

Skill Builders: Questions To Ask When Creating Your Byway's Vision And Mission

These seven questions can help you start creating your byway's vision statement. Ask each individual to write down ideas and then share them with the group.

- Why have you chosen to live here?
- Why have you chosen to join this group?
- What are the things you value about your byway?
- What is unique about this place?
- What do you want it to look like in five to ten years?
- What "theme" consistently runs through your byway?
- What do you want to leave for others on this byway after you're gone?

Turning Your Vision Into Goals

Your goals begin to suggest the ways in which your vision will become reality. Unlike the broadly sweeping language of the vision statement, your goals address point-by-point issues that can be dealt with through policy, management or voluntary action.

The difference between your vision statement and your goals can be a matter of providing more specific elaboration. They are broad statements providing more direct direction, although not detailing specific action.

Example (Hypothetical)

Vision

State Route 55 is a beautiful highway noted for its striking landscape and sweeping vistas. The route shares a remarkable history with visitors who travel it. Balanced tourism, combined with responsible economic development, maintains a stable economic base and quality of life for the people of the region.

Goals

- Cultural and natural resources along the route will be preserved and enhanced.
- Interpretive programs will provide information on the early human settlements in the region and an explanation of our unique natural resources.
- Adequate services shall be provided to ensure that visitors to the region have an opportunity to appreciate the community and resources in comfort, ease of movement and safety.
- Tourism will be managed in such a manner that it will have as small an impact as possible on the daily routines and traditional cultures of the region.
- Economic and recreational development shall not detract from the scenic qualities of the byway.

Steps

Here are three suggested steps to assist you in developing goals.

1. Solicit Input From The Community

As in every other stage of the scenic byway process, your group should solicit input from the community at large. How do community members view the ideal future of the byway?



2. Think The Impossible

Try this with your planning group: Temporarily free yourself from what you assume will be realistic constraints. For now, imagine possibilities without limits, as if your community had unlimited funds and you had complete power to make anything happen. From those ideas, your group may develop attainable goals.

3. Keep A Sense Of The Future.

Imagine how you would like to see your route in the future. This is similar to the process used to establish your vision statement, but with additional details. Review your vision statement to extract the goals that are included or implied within it. Remember, due to the broad and sweeping nature of a vision statement, you're likely to end up with a number of goals to accomplish the desired results.

Formulating Objectives

The next step, closely related to setting your goals, is to formulate your objectives. Unlike goals, which are idealistic, ambitious, and fairly broad in scope, objectives are realistic and specific about how the goals will be achieved.

The objectives you set will begin the process of creating your implementation strategy. You will often have multiple objectives for each goal, and the objectives might not all have the same priority or timeframe for completion. For example, a goal that reads "Communicate spots of interest along the byway to travelers" might be followed by a series of objectives such as:

- Print maps of sights along the route.
- Design and create tour route signs.
- Print annual calendar of events and develop an effective method of distributing them to tourists and the media.

An objective describes a specific act with a measurable outcome. Unlike your goals, which will rarely change, the objectives for your scenic byway should be reviewed and updated periodically. Completed objectives can then be dropped and new ones added, reflecting changes in needs, opportunities, conditions and funding.

Sometimes you might find that you have a goal that you value, but have no idea how to achieve it. In such a case of confusion, your first and most immediate objective may be to seek more information and determine what options you have. For example, let's say that one of your goals is to better serve the needs of bicyclists, yet you have no idea of what would be best for bicyclists using your route. Your immediate objectives may be towards gaining more knowledge to help you make a decision on what action to take. Example objectives might include:

- Meet with and interview members of local bike clubs.
- Research and compare the safety and usage statistics of wider road shoulders versus separate bike pathways.
- Talk to the Bicycle-Pedestrian Coordinator with the State Department of Transportation to ask questions.