



## 2018 FSHP Byway Annual Report (BAR) Form

**Scenic Highway:** Green Mountain Scenic Byway  
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### Section 1: Completed Projects

#### Did your byway organization complete one or more projects in 2018?

- Yes** – If more than one project was completed in 2018, make a blank copy of Section 1 starting below at “Completed Project #1.” Paste this blank copy into your report below Project #1 and change the project number for each subsequent completed project.
- No**

#### Completed Project #1

1. **Project Name:**

2. **Category/Type (highlight one category that best describes the project):**

- Physical or built** – scenic pull-out, landscaping, wayfinding signage, interpretive panels/kiosks, visitor center, etc.
- Planning** – CMP (now BMP) update, interpretive, marketing, wayfinding, master plan, etc.
- Organizational Development** – fundraising plan, strategic plan or retreat, accreditation, etc.
- Program** – cell phone app, website, beach cleanup, Adopt A Highway, Kids Ocean Day, etc.
- Promotion** – brochure, video, advertising, etc.

3. **Project Cost**

**Total Cost of Project (rounded to nearest \$100):** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Sources of Project Funding:	
<b>Government Grant(s)</b> (federal, state, or local)	\$
<b>Private</b> (individual donations, business sponsors, foundations, special events, membership)	\$
<b>Earned Income</b> (merchandise sales, fees for programs, etc.)	\$
<b>In-kind value</b> (only include if allowed as matching for grant)	\$
<b>Other</b> _____	\$
<b>Total Cost of Project</b>	\$

<b>Revenue Generated by Project:</b> (i.e., event registration fees, merchandise sales, etc., - <i>not all projects generate revenue, leave blank if not applicable</i> )	\$
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4. **Project Dates:**
  - a. **Start Date** (can be prior to 2018) MM/YYYY:
  - b. **Completion Date** (must be in 2018) MM/YYYY:
5. **Project Lead**

Did the byway organization lead the project (obtained/helped obtain funding, managed project, etc.)? Yes or No (highlight a response)

If No, indicate the project lead and describe the role the byway organization played:
6. **Description of the project** (this description should include all information needed to develop a 2-3 paragraph article about the project):
7. **Lessons learned from the project:** What worked well? What would you do differently? What elements were critical to success?
8. **Project benefits:** Discuss known benefits of the project or estimate return on investment if possible. What is known about the positive economic, quality of life, and/or environmental benefits of the project?
9. **Byway goals addressed:** What planning goals are addressed by the project?
10. **List and describe the role of all project partners:**

*Email 3-5 high-resolution photos of each project that the FSHP has permission to include in Program publications.*

### Section 2: Other Accomplishments and Ongoing Projects

1. **Describe any other noteworthy accomplishments from 2018 not included in the Completed Projects section. Also discuss any ongoing projects that were not completed in 2018.**

**Tower Construction at Scenic Overlook** – The project moved forward thanks to volunteer graphic artist help creating a visual schematic of the proposed tower. Each county commissioner and the county manager received the picture and cover letter describing the overlook history and future. Byway representatives met with the local commissioner and county staff with the goal of creating a cost estimate and initial construction plan. Byway staff then met with County Parks and Trails Advisory Committee and County Economic Prosperity (Visit Lake) for approval of the project. Staff suggested that construction be funded by Economic Prosperity. Byway representatives will pursue this funding opportunity to push the project towards completion.

**Athletic event** –A running race from the Green Mountain Scenic Overlook to Magnolia Park in Orange County was postponed due to trail damage caused by hurricane Irma in 2017. The race date has been



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re-set to February 2019.

**FOLA 40 Bike Ride** – The Byway Organization volunteered to staff a water/snack station for the Friends of Lake Apopka’s FOLA 40-mile bicycle ride around Lake Apopka held November 11, 2018. Owners and friends of a bicycle store (Wheel Works) in Winter Garden routinely ride bicycles around Lake Apopka, utilizing public roads, parts of the West Orange Trail, the Apopka Loop Trail and parts of the South Lake Trail. This event was organized as a fund-raising venture for FOLA. They expect to host a ride every spring and expect the ridership to grow. This was the second ride.

**Participation in FSHP Statewide Byway Meeting and District 5 Byway Workshop** – Two Byway members attended, with one presenting at the State workshop. The presentation included investing ideas for 501(c)3 organizations. The audience was probably not as suitable as thought. Too many of the byways are living hand to mouth rather than having investible assets.

**Trail Construction** – The Lake Apopka Loop Trail segments planning continues. Two segments remain; one in Lake and one in Orange County. The Lake segment depends on developer(s) initiating residential or commercial construction on adjacent properties. Whichever company initiates development will be responsible for fronting Hancock Road and associated trail from CR 561a to CR 455. Lake County will encourage the construction well in advance of the actual need. The reason is to further the Lake Apopka Loop and the recreational opportunity sooner than later. Orange County appears to be in competition with Lake to see which segment can be completed first. Everything is in place except the funding to connect the Lake Apopka Loop from Magnolia Park to the West Orange Trail.

### Section 3: Previously Completed Projects and Byway Resources

1. Describe the significant benefits or positive impacts from projects completed prior to 2018. Name the project and summarize any benefits or measures of success in all areas below that apply:

#### Green Mountain Scenic Overlook and Trailhead:

##### a. Economic:

Use of the facility increases day by day. The parking lot is usually at capacity on weekends. Lake County installed a counter and we have preliminary data. Runners, hikers, bicyclists frequent the facility as a starting point or as a rest stop as part of longer journeys. Motorcycle groups, car clubs, families, and day users all frequent the facility.

- Out of county and out of state road bicyclists visit the facility during training rides for the Horrible Hundred ride. The facility is a rest stop for the various ride distances within the Horrible Hundred event.
- Trail bicyclists typically start at Magnolia Park and use the Overlook as a rest stop before the return ride. There’s greater population and potential riders east of Lake Apopka. That said, the Overlook parking lot typically holds a number of cars with empty bicycle racks.
- Runners hit the trails early in the morning, in pairs and triples. Many of the runners are longer-distance runners, possibly training for triathlons.
- The Scenic Byway is popular with motorcycle group riders. The Overlook is the typical rest stop; the Overlook itself is a popular way to “stretch the legs” and get a great view at the same time.

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- Byway members conducted a short survey of users across multiple weekend days as background data collection for a presentation to the Lake County Parks and Trails Advisory Committee. 146 people were surveyed; 95 were walkers, 34 bicycled, and 17 drove motorcycles. The hikers/bikers counts matched the county numbers. Use patterns were consistent across the different days and byway surveyors. Multiplying dollars spent on lunches, breakfasts and dinners with County count data shows nearly \$250,000 economic impact. This number is astounding considering the facility is essentially in the middle of nowhere. This estimate excludes the economic impact of various events such as the Horrible Hundred bicycle ride, the FOLA 40 ride, or other group running events.

**b. Quality of life:**

The impact to quality of life will grow exponentially with the development of the local hills. Development required the construction of a new Turnpike interchange, opened in 2017. Approximately 20,000 homes are planned for the surrounding properties. Thousands of acres of open spaces have been off limits to the public, awaiting development. As the numbers of rooftops and commercial buildings increase, the Overlook will shine brighter as the last remaining, accessible greenspace and more importantly, as the entry to the 20,000 acres of the North Shore.

The Byway, Overlook and associated trails have become a rallying cry to push the local developers to “remember” the bicycle users in their plans. The Hancock Trail, connecting the South Lake Trail to CR 561A was opened in 2017. The last section, connecting from CR 561A to the Overlook will be constructed prior to the first house built by either the Hills of Minneola or Sugarloaf Mountain developments. As other parts of the County are developed, users of those rural areas are turning to the Overlook and trails. A Winter Garden Bicycle shop routinely coordinates trips and get-togethers leaving from a Winter Garden business to tackle the Lake Apopka Loop.

**c. Environmental:**

Before the end of 2035, this and the Ferndale Preserve will be the only green spaces (other than small pocket parks) in the immediate area.

**d. Other:**

**Ferndale Preserve:**

**a. Economic:**

Use of the facility increases slowly, year by year. Hikers, birdwatchers and equestrians use the facility’s trails and area.

**b. Quality of life:**

The impact to quality of life will grow exponentially with the development of the local hills. Development required the construction of a new Turnpike interchange, opened in 2017. Approximately 20,000 homes are planned for the surrounding properties. Thousands of acres of open spaces have been off limits to the public, awaiting development. As the numbers of rooftops and commercial buildings increase, the Ferndale Preserve will shine brighter as one of the last remaining, accessible greenspaces.



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The Ferndale Preserve is becoming better known as a bird watching and equestrian facility.

**c. Environmental:**

Before the end of 2035, the Ferndale Preserve and the Green Mountain Scenic Overlook will be the only green spaces (other than small pocket parks) in the immediate area.

**d. Other:**

**2. Describe any damages or threats to resources (i.e., resources that contributed to the scenic highway designation) that occurred in 2018:**

### Section 4: Public Participation & Partnerships

**1. Describe how byway stakeholders (residents, business owners, local government officials, and partners) were routinely updated about the scenic highway in 2018.**

The Byway sends e-mail meeting notices to a small subset of stakeholders. The current email list includes 66 recipients. Byway members generally attend municipal meetings when agenda items include the Byway. We hope to increase the electronic communications efforts in 2018.

**2. Are there issues or concerns regarding the scenic highway in corridor communities?**

Up until the housing crash, the Byway was generally considered an impediment to “growth,” at least in Lake County, where most of the undeveloped land existed. GMSB was perceived as an organization that impeded growth either directly or indirectly. When the developers went out of business we were able to turn wasted reactive energies into positive proactive efforts developing passive recreational opportunities. The goodwill generated by our creation of the Overlook and trails has begun to alter these perceptions as growth is about to explode again. The Byway and trails afforded by us are included in County Comprehensive plans as well as in business and developers’ advertising literature. We understand that plans and ideas are never guaranteed until actually built.

If there’s good news, current developments are focused closer to the new turnpike interchange rather than adjacent to the Byway. One developer when asked for his idea of speed of growth, estimated a maximum of 325 new homes per year. There may be enough open land to supply the annual new growth for 10s of years before abutting the Byway.

**3. How are new byway organization members, leaders, and volunteers recruited?**

To date, we have been using visitor sign-up sheets at all of our festivals. Recent attempts to expand our efforts were mediocre at best. We have a contact at Montverde Academy that we will be working with to establish a “friends of” type of club. The objective of this effort would be to establish a group of students that, as a whole, can maintain continuity of process and ideas as students enter and graduate. Some ideas would be to use students for newsletters, recruiting, social media, website, etc.

**4. Is there evidence that more stakeholders are involved/interested in and/or aware of the scenic**

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highway (more people receiving newsletter, attending meetings, volunteering, etc.)?

The Byway has started to receive incoming e-mails coming from website viewers. The Scenic Byway is more often mentioned in local meetings. The trails and facilities are used ever more often for organized events, e.g. Horrible Hundred Bicycle Race and Mazda Car Club to name two.

5. **With how many stakeholders does the byway organization routinely communicate (meeting notices, newsletters, etc.)?**

Meeting notices go out to 66 people. We've been working on a project to expand this list...pre-empted by other projects. We hope to continue expanding this list and initiate a more routine communication campaign in 2019.

6. **Describe how the byway organization assisted its partners in 2018.**

The byway participates in festivals, open houses, and events hosted by municipalities and nonprofits from one end of the byway to the other including: Winter Garden Heritage Foundation, Oakland Nature Preserve, Friends of Lake Apopka, Audubon, Winter Garden, Montverde, Mt Dora, and Lake County.

### Section 5: Funding

1. **Does your byway organization have an annual budget? (highlight a response)**

- Yes – Email as an attachment to [wanda.maloney@floridascenichighways.com](mailto:wanda.maloney@floridascenichighways.com)
- **No** – Provide 2018 revenue information in the table below in dollars rounded to the nearest \$100

2018 Revenue table:

<b>Government Grant(s)</b> (federal, state, or local)	\$0.00
<b>Private</b> (individual donations, business sponsors, foundations, special events, membership)	\$1,886.10
<b>Earned Income</b> (merchandise sales, fees for programs, etc.)	\$0.00
<b>In-kind value</b>	\$9,135.30
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$11,021.40</b>

2. **Describe your outstanding funding needs in the following categories:**

a. **Project(s) or program(s) that lack funding:**

The only current project is construction of the additional Overlook Tower.

b. **Total amount of funding needed (in dollars rounded to nearest \$100):**

\$500,000. The estimate increased by \$100,000 from a year ago after realizing the additional tower would require an elevator to meet ADA requirements.

c. **Potential sources of funding identified:**

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We already have a verbal offer of \$10,000 from the Bond Foundation, a non-profit headquartered in Winter Garden. We are holding this on the side; hoping to fully fund the entire project from Lake County revenues; whether general funds, economic development or tourist tax. In 2018, we presented the project in writing to all County Commissioners, met with two individual Commissioners, presented to the Lake County Parks and Trails Advisory Council and in every case found full support. Although tourist tax revenue has been suggested as the funding source, the agency requires significant correlation of funding to events leading to overnight hotel use. This is the challenge we need to address.

3. **List potential funding sources being pursued (if not identified above).**
4. **Describe the organization's challenges to obtaining funding.**  
 There's fewer and fewer dollars available from municipal sources as the current political will to fund anything but essential services is absent. We hope to be able to show a financial return on this investment as well as gaining private financing to offset any negative perception of this project. Philanthropic giving is questionable given the recent tax changes.
5. **Describe your funding success stories from 2018. For example: a successful fundraising event or identifying a new source of funding.**

### Section 6: Tourism Promotion

1. **Describe the methods used to promote tourism in 2018 for the scenic highway and *the effectiveness of each* (website, brochure, festival booths, advertisements, social media, etc.).**  
 Byway members participate in any/all festivals and events within the corridor as well as some outside. Some of the names include: Mt Dora Earth Day; Oakland Heritage Days, Oakland Nature Preserve Open House, Winter Garden Bloom & Grow and FOLA 40. All of these festivals have been successful in broadening our name recognition.
2. **What was the total amount spent on tourism promotion?**  
 Nothing this year.
3. **What were the sources of funding for promotion?**
4. **List the social media accounts active for the byway along with the number of followers for each (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram, etc.):**  
 Facebook. 224 followers
5. **Describe any local tourism trends based on available data (number of tourists increasing, new local/regional economic impact data, etc.).**  
 In preparation for the Lake County Parks and Trails presentation, GMSB members conducted a limited user survey and found a \$250,000 economic impact of the Overlook facility. This number does not include the Horrible Hundred nor does it fairly represent the number of organized car or motorcycle



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cruises.

'According to a recent report from Visit Florida, Florida welcomed 95.8 million visitors from January through September in 2018, which is the highest number of visitors in any nine months in our state's history, and a 6.7 percent increase over the same period in 2017. Also according to Visit Florida, 30.7 million visitors traveled to Florida in the third quarter of 2018, an increase of 10.1 percent over the same period in 2017. Those visitors include 27.5 million domestic visitors, 2.7 million overseas visitors and 490,000 Canadian, says the agency. For comparison's sake, it's estimated that 118.8 million tourists visited Florida in 2017.'

*(Visit Florida report <http://www.visitfloridamediablog.com/home/florida-facts/research/>)*

If the numbers stay on target, we can project 126,789 million visitors that came into the Sunshine State in 2018. Economic spending is a bit more challenging to figure out for 2018, but if we go off of 2016 numbers Visit Florida produced in 2017, and gas prices coming down (frees up visitor resources) we can estimate that visitors spent \$118 billion in the Sunshine State. Better to wait on the numbers in January but I don't think they'll be out in time, and they'll be 2017 numbers anyway.

6. **Has the impact of the scenic highway on local tourism trends been identified in any way? If so, describe.**

See above.

7. **Describe how the byway organization is working with local tourism agencies.**

Lake County's tourist agency is tied closely with tourism that generates taxable hotel stays. We are still learning how to measure, evaluate, program for users requiring local hotels.

8. **If applicable, describe how your byway organization was able in 2018 to take advantage of the benefits of the Visit Florida Partnership provided by the FSHP. Describe both positive results and challenges associated with the partnership.**

Although our organizational capacity is limited by our small numbers, we attempted to take advantage of the FSHP provided 2018 Visit Florida membership whenever possible:

- Listing in the yearly Visit Florida vacation guide
- We enhanced our web listing with byway specific contact information, video and photography
- We used Visit Florida visitor research data to help complete this annual report

We have used Visit Florida photography for inclusion in our social media platforms & byway documents

### Section 7: Byway Organization



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**1. What is the organization’s current structure (nonprofit, informal citizen group, etc.)?**

501(c)3 non-profit

**2. In what organizational development activities did the byway organization engage this year (training, evaluation/assessment, accreditation, strategic planning, etc.)?**

Participation in District Five Byway Meeting  
 Participation in State Byway Meeting  
 Produced 2019 Work Plan  
 Produced this document, 2018 Annual Report.

**3. What are the organization’s greatest challenges (recruiting new members, getting the work done, obtaining funding, etc.)?**

We are struggling to find members to stay viable. We’ve done relatively well over the last many years in grant writing, obtaining funding, completing projects; however, we’re teetering on the brink of human capital insolvency.

### Section 8: Byway Management Plan (BMP)

**1. In what year was your current BMP (or CMP) adopted?**

2013: Green Mountain Scenic Byway 5-yr Corridor Management Plan Update. May 31, 2013

**2. Based on FSHP Guidance Section 4, when does your byway organization anticipate the next BMP update will occur?**

We review our Vision, Mission, and Goals & Objectives to ensure board members have an annual discussion as part of the Byway Annual Work Plan update cycle. These are the major components of a BMP that might change, and the annual review allows us to see if these elements still align with the board.

**3. Does your byway organization have questions about or need help deciding when to update the BMP?**

We will work with our DSHC to make sure critical elements of the BMP are incorporated into the Annual Work Plan cycle.

### Section 9: Final Comments

**1. List any other significant accomplishments or activities that have not been captured in your report.**

In the early 2000s, Green Mountain Scenic Byway was a vibrant entity working on behalf of the intrinsic resources within the Corridor. Today’s accomplishments are tied specifically to those efforts. The Ferndale Preserve is recognized as a birding and equestrian gem of a location. The vision of Byway members to see recreational opportunities across the Lake Apopka North Shore; and more



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importantly, realizing that we can connect Byway travelers to them is paying untold dividends. This would never have been realized without the State Byway affiliation. The Green Mountain Scenic Overlook and Trailhead is still a catalyst for new recreational opportunities.

The trail head and associated trails added approximately 50% to the Lake Apopka Loop Trail. Two much smaller breaks to the east and west are now more visible and represent higher priority to Orange and Lake County than ever before. The thousands of users are thousands of constituents all asking their elected officials for action. The prospects of completing this Trail sooner than later is now a priority in Lake County as developers plan on building out their developments.

The wildlife drive, somewhat patterned after the Blackpoint drive on Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge now has more visitors. This drive, free to the public is a wonderful alternative to the regions more formal "parks."

The Green Mountain Scenic Byway Byway Organization can proudly claim that we were a primary driver in implementing or allowing any of these recreational opportunities.