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2015 FSHP Byway Annual Report Form

Scenic Highway: The Ridge Scenic Highway
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Section 1: Completed Projects

Did your byway organization complete one or more projects in 2015?

- Yes** – If more than one project was completed in 2015, make a blank copy of Section 1 starting at “Completed Project #1.” Paste this blank copy into the report below Project #1 and change the project number for each subsequent completed project.
- No**

Completed Project #1

1. Project Name: 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale

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

- Physical or built** – scenic pull-out, landscaping, wayfinding signage, interpretive panels/kiosks, visitor center, etc.
- Planning** – CMP update, interpretive, marketing, wayfinding, master plan, etc.
- Organizational Development** – fundraising plan, strategic plan or retreat, accreditation, etc.
- Program** – cell phone app, website, beach cleanup, map, Kids Ocean Day, etc.

3. Project Cost

Government Grant(s) (federal, state, or local)	\$ 0
Private (individual donations, business sponsors, foundations, special events, membership)	\$ 0
Earned Income (merchandise sales, fees for programs, etc.)	\$ 0
In-kind value	\$ 0
Total Cost	\$ 0

4. Project Dates:

- a. **Start Date** (can be prior to 2015): **11/2015**
- b. **Completion Date** (must be in 2015): **11/2015**
(The event was held on November 7, 2015)

5. Project Lead

Did the byway organization lead the project (obtained/helped obtain funding, managed project, etc.)? **Yes** or **No** (highlight a response). We used a committee to develop the event.

If **No**, please indicate the project lead and describe the role the byway organization played:



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6. Description of the project (this description should include all information needed to develop a 2-3 paragraph article about the project):

The Ridge Scenic Highway CME's 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale celebrated its eight year on November 7, 2015 beginning at 8 AM and lasting till 2 PM. The event spanned from Frostproof to Haines City, going through six historic communities. This year's event attracted thousands of enthusiastic pickers and a diverse selection of sellers and goods this year.

This year the yard sale was a joint partnership between the City of Haines City, Town of Lake Hamilton, Town of Dundee, Dundee Area Chamber of Commerce, Lake of the Hills Community, City of Lake Wales, Lake Wales Depot Museum, City of Frostproof, and the Frostproof Chamber of Commerce.

The 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale had it all: local raw honey, refurbished and repurposed wood work, antiques (from glassware to jewelry), countless collectibles, appliances, electronics, old records, clothing (from vintage to today), linens, pictures and paintings from local artists, local groups and organizations selling items and food for their annual fundraising needs. Of course, there was plenty of good food along the route to keep our pickers and sellers going, like local restaurants hosting specials during breakfast, lunch, and dinner. If you didn't visit the local restaurants there were many vendors along the way that sold grilled and fried chicken, barbecue ribs, boiled peanuts, hotdogs, homemade desserts, all of which can all be washed down with homemade lemonade!

The CME choose the 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale event to bring people to the area, promote the Scenic Highway, and bring economic opportunities along the corridor. The CME also uses this event to generate income to pay for the incorporation fees and website domain and hosting.

The project costs and revenues:

Sponsorship: \$300

Earned Income: \$1,075

Total Income: \$1,375

In-Kind Value: \$620

Organization Costs: \$111

T-Shirts: \$852

Total Costs: \$1,583

7. Lessons learned from the project: What worked well? What would you do differently? What elements were critical to success?

The coordination of the local governments and community supporters. This was the first year in many where patrons of the 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale could shop truly from Haines City to Frostproof and in between.



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The CME would form the Yard Sale Committee sooner to do a better job at incorporating local business, churches and groups into the sale along the corridor. Beginning the process sooner would allow earlier notification for sponsorship and advertising. The committee also indicated an online registration and payment process will make a smoother event in the years to come.

The success to this year was the Yard Sale Committee established, while late in the process, the group worked well together to produce one of the most successful yard sales the CME has hosted.

8. Project impact: What is known about the economic, quality of life, and/or environmental impacts of the project?

The economic impact, while hard to measure, was great. We estimate around 5,000 people attended the event. This is based on estimating the number of visitors at some locations. One person estimated approximately 75 cars went by their house within 10 minutes compared to a typical Saturday of 35 cars. The event attracts people from all over Polk County and beyond. Many of those shopping the corridor also eat at the local restaurants, get gas, stay at the hotels, and shop at the business along the corridor and local downtowns. Many local businesses indicate this event helps to sell a lot of their products and brings back people from year to year to their establishment.

We posted information about the event on Facebook. The top 5 posts from September to December were about the 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale with a total reach of 9,552 people.

9. Byway goals addressed: What planning goals are addressed by the project?

Increase Education and Publicize Corridor Story

10. Please list and describe the role of all project partners:

This year the yard sale was a joint partnership between the City of Haines City, Town of Lake Hamilton, Town of Dundee, Dundee Area Chamber of Commerce, Lake of the Hills Community, City of Lake Wales, Lake Wales Depot Museum, City of Frostproof, and the Frostproof Chamber of Commerce. Each partner sold t-shirts at the six official locations.

Monetary sponsors:

Town of Lake Hamilton
Lake of the Hills Community Club
City of Haines City

Printed Event Flyers:

Dundee Area Chamber of Commerce
City of Lake Wales
Town of Dundee
The Ridge Scenic Highway CME



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Printed Local Signs:
Lake Hamilton

Printed Local Banner:
Dundee Area Chamber of Commerce

Closed Local Street to host official location:
Frostproof

Official Location (large group of sellers for the area):
Haines City – Lake Eva Banquet Hall Parking Lot
Lake Hamilton – Area around Baseball Field
Dundee - Dundee Area Chamber of Commerce Building
Lake of the Hills – Lake of the Hills Community Clubhouse
Lake Wales – Trail Head area at City Public Works Building
Frostproof – Downtown E Wall Street

Photos of Event:
Patrons
Polk TPO

Facebook Postings:
Patrons
Polk TPO
Frostproof Chamber of Commerce

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

Section 2: Other Accomplishments and Ongoing Projects

1. Please describe any other noteworthy accomplishments from 2015 not included in the Completed Projects section. Also discuss any ongoing projects that were not completed in 2015.

The CME maintains a website and Facebook page.

<http://www.ridgescenichighway.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/TheRidgeScenicHighway>

Upon the launch of the website last year, it was just discovered the analytics was not activated. We will have more information about our website next year.

Last year the CME has used Facebook extensively. The CME used social media as an opportunity to reach the general public, organizations, and governments. This is an easy way to communicate information to the masses about the Ridge Scenic Highway and its many unique features that make it a Scenic Highway. We also use this opportunity to communicate information about our local



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governments and communities whether it is an event going on or a job opening in the city. We also like to communicate information about local businesses like their specials or sales.

Here are a few stats from Facebook:

- As of January 1, 2015 the Facebook account had 211 likes, as of December 9, 2015 we have 391 likes, a 54% increase.
- Fans of our Facebook come from all over the world: USA, Germany, Morocco and United Kingdom.
- Our top 5 cities our fans have listed they live in include: Winter Haven, Lake Wales, Lakeland, Frostproof, and Babson Park all in Florida.
- With twenty percent, women aged 45-54 are the highest percentage of the fans.
- From January 1 – December 9 we have reached an average of 116 people, while last year we averaged 6 over the same period.

Section 3: Previously Completed Projects and Byway Resources

1. Please describe the significant benefits or positive impacts from projects completed prior to 2015. Name the project and summarize any impacts or measures of success in all areas below that apply:
 - a. Economic:
 - b. Quality of life:
 - c. Environmental:
 - d. Other:
2. Please describe any damages or threats to resources (i.e., resources that contributed to the scenic highway designation) that occurred in 2015:

Section 4: Public Participation & Partnerships

1. Describe how byway stakeholders (residents, business owners, local government officials, and partners) were routinely updated about the scenic highway in 2015.

The CME Board had 4 quarterly meetings throughout the year. We post information periodically on our Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/TheRidgeScenicHighway>). We also update our webpage throughout the year with a varied of information (<http://www.ridgescenichighway.com>) including pictures, events, board meeting agendas and meeting packets.

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

None

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

This year we gained a replacement of our FDOT Scenic Highway District Coordinator. We have filled the following positions in our At-Large positions for Tourism and Agriculture. These positions have been vacant for a few years.



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4. Is there evidence that more stakeholders are involved/interested in and/or aware of the scenic highway (more people receiving newsletter, attending meetings, volunteering, etc.)?

Our Facebook likes have gone up significantly (see Section 2), while it is hard to tell if this made an impact on awareness. We like to think it has made an impact on the knowledge of the Ridge Scenic Highway. We were able to get support for a committee of people to coordinate the 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale this year. These were individuals not on our Board and are new to the Scenic Highway group.

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

The quarterly board meeting notice goes out to 44 people. We have about 13 people show up for the quarterly meetings.

6. Describe how the byway organization assisted its partners in 2015.

The CME did not join up with any organizations this year. We have shared other organizations information on Facebook. We choose to do this, because we were trying to establish a connection with them before we ask to join in their efforts or ask them to join our efforts. We are also focusing on trying to reach out to more people in an effort to gain members to our organization.

Section 5: Funding

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

▪ **Yes** – Please email as an attachment to wanda.maloney@floridascenichighways.com

▪ **No** – Please provide the following revenue information for 2015:

Government Grant(s) (federal, state, or local)	\$
Private (individual donations, business sponsors, foundations, special events, membership)	\$
Earned Income (merchandise sales, fees for programs, etc.)	\$
In-kind value	\$
Total Funding	\$

2. Please describe your outstanding funding needs in the following categories:

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

The CME has not set a priority on what to pursue at this time.

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

Not sure at this time.

- c. Potential sources of funding identified:

Not sure at this time.

3. Please list potential funding sources being pursued (if not identified above).



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4. Please describe the organization's challenges to obtaining funding.

This year we have seen an increase in participation with the CME; however, there has not been enough staff to pursue grants or projects.

5. Please describe your funding success stories from 2015. For example: a successful fundraising event or identifying a new source of funding.

We use the annual 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale to fund our reoccurring costs. See completed project number one for additional information.

Section 6: Marketing

1. Describe the marketing methods used (website, brochure, festival booths, advertisements, social media, etc.) in 2015 for the scenic highway and the effectiveness of each.

We have a Facebook account and website (see Section 2 for more details).

2. What was the total amount spent on marketing?

\$163.99 Website hosting and domain name

3. What were the sources of revenue for marketing?

39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale booth rental sales

4. Please list the social media accounts active for the byway along with the number of followers for each (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram, etc.):

Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/TheRidgeScenicHighway>)

5. Describe any local tourism trends based on available data (number of tourists increasing, new local/regional economic impact data, etc.).

Do not have this information available.

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

Not directly. We have had local business talk about people coming back to their business after they visited during the annual 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale event.

7. Please describe how the byway organization is working with local tourism agencies.

The CME is working with the local Chambers of Commerce along the corridor to include them into the Board as members or as committee members. We added Dundee Area Chamber of Commerce as a



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member for the At-Large Tourism member. We have both Dundee and Frostproof Area Chamber of Commerce to the Yard sale committee. This year we reached out to Visit Central Florida, our County's local tourism office to assist in communicating information about the 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale event. They have not only posted our event on their webpage but have shared the event with their Facebook followers.

Section 7: Byway Organization

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

We are an incorporated Florida not-for-profit corporation effective June 4, 2008.

Our CME Board is made of a member an alternate where available for the following jurisdictions: Dundee, Frostproof, Haines City, Unincorporated Babson Park, Unincorporated Lake of the Hills, Lake Wales, Highland Park, Hillcrest Heights, Lake Hamilton, Polk County Board of County Commissioners, Polk Transportation Planning Organization. We currently have vacancies in Dundee, Babson Park, Lake Wales, Highland Park, Hillcrest Heights, Polk County Board of County Commissioners and the Polk Transportation Planning Organization.

We have seven At-Large positions: Agriculture, Tourism, Cultural, Historical, Commercial/Developer, Environmental and Educational. We have members for Agriculture, Tourism, and Historical. All positions do not have a co-member to support their member.

We have a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer positions to the Board.

We also have the Polk TPO and FDOT as technical experts to the Board.

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

At our December meeting the Board updated their Corridor Management Plan for 2015.

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

Recruiting new members has been a challenge for the group. Although this year we have begun a positive swing towards attracting new members to the Board or to our Yard Sale Committee. We have not pursued any additional projects outside of the 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale, due to the low number of members.

Section 8: Final Comments

1. Please list any other significant accomplishments or activities that have not been captured in this report.

