

Commonly Made Mistakes When Applying for National Scenic Byways Program Grants

America's Byways Bulletin - December 2007/Vol.4 No.6

It's that time again! As you begin to think about your FY2008 grant submissions, we want to share with you some commonly made mistakes:

1. **The project exhibits no clear relationship to the byway.** Remember you're applying for National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP) funding, so establishing the project's relationship to the byway, its intrinsic qualities and describing how the project will enhance the byway traveler experience are all important to convey in your application. A project's proximity to the byway or its inclusion in the corridor management plan do not necessarily make it eligible for NSBP funding.

2. **The funds requested are not proportionate to the benefit to byway travelers.** Please keep in mind that FHWA expects an applicant advancing a project benefiting the general public to propose a larger share of non-byways funds.

3. We're increasingly seeing applications for **visitor centers** that do not include a clear breakdown of how the space will be used or by whom. If you are submitting an application for a visitor's center, please include the following:

- a site plan for the project
- a floor plan of the project with the proposed uses and dimensions clearly identified
- an explanation of how specific areas of the building will be used to directly serve and benefit byway visitors
- an explanation of how the proposed facility relates to other visitor facilities and interpretive sites either planned or existing on the byway
- a finance plan identifying proposed sources of funding needed to complete the project
- a budget that is proportionate to the benefit to byway travelers!

4. **The submission of streetscaping and other projects that primarily benefit the local community.** Please keep in mind that the following types of projects are not typically eligible for NSBP funds:

- streetscaping and local sidewalks
- routine road construction and maintenance
- routine landscaping, vegetation management and maintenance
- preserving a pool of possible properties, rather than a specific property

5. **Non-compliance with the application submission process.** To be considered for NSBP funding you must complete and electronically submit the SF-424 form on Grants.gov in addition to the normal bywaysonline.org application process. Hard copies of the SF-424 to FHWA Headquarters are not required.

6. **Potential duplication of funding.** It's important to let us know the status of a project when you submit an application for additional funds. If it is not clear how the project will create

something new and different from similar projects previously funded, or enhance the work already completed, chances are the application will be determined to be ineligible.

7. Insufficient information. When completing both the work plan and matching funds sections of the application, please be sure to provide enough detail to support the activities outlined in your narrative and provide the reviewer with sufficient information to determine the eligibility of the costs outlined.