

Intelligent Development

Along The Midland Trail

Preserving Intrinsic Qualities In Concert with Economic Development

Finally, many towns along the Midland Trail Byway are realizing that our Intrinsic qualities are an asset which can be preserved and enhanced in economic development. This is a turnaround in thinking from the days that the path to wealth in WV was extracting natural resources and destroying our natural elements.

Across the byway as towns and cities plan their growth, the preservation and enhancement of Intrinsic qualities is an integral part of their planning. National experts on sustainable communities are being brought in to help in the planning process, showing towns how to use the rivers,

mountains, trees to attract “green industries” and the work force needed in the technology age. **Attracting the creative class, is the new WV buzz word!**

For example in Charleston a large grass roots task force has formed, at the urging of the City, to develop a Land Use Plan, with a specific eye to developing the section of the Midland Trail that passes through town along the Kanawha River. The idea is



In Huntington, on the Midland Trail at Third Ave. and the Ohio River, a new commercial retail development called Pullman Square (above) is underway. A large bookstore, two coffee shops and a large Cinema are drawing people to this area around Harris Riverfront Park and the coliseum. Walk and bike ways are installed, one way streets rerouted and the whole area is a cleaned up pedestrian mall that encourages people to visit the area and enjoy the riverfront and historical downtown..



(Above) The Midland Trail runs along the Kanawha Blvd in Charleston. Each summer Sunday afternoon west-bound Blvd. traffic is blocked to cars to allow for biking and skating along the Kanawha River. (Top) Over the bank a river path already runs from downtown to the Capitol along the Byway. Citizens are working on a plan to utilize an old trestle bridge to develop the riverfront with shops and eateries and expand the in-town greenspace along the Byway and riverfront.

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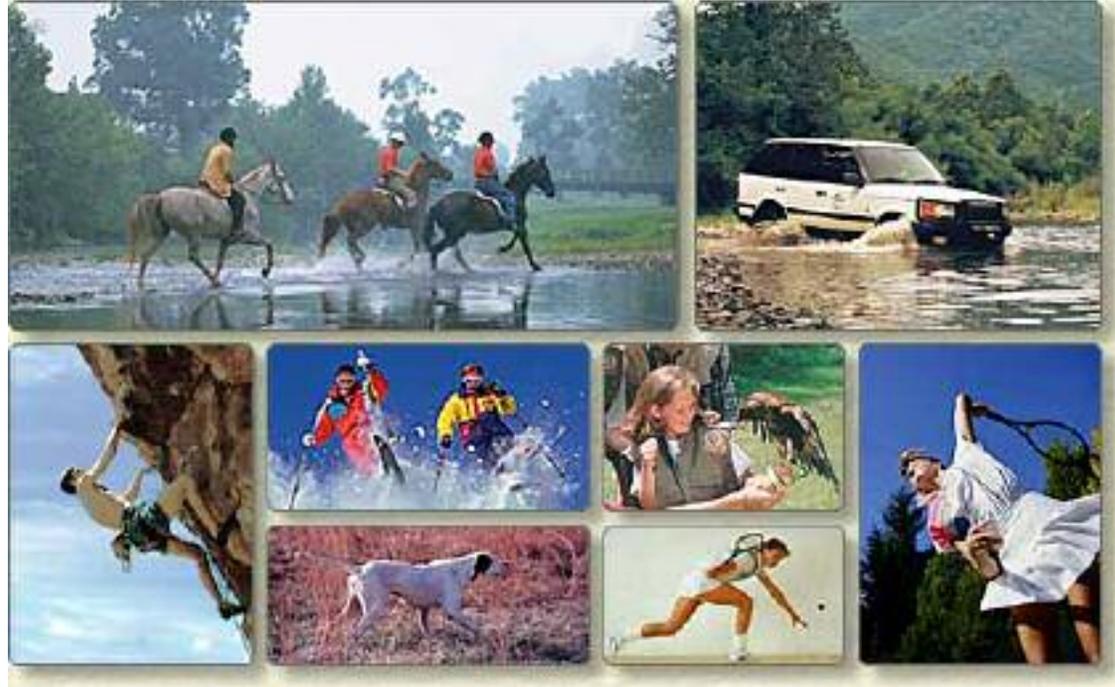
Greenbrier Hunting Club - Preserving Intrinsic Qualities In Concert with Economic Development

to make the area more user-friendly for locals and tourists. (See photos 8.1.)

In three locations on the Byway viewshed planned communities are being built with the idea of selling second homes to those who want an escape to a preserved area - White Sulphur Springs, in the New River Gorge, and at Kanawha Falls. As these plans move forward our Association will take a role in assuring preservation remains the focus.

At the eastern bookend of the Trail, the Greenbrier Resort is using the scenic, natural and cultural Intrinsic qualities as part of their formula for successful economic development.

Multi-million dollar homes are being built on the viewshed of the Byway for the famous as getaways to enjoy the natural settings on 5-acre private lots. Because the target market



Three new planned communities on the Midland Trail are using our Intrinsic Qualities to sell homesites in their land developments, primarily as second homes to the wealthy. Greenbrier Sporting Club uses this collage and the images on 8.3 in their promotion materials.

Greenbrier Hunting Club - Preserving Intrinsic Qualities In Concert with Economic Development

here includes movie stars like Nick Nolte and Tom Cruise who are being flown in on lear jets to view the property, we are confident the developers have just as great of concern as we do to preserve the natural surroundings.

A similar smaller scale project, on the drawing board for an area in New River Gorge ran into problems when they wanted to build inside the protected National Park area. Approval has been granted for the area outside the Park.



When The Snead course was built, more than 2,000 new trees were planted. They're destined to continually change the face of the course as they mature.

The 14th Hole, Howard's Creek, is named for the explorer who led the way up this tributary in 1740's.



The Greenbrier Sporting Club is an example of development done in concert with the intrinsic qualities of the Byway.

River Ridge At Kanawha Falls - Developing Vacation Homes At Our Prized Vista and Viewshed

“With a clean mountain air blowing through the trees, you can hear the gentle river lapping across the rocks. Surrounded by wildlife in a true natural habitat, you may become lost in the serenity of this beautiful new planned community.”

These are the words and images developers are using to sell homesites in River Ridge, a new planned community under construction in the mountains overlooking one of the prize views on the Midland Trail, Kanawha Falls.

The developer, an Atlanta businessman, originally purchased “all the mountains” visible from the back deck of Glen Ferris Inn (picture below), with the idea of timbering. It will be a primary mission of the MT Byway Association to work with the developer to assure this section of the viewshed of the Midland Trail overlooking Kanawha Falls is preserved for all to enjoy. Luckily this complex is situated in Fayette County,

Fayette County, to preserve its outdoor recreation mecca has established the state’s first county-wide zoning program. Their Plan is focused on preserving Intrinsic qualities like the river, mountains for the benefit of their tourism industry, designating areas for controlled growth and other for industry, and focus on “green industries.”



River Ridge at Kanawha Falls hopes to build hundreds of vacation homes on the mountains overlooking Kanawha Falls (mile 36, new mile 97).



Anomalous Intrusions

The Trail's main anomalous intrusions are unsightly industrial operations and dilapidated structures. Also extraction industry is having an adverse impact on the natural qualities and scenic views.

Of course, its not all good news. While we are making progress in terms of preservation and planning for development to co-exist with our intrinsic qualities, there are still some anomalous intrusions.

On- grade development right against the Byway brim is a particular problem in rural Eastern Kanawha County and to the west in South Charleston and

In the Upper Kanawha Valley, some industrial operations detract from views of the river and the mountains. The Association has embraced the concept of vegetative screening.

There are two large metal recycling facilities on the Byway, one approximately 10 miles east of Charleston, the other west of Charleston near the Putnam County line. At this writing the latter is under court order to clean up their area.

The other R&J Recycling (formerly Raleigh Junk) sits between the Byway and the Kanawha River, and breaks the landscape and a view of the Kanawha River with heaps of materials which rise above a fence. We have worked with them in the past and will continue to work with the new owners to secure more effective screening and to monitor potential damage to the Kanawha River and the view. One solution to this intrusion is the planting of pine trees and establishment of a roadside park with shelter and picnic tables.

On segments of the Trail, especially in Fayette and Kanawha Counties, are derelict structures which intrude on the Trail's natural beauty.

Since our 2000 CMP many of these have been addressed. For instance, at the curve overlooking the Sewell Plateau the dilapidated, abandoned Lee's Tree Tavern, a two-story cinder block structure, has been removed. Now that the demolition has been accomplished we will work toward making this an official Trail pull-off. It will be a perfect spot for a mural project installation, with an expansive vista of the Greenbrier Valley and its historical significance to Civil War tourism.



Billboards upstage beautiful mountain scenery, breaking the traveler's relationship with nature. Coal and timber trucks bigger than houses and with dusty wakes travel sections of the Trail day and night. Junk- yards, large billboards and dilapidated structures challenge and undermine visitors' satisfaction with their Trail experience. MTSHA strives to lead a variety of interests towards a unified vision of peaceful green.

Anomalous Intrusions

8.6

Anomalous Intrusions

In Greenbrier County, a quarrying operation very close to the Trail needs a vegetative screen. While pines have been planted, more and larger trees are needed to conceal this site effectively.

Extraction is still alive and well in eastern Kanawha County. But actually the coal tipples are of interest to tourists and part of our future plans include working with the coal companies to create industrial interpretation for them.

As for the other extraction businesses - gas and timber, where they exist, they are having a very adverse effect on the natural qualities on the Byway. Flooding and erosion that accompany spring rains create road hazards from falling rocks and mud slides. See photos of massive slides caused by unregulated timbering in the Charlton

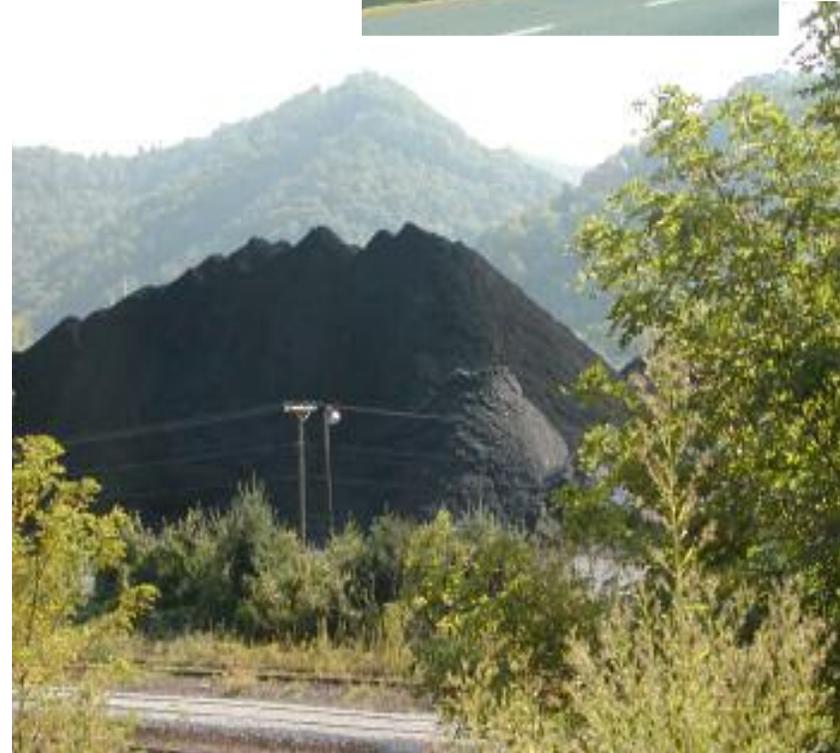
Heights area near Mile 30/91.

Heavy truck traffic, other than for the coal and timber, continues to decline as more semi-truckers move to I64 and I77.

MTSHA has a good friend in WV's newly elected Governor, Joe Manchin, who seems very committed to cleaning up the road ways, scenic views, small towns, and rural roads and streams. He has created a staff position to focus on the removal of junk cars and trash and has plans to enforce clean-



In Ceredo the tipple that loads coal on the Ohio River barges provides a good example of proper screening. Screening as a backdrop for a mix of blooming trees and evergreens provides a safety shield and lowers the impact on the scenic view.



Seeing Mountains of Coal at tipple facilities along the Byway adds to the visitor experience, if the job site is orderly and un-intrusive (above).

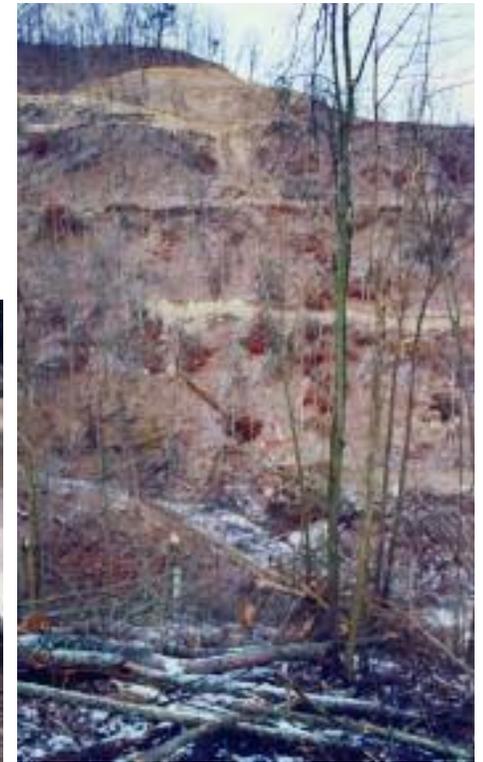
(Top): But signs of the extraction industry's practice of "Mountain Top Removal" adversely effects the natural and scenic qualities for the Visitor experience.

Anomalous Intrusions

8.6



These pictures show the devastation caused by clear cutting the Byway viewshed. Pictured right is the clear-cut mountain above Charlton Heights a village along the Byway. A July 4th rain brought this mess and millions of dollars of damage to the highway and homes.



These photos were taken by T. Paige Dalporto who became involved with MTSHA when the clear cutting started. They show Rt. 60 Midland Trail Scenic Byway after a mix of clear cutting and rain. Other nearby communities, hillsides, and waterfalls along the Byway were also demolished. In other communities make-shift access roads put in by other extraction industries like gas companies also contributed to devastation.

