



# Corridor Management Plan

To establish stewardship and promotion of

Illinois Route 66

as an

All American Road

Developed by and for:

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# 1. Introduction

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## a. Statement of Purpose of the Document

The Historic Route 66 In Illinois - Corridor Management Plan is intended to provide an up-to-date guide for the management, preservation/conservation, interpretation, enhancement, promotion, and wise use of the resources in this significant roadway corridor as an asset and catalyst for community and economic opportunity. This plan utilizes and builds upon several previous studies including the extensive Barton-Aschman Studies, commissioned by the Illinois Department of Transportation in 1996. This study includes: "The Route 66 Tourism Opportunities", "The Route 66 Operational Guidelines", and "The Route 66 Corridor Study." Many useful references and documentation from these studies are included in this Corridor Management Plan. Also, the 1995 National Park Service Special Resource Study of Route 66 has been utilized for its insight into historical context and alternative management strategies.

By providing a shared vision, common goals and thoughtful strategy, as well as an ongoing, open, public and interactive process, the Corridor Management Plan will help continue and build upon the Illinois Route 66 Byway's legacy of positive influence for generations to come.

## b. An explanation of the National Scenic Byway Program

### The National Scenic Byways Program

Under the National Scenic Byways Program, the U. S. Secretary of Transportation recognizes certain roads as National Scenic Byways based on their archeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic qualities. To be designated a National Scenic Byway, a road must possess at least one of the six qualities, or "intrinsic values". The significance of the features contributing to the distinctive characteristics of the corridor's intrinsic values must be recognized throughout the multi-state region.

The National Scenic Byways Program is founded upon the strength of the leaders for individual byways. It is a voluntary, grassroots program that recognizes and supports outstanding roads and corridors. It provides resources to help manage the intrinsic qualities within the broader byway corridor to be treasured and shared. As stated by a byway leader, "the program is about recognition, not regulation".

### The Illinois Scenic Byways Program

The Illinois process for the designation of new state scenic byways is a simultaneous Federal/State designation of the scenic byway (Public Act 89.605). The Federal Highway Administration has approved the Illinois method as meeting the basic requirement.



The mission of the Illinois Scenic Byways Program is to facilitate the designation of Illinois roads that meet the national criteria for National Scenic Byways and/or All-American Roads. Concurrent with the national scenic byway designation, the corridor would receive designation as a state scenic byway. A state scenic byway is defined as that portion of a roadway that has been nominated by the department and has received National Scenic Byways or All-American Road designation from the U. S. Department of Transportation.

### c. The Planning Process and Demonstration of Support

The State of Illinois initiated a heritage tourism program in the late 1990's through which Illinois Route 66 was designated a state heritage tourism project. A non-profit, 501 c 3 organization, Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project, Inc., was developed to manage the initiative. This organization, spearheaded by Executive Director Patricia Kuhn, has led the effort to develop the Corridor Management Plan, providing staff, administrative support and coordination.

The Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project applied for and received a grant from the State of Illinois, Department of Community and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism, to facilitate the planning process and to hire the consultant firm of American Countryside Tourism Strategies to assist with the development of the Corridor Management Plan.

As an initial action, a Statewide Planning Committee was developed with representation from a broad cross section of public and private organizations and individuals throughout the Byway corridor. The committee included several key state agencies such as the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Illinois Bureau of Tourism, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Representatives of significant statewide community organizations, including the Illinois Municipal League and Rural Partners were represented on the committee. The committee involved geographically distributed representation from local government, economic development, historical societies, tourism organizations and Route 66 attractions. See *Volume I, Section 3, Exhibit F* for a list of participants.

Through the committee, these individuals and organizations provided a multi-disciplinary resource to the planning process. Regular meetings of this group were held to discuss issues related to the Corridor Management Plan and seek input for its creation.

As a key part of the planning process, the Statewide Planning Committee toured the entire length of the corridor together by motor coach to develop a shared sense of vision, and identify key resources, issues, goals and ideas that would help ensure success of the Byway.





To facilitate the public planning process, the Byway corridor was sectioned into six geographically compatible regions and Regional Committees were established to encourage public involvement and support research at the local level. A Regional Coordinator was appointed for each region from the Statewide Planning Committee. A series of Public Meetings were held in each region to discuss the planning process and potential designation, as well as help with additional research and planning. See *Volume III, Section 3, Exhibit B for more information*. The Management and Consultant Team crafted and vetted recommendations for the CMP based upon Statewide Planning Committee, Regional Committees, and input from the general public.

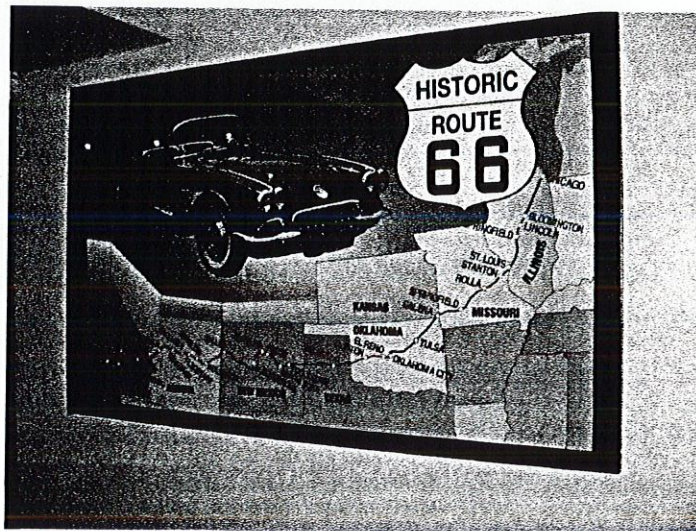
The discussion draft of the CMP was subsequently disseminated to each local government office intersecting the Byway corridor and placed on display. A set of posters announcing the availability of the plan were distributed for each local government to place in accessible public areas. Press releases were distributed throughout the Byway corridor to announce public access to the CMP. In addition, the CMP was posted on the official Illinois Route 66 web site and the online availability was also publicized to encourage broad review and comment. Comments received during the three-week review period were incorporated into the final draft of the document. See *Volume III, Section 3, Exhibit C for details*.

The Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project, in conjunction with its Regional Committees, sought and received overwhelming support from the local governments throughout the Byway corridor. Evidence of the success of this effort is demonstrated in the nomination packet compliance section (*Volume III, Section 1*).

#### d. Multiple State Cooperation

Recognizing the national significance of the Byway experience, as well as the communication required to foster a stronger national network for Route 66, the Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project took a lead role in contacting each of the other seven states along Route 66. Illinois continued to encourage interest and participation in the National Scenic Byway Program and offered support to others considering the opportunity.

Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project initiated an interstate email roundtable with the other seven states along Route 66 and maintained regular communications with representatives from the National Park Service – Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program (New Mexico) to share the status





of the Illinois CMP / nomination efforts. *For a list of National Affiliates, see Volume I, Section 3, Exhibit F.*

## 2. Identifying and Assessing the Byway

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### a. The Route 66 Byway Story and its significance to the nation

Route 66 is arguably one of the most famous roadways in the world. It has come to represent the American Dream - the freedom, passion and spirit of the people whose lives intertwined with 2448 miles of pavement to make an eternal mark on our country's cultural landscape. U.S Route 66 is legendary, and the legacy of Route 66 is reflected in special people and places through the poignant stories they tell. And, Illinois is where it all begins.

For over 50 years, between 1926 and 1977, U.S. Highway 66 was the principal roadway that connected Illinois with the Great West. As Tom Teague wrote in "Searching for 66," "At its birth in 1926, this road was hailed as a great agent of progress -- a concrete ribbon tying the west coast to the rest of America. And for a wondrous half-century, it embraced and embodied this nation like few institutions can. TV glorified it. Song-writers romanticized about it. Okies drove it out of the Dust Bowl. And scarcely an American alive did not dream at some time of setting wheel to pavement along its way."

"Route 66," declared Congress in legislation passed in 1990, "has become a symbol of the American people's heritage of travel and their legacy of seeking a better life." This Congressional finding concluded by stating that it "has been enshrined in American popular culture."

Historically, the road reflects a time in our country of tremendous achievement in commerce, particularly reflected by the mass-production of the automobile, the development of the nation's road system and the travel services that were spawned by a nation of motorists.

Culturally, Route 66 became the icon for this dynamic shift in American life. Nearly everything we did as Americans, particularly as it related to travel, was impacted by the evolution and revolution of this amazing road. Throughout the world, Route 66 came to symbolize the freedom, opportunity and mobility of the nation through its appreciation in classic literature, music, film, television and the arts.

The national significance of Route 66 is undeniable. Thousands of travelers from throughout the United States, as well as from around the world make driving Route 66 their "destination." The road continues to be a source of inspiration for artists, authors, film-makers and musicians and the power and romance of this road continue to be discovered. And, as it was in the beginning, the road continues to be a powerful driver of commerce and economic opportunity.

Illinois, the only Route 66 state east of the Mississippi River, is where the road begins. Chicago, a well-established transportation hub and international destination,



anchors the road at its eastern terminus and launches a driver on an unforgettable American journey.

## The Formative Years

Route 66 is merely a chapter in a much larger story about transportation along this historic corridor and to appreciate the significance of Route 66, one must look at the context within which the road came to be.

The state of Illinois rests between two great watersheds - the Great Lakes basin on the east and the Mississippi River basin on the west. The earliest European descriptions of the Illinois territory come from Marquette and Joliet as they traveled up the Mississippi into the Illinois River over the Chicago Portage and into Lake Michigan in 1673.

In the 1830s and 40's, the Illinois and Michigan Canal was constructed between Chicago and the LaSalle/Peru area along the Illinois River. This canal facilitated travel between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi river watersheds. Although the waterway provided an excellent route between Chicago to St. Louis, travel to Springfield required a stop in Peoria and travel southward by road. During the 1850's, railroads emerged as the dominant transportation means in Illinois. It was during this decade that a direct rail line was built between Chicago and St. Louis via Springfield. Towns sprung up quickly along this rail line, primarily to serve the shipping needs of area farmers.

The story of Illinois U.S. Route 66 really begins with the earliest road between Chicago and St. Louis constructed for use by motor vehicles. This road was "christened" the Pontiac Trail in 1915. It began in Chicago, traveled through Lemont, Lockport, Joliet, Morris, Dwight, Odell, Pontiac, Lexington, Bloomington, Lincoln, Springfield, Litchfield, Collinsville, and East St. Louis. It was described in 1915 as: "The shortest route for motor travel between Chicago and St. Louis, with so many large and important towns on its course, and intersecting, as it does, so many important east and west thoroughfares, its rapid development as a highway is easily forecasted. Already it is a well-cared-for highway, and following, as it does, State aid roads every inch of its length, *its permanent improvement will be rapid and certain.* At the present time, the trail follows stone roads the entire distance from Chicago to Morris, a distance of about 60 miles, and at Morris there are about 2 1/2 miles of concrete road. South of Pontiac, there are 5 miles of asphalt, stone and concrete road, and about 4 miles of concrete and crushed stone through Funks Grove. At Lincoln there are 2 1/2 miles of concrete road, and at Springfield 3 or 4 miles of the same."

In 1916 Congress passed the Federal-Aid Road Act - also known as the Bankhead Act. With this act the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) became a new agency under the Department of Agriculture. In addition, this act defined for the first time the relationship between federal and state highway programs. It also appropriated \$12,000,000 in matching funds for road construction in the State of Illinois. (Wrone 1965:68)



By the end of 1916, the Illinois State Highway Commission developed a plan for a 4,000-mile network of hard roads in Illinois. In order to finance this undertaking, a bond issue totaling \$60,000,000 was planned. The bond issue was passed in 1918. One of the consequences of this was the paving and standardization of the Chicago to St. Louis Route. This route—essentially replacing the Pontiac Trail—was designated SBI 4 (State Bond Issue 4)

On February 1, 1921, bids were taken to pave the portions of the State Bond Issue road system. The cost for paving 1 mile of 18-foot wide road with concrete was between \$30,000 and \$40,000. Within the next 3 years, SBI 4 would first be paved between Chicago and St. Louis.

In 1924, E.W. James of the Bureau of Public Roads, in conjunction with the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHO), suggested a national highway numbering system to relieve confusion over road names from one state to the next. A series of meetings and discussions among various federal and state officials resulted in naming a road between Chicago and Los Angeles as Route 66.

## The Beginning of Route 66

It began with an Oklahoma businessman and entrepreneur, Cyrus Avery, who envisioned a road stretching diagonally across the country between Lake Michigan and the Pacific Ocean. The diagonal course made it possible to connect hundreds of rural towns throughout the country and provide small communities access to a national highway system.

Officially, the numerical designation 66 was assigned to the Chicago-to-Los Angeles route in the summer of 1926. With that designation, came its acknowledgment as one of the nation's principal east-west arteries. The road was officially named Route 66 in 1926, but it was Avery who proclaimed it the "Main Street of America."



Route 66 was a highway spawned by the demands of a rapidly changing America. Contrasted with the Lincoln, the Dixie, and other highways of its day, Route 66 did not follow a traditionally linear course. According to noted Route 66 researcher and author, David G. Clark, "The other important highways ran east-west or north-south. Instead of using longitude or latitude as a guide, 66 followed the trail blazed by American history itself. A look at 66 on the map is a glimpse at the direction of transportation and commerce of the country from the 1830s to the present. From the beginning, this is a story that "begins" with Chicago as the gateway to an "end" in the great American West.

US Route 66 in Illinois was completely signed by 1927, the same year it appeared in the Tenth Annual Report of the Division of Highways as US 66. It is important to note these early documents show SBI 4 between Springfield and Staunton as being "T



66", the temporary routing of the road. The official alignment of Route 66 was always intended to run through Litchfield. Unfortunately, documentary evidence fails to provide any explanation or justification for this deviation. The pattern of U.S. Route 66 construction in other states, particularly Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona, was to connect two points with the straightest line possible avoiding as many impediments, including towns, as they could.



## The Depression Years and the War

In his famous social commentary, *The Grapes of Wrath*, John Steinbeck proclaimed U. S. Highway 66 the "Mother Road." Steinbeck's classic 1939 novel, combined with the 1940 film recreation of the epic odyssey, imbedded Route 66 in the American consciousness. More than 200,000 people are estimated to have migrated to California to escape the despair of the Dust Bowl. Certainly in the minds of those who endured that particularly painful experience, and in the view of generations of children to whom they recounted their story, Route 66 symbolized the "road to opportunity."

From 1933 to 1938 thousands of unemployed male youths from virtually every state were put to work as laborers on road gangs to pave the final stretches of the road. As a result of this monumental effort, the Chicago-to-Los Angeles highway was reported as "continuously paved" in 1938.

Road building was well on its evolutionary way prior to WW II. "Temporary" segments of original Route 66 were rapidly replaced with wider, safer and more modern two-lane versions of the road during the 1930's. Pavement width expanded from 18' to 20' and increased even more in urban areas like Chicago. The Illinois Division of Highways began an aggressive campaign to separate railroad and highway grades. The SBI 4 alignment was abandoned in favor of the new construction of Route 66 through Litchfield and the new 2-lane Route 66 bypassed many of the towns it had formerly dissected.

The quest for speed and safety was on.

The Annual Reports for the Illinois Division of Highways during the 1940s suggest that two major changes were taking place along Route 66. First, major bypasses were being constructed as early as 1941. Two major "Beltlines" were constructed, one around Lincoln and the other around Bloomington. By 1946, the Twenty-Ninth Annual Report boasted that current construction along U.S. Route 66 "provides through traffic with bypasses around the cities of Dwight, Odell, Pontiac, Chenoa, Lexington, Bloomington, Atlanta, and Lincoln" (1946:94-95).

The second major change during this period was the designation of U.S. Route 66 as a national "strategic highway" in 1942; Route 66 was considered essential to the



movement of troops and supplies. The Emergency War Powers Act made it possible for the acquisition of right-of-way to continue and although it took a number of years through the WW II era, construction continued.

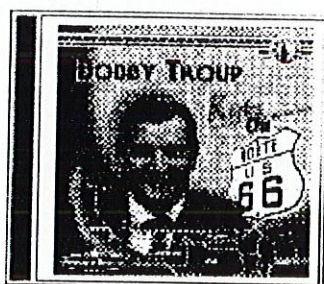
Subsequent construction and realignment of various portions of the route left segments of the original pavement unmodified and they became part of the county highway system. Segments that were replaced by the 4-lane bypasses, generally built after 1940, became part of the local road system in Pontiac, Bloomington-Normal, Lincoln, Springfield and others.

## The American Dream

From 1926 to the period just after World War II, a significant cultural change transformed America. People's worlds expanded outside their communities and their ability to move about the country was enabled by the relative affordability of personal transportation. Route 66 represented the opportunity of freedom on the open road - empowerment for all classes of people.

## The Postwar Years

Route 66 symbolized the renewed spirit of optimism that pervaded the country after economic catastrophe and global war. Route 66 made things happen. It transformed people and places. It is romantically believed that these transformations were mostly improvements—that Route 66 was a product of a Golden Age for America and its people.



Thanks to the popular song written by Bobby Troup, "Get your kicks on Route 66" became a popular phrase for countless motorists who moved back and forth between Chicago and the Pacific Coast. Troup penned the song following his very own "motor west" on the "highway that's the best." Nat King Cole recorded the song in 1946, one week after Troup arrived in Los Angeles. It was an immediate hit. Since that time, hundreds of artists have covered the song, including the Rolling Stones and Depeche Mode.

The individuals who lived during the Depression, the Second World War, and the Cold War may have disagreed with that glittering assessment of the era. Nonetheless, even during the anxious periods in our nation's history, the power of Route 66 to transform travelers into new people and the American landscape into new opportunities was acknowledged.

During this period a number of important changes took place along U.S. Route 66. These changes foreshadowed the final fate of U.S. Route 66—its replacement by Interstate 55. In many ways the period between 1940 and 1977 can be seen as a transitional period, not only for U.S. Route 66 but for all federal highways in Illinois.



## The Roadside Attractions – Architectural Fun and Economic Opportunity

Work relief programs provided jobs all along the route for its construction and maintenance. Military use of the road increased the volume of travel and naturally, an explosion of commercial enterprises followed. It set a chain reaction in motion that continued for many years as tourists began traveling the road as well. Countless amenities like motels, diners and services stations populated the road to provide basic services. Motor courts, souvenir shops and roadside attractions sprang up to meet the growing demands of leisure travelers.

The evolution of tourist-targeted facilities is well represented in the roadside architecture along U. S. Highway 66. Motels evolved from earlier features of the American roadside such as the auto camp and the tourist home. Eventually, auto camps and cabin camps gave way to motor courts in which all of the rooms were under a single roof. Motor courts offered additional amenities, such as adjoining restaurants, souvenir shops, and swimming pools.

In the early years of Route 66, service station prototypes were developed regionally through experimentation, and then were adopted universally across the country. Illinois offers exceptional examples of the evolution of gas stations, like the Soulsby Station in Mt. Olive and the Standard Station in Odell, IL.

## Freedom of the Road

By the time Americas were heading west in the 1960's, Route 66 and its many points of interest along the way were familiar landmarks. The television show, "Route 66" starring Martin Milner and George Maharis featured a convertible view of America, with stories of discovery, hope, fortune, rebellion, empowerment and change. The show captivated an entire post-WWII generation and instilled the sense of adventure that Route 66 travelers still seek today.

*A National Park Service study of the highway found it was the boundless freedom of the road that was—and still is—the primary attraction.*

## The Road Lives On

Route 66 and its capacity to inspire discovery and to instill optimism did not end when the federal government decommissioned it in 1985. It is alive with commerce and thousands of travelers still "get their kicks" by driving Route 66. The freedom, adventure, romance, kitsch...whatever it is...still sparks the imagination of national and international audiences. It is one of Illinois' greatest driving destinations and continues, as it did in the beginning, to serve as a catalyst for economic development.

## Illinois Route 66 Byway

Illinois is where Route 66 began in 1926 and remains the logical point of departure for a tour of the highway. Illinois, with Chicago as an incredible



international gateway, is an easily accessible transportation hub and destination for travelers. This makes Illinois particularly attractive to the Route 66 enthusiast and distinguishes Illinois as a sensible place for out-of-state and international tourists to begin their Route 66 adventure.

Nearly all of Illinois' Route 66 alignments still exist and can be driven. For many travelers, simply the experience of driving the road and witnessing the landscape is the attraction. For others, it is the charm and uniqueness of each of the many communities that dot the Illinois prairie that brings them to 66. Hundreds of historic and cultural icons, the special places and people of Route 66, remain the heart of the Illinois 66 travel experience. Cruising Illinois Route 66 is exploring its heritage, discovering its stories, and sensing the freedom of the road again.

## **b. A Current Description of the Byway and the Visitor Experience**

### **Assessment of Intrinsic Qualities and their context**

An abundance of Route 66 resources and visitor amenities exist throughout the entire Illinois Route 66 Byway corridor. From the core of one of the world's greatest cities, Chicago, across the Illinois prairie and its agricultural landscape, to the crossing of the Mighty Mississippi, this road tells a compelling and enjoyable story, filled with classic route 66 experiences (*for listing, see Volume I, Section 3, Exhibit F*).

The National Scenic Byway Program defines a road's resources and amenities as its intrinsic qualities, "features that are considered representative, unique, irreplaceable, or distinctly characteristic of an area." These intrinsic qualities help to define its character, appeal, and interest, differentiating the Route 66 Byway from other roadways in the area. Although not always quantifiable, intrinsic qualities are essential, underlying characteristics used to promote the Byway experience to visitors. The National Scenic Byways Program defines six intrinsic qualities that provide the basis for Scenic Byway designation: archeological; cultural; historic; natural; recreational; and scenic.

The Illinois Route 66 Byway exemplifies characteristics and features of all six intrinsic qualities; however, its national significance and "one of a kind" uniqueness is best demonstrated through its historical and cultural intrinsic qualities. These features position Illinois Route 66 as a destination unto itself.

In the Cultural Resource Management (CRM) Bulletin published by the National Park Service, Dwayne Jones outlines three distinct strategies for conducting road surveys: the Linear Approach, the Resource Base Approach, and the Thematic Approach. For this project and its objectives, the most practical approach was the resource based approach.

For the purposes of this Corridor Management Plan and future research and categorization of the road's resources, the historic and cultural intrinsic qualities are



considered to fall within four basic resource types: Primary Resources, Associated Resources, Complementary Resources, and Other Visitor Amenities. Additional intrinsic qualities present along Illinois Route 66 including archeological, natural, recreational and scenic will be referenced separately.

Although fifteen points of interest have been selected to represent Historic Route 66 in Illinois, literally hundreds of other story-related intrinsic qualities support this incredible driving experience. Classic motels, service stations and diners reflect the history and culture of 66, but the story of the road is also found in the parks, public art, architecture, signs, cemeteries, museums, historic buildings and abandoned road segments that can be discovered around every turn of the 400-mile journey.

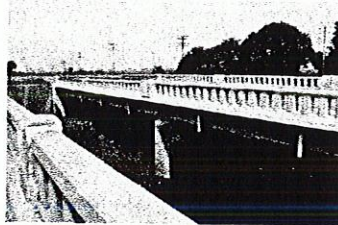
## Historic and Cultural Intrinsic Qualities

### Primary Resources

The various historic segments of Route 66 constitute a key part of the primary historic intrinsic quality. Included in this category are the pavement, bridges, and the “official” history highway signs of the various Route 66 alignments.

The way the highway was constructed—the width of its lanes and shoulders; the design of its bridges; the appearance of its guard rails, right of way monuments, traffic control signs; its alignment and profile—all suggest a slower, less congested time in our history. Even an intersection on a four-lane bypass is relatively quaint compared to the giant I-55 interchange that replaced it. The road itself—its history, its design, its technology—is a major attraction and it should be celebrated. In Illinois, almost all of the original alignment still exists and can be driven by the tourist.

Highway bridges are a distinctive resource-type along U.S. Route 66 since they are individual structures, as opposed to linear stretches of pavement. With a few exceptions, most bridges noted are structures that carry two lanes of traffic. Those built in the 1920s and 30's were intended to carry one lane of traffic in each direction, while structures built in the 1940 - 1970 era were most often constructed in pairs - each element of the pair designed to carry two lanes in one direction with a slab deck or a deck supported by concrete T-beams. A few structures utilize rolled wide flange beams.



In addition to these more standard concrete bridges that typify U.S. Route 66, a few atypical or unique bridges exist. The Jackson Street Bridge and the Adams Street Bridge, both over the Chicago River and the Ruby Street Bridge over the Des Plaines River are the only three drawbridges along Route 66 nationwide. Other unique bridges include the Chain of Rocks Canal Bridge (1946-1949) and the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge (1929). It should be noted that several of the bridges along the various



U.S. Route 66 alignments are identified on the list of historic bridges that IDOT circulated for public comment in January 1994.

In addition, archaeological segments of Illinois U.S. Route 66 exist today as abandoned sections of the old road. Some were severed or removed for construction of more modern alignments of 66 or I-55, but some were simply never removed. Four such segments have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Efforts by the Illinois Dept of Natural Resources, in cooperation with the Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project, are examining the usage of these abandoned segments throughout the corridor for their recreational value as biking and hiking trails. Feasibility studies of such an undertaking have been funded through the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program.

## **Associated Resources**

Although the mere driving of Route 66 is the ultimate experience, for many, it is the original artifacts, the places that made Route 66 special then and make it a satisfying visitor experience today.

In some respects, the highway is just the "vehicle" that takes a tourist to what they really want to see—those things that were part of the authentic Route 66 travel experience. Route 66 was and is about commerce and many of the associated resources – those that developed in direct response to the construction of the road - offer the visitor an authentic experience of life on the road even today.

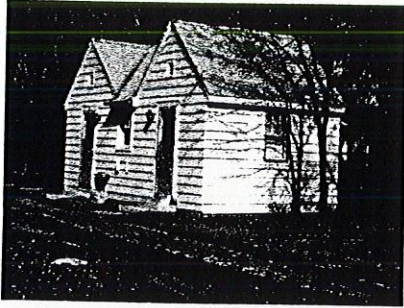
Primarily developed and owned by enterprising business people, the following structure-types are representative of those noted in the survey: Filling stations; Garages; Auto Dealers; Diners/Cafes/Restaurants; Motels; Drive-in Theaters; and Billboards. Yes, billboards. These are the things that Route 66 is all about and their presence along Illinois Route 66 offers a deep cultural connection and value to today's driver.

**Service Stations:** Service stations were a dominant feature of the Route 66 landscape. In the early years of this century, gasoline was sold in cans and from curbside pumps in front of general stores. Ironically the evolution of the "filling" station has come full circle, as the sale of gasoline today is almost exclusively available from a "convenience" based station.

By the 1920's, filling stations dedicated entirely to the auto were a common sight. Most of the stations found within the Route 66 corridor were designed to celebrate technology and reflected a distinct architectural style. Evidence can be seen of the streamline movement of the 1930's and 1940's in smooth finishes, sweeping curves, bands of stripes, and soaring canopies. Other stations had a more "domestic" appeal, evoking a more intimate, warm, and secure sense of hearth and home.



Motels: As American became a country of motorists, lodging emerged as one of the most basic needs. By the late 1920's, publicly owned camps like those found in Girard, Bloomington, Chenoa, as well as other locations along Illinois 66 were the predominant type of lodging facility. Around 1928, the "dollar a night" cabins became the predecessor of the modern motel.



The cabins were typically a 10 x 12 foot room consisting of a double bed, table, two kitchen chairs, a mirror, wash basin with cold running water and a flush toilet. Most of these tourist courts exhibited a theme to attract visitors. These themes were incorporated into the free standing or linked units. More than fifty of these types of motels have been identified through the Illinois Route 66 corridor.

Restaurants: A variety of eating establishments evolved to serve the traveling public. In the 1930's lunch stands, cafes, diners, roadhouses, family restaurants, and drive-ins began to appear along the highway. The typical cafe had a comfortable atmosphere with the decor and menu varied by owner. Standard features included a table with ashtray, ketchup bottle, napkin holder, salt and peppershakers, and a cream dispenser.

The culture associated with the automobile ushered in major changes to the restaurant business, creating fast food "drive-ins. Among the almost forty cafes/restaurants and drive-ins that were identified along Route 66, many offer a real sense of what Route 66 establishments were all about.

## Complementary Resources

Those historic properties that exist along the 66 corridor but are not directly associated with the transportation theme of U.S. Route 66 are considered Complementary. There's no question their existence during the Route 66 era enhanced the visitor experience then as it does today. Because they are part of the visual landscape, they become part of today's Route 66 experience.

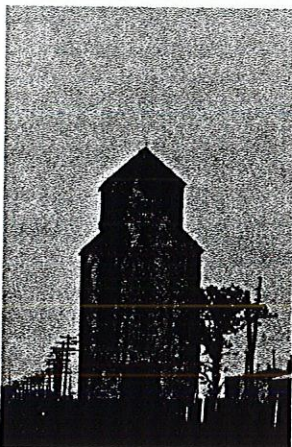
John Conoboy, a National Park Service planner and member of the NPS Route 66 study team, makes a case for complementary resources in a 1993 article in the Cultural Resource Management (CRM) Bulletin: "Surveys of U.S. Route 66 must ultimately include significant road related properties that are not now considered 'historic,' but that represent the continuum of the highway's development. We need to look now at what might become the historic properties of the future. Properties such as historic farmhouses, barns, and other buildings that are not directly tied to the highway are not generally considered U.S. Route 66 resources. Frequently,



however, these become the core of the only remaining historic cultural landscapes along the highway."

These are the artifacts that represent a particular period or region. Fields and agricultural structures, such as barns, grain elevators, fences, as well as telegraph poles and railroads were adjacent to Route 66. They formed the environmental context for the highway.

Many of these complementary resources would have been there regardless whether Route 66 was there or not; however, it is arguable that Route 66 was the progenitor of these resources. The road's capacity to carry agricultural products to larger markets would likely have give rise to many of these structures. In either case, since these resources dominate the landscape, their presence is considered by many travelers crucial for establishing the correct historical context or perspective.



The Ballard Elevator north of Lexington makes for a great example of a complementary resource. Its construction preceded that of Route 66 and its primary function was to handle the shipment of grain by rail. However, it was certainly in use during the Route 66 era and was part of the motorist's visual experience for decades.

Hundreds, if not thousands of complementary resources connect with Illinois 66 and an attempt to offer an exhaustive list would be nearly impossible. Because these resources tend to exist in communities throughout the Byway corridor, they fall in to general categories and include, but are not limited to: Agricultural Structures, Rail related structures, Public Art, Cemeteries, Golf Courses, Commercial Architecture, Monuments, Prisons, Colleges and other heritage related sites like the I & M Canal and the Abraham Lincoln sites are part of travel on Illinois Route 66.

## Visitor Amenities

In addition to visitor amenities identified as Associated Resources because of their thematic connection to the Route 66 story or Complementary Resources because of their attraction in the visual landscape, there are a large variety of additional visitor amenities such as lodging, dining, shopping, and other visitor attractions, that serve to enhance the visitor experience. A 2000 audit of these services included 219 hotels / motels, 1425 restaurants, 270 viable tourist attractions and 35 golf courses. Abundant shopping and other related amenities are available throughout the Byway.



## Top 15 sites relating to the visitor experience

(Photos in Volume I, Section 3, Exhibit A)

### 1. Chicago – Point of Departure

This is where the road begins. The splendor and magnificence of the Chicago skyline unfolds before the traveler who is immersed in the architectural landscape of one of our nation's greatest cities. An adventure on Illinois 66 kicks off with spectacular attractions including Buckingham Fountain, Lake Michigan, and The Art Institute, the heart of Chicago's "Cultural Mile." It is no wonder Route 66 founder Cyrus Avery chose Chicago to anchor his 2400 mile journey to California.

### 2. Chicago - Lou Mitchell's Restaurant

Since 1923, Lou Mitchell's Restaurant has been serving some of the greatest food Chicago has to offer. In the early 1930's the restaurant moved to its current location and solidified its position as one of the icons of Chicago and Route 66. The building is an ideal example of classic diner-restaurant architecture and the service is reminiscent of the culture of Route 66. Complimentary donuts are served to guests while they wait and ladies only receive a pack of Milk Duds.

### 3. Willowbrook - Dell Rhea's Chicken Basket

"Get your chicks on Route 66" at one of the most unique restaurants the road has to offer. Its colorful history dates back to the early days of Route 66 when the restaurant also doubled as a Blue Bird Bus stop. The building's unique features include large bay windows that allowed diners to watch take offs and landing at the neighboring airport. In winter, the flat roof was flooded to provide an icy surface for skating exhibitions! To learn more, visit [www.chickenbasket.com](http://www.chickenbasket.com).

### 4. Wilmington - Gemini Giant at the Launching Pad Restaurant

Nothing reflects the kitsch and nostalgia of the Route 66 era like the Gemini Giant, a 36' fiberglass "muffler man" - one of the most popular larger-than-life roadside attractions that began appearing on the American landscape during the 1950's. The giant is the most photographed man in Wilmington and keeps watch over the Launching Pad, a favorite stop for Route 66 travelers.

### 5. Braidwood - The Polk-a-Dot Drive In

More than 40 years ago, the Polk-a-Dot was serving lunch from a mini-sized kitchen in an old school bus decorated with polk-a-dots, of course. Today, the nostalgic diner-style restaurant greets locals and Route 66 visitors from around the world who come to enjoy great food and lots of fun. No stop is complete without a photo op with life-sized replicas of Marilyn Monroe, James Dean and Elvis "Himself." You can visit [www.polk-a-dot.com](http://www.polk-a-dot.com) for more information.

### 6. Odell - Standard Oil Service Station (Odell Station)



The Odell Station serves as an ideal example of the American filling station. Its architecture and its place in the landscape make it one of the most recognizable symbols of the popular culture associated with Route 66. Built in 1932, this beautiful "depression era" service station served travelers on Route 66 until the mid 1960s. Preservation efforts saved this National Register landmark and although it no longer sells gas, visitors enjoy learning about the station's past.

#### **7. Bloomington - Historic Miller Park**

Historic Miller Park has served as a mecca for outdoor recreation and entertainment since 1887. Recognized for its architectural splendor, the park features a pavilion designed by George H. Miller, beaches, a bandstand and incredible zoo. During the 1930's the park welcomed 350,000 to 400,000 visitors each summer and later added amusement rides to entertain local residents and Route 66 travelers. Today, the park and zoo remain among the city's most popular attractions.

#### **8. Shirley - Funk's Grove Pure Maple Sirup**

There's more than maple sirup (yes, its spelled that way on purpose) at Funk's Grove. Since 1824, the Funk Family has been producing its special brand of pure maple sirup from more than 6,000 taps in the prolific stand of maple trees. When the new "hard road" cut through the family property, it also provided a steady and receptive string of customers for the sirup venture. The grounds include a historic cemetery and mineral museum. You can visit [www.funkspuremaplesirup.com](http://www.funkspuremaplesirup.com) for more information.

#### **9. Atlanta - Historic Downtown Atlanta**

Atlanta's compact downtown area has everything a Route 66 lover enjoys. Recently restored authentic murals adorn the exterior of historic buildings and a recently relocated Bunyon Giant maintains order on historic Arch Street. Take a walking tour of this adorable area and soon visit the Palms Grill Cafe - an authentic 1936 diner in its original building currently being restored. The Cafe will also house historical artifacts managed by the Atlanta Museum and Park Board.

#### **10. Lincoln - Historic Sangamon Street**

Lincoln, Illinois, the only city named for our 16th President prior to his assassination, is alive with the charm of Route 66. Sangamon Street, original 66, is lined with quaint shops and restaurants, each with a special connection to the town's history and Route 66. Within a stone's throw, you'll discover Lincoln's historic depot and the "Christening Site," the actual spot where Abraham Lincoln christened the town with the juice of a watermelon.

#### **11. Springfield - Shea's Gas Station Museum**



Gas man Bill Shea has been running his business on old Route 66 for over half a century. Beginning with a gas station and garage, the business has been transformed into a tribute to the early days of gas stations that once lined the Mother Road. Visitors can enjoy a large and eclectic collection of vintage gas pumps, signs, photos and service station memorabilia. Shea has gained an international reputation as an icon of Route 66, making this a "must stop" for Route 66 fans.

#### 12. Springfield - The Cozy Drive-In

The Cozy Drive In is the home of the one and only Cozy Dog, the original hot dog on a stick. Lunch at the classic Route 66 stop has become an entry on the "to do" list of nearly every Route 66 traveler. The tasty treat, invented by Ed Waldmire in 1946, is served in an authentic Route 66 style diner by members of the Waldmire Family. Son Bob is an internationally recognized artist, whose work focuses on the history of Route 66. His artwork is displayed throughout the Drive In. Learn more at [www.cozydogdrivein.com](http://www.cozydogdrivein.com).

#### 13. Litchfield - The Ariston Café

Noted author, Michael Wallis, calls the Ariston, "...the best the old road has to offer." You'll understand why after you join the hundreds of locals and Route 66 visitors who dine at the Ariston each day. The business has been in the same family since 1924 and continues to provide the same excellent food, first rate service and reasonable prices that were its hallmark during the heyday of Route 66. More information about The Ariston can be found at [www.ariston-cafe.com](http://www.ariston-cafe.com).

#### 14. Mt. Olive - Russell Soulsby Station

Built as a Shell Station in 1926 by Henry Soulsby, the building ranks as one of the oldest filling stations still standing on Route 66. The building was enlarged and eventually added an adjacent TV repair business. It remained in the Soulsby family and operated until 1991. The Soulsby Station Society, founded by noted author and Route 66 historian, Tom Teague, provided the preservation effort that saved this treasure and helped it achieve National Register status.

#### 15. Madison - The Old Chain of Rocks Bridge

Once the major 66 thoroughfare between Illinois and Missouri, the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge crosses one of the most historic and scenic sections of the Mississippi River. Officially opened in June 1999 as a multi-use recreational trail, the Bridge is the longest pedestrian bridge in the world at 1-mile in length. The Bridge offers a panoramic view of the St. Louis skyline, the Mississippi River, as well as the gothic style water-intake towers that jut from the shoals.



## c. General Character and Physical Characteristics of the Byway

### Cross Sections

Route 66 was an experiment in road design and construction that worked. It served as the model for modern highway construction techniques and standards and as noted Route 66 author, Tom Teague, once said, "Route 66 became a victim of its own success." Today's Interstate Highway System is rooted in Route 66.

Its interesting to reflect on the development of the typical cross-sections that were used by the Illinois Division of Highways on Route 66 from 1926 to 1977 as the highway became progressively wider, stronger, and more complex. Illinois Department of Transportation reports examine five years of significance (1926, 1941, 1946, 1953, and 1962), in which the cross-section changed dramatically.

Following the 1960's, road construction on Route 66 was gearing up for compatibility and use with Interstate 55, which resulted in a significantly different cross section than those found on Route 66 in 1926.

### Design Elements

Even as early as 1926, The American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHO), set minimum standards for highway design. The State of Illinois followed these guidelines in developing state highways. As the guidelines changed, so did the state's design practices.

The state highlighted these progressive alterations in the design of highways in its annual reports. These reports include a summary of changes to the highway's cross-section, horizontal alignment, vertical profile, bridge structures, traffic signing, and landscape plantings. The cross-section expanded from 32 feet in 1926 to 114 feet by 1962 and from two 9-foot lanes with 6-foot grass shoulders to a divided 4-lane facility with 12-foot lanes and 10-foot paved shoulders. The pavement went from six inches thick in 1926 to ten inches in 1962. Steel reinforcing progressively improved, except for the steel shortage during World War II.

Horizontal and vertical curves became progressively flatter as speeds of vehicles increased. The average speed of cars on the nation's rural highways in 1945 was 42 mph and trucks averaged 38 mph according to AASHO. By 1962 cars had increased their speed to an average of 55 mph and trucks to nearly 50. The percentage of cars exceeding 50 mph went from 17 percent in 1945 to 70 percent in 1962. Nearly a quarter of all cars on rural roads in 1962 exceeded 60 mph.

### Bridges

Highly noticeable and representative resources of historic Route 66 in Illinois are the bridges that still exist.



As early as 1924, dangerous at-grade crossings were eliminated by avoiding railroads or grade separating the road from the railroad. Later, major intersections were converted into grade-separated interchanges. Grade separations culminated in 27 paired bridges carrying Route 66 over railroads and highways when Route 66 was a four-lane expressway

Over the years, a variety of bridges were constructed. Most were built entirely of reinforced concrete, including their abutments, piers, floor beams, stringers, decks, and railings, and they were largely devoid of ornamentation. Their character was utilitarian. Reinforced concrete T-beam bridges were the most common in Illinois. Perhaps to vary the appearance of these ubiquitous structures, three different railing choices were offered: solid concrete parapets with inset panels; Flemish bond brick inset panels; and concrete baluster rails with square posts and arched openings.

Although the appearance changed little, the width on and under bridges increased significantly after 1926, incrementally improving traffic safety. In 1943, with metal in short supply due to the war, reinforced concrete bridges were constructed with salvaged steel. By 1944, not only was steel in short supply but so was manpower. Consequently, several bridge projects were postponed.

Historic bridges are finding new uses throughout the corridor. As an example, The Old Chain of Rocks Bridge, closed to traffic following the opening of the “new” Chain of Rocks Bridge,” has been restored and currently serves as the world’s longest pedestrian and bicycle bridge.



## Signs

As early as 1926, route markers and traffic safety signs complied with AASHO standards. In 1931, reflective signs were introduced as an experiment for hazardous locations. Advances in the design of the signs continued through 1933, when steel signposts were instituted. Warning signs, flashing signals, and gates were added to hazardous railroad crossings conforming to national standards in 1933. By 1936, the use of reflection signs was extended to additional types of signage.

Always the subject of experimentation, Route 66 was used to conduct investigations into the visibility, permanency, and economy of various reflective chips used for striping traffic lanes.

## Roadside Development

Maintenance changed substantially from era to era. It was initially limited to cutting weeds, clearing right-of-way, and mowing shoulders. The federal public works programs of the Great Depression significantly altered the way roadsides were designed and maintained. By 1934, the federal Works Progress Administration provided labor for planting native trees and shrubs. A landscape engineer was assigned to each district to develop a progressive plan for future landscape



improvements along Illinois roadways and the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads recognized roadside planting as an essential phase of highway development.

In the mid-1930's, roadsides were re-graded to provide a more natural appearance and to reduce erosion, and picnic areas were developed as roadside amenities. In 1938, Illinois Governor Horner initiated a Farm Floral Contest to create more attractive farm grounds and to encourage farmers to supplement roadside plantings. There were 2,500 entries.

By the end of 1938, 3,249 miles of highway were landscaped, 74 picnic areas had been created, and 63 roadside tables had been installed along Illinois public roadways.

During World War II, maintenance was reduced to only an erosion control program. By 1942, only landscape improvements and maintenance dealing with erosion control were allowed because the war commanded the necessary labor and materials. The wartime curtailment of landscape activities continued through 1945. After the war, the Landscape Section of the U.S. Bureau of Highways adopted a policy that, "The ultimate landscape development shall be given consideration at the time of preparing original plans for a new [highway] development." By 1950, however, landscaping is primarily concerned with ameliorating soil erosion.

### **Accessibility**

At either end of Illinois' portion of Route 66, visitors can arrive via an international airport - St. Louis' Lambert Field or Chicago's O'Hare Airport. Chicago, where the road begins, is the typical point of departure for international visitors who cruise the entire eight-state Route 66 adventure. Three major regional airports, Mid-America Regional Airport, Central Illinois Regional Airport and Midway Regional, are located near the route. In addition, eleven communities along Illinois 66 are served by commuter airlines with daily service to either international airport.

Amtrak's State House Route parallels Illinois 66 and offers daily service to nine communities along the corridor. In partnership with Enterprise Car Rental, Amtrak now offers some attractive train/car rental offers in each of these communities.

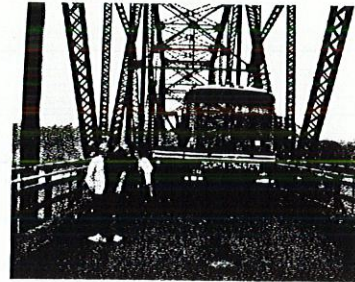
Regular inbound and outbound motor coach service is available in seven communities along the Illinois 66 route.

By far, the road itself remains the single most important access method. Route 66 is a driving experience and motor vehicles, especially classic cars, remain among the most popular way to cruise 66. Illinois Route 66 intersects with I-90/94, I-290, I-355, I-80, I-74, I-72, I-70, I-64 and is paralleled throughout nearly its entire span across the state by I-55. In addition to these major Interstate exchanges, the road is intersected by two other Byways, The Lincoln Highway and The National Road, and numerous other state highways throughout the corridor.

### **Accommodating Vehicles including Tour Busses**



Illinois 66 welcomes and easily accommodates tour busses. To assure this, a 57-passenger motor coach transported members of the Route 66 Byway Statewide Planning Committee on a tour of the entire corridor in March 2004. Comfortably navigable lanes, ample parking and services for large groups are available all along Illinois 66. Tourism organizations and independent tour operators design and market Illinois 66 bus tours on a regular basis. Route 66 is regularly represented at ABA's Marketplace and Team Illinois, the state's motor coach industry partner offers Route 66 tour packages.



### Provisions for Bikes and Pedestrians

Nearly all of the Historic Route 66 in Illinois Byway corridor is accessible by bicycle. The Illinois Official Bicycle Maps (*Volume I, Section 3, Exhibit E*) encourages caution through a significant portion of the corridor; however, Route 66 has a number of segments suitable for bike travel.

Bicycle groups, both domestic and international, tour the corridor each year and rely on organizations like the League of Illinois Bicyclists to offer suggested routes and itineraries for traveling Illinois 66 by bike. According to Ed Barsotti, Executive Director of the organization, Illinois Route 66 is navigable by bicycle with very few exceptions. Occasional detours are required where Route 66 and I-55 are one in the same. Despite these minor deviations, Route 66 remains one of the most frequently requested road tours the group supports.

Because of the overwhelming interest in biking Route 66, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources has initiated a statewide program to study the feasibility of a Route 66 bike trail. The project will consider the use of hundreds of miles of abandoned pavement as the primary route for the trail and will link into the trail systems of several major communities including Chicago, Bloomington/Normal, Springfield and others. As a preliminary step toward this development, IDNR has committed to produce an Illinois Route 66 Bicycle Route Map and Guide.

### Highway safety and accident record

In many cases, the road segments formerly known as US Route 66 have become local and county roads and records relating to safety and accident records are no longer maintained.

In an effort to report on Route 66-related accidents, traffic, road conditions, etc., the Illinois Department of Transportation has worked in conjunction with the Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project to identify and label thousands of individual road



segments that comprise Historic Route 66. However, this is a major undertaking and the accumulation and conversion of this data is expected to take months of effort. The ambitious project was not possible to complete within the time constraints of the byway nomination effort.

### **Compliance** with all existing Local, State and Federal laws on the control of outdoor advertising

According to Illinois statute (Illinois Outdoor Advertising Control Act of 1971), the erection of new, off-premise outdoor advertising will be prohibited along those segments of the designed byway route that are part of the Federal Aid Primary (FAP) System and the National Highway System (NHS). Essentially, any segment controlled by the Illinois Department of Transportation is subject to signboard control.

The Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project, in cooperation with its Regional Team Coordinators, accepted the challenge to achieve unanimous local government compliance with the Illinois statutes regarding outdoor advertising control. An extensive and exhaustive plan was set in to motion as follows:

- I. Education – January through March 2004
  1. A series of public meetings were conducted to highlight the benefits and the requirements of the National Scenic Byway Program
  2. Documents were prepared by the Illinois Department of Transportation signboard control staff to interpret the Illinois Outdoor Advertising Control Act
- II. Research & Development – September - October 2004
  1. A Byway corridor was selected and a detailed and precise set of maps was created.
  2. Detailed driving directions were generated
  3. A contact database that included each intersecting local government was created (municipal and county)
  4. A set of detailed maps were delivered to each of four IDOT districts responsible for the byway corridor
  5. IDOT district staff examined the proposed byway corridor and determined the commercial & industrial / business areas along the byway
- III. Local Government Contact – October / November 2004
  1. A comprehensive information packet was developed for each local government entity that included:
    - a. Cover letter explaining the signboard moratorium and the measures required by each local government for compliance, as well as an explanation of the contents of the packet.
    - b. Detailed map of the proposed byway corridor through the jurisdiction



- c. Copy of the detailed driving directions through the jurisdiction
  - d. Sample documents with guidelines for the preparation of individual letters of support and resolutions.
  - e. A report containing the information regarding IDOT's C & I determination
  - f. IDOT interpretation of the Illinois Outdoor Advertising Control Act of 1971 (upon request)
  - g. IDOT illustration of the signboard regulation (upon request)
- 2. A copy of the information packet and all related documents were supplied to the IDOT Scenic Byway Coordinator.
- IV. Compliance Document Collection / Local Government Follow-up (November – March 2005)
    - 1. Collected and reviewed compliance documents – in many cases where documents were not in compliance, provided further follow-up to assure accuracy of documentation
    - 2. Provided technical assistance for document preparation
    - 3. Testified before numerous public bodies in support of byway compliance

With a proposed 400+ mile Byway corridor and more than 85 connecting local government entities, this process proved to be a daunting task; however, the byway organization was committed to achieving the highest level of understanding possible among local elected officials and the general public.

The process not only achieved nearly unanimous approval for the Byway nomination, but it created spillover benefits by raising local awareness, increasing interest in development and preservation of Route 66 resources and promoted travel of the corridor.

### **3. Vision Statement**

The vision is to honor the significance of Route 66 in Illinois by conserving the resources that support its legacy and sharing the Illinois Route 66 experience with the world. Although the Route 66 experience is visitor-ready today, the visitor experience will be even further enhanced through the focused partnership strategies that are outlined in the goals and strategies that follow. As a result of this effort and the achievement of "All American Road" status, Route 66 will enable Illinois communities to thrive as people all over the world come to know the powerful and compelling story of the road that bespeaks the freedom and values that Americans are willing to live and die for.



This vision will be achieved through the Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project in partnership with the special people, places and organizations of the Illinois Route 66 corridor.

## 4. Goals and Strategies

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The goal statements flow from the vision statement, and provide descriptions of specific desired outcomes in five key categories:

- A. Historic Preservation/Conservation;
- B. Interpretation;
- C. Enhancement/Development;
- D. Marketing, and;
- E. Management.

The goal statements in each category are followed by a variety of specific strategies that will lead to the accomplishment of each goal. The strategies work together to help tell the Byway Story and enhance the visitor experience for both the resident and guest.

### A. Preservation/Conservation

Stewardship (preservation/conservation/maintenance) of the resources and qualities that make up the essence of the Route 66 story and experience

#### a-1 Goal Statement

Identify key Route 66 historic and cultural resources (intrinsic qualities) including the road itself, and develop strategies for preserving and conserving these resources.

#### Strategies for accomplishment

Several enforcement mechanisms are currently in place as a result of the existing National Register road segments. These will be utilized for discussions regarding protecting other segments that are not yet on the National Register.

The Route 66 Heritage Project will work with local residents and officials to establish similar enforcement and protection mechanisms at the local level.

A Toolbox for communities will be created with information regarding funding sources, technical assistance, etc.

The Route 66 Heritage Project will work with other preservation organizations and resource agencies (IDOT, IHPA, IDNR, IBOT) to identify and promote Route 66 as a key resource.



The Route 66 Heritage Project will work with IDOT to develop and implement design standards relating to any proposed modification of the roadway, including an evaluation of how the proposed changes may affect on the intrinsic qualities of the byway corridor.

The Route 66 Heritage Project will continue to develop an inventory of historically and culturally significant properties that relate to the Route 66 experience. Those may include, but are not limited to, as examples, the Castle Car Wash in Chicago, the Hoffman Tower in Lyons, the Meramec Caverns barns and the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge.

#### **a-2 Goal Statement**

Raise awareness of the significance of the Route 66 stories and icons to create a greater appreciation of and value for them.

#### **Strategies for accomplishment**

A Route 66 Community Partners Program will be created to recognize communities that have embraced the ethic of preservation and interpretation and to identify them for greater attention at the state level. Communities that take concrete actions to promote, preserve & restore Route 66 integral infrastructure could be eligible for greater state assistance. Actions could include local funding, local ordinances, etc.

The Route 66 Heritage Project will function as a central clearinghouse of information for partners to utilize in participating in the awareness-building program.

The Route 66 Heritage Project will develop and release stories about the economic impact of the Route 66 Byway. Examples exist in Countryside, Springfield and Atlanta, each a Route 66 community, where each has documented and utilized economic information related to Route 66 to gain community, county and state support for conservation and promotion efforts.

Partners will talk about the opportunities of Route 66 with opinion leaders in their communities. They will demonstrate how Route 66 benefits them.

The Route 66 Heritage Project will engage High Schools and Colleges / Universities, including Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, University of Illinois Springfield to get them involved at both the student and teacher level. An example exists in the Towanda High School Route 66 restoration project which involved students creating a series of interpretive kiosks on a one-mile segment of original Route 66, now used for a popular walking and biking trail.



Libraries in Route 66 communities will be encouraged to identify Route 66 material for easy access. The Route 66 Heritage Project will coordinate an effort to raise awareness by making a Route 66 week at libraries – the same week corridor wide.

Newspaper editors will be encouraged to write community Route 66 stories.

The Route 66 Heritage Project and its partners will strive to have Route 66 information at every major public activity and event (such as county fairs) along the Byway. A traveling exhibit will be developed for this purpose.

### **a-3 Goal Statement**

Identify and preserve the personal stories of older generations of Route 66 enthusiasts.

A key and urgent issue is the preservation of the stories of Illinois Route 66 that are being verbally shared by several individuals such as Bill Shea, Patrick Rhea, and Ernie Edwards, Phil Hawley, just to name a few.

### **Strategies for accomplishment**

The Route 66 Heritage Project will promote the collection of oral histories (and photos) from key Route 66 resource storytellers like Bill Shea, and from Route 66 travelers as well.

Corporate donations will be sought to underwrite the collection efforts.

“Share Your Route 66 Story” – a booth sponsored by the Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project will continue to be offered at major venues like the Illinois State Fair and International Route 66 Mother Road Festival to collect oral histories

Individuals in each community will be enlisted in the effort, with the assistance of community organizations.

People will be identified who can focus on specific eras of Route 66

High Schools and Colleges will be engaged to develop student projects

Repositories will be identified (UIS, State Library, Public television and radio stations)

PBS stations will be approached to help promote and visually document the projects

Tom Teague’s book – Search for 66 – will be utilized for its rich oral histories



Local Museums will be assisted with its Oral History Night and other such facilities will be encouraged to conduct similar exercises.

The Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project will develop a toolkit to assist communities in collecting oral histories

**B. Interpretation, Education and awareness – telling and sharing the story**

An interpretive framework for the Byway will be developed as well as strategies designed to improve local capacity to interpret and celebrate the unique history and culture of the corridor and the communities, recreation opportunities, and natural areas to which it provides access.

All along the Byway are rich and lively stories of the resources, the residents, their way of life, and the evolution of the road and its particular culture. These stories illuminate the special qualities of the Byway's resources. Sharing these stories through interpretation—communicating factual information in an interesting and engaging manner—enables residents and visitors to truly understand and appreciate the Byway.

Interpretation provides means for retaining the stories about the Route 66 heritage and to share them with others. Bringing local stories to life through interpretation and education is a high priority of the CMP.

**b-1 Goal Statement**

Create a compelling Interpretive Framework for articulating the nationally significant story of Route 66 and positioning the Illinois segment within it.

**Strategies for accomplishment**

Articulate the national story and the local stories and how they fit together (the region, the nation), and their relevance in the modern world.

Develop Interpretive Themes - The "big picture" perspective on the Byway—it's broadest, most universal messages. Themes include, but are not limited to, mining, prohibition era Route 66, arts & entertainment, gas stations, diners, motels, construction of the highway, trucking.

Demonstrate the interrelationships between the interpretive themes, intent, target audience, and potential audience.

Develop themes or messages to identify stories that connect people with the history of the Illinois Route 66 corridor. Development of the Battle of Virden Memorial, the Palms Grill Café in Atlanta and the Route 66 Museum in Countryside are examples of efforts underway.



Tell of the diverse though interconnected stories of the region's landscape, economy, culture, and history. (How you use oral histories)

Develop a strategy for telling those stories through the creation of interpretive signs, exhibits, maps, touring routes, and brochures.

Identify partners and their roles in conveying the stories. Develop a strategy for interpreting resources for the benefit of local citizens as well as visitors.

#### **b-2 Goal Statement**

Improve storytelling at existing Route 66 interpretive facilities

##### **Strategies for accomplishment**

Create Interpretive Standards and a community project assistance program that includes a Community toolbox that helps guide community interpretation efforts, and describes how to create a quality visitor experience, and includes a Manual that describes how to develop exhibits, etc. (See Barton-Aschman Study)

Illinois Route 66 interpretive sites should include elements of a consistent design style that, although unique to each area, ties them together as a family of storytelling venues.

Develop Partnership Interpretive Projects - Sample Project - McLean County Museum could develop a Route 66 exhibit.

Create a Route 66 Byway Festival Fund - Develop program criteria and responsibilities.

#### **b-3 Goal Statement**

Create more storytelling venues along the road and in its communities

##### **Strategies for accomplishment**

Route 66 is the story of a journey. To help the traveler discover and understand that journey, an organized series of interpretive experiences is necessary. Well-spaced, skillfully designed, and easily accessible sites are key to the success of the tourist experience.

To capture the Route 66 tourist audience, an interpretive system needs to be developed. The purpose of the system would be to create a new awareness of Route 66 in Illinois. It would benefit both the tourist and the host communities.



The interpretive system would emphasize the corridor as a historic landscape. It would highlight communities and historic sites within the corridor. A system of interrelated interpretive facilities would demonstrate that Route 66 was a continuous linear landscape, not a series of unrelated segments and communities

The interpretive system would incorporate a variety of facility types. The types would be differentiated by levels of service and development. There would be four types of interpretive facilities including Welcome Centers, Interpretive Stations, Thematic Sites, and Special Markers. Each type of facility has a different function based on the level of service offered, type and quality of the resource to be interpreted, and the level of financial interest and support.

#### *Welcome Centers.*

Welcome Centers should be located at the north and south ends of the Route 66 corridor. The Welcome Center would be the initial contact for tourists. The centers would provide an overview of the historic corridor and direct travelers to the various Route 66 interpretive opportunities.

#### *Interpretive Stations.*

Interpretive stations would focus on a specific Route 66 resource. It would interpret the resource's history and how it related to Route 66. Any high quality resource located within the Route 66 corridor would be a candidate for an interpretive station. The resource could be a primary resource (like a bridge or pavement), an associated resource (like a motel or gas station), or a complementary resource (like a grain elevator or a prairie). Then, to more effectively draw marketplace out of Chicago and get them to slow down as they go through Illinois, a new interpretive center could be developed. (An example of a potential building is the old District 6 State Police Headquarters near Pontiac - going to be abandoned.)

#### *Thematic Sites.*

A thematic site should evoke a sense of time and place. It would focus on a resource, event, or cultural theme related to Route 66. The level of development would typically be greater than that of an interpretive station. While the site location could be based on a particular resource, artifacts related to the general theme of the resource might be added or displays constructed to evoke a sense of time and place.

#### *Special Markers.*

Special markers would be used to indicate interesting resources within the Route 66 corridor that were not developed as an interpretive station or thematic site. The resources would be recognized by travelers as resources which add to the experience of Route 66. These resources could be preserved and maintained, and perhaps marked and described by a simple plaque.

#### *Interpretive Installations and Exhibits*



Interpretive exhibits make topics come to life through active visitor involvement and relevance to everyday life. Exhibits tell a story in an ordered fashion while bringing artifacts and stories to places where the people are. Opportunities exist for providing interpretive experiences along the Byway, at trailheads and picnic sites, and in town centers near the Byway. Small-scale pull-offs—whether through improvements to existing ones or development of new ones—are an important component of interpretation. Pull off's and Wayside Exhibits could be developed at strategic locations where scenic or interpretive opportunities are available and needed. Example - Turkey Tracks in Nilwood on old Route 4 alignment.

Current proposed projects include, but are not limited to:

- Castle Car Wash in North Lawndale, Chicago
- Route 66 Museum / Wishing Well in Countryside
- Eagle Hotel in Wilmington
- Amblers - Beckers Station in Dwight
- Memory Lane in Lexington
- Palms Grill Project in Atlanta
- Elkhart Station in Elkhart
- Ice House (possible other locations) in Springfield
- Battle of Virden Memorial in Virden
- Historical Museum in Girard
- Brown Shoe Building in Litchfield (other motel / signage projects)
- Interpretive Stations in Downtown Edwardsville
- Old Chain of Rocks Bridge in Madison
- Historic Neon Signs in Countryside, Pontoon Beach, Granite City, etc.

#### **b-4 Goal Statement**

Provide readily available interpretive information

#### **Strategies for accomplishment**

Develop Interpretive Tools for Improving the Visitor Experience

Maps, Guides, and Itineraries (in additional languages as well)  
A series of maps, guides, and itineraries for the Byway should be prepared. Maps, guides and itineraries should not only physically orient people to the region; they should also help orient people to stories of the region. One way to accomplish this goal is to develop maps, guides, and travel itineraries that are organized by theme, rather than only geography.

Audio Tours (C.D.) and Virtual Tours (DVD)  
High quality audio driving tours, using compact discs, are a relatively inexpensive means to make the Byway resources more accessible. The tours should be a series of stories about the region that make it come alive (along



the lines of a National Public Radio style format) rather than a description of the route. The compact discs should follow the interpretive themes through a combination of narration, sound effects, and songs. A video version could also be created during this process, and be marketed as a Virtual Tour on DVD.

Local Guides (like the Chicago greeters program – types of concierges)  
Increasingly, historical sites and museums are finding that visitors are more interested in the lives of people from the past and present, rather than individual artifacts. A program involving local guides or interpreters who tell the story of the Byway would be one way to effectively enhance the traveler experience by offering context, historical background, and local flavor. Some of the best guides would include local resident volunteers. These are the individuals who know the area best, and are familiar with the stories.

Web-enabled GIS application / GPS application  
Continue to develop the components necessary for the identification of Route 66 travel components, including primary resources, associated resources, complementary resources and visitor amenities. Continue to develop agency resource contributions to the product and use as a demonstration project for inter-agency GIS development.

#### **b-5 Goal Statement**

Influence the teaching of the Route 66 story as a significant part of teaching Illinois history

#### **Strategies for accomplishment**

Work with lead teachers to develop a Route 66 Curriculum that ties into state standards and requirements (See Tom Teague's efforts)

Create a Route 66 scholarship program to promote research and discovery about Route 66 in local communities.

Develop a program to recognize outstanding achievement in Route 66 education.

Continue working with IHPA to develop curriculum resources for educators

#### **C. Enhancement and Development to improve the visitor experience**

The following are goals and strategies for enhancing existing Intrinsic Qualities and related resources for traveler's enjoyment, safety, comfort, and improvement of the overall visitor experience. Enhancements are not intended to homogenize or change the uniqueness, authenticity and integrity of resources, but rather make them more accessible and experiential for the visitor. Inherent in this section are goals and strategies that lead to the



accommodation of commerce while maintaining a safe and efficient level of highway service, including convenient user facilities. Inherent in the goal is the minimization of intrusions to the visitor experience.

#### c-1 Goal Statement

Improve way-finding throughout the corridor

##### Strategies for accomplishment

Build upon the existing state signage plan to identify ways to improve the signage by developing a comprehensive way-finding system. Make signage and the number of signs supportive of the Visitor Experience and comply with Outdoor advertising regulations.

An effective way-finding system will provide access to the products and services of the Byway corridor. The way-finding system could be keyed to a mile marker system. A part of this system will be the proactive planning of Information Centers at key locations, provided by a partnership of public organizations and private businesses. There is much mutual benefit to be gained by forging a close relationship between the two. The way-finding system must be viewed as a regional resource, with ownership shared by tourism stakeholders.

##### Routing and the various alignments

The Way-finding System should address the "multiple route" issue. To the first time or casual traveler, the various routes may be confusing & make way-finding difficult unless dealt with properly and adequately. Develop way-finding from key byway entry points – other well-known landmarks and transportation hubs and gateway communities. Illinois Route 66 can effectively leverage existing Historic Route 66 signage to build the system. Color coding signs is highly recommended.

##### Maps

Pick graphics with a look and feel for each alignment era of Route 66 to assist with the identification of the type of visitor experience available. Plot resources by the era they represent. Develop a Map Legend with the Main Route color coded with signage and perhaps demonstrated by the other methods such as the width of line.

##### Creative Signage

On portions of the road that are not on the primary system (Listed by Jan 1, 1991) that have no regulations prohibiting new signage – the Byway could develop a "Burma Shave-type" signage system to convey certain messages – including Highway safety, which was one of the original themes for the Burma Shave type signage on Route 66. Research the historic signs and messages and replicate them as appropriate.



## c-2 Goal Statement

Enhance visitor services in the corridor

### Strategies for accomplishment

The enhancement strategy for new development is focused on improving the visitor experience and accommodating commerce while preserving intrinsic qualities. This will be accomplished through the use of design review standards, land management techniques, and economic incentives to minimize intrusions on the Visitor Experience to the extent feasible while maintaining safety and providing for convenient user facilities.

### Business Development Loan Fund

A Tourism Focused Business Development Loan and Assistance Program could encourage the most viable and needed services to be expanded and improved or newly developed.

The Experience Illinois Loan Program could be a matching source.

The Illinois Route 66 License Plate Program Fund could also be a source of funding for management as well as infrastructure improvements.

Corporate funding could be sought to provide match money for grants.

## c-3 Goal Statement

Increase recreational activity within the Route 66 corridor

### Strategies for accomplishment

Develop additional Bikeways in the Route 66 corridor

Under development. McLean County Route 66 Bikeway. This bike trail, in the Route 66 right of way, will provide a visitor experience directly along the historic highway.

Proposed. Litchfield-Mt Olive Route 66 Bike Trail. This corridor is on the National Register of Historic Places. NPS cost share – using existing concrete.

Proposed. Sangamon Valley Greenway. 38 mile trail will run parallel to Route 66 and will be near the 1926 Route 4 alignment

Develop ideas for Trail Head rest areas – picnicking, etc.

Future concept. Route 66 Bike Trail throughout the Illinois corridor which connects existing recreational trails:



1. Madison County offers a network of trails near the southern Route 66 alignments/spurs.
2. Bloomington-Normal offers the Constitution Trail
3. Springfield offers the Lost Bridge, Interurban, and Wabash Trails
4. At Will County/Joliet various trails are nearby: Old Plank Road, I&M Canal, Wauponsee, others.
5. Cook County offers the Lakefront Bike Path and others
6. Dwight - Creek Right of Way - Linked to 45 alignments - Trails - leading to Lion's field.

Encourage and support additional Route 66 related car shows, events, cruises and tours.

#### c-4 Goal Statement

Address Safety issues in the driving experience

A general narrative review of the roads safety and accident record will be developed to identify any correctable faults in Highway Design, maintenance, or operation and a discussion of design standards to any proposed modifications of the roadway (IDOT)

In order to improve the safety and enhance the pleasure of the driving experience along the Scenic Byway, recommendations will be provided to correct current roadway deficiencies, Byway signage, roadway markings, and circulation in pull-off areas.

#### D. Marketing and promotion - "Come Closer - We Have Stories to Tell"

Resident-driven tourism is about development and marketing that serves to provide opportunities to both residents and visitors. It seeks to maximize the positive contribution of visitors to help achieve sustainability and improve the regional quality of life.

The Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project will develop a program that enriches residents' understanding of their home while simultaneously increasing community pride.

Effective tourism marketing of the Byway Corridor is based on offering the right product to the best customers, tempered by what residents expect from tourism. Customer satisfaction in tourism is greatly influenced by the way in which the service is delivered and the physical appearance and personality of the byway. It is critical that these elements be communicated in the best possible manner to convince people to come and experience what the byway community has to offer.

Three types of customer have been identified for the Byway Corridor:

- The aficionado - Foamers

- The heritage traveler - History interest (biggest area)

- The casual traveler - families and general consumers

Each of the three markets has different expectations. Often, they require unique types of information, and will purchase different products and services. Each market is composed of smaller niche markets. These customers could be destination travelers, transient travelers, or residents.

In addition, the All American Road stature of Route 66 is demonstrated in the large number of international travelers already attracted. The Route 66 Heritage Project will promote, interpret and market Route 66 in order to attract more travelers and international travelers in the following ways.

#### d-1 Goal Statement

Increase awareness of Route 66 and its opportunities

#### Strategies for accomplishment

##### Strengthen the Byway's "Brand" Identity

While interpretive themes provide a structure around which to organize information, they do not provide a marketable visual identity. Strengthening the Byway's identity is a key step in improving its function as a gateway to the corridor's unique resources and locations. Day-to-day users, seasonal visitors and newcomers should be encouraged to think of the Byway as more than simply a means to get from one point to another. Visitors and residents alike should be persuaded—through careful investment and sensitive promotion—to appreciate the Byway as a local resource worthy of careful management and stewardship. Once an identity is established, Byway advocates need to look at how best to promote the identity. This requires the implementation of a branding/graphic identity program. An identity program assembles information in a unique format that signals cohesiveness, quality, consistency, and accuracy for those experiencing the Byway. The program is essentially a graphic design project. It should be bold, simple, incorporate the Byway themes, and be applicable in a variety of settings and formats. The graphics should reflect the uniqueness of the region. Professional graphic designers should be engaged to create the package including a uniform system of icons, designs, and colors.

Byway communities have an abundance of printed material and brochures relating to the region's significant resource. This surplus of materials makes it extremely difficult and confusing for the visitor to understand the complete Byway story. There is no over-arching graphic design system that strongly ties the Byway together and communicates a consistent image of the area to the traveler. A branding/graphic identity program therefore, would be used to



orient visitors to the area, help identify and link various resources within the Byway area, and accomplish this task in a comprehensive, uniform and coordinated fashion. The overall brand and identity should call up strong images as well as build expectations. A successful branding program should consist of the following elements: logo/brand development, typefaces, symbols, signage (way-finding, entryway), exhibits/interpretive panels, brochures (interpretive/programmatic), stationary, web page, and maps.

#### d-2 Goal Statement

Increasing visitors and accommodating increase visitation

#### Strategies for accomplishment

Expand upon and improve the existing Route 66 Visitor Publications and multi-lingual information.

A primary marketing vehicle of the Illinois Route 66 Byway will be the official Illinois Route 66 Web site – [www.illinoisroute66.org](http://www.illinoisroute66.org) . A significant effort will be made to drive people to the web site including:

- An aggressive linkage strategy from other Route 66 Web sites
- Icon Linkages in community web sites
- Press Releases announcing the availability of the new Web site to:
  - Illinois Route 66 communities including Chicago (and St Louis)
  - Travel magazines such as AAA, Midwest Traveler, etc.
  - Car Club and Association Newsletters
  - Post Card mailing to Car Clubs

In addition, the Illinois Route 66 Byway will develop target promotional campaigns including:

- Promotion during the International Route 66 Festival “Expo”
- Participation in State Promotions
- Call center – 1-866-DRVRT66, 1-866-378-7866
- Reprinting of State Route 66 Map
- Packages for individuals and groups
- Calendar of events
- Brochure (printed fulfillment piece)
- Illinois Route 66 Club Card Program Promotion
- Cards, passports, geo-caching, treasure hunt, scavenger hunt

Establish the “brand” (Logo – look and feel – graphic sensitivity – common elements with out homogenizing). Create “Key” to map to put it in perspective

Develop Core message that residents and visitors will remember. (local awareness – contests – get local media involved)

Develop Programs to motivate people to visit attractions, to learn more, and to see places where events actually happened.

In regard to accommodating increased visitation, the Route 66 Heritage Project will work with communities to put in place plans that recognize and prepare for the increase, and will monitor this increase through visitor and community surveys.

#### **d-3 Goal Statement**

Not only increasing visitation, but increasing visitor expenditures as measured by length of stay and dollars expended.

#### **Strategies for accomplishment**

The Route 66 Heritage Project will work with the State Tourism office as well as area Convention and Visitor Bureaus in the development itineraries and packages that will include suggested Themed Trips (prohibition, entertainment, golf), and Motorcoach Itineraries.

The Illinois Route 66 "Servin' Up 66" Program has been developed to accomplish this goal. It "packages" key Illinois Route 66 sites and businesses and provides incentives for travelers to frequent these businesses.

#### **d-4 Goal Statement**

Develop promotional partnerships and incentives to increase tourism and the quality of visitor service

#### **Strategies for accomplishment**

Establish the Route 66 Byway Corridor tourism forum  
Develop a Route 66 Awards Program

#### **d-5 Goal Statement**

Develop Multiple State Cooperation, especially with the contiguous Route 66 state of Missouri, to promote the Route 66 experience.

#### **Strategies for accomplishment**

A cooperative program will be implemented. The program will include, but is not limited to:

Sign logo design



Seek approval from each state's Bureau of Tourism to include multi-state literature in the distribution of promotional material

Establish ongoing training and information exchange between state organizations as part of a complete hospitality program

Coordinate themes and events along the route

Develop a regional marketing program

**E. Management – coordinating the initiative and making it sustainable**

Effective management is key to the sustainability of the Illinois Route 66 Byway and the initiative to conserve and tell its powerful story for the benefit of the public.

**e-1 Goal Statement**

Create the appropriate governance structure for the Byway Management entity.

**Strategies for accomplishment**

The Illinois Route 66 Byway has the distinct advantage of already being recognized and supported as an Illinois heritage tourism initiative with an established governing organization, the Route 66 Heritage Project, Inc.

The Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project, Inc. is a registered Illinois non-profit corporation with 501 c 3 status from the IRS. This organization focuses on education, community involvement, and facilitating community development through providing technical assistance and vision.

In addition to the Executive Director, Patricia Kuhn, the volunteer members of the Board of Directors provide guidance to the management and staff of Illinois Route 66. The board meets monthly to discuss policy, mission, and provide input as needed

**e-2 Goal Statement**

Achieve operational sustainability of the management entity.

**Strategies for accomplishment**

Refine and implement the business plan for Illinois Route 66. The business plan identifies sources of income, strategies and a timetable for achieving operational sustainability

### e-3 Goal Statement

Assure ongoing Public Involvement and participation in the process of implementation and management of the Byway.

#### Strategies for accomplishment

Regular public meetings – The project intends to hold regular public meetings to develop ideas, refine plans, announce activities and opportunities to participate.

Revolving Board structure – The heritage project has a revolving board structure to facilitate new participation in strategic decisions

Regional Advisory Committees – A broad, statewide advisory committee is in place, which includes six regional advisory committee chairs. Each chairperson is responsible for the establishment and activities of a regional advisory committee.

## 5. Implementation Partnership and Process

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This section of the corridor management plan provides guidelines for ongoing public participation and dividing responsibility for implementation of recommended projects among participating agencies, groups, and individuals. It includes a description of evaluation criteria and process to ensure ongoing review and measurement of achievement in accordance with agreed upon responsibilities.

- A. The Implementation Partnership – The following organizations, committees, agencies, groups, and individuals have come together to develop the Corridor Management Plan. Each entity's potential role in the implementation of the CMP is reflected in the Implementation Partnership Matrix.

Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project, Inc.  
Management Entity

Statewide Planning Committee  
Advisory Entity

Regional Planning Committees  
Coordinating Entity

Resource partners  
Illinois Historic Preservation Agency  
Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
Illinois Department of Transportation



Historical Societies  
Conservation Organizations  
Preservation Groups

**Community Development Partners**

Economic Development agencies and organizations  
Main Street Organizations  
Chambers  
Local Governments  
Regional Planning Commissions

**Product Development Partners**

Route 66 Authors, Artists, etc.

**Marketing Partners**

Convention & Visitor Bureaus / Tourism Organizations  
Chambers of Commerce

**Partnerships and Agreements**

The Byway nomination process creates an implicit partnership between each local government entity and the Byway management organization, in this case the Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project, as well as an explicit relationship with the Illinois Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. This basic relationship allows for continued development of partnerships and additional agreements for the implementation of this Corridor Management Plan.

The Implementation Partnership Matrix to follow offers a guideline for those agencies and organizations to engage during each phase of the CMP implementation. The level of commitment each partner will be able to offer at the time of implementation will vary based on the resources of the organization at that time.

In addition, a Memo of Understanding will be used to inform local governments as to any guidelines or suggestions for the treatment of historic properties, particularly those affiliated with the National Register. These documents will not be intended as binding, but will be offered in a way to encourage local awareness and promote discussion.

**Protection Techniques**

In addition, a Memo of Understanding will be used to inform local governments as to any guidelines or suggestions for the treatment of historic properties, particularly those affiliated with the National Register. These documents will not be intended as binding, but will be offered in a way to encourage local awareness and promote discussion.

**Relationship to Local Planning and Policies**

The Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project will serve as a resource to local planning efforts and facilitate the preservation and development of those resources consistent with the goals and strategies outlined in this Corridor Management Plan. The organization will continue to educate local elected officials regarding the potential economic development impact of Route 66 tourism and encourage local planning and policies which honor the relationship with Illinois Route 66 history and heritage. Such efforts have already proven successful in Elkhart with the preservation of a local service station, in Countryside with the completion of a feasibility study on the site of the Wishing Well Motel and in Springfield with the possible development of a 66 interpretive center along the 9<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor.

#### **Evaluation Process**

The Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project management entity will establish appropriate goals and objectives to measure the implementation of the CMP. An appropriate evaluation process will be created to determine the success of the effort.



Implementation Partnership Matrix												
	Heritage Project, Inc	IDOT	IHPA	IDNR	IBOT	Other state-wide Orgs	CVB's / Tourism	Econ Dev Orgs	Local Gov't	Historic Societies	Sites and Business	Other
a-1 Goal Statement Identify key Route 66 historic and cultural resources (intrinsic qualities) including the road itself, and develop strategies for preserving and conserving these resources.	X	X				X			X			
a-2 Goal Statement Raising awareness of the significance of the Route 66 stories and icons	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
a-3 Goal Statement Identifying and preserving Route 66 stories	X		X			X				X	X	
b-1 Goal Statement Creating a compelling Interpretive Framework	X		X	X	X		X			X	X	
b-2 Goal Statement Creating more storytelling venues along the road and in its communities	X		X		X		X		X	X	X	
b-3 Goal Statement Improving storytelling at existing Route 66 interpretive facilities	X		X		X		X				X	
b-4 Goal Statement Provide readily available interpretive information	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
b-5 Goal Statement Influencing the teaching of the Route 66 story as a significant part of teaching Illinois history	X		X			X	X			X		X
c-1 Goal Statement Improving way-finding throughout the corridor	X	X							X		X	
c-2 Goal Statement Enhancing visitor services in the corridor	X	X			X		X	X	X		X	

	Heritage Project, Inc	IDOT	IHPA	IDNR	IBOT	Other state-wide org's	CVB's / Tourism	Econ Dvlp Orgs	Local Gov't	Historic Societies	Sites and Business	Other
<b>c-3 Goal Statement</b> Increase recreational activity within the corridor	X			X		X	X	X	X			X
<b>c-4 Goal Statement</b> Address safety issues in the driving experience		X							X			
<b>d-1 Goal Statement</b> Increasing awareness of Route 66 and its opportunities	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<b>d-2 Goal Statement</b> Increasing visitors and accommodating increased visitation	X	X			X	X	X		X		X	
<b>d-3 Goal Statement</b> Increasing visitor expenditures	X				X		X		X		X	
<b>d-4 Goal Statement</b> Develop promotional partnerships	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
<b>d-5 Goal Statement</b> Develop Multiple State Cooperation	X	X		X		X	X				X	
<b>e-1 Goal Statement</b> Creating the appropriate governance structure for the Byway Management entity.	X			X	X		X		X		X	
<b>e-2 Goal Statement</b> Achieve operational sustainability of the management entity.	X				X		X	X	X		X	
<b>e-3 Goal Statement</b> Continue Public Involvement	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	



## 6. Potential Funding Sources

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There are numerous funding sources that have potential applicability to the implementation of the CMP projects. At the federal and state level, these funding sources typically take the form of grants and matching grant programs. At the local level, funding sources can include donations, and public/private partnerships. Several private foundations offer grants for projects related to improving byways.

### Federal Funding Sources

There are several Federal programs that offer realistic funding potentials for CMP projects. These include Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds; and the Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program.

The law creating the National Scenic Byways Program, states that grants can be made to "implement projects on highways designated as National Scenic Byways, All-American Roads, and State scenic byways." Eligible activities in the National Scenic Byway Discretionary Grant program include state programs, corridors management plans, safety improvements, byway facilities, access to recreation, resource protection, interpretive information, and marketing. A number of the projects recommended in this CMP would be eligible activities under this program. There are other FHWA programs that might also be applied to projects along a scenic byway. Each of these programs has its own eligibility and selection criteria that are established by law, by regulation, or administratively.

Although available funding is limited, the potential for funding exists with the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program, administered through the National Park Service – Long Distance Trails Program. An annual cost-share grant program provides up to \$50,000 for individual projects selected as fund recipients.

### State Funding Sources

The State of Illinois offers a number of programs with potential to fund CMP improvements. These include, but are certainly not limited to the Illinois Bureau of Tourism – Tourism Development Program, Private Sector Grant Program and Marketing Partnership Program. The Illinois Historic Preservation Agency offers a Partnership Grant Program, and the Illinois Treasurer's Office provides the Experience Illinois Loan Program – a guaranteed loan program specifically for the development of tourism related opportunities.

### Donations / Local Fundraising

Local benefactors have been the key to several ongoing projects along Illinois Route 66. The Downey Building, currently being renovated for use as the Atlanta Historical Museum and Palms Grill Café was donated by a local family. In Lexington, cash

required for the repaving of two miles of abandoned road bed for use in the local trail system was a gift from a local family. Fundraising efforts that include poker runs, events & concerts have proven to be successful fundraisers for preservation projects.

### **Public/Private Partnerships**

One of the most efficient means of implementing projects is through development of public/private sector partnerships. Development, preservation, interpretive and marketing projects along Illinois Route 66 are infinitely "sponsorable." Several opportunities have already been identified and will continue to be explored along the byway.

### **Foundations/Corporations**

Foundations fund grants for community development projects. Among those that could potentially afford assistance include: the Ford Foundation; and the General Motors Foundation. Several Fortune 500 corporations have historically supported community development activities. Among the largest and most charitable are: Citibank; General Motors; General Electric; and Ford Motor Company.

Numerous county and community foundations exist throughout the corridor, as well as several statewide organizations, like the Illinois Humanities Council and Illinois Arts Council.

### **In Kind Contributions / Volunteer Help**

Numerous Route 66 preservation groups have been instrumental in the completion of several important projects, including the Odell Station, the Pig Hip Museum, the Soulsby Station, the Meramec Caverns Barns, etc. Their ability to recruit dedicated and experienced labor has proven to be a valuable asset in the implementation of several preservation projects.

### **Route 66 License Plate Fund**

The Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project was successful in its efforts to establish law which created a special fund for the collection of fees from the sale of the Illinois route 66 permanent specialty license plate. Proceeds are distributed to the Heritage Project on an annual basis and are based on the level of registrations and renewals received for the plate throughout the fiscal year.

The intent of the fund, in addition to providing crucial administrative funding to the management organization, is to create a zero-interest revolving loan fund or cost share grant program for use by communities and organizations throughout the corridor. The level of revenue available through this source does not currently allow for distribution of funds.