportation designated the entire 9-mile segment of Ohio Route 254 within Lorain County as the ***North Ridge Scenic Byway***. Management of the Scenic Byway is the responsibility of the Sheffield Village Historical Society and the Avon Historical Society, working in concert with the Ohio Department of Transportation, Office of Environmental Services. The purpose of this document is to guide the management of the ***Scenic Byway*** over the next five years.

Variouly known as North Ridge and Detroit Roads, this historic highway passes through a diverse assemblage of agricultural, residential, commercial, and natural settings as it traverses the northernmost ancient beach ridge of a glacial-lake predecessor to Lake Erie. Travelers along this stretch of highway are treated to pleasing views of many cultural and natural features.

The communities of Avon and Sheffield are rich with human history that begins several thousand years ago with Native American Indian settlements on North Ridge and later the Burrell Fort on French Creek. Soon after the War of 1812, hearty pioneers from New England and New York recognized the natural attributes here and began to settle the new land, naming it after their towns in the East. In the middle of the nineteenth century German immigrants purchased land and enriched the communities with their heritage. Churches and schools were built and our rural communities flourished as they produced men and women of outstanding strength and character.

Visitors to the ***North Ridge Scenic Byway*** can view an array of working farms (many with early 19th century farmhouses), parkways, attractive commercial centers, and small-town neighborhoods with colorful antique shops, gift store, and restaurants. To assist visitors in their enjoyment of the ***Scenic Byway***, our Historical Societies have produced a brochure and an comprehensive guidebook to the features that can be viewed from North Ridge.

2. BYWAY VISION AND MISSION

Today Avon and Sheffield are in transition as they become a modern residential and commercial center. As they move forward, it is fitting to recognize the efforts of those who built these towns, and that we work to preserve and share the heritage of their contributions. We can learn much about ourselves and how to cope with our current struggles by understanding the hardships and joys of our village ancestors. To this end the ***North Ridge Scenic Byway*** is dedicated. The ***Scenic Byway*** seeks to engender public awareness of the cultural and natural attributes associated with the Ohio Route 254 corridor through our community. Preservation of historic buildings and sites along North Ridge has begun, but too late to save several noteworthy structures. Scenic Byway designation will do much to generate interest not only in the preservation of endangered historic buildings, it will encourage further documentations of the cultural history of our community, thereby enhancing an appreciation of our heritage by residents and visitors alike.

Accomplishments

Working together, the Sheffield Village Historical Society and the Avon Historical Society are produced a publication titled ***Guide to the North Ridge Scenic Byway***. The 284-page guidebook contains some 290 full color and 125 black & white illustrations of features within the ***Scenic Byway Corridor***. The guidebook is designed: (1) first, to familiarize to travelers along this corridor with the natural and historic setting and (2) second, to provide a mile point by mile point illustrated description of the most noteworthy features, both natural and cultural, that can be seen while traversing the ***Scenic Byway***. Publication of the guidebook was made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, National Scenic Byway Program. The guidebook is available for a \$20 donation to either the Sheffield Village or the Avon Historical Societies.

In September 2008, the Sheffield Village Council authorized Mayor John D. Hunter to issue a proclamation establishing the ***North Ridge Historic District*** encompassing all of Ohio Route 254 within the Village of Sheffield. The proclamation recognizes the historic character of the ***North Ridge Scenic Byway*** and how its establishment has promoted the educational, cultural, economic, and general welfare of the people of the Village and has fostered civic pride in the notable accomplishments of the our founders.

The Historical Societies, working with the Ohio Preservation Office, successfully nominated the Avon Isle Dance Pavilion for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. This historic facility is located on French Creek in the City of Avon on the ***North Ridge Scenic Byway***. The nomination was approved by the U.S. Department of Interior in 2012.

In recognition of the founding of Sheffield in 1815, the Village of Sheffield will dedicate a new ***Bicentennial Park*** and ***Founders Monument*** on August 2, 2015. The monument is a 10-high black granite spire with carved Sheffield Bicentennial seal and inscription lined in antique gold. The new park and monument will be located on a parcel of land adjacent to the Sheffield Village Hall situated on the ***Scenic Byway***. The historic, 1883, Queen Ann-style Village Hall is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Goals for 2015-2020

The Historical Societies, managers of the ***Scenic Byway*** will continue to foster a close relationship with the administration of the City of Avon, the Village of Sheffield, and the Township of Sheffield—the communities along the ***Scenic Byway***. This is exemplified by the Societies being included in the membership of key civic organizations, such as the Avon Landmarks Preservation Commission and the Sheffield Bicentennial Commission.

The managing organization, as well as the communities we serve, are pleased with the accomplishments that have been achieved in regard to the ***North Ridge Scenic Byway***. We believe the management is being conducted effectively and we do not envision any major modification to our management style. As a State Route, maintenance of the road surface, signage, and shoulders is the responsibility of the Ohio Department Of Transportation in concert with the communities through which is traverses. Our function in this regard is alert the appropriate agencies of any needed repairs of service, which is our ongoing policy.

In terms of future project, the Historical Societies will continue to support annual and special civic functions within the ***Scenic Byway Corridor***. Through our quarterly journal, ***The Village Pioneer***, and

our websites (*SheffieldVillage.com* and *SheffieldBicentennial.org*) will highlight such events and other opportunities for local citizens and visitor.

3. BYWAY ORGANIZATION

As discussed earlier, the management of the **North Ridge Scenic Byway** is an integral part and function of the Sheffield Village Historical Society and the Avon Historical Society, in coordination with the Village of Sheffield Village and City of Avon City administrations. These communities have designated the Historical Societies as the managing organization. The Sheffield Village Historical Society's Board of Trustees meets quarterly and the Avon Historical Society meets monthly. Several joint meetings are held annually to discuss **North Ridge Scenic Byway** issues, primarily when special events are being planned.

The Presidents of the Societies serve as the lead contact concerning the **North Ridge Scenic Byway**. Mr. Ralph White (36715 Lakeland Drive, Avon, OH 44011 (440) 934-7720) currently serves as president of the Avon Historical Society and Dr. Charles E. Herdendorf (4921 Detroit Road, Sheffield Village, OH 44054 (440) 934-1514) currently serves as president of the Sheffield Village Historical Society.

No additional funds, beyond the resources of the Historical Societies, are anticipated as being need in the next five years.

4. UPDATE AND DOCUMENTATION

As discussed earlier, as a State Route, maintenance of the road surface, signage, and shoulders is the responsibility of the Ohio Department Of Transportation in concert with the communities through which it traverses. Our function in this regard is alert the appropriate agencies of any needed repairs of service, which is our ongoing policy. Currently the highway conditions along the **North Ridge Scenic Byway** are satisfactory.

Rather than generate yet another lengthy excel table, please refer to the tables and maps on pages 74 through 79 of the **Guide to the North Ridge Scenic Byway** (copies supplied earlier to the Ohio Department of Transportation). The tables contain 102 noteworthy features along the **North Ridge Scenic Byway Corridor** with mile point designations.

5. VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The farther I get down this outline the more redundancy I encounter—it seems like I am saying the same thing over and over again. Essentially our operating policy with the **North Ridge Scenic Byway** is—***“if it ain't broke, don't fix it.”*** I think all this busy work is a waste of time. If you have a good guidebook to your scenic byway—that all you need. If ODOT wants to scan the guidebook and put it on a website, that's fine with me.

6. MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Again, these issues have been covered earlier.

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Again, these issues have been address in earlier section of this plan. Please try some consolidation!

8. MAPPING

The ***Guide to the North Ridge Scenic Byway*** (pages 77-79) contains maps of the ***Scenic Byway Corridor*** prepared by the Lorain County Engineer with 102 numbered features. Illustrations of each of these are contained on pages 80-207 of the ***Guide to the North Ridge Scenic Byway***. Topographic (page 2), Glacial Beach Ridges (page 6) and Geologic (page 10) maps are also included the ***Guide to the North Ridge Scenic Byway***.

9. APPENDIX

The ***Guide to the North Ridge Scenic Byway*** contains 290 full color and 125 black & white illustrations of features within the ***Scenic Byway Corridor*** as well as the maps enumerated earlier. It would be a waste of time and resources to redundantly reproduce the here when they are already available in a single volume.

10. CMP FORMAT

Unfortunately, no information is given where to electronically submit the CMP document. This I am sending this draft to Tom Barrett's email address.

Submitted April 15, 2015

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The Ohio State University

Co-Coordinator, North Ridge Scenic Byway