

**Town of South Kingstown
U.S. Route 1 Scenic Roadway Application**

STEWARDSHIP PLAN OUTLINE

This outline of the Scenic Roadway Stewardship Plan for U.S. Route 1 is intended to provide a brief summary of the topics to be considered for the final Stewardship Plan. The development of a final Stewardship Plan for U.S. Route 1 would occur after successful designation of the Scenic Roadway and would include additional land-use inventories, field research, notice to abutters, public meetings, and related analysis to be conducted by the South Kingstown Planning Board with input from abutting property owners. The purpose of the Stewardship Plan will be to provide general guidance and recommendations to protect and preserve the scenic character of U.S. Route 1. It is understood that preserving the scenic qualities of U.S. Route 1 contributes to a positive sense of place in South Kingstown and is aligned with the Town's Comprehensive Community Plan.

It should be noted that a mix of residential, commercial, and agricultural land uses currently exist in direct proximity to U.S. Route 1, which adds to a positive and diverse range of activities along the roadway corridor. It would not be the intent of the Stewardship Plan to alter the existing land uses or unduly limit the rights of abutting residential or commercial property owners. Additionally, the Plan will not restrict property owners in their ability to pursue the development potential of their property based on the underlying Zoning Ordinance allowances and applicable requirements of the current Subdivision and Land Development Regulation.

Topics to be considered for the Stewardship Plan:

Address design improvements within the boundaries of the State right-of-way for U.S. Route 1.

- The Stewardship Plan should articulate recommendations for consideration by State agencies relating to proposed roadway improvement plans, including design features such as: roadway access/exit points, signage, lighting, landscaping, median and shoulder treatments, and u-turn intersections. Based on initial Planning Board review, potential examples of such recommendations may include:
 - Improve aesthetics for and limiting the number of RIDOT signs to reduce visual clutter and standardize signage design;
 - Improve design of RIDOT improvements, including design of lighting and guardrails;
 - Encourage green infrastructure over traditional stormwater management techniques;
 - Encourage the use of native landscaping materials used within the medians; and
 - Investigate the creation of a long-term vision for active transportation and scenic vista management along the corridor.
- The Plan should articulate recommendations for amendments to the Town's Comprehensive Community Plan as a means to highlight the roadway's scenic character as shared community asset, its economic and cultural significance to the Town, and defining the Town's commitment to protecting and enhancing its scenic values.
- The Plan should not recommend actions that will reduce the safety of the roadway.

Address maintenance practices within the boundaries of the State right-of-way for Route 1.

- The Plan should articulate recommendations for consideration by State agencies relating to maintenance practices within the U.S. Route 1 State right-of-way, including issues relating to general roadway maintenance and the upkeep of landscaping, medians, shoulders, and access/exit points.
- The Plan should address the need to limit disruption and disturbance stemming from construction activities that may impact visual resources.

Address potential changes to U.S. Route 1 that could impact the roadway's scenic character, including abutting residential and commercial land uses.

- The Plan should articulate recommendations for identifying and preserving existing scenic features, such as vegetative buffers, significant and mature trees, native shrubs and rare plants, stone walls, and historic and cultural resources, within abutting areas.
- The Plan should articulate recommendations for design elements of abutting areas such as signage placement, amount and design, management of curb cuts/access points, management of invasive species, and general maintenance practices.
- The Plan should provide general guidance to inform future development activities on abutting properties in order to increase design sensitivity to features that may impact the scenic character of the roadway. This may result in recommendations for amendments to the Town of South Kingstown Zoning Ordinance and/or the Town of South Kingstown Subdivision and Land Development Regulations, depending on the goals of the final Stewardship Plan. Based on initial Planning Board review, potential examples of recommended amendments may include:
 - Consider amending the Zoning Ordinance to ensure the protection of existing stone walls along the U.S. Route 1 highway line on parcels proposed for private commercial or residential development;
 - Consider amending the Zoning Ordinance to require increased setbacks (potentially determined based on a percentage of total lot depth), and curved driveways for new single-family homes.
 - Consider amending the Zoning Ordinance and the South Kingstown Subdivision and Land Development Regulations to require that new major subdivisions and land development projects preserve prominent viewsheds by increasing setbacks (similar to those already required for the Route 1 Special Management District), and limiting the number of new curb cuts; and
 - Consider amending the Zoning Ordinance to limit the installation of invasive landscape species on private property.

Address the roles and responsibilities for units of government and other stakeholders with regard to the stewardship of U.S. Route 1.

- The Plan should establish the Town of South Kingstown as the primary steward for the U.S. Route 1 Scenic Roadway. In this role the Town would work closely with the RI Scenic Roadways Board, RI Department of Transportation, other state and federal agencies, area businesses, tourism interests, private land owners and other stakeholders to identify and pursue the common goals for the roadway.
- The Plan should articulate the roles and responsibilities of local Boards/Commissions and Town Administration in the review of proposals affecting the U.S. Route 1 corridor.
- The Plan should provide general guidance to the RI Department of Transportation and the RI Scenic Roadways Board in their development and review of any roadway improvement plans related to U.S. Route 1
- The Plan should develop a program of public information and owner outreach education to provide a platform for community members to assist with roadway stewardship.