



Great River Road Tennessee

Corridor Management Plan



Recognitions

Governor Phil Bredesen

State of Tennessee
State Capitol
Nashville, TN 37243

Commissioner Susan Whitaker

Department of Tourist Development
Wm. Snodgrass/Tennessee Tower
312 8th Avenue North, 25th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243

Ms. Marty Marby

West Tennessee – Tourist Development
Regional Marketing & Public Relations

Commissioner Gerald Nicely

Tennessee Department of Transportation
505 Deaderick St.
James K. Polk Bldg. – 7th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243

Shawn Bible

Beautification Office Manager
Tennessee Department of Transportation

Pam Monjar

Scenic Byways – State Coordinator
Tennessee Department of Transportation

Commissioner James Fyke

Tennessee Dept. of Environment and Conservation
401 Church Street
1st Floor – L & C Annex
Nashville, TN 37243

Director Gary Myers

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
Ellington Place – PO Box 40747
Nashville, TN 37204

Commission Matt Kisber

Department of Economic & Community Development
312 Eighth Ave. North
Tennessee Tower – 11th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243

Senator Mark Norris

State of Tennessee
302 War Memorial Building
Nashville, TN 37243

State Representative Craig Fitzhugh

82nd District – State of Tennessee
33 Legislative Plaza
Nashville, TN 37243

Mayor AC Wharton	Shelby County
Mayor Jeff Huffman	Tipton County
Mayor Rod Schuh	Lauderdale County
Mayor Richard Hill	Dyer County
Mayor Macie Roberson	Lake County
Mayor Benny McGuire	Obion County

Byway Planning Team

Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee, Inc. Board of Directors

John Sheahan	Chairman/CEO
John Threadgill	Secretary
Jim Bondurant	Chair – Obion - Task Force Committee
Rosemary Bridges	Chair – Tipton - Task Force Committee
Peter Brown	Chair – Dyer - Task Force Committee
Laura Holder	Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area
Pamela Marshall	Public Affairs - Memphis Regional Chamber
Gary Myers	Director – TWRA
Joe Royer	Owner – Outdoors, Inc.
Mary Schmitz	Memphis Convention & Visitors Bureau
Margaret Shoemaker	Chair – Lauderdale Task Force Committee
Larry Smith	Chair – Shelby Task Force Committee
Diana Threadgill	Executive Director – MRCT
Carroll Van West	Director – Center for Historic Preservation
Kathleen Williams	Director – TN Parks & Greenways Foundation
Fred Wortman	Chair – Lake Task Force Committee

Advisory Council Members

Michael Butler	Tennessee Wildlife Federation
Mike Carlton	Tennessee State Parks
Randy Cook	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Jack Grubaugh	University of Memphis – Biology Department
David Hayes	Security Bank – Dyersburg
Marcia Mills	Chamber of Commerce – Lake County
Mark Norris	Senator and Attorney
Mack Prichard	State Naturalist – Tennessee
Greg Wathen	TWRA
Denise Watts	Tennessee Valley Authority
Marty Mabry	TN Dept. of Tourist Development

The University of Memphis

Regional Economic Development Center
208 McCord Hall
Memphis, TN 38152

Dr. Charles Santo	Assistant Professor
Dr. Gene Pearson	Professor Emeritus
Steve Redding	Research Assistant Professor
Nate Ferguson	Research Associate

Byway Consultant

David L. Dahlquist
President
David L. Dahlquist Associates, L.L.C.
5204 Shriver Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50312

Pickering Firm, Inc
Architecture – Engineering – Planning – Surveying

Bob Pitts, PE
Principal Owner
Director, Civil Engineering Services
6775 Lenox Center Court – Suite 300
Memphis, TN 38115

Historical Consultant

Dr. Carroll Van West
Director
Center for Historic Preservation
Middle Tennessee State University
P.O. Box 80 – MTSU
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee, Inc.

291 Kenilworth Place
Memphis, TN 38112

Diana Threadgill – Executive Director/CMP Preparer
Amie Vanderford – Director of Marketing & Technology

David Richtmyre
Designer

Tina Brooks
Print Coordinator
Graphic Systems Inc.



Submission to the State of Tennessee – Department of Transportation

The application to the State of Tennessee for the Great River Road Tennessee to be designated an official Tennessee Parkway was submitted to the Department of Transportation (TDOT) and signed with full state designation by Commissioner Gerald Nicely on December 4, 2008.

Recognition to CMP Participants

The Mississippi River Corridor – TN and the Tennessee Department of Transportation would like to express their appreciation to everyone who participated in our meetings, planning and discussions that led to the production of this Great River Road Tennessee – Corridor Management Plan and application.

Funding Statement

Funding to support the preparation of the Great River Road Tennessee – Corridor Management Plan included a grant from the National Scenic Byway Program of the Federal Highway Administration, the State of Tennessee – Department of Economic and Community Development and The McKnight Foundation.

Web Site Information

Digital copies of information related to the Corridor Management Plan for the Great River Road Tennessee may be found at: www.msrivertn.org

Collaborative Planning with Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Kentucky as well as the America's Byways® Resource Center

The Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee and the Tennessee Department of Transportation expresses its appreciation to representatives of the Great River Road in the Lower Mississippi River Region for the assistance and support they provided during the preparation of the Corridor Management Plan. Likewise, the Department recognizes Dennis Adams of the America's Byways® Resource Center for assistance and examples of good practice in other states.

Great River Road Tennessee Corridor Management Plan Adoption

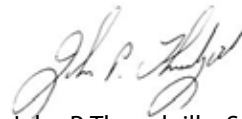
The Great River Road Tennessee – Corridor Management Plan and its reference library materials are adopted as the official management guide for the Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee. This document updates and replaces previous documents pertaining to the management of the Great River Road and the Mississippi River Corridor in Tennessee.

Approved and Adopted December 8, 2008

By:



John P. Sheahan – Chairman/CEO
Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee



John P. Threadgill – Secretary
Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee



The historic Mud Island River Park and Museum, located at the foot of the famous Memphis riverfront, is a unique 52-acre recreational, educational and entertainment facility dedicated to telling the story of the Mighty Mississippi River and its people. The featured River walk is an exact scale model of the Lower Mississippi River from its confluence with the Ohio River at Cairo, Illinois, 954 miles south to the Gulf of Mexico. The Park also contains the Adventure Center which offers canoe, kayak, pedal boat and bike rentals; a 5,000 seat outdoor amphitheater which is a showcase venue on the river with concerts throughout the season; gift shops; food concessions, banquet facilities and marina. The Mud Island River Park and Museum is owned by the City of Memphis and managed by the Riverfront Development Corporation.

www.mudisland.com

Executive Summary

The special mystique, the almost mythical quality of the Mississippi River in west Tennessee springs from its unique attributes that are historical, cultural and natural. It's our special river, robust with stories and legends known and loved by people throughout the world. Images of barefoot boys floating down river on rafts . . . riverboats full of hopeful settlers looking for a new home in a New World . . . the haunting notes of the Blues . . . distant reverberations of Civil War cannon . . . super-human efforts to stem the rising tide of the river in flood . . . paddle wheelers to barges transporting goods to the nation. . . . **the struggle for freedom and human rights.** All are part of our river's special mystique.

To document and celebrate this special heritage, a 501(C)(3) non-profit organization was formed by the citizens of the region and named the **Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee, Inc.**(MRCT) in 2006. Formerly, a small "grass roots" initiative, this great river Corridor has grown into a significant voice for historic preservation. Its strategic planning currently embraces six river counties and their assets on or in close proximity to the Great River Road in Tennessee.

The Mississippi River Corridor in Tennessee is a complex and ever-evolving organization that involves uniting hundreds of key stakeholders and property owners within the region to also preserve the area's important and significant resources like vegetation, wildlife, soils, water, trails, sites of historical, geological and archaeological interests, scenic views, vistas and areas of high aesthetic value. The MRCT will provide managed access to this unique region for cultural, recreational and educational experiences along the Mississippi River.

Its Mission is to identify, conserve and interpret the region's natural, cultural and scenic resources to improve the quality of life and prosperity in West Tennessee.

This Corridor Management Plan will unveil the tremendous potential and unique historic and natural resources available to visitors seeking a river refuge along the Great River Road in west Tennessee. It will also document the past several years of management meetings, public outreach and regional planning for a successful National Scenic Byway. Our ongoing commitment and support for an outstanding visitor experience along the western coast of Tennessee is also reflected through a collaborative effort among state and county agencies and non-profit organizations. Through their pledges to uphold the highest of standards in the maintenance, enhancement, stewardship and interpretation of historic, natural and manmade amenities, the GRRT will become an international visitor destination.

The Great River Road Route in Tennessee encompasses the entire western coast from the Kentucky border at Reelfoot Lake to south of Memphis connecting with Mississippi. The route is 185.5 miles long and is bordered by the Mississippi River on the west and the Chickasaw bluffs landform or county boundary lines on the east.



The Great River Road – Tennessee passes through five counties in west Tennessee: Lake, Dyer, Lauderdale, Tipton, and Shelby. Nearby, Obion County provides hospitality services and other major attractions to support travel on the Great River Road in northwestern Tennessee.

The Corridor Management Plan for the Great River Road and the Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee, will address the following 14 points of corridor management planning that are included in the Federal Highway Administration's interim policy for the National Scenic Byways Program:

1. A map identifying the corridor boundaries, location of intrinsic qualities and land use in the corridor.
2. An assessment of the intrinsic qualities of each identified asset and their "context" (the areas surrounding them) in relationship to the determined roadway.
3. A strategy for maintaining and enhancing these intrinsic qualities for each asset as they relate to the Corridor route.
4. The agencies, groups, and individuals who are part of the team that will carry out the plan, including a list of their specific, individual responsibilities. Also, a schedule of when and how you'll review the degree to which those responsibilities are being met.
5. A strategy of how existing road development might be enhanced and new development accommodated to preserve the intrinsic qualities of the byway.
6. A plan for on-going public participation.
7. A general review of the road's safety record to locate hazards and poor design, and identify possible corrections.
8. The plan to accommodate commercial traffic while ensuring the safety of sightseers in smaller vehicles, as well as bicyclists, joggers, and pedestrians.
9. A listing and discussion of efforts to minimize anomalous intrusions on the visitor's experience of the byway.
10. Documentation of compliance with all existing local, state, and federal laws about the control of outdoor advertising.
11. A plan to make sure that the number and placement of highway signs will not get in the way of scenery, but still be sufficient to help tourists find their way. This includes, where appropriate, signs for international tourists who may not speak English fluently.
12. Plans of how the Corridor will be marketed and publicized.
13. Any proposals for modifying the roadway, including an evaluation about design standards and how proposed changes may affect the byway's intrinsic qualities.
14. A description of what you plan to do to explain and interpret the byway's significant resources to visitors.

Table of Contents

SECTION 1:

INTRODUCTION 8

- Document Organization..... 8
- History of CMP Preparation..... 10
- How This Document Can Be Utilized 16
- Vision Statement..... 16
- What is a Byway?..... 17
- The National Scenic Byway Program 18

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: The Great River Road

- The Great River Road in Tennessee..... 18

SECTION 2:

CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN FEATURES

- GREAT RIVER ROAD – TENNESSEE ROUTE (1) 22**
 - Route Description 23
 - Gateway Communities 24
- INTRINSIC QUALITIES (2)..... 25**
 - Overview of the Great River Road – TN 25
 - Specific Historic Intrinsic Qualities and Sites..... 27
- MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING INTRINSIC QUALITIES (3) 42**
- RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE BYWAY (4) 44**
- DEVELOPMENT AND PRESERVATION STRATEGIES (5)..... 50**
- PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY (6) 60**
- BYWAY SAFETY (7) 61**
- COMMERCE AND USER FACILITIES (8)..... 63**

- EFFORTS TO MINIMIZE INTRUSIONS AND ENHANCING EXPERIENCES (9) 64**
- OUTDOOR ADVERTISING (10)..... 66**
- SIGNAGE (11) 68**
- MARKETING (12)..... 68**
- ROADWAY DESIGN STANDARDS (13) 70**
- INTERPRETING SIGNIFICANT BYWAY RESOURCES (14)..... 72**

Note: Numbers in parenthesis refer to topics (Federal Register Vol. 69, No. 96) that require attention by the Federal Highway Administration in a National Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan

SECTION 3:

- Great River Road Tennessee – Reference Library..... 74**





Section One: Introduction

Geographically, the Great River Road in Tennessee is the Lower Mississippi River Valley. Historically, the land has been shaped by the fluctuating water levels of ancient seas, the continual meandering and flooding of the Mississippi River, and the seismic activities of the New Madrid fault, one of the most active in the country. The ongoing effect of these natural forces makes this area of Tennessee, in geological terms, the state's youngest region.

The natural cycles of change have been greatly influenced by human inhabitants over time. A series of levees, dikes and

navigation structures have altered habitat along the Mississippi River. Today only Lauderdale County's floodplain is subject to the natural rise and fall of the river. Meeman Shelby Forest State Park and the Hatchie River are outstanding remnants of unmodified ecosystems found in the Western Plains today.

Lying within the heart of the Mississippi flyway, broad swampy bottoms host a tremendous influx of migrating and wintering songbirds, waterfowl, and birds of prey. There is a spectacular annual arrival of migrating bald eagles at Reelfoot, Tennessee's largest natural lake. Concentrations of gadwall, mallards, pintails and Canada geese at Reelfoot and other locations are equally impressive.

West Tennessee's rich bottomlands support humid hardwood and bald cypress forests. Our protected green corridors and isolated wetlands harbor great concentrations of wildlife. The ongoing struggle to balance agriculture and other land uses with the conservation of forested wetlands is a prominent environmental theme of the corridor.

The Great River Road in Tennessee is a collection of highways, local roads and city streets that will guide visitors in a continuous routing along the west bank of the Mississippi River to our uniquely significant historical and natural assets.

This corridor management plan is expected to guide the long term enhancement of the Great River Road in Tennessee and to support consideration of this route as a National Scenic Byway by the Federal Highway

Our Context to the Mississippi River

The Mississippi River is the largest riverine ecosystem in North America; it is the third largest in length, second in watershed area, and fifth in average discharge in the world. It flows from its source at Lake Itasca, Minnesota to the subtropical Louisiana Delta. Its watershed extends from the Allegheny Mountains to the Rocky Mountains and includes all or parts of 31 states and 2 Canadian provinces- about 40% of the United States and about one-eighth of North America.

This dynamic, large flood plain river ecosystem flows along the 185.5 miles of Tennessee's western border and represents the northern extension of the Mississippi Delta Region.

The average river width through this reach is nearly a mile and currents are generally very strong. Although the Mississippi River habitat diversity and biological productivity have been drastically altered from its natural state for navigation and flood control, it remains home to several large river fishes found nowhere else in the world.

ORGANIZATION of the Great River Road Tennessee Corridor Management Plan

The Great River Road Tennessee – Corridor Management Plan, is organized in three Sections:

Section 1: Introduction and Overview of the Tennessee State Scenic Parkway Program, the National Scenic Byway and the MRCT

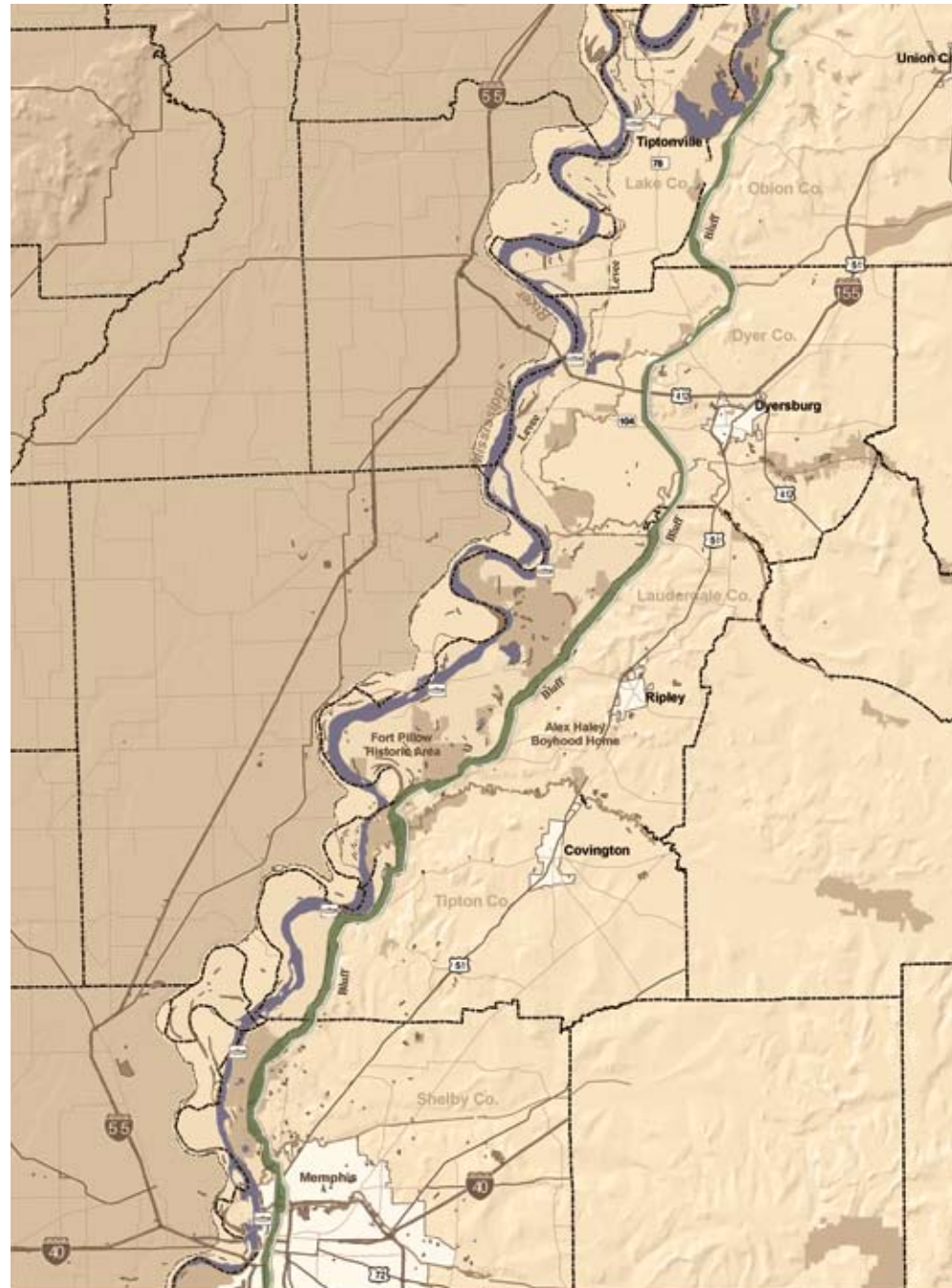
- The history and current status of the Great River Road

Section 2: Essential features of the Great River Road – Tennessee, Corridor Management Plan

Section 3: Great River Road – Tennessee Reference Library

- A collection of detailed reference materials that were utilized in the creation of the Corridor Management Plan for Tennessee
- A listing of intrinsic resources associated with the Great River Road – Tennessee

Note: In this document, the term "Great River Road" or "GRR" refers to the multi-state route. The term "Great River Road – Tennessee" or "GRRT" refers only to that portion of the Great River Road contained in the state of Tennessee.



Original Concept Map

The green line on map indicates the original Mississippi River Corridor - Tennessee boundary.

*Produced by Ritchie Smith Associates
- 2003*

History of the CMP Preparation

How the Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee, Inc. began....

(The article written below is a historical dialogue from one of our visionary leaders in the early days of project development. Mr. Sheahan continues to help direct our efforts toward the creation of a National Scenic Byway on the Great River Road – Tennessee. We are eternally grateful to our volunteers and advocates for their work in the creation of the Mississippi River Corridor – TN.)

A Brief History Lesson

By John P. Sheahan
Chairman/CEO

Our predecessor, *The Mississippi River Natural and Recreational Corridor* (MRNRC), was a “grass roots” initiative that grew out of the Memphis Regional Chamber efforts to implement the “Regional Sourcebook” plan and the “Vision 2005” study at the turn of the twenty-first century. I had the pleasure, as Chairman of the Shelby County Conservation Board, to sit on the “blue sky” committee looking for ways to market the region with goals of hiring and retaining quality employees. Open spaces, the natural environment, rivers, wetlands, and recreation were all topics discussed. The fact that the Mississippi River was West Tennessee’s greatest and most underutilized asset came into the “visionary screen” and we considered the opportunities.

The Chamber initiative, headed up by the CAO John Threadgill, began to assemble a team to look into how to go about building a more “user friendly” Mississippi River. As I was also the Chairman of the Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation (TPGF), I suggested that the foundation be invited to the initial meeting based on our mission and goals to “preserve and protect Tennessee’s treasures”. TPGF, with its 501(C)(3) non-profit designation, came to the group as an organization that was also looking for a project in West Tennessee that would be of substance and to broaden its recognition and constituent base. When Kathleen Williams, TPGF executive director, and I, presented the idea to both the Executive Committee and then to the Board of the foundation, the project was endorsed and our real involvement began. I resigned as TPGF Chairman to assume the corporate responsibility of TPGF Vice President, West Tennessee, and to make sure we had local representation for all developing aspects of the new project. The project was to be managed by a Steering Committee of which both Kathleen and I were to be seated. These events took place in late 2000-2001.

During these initial planning years, the Tennessee Parks and Greenway Foundation was asked to take a leadership role in the organizational phase of the project and to serve as the repository for all financial contributions to the project. It was also asked to serve as the fiduciary agent for the project and not only keep track of the contributions and expenses of the project, but also to be the main initiator of grant solicitation.

After an initial funding grant from the **Community Foundation of Greater Memphis** (CFGM), we received contributions from the **Memphis Regional Chamber**, the **Riverfront Development Corporation**, the **Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency** and some small private contributions. Susan Jones, founder of the Mississippi River Trail (MRT), the bike trail that runs the entire length of the Mississippi River, agreed to be a contracted agent to coordinate the conceptual development of the project. Thanks to her leadership, the project moved along to where we had enough substance to be able to present the project to larger foundations and other granting sources. Early on, I had contacted the McKnight Foundation of Minneapolis, Minnesota, for possible planning grant funding but was told that the project was too premature for their funding, based on their criteria, but to contact them after we had progressed further.

Since conservation was going to be a major focus of this project, Kathleen and TWRA embarked on a Land Conservation Plan for the corridor. This plan was to be presented to the Governor of Tennessee, Phil Bredesen, as documentation of the importance of protecting and developing lands already owned by the State, as well as identifying lands for future acquisition.

The project had progressed to the point that we met the **McKnight Foundation’s** criteria, so we applied and received a \$100,000.00 grant, allowing TPGF to hire a project coordinator. After an interview process, Marilyn Hughes was employed by TPGF but she chose to pursue another field she was closer to and resigned, after a short but productive time.

The project concept and conservation plan was presented to Governor Bredesen in hopes that he would get behind it with the full power and influence of his Office. Because of the Governor’s priority for the Cumberland Plateau, as well as his realization of the size and scope of the MRNRC project, he asked that we go back and organize the six corridor Counties so that when the time was right, he could impact the project that was organized at the “grassroots”. At the same time, he asked Jim Fyke, now Commissioner of



Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) to be his point person for the project and research what would be involved from the State level for a project of this magnitude. This one meeting with the Governor changed the complexion and the near term direction of the project. It moved the project to a marketing and promotional mode that needed to be presented to the individual counties as they became organized.

In the summer of 2005, the Corridor project began discussions about developing a new key partnership with an important federal program, the **Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area** (TCWNHA). The National Heritage Area, which is administered by the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University and is funded through the National Park Service, already had identified the six county corridor region of US Highway 51 as one of its seven primary heritage corridors in its master and management plans. TCWNHA encouraged further discussion and idea sharing on best practices in heritage development and brought new expertise in history and historic preservation to the project.

In July 2005, TPGF hired a new project director, Diana Threadgill, who brought extensive business and non-profit experience as well as familiarity with the project. Diana had been helping with some of the marketing products we were in the process of developing. She was originally employed by TPGF but soon switched to an independent contractor due to the number of hours that were needed to organize this newly determined project direction. Since contracting with her in October 2005, the MRNRC project has taken on new life. The organizational and marketing skills she brought to the project are unparalleled. Realizing that Diana could not do all that she determined needed to be done for the project's new direction, I reorganized my time priorities to give the project an additional volunteer available to help bring about the organizational changes necessary. At the same time, as a Corporate Officer for TPGF, I would have the opportunity to bring the mission and goals of the TPGF to the project's constituents as the project grew.

For example, in the late summer of 2005, the TPGF and TCWNHA entered into a collaborative partnership that brought \$30,000 for the development of the Conceptual Master Plan and other promotional and educational materials. The National Heritage Area also began planning a thorough survey of historical and architectural properties in the river bottom region of the river, a project that was carried out from January to March 2006.

In the winter of 2005-2006, through the Steering Committee's direction and Threadgill's execution, the focus areas of the project were expanded to seven: Economic Development, Transportation, Recreation, Conservation, Education, Historical and Cultural Preservation and Health and Wellness. With these focus areas as the foundation, we have been able to bring the project to the six Counties and develop Task Force Committees in each with task force members identifying with any one of the focus areas. The "grassroots" development the Governor requested was taking shape.



The final focus area to be developed for the Master Plan was the potential "path" of the corridor. How we will connect all the "treasures", as determined by the local county task force committees, and public lands as they relate to the focus areas, was the Steering Committee's challenge from the summer to the fall of 2006. The Steering Committee then expanded to 21 members due to the multi-focus areas, and will continue to grow as we expand the project's constituent base.

In October came a **Regional Charette Meeting** about the resources and locations of assets, natural, recreational, tourism, and historical, that lie in the six-county area. This key meeting took place in Dyersburg. In November came a Strategic Planning Retreat, held in Memphis, which produced some of the last necessary discussions and documents to complete the Conceptual Master Plan which was presented to The McKnight Foundation in December, 2006.

The record of achievement and the building of reciprocal partnerships within the Mississippi River Natural and Recreational Corridor is exemplary and one that all of the stakeholders of the Mississippi River Valley of West Tennessee can take pride in.

Mississippi River Corridor - Tennessee Project Categories

- **Economic Development**

- Tourism and related industries
 - Employment opportunities and training
 - Recreational vendors and outfitters

- **Transportation and Infrastructure**

- Construction of facilities, roads and bridges
 - Transportation vehicles (land and water)
 - 1-69 Interstate considerations



- **Land Conservation**

- Wildlife protection and landscapes
 - Wetlands and natural habitats
 - Trail creation, expansion and enhancements
 - Access and design of key bluff outlooks
 - Land Acquisitions as needed to complete Corridor route

- **Recreation**

- Hiking, cycling, kayaking, canoeing and boat excursions
 - Fishing and hunting
 - Auto touring and bird watching

- **Heritage Development and Cultural Amenities**

- Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area
 - River discovery and historical influence on West Tennessee
 - Archeology of important sites, African American and Indian heritage
 - Museums and cultural centers
 - Music, art and food heritage

- **Health and Wellness**

- Recreational activities related to health: bicycling, hiking & birding, etc
 - Spiritual renewal opportunities
 - Mid-Corridor Center: Lodge and fitness center



- **Education**

- Interpretive River Centers (6)
 - Bus & Water Tours for school students
 - Mid-corridor Center/Ft. Pillow- Historical studies/Civil War
 - Bird Watching Tours and study

Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee Project Timeline: 2001-2008

2001-2003

- Initial partnerships were created between the Memphis Regional Chamber, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, and the Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation to develop a project plan for the Mississippi River Natural and Recreational Corridor.
- Methodically enlisted widespread support from conservation partners, state officials, county executives, economic development professionals, landowners and professionals, including planners, architects, engineers, public relations professionals, graphic designers, photographers, and more to develop concept and feasibility analysis.
- Developed a concept map and plan.
- Determined its feasibility by acquiring consensus from major stakeholders on the concept and preliminary cost estimates.
- Contracted with Younger & Associates to produce an Economic Impact Study based on the preliminary concepts of eco-tourism and the impact of I-69 coming through West Tennessee.

2004

- Created an informational Presentation Packet that fully explains the project vision and goals.
- Secured initial funding from Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Memphis Regional Chamber, Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation, The McKnight Foundation, Memphis Riverfront Development Corporation and in-kind support, in excess of \$250,000.
- Developed a Project Plan for the next phase of work.
- Completed Land Conservation Strategy with the input of 100 plus participants and with the expertise of scientists, park professionals, archaeologists, historians, birders, and professionals from various disciplines at the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, County experts, and interested constituents.

2005-2006

- Hired a full-time Project Director, Diana Threadgill, a marketing/public relations professional headquartered in Memphis.
- Developed a potential funding database and began to apply for significant grants to implement the vision.
- Secured \$30,000 Collaborative Partnership from the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area for Master Plan, public meetings, and promotional/educational materials
- Expanded Project Focus Areas to include: Economic Development, Transportation, Conservation, Recreation, Historical/Cultural Amenities, Health and Wellness, and Education.
- Continued individual meetings and increased the Steering Committee membership to include 6 county experts within the expanded focus areas. The new members were each appointed by the six County Mayors. Elected a Chairman of the Steering Committee, John Sheahan, who works as a full-time volunteer/director for the project.
- Produced marketing/educational materials and events which include:
 - Interactive Website www.msrivertn.org
 - Produced a large-format brochure with Thompson & Company to inspire further support and action for the project (Brochure won two Addy Awards – 1st place)
 - Created six 6' tall display fabric banners to illustrate the six counties and project focus categories
 - Initiated a major public relations campaign which garnered front page stories and editorials
 - Produced an 8-minute DVD to illustrate the project visually and verbally
- The MTSU Center for Historic Preservation and the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area carried out, as a donated professional services



project, a historical and architectural inventory of extant historical resources in the Mississippi River bottomland. They were also instrumental in the successful completion of public meetings and on-going project planning.

- Held Progress Report meeting with Governor's cabinet (tourism, transportation, economic/community development, and environment/conservation) in Nashville. Project was represented by Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, and the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area.
- Conducted five public "Town Hall" meetings in West Tennessee counties to introduce the project and to seek additional input for the Conceptual Master Plan. Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency video-taped each meeting for future reference and publicity.
- Wrote and distributed extensive surveys for a cataloging of county assets along the Mississippi River. Compiled public surveys for reports.
- Created six County Task Force Committees to help guide the project according to the individual county needs
- Produced a major **Mapping Charette Meeting** in Dyersburg which featured keynote transportation expert, Michael Gallis. Presentations were given on regional resources from architect Ritchie Smith and historian Carroll Van West, and reports from each of the six county task forces. Each county worked on individual maps to identify target assets for the Corridor route.
- Appointed TDEC Commissioner/Deputy for State Parks, Mike Carlton, to serve on the Steering Committee for the development of the mid-corridor, world-class destination site which will become an "anchor" near the Hatchie River and the Fort Pillow Historic Museum
- Held Five-Year Strategic Planning Retreat. Members of the Steering Committee and selected stakeholders attended a day-long retreat at the University of Memphis on Saturday, November 11th, 2006, to review and rewrite the 2002 initial mission statement, values, goals, and objectives for the project. This new Strategic Plan was adopted to include the Corridor's expanded focus areas of interest and to incorporate the significant opinions collected from the public meetings and surveys. Steering Committee voted to create a new non-profit organization, the Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee, Inc.
- December 1, 2006. Submitted completed Conceptual Master Plan to The McKnight Foundation.

- Awarded *Scenic Byways* grant of \$ 79,179 to develop a Transportation Plan and route for the Mississippi River Corridor in Tennessee
- Expanded MRC-T Board of Directors and Advisory Council memberships
- Executive Director, Diana Threadgill, was selected as a 2008 *WestStar* Leadership Program member (21 counties in West Tennessee, the program is administered by the University of Tennessee – Martin)
- Photography and database development of West Tennessee assets in process
- Held meetings with all six counties in the fall of 2008 to reach consensus on the new route for the National Scenic Byways and State of Tennessee designations
- Executive Director, Diana Threadgill, selected to serve on the Environment Committee by Mayor AC Wharton in his new *Sustainable Shelby County Initiative*
- Ground breaking takes place for the new \$100M **Discovery Park of America** in Union City (Obion County) - Northern gateway into the MRCT on Interstate-69
- Ground breaking ceremony (July 2008) for the new **Beale Street Landing** project by Riverfront Development Corporation in downtown Memphis

County Projects 2008:

- **Shelby County:** Self-guided walking tour Brochure of the Mississippi Riverfront at Memphis
- **Dyer County:** Historical Society Oral History Program and Digital Maps. River Front Park donation for downtown Dyersburg. Theatrical performance by Ken Teutsch – “Life on the Mississippi” and Promotional video
- **Tipton County:** Site Restoration Plan for Fort Wright, a historic gun powder magazine located on the second Chickasaw Bluff at Randolph
- **Lauderdale County:** Production of a new historical film for the Fort Pillow State Park Museum at Henning. Creation of a new marketing tri-fold brochure for Lauderdale County
- **Lake County:** Creation of a Map and spiral bound Guide Book of tourist destinations at Reelfoot Lake. A PDF document for website distribution will also be included
- **Obion County:** Production of a Marketing Brochures for Discovery Park of American and Obion County listing tourist destinations and unique assets



HOW THIS DOCUMENT CAN BE UTILIZED

The Great River Road Tennessee - Corridor Management Plan is available to a variety of organizations and groups for several uses. Some examples include:

Organization/Group	Primary Use
Tennessee Department of Tourism Development and the Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee, Inc.	Policy direction for strategic and annual plans A basis for preparing future grant and funding requests. A foundation for promoting the Great River Road - Tennessee to the tourism industry and consumer markets.
Tennessee Department of Transportation	A basis for comprehensively improving, managing, and maintaining the roadways of the designated route.
City/County Chambers of Commerce and Convention & Visitor Bureaus	Direction for cooperative promotion of the Great River Road Tennessee. Identification of local tourism development opportunities.
Managers of public resource sites such as parks, historic sites, museums, etc.	Guidance and support for funding and managing local resources that in fact have national significance as related to the Great River Road.
Owners and managers of private resource sites	Assurance that public efforts to sustain, interpret and promote intrinsic resources of the Great River Road Tennessee can support private and local economic development interests.
Organizations with an interest in the overall Mississippi River environment such as the Mississippi River Parkway Commission (MRPC) and Mississippi River Trail	Identification of opportunities to collaborate on shared missions to serve public interests.
Other state Great River Road organizations	A tool to identify shared issues and opportunities that cross state and regional lines.
Federal Highway Administration	Assurance that the Great River Road Tennessee is being planned and managed according to the requirements associated with National Scenic Byway designation.
All organizations and groups	A record of conditions and a benchmark to measure progress.

Periodic Updates are Essential

While this Corridor Management Plan provides long term management direction for the Great River Road Tennessee, its authors, and the Tennessee Departments of Transportation and Tourism recognize that effective management and development of state and nationally designated byways require periodic reviews and strategic updates of the corridor management plans that support those byways. Three levels of review and update of this corridor management plan are recommended:

- Immediate review and modification when significant milestones are reached, internal management and resource conditions change, or external events and conditions change beyond the control of the Tennessee Department of Transportation or the Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee.
- Annual review by the Tennessee Department of Transportation, Tourism and MRCT staff to account for progress toward implementing short-term actions. Annual reviews should include a drive of the entire route by the Tennessee Department of Transportation and MRCT staff to observe any changes in conditions.
- Four- to five-year updates involving a complete review, and appropriate modification of all sections of the Great River Road Tennessee CMP. This would include a thorough review of the route conditions, intrinsic resource inventory and improvement plans.

Vision Statement

From the city main streets to the rural environments of America and far beyond, the Great River Road in Tennessee along the mighty Mississippi River has inspired and welcomed generations of visitors and immigrants to a historic landscape full of hope, soulful culture and unique opportunities for a better quality of life.



What is a Byway?

Byways offer visitors and residents access to authentic experiences in treasured places. They provide alternatives to the monotony of linear, high-speed travel and open up vistas of imagination. Byways introduce travelers to places and riches they may otherwise overlook. The route may be a spectacular destination sought by many travelers, or it may be a local road long admired and appreciated by nearby residents. A byway may be rural, suburban, or urban. It may have one of many different names—a road, trail, backroad, backway, or historic roadway. As long as a community or responsible organization believes a road corridor provides access to respected and protected resources, the roadway may be considered a byway. In order to become a designated Tennessee Scenic Parkway, however, it must meet certain minimum criteria; have a viable organization that accepts responsibility for its operation; and maintain relationships with interested individuals, organizations, and agencies.

The *Federal Register* defines a scenic byway as:

“a public road having special scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archeological, and/or natural qualities that have been recognized as such through legislation or some other official declaration. The terms “road” and “highway” are synonymous. They are not meant to define higher or lower functional classifications or wider or narrower cross-sections. Moreover, the terms State Scenic Byway, National Scenic Byway, or All-American Road refer not only to the road or highway itself but also to the corridor through which it passes.”



What is a Corridor Management Plan?

The *Federal Register* also defines a “Corridor Management Plan” as a:

“a written document that specifies the actions, procedures, controls, operational practices, and administrative strategies to maintain the scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archeological, and natural qualities of the scenic byway.”

A corridor management plan is an organization’s statement of actions to bring about a vision for a byway. It is a written outline of a set of intentions for a byway. The plan’s complexity and the topics it addresses in detail vary from byway to byway. A corridor management plan, on its own, carries with it no regulation of property or property use. Instead, it represents a point of beginning or renewal. The corridor management plan assembles concerns, thoughts, and ideas in a single organized document. Thus, diverse issues and objectives like increased tourism development, roadway safety, an archaeological museum, and others are studied and planned by the byway organization. This helps all stakeholders work together, join forces on related projects, and resolve conflicts that sometimes occur when different organizations, groups or governments plan without consulting one another.

A corridor management plan does not need to solve problems. It may simply identify issues and suggest methods by which goals will be achieved. The corridor management plan does not need to outline the specifics involved with the development of programs and projects—it may simply identify needs and suggest ways a program might get started. The key to the success of a corridor management plan is follow-through by an energetic organization that executes programs and projects.

The Great River Road Tennessee - Corridor Management Plan is designed to:

- develop another shared link between units of government;
- assist local communities with corridor-wide issues;
- provide support for continued protection of intrinsic qualities;
- increase communication among byway communities regarding tourism and economic development;
- provide a framework by which economic development can be encouraged without compromising quality of life enjoyed by the residents of the region;
- fulfill the corridor management plan requirements for nomination as a National Scenic Byway; and
- be a flexible plan that can be modified over time.

The Great River Road Tennessee - Corridor Management Plan is not designed to:

- impose regulations on a county, city or town;
- require the adoption of any new local ordinances or special districts;
- prohibit new construction or development;
- deny any community its right to pursue funding for local projects; or
- require participation in corridor-wide projects or programs.



The National Scenic Byways Program

The National Scenic Byways Program was established under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). A Scenic Byways Advisory Committee, working with the Federal Highway Administration, recommended that the program designate a system of "National Scenic Byways" and "All-American Roads." For a route to be eligible for designation as a National Scenic Byway, it must possess one or more of the six intrinsic qualities (archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational or scenic); have a community or organization committed to its designation and management; and have developed a corridor management plan. From the best of these is chosen a very small number of All-American Roads. This designation is a very rare occurrence. As of 2008, there are 125 designated All-American Roads and National Scenic Byways.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Great River Road

The national scenic and historic highway known as the Great River Road, celebrating its 70th birthday this year, is one of the oldest, longest, and most unique scenic byways on the North American continent. It offers respite to millions each year for a day's drive or for an extended vacation.

The 4,838-kilometer (3,000-mile) continuous Great River Road route stretches from near Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, picking up its first views of the Mighty Mississippi near its headwaters in Minnesota and criss-crossing the river through the 10 Mississippi river states. Travelers enjoying the scenery, history, and culture along the Great River Road can thank previous generations for their forethought in preserving and developing the river route for our enjoyment. The story of the continuing evolution of the Great River Road demonstrates what can be accomplished when state and federal officials work cooperatively with local communities to bring the best transportation, historical, and cultural facilities to the American people.

Franklin Roosevelt was President and automatic transmissions were the cutting edge of automotive technology when the Mississippi River Parkway Planning Commission was formed in 1938 to develop plans for what was to become the Great River Road. Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes had urged the governors of the 10 Mississippi River states to form the Commission after being convinced of the merit of a Mississippi River Parkway by a group of state planning officials. The planning officials had been developing the concept of a Mississippi River Road as an extension of an idea for a recreational river road that had been first put forward by the Missouri Planning Board in 1936.

The Commission was to become instrumental not only in the early planning and development of the parkway, but in its construction, promotion, marketing, and development. Now known as the Mississippi River Parkway Commission and headquartered in Wisconsin, the Commission continues to promote, preserve, and enhance the resources of the Mississippi River Valley and to develop the highways and amenities of the Great River Road. Representatives of all 10 river states serve on the Commission's Board of Directors, and Chair State Mississippi River Commissions. But the road from the Commission's beginnings in 1938 to the success of the Great River Road today had been a long one, full of starts and stops.

1939-1951: Feasibility Studies

As with so many government enterprises, the Great River Road began with a false start, followed by a feasibility study. The U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Public Lands held hearings in 1939 and 1940 to discuss a bill that would have authorized a feasibility study of the Mississippi River Parkway concept. While popular, the Parkway idea was soon overshadowed by World War II.

It wasn't until 1949 that Congress approved funding for a feasibility study. The study, "Parkway for the Mississippi River," was completed by the Bureau of Public Roads (predecessor agency to the Federal Highway Administration) in 1951.

Study Conclusion: A Scenic Route, Not a Parkway

The study concluded that a parkway for the Mississippi River would benefit the nation as a whole. However, the report made an important distinction. Because it would be too expensive to build an entirely new parkway, the Bureau of Public Roads recommended instead that a scenic route would be designated. The scenic route would consist of existing riverside roads, with new construction limited to interconnecting the existing roads so that a continuous route could be developed. The existing roads would be upgraded to parkway quality. The modified approach would save a great deal of land acquisition and new construction costs. Another consideration was that some of the most scenic locations along the river had already been pre-empted by existing highways, railroads, towns, and cities.

The concept of a scenic route rather than a national parkway was adopted. As a result, the Great River Road is not owned by the National Park Service, as is the case with true national parkways such as the Blue Ridge and Natchez Trace Parkways. Instead, the states have developed the Great River Road through a nationally coordinated program. The Bureau of Public Roads recommended "that the selected route shall be improved in a superior manner and that it should be dedicated to recreational purposes as well as to moving traffic." The needed construction and improvements "can be done with regular apportionments under the federal highway act or by the states on their own..."

1954-1970: Planning Studies and Initial Route Markings

With the Federal Highway Act of 1954, Congress responded to the recommendations of the Bureau of Public Roads by appropriating planning funds. The Bureau of Public Roads was authorized to work with each of the states to develop specific criteria for the "parkway," and to determine one specific route within each state for the "Mississippi River Parkway."

By the late 1950s, the familiar green and white pilot's wheel marker began to spring up on various sections of the designated route. Planning continued through the 1960s.

1974-1983: Development Begins

With the completion of all the planning reports in early 1970, actual development of the Great River Road was ready to begin. Although a number of states had put up Great River Road highway signs and used available state funds for scenic bluff protection and road improvements, full-scale development funds had not been readily available. Legislation to fund the development of the Great River Road was included for the first time as part of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1973. From 1973 to 1982, Congress authorized a total of \$314 million in funds earmarked for the Great River Road. Most (\$251 million) of those funds were allocated directly to the states.

1976: Federal Guidelines Issued

With funds available, development could begin in earnest. In 1976, the Federal Highway Administration issued program guidelines setting criteria for the Great River Road. The states then set up their own individual process procedures for selecting the route of the Great River Road within their state boundaries.

"The Great River Road should be located within designated segments to take advantage of scenic views and provide the traveler with the opportunity to enjoy the unique features of the Mississippi River and its recreational opportunities," the guidelines said. The criteria also specified that the Great River Road should provide for a variety of experiences or themes including history, geology, and culture, and that the road should provide convenient access to larger population centers. Protection of the Mississippi River corridor was required by "appropriate route selection, effective control and development, and scenic easement acquisition."

State and Federal Routes

While the national Great River Road criss-crosses the river within each state, the states have designated alternative routes that provide Great River Road routes on both sides of the river from the headwaters to the Gulf. The national or federal Great River Road route consists of sections that conform to the FHWA guidelines and were eligible for the Great River Road funds that were available in the 1970s and early 1980s. The state-designated alternative routes include sections with significant scenic, historic, and recreational interest. The Mississippi River Parkway Commission makes no distinction between the federal and state routes in its promotional efforts. However, some states do use highway signs that distinguish between a national and state route.

1990s: National Scenic Byways Program

State-designated scenic byways are now eligible to receive federal grants under the federal National Scenic Byways Program, which was first authorized in 1993 federal highway legislation and reauthorized in the 1998 highway bill. The Great River Road in six states have received National Scenic byway designation. National Scenic Byway Program grant funds are available to designated National Scenic Byways for certain types of byway-related projects.

The Great River Road in Tennessee

In 1958 the State of Tennessee requested from the US Department of Commerce, a study that would propose a route for the Great River Road through the western portion of the State bordering the Mississippi River. The Study was to serve as a blueprint for creating a scenic and historical byway that would provide economic development opportunities while improving Tennessee's quality of life. Included in the Study were descriptions of the many natural and historical assets that compliment Tennessee's Mississippi River region; suggestions on how best to capitalize on these assets economically; an overview of what constitutes a successful parkway and how best to incorporate this into Tennessee's landscape; and finally a proposed route

that would be the best use of the assets described. The objective was to include Tennessee in the very ambitious goal of linking all ten Mississippi River States into one seamless international destination.

Fifty years have passed since the Study was presented to the State and it remains a viable concept today. The Tennessee portion of the Mississippi River is one of the most unique and scenic sections along its entire length. Tennessee is just south of the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers which creates the “Lower” Mississippi River. This is the portion of the River that one equates with the “River Boat Days” and the Mark Twain era.

Twice the width as the Upper Mississippi, the Lower section is free-flowing and unstoppable. Attempts to tame the Lower Mississippi have always been met with frustration and disaster. The Chickasaw Bluffs, which start at the eastern edge of the confluence, runs parallel with the river all the way to Memphis. It provided the only “flood free” high ground available to early settlers. This Corridor – from the Bluffs to the River – is a unique and fascinating attraction that only Tennessee offers in abundance in the ten-state expanse of the Great River Road.

Between the River and the Bluffs lies the great Mississippi River Alluvial Valley which contains some of the most fertile soil in the world. The once mighty bottomland forest that once existed within the alluvial valley has mostly disappeared, but reforestation is underway and soon there will be thousands of contiguous acres of existing and new growth to welcome migratory waterfowl and neo-tropical birds.

Fortunately, many of the lakes, streams, sloughs and wetlands with their majestic cypress trees, that make this area so unique, still exist. Descending the Chickasaw Bluffs onto the Valley floor takes only seconds by car, yet the contrast is like night and day. The Bluffs with their hilly terrain seems miles apart from the flat, wet, and dark surface of the Valley below. Overlooks, from atop the Bluffs, offer incredible views of the forests canopy and the mighty Mississippi River.

The original concept of the Great River Road has not been lost to most people and local organizations. The Great River Road was, and still is, intended to be an economic development asset for the communities along the Mississippi River. The idea that the Mississippi River, as a universal icon, would attract tourists internationally, is still valid. With development and enhancement of the Corridor’s assets coupled with a sound marketing strategy required to promote the region – the desire to create a viable destination will be successful.

The mission of The Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee, Inc. (MRCT) is to take up where the 1958 Study left off and to turn a concept into reality by making the Great River Road in Tennessee a viable tourist attraction and thus creating an economic stimulus for the six counties that are directly associated with the Mississippi River. The MRCT will also facilitate quality of life enhancements for the people of the Mid-

South, especially the over 1 million inhabitants of metropolitan Memphis.

Once a small *grassroots* initiative, the MRCT has grown into a significant 501(c)(3) non-profit organization comprised of representatives from all six counties that border the Mississippi River and Reelfoot Lake – Obion, Lake, Dyer, Lauderdale, Tipton & Shelby. Each county has a “Task Force Committee” made up of local citizens appointed by their County Mayor. The Task Force Committees are responsible for recommending, reviewing and approving all aspects of the MRCT Strategic Plan that impacts their respective county.

These six Task Force Committees have approved the recommendations submitted by the MRCT for a proposed historical route to serve as the Great River Road for the State of Tennessee.

The proposal for the Great River Road - Tennessee is much more than merely connecting the state of Kentucky with the state of Mississippi. It is **the** crucial piece of a comprehensive long range plan for stimulating economic development by protecting and enhancing intrinsic qualities, and telling their stories to residents and visitors alike.

Travelers will experience all intrinsic resources of the Great River Road Corridor in Tennessee – scenic, historic, natural, recreational, archeological and cultural. The route connects all four State Parks that border the River as well as public land owned by Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Thousands of acres of public land are included on the route. It also includes breathtaking vistas of the Mississippi River; overlooks of the alluvial forests; wildlife observation areas; Mississippi River shoreline; river sandbars and islands; cypress lined lakes, rivers and sloughs; wetlands; hilly and forested countryside; huge plantation operations; quaint farms, all six county seat townships and their civic squares; local and regional landmarks and museums; colloquial commercial venues; and much more.

Many of the assets needed to make the Great River Road - Tennessee Corridor a viable destination already exist and efforts continue to create a single “product” that is easily recognized by the user. Enhancing existing assets and creating new attractions are a major objective of the MRCT. Hiking trails, water access points, wildlife observation stations, signage, road improvements, outfitters and vendors, interpretative centers and convenience stations, overlooks and professional excursion providers are some of the major improvements planned to truly make the Great River Road – Tennessee Corridor a world class experience.

The marketing and promotion of the Great River Road – Tennessee Corridor is another key element of the MRCT mission. Having the product in place is no guarantee of success without a feasible marketing strategy. Maintaining an attractive and useful website, distributing printed materials, promoting the Corridor in all media formats,

conducting public relation tours and conferences coupled with a strong partnership with the State of Tennessee is critical in making the route an economic engine for the region; a primary collection of Mississippi River intrinsic qualities and an inspiring stage for authentic visitor experiences.

Map Created for the Mississippi River Corridor -Tennessee

2006 Mapping "Charette" Meeting

MISSISSIPPI RIVER Corridor PRESENTS THE
2006 MAPPING "CHARETTE" MEETING
CREATING "Human Habitat" IN WEST TENNESSEE

Come join citizens and professionals in the fields of Economic Development, History, Culture, Infrastructure, Education, Health and Wellness, Conservation and Recreation as we design a new "wayfaring" route to the Mississippi River in West Tennessee.

Tuesday, October 17, 2006
Dyersburg, Tennessee
11:30 am - 4:30 pm


To be held at the
 Lannom Center, 2000 Commerce Avenue, in Dyersburg, TN 38024

Activities will include:

- Presentation by Michael Gallis "New Approaches for Achieving Environmental Success in a Global Age" Noon - 1:00 pm
- Focus Groups
- Drafting of Master Map
- Lunch is provided w/registration

Be a part of History and make your reservation today!
www.msriver.tn.org
 901.278.8439

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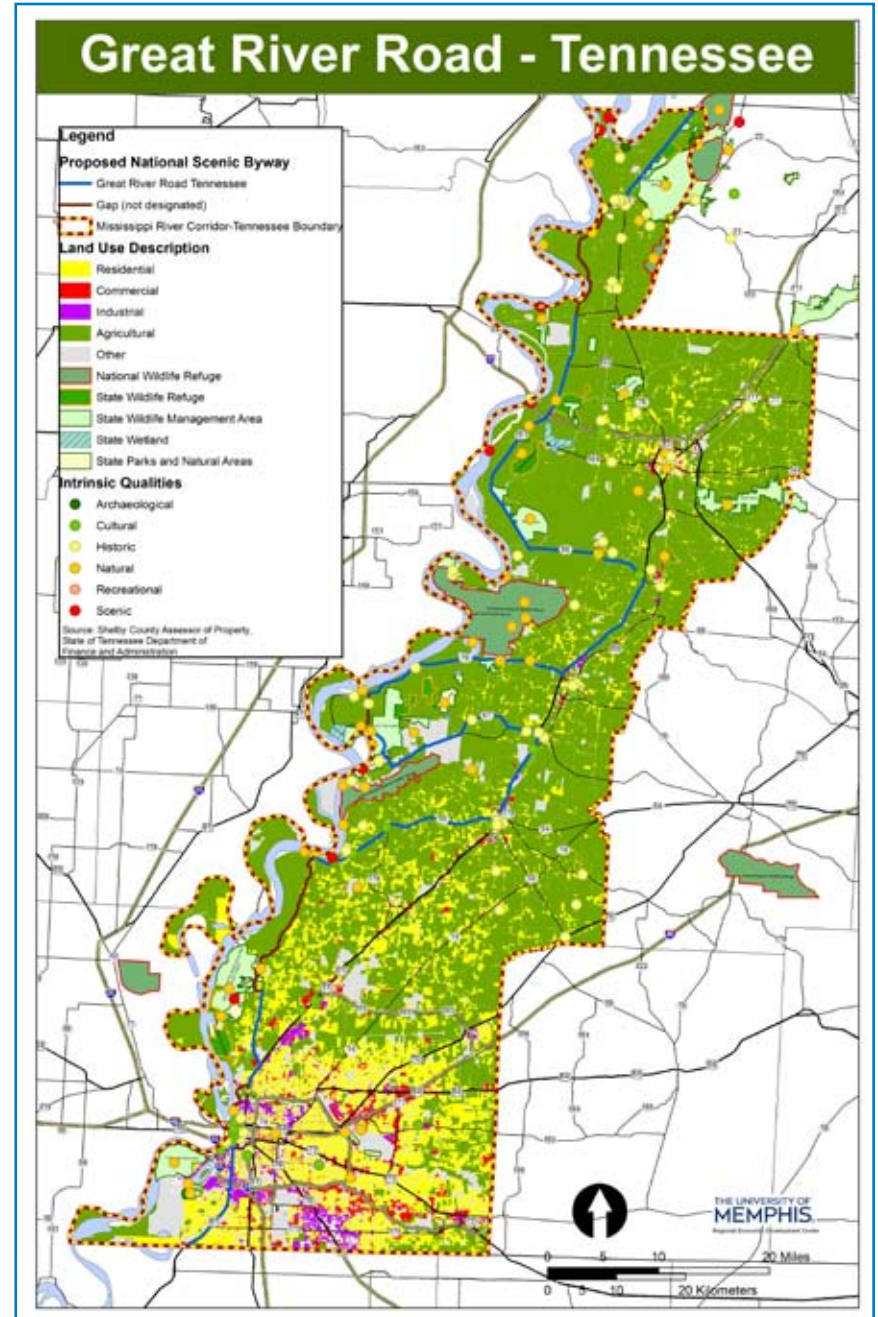


Michael Gallis



Identification of the top Corridor Assets as identified by public meetings, surveys and a major Mapping Charette- Dyersburg

Section Two:
CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN FEATURES
Great River Road Tennessee Route and Map (1)



Great River Road Tennessee – Route Description

The Great River Road Tennessee is a collection of state highways, county and local roads, and city streets that provide a continuous routing near or on the west bank of the Mississippi River from the Kentucky state line at Reelfoot Lake and onto the Mississippi state line just south of Memphis.

The route is 185.5 miles long and is bordered by the Mississippi River on the west and the Chickasaw bluffs landform or county boundary lines on the east. The Great River Road passes through five counties: Lake, Dyer, Lauderdale, Tipton and Shelby.

Official Title:	Great River Road Tennessee
Length:	185.5 miles Includes public highway, county roads, and urban/rural street segments
Road Surfacing:	Paved hard surface and a three-mile segment of unpaved road in Tipton County at the Shelby County line
Seasonal Accessibility:	All portions are accessible the majority of the year except during high floods in Tipton or Lauderdale counties or during the Memphis in May International Festival (a month long celebration at Riverside Drive). Normal travel interruptions are anticipated and alternative routes are planned for flooding or Festival activities.
Counties through which the Great River Road -Tennessee passes (north to south)	Five (5) total Lake, Dyer, Lauderdale, Tipton and Shelby (Obion County is a major gateway in northeast Tennessee at Reelfoot Lake)
Municipalities through which the Great River Road Tennessee passes:	Six (6) total Tiptonville, Halls, Ripley, Henning, Memphis, Burlison, Covington, Garland, and Gilt Edge

Adjoining states to which the Tennessee Great River Road connects:	<p>Kentucky west bank: US 88</p> <p>Mississippi west bank: US 61</p> <p>Arkansas Northern section – Hwy 61</p> <p>Missouri west bank: I-155</p>
Principle land uses associated with the Great River Road -Tennessee	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agriculture 2. Levee and flood protection 3. Public lands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Wildlife Refuge • State Wildlife Management Area • State Wetland • State Park and Natural Area • National Wildlife Refuge 4. Industrial uses and cargo distribution associated with the Mississippi River 5. Residential 6. Commercial 7. Other
Mississippi River Crossings: Bridges (north to south)	<p>The Caruthersville Bridge – Dyersburg – I-155 to MO</p> <p>The Hernando Desoto Bridge- Memphis – I-40 to AR</p> <p>The Memphis-Arkansas Memorial Bridge – Memphis – I-40 to AR</p>

- The river valley in Tennessee spreads over more than 650,000 acres and is larger in size than the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
- Much of the valley is *not* protected by federal levees, providing opportunities to see and feel the immense power of the river in flood. In the Lower Mississippi, this special experience is unique to Tennessee.
- The valley is traversed by five significant rivers, including the Hatchie, a 200 mile long river that is the longest free-flowing river in the Lower Mississippi basin south of Cairo, Illinois.
 - Hatchie National River
 - Obion River
 - Forked Deer River
 - Loosahatchie River
 - Wolf River

- Four Chickasaw bluffs traverse the state from northeast to southwest and provide panoramic overviews of the river and valley.
- State parks and a nationally recognized river park provide fine recreational and educational opportunities.
 - T. O. Fuller State Park
 - Meeman Shelby Forest State Park
 - Fort Pillow State Historic Park
 - Reelfoot Lake State Park
 - Mud Island River Park
- Significant historical sites and a major Mississippi River museum interpret the rich historical and cultural experience of the region.
 - Fort Pillow Civil War historical site and State Park
 - Chucalissa Indian village and the C.H. Nash Museum
 - Mud Island Museum and River Park
 - Alex Haley Boyhood Home in Henning (near U.S. 51)

A series of wildlife refuges and wildlife management areas covering large areas of the valley provide rich, protected habitat for wildlife.

Lower Hatchie NWR
Reelfoot Lake NWR and WMA
Eagle Lake Refuge
Moss Island WMA
Bogota WMA
Cold Creek Refuge
Tumbleweed WMA

Chickasaw NWR
Lake Isom NWR
John Tully WMA
White Lake Refuge
Black Bayou Refuge
Ernest Rice WMA
President's Island WMA

Millions of birds, over 40% of all bird species in the U. S., migrate along the Mississippi River flyway each year during the fall and spring and depend upon it for feeding and resting. The migration corridor is also indispensable to the life-cycle of many birds. The great raptors, including the bald eagle, with a wing-span that is up to eight feet long, are among the many species of birds that can be seen along the river in Tennessee.

Gateway Communities

The Great River Road - Tennessee travelers are well served by numerous communities; public and private services; and various connecting highways and county roads all along the route. Our urban visitor centers, state park welcome offices, and county seats all provide an extensive network of travel support. In turn, leisure travel along the Great River Road



and throughout its Mississippi River Corridor affords significant contributions to local economies and exhibit significant potential for growth.

Of the numerous routes and beginning points travelers can use to reach the Great River Road - Tennessee, six community areas are significant for the numerous travel services and amenities they provide and the intrinsic resources they sustain that are so important to the overall ten-state Great River Road story. The primary gateway communities or regions in west Tennessee are:

- Union City – Obion County (I-69 connection in progress and Reelfoot Lake NE entrance)
- Tiptonville – Lake County (entrance from Hickman, Kentucky)
- Dyersburg – Dyer County
- Ripley – Lauderdale County
- Covington – Tipton County
- Memphis – Shelby County (major urban entrance from Tunica, Mississippi)
- Hickman, Kentucky
- Tunica, MS
- Hayti/Caruthersville, Missouri

Important features of all six gateway entrances include:

- multiple access points to view the Mississippi River
- support of regional visitor centers and state park offices
- connection with one or several gateway communities
- a variety of public attractions that support the byway's intrinsic qualities
- connection with the Mississippi River Trail
- essential travel services and numerous establishments for lodging, fuel, food and restaurants, and shopping

See **Part 3: The Great River Road - Tennessee Reference Library** for more information.

Intrinsic Qualities (2)

FEDERAL REGISTER - NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM -
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION:

An assessment of the intrinsic qualities and their “context” (the areas surrounding them).

Overview of the Great River Road – Tennessee – Intrinsic Qualities

The National Scenic Byway Program of the Federal Highway Administration describes six intrinsic qualities—archaeological, cultural, historical, natural, recreational, and scenic—as valued qualities used to describe and categorize a byway’s special sense of place and meaning to local residents and byway travelers. These six intrinsic qualities aid byway stakeholders and managers in determining the local, regional (multistate) and national significance of each individual site, event, and story as they contribute to the authenticity of visitor experiences.

Identified, categorized, and recorded, intrinsic qualities have value because they can be enhanced, managed, protected, interpreted, and promoted. Equally important, intrinsic qualities can and should be recognized for reasons that:

- support visitor experience
- instill local resident values such as pride, investment and conservation of natural and historic resources
- aid in fulfilling state agency initiatives and
- serve vital roles in communicating the stories that are regionally, nationally, and internationally significant

The Great River Road – Tennessee, similar to the other nine states that border the Mississippi River, contains an abundance of assets, natural attributes, historical sites, recreational opportunities, cultural amenities and scenic vistas that are all associated in a like manner to the six intrinsic qualities most valued in a National Scenic Byway.

For each of the six distinct resource types, examples in the Great River Road Tennessee corridor include:

Archaeological: *Archaeological Quality involves those characteristics of the byway corridor that are physical evidence of historic or prehistoric human life or activity that are visible and capable of being inventoried and interpreted. The byway corridor’s archeological interest, as identified through ruins, artifacts, structural remains, and other physical evidence have scientific significance that educate the viewer and stir an appreciation for the past.*

- Chucalissa and the C.H. Nash Museum
- Island #10 – Tiptonville
- Indian Mounds
- Reelfoot Lake



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

- Music, various music genres, traditional and contemporary musicians and musical festivals
- Graceland, Beale Street, Sun Studios, Stax Records... with historic associated names that continue to influence generations of musicians; Elvis, BB King, Carl Perkins, Roy Orbison, Tina Turner, Issac Hayes, Jerry Lee Lewis, Sam and Dave, Rufus Thomas, Sam Phillips...
- Culinary cuisines, food products, locally grown and raised produce
- Barbecue (home of the largest International Barbeque Festival – Memphis in May Festival)
- Down home soul food, including catfish and turnip greens
- Art and crafts; painting, sculpture and pottery unique to this region
- Oral History programs based on southern experiences and river lore
- Writing and literary arts; historical documentation (Shelby Foote)
- Numerous ethnic and community festivals and events
- Major arts district on South Main – downtown Memphis
- Active and successful preservation efforts to save architectural buildings
- A special southern dialect and speech that is unique to west Tennessee

Historic: *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 viewer and stir an appreciation for the past. The historic elements reflect the actions of people and may include buildings, settlement patterns, and other examples of human activity. Historic features can be inventoried, mapped, and interpreted. They possess integrity of location, design, setting, material, workmanship, feeling, and association.*

- Native American and immigrant Indians
- Tom Lee Park – Riverside Drive – downtown Memphis
- The Cotton Museum – Front Street – Memphis
- Chickasaw Bluffs – (4) – west Tennessee
- Fort Wright at Randolph
- Victorian Village – downtown Memphis
- Shelby County Courthouse
- Numerous museums and historical structures throughout the Corridor
- Historical sites selected later in the CMP document

Natural: *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, landform, water bodies, vegetation, and wildlife. There may be evidence of human activity, but the natural features reveal minimal disturbances.*

- Geology, landforms and river hydrology
- Wetlands, bayous and swamps

- Protected wildlife management properties, state preserves
- Overton Park – *The Old Forest* – mid-town Memphis
- Nature centers
- Interpretation programs and watchable wildlife programs and opportunities
- Birding trails
- Waterfowl
- The Mississippi River
- Hardwood forests

Recreational: *Recreational Quality involves outdoor recreational activities directly associated with and dependent upon the natural and cultural elements of the corridor's landscape. The recreational activities provide opportunities for active and passive recreational experiences. They include but are not limited to water skiing, rafting, boating, fishing, and hiking. The recreational activities may be seasonal, but the quality and importance of the recreational activities as seasonal operations must be well recognized.*

- Water-based recreation opportunities for boating, fishing, hunting
- Kayaking and canoeing on the numerous lakes, rivers and 'ole man river
- Protected wildlife management properties, state preserves
- State and city parks
- Mississippi River Trail
- Primitive and modern campgrounds
- Wildlife viewing
- Antique and art shopping
- Performing arts and cultural events
- Evening entertainment (Beale Street and South Main historic districts)
- Memphis in May International Festival (month long event-Memphis)
- Art museums (Memphis Brooks Museum of Art – the largest in Tennessee)
- Natural History (The Pink Palace – Memphis)

Scenic: *Scenic Quality is the heightened visual experience derived from the view of natural and manmade elements of the visual environment of the byway corridor. The characteristics of the landscape are strikingly distinct and offer a pleasing and most memorable visual experience. All elements of the landscape—landform, water, vegetation, and manmade development—contribute to the quality of the corridor's visual environment. Everything present is in harmony and shares in the intrinsic qualities.*

- Mud Island River Park and Museum – riverfront Memphis
- National Ornamental Metal Museum
- The Mississippi River itself and various River vantage points
- Agricultural fields, farms, and plantations
- Distinctive architecture
- Small town main streets and civic squares
- Vegetation in all seasons
- Floodplain forests
- Wetlands bayous and backwaters

There are over 16,000 miles of rivers and streams within the Mississippi River Corridor of west Tennessee. The East Gulf Coastal Plain produces streams and aquatic habitats more similar to the Gulf Coast than to the rest of the state. Along the Great River Road - Tennessee, the Mississippi Alluvial Plain, at less than 300 feet above sea level, produces lowlands, flood plains, swamps and meandering streams.

The major rivers in this drainage include the Obion, Forked Deer, Hatchie, Loosahatchie, and the Wolf. Most of the rivers and streams in this drainage have been channelized and leveed to restrict their natural behavior; however the main channel of the Hatchie River remains largely unaltered. The river's natural conditions of serene and primitive beauty have been preserved by several non-profit organizations in the region.

However, despite our great wealth of resources in natural, scenic, cultural, recreational and archaeological intrinsic qualities, the Great River Road – Tennessee, like most of our other Mississippi River states, has chosen the **historical** category to maximize our western coast. Listed below are fifteen unique sites that document the river civilization that was built many, many generations ago and continues to evolve as a culture with great promise for the future and distinct pride in our past achievements.



Specific Historic Intrinsic Qualities and Sites Great River Road – Tennessee

Corridor Management Plan

Historical Sites – Great River Road and Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee:

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 viewer and stir an appreciation for the past. The historic elements reflect the actions of people and may include buildings, settlement patterns, and other examples of human activity. Historic features can be inventoried, mapped and interpreted. They possess integrity of location, design, setting, material, workmanship, feeling and association.

LAKE COUNTY

1) Island # 10 - Civil War battle and marker



Great River Road Tennessee, Marker for the Battle of Island No. 10, north of Tiptonville, Lake County, Tennessee

This state-developed Island No. 10 interprets this pivotal Civil War battle for control of the Mississippi River. Erected c. 1960 as part of the state's Civil War centennial. Rucker's Battery site, south of the marker on Tennessee 78, is another part of the Island No. 10 battlefield.

2) Jones Chapel Church of Christ Cemetery - Hwy 22, north of Tiptonville



Caption: Great River Road Tennessee, Jones Cemetery, north of Tiptonville, Lake County, Tennessee

Alternate Text: This National Register-eligible cemetery is the resting place for the mass burial of 75 Confederates from the Island No. 10 battle during the Civil War, the oldest identified marker dates to 1838.

This National Register-eligible cemetery is the resting place for the mass burial of 75 Confederates from the Civil War's Island No. 10 battle. Just as important, many markers are associated with settlement history in the region, when this area was known as Madrid's Bend. The oldest identified marker dates to 1838.

With the surrender of Forts Henry and Donelson, Tennessee, and the evacuation of Columbus, Kentucky, Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard, commander of the Confederate Army of the Mississippi, chose New Madrid and Island No. 10, about 50 river miles below Columbus, to be the strongpoint for defending the Mississippi River. Beauregard had only 7,000 Confederates at New Madrid and Island No. 10 to defend the river and prevent a Union thrust deep into West Tennessee and Arkansas. The stronghold was located in a hairpin turn of the river that created the New Madrid Bend, a peninsula that controlled long reaches of the waterway.

The strong Confederate position on Island No. 10 blocked Union Brig. Gen. John Pope's, commander of the Union Army of the Mississippi, access to the Union fleet which was located above their blockade. Officer Andrew H. Foote's six ironclads and 10 mortar scows unsuccessfully shelled the island. For three weeks, Pope's regiment of engineers, assisted by contrabands, dug a canal that connected the bends in the Mississippi River through two bayous. On April 4, 1862, the Federals sent light-draft steamboats from Island No. 10 through the canal to New Madrid, avoiding the Confederate batteries.

During the storms on the nights of April 6 and 7, the Carondelet and the Pittsburg slipped past the guns on Island No. 10. The ironclads protected Pope's troops as they crossed the river at Tiptonville on April 7 and blocked the base of the Reelfoot peninsula, the Confederate escape route. Confederate Brig. Gen. William W. Mack-

all surrendered and the formalities were completed the next day. As a result of this Union victory, the Mississippi River was open to the Federals down to Fort Pillow, Tennessee. Following the Confederate evacuation of Island No. 10, approximately 1,000 African-American freedmen were settled there by the Federal commander at Columbus. The island then functioned as an agricultural colony.

The siege and capture of Island No. 10 was designated one of the Civil War's 384 principal battlefields by the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission in 1993 because it was an engagement involving elements of the field armies that had a direct and decisive influence on the Vicksburg campaign.

A series of floods have destroyed Island No. 10, but some rifle and artillery emplacements remain on the river bank. We plan to create an interpretive site with information panels at the site along the shore of the Mississippi River in the vicinity of the Mississippi River.

3) Reelfoot Lake



Caption: Great River Road Tennessee, Reelfoot Lake, White's Landing Boardwalk and Fisherman, Lake County, Tennessee

Alternate Text: This lone fisherman is an example of the fishing activity that takes place in the midst of beautiful old cypress trees in this natural fish hatchery lake created as a result of the New Madrid earthquakes which occurred in the early 1800s.

Reelfoot Lake is located in Lake and Obion counties in extreme Northwest Tennessee. A portion of the lake extends into southwestern Kentucky near the town of Fulton. The lake lies approximately 3 miles east of the Mississippi River. It is the largest natural lake in Tennessee encompassing more than 10,000 acres of water and another 5,000 acres in marshes and hardwood wetlands. It is estimated that more than 40% of the lake has a depth of 3 feet or less. Approximately 30,000 acres of the lake and surrounding marshes and watershed are protected. Management of the lake is primarily vested with 3 primary agencies (TWRA-17,500 acres; USFWS-12,300 acres; TDEC-300 acres).

Late in 1811, the New Madrid Earthquake caused huge spasms and convulsions that rocked much of North America. The major force of these shocks were centered in the Reelfoot Lake area, which was then a huge cypress forest. On December 16th, the earth's surface rose and sank and the Mississippi River actually turned around and flowed backward, pouring into a hissing abyss. This mighty quake created the awesome Reelfoot Lake when more than 15,000 acres of forest land sank beneath the level of the river. Naked trunks remained and one of the world's greatest natural fish hatcheries was created.

Historical records show that Davy Crockett hunted in the "land of the shakes" during the early 1830's. Hungry animals and a huge variety of waterfowl moved into this area and made Reelfoot a significant wildlife preserve. Crockett stated in his autobiography that he killed 108 bears in a single year at the lake and frequently made camp at the Bluebank Bayou. Crockett, the frontiersman, Indian fighter and Congressman is well remembered. He has a church (Crockett Chapel Methodist), a town (Crockett Mills) and a county named after him in this vicinity. The cabin where he lived is near Rutherford, Tennessee, about an hour drive from Reelfoot Lake on Highway 45W.

Reelfoot Lake State Park preserves one of the state's most unique environments, Reelfoot Lake with adjacent wetlands and forests created by the New Madrid earthquakes of 1811-1812. The state acquired the land in the early twentieth century but no formal park development took place for some time. In November 1934, CCC Company 1453 moved from Tellico Plains, in the mountains of East Tennessee, to Tiptonville, the north gateway to the Tennessee Delta. The goal of the 200 men was to build a public park around the lake. William B. Connelly was the project superintendent. The company first cleared dead trees, foliage, and stumps from the banks of the lake so views of the its eerie landscape would be enhanced. Then the workers turned to building structures, from picnic areas to well-crafted Government Rustic style check-in stations for the hunters and fishermen expected to use the park regularly. The CCC continued its work on the park until 1938 when it turned its attention to building two wildlife refuges. Lake Isom National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1938. It includes 1,850 acres and is located five miles south of Reelfoot. The project turned reclaimed land into a hunters' haven, especially for the Canada goose. Reelfoot National Wildlife Refuge contains 9,586 acres, representing the upper one-third of the lake area. Established in 1941, the Reelfoot refuge provides a winter home to a large number of waterfowl, such as coots, mallards, and Canada geese. It is also famous for nesting eagles who consider Reelfoot their home.

Despite the years of work by the CCC, Reelfoot Lake did not become a state park until 1956. Most of the facilities today date to the 1960s and 1970s, although the

Blue Pond day-use area has a restored CCC check-in building and picnic shelter. The park visitor center, built in 1961, has exhibits about wildlife, the landscape, and the region's history.

[Text taken from C. V. West, *The New Deal Landscape of Tennessee* (UT Press, 2000)]

Dyer County

4) *Heloise - End of Tennessee Highway 104 at Heloise Loop Road.*



Caption: Great River Road Tennessee, Heloise Landing and the Mississippi River, Dyer County, Tennessee

Alternate Text: This access point to the Mississippi River port was once a prominent stop for agricultural trade during the time between the Civil War and World War II eras.

This Mississippi River port was once a prominent stop for agricultural trade between the Civil War era and World War II. The landing is still extant and provides immediate access to the river. The port is located along Heloise-Midway Road, one of the state's outstanding roads to explore the Mississippi River up close. It hugs the river bank and provides great vantage points to the river.

Along the road you can also discover representative types of farms and tenant houses associated with agricultural life in this region. The historic cemetery at Chic, near the Free Church of God at Chic, contains burials to the 1850s and it documents the number of people who once lived and worked along the river in Dyer County.

Lauderdale County

5) Alex Haley State Historic Site 200 South Church Street – Henning, TN 38041



Caption: Great River Road Tennessee, Alex Haley's Boyhood Home, Henning, Tennessee

Alternate Text: This one-and-one-half story weatherboard bungalow where Alex Haley lived from 1921 to 1929, was the house of Alex Haley's grandfather, Will Palmer and his time there served as inspiration for his popular book *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* (1976).

NRHP. This one-and-one-half story weatherboard bungalow was the house of Alex Haley's grandfather, Will Palmer, who operated a respected and profitable lumber business and mill in Henning. In 1918-19 Palmer and his wife Cynthia built the ten-room house, complete with music room and library, that rated among the most modern and fashionable residences in this rural town.

Two years later, in 1921, their daughter Bertha Palmer Haley brought her baby son Alex back home to Henning to stay with her parents while her husband, Simon Haley, pursued graduate studies at Cornell. Haley lived here from 1921 to 1929 and afterward visited the home during many summers. As he later recounted in his popular book *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* (1976) and in many interviews, his Grandmother Palmer was an immense influence on his telling of the family history,

especially through her colorful and compelling stories of past, but not forgotten, family members. Haley heard those stories and began to develop his own sense of imagination and place while living at this bungalow dwelling. His writings and lectures inspired millions to search for their family history and to learn how their families have played a role in the drama of the American past. The Alex Haley Boyhood Home was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 and was opened as the first state historic site devoted to African American history later that decade. After his death in 1992, Haley was buried in the front yard of the boyhood home he recalled so fondly.

Source: <http://tennesseencyclopedia.net>

A new Interpretive Center will be completed behind the Alex Haley home in early 2009. This \$1.26 million museum was designed by Memphis-based architecture firm, Askew Nixon Ferguson Architects. The 6,500-square-foot museum will have an interpretive center that will include Haley's Pulitzer Prize and other artifacts from the life of the author of *Roots* and *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*.

Exhibits will focus on different parts of Haley's life leading up to the research and writing of *Roots*, and will include a recreation of the front porch and voice-overs of the stories Haley heard growing up along with a recreation of a slave ship.

The center's one-story, 6,500-square-foot design focuses visitors' attention directly on the Haley House itself. On entering the lobby, visitors encounter a sightline of the house through the wall of windows that is created by the building's angled wings. The center's public spaces also open onto this central lobby with its framed view of the historic home. It was designed to mirror the style of the 10-room house built by Haley's grandfather, Will Palmer, in 1919, and employed the same kind of brick as in the original house.

Sources:

Memphis Business Journal, Friday, August 25, 2006

AIArchitect, Volume 14, October 12, 2007

6) Fort Pillow State Historic Park 3122 Park Road, Henning, TN 38041

Caption: Great River Road Tennessee, Fort Pillow State Historic Park, Lauderdale County, Tennessee

Alternative Text: Civil War re-enactments are periodically held at this historic site to remember the events that occurred at Ft. Pillow during the Civil War.

This Civil War earthwork and battleground, listed as a National Historic Landmark, occupies a Mississippi River bluff in Lauderdale County. Late in the spring of 1861, Confederate troops from Arkansas built a battery at the site to control a bend in the river. Major General Gideon Pillow subsequently ordered the construction of a thirty-acre enclosure with numerous batteries below, in, and atop the bluff. It soon took on his name. After the Union army took control of the fort, it later manned it with U.S. Colored Troops. In 1864, Confederates retook the fort, killing hundreds of African American Federal troops in what participants and later historians have described as a massacre, making the fort and the battle among the most infamous events of the war.

The Mississippi River Corridor – TN and the William Bearden Company completed production of a new film, *The Fort Pillow Story*, for the Fort Pillow Museum in October, 2008. Replacing a 20-year documentary, this contemporary film analysis was financed by the MRCT Lauderdale County Task Force Committee. The 20-minute film tells the story of the Mississippi River's role during the Civil War and the importance of Fort Pillow in shaping the legacy of how prisoners of war are treated, even in modern day conflicts, as a result of the controversial battle forged at the site. The film is currently being screened at the Fort Pillow Museum as well as website access: www.msrivertn.org

7) Ripley (town and county seat)

Caption: Great River Road Tennessee, Lauderdale County Courthouse, Ripley, Tennessee

Alternate Text: The Lauderdale County Courthouse has a unique design among Marr and Holman's Public Works Administration (PWA) courthouses due to its use of buff-colored glazed brick as the main exterior material and its cruciform plan.

Ripley was established as the county seat in February 1836 on 62 acres purchased from Thomas Brown and named for General E. W. Ripley, a veteran of the War of 1812. J. N. Smith opened the first mercantile store in a log cabin, and the town quickly became a center for trade between Dyersburg and Covington. In 1936 the Public Works Administration (PWA) built Lauderdale County's fourth courthouse. Designed by the Nashville firm of Marr and Holman, the building displays the PWA Modern style so popular in the New Deal era. The town's historic Rosenwald School, 150 Church Street, is still used as an education building by an adjacent African American Baptist church. The school served both as a education center and a social center for Ripley's black communities from the Jazz Age through the Civil Rights Movement. The town's Colonial Revival-styled post office (1941) contains a mural, *Autumn*, painted by Marguerite Zorach, which depicts hunting and nutting in the West Tennessee country. The Wardlaw- Steele House at 128 Wardlaw Place, is one of the most striking examples of domestic architecture in the county.

The first of Marr and Holman's Public Works Administration county courthouses to be completed in Tennessee, the Lauderdale County Courthouse was funded with local bonds totaling \$75,000 and a PWA grant of \$50,000. The contractor was the R. M. Condra Company. WPA-funded workers demolished a courthouse from 1870 before construction began; many continued on as construction workers for the new build

ing. Opened in December 1936, the courthouse tripled the space of the old one and included all county offices, rooms for the local WPA office, two courtrooms, the public library, rest rooms for whites and blacks, and a large community room (white only) with a kitchen and a dining room. Its design is unique among Marr and Holman's PWA courthouses due to its use of buff-colored glazed brick as the main exterior material and its cruciform plan. Located at the center of the cruciform, in the first floor rotunda, is an inlaid terrazzo map of the country, showing its towns and transportation systems. The rotunda ceiling has coffered panels surrounding a ceiling medallion set within a central concave area. "Zig-zag-influenced angular Art Deco decorative elements," noted architectural historian Trina Binkley, enliven both the exterior and interior, "framing doors, doorways, windows, and at the ceiling line." (7) Plus, the new courthouse did not overwhelm the Public Square; new landscaping helped to highlight the building. A county historian remarked in 1957: "few prettier spots exist in the United States than the lawn about the courthouse, for here are a few of the ancient trees, and many new pecans, maples, locusts, and shrubs which sit of a carpet of green grass with squirrels playing."

[Text from C. V. West, *The New Deal Landscape of Tennessee* (UT Press, 2000)]

TIPTON COUNTY

8) Historic Downtown Covington



Caption: Great River Road Tennessee, Tipton County Courthouse, Covington, Tennessee

Alternate Text: This late nineteenth century Victorian-styled Courthouse and gazebo in Covington serves as an anchor to surrounding historic commercial and public buildings ranging in age from the 1870s to the 1970s.

Covington's Courthouse Square can trace its origins to the beginning of the county in 1823. In October of that year, Tipton County was organized and soon afterward a commission was appointed by the Tennessee State Legislature to locate a county seat. Before the end of 1824, the commissioners reported that they had selected a site for the new town to be known as Covington upon the lands of John Christmas McLemore and Tyree Rhodes. In the following year, a plan for the new town was recorded and a sale of the 106 lots commenced. By 1826, Covington had grown large enough to be incorporated by the State of Tennessee. With the growth of the town, the Square would become the central business district, a distinction it would hold until the early 1970's.

Tipton County has had three courthouses located on the square in Covington. The first building was a temporary frame structure located at the northwest corner of the Square. In 1832, the first permanent courthouse was completed. It was a large two story brick structure with a central cupola and porticos on the north and south entrances. This building was torn down in 1889 to make room for the present structure that was completed in 1890.

It has been said that the Tipton County Courthouse and the surrounding Court Square are the most beautiful in all of West Tennessee. Major renovations to the Courthouse, the Square and the surrounding properties in the last decade have improved the appearance of this historical area.

Two structures on the Square namely the Ruffin Theatre and the former Lindo Hotel are both listed on the National Register of Historical Places.

Radiating south from the historic Tipton County Courthouse square, the residential South Main Historic District is truly diverse in its architectural types, including a suburban version of a Louisiana plantation house, Queen Anne homes from the early twentieth century, and red brick bungalows. North of the courthouse square is the historic black business district and the landmark Canaan Baptist Church (1916-17), which is also NRHP.

9) Canaan Baptist Church 211 N. Main Street, Covington, TN 38109



Caption: Great River Road Tennessee, Canaan Baptist Church, Covington, Tennessee

Alternate Text: Built from 1916 to 1917, the Canaan Baptist Church has played a significant role in the social history, religious history, and the ethnic heritage of African Americans in Covington and Tipton County.

Built from 1916 to 1917, the Canaan Baptist Church, at 211 North Main Street in Covington is listed in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its role in the social history, religious history, and the ethnic heritage of African Americans in Covington and Tipton County. As the oldest and primary African American Missionary Baptist church in Covington, Canaan is still a significant social, political, and religious center of the African-American community.

The Canaan Baptist Church was organized in 1868 two miles northwest of Covington, Tennessee on the Leigh Chapel Road under a brush arbor by the Reverend Jupiter Williams, a former slave. He served as pastor until 1871 and resigned from ill health as a result of life under slavery. Reverend William Adams brought the congregation into Covington and built a small frame church on what is now known as North Main Street. The present church building stands at the site of the third church building, which originally was a frame church for whites in Covington and known as the First Baptist Church. This move into much larger quarters happened under the direction of Reverend David Evans, who served as Canaan's minister from 1876 to 1885. The congregation continued to use this building for over thirty years.

In 1916-17, the frame church was torn down and replaced by the current brick church under the direction of Reverend William J. Clark. Just north of the southeast entrance is a dedication stone, which reads "Canaan Bapt. Church, Organized 1868 by Rev. J. Williams, Rebuilt 1916 B.F. Walker, Peter Vaughn, G.R. Smith, Bob Lauderdale, Skidmore Taylor, William Ervin, William Smith, W.J. Clark Pastor". These people were instrumental in support of the construction of the new church. Canaan's pivotal church leader of the twentieth century, however, was Reverend John Henry Seward,

a dentist by professional training, who served the congregation from 1931 to 1966. During his pastorage the church renovated the interior of the church by adding the present balcony and electricity. He started many programs that brought the church to statewide, nationwide, and international involvement.

Source: Carroll Van West and Brad Wolf, "Canaan Baptist Church, Tipton Co., TN," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, MTSU Center for Historic Preservation.

10) Randolph



Caption: Great River Road Tennessee, vista view of the Mississippi River from bluffs in the town of Randolph, Tennessee.

Alternate Text: Randolph was founded in 1823 and undoubtedly occupied the best potential site available for water-borne commerce, due its direct access to the Mississippi River, and as such provided an excellent harbor for steam and flatboats at all stages of the river.

Randolph was founded in 1823 and named for John Randolph of Virginia. Randolph undoubtedly occupied the best potential site available for water-borne commerce and provided an excellent harbor for steam and flatboats at all stages of the river. Until 1840, Randolph shipped more cotton than Memphis, as many as thirty-five to forty thousand bales annually, and became the great steamboat depot of West Tennessee. By 1834 it had its first newspaper and a population of 1,000. It had four hotels, several schools, nearly fifty businesses, and a dozen saloons. Many factors led to the demise of Randolph: Randolph's failure to secure a railroad; financial depression; an unfavorable mail route; the continuation of the county seat at Covington despite an 1852 effort to have it moved to Randolph; and the failure to secure a proposed

canal connecting the Tennessee and Hatchie rivers. The final blows came during the Civil War when occupation by both armies led to the destruction of many buildings and property. During the early days of the Civil War, Randolph became the Confederate Boot Camp or Camp of Instruction. Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest enlisted as a private here and went on to become a Lieutenant General. Of the several thousand soldiers that signed up or trained here, over a dozen reached the rank of general by the end of the Civil War. Maps of the period show how the three terraces were used for gun emplacements. In October 1864, raiders attacked the Steamship Belle St. Louis while it was docked here.

Fort Wright, built in 1861, is a National Register-eligible remnant of the war's impact on the Randolph community. Its historic Mississippi River blufftop site is the only intact and visible Confederate powder magazine left in the state of Tennessee.

Located in rural Tipton County, Fort Wright was constructed with African-American slave labor and Confederate army personnel on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River during the late spring and early summer of 1861. On May 5th, large numbers of slaves were engaged in completing the fort's batteries, and area slave owners were requested to provide 200 slaves for clearing away timber. Later, Confederate troops stationed at nearby Randolph under the command of Brig. Gen. Gideon J. Pillow expanded the fort's works.

The earthworks at Fort Wright were irregular fortifications that encompassed some 30 acres. Four batteries were constructed on the riverbank. The embrasures were designed to guard against Federal approach by the river in either direction. A military road was cut to connect the infantry camps with the batteries. About 3 miles to the north another three-gun battery was erected to cover the mouth of the Hatchie River.

Originally, the fort site contained defensive earthworks, four redoubts, at least one bricklined underground powder magazine (the only extant example of its kind in the South), and associated encampments. The site, which has been impacted by agricultural operations, currently consists of remnants of an underground powder magazine, one redoubt and portions of defensive earthworks. Onsite interpretation and restoration is needed for preservation of this important Civil War installation.

In June, 2007, the Mississippi River Corridor contracted with Ritchie Smith Associates (Landscape architects) to create a restoration and site improvement plan for Fort Wright. The plan for visitor parking, walking path, interpretive kiosks and site restoration was completed in the summer of 2008. We are now working with County Mayor Jeff Huffman and the Fort Wright Historical Site, Inc. to determine final ownership

and feasible ways to restore the very steep ravine for safer public access to the site. Funding for the study was provided by the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area at MTSU and the Tipton County Task Force Committee for the MRCT. (Plan attached)

SHELBY COUNTY

11) Mud Island River Park and Museum 125 North Front Street – Memphis



Caption: Great River Road Tennessee, Mud Island River Park & Museum, Memphis, Tennessee

Alternative Text: The River Walk on Mud Island is a 5-block long replica of the lower Mississippi river, from Cairo, IL, to New Orleans, LA with each 30" stride equivalent to one mile on the actual river.

A featured Interpretive Center on the Great River Road

Mud Island River Park is a unique 52- acre recreational, educational and entertainment facility dedicated to telling the story of the Mighty Mississippi River and its people. It houses the 18- gallery Mississippi River Museum; which contains a permanent collection of over 5,000 artifacts in support of its mission to preserve and promote the natural and cultural history of the Lower Mississippi River Valley. Museum exhibits detail the valley's creation and settlement from the Native American inhabitants to European explorers; transportation on the river, including a three story replica of an 1870's steamboat; the Civil War on the river, complete with a full scale Union Gunboat engaged in battle with Confederate land troops; and the development of Delta Music from early Blues to Rock -n- Roll.

Other attractions at Mud Island River Park include the Riverwalk, a ½ mile –long scale model of the lower Mississippi River ; with twenty scale model river cities from Cairo, Illinois to New Orleans, Louisiana and 68 free standing text panels; The Adventure Center which offers canoe, kayak, pedal boat and bike rentals; a 5,000 seat Amphitheatre which offers concerts throughout the season; gift shops; food concessions and banquet facilities and marina.

The Mississippi River Museum offers a variety of education programs for visitors of all ages including adults, school students, home school organizations, Boy and Girl Scouts, and other youth groups.

Guided Riverwalk tours. These tours are an informal walking tour along the model and they focus on the history, culture and geology of the Lower Mississippi River Valley. These tours highlight many aspects of the river including: its creation, drainage basin, major tributaries, watersheds, political boundaries, and fluvial dynamics. Also, the cultural history of major river cities from Cairo to New Orleans is explained.

Mud Hunt - a written scavenger hunt for information found along the Riverwalk model. It is a creative blend of education and recreation. Participants discover answers by investigating the ½ mile-long model, various maps, text panels and by utilizing their own exploratory skills.

Transportation on The Mighty Mississippi - Learn about the development of boats that have traveled the Mississippi River. Experience a timeline of boats from the early days of log rafts to modern commercial barges.

Civil War Riverwalk Tour - This unique tour highlights the strategic importance of the Mississippi River during the U. S. Civil War. It highlights major river battles and important cities along the Lower Mississippi River. It focuses on the history, geography, transportation and the strategies and campaigns of both Union and Confederate forces.

Temporary Exhibits – The River Gallery in the museum is used throughout the season to display traveling exhibits on loan from other facilities. Exhibits cover a variety of topics and subject matter related to the Mississippi River Valley.

History of Mud Island

Mud Island River Park occupies 52 acres at the very southern tip of a large sandbar off the waterfront of downtown Memphis. This sandbar which is about three miles long and perhaps one third of a mile across in some places is a creation of the Mississippi River itself, built up of sand, soil, and rock deposits carried by the river from points

farther north and laid at our the city's waterfront over a period of many years. Mud Island has actually never been a true island but rather a long, narrow peninsula.

The oldest evidence that a mud peninsula was growing here along the banks of the Mississippi comes from an early map of the forts of the bluff drawn in the 1790's. The peninsula grew and shrank and grew again throughout the 1800's according to the dictates of the Mississippi. The first decade of the 1800's was a period of growth for the sandbar. It supported a small Native American Village and a quarter mile horse track.

By 1820 Mud Island had shrunk by about one-half mile, probably due to changes in the river caused by the New Madrid earthquake of 1811-1812. By the 1830's the sandbar had grown again by more than 1,000 feet and the land was quickly covered by willow and cottonwood trees. During the 1840's, U.S. Naval Yards were constructed on the peninsula. The first ship to be built there was christened the "Allegheny". By 1860's, erosion on the island reoccurred and the naval yard had to be abandoned.

By 1912-1913, the peninsula had permanently established itself. The Great Centennial Flood of 1876 caused large deposits of sediment to be laid down as far south as the downtown waterfront. Each year's flood season brought fresh sand, soil, and gravel further stabilizing the peninsula and extending its length.

In 1956, the Wolf River, which flowed between Mud Island and the Memphis waterfront, was diverted across the northern tip of the island. A .6 mile channel and a dam were constructed to provide a modern harbor at downtown Memphis and a still body of water 3.5 miles long. This harbor now provides for several businesses and the Memphis Yacht Club Marina.

During the 1960's, a municipal airport was built on Mud Island and in 1965, 33 million cubic yards of dirt was dredged from the western part of the island and deposited on top of it. This was done in preparation for the construction of the Hernando – DeSoto (I-40) bridge. This deposit raised the ground level of some parts of the southern portions of the island by twenty feet and caused land values to more than triple. However, by the 1970's, City of Memphis Administration began in earnest to develop a productive use for the large piece of real estate that had been a gift of the Mississippi River to the citizens of Memphis. About 1972, the city announced a competition—open to all—to design a public facility on the island that was to be known as "Volunteer Park" and would be scheduled to open in 1976 during the nation's Bicentennial. The design of the Memphis architect, Roy Harrover, who also designed our International Airport, was chosen. The idea behind his design was that the park should serve as a monument to the heritage of the Mississippi River which

has been so important to the development of Memphis and to all the communities that are located on the banks of the Lower Mississippi River.

Mud Island River Park has a vital and dynamic role to play in the life of the City of Memphis today. It is a 52 acre outdoor park and major tourist attraction. The park is home to the 18-gallery Mississippi River Museum; the 5-block long scale model, the Riverwalk; the Adventure Center and a 5,000 seat outdoor amphitheater. The park serves as a site for staging outdoor community festivals and special events each season, and is an important catalyst for the continuing revitalization of downtown Memphis. Today, the park is owned by the City of Memphis and managed by the Riverfront Development Corporation.

www.mudisland.com

MUD ISLAND RIVER PARK - RIVER WALK MODEL FACT SHEET

What Is the Mud Island River Park River Walk?

The River walk is an exact scale model of the Lower Mississippi River from its confluence with the Ohio River at Cairo, Illinois, 954 miles south to the Gulf of Mexico.

Scale: 30" = One Mile

One contour ridge = 5 feet vertical depth
Entire Length = 2,000 feet or 5 blocks



Features:

- Twenty cities are mapped along the Riverwalk
- Concrete wedges locate the main rivers flowing into the Mississippi or show river engineering structures such as floodways
- There are four watershed walls which map the entire drainage area of the Mississippi River
- The model empties into an acre size Gulf of Mexico
- Designed using Corps of Engineers survey and navigational charts.
- There are 1, 746, 4' x 8' concrete sections, which were installed and positioned to allow the water to flow from north to south



12) Beale Street 203 Beale Street - Memphis



Caption: Great River Road Tennessee, Beale Street, Memphis, Tennessee

Alternate Text: Two blocks of Beale Street have been closed to vehicular traffic so that music, food and beverages may be enjoyed while walking on the street and also to allow for easier access to the prime music venues, restaurants and street performers for which Beale Street is known.

Beale Street was created in 1841 by entrepreneur and developer Robertson Topp (1807-1876), who named it for a forgotten military hero. The original name was Beale Avenue. Its western end primarily housed shops of trade merchants, who traded goods with ships along the Mississippi River, while the eastern part developed as an affluent suburb. In the 1860s, many black traveling musicians began performing on Beale. The first of these to call Beale Street home were the Young Men's Brass Band, who were formed by Sam Thomas in 1867.

In the 1870s the population of Memphis was decimated by a series of Yellow Fever epidemics, leading the city to forfeit its charter in 1879. During this time Robert Church purchased land around Beale Street that would eventually lead to his becoming the first black millionaire from the south. In 1890, Beale Street underwent renovation with the addition of the Grand Opera House, later known as the Orpheum. In 1899, Robert Church paid the city to create Church Park at the corner of 4th and Beale.

It became a recreational and cultural center, where blues musicians could gather. A major attraction of the park was an auditorium that could seat 2,000 people. Some of the famous speakers in the Church Park Auditorium were Woodrow Wilson, Booker T. Washington, and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In the early 1900s, Beale Street was filled with clubs, restaurants and shops, many of them owned by African-Americans. In 1889, NAACP co-founder Ida B. Wells was a coowner and editor of an anti-segregationist paper called Free Speech based on Beale. Beale Street Baptist Church, Tennessee's oldest surviving African American Church edifice built in 1864, was also important in the early civil rights movement in Memphis.

In 1905 Mayor Thornton was looking for a music teacher for his Knights of Pythias Band, and called Tuskegee Institute to talk to his friend, Booker T. Washington, who recommended a trumpet player in Clarksdale, Mississippi, named W.C. Handy. Mayor Thornton contacted Mr. Handy, and Memphis became the home of the famous musician who created the "Blues on Beale Street". Mayor Thornton and his three sons also played in Handy's band.

In 1909, W.C. Handy wrote "Mr. Crump" as a campaign song for political machine leader E. H. Crump. The song was later renamed "The Memphis Blues". Handy also wrote a song called "Beale Street Blues" in 1916 which influenced the change of the street's name from Beale Avenue to Beale Street.

From the 1920s to the 1940s, Louis Armstrong, Muddy Waters, Albert King, Memphis Minnie, B.B. King, Rufus Thomas, Rosco Gordon and other blues and jazz legends played on Beale Street and helped develop the style known as Memphis Blues.

In 1938, Lewis O. Swingler, editor of the Memphis World Newspaper, a Negro newspaper, in an effort to increase circulation, conceived the idea of a "Mayor of Beale St.", having readers vote for the person of their choice. Matthew Thornton, Sr., a well-known community leader, active in political, civic and social affairs and one of the charter members of the Memphis Branch of the NAACP, won the contest against nine opponents and received 12,000 of the 33,000 votes cast. Mr. Thornton was the original "Mayor of Beale St." an honorary position that he retained until he died in 1963 at the age of 90.

In the 1960s, Beale became run down and many stores closed, although on May 23, 1966, the section of the street from Main to 4th was declared a National Historic Landmark. On December 15, 1977, Beale Street was officially declared as the "Home of the Blues" by an act of Congress.

Despite this national recognition of its historic significance, it was not until the 1980s that Beale Street received attention from local lawmakers, which led to an economic revitalization, with many new clubs and attractions opening. The street is now home to a chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

During the first weekend of May (sometimes including late April), the Beale Street Music Festival brings major music acts from a variety of musical genres to Tom Lee Park at the end of Beale Street on the Mississippi River. The festival is the kickoff event of a month of festivities citywide known as Memphis in May.

www.bealestreet.com

13) National Civil Rights Museum (Lorraine Motel) 450 Mulberry St. – Memphis



Caption: Great River Road Tennessee, National Civil Rights Museum, Memphis, Tennessee

Alternate Text: As showcased at the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, the struggle for civil rights continues to play a major and historic role in our society. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was cut down by an assassin's bullet in

1968 at this shrine to his life's work and quest to secure the rights of equality, liberty and justice for all people in the world.

The inspirational "*I have a Dream*" speech delivered by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1963 during the March on Washington, has been a long time anthem of hope for generations of our citizens and immigrants into the region. The struggle for civil rights and dignity for all continues to play a major role in our society as showcased at the **National Civil Rights Museum** in downtown Memphis.

Cut down by an assassin's bullet on April 4, 1968 as he stood on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee, at the age of thirty-nine, King had years earlier become the leader of the movement for freedom for the disenfranchised across America and beyond. In order to fully acknowledge the legacy and historical contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., we must take into account that as early as the 1950's he called for world disarmament, an end to apartheid in South Africa, a global war on poverty, and his rallying cry for assistance to American blacks to overcome centuries of racism and discrimination.

Forty years later, as we remember and honor King at the Museum where he made the ultimate sacrifice, it is imperative to place him in the context of the movement for equality, freedom and justice that he helped to make and that made him. He was not static but rather flowed with the dynamics of the movement.not unlike our mighty Mississippi River as it carves a path despite superhuman efforts to manipulate its flow.

Through his sermons and speeches, the gifted orator offered his people a construct that explained their status, urged unity and conveyed with conviction that they would succeed in their quest to secure the rights of equality, liberty and justice.

The exhibits of the museum tell the story of the struggle for African American civil rights from the arrival of the first Africans in the British colonies in 1619 to the assassination of King in 1968.

14) Chucalissa and the C.H. Nash Museum 1987 Indian Village Drive – Memphis



Caption: Great River Road Tennessee, C. H. Nash Museum, Chucalissa Archaeological site, Memphis, Tennessee

Alternative Text: Operated by the University of Memphis, the Chucalissa site and museum serves as a gateway into understanding the science of archaeology and the interpretation of Native American history in the mid-south.

(A National Historic Landmark and featured stop on the Great River Road in TN)

Chucalissa, administrated by the University of Memphis, allows visitors to step back in time to explore the culture of a people that flourished before the first Europeans landed in America. Chucalissa is a Choctaw word for “abandoned house.” The archaeological remains tell us that the site was occupied, abandoned and reoccupied several times between 1000 and 1550 AD. This site was part of a larger political system called the Mississippian culture. At its height in the 15th century, Chucalissa was home to 800 to 1000 people.

The museum is named for its founding director, Charles H. Nash, who served Chucalissa from 1954 to 1968. The museum curates an extensive collection of artifacts recovered from excavations of the site. The exhibitions discuss the history of Native Americans in the southeastern United States and their life on the Mississippi River.

15) National Ornamental Metal Museum 374 Metal Museum Drive – Memphis – 38106



(Former sites of Fort Pickering and the United State Marine Hospital)

Caption: Great River Road Tennessee, National Ornamental Metal Museum, Memphis, Tennessee

Alternative Text: The patio area and gazebo behind the museum sits atop a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River and the Arkansas Memorial Bridge in Memphis, TN and is speculated to have been the point from which Hernando de Soto first saw the river in his early explorations.

The first European structure built on the grounds of Fort Pickering was a cabin put up by French explorers looking for a lost crew member in 1682, although records exist of Spanish and French explorers visiting the area in the 16th century.

Several forts were to follow but by far the most long lasting and significant was Fort Pickering. The site was named for Thomas Pickering, George Washington’s Secretary of War. However, it became less significant after the U.S. purchased the Louisiana Territory from Louisiana and the fort was mostly abandoned in 1806.

As the 19th century progressed, the fort weathered away, but in 1862 Union troops captured Memphis after a brief naval battle, and a new, much larger Fort Pickering was erected. The fort was largely garrisoned by troops of the U.S. Colored Troops during the civil war years.

After the war, the fort became the site of Jackson Mounds amusement park with a three-story dance pavilion constructed on top of the largest Indian mound on the grounds. Yankee engineers had hollowed out this mound and installed an underground powder magazine in order to convert it to a formidable redoubt commanding the north entrance to the Tennessee Chute of the Mississippi River.

After the war when the amusement park was privately established, a shooting gallery, bowling alley and other entertainments were added to the dance pavilion. Most of these operations were closed and removed around 1900.

The existing complex of buildings, known as the United States Marine Hospital, are situated on the Mississippi River bluff at the north side of Chickasaw Heritage Park and dates back to July 16th, 1798, when President John Adams signed an act creating the Marine Hospital Service. This act was designed to administer aid to sick and disabled seamen, and was for the forerunner of the U.S. Public Health Service.

The site of the Marine Hospital was selected in 1881 out of what was then known as Fort Pickering, a separate town eighteen years older and, at one time, larger than Memphis. Six buildings comprised the original hospital district: the surgeon's house, a stable, the executive building, two wards and a laundry-dining room. The two surviving buildings from 1884 are known in the National Register Nomination for the Hospital as the laundry-dining room and executive building.

Although the hospital was originally intended to serve the needs of seamen, it was used at various times by the Coast Guard, cadets of the state maritime academies, members of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, Public Health fieldmen, the Army Corps of Engineers, and employees and federal workers injured on duty. In 1951, this expanded program was reflected in the change of the official name of the facility to the United States Public Service Hospital. The hospital was closed in 1965.

In 1970, the property was divided: The Federal government retained the eastern end of the site, and the City of Memphis acquired the western end, which it has leased to the National Ornamental Metal Museum, the only one of its kind in the U.S.

Sources: Shelby County Archives; Lauren T. Crews; ETCA files; 1/14/73 Commercial Appeal – Paul R. Coppock article;
Memphis Heritage and Edward F. Williams – County historian

Chickasaw Bluff Number Four - Memphis

The term Chickasaw Bluff refers to high ground rising 50 to 200 feet above the flood plain between Memphis, Tennessee and Hickman, Fulton County, Kentucky. Composed of eroded Pleistocene loess over Pliocene glacial gravel, they are slide prone. This elevation is named for the Chickasaw, who by their possession of the elevation impeded French river traffic in the 18th Century.

At the border between Kentucky and Tennessee, the left bank of the Mississippi River strikes the western edge of these uplands, exposing four banks of up to thirty feet in height. These Chickasaw Bluffs were numbered by rivermen from one to four starting from the north.

- First Chickasaw Bluff: Above Fulton, Lauderdale County, Tennessee.
- Second Chickasaw Bluff: At Randolph, Tipton County, Tennessee.
- Third Chickasaw Bluff: At the line between Tipton and Shelby counties in Tennessee.
- Fourth Chickasaw Bluff: Below the mouth of the Wolf River at Memphis. This was the site of the French Fort Assumption, used as a base against the Chickasaw in the abortive Campaign of 1739. The French Fort Prudhomme, or Prud'homme, was established at one of these river bluffs by La Salle in 1682. This may have been at the Second Chickasaw Bluff, although all of the others have been variously cited as well. This location was also the meeting place of d'Artaguet, Chicagou and de Vincennes before their ill fated 1736 attack against the Chickasaw.

The Chickasaw Bluff secured Memphis from river floods, while a rare shelf of sandstone below provided a secure boat landing, making this the "only site for a commercial mart" between the Ohio River and Vicksburg, Mississippi.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chickasaw_Bluff



Historical Significance of the Great River Road - Tennessee

A Land of Bounty, a Land of Nations: Tennessee's Mississippi River in History

The cultural landscape of the Mississippi River Valley extends approximately 13,000 years from the time when late ice-age hunters and gatherers pursued mastodons and other species of large now-extinct mammals, through the recent revitalization of Beale Street as a tourist destination in downtown Memphis. Throughout this period, the river has served as a cultural stage upon which the lives of the region's inhabitants have unfolded. The river has witnessed the rise and fall of great Native American communities, the arrival of the first European explorers, the Civil War and Reconstruction, the age of steam-powered river boats, dollar cotton, the sounds of gospel music, the rhythms of blues and soul, and finally, Elvis. The cultural phenomena that have unfolded along the banks of the great river are closely tied to the valley's physical environment. Extremely fertile silt deposited by seasonal flooding has provided the region with the most productive agricultural soils in North America.

The river and its extensive network of tributaries were, and continue to serve as, vital transportation arteries linking diverse markets from the Rocky Mountains to the Appalachians and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. Agriculture and transportation have been, and continue to be, the primary factors that shape the cultural landscape of the Mississippi River Valley.

Native American communities were the first to take advantage of the agricultural potential of the river valley. Approximately one thousand years ago, large villages began to appear along the river and its major tributaries where corn could be cultivated in the rich bottomland soils. These communities grew and eventually dominated the landscape with impressive mounds, plazas, and houses enclosed by defensive walls. Temple structures were built on top of the mounds for powerful chiefs and priests who advertised their political power with costumes of marine shells and copper obtained from distant sources and transported along the river. The open plazas between the mounds served as ball courts where rival villages competed in heated sporting events. Awe-inspiring ceremonies celebrating the corn harvest and the life-giving power of the sun were also conducted in the plazas. Eventually the great towns were abandoned and the ball courts fell silent leaving the mounds as silent testimony to the people that once inhabited the valley. History does not record the names of these people, so archaeologists refer to them as the *Mississippian culture*, acknowledging the river that gave rise to their way of life. Today, Chucalissa Museum at the T. O. Fuller State Park preserves and interprets one significant village site, which is listed as a National Historic Landmark.

In the winter of 1540, Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto entered the Mississippi Valley and was the first European to see the great river and make contact with its native inhabitants. In 1673 Father Jacques Marquette and trader Louis Joliet, followed by

Robert Cavelier de la Salle, would descend the Mississippi and claim the Lower Valley for France. An expedition led by La Salle in 1682 established the first structure built by whites within the present-day boundaries of Tennessee, named Fort Prudhomme, on the second Chickasaw Bluff near the confluence of the Mississippi and Hatchie rivers. In 1739-1740, the French built a second fort, named Fort Assumption, on the fourth Chickasaw Bluff in present-day Memphis.

French traders established economic networks with Native Americans throughout the region, especially the Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Natchez Indians. The French, and later the Spanish, built sizeable trading posts along the Lower Mississippi and controlled traffic along the mighty river. The primary Spanish post in Tennessee was Fort San Fernando de las Barrancas, built on the fourth Chickasaw Bluff in present-day Memphis, in 1795. Its legacy was a small settlement whose residents later became among the first residents of Memphis.

In 1818 Chickasaw leaders negotiated with Andrew Jackson and Isaac Shelby and signed the Treaty of Tuscaloosa, which opened over 10,700 square miles of West Tennessee for white settlement. The following year, Jackson, John Overton, and James Winchester established Memphis. Within six years, in 1824, what had been a vast open Chickasaw hunting ground had been politically divided into sixteen new counties of Tennessee.

The rich natural resources of West Tennessee—the river transportation, the excellent hardwood stands, the rich bottomland soil—fueled the land rush. Over the next generation, farmers, planters, and their African American slaves transformed the regional landscape and the countryside became prime cotton land. Thousands of African slaves were pressed into service cultivating and harvesting this labor intensive crop by hand. Home to successful cotton brokers, a thriving slave trade, and a rising financial center, Memphis boomed in the 1850s and became Tennessee's largest city. It was a diverse city, with its large slave and much smaller free black population, its German and Irish immigrants, and the many passersby who stopped in the city as they traveled the river. Steam powered ships plied the waters of the great river transporting white gold to distant markets. As an urban center, Memphis also grew as a cultural center for music and the arts and boasted of the Gayoso Hotel, one of the river's grandest.

During the Civil War, control of the Mississippi River as a transportation route was of great strategic value. The first major Civil War battles in Tennessee took place along the Mississippi, Tennessee, and Cumberland river systems. In February 1862, two important forts in Tennessee, Fort Henry on the Tennessee River and Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River, fell to federal forces. The Confederates still held a strong position on the Mississippi River on Island No. 10, near Tiptonville in Lake County, and constructed earthworks on the Tennessee side of the river. Sixteen Union ships shelled the island, but could not force the Confederates from their position. Federal engineers, however, decided to have troops dig a canal that connected the

bends in the Mississippi River through two sloughs, allowing federal gunboats to bypass Island No. 10 and join other Union forces at New Madrid, Missouri. Union forces were then able to cross the river and block the Confederate escape route at Reelfoot peninsula, resulting in the Confederate surrender of the Island No. 10 in April 1862. Remnants of the earthworks constructed by Confederate forces remain northeast of Tiptonville; nearby is the Jones Chapel Church Cemetery, which contains a mass grave of Confederates who died during the defense of the island.

The next Mississippi engagement took place at Fort Pillow in Lauderdale County. In the spring of 1862, the Union army regularly bombarded Fort Pillow and a Confederate gunboat fleet based there. On May 10, 1862, Confederate and federal naval forces fought the Battle of Plum Bend near Fort Pillow; Confederate rams sunk two federal boats, which were subsequently repaired. The Union counterattacked with its own ram fleet, which Confederate batteries repulsed, and then a ground effort to storm the fort. The federal offensive failed, but the Confederate command, fearing being cut off from supplies and support, abandoned Fort Pillow on June 4, 1862.

Memphis fell two days later as an outmanned and outgunned Confederate navy fell to the combined firepower of 24 Union gunboats. An estimated 10,000 people watched the battle from the safety of the river bluffs.

For the remainder of the war, federal troops manned and expanded various fortifications along the river. Fort Pillow became an important vantage point on the Mississippi River. Union forces used the fort as an operations base, as a recruiting post, and a trading center. It also was a refuge for runaway slaves and many African Americans lived in and nearby the fort. In April 1864, Confederate General Nathan B. Forrest attacked Fort Pillow, where his 1,500 battle-hardened veterans faced about 300 white Unionists and a roughly equal number of African American civilians and troops of the United States Colored Troops (USCT). A federal gunboat evacuated most of the civilians but the federal troops retreated to a small, inner fort near the river bluff. Forrest offered to accept the garrison's surrender, but the federal commanders refused. Forrest's troops then attacked, and offered no quarter. As historian John Cimprich concludes, "as a result of the intense hostility toward armed blacks and southern unionists, discipline among the victors broke down. . . Deaths totaled 64 percent of the black troops and at least 31 percent of the whites. Forrest alleged that the Federals refused to surrender until most had died; Federal survivors claimed that a massacre took place." Fort Pillow became one of the controversial battles of the entire Civil War.

Memphis became a major federal base of operations for the entire western theater. Generals U. S. Grant and William T. Sherman were among the Union commanders based there. The city became home for thousands of African American slaves who flocked to the Union lines for protection. President's Island in Memphis became one of the state's largest camps of contrabands, as the escaped slaves were categorized. Federal troops also constructed Fort Pickering, near the present-day location of the National Ornamental Metal Museum and De Soto Park and south of the I-55 Bridge,

in Memphis. This fort was a major USCT training post and home to several USCT regiments.

A year after the war, soldiers from Fort Pickering were involved in the infamous Memphis Race Riot of 1866, which left 46 black and two white residents dead. The white violence against federal soldiers and African American citizens spurred officials in Washington to pursue the passage of a federal Civil Rights Bill and the 14th Amendment to the Constitution.

The bitter politics and violence of Reconstruction shaped the region's race relations as well as its settlement patterns. Memphis became a patchwork of segregated neighborhoods. With industrial development fueled by railroad expansion, thousands of black and white migrants moved to the Bluff City. Along the river to the north, newly freed African Americans established rural enclaves such as Jamestown and St. Paul in Tipton County.

The region's emerging railroad system soon surpassed the Mississippi as the primary transportation corridor, and what were once small county seats became large, bustling trade centers. The opening of the Frisco railroad bridge over the Mississippi at Memphis in the 1890s inaugurated a new boom in urban and industrial expansion, a boom that carried the city and region forward until the triple devastation wrought by the tremendous river floods of 1927 and 1937, with the Great Depression sandwiched between.

New Deal programs brought new levees to the river, along with wholly new infrastructure of roads, utilities, and river improvements. Industry not only shaped the towns and cities; it also changed the nature of cotton farming throughout the region. By the mid-20th century mechanized farming replaced the labor of hand-picked cotton and thousands of African Americans were displaced from the fields. Some left for the industrial cities of the north; many more searched for new opportunities in Memphis.

Out of war, emancipation, labor, soil, trial and triumph came a rich cultural legacy expressed through music. Memphis and the Tennessee Delta formed a crucible for American roots music; signature contributions to American Gospel, the compositions of Lucie Campbell and Herbert Brewster, the blues trumpet of W. C. Handy, the guitar wailings of Sleepy John Estes, the powerful soul music of Stax Records, and the rockabilly traditions of Sun Records, personified by Elvis Presley. These musical traditions would forever change the sound of the Mississippi Valley, and they echo through our culture to this day.

Today we are left with physical reminders of our past in the form of Indian mounds, Civil War forts, wrecked steamboats, and the harmony of hard labor. Historic sites provide us with a basis to understand our past, enjoy the present, and hope for the future. The intrinsic worth of these resources is so great that we have a responsibility to protect and preserve our history so that future generations may value and appreciate our past.



Mississippi River Corridor Tennessee Strategic Plan

Includes:
Vision Statement
Mission Statement
Shared Values
Strategic Goals
Objectives

Fall 2008

Prepared by:
Dr. Donald C. Fisher - Executive Director
MSQPC—The Quality Center - Memphis

MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING INTRINSIC QUALITIES (3)

FEDERAL REGISTER - NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM - FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION:

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.

In partnership with the Tennessee Department of Transportation, the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development and numerous other government and non-profit organizations, the Mississippi River Corridor - Tennessee is completely committed to maintaining, enhancing, and interpreting the intrinsic qualities of the Great River Road – Tennessee. We have spent many years cultivating the financial and human resources that will be needed to fulfill our commitment. We encourage and continue to serve as facilitators for other organizations and government agencies to share roles in meeting the central objectives.

Shown below is the **MRCT Strategic Five-Year Plan** created by six county Task Force Committees, public meetings, surveys and government support to help implement our goals to achieve the highest possible quality experience for a unique visitor experience, to ensure the preservation and enhancement of our most valuable resources and to continually engage the regional citizens of west Tennessee in the process of developing the Great River Road – Tennessee.

Vision Statement

To offer the world a unique experience in the Mississippi River Valley of Tennessee.

Mission Statement

To identify, conserve, and interpret the region's natural, cultural, and scenic resources to improve the quality of life and prosperity in West Tennessee.

Areas of Responsibilities

The primary function of the MRCT is divided into three main focus areas: Asset Development, Economic Development and Community Development.

Asset Development is concerned with enhancing the physical assets within the Corridor, both existing and prospective. It is also responsible for bringing together the numerous public & private entities that are the Corridor stakeholders to create a seamless and cooperative Alliance dedicated to the Vision & Mission of the project. Economic and Community Development is focused on the human element (history, culture, education, recreation and politics). The main objective is developing an organization comprised of the numerous socio-economic entities within the Corridor that will work collaboratively to promote and enhance the economic and cultural benefits of the Corridor.

Shared Values

1. Creating a model that is environmentally and economically sustainable.
2. Providing a forum for public and private collaborative partnerships and endeavors.
3. Improving the quality of life in West Tennessee.
4. Conserving the natural and scenic resources of the region including critical fish and wildlife habitats.
5. Preserving the region's cultural and historical assets.
6. Respecting the traditions and rights of the people who live in the region.
7. Providing access to sites within the Corridor.
8. Protecting the environment throughout the Corridor.
9. Promoting the Mississippi River Corridor as a global destination.

Strategic Goals**Strategy 1: Asset Development**

- Objective (a) Coordinate county MRC-T Task Force projects
- Objective (b) Inventory existing roadways, parks, trails and other infrastructures.
- Objective (c) Collaborate with local, state and federal agencies to address infrastructure
- Objective (d) Promote the conservation and preservation of natural resources and scenic qualities of all assets
- Objective (e) Assist in the identification and enhancement of wildlife amenities

- Objective (f) Assist in the identification and enhancement of outdoor recreational amenities.
- Objective (g) Assist in the identification and enhancement of cultural, historical and archeological resources
- Objective (h) Promote sustainable design & construction practices (LEED)
- Objective (i) Facilitate the design and development of River Centers
- Objective (j) Inventory outfitters, accommodations, and other service providers to determine the current level of supply

Strategy 2: Market the Corridor

- Objective (a) Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing & branding plan for Corridor (target audiences)
- Objective (b) Promote the Corridor internationally
- Objective (c) Establish and promote a regional identity
- Objective (d) Develop & coordinate a tourism enhancement strategy

Strategy 3: Secure sustainable funding / development

- Objective (a) Create MRCT development plan
- Objective (b) Obtain local, state and federal governmental funding for projects as needed
- Objective (c) Obtain private funding: individuals, corporations and non-profits
- Objective (d) Predict the economic impact derived from each project

Strategy 4: Provide educational opportunities

- Objective (a) Promote the Mississippi River Corridor as an educational venue
- Objective (b) Create opportunities for job skills development in the Corridor
- Objective (c) Promote public outreach by offering continuing education opportunities through community colleges and universities
- Objective (d) Develop Corridor as a major river research venue
- Objective (e) Interpret cultural experiences (art, music, history, etc)
- Objective (f) Plan for environmental education and research

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE BYWAY (4)

FEDERAL REGISTER - NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM - FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION:

The agencies, groups, and individuals who are part of the team that will carry out the corridor management plan, including a list of their responsibilities and a schedule for the continuing review of how well those responsibilities are being met.

**Partners, Sponsors, Endorsers and Directors
Mississippi River Corridor - Tennessee**

Great River Road - Tennessee

Principal Partners

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation
Tennessee Civil War National Heritage

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State of Tennessee Conservation Commission
Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation
Tennessee Department of Tourist Development
Tennessee Department of Transportation
Tennessee Valley Authority
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Lower Mississippi Conservation Committee
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee, Inc.

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Six West Tennessee Counties Task Force Committees

Mayor Richard Hill – Dyer County

Eddie Anderson
Peter Brown (Co-Chair)
Paul Carson
Bill Cloar
David Hayes (Co-Chair)
Allen Hester
Nick Nunn
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Jim Johnson
Patrick Johnson
Bettye Lee
Marcia Mills (Co-Chair)
Daisy Parks
Tony Wallace
Sarah Woods
Fred Wortman (Co-Chair)



Mayor Rod Schuh – Lauderdale County

Charles Anthony
Bettie Davis
Lisa Hankins
Willie Mae Harmon
Margaret Shoemake (Co-Chair)
Vernon McBride
Dale McCaslin (Co-Chair)
Sue McLemore



Mayor Benny McGuire – Obion County

Jim Bondurant (Chair)
Wade Carrington
Jim Cooper
Christine Donald
Jim Rippy
Scott Maness



Mayor AC Wharton, Jr. – Shelby County

John Dudus
Ted Fox
John Gary
Taylor Gray
Keith Kirkland
Martha Lott
William Lozier
Harry Miller
Beverly Robertson
Calvin Robinson
Michael Oates
Jimmy Ogle
Mary Schmitz
Mike Sheahan
Larry Smith (Co-Chair)
Dorchelle Spence (Co-Chair)



Mayor Jeff Huffman – Tipton County

Rosemary Bridges (Chair)
Leon Davenport
David Gwinn
Lee Johnston
Terry Sneed



The Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee currently serves as the central management organization for the **Great River Road – Tennessee** in providing the essential facilitating role for the effective stewardship, interpretation and marketing of the intrinsic resources as well as the coordination of the other important corridor issues and opportunities.

The following table indicates general responsibilities for the Mississippi River Corridor - Tennessee as well as other key organizations and groups. The progress of these responsibilities will be reviewed on a quarterly basis.

Organization	Beneficial Ongoing Responsibilities
Mississippi River Corridor- Tennessee, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall facilitation and implementation of the Great River Road – Tennessee Corridor Management Plan including updates of the Plan and Resource Library as needed. ▪ Promotion and market development surrounding travel on the Great River Road - TN ▪ Identification of sources of funding to support the various needs and opportunities of the corridor ▪ Continued protection and enhancement of State of Tennessee properties—Historic sites, state parks, etc. ▪ Provide a central source of information related the Great River Road - TN ▪ Serve as a facilitator to identify and resolve problems and issues related to the Great River Road - TN ▪ Serve as the contact point for public involvement and participation in the development of the Great River Road - TN ▪ Provide communications and participation with activities of the Mississippi River Parkway Commission ▪ Partner with the Tennessee Department of Transportation to administer National Scenic Byway grants for the Great River Road – TN ▪ Continue active engagement of west Tennessee citizens in the preservation and enhancement of Corridor resources and assets
Tennessee Department of Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roadway management ▪ Traffic control devices including lane marking, signage and intersection controls ▪ Access (driveway) control ▪ Outdoor advertising management and control ▪ Roadside vegetation and litter control ▪ Official Highway Map – Great River Road - TN
Center for Historic Preservation- TCWNHA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plan, create and implement historical site enhancements and travel guides in west Tennessee ▪ Interpretive and education programs for the public

Organization	Beneficial Ongoing Responsibilities
Tennessee Department of Tourist Development and Convention & Visitor Bureaus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote the Great River Road - TN in county based promotional programs ▪ Assure that local hospitality providers—lodging, vehicle, food, entertainment, etc. are aware of and promote their relationship to the Great River Road ▪ Monitor visitor satisfaction with the experience of traveling on the Great River Road ▪ Coordinate marketing publications, websites and local publicity efforts to promote the Great River Road on a regional, national and international basis
Mississippi River Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advocate and facilitate the development, maintenance and use of the Mississippi River Trail as a primary companion to the Great River Road
US Department of Interior National Park Service (NPS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create opportunities to expand a linear trail network to enhance the recreational opportunities on the Great River Road – TN ▪ Development of a Blueway Mississippi River Trail to accommodate kayaks, canoes and river transporters.
US Army Corps of Engineers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public education programs and interpretation of the history and operations of the US Army Corps in flood control and navigation on the Mississippi River ▪ MRCT participation in their Lower Mississippi Restoration Plan for west Tennessee and other southern states
Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continued partnership participation in efforts to improve the state parks in west Tennessee for the highest quality visitor experience ▪ Participation in the TDEC marketing campaign for Trails and Greenways in Tennessee ▪ Development of a linear Trail System in west TN
County (6) Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Active participation by Task Force Committees in local asset enhancements and public outreach ▪ Land use planning for rural/urban development ▪ Transportation planning and improvements ▪ Zoning enforcement ▪ Traffic regulation enforcement ▪ Local outdoor advertising permitting and enforcement
Mississippi River Network (McKnight)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create promotional opportunities to participate in ten-state events and educational river awareness programs
Municipal governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participation in the <i>Sustainable Shelby County</i> Plan for regional development ▪ Public participation in planned developments ▪ Transportation planning and improvements ▪ Zoning enforcement ▪ Traffic regulation enforcement ▪ Local outdoor advertising permitting and enforcement

Organization	Beneficial Ongoing Responsibilities
Mississippi River Parkway Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall marketing programs for the Great River Road Forum for discussion of issues and opportunities that effect all Great River Road states Professional and organization development for stakeholders along the Great River Road
Community Non-profit organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue partnerships that build community consensus on a variety of issues effecting the Great River Road – TN Establish volunteer opportunities for regional citizens to gain a greater understanding of the Great River Road – TN and how to showcase their community to visitors Encourage and invite local citizens to participate in the recreational activities, educational opportunities and historic treasures in their own backyard
National Trust for Historic Preservation Mississippi River-based industries, and industry organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with protection and preservation projects Public awareness of the importance of history and historic resources Encourage good practices in river restoration and non-polluting industry advantages Promote the good stories of river-based industry and occupations Sensitive property development and operations
Individual property owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize the value and benefits of the Great River Road in relationship to the identity, appearance and economy of individual properties



In order to educate and appeal to a greater public understanding of the real and significantly positive effects of a Great River Road in Tennessee, the Mississippi River Corridor – TN commissioned a Regional Economic Impact Analysis Report from a professional consultant, Sharon Younger & Associates, in the fall of 2008.

The results of this report are documented below:



Economic Impact Analysis

Mississippi River Corridor - Tennessee

October 2008

Scope and Methodology

Younger Associates has conducted an analysis of the economic impact of the proposed development of the Mississippi River Corridor - TN. The analysis focuses on the regional economy of Shelby, Tipton, Lauderdale, Dyer, Lake and Obion Counties in Tennessee, where the corridor and its visitor amenities are to be located.

Estimates of costs for capital improvements within in the Corridor were made based upon recent construction costs of similar structures. Average or typical roadway and trail way building costs were supplied by the Tennessee Department of Transportation.

The projected number of visitors was based upon state and national travel statistics and upon comparisons of selected other visitor attractions with similar amenities. In particular, the number of visitors to various areas of Tennessee was examined. Visitor projections also consider historic visitor data to a number of nature corridors with similar features. Traffic counts along existing portions of the Great River Road were extensively reviewed to substantiate potential visitor-day projections.

The visitor projections in this study are a broad estimate based not only upon the number of new visitors, but also the number of additional days visitors could be expected to stay in Tennessee due to the Mississippi River Corridor - TN amenities and attractions.

A model of the Regional economy, driven by U.S. Bureau Economic Analysis regional input-output multipliers (RIMS II), was applied to determine economic impact. Younger Associates has applied this modeling system to hundreds of projects over the past twelve years. When compared to actual economic activity (on projects of a scope and sufficient time frame to allow actual measures) the economic impact projections produced by this model have been found to be reliable and tend to provide conservative projections. Our model is utilized in training courses by the Economic Development Institute of the International Economic Development Council.

Economic Activity Measurements

In order to measure only new economic activity generated by the Mississippi River Corridor, a “visitor” was defined as a person traveling over 100 miles or visiting from another state. This definition serves to eliminate spending impact generated by people who reside in the region who potentially could have spent the same dollars on another form of local recreation if the corridor did not exist.

A “visitor day” is a single person visiting the study area for a one day period. For example group of four visitors remaining in the study area for two days would equate to eight visitor days.

The current level of visitor activity at Reelfoot Lake, Ft. Pillow, Meeman-Shelby Forest, wildlife refuges and other existing attractions within the corridor were not included in the new visitor impact projections. Since this activity already exists, it must be excluded from new impact generated by the corridor.

Economic Impact Summary

The annual impact of visitor spending is projected to grow as more of the Corridor’s features are developed, as knowledge of the corridor becomes more widespread among potential visitors, and as the population grows.

This report projects the number of visitors, visitor spending and the economic impact of visitor spending at the 5, 10, 15 and 20 year points in project development. These time frames represent various stages of construction of visitor attractions with the project being substantially complete in year 20.

By year five, the Mississippi River Recreation Corridor is projected to attract 548,000 new visitor days (number of visitors multiplied by the length of stay) to the region. A conservative estimate of visitor spending per day is \$77 per day totaling new visitor spending of \$42.2 million. This level of spending will generate an economic impact of \$84 million on the region and support 2,960 jobs in the region.

By year 10, visitor days are projected to grow to 986,000 and average spending per day to increase to \$88. Economic impact at this point is projected to be \$172.7 million, supporting 6,086 jobs.

By year 15, visitor days are projected at 1.6 million and spending per day at \$99. The economic impact is projected to be \$343.8 million, supporting 11,409 jobs.

At the completion in year 20, the corridor is projected to attract 2.2 million new visitor days to the region. Average spending per day by visitors to the corridor is projected to be \$110. The economic impact of visitor spending on the region will reach \$479 million and support 16,897 jobs within the region.

Investments

At least three government agencies have plans to invest in infrastructure and visitor amenities to improve access to the natural assets contained in the Corridor. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife 15-year plan includes \$17.2 million for improvements in the Lower Hatchie, Reelfoot Lake, and Chickasaw refuge areas. These investments include road and trail improvements, addition of visitor centers, parking improvements and a boat ramp improvement at Chickasaw.

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency five-year plan calls for the acquisition of 1,500 to 2,000 acres of land per year within the Corridor. The plan also calls for the restoration of 500 to 700 acres of wildlife habitat within the next five years. A total investment of \$44.2 million is planned for investment in this effort.

There are four state parks, T.O. Fuller, Meeman Shelby Forrest, Fort Pillow, and Reelfoot Lake, located in the Corridor. At this time information on planned improvements in the parks by the State of Tennessee is not available. Investments in the state parks could complement and perhaps leverage other investment in the corridor. The Mississippi River Corridor - TN leadership will seek to attract new public private investment within the corridor. Plans for roads, trails, signage, roadway amenities, river centers and other visitor infrastructure would require an estimated \$70 million investment over the next 20 years. This investment would have an economic impact of \$151.8 million on the region.

The investments by governmental agencies and those attracted by the Corridor leadership will be needed to support the visitor projections. This public investment should also attract private investment by businesses deriving economic benefit from visitor spending within the Corridor.

If a modest 3% of the visitor spending revenues generated in the corridor were to be reinvested in Corridor improvements, the private investments would total \$1.3 million per year by year 5 and \$7.2 million per year by year 20.

Development and Preservation Strategies (5)

FEDERAL REGISTER - NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM - FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION:

A strategy describing how existing development might be enhanced and new development might be accommodated to preserving intrinsic qualities of the byway.

We imagine the Great River Road Tennessee to be an interconnected “tapestry” of special places. Each site will have its own unique, indigenous, intrinsic value and *sense of place* - creating “Human Habitat” on the Mississippi River in Tennessee and a better quality of life for all citizens.

In order to preserve our treasured and unique intrinsic qualities, while enhancing existing development and accommodating the new, we have created a variety of strategic plans to implement in partnership with state, county agencies and other community organizations in Tennessee.

Community Development Strategy for Resource Development

Resource assessment has been a collaborative process from the very beginning of the Great River Road – Tennessee initiative. Experts on the region’s natural, historical and cultural resources have banded together to produce comprehensive and useful assessments of the many treasures of the Mississippi River Valley in West Tennessee.

These inventories, however, only began the process of resource assessment. First, to truly meet the charge of a grassroots regional development project, the Mississippi River Corridor - Tennessee reached out for community input and perspective through its county task force structure. After each public meeting, the county task forces met and provided the MRCT with its list of recommended resources and points of interest. This information was compiled into extensive County Surveys to help identify priority assets within each of the six counties.

The next step was to combine the professional expert assessments with those from local residents and stakeholders at a regional charette, held in Dyersburg, in October 2006. The Dyersburg Charette featured an opening presentation from planner and transportation expert Michael Gallis, including a Powerpoint presentation to a group of approximately 100 people that set the stage for the major activity of the afternoon. Attendees participated in a detailed discussion and review of resource maps, prepared by the Memphis firm of Fisher Arnold, which listed both the priorities of resource professionals and the recommendations made by the earlier task forces. These resources were placed on county maps, which the attendees then used as a platform for debate and discussion on their top priorities and most important resources.

The last 90 minutes of the Charette allowed each of the county task forces to present their own findings and recommendations. The groups emphasized natural and cultural resources and expressed interest in such strategies as heritage tourism, National Register historic districts, better management of existing conservation areas, expansion and creation of new conservation areas, the encouragement of new economic opportunities tied to the river and its resources, and much more coordination and communication between the counties so that a more regional approach to resource development could be achieved. A newspaper story in the *Dyersburg State-Gazette* captured the excitement and the achievements of the Charette and parlayed its findings to an even larger audience of residents and decision makers along the river valley.

Public ownership of resources:

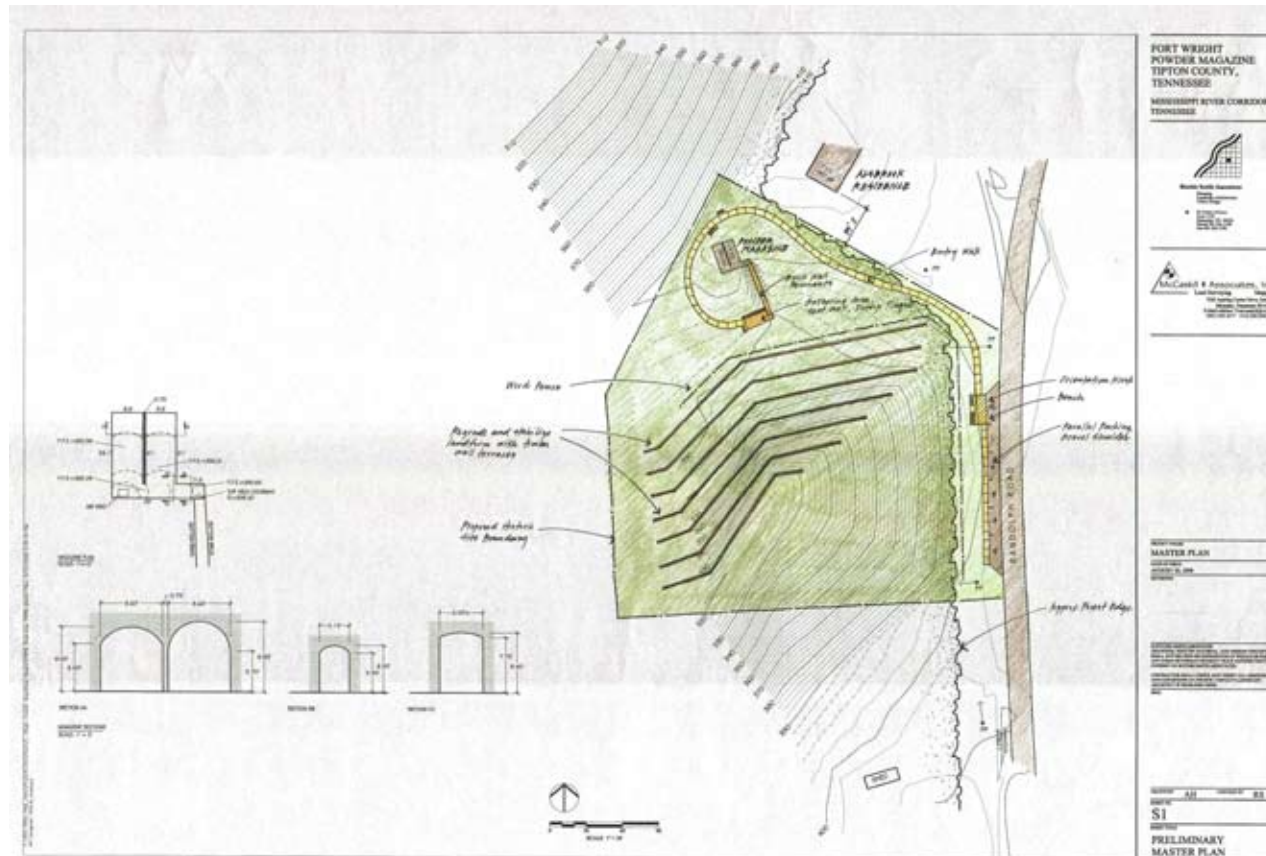
Many of the Great River Road – Tennessee’s intrinsic quality resource sites are publicly owned and managed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Agency, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation. Museums, state parks, historic sites, wildlife management areas, river accesses and frontages, and recreation trails as well as the highways, roads and streets of the Great River Road itself are publicly owned, protected, managed, and often interpreted for the public. We also have several active conservation groups like Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy and the the Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation who have invested in Corridor properties for preservation and recreational opportunities.

National Register of Historic Places designation:

Hundreds of properties in the Great River Road - Tennessee corridor are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the inventory of registered properties grows yearly. We are currently in the process of coordinating an application for a very unique historic property in Tipton County at Randolph which is named Fort Wright. It is the only intact civil war powder magazine left in the state of Tennessee. A plan for its restoration was completed last summer by the landscape architectural firm, Ritchie Smith & Associates.



FORT WRIGHT RESTORATION PLAN



Owner initiated resource conservation easements:

The establishment of owner and initiated conservation easements on private property is a preservation strategy that has grown in popularity in west Tennessee. Our nonprofit land trust organizations assist property owners in realizing tax advantages to guarantee long-term conservation of scenic, natural, and historic resources. The MRCT helps to identify “willing” land owners to help expedite this process of valuable land retention, particularly in our rural farm areas, historic sites and scenic river bluffs.

Public agency land use and transportation planning:

An essential tool for enhancing and protecting intrinsic resources of the Great River Road - Tennessee is local public agency land use and transportation planning that can address a variety of growth management issues on a continuous basis. Maintaining and sustaining long-range land use plans, context sensitive transportation improvement plans, zoning, and building codes are important strategies in the Great River Road corridor in Tennessee.

An excellent example of urban/regional transportation planning is the following Summary from the MPO Agency located in Memphis.



Executive Summary

Introduction

The Memphis Urban Area 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) represents the culmination of a multi-level partnership between local, state, and federal policy-makers and the citizens, business owners, and stakeholders who are most impacted by transportation decisions. The LRTP fulfills the requirements of SAFETEA-LU and complies with prior requirements of the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1977 and 1990. The plan identifies key regional transportation decisions that have been made based on community needs and complies with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice), and Executive Order 13166 (improved access for Limited English Proficiency). It provides critical information to be considered in the development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) by prioritizing projects. Finally, it fosters multimodal transportation decisions, and as a result, ensures consistency among competing modes.

The federal government requires the Memphis Metropolitan Planning Organization (Memphis MPO) to review and update the LRTP every four years in air quality non-attainment areas to reflect the region's changing needs and priorities. Since launching the metropolitan planning process in 1970, the federal government has required a cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive planning framework for making transportation investment decisions in metropolitan areas. The Memphis MPO includes municipalities in three counties and two states. As a result, multiple governmental agencies participated in the planning process.

The LRTP, as presented, is financially constrained and demonstrates air quality conformity as required by the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments.

Plan Goals and Objectives

The LRTP is a multimodal transportation plan that considers roads, transit, railroads, waterways, air travel, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The ten specific goals of the LRTP are:

1. Increase accessibility and mobility for people using the Memphis MPO's regional transportation network through transit and shared ride modes.
2. Continue to ensure that the Memphis MPO enforces and promotes adherence to Title VI and the President's Executive Order on Environment Justice.
3. Promote efficient land use and development patterns to ensure safety, economic vitality, and to meet existing and future transportation needs.
4. Encourage conservation of energy resources in addition to minimizing the adverse impacts transportation has on social, economical and environmental attributes of the community.
5. Develop a cost effective planning process that maximizes community consensus in all aspects of transportation planning.
6. Enhance the Memphis MPO's relationship with other regional planning entities.
7. Encourage and provide adequate facilities for non-motorized transportation modes.
8. Increase the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.
9. Continue to develop a multi-modal transportation network that utilizes strategies for addressing congestion management and air quality issues in the Memphis MPO region.

10. Encourage improvements to and the expansion of freight facilities to ensure that Memphis maintains its leading role in global logistics.

There are specific objectives listed for each of these goals in the plan, and their relationship to the eight transportation planning goals identified in SAFETEA-LU is identified.

Public Participation Process

LRTP regulations require that there must be adequate opportunity for public official and citizen involvement in the development of the transportation plan and that public involvement procedures include opportunities for interested parties to be involved in the early stages of the plan development process. In nonattainment Transportation Management Areas (TMAs), a public meeting is required. Publication of the proposed or other methods to make the LRTP readily available for public review and comment is also required [23 CFR 450.322 (c)]

In accordance with its Public Participation Plan, the Memphis MPO shall to the maximum extent practical – (i) hold any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times; (ii) employ visualization techniques to describe long-range transportation plans; and (iii) make public information available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the Memphis MPO website, as appropriate to afford reasonable opportunities for consideration of public comment and opinion. The goal of the Memphis MPO's Public Participation Program is to ensure that all citizens regardless of race, color, religion, income status, national origin, age, gender, disability, marital status, or political affiliation, have an equal opportunity to participate in the Memphis MPO's decision-making process. The development of the LRTP conformed to the requirements of its Public Participation Plan.



Community involvement for the LRTP reached out to all community members through a variety of media including the Transportation Plan Advisory (TPAC), public workshops, stakeholder interviews, public surveys, newsletters, and a project website. A special focus of the public involvement process was to reach out to special focus groups of the population — specifically low income, minority, limited English speaking Hispanic community and persons with disabilities.

Environmental Justice

As the recipient of federal transportation funds, the Memphis MPO is required to ensure non-discrimination in all aspects of the transportation planning process. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that “no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal assistance” (42 U.S.C. 2000d-1). Additionally, in 1994, President Clinton issued Executive Order 12898 which states that “each federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.”

Executive Order 13166 requires “improved access to services for persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP).” Once the percentage of an LEP population (such as the Hispanic/Latino population) becomes 5%, federal departments and agencies are required to extend financial assistance to develop programs and provide oral and written services in languages other than English. It was determined that the projects included in the LRTP do not have a disproportionate negative impact on minority, low-income, or LEP populations. A summary of the methodology, analysis,

and findings is included in Chapter 3, with details provided in Appendix D.

Natural, Environmental, and Cultural Resources

Projects identified in the LRTP were screened to determine the impacts to the natural, environmental and cultural resources of the region. Locations of these natural resources were determined using the National Heritage Program, the National Register of Historic Places, information available from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Guiding principles for minimizing impacts to these natural resources in considering new roadway alignments and extensions are provided by a set of best practices in the LRTP.

The environmental effects of transportation projects on environmental and cultural resources were examined at the macro level for the LRTP. As each project advances through the process, a more thorough investigation of possible adverse impacts occurs by the local jurisdictions as well as state and federal agencies.

As part of the development of the LRTP, SAFETEA-LU requires that types of mitigation shall be discussed within the 20-year planning document along with potential sites to carry out the activities, including activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the plan. Environmental mitigation activities are strategies, policies, programs, actions, and activities that, over time, will serve to avoid, minimize, or compensate for (by replacing or providing substitute resources) the impacts to or disruption of elements of the human and natural environment associated with the implementation of a long range statewide or regional transportation plan.

Potential Environmental Mitigation Activities	
Resource	Potential Mitigation Activity
Wetlands or water resources	Mitigation sequencing requirements involving avoidance, minimization, compensation (could include preservation, creation, restoration, in-lieu fees, riparian buffers); design exceptions and variances; environmental compliance monitoring.
Forested and other natural areas	Avoidance, minimization; Replacement property for open space easements to be of equal fair market value and of equivalent usefulness; design exceptions and variances; environmental compliance monitoring.
Agricultural areas	Avoidance, minimization; design exceptions and variances; environmental compliance monitoring.
Endangered and threatened species	Avoidance, minimization; time of year restrictions; construction sequencing; design exceptions and variances; species research; species fact sheets; Memoranda of Agreements for species management; environmental compliance monitoring.
Ambient air quality	Transportation control measures, transportation emission reduction measures.
Neighborhoods, communities, homes and businesses	Impact avoidance or minimization; context sensitive solutions for communities (appropriate functional and/or esthetic design features).
Cultural Resources	Avoidance, minimization; landscaping for historic properties; preservation in place or excavation for archeological sites; Memoranda of Agreement with the Department of Historic Resources; design exceptions and variances; environmental compliance monitoring.
Parks and recreation areas	Avoidance, minimization, mitigation; design exceptions and variances; environmental compliance monitoring.

As part of this requirement, TDOT and MDOT established a consultation process with state and federal agencies responsible for environmental protection, land use management, and natural



resource and historic preservation. Through this the Memphis MPO was able to seek comment and compare available plans and maps with planned transportation improvements. Mitigation strategies developed as part of the plan included:

Land Use and Design Considerations

The LRTP evaluates the relationship between land use, urban design, and transportation using the principles of urban form. Four focus areas representative of varying types of development patterns and intensities were analyzed. The four focus areas included:

- Downtown reinvestment
- Transit-oriented development
- Traditional neighborhood development
- Rural preservation

Recommendations from the four focus areas can be applied to other areas of the region. Communities with similar vision, development patterns, and supporting infrastructure can consider the best development practices generated from these models when implementing their own community plans that better integrate land use, urban form, and transportation decision-making. Land use integration recommendations included:

- Continue to support local initiatives that result in a more efficient, livable transportation system (street connectivity, transit system enhancements, etc.).
- Reinvest in existing infrastructure and promote infill development or redevelopment instead of sprawl out from the core of the community.
- Seek state and federal funding supportive of activities to improve the quality of development and protect human health and the environment.

Roadway Element

The LRTP includes extensive information on the roadway network. The discussion of the existing highway system and conditions is organized into the following sections:

- Existing Plus Committed Network
- Existing Transportation Improvement Program
- Functional Classification
- Existing Corridor Operations

The focus of the existing roadway element of the plan is to identify the existing roadways, identify those roadways that are presently committed to be constructed, and to provide an overview of how the existing roadway system is currently operating.

The existing plus committed network is a term used to describe the current roadway system and the programmed capacity expansion projects. The capacity expansion projects that are identified as “committed” are those projects that have advanced beyond the planning phase and that are far enough through the design and/or right-of-way phases that a funding source has been identified and funding committed to construct or implement the project. The Committed Network also includes projects that have already moved into the construction phase, but have not yet been completed. Table 5.1 and Figures 5.1A through 5.1C of the plan show the existing and committed projects.

The construction funding for the capacity expansion projects included in the Committed Network has been included either in the 2008-2011 TIP with matching funds included in the most recent local agency Capital Improvements Program or from resources identified in a previous fiscal year. The capacity expansion projects were identified based on a review of the *Memphis Urban Area Transportation Improvement Program, 2008-2011*, *TDOT State Transportation Improvement Program*

(STIP), 2008-2011, and the *Mississippi State Transportation Improvement Program, 2007-2012*.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) provides a financially constrained list of the most immediate priority transportation improvements for an area. The TIP also includes projects for which a dedicated funding sources for construction has not yet been identified or programmed, and therefore were not considered to be part of the Committed Network. The list of those remaining roadway related projects in the 2008-2011 TIP is included in the plan.

The classification of streets into several “functional” categories aids in communication among policy makers, planners, engineers, and citizens for expanding the transportation system. The functional classification system groups streets according to the land use served (or to be served) and provides a general designation of the type of traffic each street is intended to serve. The functional classifications for the Memphis MPO roadway network are provided in Figures 5.2A through 5.2C.

The existing congested network was determined using the Regional Travel Demand Model to screen roadway segments based on the Level of Service. The Existing plus Committed roadway network as defined in Chapter 5 was used in the evaluation. The base year used in the evaluation was 2017.

The Congestion Management Process (CMP) outlines the types of projects that can help to relieve traffic congestion. The CMP was updated to comply with SAFETEA-LU and was adopted by the Transportation Policy Board of the Memphis MPO on August 30, 2007. Congestion management is a major consideration for the Memphis region due to the status of the region’s air quality designation.



MEMPHIS LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN



The following strategies were applied to address the congested network in a systematic way:

- Ridesharing,
- Roadway Improvements,
- Dedicated Laneage,
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities,
- Transit Improvements,
- Intelligent Transportation Systems,
- Growth Management, and
- General Purpose Lanes.

The congested network is identified in Figure 8.1A through 8.1C and in Table 8.1.

Table 8.2 lists the roadways in the existing plus committed congested network and the strategies that could be implemented to address the congestion. Table 8.3 lists the roadways in the Horizon year congested network and the strategies that could be implemented to address the congestion. A qualitative screening process was used to assess the potential impacts of projects included in the LRTP. This analysis consisted of overlaying roadway project alignments and/or locations onto a series of maps that identify natural features, cultural/community sites, and demographic data. Projects were also analyzed for how they relate to other modes; address roadway congestion, safety, and security; and impact economic growth. The results of this evaluation were summarized in matrix form and represent a qualitative assessment of potential project issues. The matrix evaluation criteria are grouped into seven categories:

- Congestion Relief, Access, and Mobility
- Ridership and Usage

- Economic Opportunities
- Safety and Security
- Public/Community Support
- Environmental Impacts
- Funding Considerations

Potential project impacts were classified as “Minor,” “Moderate,” or “Major” for each of the above categories.

Complete Streets.

Complete streets is a term used nationally to describe the concept of transforming thoroughfares into community oriented streets that safely and conveniently accommodate all modes of travel. This section of the plan describes complete street concepts that could be implemented as part of the plan. The complete streets concepts presented are consistent with those provided in the City of Memphis and Shelby County *Unified Development Code (UDC)*. Recommendations to implement the concepts of complete streets are provided. Typical sections are included for principle and minor arterials, as well as roadways with transit fixed guideways.

Recommendations for access management are provided for specific roadway segments identified in the planning process. The roadways evaluated were:

- Goodman Road from US 51 to Greenbrook Parkway,
- Poplar Avenue from Schilling Boulevard East to Byhalia Road,
- Poplar Avenue from Oak Court Drive to White Station Road,
- Third Street from Levi Road to Peebles Road, and
- US 51 from Babe Howard Boulevard to West Union Road.

Figures 7.1A through 7.5E show the potential access management strategies that could be implemented to improve capacity and safety along these strategic corridors.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Element

The Memphis MPO completed a bicycle and pedestrian plan entitled *Final Report: Memphis MPO Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* (adopted in January 2005). The LRTP is not intended to replace the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, but is intended to take the plans developed there and provide guidance for its implementation through the LRTP process.

The bicycle and pedestrian element of the LRTP evaluates existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities and provides recommendations to expand the network of sidewalks, on-street bicycle facilities, and off-street facilities such as multi-use paths; and recommends engineering, education, encouragement, and enforcement programs to maintain safe and efficient facilities. The following are recommendations identified in the plan for bicycle and pedestrian facilities:

- A proposed on-street bicycle network should build on the greenway system to create regionally interconnected bikeways designed for short- and long-distance travel;
- The routes identified in the existing bicycle and pedestrian plan should be enhanced with the research and input received during the development of the LRTP;
- Pedestrian facilities provided along arterial roadways should be separated from the roadway with landscape areas;
- Funding should be pursued to allow the development of greenway trails identified by the community near area rivers and along abandoned railroad lines; and
- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities should be coordinated with the transit routes to provide interconnection of these facilities.



Kimley-Horn
and Associates, Inc.

Executive Summary

Page E-4





Transit Element

The transit element of the LRTP focuses on enhancing the existing transit system by improving the image of transit in the community, enhancing transit stops, and providing improved communication with transit users; and discusses the transition to a centers-and-corridors orientation to better serve the region.

The two most critical elements for transit to flourish in the region will be progressive planning and increased, preferably dedicated, funding. Many of the recommendations for transit in the Memphis area involve promoting transit as a safe, convenient, and dependable form of transportation. Long-term solutions target improvements for captive and choice riders to make sure transit exists as a sustainable transportation alternative.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) provides a financially constrained list of the most immediate priority transportation improvements for an area. The current (2008-2011) TIP projects with transit funding in the Memphis region are listed in the plan.

The recommendations for the transit element of the LRTP have been divided into short- and long-term strategies. The short-term recommendations are provided to create a foundation for MATA to improve the impression of transit and evaluate current service operation. The longer-term recommendations aim to establish a refined transit delivery system in the Memphis area, as well as create a dedicated funding source for transit.

Short-Term Strategies

The short-term strategies that follow provide initial steps to address these key findings. While some of these strategies represent long-term commitments, their inclusion as short-term strategies suggests the need to establish the program, policy, and/or action in the near term. Strategies that require service expansions may require additional funding.

- MATA and the Memphis MPO should coordinate with other human service providers to complete the recommendations identified in the MACHSTP report.
- Transit should be promoted for all types of riders.
- Passenger amenities should be improved and expanded.
- Consider development of a transit master plan to extend the planning of operation and capital needs beyond a year-to-year basis.

Long-Term Strategies

The long-term transit strategies that follow are designed to create a transit network that links activity centers throughout the region, provides enhanced services for all users, and positions itself to address shifting growth patterns.

- Complete an inventory of existing park-and-ride facilities.
- Identify future routes to be responsive to future land use patterns.
- Consider establishing a regional transit agency with its own dedicated funding source for transit.
- A fixed guideway study should be completed to analyze potential transit service on the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes on I-40 and I-55.
- Coordination with the Memphis MPO and other transportation providers should continue to implement the Action Plan within the MACHSTP report.
- Improved transit information technology should be explored.
- The long-term recommendations of the transit master plan (recommended as a short-term strategy) should be implemented.

- Consider creation of a transit delivery system that offers service oriented to activity centers and corridors.
- Pursue acquisition of existing or preservation of abandoned freight railroad rights-of-way for future use for fixed guideway transit, bikeways, and green belts.

Additional transit recommendations include:

- Enhance communication and information regarding routes and schedules, especially in Spanish for the Hispanic community
- Enhance passenger amenities at well-used bus stops, including the following:
 - repair sidewalks and rebuild as necessary to comply with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act Guidelines
 - Install shelters, canopies, and other amenities and plant a shade tree nearby
 - Add bike racks on all buses
- Close gaps in existing bus service
- Improve bus route system to reduce travel time for reverse commute and suburb-to-suburb travel

Freight and Aviation Element

The freight and aviation element of the LRTP examines the interaction between existing and future infrastructure needs of air, rail, port, truck, and intermodal facilities; and recommends policy and infrastructure needs based on stakeholder coordination.

Five types of freight transportation were studied— marine port, airport, rail, highway, and intermodal service. Freight needs were identified not only through sites visits and visual inspections, but also by a review of published data and survey results. The recommendations provided in the LRTP include:



MEMPHIS LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN



- Conduct a feasibility study to determine the viability of a local short-line rail operator at the Port;
- Conduct a feasibility study to identify high-crash highway/rail grade crossings that can be economically converted into grade separated structures;
- Build I-69 and I-269 connecting Memphis on the transcontinental highway from Toronto, Canada to Monterey, Mexico;
- Build a new rail/highway bridge spanning the Mississippi River, with connections to existing infrastructure; and
- Conduct a feasibility study to evaluate the potential to develop a Memphis Rail Bypass to route through-freight movements, including the movement of hazardous materials through less populated areas.

Transportation Safety

The safety element of the LRTP identifies the requirements of SAFETEA-LU to address safety; evaluates existing safety programs for roadway, transit, freight, and non-motorized users through cost-effective applications; and identifies best management practices, and local access and land use policies. Existing Local, State, and Federal program, such as the Tennessee Strategic Highway Safety Plan, the Mississippi Strategic Highway Safety Plan, FHWA Highway Safety Improvement Program, and MATA's System Safety Program Plan (SSPP), are described.

A list of intersections with the highest crash rates is presented along with recommended countermeasures for each location. Specific best practices to resolve safety related problems vary based on the facility type and location. Therefore, once a problem location is identified, it is recommended that a safety audit review be performed. Federal funds are identified within SAFETEA-LU for addressing safety problems. State funds in Tennessee are

available under the Spot Safety Fund and in both states under the Highway Safety Improvement Program.

For local governments to better identify and categorize crash data, it is recommended that crash data be incorporated into the Memphis MPO's geographic information system (GIS) database. This step will allow a more complete and detailed analysis of the crash data. This data could be used to identify hot spots for specific crash types such as red light running, speed related crashes, or single vehicle crashes. This information may now be available in this format at the State level, but it is often unavailable for local use.

The need exists for better sharing of safety data between the local and state agencies. Liability issues that potentially exist with this information would need to be resolved, but the sharing of this data in a useable format would allow the Memphis MPO to identify locations for safety improvements within its boundary.

Transportation Security

One of the key goals of the Memphis Urban Area 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is to increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users. A number of initiatives at the Federal, State, and local level are planned and have been implemented. The plan describes current transportation system security programs such as:

- National Highway System (NHS),
- MATA's System Security and Emergency Preparedness Plan (SSEP),
- Transportation Security Grants (awarded to Amtrack),
- Public and Private Airport Security programs
- Port Authority programs

- Programs of the National Security and the Defense Department
 - Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET),
 - Railroads for National Defense (RND) Program, and
 - Ports for National Defense (PND) Program.
- Naval Support Activity (NAVSUPACT) Mid-South Programs

The metropolitan transportation planning process is consistent with the Regional Transit Security Strategy (RTSS), as required by the Department of Homeland Security. The RTSS establishes an overall vision of regional transit preparedness with specific goals and objectives essential to achieving the vision. It serves as the strategy for the region with mode-specific goals and objectives as they relate to prevention, detection, response, and recovery. Below is a brief summary of the security efforts in the Memphis MPO area.

Financial Plan

SAFETEA-LU legislation requires a financial plan be provided as a part of the LRTP. The goal of the financial plan is to show how the proposed investments can be provided by funding sources that can be reasonably expected to be available over the life of the plan. Meeting this test is referred to as "financial constraint."

The *Memphis Urban Area 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)* is financially constrained. The mix of transportation recommendations proposed to meet metropolitan transportation needs until 2030 is consistent with revenue forecasts for the same time period. The Financial Plan details both proposed investments for these recommendations and revenue forecasts over the life of the plan.

MEMPHIS LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN



The proposed recommendations were developed in collaboration with the Memphis MPO, local municipalities, Shelby County, Fayette County, DeSoto County, TDOT, MDOT, and the Memphis Area Transit Authority (MATA). These projects include roadway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities and services for the life of this plan and reflect existing and committed projects, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the future plans of the Memphis MPO, TDOT, MDOT, local jurisdictions, and MATA. These recommendations also reflect travel demand benefits and socioeconomic impacts studied using the congestion management and evaluation matrix processes. Finally, these projects result from an extensive public participation process that incorporated public workshops, small focus group meetings, and the efforts of a Transportation Plan Advisory Committee.

Revenue forecasts were developed after a review of previous state and local expenditures, current funding trends, and likely future funding levels. The revenue forecasts involved consultation with TDOT, MDOT, the Memphis MPO, MATA, and local jurisdictions. All dollar figures discussed in this section initially were analyzed in current year dollars (i.e. 2008) and then inflated to reflect projected year of funding or implementation. Based on current national and state standards, an annual inflation rate of 3% was used to forecast costs and revenues.

Based on the fiscally constrained scenario presented in the financial plan, the total projected cost for all non-transit capital projects within the Memphis MPO Area is approximately \$3.4 billion.

State and Federal revenues allocated by formula may not sufficiently fund a systematic program of constructing desired transportation projects and providing congestion relief in the Memphis MPO region. Therefore, the Memphis MPO and local jurisdictions may desire to pursue alternative funding measures

that could allow for the implementation of this plan. Alternative funding sources that may be considered are included in the plan.

Travel Demand Model

The Travel Demand Model (TDM) is an important tool used in the development of the LRTP. The Memphis Model was completed in 2007 and it is developed with TransCAD as the base platform software, which is a GIS based software that allows efficient storing, managing and displaying of the transportation data. The model development underwent an extensive review process through a local steering committee, an expert panel review, and a Peer Review Process. The completed model has also been reviewed and approved by the appropriate State Departments of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Authority (FTA). The Memphis Model has base year of 2004 and a horizon year of 2030 with various interim years of 2008, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2017, and 2020.

Implementation Plan

The purpose of the implementation plan is to provide a framework of action upon which the programs, projects, and desires presented throughout this document can become reality. The implementation plan is based on the goals and objectives of the plan and identifies the actions required to implement multimodal solutions designed to improve the safety, mobility, and aesthetics of the Memphis region.

The following action items should be used to implement the recommendations of the LRTP.

1. Prioritize Projects using the existing Memphis MPO committees to identify projects from this LRTP to be included in the next TIP.
2. Update the Congestion Management Plan, the Major Road Plan, and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

3. Request inclusion of high-priority projects in the next update of the state's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
4. Develop a Transit Master Plan.
5. Use the Citizens Advisory Committee to encourage and educate the public, and aide in the implementation of this plan.
6. Coordinate with the development review process to integrate recommended street, bikeway, and greenway networks that create an interconnected network.

Air Quality Conformity

The 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) and the Tennessee Transportation Conformity Rules require demonstration that transportation plans, programs (TIP), and projects conform to the Tennessee State Implementation Plan (SIP). Conformity to a SIP means that planned transportation activities will not produce new air quality violations, worsen existing violations, or delay timely attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). This new air quality conformity analysis was completed to assess those projects included in the 2008-2011 Memphis MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Memphis Urban Area 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan for both CO and ozone.

The approach used for this conformity was developed in concert with 40 CFR Part 93 (i.e., Transportation Conformity Rule) and subsequent amendments. Consideration was also given to issued and proposed federal guidance in response to negotiated settlements between federal agencies and interested environmental groups. All of the planning assumptions remain the same as agreed upon through the interagency consultation process with the exception of an additional functional classification (Urban Interstate) utilized during the air quality modeling process.



Kimley-Horn
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Executive Summary

Page E-7





The conformity determination was performed according to procedures prescribed by the following federal, state and local regulations: 69 FR 40004, 40 CFR Parts 51 and 93 (i.e. Transportation Conformity Rule Requirements); the TDEC Transportation Conformity Rules, Chapter 1200-3-34; the Memphis and Shelby County ordinances that adopt by reference the Tennessee Conformity Rules; and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Planning Regulations (23 CFR 450) implementing SAFETEA-LU Requirements. In order for each transportation plan (2030 LRTP), program (2008-2011 TIP), and FHWA/FTA project to be found to conform, the MPO and DOT

must demonstrate that the applicable criteria and procedures have been satisfied (section §93.109-a).
 Mobile source emissions estimates for the ozone season (summer) and CO season (winter) were developed using EPA's Mobile Source Emissions Factor Model, MOBILE6.2 (Sept 2003, updated March 2006), and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) estimates from the latest Memphis MPO Travel Demand Model. The emissions factors are based on a number of inputs including temperature, presence of inspection and maintenance programs, and vehicle type mix. Emissions estimates are the product of average daily VMT, adjusted for seasonal variation, and the appropriate emission factors.

The emissions estimates for CO and the ozone precursors, VOC and NO_x are lower than the corresponding emission budgets for each horizon year. The analysis indicates that projected emissions levels based on the projects contained in the Memphis Urban Area 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program meet the conformity tests. It is the determination of this analysis that the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the LRTP conform under 8-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards and the CO National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Table 13 - Summary of Mobile Source Emissions and Emissions Budgets (ton/day)

Pollutants	Emission Budget*	2010	2017	2020	2030
VOC (ozone season)	144.5	19.557		11.639	11.131
NO _x (ozone season)	94.3	39.767		23.246	10.594
CO (CO season)	839.99		306.768		

Professional and technical services:

Professional and technical services are also available to public and private landowners and land managers throughout the Great River Road – Tennessee corridor from a wide range of public and private organizations. Land-use planners, landscape architects, engineers, historians, architects, ecologists, graphic designers, wildlife and vegetation scientists as well as legal and financial experts are among the professionals that are available to property owners and resource managers for purposes of protecting, managing, enhancing and interpreting the intrinsic resources of the Great River Road - Tennessee corridor.

Public interpretation and education programs:

Educating the public, including most particularly travelers of the Great River Road - Tennessee about its intrinsic resources, their values to local and national society, and to the risks the resources face is an extremely important step in building support for enhancement and protection of those resources. Through our ongoing public meetings, symposiums and partnerships with academic institutions, we plan to continue efforts to inspire and initiate programming for incoming visitors, community leaders, public citizens and students to foster additional appreciation for our most valuable intrinsic qualities and resources.

Cooperative agreements between separate units of government:

Practical and creative uses of cooperative agreements between different jurisdictions and levels of government need to be explored as part of the strategy of offering services to property owners and resource managers interested in protecting and enhancing intrinsic qualities.



Public Responsibility (6)

FEDERAL REGISTER - NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM - FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION:

A plan for on-going public participation in the implementation of corridor management objectives.

The Great River Road - Tennessee will attract thousands of visitors as well as local travelers along the newly developing Interstate 69. History buffs, recreational and outdoor enthusiasts, biology and botany researchers and observers, families, and students of all ages will benefit from the Corridor's historic landmarks, magnificent trails and scenic vistas, interpretive nature centers and recreational facilities. Enhancement of amenities to support the influx of visitors and new development ventures will positively impact job creation, capital investments, income levels, and local and state tax revenues.

Without the support and cooperation of citizens and visitors to the west Tennessee Corridor, our public outreach efforts and educational programming will not be effective. In order to secure public participation and additional expertise for our Corridor public relations campaign, the MRCT organized six county Task Force Committees. Each member was selected by their respective County Mayors. The criteria for Committee membership was determined that each individual should have a significant amount of expertise in at least one of our Focus Categories: Economic Development, Transportation, Conservation, Recreation, Heritage Development, Health & Wellness or Education.

This has proven to be an excellent formula in bringing together a variety of individual interests and agendas in our mission to identify, conserve and interpret the region's natural, cultural and scenic resources to improve the quality of life and prosperity in west Tennessee.

The MRCT will continue to hold public meetings, workshops, symposiums, educational outings, and special events to keep our citizens and incoming visitors engaged in our river activities and ongoing preservation of intrinsic resources within the Great River Road – Tennessee corridor.

As noted in the MRCT Strategic Plan, our partners, Board members, Advisory Council and Committee members have pledged to:

Strategy 2: Market the Corridor

- Objective (a) Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing & branding plan for Corridor (target audiences)
- Objective (b) Promote the Corridor internationally
- Objective (c) Establish and promote a regional identity
- Objective (d) Develop & coordinate a tourism enhancement strategy

Much of the protection and enhancement of intrinsic qualities, as well as the delivery of authentic visitor experience, relies on cooperative and volunteer partnerships between many otherwise unrelated organizations and individuals. The MRCT has built alliances and relationships that are unprecedented in our region. Through public participation in meetings up and down the Great River Road – Tennessee, we have helped to identify each county’s greatest assets and unique resources for enhancement and preservation purposes. We have also experienced a wonderful “reawakening” from the six county communities as they discover treasures that were once taken for granted. The apathy and neglect of valuable resources that was often commonplace in the corridor has been replaced with pride and a *sense of place*. In addition to being continually accessible to organizations and interested individuals through its staff and volunteer associations, the MRCT will continue to provide the following services for greater public participation in the Great River Road – Tennessee promotions and activities:

- Disseminate information related specifically to the Mississippi River and the Great River Road – Tennessee as well as other associated regional activities
- Serve as a clearinghouse by directing comments, suggestions, complaints, and recommendations to the proper offices and departments within the state of Tennessee
- Report on travel and tourism trends as well as performance indicators for the tourism industry in our region
- Represent a broad spectrum of interest groups that rely on the enhancement and interpretation of the intrinsic qualities of the Great River Road – Tennessee
- Serve as a conduit for representing Louisiana with the 10-state Mississippi River Parkway Commission, and vice versa.

When updates are needed to this corridor management plan—annual as well as five-year updates—the Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee in cooperation with the Tennessee Departments of Transportation and Tourist Development will provide structured opportunities for organizations and individuals to participate in implementing and updating the objectives for protecting and enhancing the intrinsic qualities as well as providing positive byway travel experiences for visitors of the Great River Road – Tennessee.

Byway Safety (7)

FEDERAL REGISTER - NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM - FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION:

A general review of the road’s safety record to locate hazards and poor design and identify possible corrections.

The majority of the roads that comprise the Great River Road – Tennessee are state and federal highways. However, a portion of the overall route includes municipal streets and county roads. All portions of the route occur on public rights of way and are enforced and maintained by appropriate levels of government including the selected bridge crossings of the Mississippi River. Traffic regulations are enforced throughout the route, and emergency services are available through local and state response procedures.

The route has hard surface paving and contains a two-mile stretch in Tipton County at the Shelby County line that is impacted gravel. The MRCT is working to have that small section paved next year. Roadway improvements and upgrades occur through normal local and state transportation improvement processes. Traffic control devices generally conform to the manual on uniform traffic control devices.

Roadway Safety Issues

As with many other roads that carry motorists on leisure travel, the Great River Road –Tennessee shares needs and opportunities for improvements in the following areas:

- Route marking, proper placement of traffic control devices, and other wayshowing components to recognize first-time travelers on the Great River Road - Tennessee
- Provisions for pedestrian access, and crossing of the Great River Road – Tennessee
- Provisions for bicycle traffic (shared lane or separate path), particularly in regard to the routing for the Mississippi River Trail
- Traffic calming procedures and improvements
- Designated opportunities for traffic to turn around and change directions on the Great River Road - Tennessee
- Parking areas and safe pull-offs for motorists to observe roadside attractions and access top-of-levee trail system

- Maintenance of appropriate clear zone
- Establishment and maintenance of additional roadway shoulders

In the next year, in cooperation with the Tennessee Department of Transportation, the Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee plans to create an Inventory and Analysis of current road conditions through the Great River Road – Tennessee corridor. It will be based on the following design and safety considerations:

Corridor roadways provide the primary linkage between the tourist and educational venues, recreational features, and other elements contained within the corridor; therefore, it is important that the roadways be of consistent design and appearance in order to facilitate wayfinding, safety, and vehicular capacity.

Table 1 indicates suggested roadway design elements, predicated on the roadway classification. A brief description of each element follows:

Roadway Classification is the basic element that defines the type of roadway and is based on its functional category, as defined by either local government officials and/or the Tennessee Department of Transportation.

Design Speed is the other basic element that establishes the other design criteria, and is typically dictated by its classification.

Lane Width is defined as the width of the pavement traveled by vehicles, not including shoulders, commonly known as the traveled way.

Shoulder Width is the width of the shoulders outside of the traveled way; shoulders are provided for safety and capacity.

Pedestrian / Bicycle Accommodation is the width provided for pedestrians and/or bicycles, and can be either inclusive or exclusive of the shoulder width.

Stopping Sight Distance is a measure of safety predicated on the roadway classification and is a measure of the minimum required visibility distance to stop once a hazard is observed.

Horizontal Curvature is a measure of the size of the roadway’s horizontal alignment in curves.

Minimum and Maximum Grades are measures of how flat and how steep the roadway can be, respectively, as measured longitudinally.

Superelevation is the maximum rate that the roadway can be banked or tilted through horizontal curves, and provides for consistency of operation and safety through roadway curves.

The application of the above features to the existing and proposed roadways within the Great River Road – Tennessee corridor require consideration of many factors — a primary one being an inventory of existing roadway features and characteristics, including:

- Inventory of existing roadway conditions including geometry, pavement and bridge conditions, maintenance needs, and signage.
- Inventory and analysis of vehicular crash data.
- Inventory of existing vehicle operating characteristics including car and truck hourly and daily counts, directional data, recreational vehicle origin and destination, and speed studies.

Once these items are inventoried and analyzed, a reasonable application of the requisite functional classification can be applied to each roadway segment.

SEE ROADWAY CHART BELOW

Table 1 – Roadway Design Criteria

Design Element	Roadway Classification		
	Local	Collector	Arterial
Design Speed, mph	30	40	50
Lane Width, ft	11	12	12
Shoulder Width, ft	2	4	6
Pedestrian / Bicycle Accommodation, ft	4	4	6
Minimum Stopping Sight Distance, ft	200	300	400
Minimum Horizontal Curvature, ft	252	468	764
Minimum Grade, %	0	0	0
Maximum Grade, %	7	6	5
Maximum Superelevation, %	8	8	8

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Commerce and User Facilities (8)

FEDERAL REGISTER - NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM - FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION:

A plan to accommodate commercial traffic while ensuring the safety of sightseers in smaller vehicles, as well as bicyclists, joggers, and pedestrians.

Safety is an issue on the Great River Road – Tennessee that equals in importance as protecting and enhancing its intrinsic qualities. Along its entire course, travelers will find nearly all imaginable driving conditions and situations including winter driving conditions and one short segment with a gravel road. Some portions of the Great River Road- Tennessee, such as in the northwestern part of the state on the river, are characterized by very low traffic volumes while others, as in the Memphis metropolitan areas, are marked by high traffic counts and considerable commercial traffic. Motorists traveling along the Great River Road – Tennessee across will participate in a wide diversity of traffic conditions and will need to be attuned to changing traffic conditions as part of their travel experience. However, roadway conditions throughout the entire route do support all types of motor vehicles, including commercial level coach tour buses.

Environmental Enhancement Systems Plan

In partnership with the Regional Economic Development Center at the University of Memphis, the MRCT has been working for the past year to create an *Environmental Enhancement Systems Plan*. This plan, funded primarily by a grant from The McKnight Foundation based in Minneapolis, will enable advocates for the Great River Road – Tennessee to develop ways to accommodate commercial traffic while ensuring the safety of sightseers in smaller vehicles, bicyclists, joggers and pedestrians.

The overarching focus will be the completion of the MRCT Master Plan for the Great River Road – Tennessee with recommended nodes and themes for natural and cultural heritage conservation, recreation, research, and education supported by necessary transportation and way finding systems. We also intend to utilize this new network of facilities and sites to create a safer and more scenic route for the Mississippi River Trail (MRT). The plan will enable cyclists to efficiently ride through the Corridor in Tennessee and serve as a major connector to the other ten river states included in the MRT roadway and trail system.

There is also a former *Chickasaw Bluff* trail that will provide the foundation for the development of a linear trail system to travel from Mississippi through west Tennessee and up to Kentucky for hikers and river *explorers* in the region.

The plan will contain recommendations to establish the six-county region as a unified destination for regional citizens and visitors to experience the River environment through eco-tourism, recreational tourism, cultural heritage tourism, and agri-tourism. These citizen experiences will be aimed at promoting advocacy of protecting water quality, historical landmarks, riverside bluffs, flood plains, habitat resources, wetlands and best farming practices.

In addition to the great Mississippi River waterway, the region is currently tied together by the federal primary route US highway 51, which was the original highway connecting Chicago to New Orleans. The region, and parts of an enhanced US 51, will be the future Tennessee route of I-69 that will connect Canada, the United States and Mexico. This interstate highway will open the MRCT and the Great River Road - Tennessee to increased economic development potential and presents opportunities for educating and engaging the public in natural resource preservation, historical appreciation and research.

The MRCT *Environmental Systems Enhancement Plan* is being created to improve **awareness** of the Mississippi River and strengthen **connectivity** (physical and cultural) to the river by giving residents and visitors **places** to go along the river, **reasons** to go there, and clear **routes** to get there. We believe that improving awareness and connectivity by engaging residents and visitors in experiences on the river will help to create and educate advocates. Related enhancements will also serve to strengthen riverfront communities in the six counties adjacent to the Mississippi River in west Tennessee and the region.

This is essentially a Great River Road - Tennessee plan for a system of interconnected *nodes and themes*. Our plan will suggest a system of **River Centers**, strategically located in each of the six corridor counties, which will serve as nodes – places that provide access to the river and opportunities for engagement, education, and recreation. Using community input and working from the lists of assets previously identified by leaders and residents in the six corridor counties, we will develop a set of common themes that will draw residents and visitors to the River Centers. These themes will help define an overall identity for the MRCT and the Great River Road - Tennessee corridor.

Each River Center will educate visitors about nearby assets and amenities that relate to the system-wide set of common themes. The individual centers will vary in focus, architecture and function, depending on the types of common-theme assets that exist within each county.

Our plan will examine the need for improved physical connections to each of the identified nodes as well as between nodes, to allow visitors to easily find their way from center-to-center and asset-to-asset along the corridor. The plan will also consider how to maximize the potential for enhancing awareness (by reaching large and diverse audiences) in determining the locations, design, and function of the

River Centers. There is only regional plan currently in place to address community concerns or “unique place” initiatives in West Tennessee.

Wayshowing:

Effective byway wayshowing in the form of consistent and uniform highway signs that clearly mark the route of the Great River Road - Tennessee and provide directions to its various intrinsic resource stops, is an important component of assuring positive visitor experiences.

Infrastructure Improvement Planning:

A variety of infrastructure improvements are appropriate to support increased use of the Great River Road – Tennessee. The types of projects include, but are not limited to: parking areas that serve as trailheads for the Mississippi River Trail and Chickasaw Bluffs; turnarounds and traffic circles that will manage continuous flow of traffic with turning movements; pedestrian crossings; orientation stops; and turning lanes for traffic entering major attractions. The MRCT, in cooperation with the Tennessee Department of Transportation, will provide an annual clearinghouse to identify and prioritize the various infrastructure improvement projects along the Great River Road – Tennessee.

Efforts to Minimize Intrusions and Enhancing Experiences (9)

FEDERAL REGISTER - NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM - FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION:

A discussion of efforts to minimize intrusions on the visitor’s experience and make improvements to enhance that experience.

The State of Tennessee has a Code for advertising in place to help minimize intrusions on the visitor’s experience (listed below) and the MRCT is currently developing a plan to suggest improvements for the Great River Road - Tennessee to further enhance our capability to produce a first class visitor destination.

TN Code Annotated – Volume 10 for Advertising on Scenic Roadways

Following are selections from the Tennessee Code Annotated for advertising on Scenic Roadways:

**Tennessee Code Annotated
Volume 10
Title 54
Chapter 17**

Scenic Roadways

54-17-108. Advertising or junkyards prohibited on scenic highways — Authority of commissioner to acquire.

(a) Whenever a road or highway has been designated part of the system, it is unlawful for any person to construct, use, operate or maintain any advertising structure or junkyard within two thousand feet (2,000') of any road or highway which is a designated part of the system and which is located either outside the corporate limits of any city or town or at any place within a “tourist resort county” as defined in § [42-1-301](#).

54-17-109. Advertising permitted on scenic highways.

(1) Those constructed by the owner or lessee of a place of business or residence on land belonging to such owner or lessee and not more than one hundred feet (100') from such place of business or residence, and relating solely to merchandise services or entertainment sold, produced, manufactured or furnished at such place of business or residence;

54-17-110. Removal or abatement of advertising structures and junkyards. —

(c) The power of eminent domain may be utilized to remove existing advertising structures or junkyards from within one thousand feet (1,000') of either side of designated Tennessee scenic highways.

Following are selections from the Tennessee Code Annotated for advertising on the Tennessee Parkway System:

**Tennessee Code Annotated
Volume 10
Title 54
Chapter 17**

Tennessee Parkway System

54-17-206. Advertising structures, junkyards, and trash dumping — Directional signs. —

(3) The commissioner of transportation may authorize the construction of advertising structures described in § 54-17-109(1) no larger than five hundred square feet (500 sq. ft.) and the construction and maintenance of signs which do not exceed eight square feet (8 sq. ft.) in area for nonprofit service clubs, charitable associations or religious services in accordance with criteria contained in rules and regulations that the commissioner is hereby authorized to promulgate.

(4) The commissioner may also authorize the construction of advertising structures of the size specified in subdivision (a)(3) for business establishments located within five (5) miles of a parkway route which provide services to persons traveling on that route. This subdivision (a)(4) shall apply only to that portion of Highway 79 located west and south of the Tennessee River which is in the Tennessee parkway system.

(b) All business establishments shall be entitled to erect and maintain two (2) directional signs of less than seventy-five square feet (75 sq. ft.) indicating the location of their business premises, with such spacing and zoning as required by the present laws.

Identify Connectivity Enhancements

As the MRCT identifies the capacity of existing and planned roads to connect residents and visitors to important assets throughout the corridor and to experiences on the river, we are also planning improvements to maximize the visitor experience. Transportation and wayfinding improvements will be identified and particular attention will be given to the role of the planned I-69 in fostering increased awareness and connectivity.

The following action steps will be required to identify connectivity enhancements:

- Analyze ability of existing road network and the Great River Road - Tennessee to connect the proposed nodes (River Centers), provide access to corridor assets, and connect residents and visitors to the river
- Recommend appropriate transportation improvements, including large capital improvements as well as simpler way-finding improvements (such as consistent themed signage)
- Evaluate the impact of I-69 routing and interchanges on the Great River Road – Tennessee, access to corridor assets, proposed River Centers, and overall awareness and connectivity
- Determine how expansion of roadways along the Mississippi River can link critical tourism elements and offer a unique experience to visitors along the Great River Road – Tennessee. Consider connection points to I-69 interchanges
- Integrate the MRCT trails, roads and bikeways (specifically the Mississippi River Trail) into the overall transportation network for the Great River Road – Tennessee.



Outdoor Advertising (10)

FEDERAL REGISTER - NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM - FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION:

Documentation of compliance with all existing local, state, and federal laws about the control of outdoor advertising.

Historically, the importance of reducing visual intrusions along the Great River Road has been well recognized. Previous Great River Road planning studies, which were intended for roadway improvements, have emphasized the need to control and regulate billboards and other forms of outdoor advertising. A number of corridor counties have signage and billboard policies that restrict and manage the installation and maintenance of outdoor advertising. Assistance is also available to all interested communities along the Great River Road - Tennessee corridor for improving their signage policies. Additionally, public agencies and private conservation organizations often acquire scenic and conservation easements to sustain intrinsic resources from uncontrolled or insensitive development.



Tennessee Parkways and Scenic Highways Program



Guidelines

The objective of designating roadways under either the *Tennessee Parkway* system or the *Scenic Highway* system is to provide a network of routes that have logical termini; provide alternative routes to highly traveled roads; preserve and protect historical, scenic, and natural qualities, and furnish motorists with safe and relaxing routes by which to experience the beauty of Tennessee.

Additionally, both the *Tennessee Parkway* system and the *Scenic Highway* system restrict outdoor advertising. The *Scenic Highway* system is the more restrictive of the two programs in regards to outdoor advertising.

Under both programs, it is unlawful to construct, use, operate or maintain any advertising structure within 2,000' of any road or highway which is a designated part of either system located outside the corporate limits of any city or town.

Please refer to Tennessee Code Annotated 54-17-206 for rules and regulations of outdoor advertising on the *Tennessee Parkway* system.

Designation Details

Scenic Highway

- Is designated by means of Legislation. Contact the Tennessee State Legislature to request that the route be designated an official *Scenic Highway*. The State Legislature has the authority to make this designation.

Tennessee Parkway

- Designated by the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation.
- A request from the individual, organization, agency, or group desiring a route be designated an official *Tennessee Parkway* must submit a request in writing to Commissioner Gerald Nicely
- The letter requesting the route to be designated as part of the Tennessee Parkway system must detail:
 - ◆ The route information
 - ◆ A map showing the route location
 - ◆ Pictures showing the route's historical, scenic, and/or natural qualities is recommended
- The request needs to be accompanied with strong community support, and a description of how the Parkway would contribute to the overall Tennessee Parkway system.
- The requested Tennessee Parkway designation must connect with an established Tennessee Parkway route.
- The Commissioner of the Department has the authority to approve or deny a route designation for the Tennessee Parkway system.

Federal Requirements

By principle and federal law, outdoor advertising (billboards, etc.) are managed on the Great River Road - Tennessee. Title 23, Section 131 of the United States Code outlines the specifics for controlling outdoor advertising associated with designated scenic byways.

Title 23, Section 131(s) describes control of outdoor advertising along designated scenic byways:

Scenic Byway Prohibition.--If a State has a scenic byway program, the State may not allow the erection along any highway on the Interstate System or Federal-aid primary system which before, on, or after the effective date of this subsection, is designated as a scenic byway under such program of any sign, display, or device which is not in conformance with subsection (c) of this section. Control of any sign, display, or device on such a highway shall be in accordance with this section. In designating a scenic byway for purposes of this section and section 1047 of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, a State may exclude from such designation any segment of a highway that is inconsistent with the State's criteria for designating State scenic byways. Nothing in the preceding sentence shall preclude a State from signing any such excluded segment, including such segment on a map, or carrying out similar activities, solely for purposes of system continuity.

Title 23, Section 131(t) defines the terms "primary system" and "Federal-aid primary system":

Primary System Defined.--For purposes of this section, the terms "primary system" and "Federal-aid primary system" mean the Federal-aid primary system in existence on June 1, 1991, and any highway which is not on such system but which is on the National Highway System.

Title 23, Section 131(s) references subsection 131(c) which explains what signs, displays, or devices are allowable along designated scenic byways:

Effective control means that such signs, displays, or devices after January 1, 1968, if located within six hundred and sixty feet of the right-of-way and, on or after July 1, 1975, or after the expiration of the next regular session of the State legislature, whichever is later, if located beyond six hundred and sixty feet of the right-of-way located outside of urban areas, visible from the main traveled way of the system, and erected with the purpose of their message being read from such main traveled way, shall, pursuant to this section, be limited to (1) directional and official signs and notices, which signs and notices shall include, but not be limited to, signs and notices pertaining to natural wonders, scenic and historical attractions, which are required or authorized

by law, which shall conform to national standards hereby authorized to be promulgated by the Secretary hereunder, which standards shall contain provisions concerning lighting, size, number, and spacing of signs, and such other requirements as may be appropriate to implement this section, (2) signs, displays, and devices advertising the sale or lease of property upon which they are located, (3) signs, displays, and devices, including those which may be changed at reasonable intervals by electronic process or by remote control, advertising activities conducted on the property on which they are located, (4) signs lawfully in existence on October 22, 1965, determined by the State, subject to the approval of the Secretary, to be landmark signs, including signs on farm structures or natural surfaces, or historic or artistic significance the preservation of which would be consistent with the purposes of this section, and (5) signs, displays, and devices advertising the distribution by nonprofit organizations of free coffee to individuals traveling on the Interstate System or the primary system. For the purposes of this subsection, the term "free coffee" shall include coffee for which a donation may be made, but is not required. Additional information from FHWA on outdoor advertising control can be found here: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/realstate/out_ad.htm.

The Tennessee Department of Transportation processes formal requests pertaining to the construction and replacement of outdoor advertising according to the procedures and enforcement functions that are legally available to the Department of Transportation.



Signage (11)

FEDERAL REGISTER - NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM - FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION:

A signage plan that demonstrates how the State will insure and make the number and placement of signs more supportive of the visitor experience.

The Tennessee Department of Transportation will work to ensure that the quantity and character of signage on the Great River Road - Tennessee is maintained and enhanced with appropriate wayfinding and directional signage for citizens and visitors into the region. The Department of Tourist Development will continue efforts to educate potential advertisers of the vision and goals of the Great River Road - Tennessee and direct appropriate state and sponsored promotional resources to ensure its success as a treasured visitor destination.

The Tennessee Parkways and Scenic Highways Program in the Tennessee Department of Transportation, recently received a Federal grant to create an assessment study of their current Byways, potential marketing initiatives to promote the Byways and long-term planning for increasing usage needs for the Great River Road – Tennessee, as well as others in development or current Byway routes such as The Natchez Trace.

The project will benefit byway travelers by providing systematic wayshowing components and easy-to-follow information at all stages of the byway experience. The project will feature uniformly identified byway entries and exits; orientation stops at visitor centers; route markers and guide signs; directional signage to land/river vistas, historic districts and unique sites as well as where to enjoy Tennessee's best cultural food and music.

For the Great River Road - Tennessee, the pilot wheel symbol will serve as the primary route marker identification. To be effective, this symbol will also be incorporated into the widely distributed Official State Highway Map; in web sites; and printed travel directions and literature. For travelers navigating the 10 Great River Road states, consistent application of this iconic emblem is essential.

Marketing (12)

FEDERAL REGISTER - NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM - FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION:

A narrative describing how the byway will be positioned for marketing.

The Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee is fortunate to already have a significant marketing and public relations program in place to promote the Great River Road – Tennessee.

The MRCT program was awarded a 1st place VOX Award by the Public Relations Society of America (Memphis Chapter) for their work in 2007. The project has secured almost one hundred regional articles throughout west Tennessee including a featured ***"Mystery Mississippi – Rolling out the River"*** series of special edition articles in December, 2006 by *The Commercial Appeal*, the major newspaper in Memphis.

Our ongoing campaign includes public meetings, symposiums, informative speeches to various civic groups, meetings with politicians and civic leaders and special event outings on the river. Marketing products specifically produced for the campaign include:

- An extensive and educational website www.msrivertn.org
- 4- Display fabric banners for exhibits and presentations
- A 10-minute DVD for speeches and presentations
- Brochures and an Executive Summary of the MRCT
- A Conceptual Master Plan – December 2006
- Maps of asset resources and directions to route sites
- Marketing projects in each of our six river counties including a recently produced documentary film, ***"The Fort Pillow Story"***, for the historic state park and Museum outside of Ripley.
Our 2009 marketing and public relations program for the Great River Road – Tennessee is detailed below:
- Publicize festivals and events (pulling information from a variety of sources) along the Great River Road Tennessee on the MRCT Calendar of Events (<http://www.msrivertn.org/calendar.asp>) and MRCT Blog (<http://memphisphotog.blogspot.com/>).
- Create and maintain Google Earth files/interactive map on MRCT website (www.msrivertn.org) which will include entire GRR route, assets along the

route (including descriptions, website & contact information and photos), and allow real-time travel planning for website visitors such as creating specific itineraries, altering routes, checking distances and obtaining directions to assets.

- Work with Memphis Convention & Visitors Bureau, west Tennessee Chambers of Commerce and the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development to ensure all assets along our Great River Road are included in their web and print visitor materials sent locally, nationally and internationally.
- Promote the Great River Road Tennessee in conjunction with the other 9 states bordering the Mississippi River via the 10-state represented marketing organization, the Mississippi River Parkway Commission (<http://www.experiencemississippiriver.com/>). Tennessee assets are currently and will continue to be included in their printed and online tourism marketing materials which are sent out internationally.
- Send periodic press releases and brochures to nationwide travel writers/publications to publicize locations and events to a broader audience.
- Produce a variety of driving maps/themed asset brochures which will be displayed at Visitor Centers and hotels, and/or downloadable in PDF format from our website, including:
 - Historical Guide and Driving Tour Map of West Tennessee – funded by the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University
 - Birding Guide and Map – in partnership with the Audubon Society and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
- Promote visits to specified assets by hiding caches with trinkets at those sites and driving traffic to them via www.geocaching.com. Three site caches are already in place.
- Promote photographs of our assets through a photography website (www.flickr.com), which has a world-wide audience and is indexed by the two primary Internet search engines, Google and Yahoo. This website will both allow visitors to Tennessee to find photos of sites they'd like to visit during

their travel planning, as well as provide an opportunity for locals and visitors to post and promote the photos they take of the region.

- Utilize various Web 2.0 social networking sites such as MySpace, Facebook and Twitter to create avenues by which our younger demographic can learn about the GRR and assets available in West Tennessee.
- Production of GPS-based audio tour guides of West Tennessee assets which may be rented from Visitor Centers.

Tennessee Department of Tourist Development

The Tennessee Department of Tourist Development will market the collection of all designated byways in Tennessee. In that role it provides byway information on the state tourism website; publishes a brochure detailing Tennessee Byways in the state; provides basic visitor information; participates in consumer and trade show events; and markets the Tennessee Byways at all official Tennessee Welcome Centers.

Mississippi River Parkway Commission

With its “Experience the Mississippi River” program, the Mississippi River Parkway Commission presently offers the exclusive single source for market development dedicated to the overall Great River Road - Tennessee program; the recognition

associated with the anticipated National Scenic Byway Program designation; and the prospect for collaborating with the adjacent state market development activities, the potential for increased effectiveness of the Mississippi River Parkway Commission to serve new travel markets is significantly increased. The Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee and the Department of Tourist Development plans to increase its participation with the Mississippi River Parkway Commission expecting that mutual benefits will continue to accrue for both organizations. Memphis will serve as the next host city in April, 2009, for the MRPC semi-annual meeting.

National Scenic Byway Program

At the national level, the market development efforts of the National Scenic Byway Program and its website (www.byways.org) will continue to be critical in connecting prospective travelers from around the nation and the world with the Great River Road – Tennessee. The Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee and the Department of Tourist Development will provide updated information for dispersal through these national outlets.



Identification of Potential Beneficiaries

We will conduct a series of demographic analyses to help us understand how to maximize the potential for improving awareness by reaching a broad and diverse audience, particularly disadvantaged ethnic groups in our region, and to ensure that the proposed River Centers are economically sustainable. These analyses will provide a better understanding of our target audiences (local, regional, national, and international visitors) and the level of capital investment that they might support. These analyses will also affect decision-making regarding the location, design, and function of the River Centers and transportation networks to ensure their success.

The following action steps will be required to identify potential beneficiaries:

- Estimate potential visitor base, including local, regional, national and international visitors
- Explore visitor potential by specific advocate or interest groups (e.g., family vacationers, outdoor enthusiasts, history educators, bird watchers, conservation advocates, etc.)
- Estimate potential spending patterns of corridor visitors



Roadway Design Standards (13)

FEDERAL REGISTER - NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM - FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION:

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 the intrinsic qualities of the byway corridor.

The Tennessee Department of Transportation has the capacity to anticipate and influence current design standards in ways that will respect the intrinsic qualities of the Great River Road – Tennessee. In facilitating effective management of the Great River Road and the Mississippi River Corridor - Tennessee, this department will strive to:

- In partnership with the MRCT, continue to build awareness among all stakeholders in the Great River Road Tennessee corridor.
- Support collaborative long-range professional transportation and land use planning that recognizes the value and great potential of the Great River Road – Tennessee
- Advocate the application of context-sensitive design approaches to transportation improvement projects on the Great River Road – Tennessee
- Support special research and planning projects currently in production by academic institutions such as the University of Memphis (Regional Economic Development Center) in partnership with the Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee to produce an **Environmental Systems Enhancement Plan**.

Identify Connectivity Enhancements

A significant portion of the Environmental Systems Enhancement Plan will determine the capacity of existing and planned roads to connect residents and visitors to important assets throughout the corridor and to experiences on the river, especially via the proposed River Centers. Transportation and wayfinding improvements will be identified. Particular attention will be given to the role of the planned I-69 in fostering increased awareness and connectivity.

The following action steps will be required to identify connectivity enhancements:

- Analyze ability of existing road network to connect the proposed nodes (River Centers), provide access to corridor assets, and connect residents and visitors to the river
- Recommend appropriate transportation improvements, including large capital improvements as well as simpler way-finding improvements (such as consistent themed Great River Road - Tennessee signage)
- Evaluate the impact of I-69 routing and interchanges on access to corridor assets, proposed River Centers, and overall awareness and connectivity
- Determine how expansion of roadways along the Mississippi River can link critical tourism elements to neighboring river states through a National Scenic Byway. Consider connection points to I-69 interchanges
- Integrate the Corridor trails, roads and bikeways (specifically the Mississippi River Trail) into the overall transportation network
- With assistance from the Audubon Society, establish the Important Bird Areas (IBA) of the Mississippi Alluvial Valley in Tennessee into the Transportation network, aiding the Audubon Society in developing a segment of the Lower Mississippi Birding Trail
- In partnership with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and the Audubon Society, identify the major birding sites, calendar of annual bird visitations and protected habitat resources on the Mississippi River in Tennessee
- Prepare and produce design/network maps to highlight the intrinsic qualities located on the Great River Road - Tennessee (e.g., existing transportation network, proposed transportation improvements, way-finding sign locations, historic sites, the Mississippi River Trail and major Birding sites in the Corridor)



Tennessee Department of Transportation CSS Statement of Commitment

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) uses “Context Sensitive Solutions” (CSS) as a process to plan, design, construct, maintain and operate its transportation system in order to establish and achieve transportation, community, and environmental goals. Context Sensitive Solutions balances safety and mobility and the preservation of scenic, aesthetic, historic, environmental and other community values. CSS is a philosophy of doing business that impacts both the project development process and project outcomes. TDOT has been using the principles of Context Sensitive Solution since 2003 and formally adopted the commitment to CSS in March of 2006.

Context Sensitive Solutions are reached through a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves a full range of stakeholders from the earliest phase of project development and is scaled to the complexity of the project. CSS requires the flexibility to consider alternative solutions that can benefit a broad range of stakeholders, while recognizing the fiscal constraints and the limits of TDOT’s mission as a transportation agency. In some cases it may be possible for project partners to carry out elements of a project vision that go beyond TDOT’s capacity to fund or ability to implement.

The involvement of a full range of stakeholders throughout the project delivery process is a hallmark of CSS. For all projects TDOT staff will consider and act on the need to inform and engage the public affected by the project. While the lead responsibility for coordinating public involvement at TDOT lies with the Community Relations Division, engaging the public in our projects is the responsibility of the entire agency, not just one unit. TDOT will seek to achieve consensus with a full range of stakeholders at key project development milestones, including problem identification, developing a project vision, developing and assessing project alternatives, and addressing construction and maintenance needs. In public involvement efforts TDOT is particularly mindful of fostering collaboration with traditionally under-served communities.

CSS maintains safety and mobility as priorities, yet recognizes that these are achieved in varying degrees with alternative solutions. CSS can affect all design elements; therefore project costs may increase, decrease or be unchanged depending on the alternatives considered. Cost issues must be addressed during project development, as is the case with all technical and environmental constraints. CSS adds value to the process by helping the Department identify and work with stakeholders to develop projects that are sensitive to their context.

TDOT is proud of its role as a partner with the citizens of Tennessee in creating transportation facilities that accommodate all modes of transportation and complement the natural beauty and livability of the state. TDOT believes using the CSS approach on all projects will strengthen Tennessee's communities and transportation system.

TDOT uses as a tool to guide its project delivery efforts the following principles of Context Sensitive Solutions based on CSS principles developed at the national Thinking Beyond the Pavement Conference that launched CSS in 1998. The quality statements refer to desired project outcomes. The characteristics statements refer to the process approach to achieve these outcomes.

Qualities of Excellence in Transportation Design:

- The project satisfies the purpose and needs as agreed to by a full range of stakeholders. This agreement is forged in the earliest phase of the project and amended as warranted as the project develops.
- The project maintains safety both for the user and the community.
- The project is in harmony with the community and preserves environmental, scenic, aesthetic, historic and natural resource values of the area, i.e., exhibits context sensitive design/solutions.
- The project meets the expectations of both designers and stakeholders, and achieves a level of excellence in people's minds.
- The project involves efficient and effective use of resources (time, budget, community) of all involved parties.
- The project is designed and built with minimal disruption to the community.
- The project is seen as having added lasting value to the community.

Characteristics of the Process Which Would Yield Excellence:

- Establish a multi-disciplinary team early with disciplines based on the needs of the specific project and include the public.
- Secure commitment to the process from top agency officials and local leaders.
- Seek to understand the landscape, the community, and valued resources before beginning engineering design.
- Involve a full range of stakeholders with transportation officials in the scoping phase. Clearly define the purposes of the project and forge consensus on the scope before proceeding.
- Tailor the public involvement process to the project. Include informal meetings.
- Communication with all stakeholders is open and honest, early and continuous.
- Tailor the project development process to the circumstances. Employ a process that examines multiple alternatives and that will result in consensus on approaches.
- Use a full range of tools for communication about project alternatives.

Interpreting Significant Byway Resources (14)

FEDERAL REGISTER - NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM - FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION:

A description of plans to explain and interpret the byway's significant resources to visitors.

The Great River Road – Tennessee is fortunate to have a number of significant Museums, state park programs and interpretative centers already established in west Tennessee to explain and interpret the byway's significant resources for visitors in a personal, professional and educational manner. Most, if not all, have current marketing materials for visitors. Our plan is to incorporate these significant resources into promotional materials and a Great River Road – Tennessee/MRCT website for visitors to take full advantage of the various sites of interest within the west Tennessee corridor.

Examples of Great River Road – Tennessee resources include:

Obion County:

- Discovery Park of America – \$ 100M Natural History Museum and complex
- Dixie Gun Works/Antique Car Museum
- Obion County Museum

Lake County:

- Reelfoot Lake State Park
- Carl Perkins Boyhood Home

Dyer County:

- Dr. Walter E. David Wildlife Museum
- Dyer County Museum
- Edward Moody King House
- Newbern Depot and Railroad Museum
- Okeena Park Arboretum/Nature Trail
- Welcome Center – Interstate I55

Lauderdale County:

- Alex Haley Boyhood Home Museum
- Fort Pillow State Park
- Lauderdale County Museum
- Murray Hudson Antiquarian Shop
- Veteran's Museum

Tipton County:

- Covington Court Square and Historic District
- Randolph and Fort Wright (Interpretive center is planned - 2009)
- Tipton County Museum/Nature Center

Shelby County:

- Beale Street Entertainment District
- Belz Museum of Asian and Judaic Art
- Center for Southern Folklore
- Chucalissa Archaeological Museum
- Cotton Museum at the Memphis Cotton Exchange
- Danny Thomas/ALSAC Pavilion (St. Jude Children's Research Hospital)
- Elmwood Cemetery – founded in 1852 – audio tours
- Fire Museum of Memphis
- Gibson Guitar Factory and Showcase
- Graceland (off the river route but worth a visit)
- Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park
- Memphis Pink Palace Museum
- Memphis Riverboats Inc.
- Memphis Rock 'n Soul Museum (Smithsonian Institution)
- Mississippi River Museum
- Mud Island River Park
- National Civil Rights Museum
- National Ornamental Metal Museum
- The Orpheum Theatre (1928)
- The Peabody Hotel (1925)
- Slave Haven Underground Railroad Museum
- Stax Museum of American Soul Music
- Sun Studio
- TO Fuller State Park
- Woodruff-Fontaine House Museum (Victorian Village Historic District)

Interpretation providers cross a broad spectrum of affiliations that includes the various offices of the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development; county-level and city convention and visitor bureaus; in-house Museum or attraction staff members and an extensive offering of commercial or private tours and trips. Many travelers take advantage of travel websites, history and tour guide books available in libraries and bookstores, to supplement interpreter-led programs and static exhibits.

Murray Hudson Antiquarian Shop, Henning, TN



Section Three: Corridor Management Plan

Visitor Center Locations

Memphis I-55 Welcome Center

I-55 on the Mississippi Line, Memphis, TN 38111
Phone: (901) 345-5956 | Fax: (901) 345-5956

Memphis I-40 Welcome Center

119 North Riverside Drive, Memphis, TN 38103
Phone: (901) 543-6757 | Fax: (901) 543-6324

Dyersburg Welcome Center

I-155 eastbound 4 miles west of Dyersburg, Dyersburg, TN 38024
Phone: (731) 286-8323 | Fax: (731) 286-8324

Websites

Mississippi River Corridor Tennessee
www.msrivertn.org

Tennessee Department of Tourism
<http://www.tnvacation.com/>

Memphis Convention & Visitors Bureau
47 Union Ave., Memphis, TN 38103
800-8MEMPHIS
<http://www.memphistravel.com/>

Beale Street Official Site
<http://www.bealestreet.com/about.html>

Downtown Ripley Tennessee
<http://www.ripleytenn.com/>

Halls, Tennessee
<http://www.town.halls.tn.us/>

Obion County Tourism
<http://www.visitobioncounty.com/>

Website References

Chambers of Commerce

Obion County Joint Economic Development Council
214 E. Church Street, Union City, TN
731-885-0211
<http://www.obioncounty.org/>

Reelfoot Lake Chamber of Commerce
1441 Church St., Tiptonville, TN
731-253-8144
<http://www.reelfootareachamber.com/>

Reelfoot Lake Tourism Council
4575 S.R. 21 E., Tiptonville, TN
888-313-8366
www.reelfoottourism.com

Covington-Tipton County Chamber of Commerce
106 W. Liberty Ave., Covington, TN
901-476-9727
<http://www.covington-tiptoncochamber.com/>

South Tipton Chamber of Commerce
1461 Munford Ave., Munford, TN
901-837-4600
<http://www.southtipton.com/>

Lauderdale County Chamber of Commerce
123 S. Jefferson St., Ripley, TN
731-635-9541
<http://www.lauderdalecountytn.org/>

Memphis Regional Chamber of Commerce
<http://www.memphischamber.com/>

Dyersburg-Dyer County Chamber of Commerce
2000 Commerce Ave., Dyersburg, TN
731-285-3433
<http://ddcc.dyercountychamber.com/>

Reference Publications

Museum Links

C.H. Nash Chucalissa Archaeological Museum
<http://cas.memphis.edu/chucalissa/>

Mud Island River Park
<http://www.mudisland.com/>

Memphis Cotton Museum
<http://www.memphiscottonmuseum.org/>

National Ornamental Metal Museum
<http://www.metalmuseum.org/>

Center for Southern Folklore
<http://www.southernfolklore.com/>

National Civil Rights Museum
<http://www.civilrightsmuseum.org/>

Alex Haley's Boyhood Home
200 S. Church St., Henning, TN
731-738-2240
<http://tennessee.gov/environment/hist/stateown/alexhale.shtml>

Discovery Park of America
<http://www.discoveryparkofamerica.com/>

Veteran's Museum
100 Veterans Drive, Halls, TN
731-836-7400
www.dyaab.us

State Parks

T.O. Fuller State Park

1500 Mitchell Road
 Memphis, TN 38109
 Office: 901-543-7581
 Fax: 901-785-8485
www.tennessee.gov/environment/parks/TOFuller/

Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park

910 Riddick Road
 Millington, TN 38053
 901-876-5215
 800-471-5293
www.tennessee.gov/environment/parks/MeemanShelby/

Ft. Pillow State Historic Park

3122 Park Road
 Henning, TN 38041
 731-738-5581 or: 731-738-5731
www.tennessee.gov/environment/parks/FortPillow/

Reelfoot Lake State Park

3120 State Route 213
 Tiptonville, TN 38079-9799
 Park Office (731) 253-8003
 Eagle tours (731) 253-7756
 Inn reservations & meeting rooms
 (731) 253-7756 | (800) 250-8617
 Visitor Center (731) 253-9652
www.tennessee.gov/environment/parks/ReelfootLake/

Reference Publications

Online Edition of the Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture (Tennessee Historical Society and University of Tennessee Press, 2005, <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>)

Carroll Van West, Middle Tennessee State University, *The New Deal Landscape of Tennessee* (UT Press, 2000)

(1) James and Dorothy Richardson, "Meeman-Shelby: One of Our Most-Loved State Parks," *Tennessee Conservationist* (May/June 1994): 4.

Prepared by encyclopedia staff from material supplied by Angela Wallace Finley, Covington-Tipton County Tourism Bureau

Jim Johnson, *Rivers Under Seige: The Troubled Saga of West Tennessee's Rivers* (UT Press, 1997)

Memphis Business Journal, Friday, August 25, 2006

AI Architect, Volume 14, October 12, 2007

Tennessee Historic Commission
<http://www.state.tn.us/environment/hist/>

Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area
<http://histpres.mtsu.edu/tncivwar/new/index.html>

Tennessee Historical Society
www.tennesseehistory.org/

West Tennessee Historical Society
www.wths.tn.org/

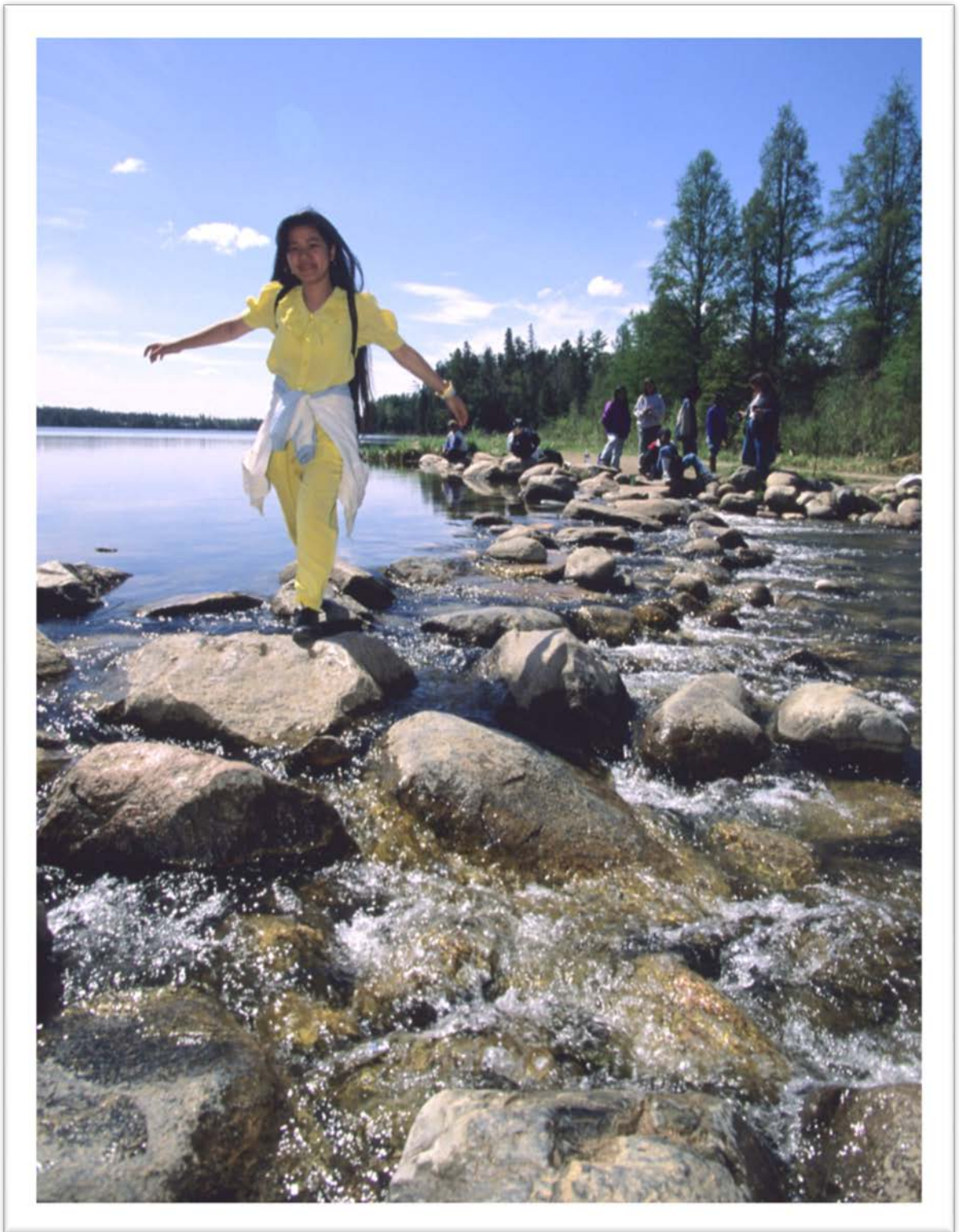
Tennessee Century Farms
<http://frank.mtsu.edu/~histpres/initiatives/centuryfarms.html>

Photo credits: Amie Vanderford, MRCT
 Mud Island River Park & Museum
 Lisa Waddell Buser, National Civil Rights Museum
 David Richtmyre, Beale Street, Main Street Trolley
 and the Commercial Appeal



2018 TEN-STATE GREAT RIVER ROAD CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mississippi River Parkway Commission 701 E. Washington Ave., Suite 202 Madison, WI 53703



1963 Mississippi River Parkway Commission "Story of Progress"

Mississippi River Parkway Commission

The Story of Progress

THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER VALLEY IS RICH IN HISTORIC, SCENIC, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND RECREATIONAL VALUES which if interwoven into a definite Master Plan which will utilize these natural gifts and assets, using coordinated effort of all the states and provinces involved, something will be developed that will be of lasting benefit not only to the valley but to the whole nation.

SO OUR MISSISSIPPI RIVER PARKWAY PLANNING COMMISSION IS WORKING HARMONIOUSLY AND PERSISTENTLY to develop the Great River Road on both sides of the river as the backbone to which will be attached many existing and proposed parks, historic places, magnificent and breath-taking lookouts and vistas, roadside parks and rest areas, public launching ramps for boats, wild life preserves, fine fishing and hunting, floral adornments, recreational areas, thousands of lakes, peaceful vistas of rural scenery, palms and pines, corn and cotton fields, beautiful cities and towns and many places where our people can lose themselves among nature's gifts and away from the tension and problems of life.

ENCOURAGING PROGRESS REVEALS THAT CONGRESS created a Federal Aid Parkway or Great River Road by appropriating \$250,000 for a complete study of factual information which when completed was presented to Congress and a second \$250,000 was appropriated by Congress for detailed plans for each state and for supervision by the Bureau of Public Roads and the National Park Service. These plans show a recommended route through each section of land and provide for scenic easements and embellishments that will make our Parkway not just another road but something different and unique.

THE TOTAL NECESSARY AREA, 300 feet wide on each side of roadway right-of-way from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, is equal to only 10% of the area of Yellowstone National Park.

THE CHANNEL OF PROCEDURE IS THROUGH THE FEDERAL AGENCIES, the state legislatures and Highway Commissions of each state who utilize primary, secondary and urban money as it accumulates each year to work on an adopted plan. Other agencies, federal, state, county, city, Chamber of Commerce, Service Clubs and many other organizations are contributing their energy and finances to do their part.

MANY OF THE STATES HAVE SELECTED THE PERMANENT ROUTES through their states and have marked it with Parkway Markers. Other states are either in progress or planning to fix permanent and temporary alignment and mark the Parkway.

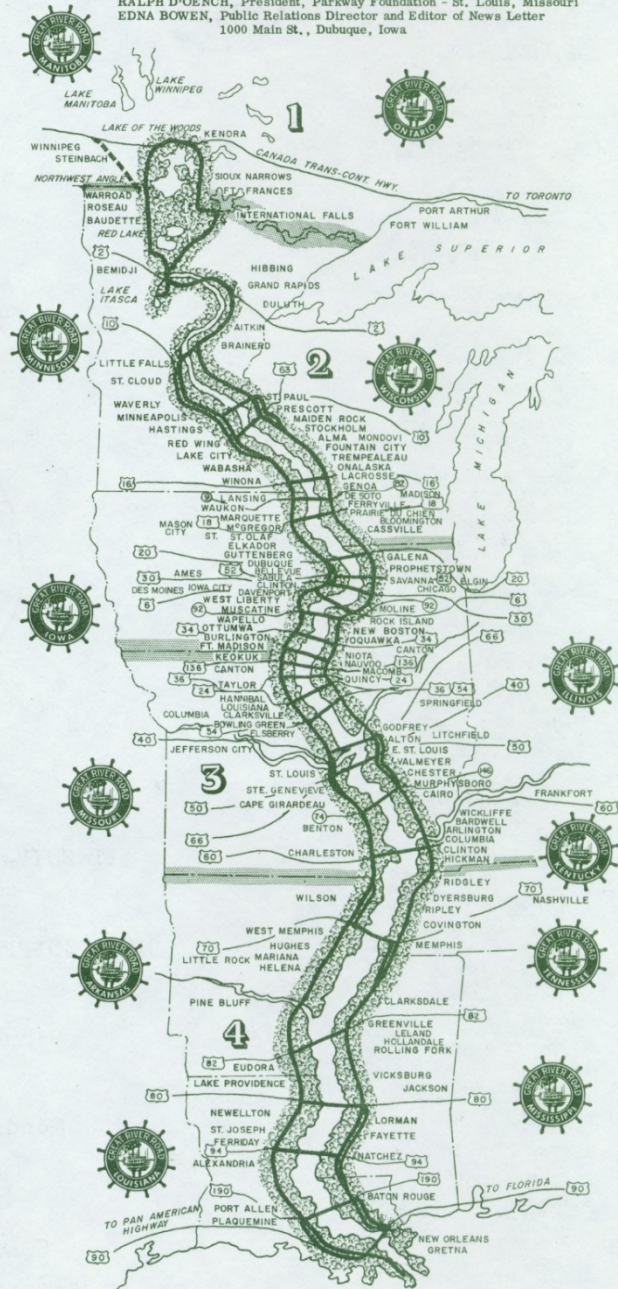
A TABULATION OF FEDERAL REPORTS REVEAL 3,287 miles total in United States of which 736.4 miles will be new roads, 410.3 miles are local, 1,715.5 miles trunk highways, 336.5 miles interstate and 41 miles Natchez Trace Highway. The total population in the 10 states bordering the Parkway, in the 1950 census is 32,006,393 in the United States. About 60% of the existing highways in the United States are to Parkway Standards except embellishments. Ontario and Manitoba in Canada have 360 miles of trunk highways suitable for Parkway Standards and are energetically developing and marking them.

THE MAP SHOWS THE LIMITS OF EACH DISTRICT, the officers of which are shown on the reverse side of this sheet.

THE MAP ALSO SHOWS THE HIGHWAYS ON EACH SIDE OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER, of which many sections and feeder roads have blossomed into completed stretches and many other sections are contemplated or in progress.

THE MAP SHOWS AN OUTLINE OF OUR OBJECTIVES WHICH WILL DEVELOP AND PRESERVE HISTORICAL AND SCENIC VALUES - A PARKWAY FOR EACH SIDE OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER, FOR THE PLEASURE AND GENERAL WELFARE OF OUR PEOPLE.

COL. J. LESTER WHITE, Pilot - Baton Rouge, Louisiana
 J. W. CLARK, Pilot Pro-Tem - St. Paul 1, Minnesota
 CHARLES H. YOUNG, Pilot Emeritus - Muscatine, Iowa
 HAROLD E. OLSON, Secretary - St. Paul 4, Minnesota
 J. C. GILLESPIE, Treasurer - De Soto, Wisconsin
 J. A. SHERRETT, Co-Pilot Dist. No. 1 - Kenora, Ontario, Canada
 RAY ECKSTEIN, Co-Pilot Dist. No. 2 - Cassville, Wisconsin
 SEN. LILLIAN SCHLAGENHAUF, Co-Pilot Dist. No. 3 - Quincy, Illinois
 ROBERT W. BELL, Co-Pilot Dist. No. 4 - Jackson, Mississippi
 RAY ECKSTEIN, Finance - Cassville, Wisconsin
 RALPH D'OEENCH, President, Parkway Foundation - St. Louis, Missouri
 EDNA BOWEN, Public Relations Director and Editor of News Letter
 1000 Main St., Dubuque, Iowa



The 2018 Corridor Management Plan carries forward the vision established by previous Great River Road plans.



Table of Contents

Front Cover - Mississippi River Headwaters at Itasca State Park, Minnesota

1963 Mississippi River Parkway Commission “Story of Progress”	1
Table of Contents.....	2
Ten-State Corridor Management Plan Purpose and Process.....	3
Plan Strategies.....	4
1. Designated Route Mapping	4
2. Wayshowing Guide Signs.....	5
3. Byway Design.....	6
4. Intrinsic Resources	10
5. Interpretation and Storytelling.....	11
6. Marketing.....	11
7. Organization – Mississippi River Parkway Commission.....	12
8. Partner Education and Engagement.....	13
9. Byway Traveler.....	14
10. Funding and Resources.....	14
Back Inside Cover - Federal Highway Administration's America's Byways Program.....	15

Prepared by



Engineering Services Division
Office of Environmental Stewardship
395 John Ireland Blvd., Mail Stop 686
St. Paul, MN 55155-1800

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TEN-STATE GREAT RIVER ROAD CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

America's Byway of the Mississippi River

Corridor Management Plan Purpose

The Great River Road was established in 1938 by Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes and the ten Mississippi River state Governors. The Great River Road's purpose is to 1) serve as a byway providing access to intrinsic resources along the river's length, 2) honor the river with planned context sensitive and complete streets transportation design, and 3) celebrate the Mississippi River as a national icon applying meaningful interpretation and compelling storytelling. The Great River Road gets people out, actively engaging with the river's landscapes and cultures, fostering economic opportunity for river communities large and small.



Since then the Mississippi River Parkway Commission (MRPC) in each state, and collectively as a ten-state organization, have served as the Great River Road's byway organization, with support described in [statute](#).

This ten-state corridor management plan (CMP) describes fundamental responsibilities and actions to assure that the Great River Road continues to be a consistently signed and mapped byway that intentionally provides access to the Mississippi River's scenic, natural, historic, archaeological, cultural and recreational intrinsic resources. The CMP will guide the MRPC and its partners on how to manage the byway's roads so they tell the river's stories, encourage active living, enrich quality of life for today's residents and tourists alike, foster sustainable economic development, and steward river resources for future generations to come.



By implementing the CMP the ten states comprising the MRPC and their partners will continue to provide and promote a superior Mississippi River travel experience within a legible byway setting. The CMP provides a unifying framework that allows the ten states to work in an independent, yet coordinated, manner to fulfill the MRPC mission and state statutes.

Because the Great River Road and Mississippi River corridor are so complex and enormous this CMP is more general than site specific, acknowledging the byway, river landscape and supporting agencies and partners are unique and evolving in each state. This CMP updates the MRPC's tradition of an ambitious shared vision to carry forward the national Great River Road within the context of each state.

Corridor Management Plan Process

This CMP was developed by the MRPC based upon past national and state design and corridor management plans, MRPC Board of Directors and four standing committees work, and general session reviews during MRPC meetings. Initial implementation priority and responsibility will be determined during the 2018 Strategic Planning meeting and MRPC Annual meeting, then incorporated into the final Plan.

The CMP development process resulted in the following:

- A 10 to 15 year 10-state byway corridor management plan,
- National, ten-state and partner synergy required for plan implementation, and
- Federal Highway Administration's National Scenic Byway corridor management plan components met.



The Great River Road is designated by the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration as a national scenic byway in all 10 states, with some exceptions in Illinois and Missouri. If FHWA opens nominations, the MRPC will seek All American Road designation in all ten states.



Ten-State Great River Road Corridor Management Plan Components



Ten areas define Great River Road corridor management to guide 10 to 15 years of coordinated effort across ten states. Some areas include more detailed management strategies, but each is vitally important. Implementation of some of the specific strategies (e.g. mapping) will support implementation of other strategies, thus may have priority, although much of the implementation will be done concurrently and become ongoing.

Implementation priority and responsibility will be determined by MRPC Standing Committees and Board of Directors.

1. Designated Route Mapping
2. Wayshowing Guide Signs
3. Byway Design
4. Intrinsic Resources
5. Interpretation and Storytelling
6. Marketing
7. Organization – Mississippi River Parkway Commission
8. Partner Education and Engagement
9. Byway Traveler
10. Funding and Resources



1. Designated Route Mapping



Knowing which state and local roads are designated as the Great River Road is critical to managing the byway infrastructure, partner communication, traveler information, and to providing a safe and pleasant byway experience.

A. The MRPC will work with the ten state Transportation agencies to provide **the official**, correct and maintained Geographic Information System (GIS) inventory of the Great River Road for the purpose of:

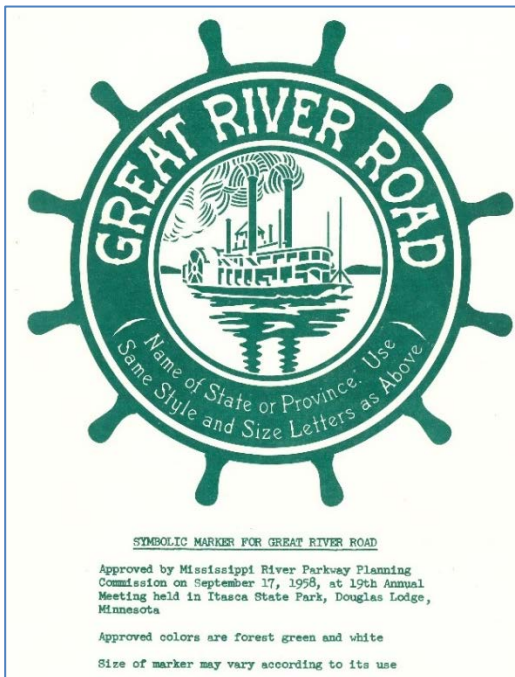
- Informing Transportation agency planning, scoping, design, construction and maintenance of roads designated as the Great River Road.
- Assisting travelers with trip planning and while traveling by providing accurate and drivable print, website, mobile app, interpretive panel, and other maps,
- Marketing by MRPC, state Commissions, state Tourism departments, destination marketing organizations, Great River Road Interpretive Centers and other river attractions
- Working with in-car navigation and online mapping companies to encourage indicating the GRR as a selectable route by providing them with the GRR alignment files;



2. Wayshowing Guide Signs

Wayshowing guide signs are critical to successful byway exploration, and are a proven branding and marketing tool. The Great River Road is a complicated route, using hundreds of state and local roads as it follows the meandering Mississippi River through ten states from its headwaters in Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico in Louisiana. While online maps, apps and paper maps supplement wayfinding, byway travelers need real time on-site signage, too.

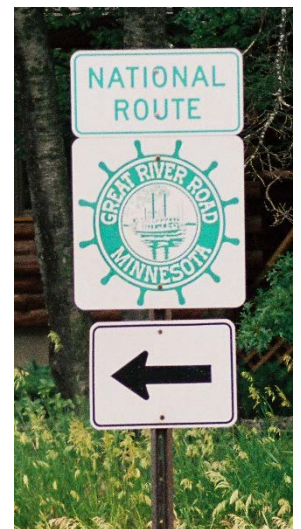
- A. Work with the ten state Transportation agencies to use existing GIS data and/or to conduct GIS collector app field surveys of Great River Road wayshowing guide signage to determine system integrity on both the state and local road systems designated as the Great River Road.
- B. Incorporate the data/survey findings into state Transportation asset management systems to serve as *the official*, correct and maintained GIS inventory of Great River Road wayshowing and review the status of each state's wayshowing annually.



C. Use the Manual On Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) to measure consistency with requirements for location, size, colors, graphic format, assembly and condition and address any wayshowing deficiencies.

D. Educate state and local Transportation agency staff responsible for planning, scoping, design, construction and maintenance of roads designated as the Great River Road about the correct wayshowing signage locations and assemblies so the wayshowing is maintained as part of statewide transportation system management in all ten states.

E. Promote the Pilot's Wheel sign as branding, describe its meaning and instruct travelers to look for the signs to know where to turn.



- F. Work with FHWA and the ten state DOTs to allow adding signage on non-byway river crossings and nearby National Highway System routes providing direction *to* the Great River Road.
- G. Co-locate Great River Road signs with Mississippi River Trails signs, when possible, to increase maintenance efficiencies, improve wayshowing effectiveness and leverage reciprocal branding.



3. Byway Design



Since its inception in 1938 the Great River Road is intended to be developed and maintained as a parkway-like byway celebrating and providing access to the Mississippi River. From forest road to Interstate river crossing, each segment of Great River Road *is* a river place and a river experience. Each of the hundreds of segments frames moments in time that cumulatively *are* the byway experience.

The MRPC needs to work with each transportation agency that owns a section(s) of the Great River Road to implement CMP byway strategies. Working together, the roads will collectively reinforce an intended sense of place, uniting the individual roads with a byway context applied to planning, design and maintenance so that *each* segment evokes a river experience, even when you can't see the river. This byway aims for an experience that is safe, predictable, comfortable and rewarding to the mind, body and spirit of each traveler.

Applying the byway concept to each road segment is necessary to achieve the vision, and the investment of time and funding is worth it. People from around the world, and our fellow neighbors, follow the Great River Road to experience the many activities the Mississippi River offers: from history buff to hiker, bicyclist to motorcyclist, antique car club member to excursion boat passenger, to bird and wildlife watcher, to fisher and hunter, to art hound, to foodie, to shopper, to photographer and more.



Travel, tourism, and the intrinsic resource management that supports tourism are important industries to our local and national economies. According to the U.S. Travel Association in 2017 domestic and international inbound travel and tourism:

- Generated \$2.4 trillion for the U.S. economy,
- Supported 15.6 million American jobs.
- Tax revenues generated reduced each U.S. household's taxes by \$1,310.
- Direct spending by resident and international travelers in the U.S. averaged \$2.8 billion a day, \$118.2 million an hour, \$2.0 million a minute and \$32,840 a second.
- Directly and indirectly supported one in every nine U.S. non-farm jobs.
- Was the 7th largest employer of all industries in the U.S.

(Source: <https://www.ustravel.org/economic-impact>)

Applying the byway concept to designated roads will help assure the Great River Road serves these industries' transportation needs now and into the future across ten states. While marketing can get people to visit once, the byway setting along the length of the Mississippi will have Great River Road travelers planning return visits.



Much has been built since 1938 and a strong built legacy remains in place. However institutional knowledge about these byway features has waned as MRPC Transportation staff have retired and new staff are not replaced or have difficulty participating in out of state meetings.

The good news is today's increased use of geographic information systems (GIS) by transportation and intrinsic resources management is timely as byway assets and intrinsic resources management require digital inventories and analysis to successfully compete for transportation and other funds.

Digital trip planning and travel aids are also needed to attract and retain byway explorers, so the work to understand what is in place will yield additional traveler service benefits as this data is incorporated into travel aids and marketing.

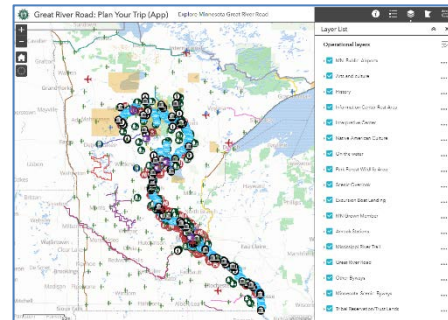


Byway Design (continued)

Below are specific byway attributes and strategies to develop and maintain the Great River Road.

A. Byway Asset Mapping: Improve MRPC and Transportation agency understanding of the Great River Road and transportation assets within the right of way of state and local segments by mapping the location, condition and improvement needs of:

- a. alignment of the designated Great River Road route,
- b. alignment of the designated Mississippi River Trail (MRT),
- c. wayshowing guide signage locations for Great River Road/ MRT,
- d. scenic easements and scenic areas
- e. rest areas, overlooks, interpretive waysides, travel information centers,
- f. interpretive panels within the byway right of way.



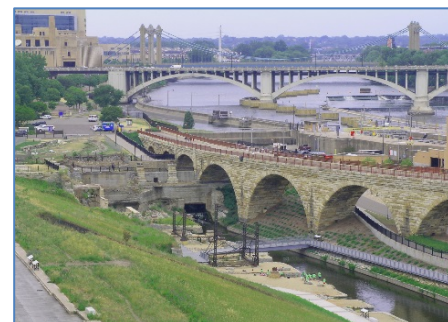
B. Byway Management Training: Develop training for state and local transportation agencies so they understand where the mapped assets are, how each asset improves the byway experience, and how ongoing transportation projects can help contribute to the intended outcomes.

C. Accessibility: Incorporate ADA-compliant accessibility in scoping, design, construction and maintenance of transportation infrastructure.

D. Multi-modal traffic management: While byways are roads and thus focused on motorized travel, byways encourage walking, hiking, bicycling, and boating along the river, and trains, planes and transit to travel its length. A byway integrates traveler movement between travel modes.



- a. Work with state DOTs and local agencies to assess travel rates, safety, and efficiency issues, including accident types and hotspots, to determine potential improvements. Ongoing, measure increases in tourism travel/expenditure and its effects on safety, efficiency and economic impact.
- b. Provide traffic calming, pedestrian access, and crossing of the Great River Road near overlooks and waysides, local attractions, Great River Road Interpretive Centers, and multimodal facilities.
- c. Provide bicycle accommodation (shoulder, shared lane or separate path) along the entire length of the Great River Road, but, particularly in areas that share the MRT designation.
- d. Verify MRT signage and shoulder/trail conditions in each state to assess if they are in accordance with bicycle design guidance and work with DOTs and County/local road managers to program needed improvements. Use MRT route data to help market facility conditions to appropriate bicyclists.



- e. Map multi-modal travel options and encourage transportation agencies to expand and connect these options along the length of the byway.



Byway Design (continued)

- f. Map and promote multimodal options and connection points by partnering with different entities that operate Amtrak, local transit, excursion ports, marinas and airports.
- g. Address car/ride/bike/scooter/paddle, etc. share programs as local regulations become more established.

- h. Pave an unpaved Great River Road segment in Aitkin County, MN to allow greater use by bicyclists, motorcyclists, RVs, coach buses, collector cars, etc. Confirm no other unpaved segments exist to pave too.



- i. Adjust the route as needed to best showcase Mississippi River by getting people closer to the river, intrinsic resources and multimodal travel options.

- j. Identify new places within the right of way to tell the river's stories and to offer visual and physical access to the Mississippi River where there are none.

- k. Protect the byway experience by encouraging State Patrol and local jurisdictions to enforce weight limits.

- l. Encourage byway community festivals and events to provide advance communication about site access and egress to reduce byway traffic issues.

E. **Billboard Controls:** Demonstrate compliance with existing local, State, and Federal laws on the control of outdoor advertising by working with state DOTs to enforce the Highway Beautification Act Outdoor Off-Premise Advertising Control regulations.

F. **Structural Materials:** Reflect and honor the scenic and natural intrinsic qualities of the Mississippi River by specifying regionally sourced stone, wood, metal and other materials in transportation infrastructure construction designs and maintenance. This may or may not cost more to procure and/or install, so scope projects to account for designs incorporating intrinsic materials.



- a. The Great River Road markets intrinsic Mississippi River resources including highly valued natural bluffs, granite outcrops, sand plains, and other geological features. Use no artificial stone (rusticated concrete, form liner) on Great River Road, river bridge, rest areas, walls and other transportation infrastructure as it degrades the byway setting by imitating the natural attributes that Mississippi River tourists and residents are coming to see. Instead use form liners to add classic architectural lines, images or symbols that reflect, not mimic, byway intrinsic qualities.



- b. Develop a transportation infrastructure materials palette of best and not best practices to help Transportation agencies understand this principle.



Byway Design (continued)



G. Vegetation: Incorporate the vegetation management byway outcomes below into state and local transportation roadside vegetation management plans and road designs in order to:

- a. protect water quality,
- b. stabilize slopes
- c. provide unobstructed wayshowing and other signage
- d. use native plants in construction and maintenance operations,
- e. increase native habitat for pollinator/native/migratory species
- f. disperse precipitation impacts,
- g. act as living snow fences,
- h. calm traffic,
- i. preserve or enhance views to and from the river/GRR/MRT,
- j. enhance byway curb appeal, and
- k. manage removal of trees affected by Emerald Ash Borer and reestablish native vegetation.



H. Scenic Easements/Areas: Protect scenic easements/scenic areas by incorporating them in Great River Road mapping so they are known to transportation project managers and local authorities.

I. More and better river crossings: Work with adjacent states to enhance opportunities to cross the river safely by vehicle, bicycle and foot. Include opportunities to interpret the river, provide wayshowing and pedestrian resting.

J. Historic Roadside Properties: Map/restore/maintain historic roadside properties (e.g. New Deal) along the Great River Road according to the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.



K. Provide and maintain safe pull-offs and rest areas for motorists to experience the Mississippi River from the roadside. Tell the river's stories and encourage longer stays at these locations by incorporating and maintaining Great River Road interpretation seen and accessed from the byway as an intended part of the byway experience. Map sites for marketing, travel and maintenance uses.

L. Anticipated Intrusions: Minimize intrusions on the Mississippi River Valley visitor's experience by:

- a. Analyzing potential impacts in a state or states utilizing the Great River Road asset mapping and other geospatial data related to the proposed intrusion.
- b. Recommending impact avoidance, minimization, and mitigation.
- c. Recommending screening views from the byway and river of adjacent developments and existing conditions that are not aesthetically compatible with the character of a byway.
- d. Using a minimum 50' native vegetative buffer to screen utility corridors seen from the byway. Work with Utility Commissions to require this by the utility companies.
- e. Applying dark sky principles to transportation design to safeguard the night views.



4. Great River Road Intrinsic Resources



The following strategies will enable the MRPC to protect, enhance and promote byway intrinsic resources:

- A. Map Great River Road intrinsic resources by working with the ten state Natural Resource and Historical Society agencies, Network of Great River Road Interpretive Centers (IC), Mississippi River Connections Collaborative and local intrinsic resource managers to provide the official, correct and maintained GIS inventory of Great River Road intrinsic resources for the purpose of:
 - Informing MRPC, Natural Resource and Historical Society agency and partner planning, management and promotion of Great River Road intrinsic resources,
 - Assisting travelers in trip planning and while traveling with drivable print, website, mobile app, interpretive panel, and other maps including this information,
 - Informing marketing by MRPC, state Commissions, state Natural Resource, Historical Society, and Tourism agencies, destination marketing organizations, ICs and other intrinsic attractions.
 - Informing Transportation planning, scoping, design, construction and maintenance to improve wayshowing and byway access to the sites;

Great River Road Intrinsic Resources to Map:

- a. Scenic, recreation, natural, historic, archeological and cultural
- b. Great River Road Interpretive Center Network,
- c. Wayshowing from the byway to intrinsic resources,
- d. Interpretive panels not within the right of way, and
- e. Other travel amenities within the right of way,



- B. Assess mapped intrinsic resources to determine their significance and applicability to CMP strategies.
- C. Confirm which Great River Road Interpretive Plan theme(s) Interpretive Centers feature, their relationship to the byway, visitor accessibility, and comfort features.
- D. Compile examples of ordinances and laws that protect, enhance and promote intrinsic resources.
- E. Enhance and promote facilities for recreating on and along the river, e.g. boating, fishing, hiking, sitting.
- F. Identify agricultural tourism sites that interpret how food is produced, transported, and ends up on dinner tables.
- G. Map Great River Road designated scenic easements and scenic areas, then work with local communities to protect them as part of local decision-making and permitting.
- H. Expand use of MN-MRPC's Visual Resource Protection Process, adapted from National Park Service's Great River Road process, to all ten states to preserve, enhance and promote views to and from the river. Include public nominations of views, then assess scenic views with CVBs, engineers, and elected officials so they can better consider scenic resource management when permitting and marketing.
- I. Encourage scenic conservation throughout the byway corridor. Partner with organizations (Departments of Natural Resources, Trust for Public Land, Sierra Club, Izaak Walton League, etc.) to protect scenic resources through conservation or scenic easements, transfers of development rights, or guidelines for development.



5. Great River Road Interpretation and Storytelling

The following strategies will enable the MRPC to protect, enhance and promote the Great River Road:

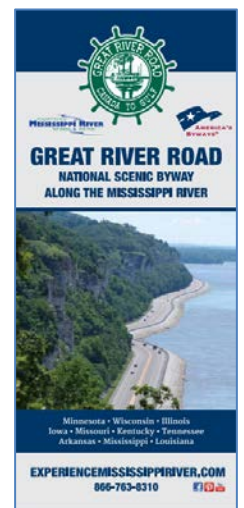
- A. Continue implementing the Great River Road Interpretive Plan and Toolkit.
- B. Map and assess existing Great River Road interpretive panels in all ten states. Develop a palette of existing interpretation, guidance for new designs aiming for some consistency, add to maps, and encourage needed maintenance.
- C. Use the Interpretive Center themes to develop stories of the river. Examples:
 - “Flash Cards” feature interpretive themes and associated ICs
 - Passports to move people from IC to IC along the Great River Road.
 - Interpretive Center trails developed by theme.
- D. Make at least one visit annually to every Interpretive Center.
- E. Train and inform Destination Marketing Organizations, local businesses and ICs about the GRR and IC network through a front-line training session/kit.
- F. Maintain Interpretive Center GRR network signage.
- G. Add new Interpretive Centers to print and online maps, apps etc.



6. Great River Road Marketing

The following strategies will enable the MRPC to promote the Great River Road and intrinsic resources:

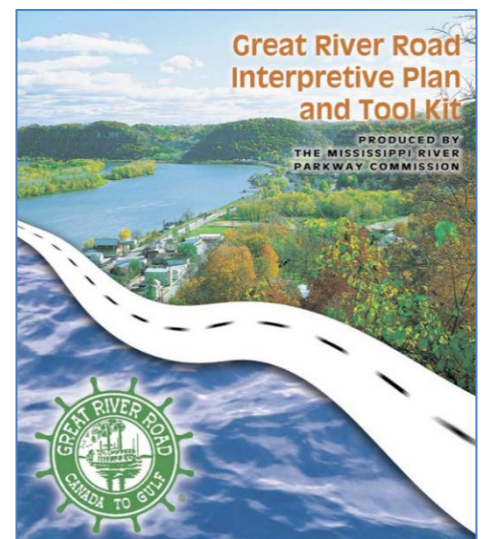
- A. Incorporate ADA-compliant accessibility in website, app, and print materials.
- B. Develop GRR/MRPC marketing sponsorship package(s).
- C. Consider updating the app and online map with the MRT alignment as a GRR recreation resource once it has been assessed for bicycle facility design guide compliance and rider safety guidance is developed.
- D. Map and promote multimodal options and connection points by partnering with Amtrak, local transit, excursion ports, marinas and airports.
- E. Work with Mississippi River Country to develop downloadable themed itineraries and hospitality training for Interpretive Center staff.
- F. Work with Mississippi River Country to integrate multiple languages, where applicable and feasible, in online/app/print material.
- G. Research Chinese and other foreign market interests in agritourism and hands on experiences, then develop interpretation options in those languages.
- H. Utilize the logo usage policy when providing GRR alignment and Pilot's wheel files to city/DMOs/IC/county/city/state/Federal for use on their maps.



7. Great River Road Organization – Mississippi River Parkway Commission

The following strategies will enable the MRPC to develop the Great River Road and protect, enhance and promote its intrinsic resources:

- A. Reinforce the MRPC Mission by including it on all MRPC documents: *To lead in preserving, promoting, and enhancing the Great River Road National Scenic Byway along the Mississippi River benefiting communities and travelers.*
- B. Include MRPC and Great River Road state statutes in new member orientation and MRPC state PowerPoints, and ensure each Board of Director and standing committee member read them as a guide for their MRPC activities and requests for state agency support.
- C. Use the benefits of MRPC membership document to express gratitude for support and accomplishment to dues paying states, then to engage state transportation, natural resources, agriculture, historical society, commerce and tourism in CMP implementation of specific strategies.
- D. Use the benefits of MRPC membership document to express gratitude for specific support and accomplishment provided by non-dues paying states, then encourage dues payment and increased participation by state transportation, natural resources, agriculture, historical society, commerce and tourism in CMP implementation of specific strategies.
- E. MRPC Board of Directors and Technical Committees to identify member agency and legislative priorities that align with and could leverage value from Great River Road corridor management plan implementation to encourage participation of Technical members.
- F. Invite Federal agencies from the Mississippi River Connections Collaborative, plus FHWA, Commerce and US Forest Service to MRPC meetings as partners in CMP implementation who can provide technical and fiscal project support for specific strategies that facilitate their agencies' work.
- G. If FHWA opens nominations, the MRPC will seek All American Road designation in all ten states.
- H. Ask Congress (Non-Technical members only) to reinstate the National Scenic Byway grants for eligible activities described in Transportation Alternatives Program as well as interpretation, planning, and marketing described in Transportation Equity Act for The 21st Century.
- I. Develop corporate partnerships offering byway travelers discounts or coupons, Great River Road brochures at corporate locations, and sponsor active living strategies. Examples:
 - a. Sporting goods
 - b. Healthcare providers
 - c. Bicycle companies
- J. Develop an Interpretive Center recognition program to encourage MRPC CMP implementation and meeting participation.



8. Great River Road Partner Education and Engagement

The following strategies will enable the MRPC to develop the Great River Road and protect, enhance and promote its intrinsic resources:



- A. Increase MRPC/byway awareness using the Pilot's wheel and MRPC mission on correspondence and collateral materials.
- B. Tailor messages to the subject matter expertise of the audience so they can assist or benefit from specific MRPC efforts without being overwhelmed by the breadth of Commission work.
- C. Invite governors, legislators, tribal members, mayors/Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative, Transportation, Natural Resource, Historical Society, Agriculture, and Tourism state agency leaders, host state businesses, tourism professionals, IC staff and Geotourism sites to attend MRPC meetings.
- D. Meet with governors, legislatures and mayors/Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative to align efforts, support programs and projects, leverage resources, and seek Federal support.
- E. Work Federal and state agencies to identify the economic benefit of the Great River Road, the apply byway benefits as part of the benefit/cost analysis on Federal or state projects in the river corridor.
- F. Create an annual MRPC Great River Road report for online posting, partner education, and funding requests/thank yous, meetings, press releases, and e-newsletters including:
 - a. Ten state commerce data illustrating byway tourism, transportation and intrinsic resource sectors.
 - b. ICs visitation rates, including MRPC promotion effects.
 - c. Great River Road economic impact and traveler interest/satisfaction/spending report.
 - d. Compiled and summarized state commission, MRPC and MRC accomplishments.
 - e. Corridor Management Plan implementation accomplishments and next steps.
- G. Send a letter of gratitude and annual report to those who provided state dues or other resources each year.
- H. Train MRPC members to participate in DOT project and planning public engagement meetings for project and modal plan development along the GRR and MRT.
- I. Build corridor management synergy and competence with a periodic CMP implementation newsletter that may include:
 - a. "Did You Know..." section about Great River Road trivia
 - b. "How To" section with resources, projects, best practices, etc.
 - c. MRPC member agency corridor management success stories
 - d. Frequently asked corridor management question/answer
 - e. A suggestion box to collect (and respond to) feedback
- J. Encourage cities and businesses to promote the Great River Road as an amenity to attract young professionals.
- K. Conduct geotourism-themed photo events featuring Great River Road eco-friendly places or activities.
- L. Encourage on-site meetings. While use of technology can reach many with less, CMP implementation is most effective for MRPC and local partners when on-site meetings provide context and personal interaction.
- M. Work with tourism councils, convention and visitors bureaus, chambers of commerce and visitor centers to:
 - a. Identify local restaurants, groceries, and locally grown food to promote healthy food options or specialties
 - b. Leverage local river-related events
 - c. Train them to promote the Great River Road as a local national treasure



9. Great River Road Byway Traveler

The following strategies will enable the MRPC to develop the Great River Road so it serves byway traveler needs today and in the future:

- A. Measure effectiveness of byway traveler benefits including: 1) Great River Road route/wayshowing, 2) access to intrinsic resources, 3) interpretation, 4) marketing, and 5) trained IC and CVB front desk staff.
- B. Assess how byway intrinsic resources attract travelers to the Great River Road and vice versa. Determine if marketing and wayshowing to the intrinsic resources encourage travelers to stop, spend more time in the corridor, repeat visitation. Determine if byway travelers help sustain local intrinsic resources and how the byway affects local economies.
- C. Developing a feedback tool to determine traveler recommendations for route improvements and to know what is working well.
- D. Continue to use the National Advisory Committee on Travel and Tourism Infrastructure 2018 survey of American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Committee on Planning to develop measures that demonstrate if byway traveler needs are being met and to encourage that transportation infrastructure is maintained and developed according to the ten-state CMP and each of the ten-state's Great River Road CMPs.




10. Great River Road Funding and Resources

The following strategies will assure resources the MRPC needs to develop the Great River Road and to protect, enhance and promote its intrinsic resources:

- A. Develop talking points and presentation materials for MRPC Board of Directors, state Commission non-technical members, local champions and partners to use to ask Congressional members to reestablish the National Scenic Byway (NSB) grant program with the eligible activities as described in the Transportation Equity Act for The 21st Century. Use strategies from the ten-state and ten state's CMPs as examples of need and opportunity, and past projects funded by NSB grants as examples of Great River Road success.
- B. Visit local state and Federal agency/legislature/Congressional offices to encourage reestablishing the NSB grant program. As needed, the MRPC should go to Washington, D.C. to continue the discussions.
- C. Meet with each non-dues paying state to identify how to secure a commitment to pay the National MRPC dues, as well as fund agency staff time and travel to participate as MRPC members.
- D. Continue to research and pursue Federal, state and non-profit grant and private sector funding opportunities for byway activities no longer eligible for transportation funds, including marketing, interpretation, visitor centers and planning. Earmark MRPC reserves for specific CMP implementation that can be used as local match, if required.
- E. Use the MRPC Endowment Fund to solicit donations for specific CMP strategy implementation, then report back on accomplishments to donors.
- F. Establish Great River Road vehicle license plates in each of the ten states with funds going to the Endowment to facilitate CMP implementation.





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