



The 2012 - 2013 Business Plan

*A plan to take the WNYSSB to the next level of
success and meet its mission.*

*Our mission: To promote economic development and community pride through
the thoughtful stewardship of the natural, scenic, cultural, historic, and
recreational resources of the byway region.*

The work plan

Ten years ago as we contemplated a name for the Byway the term “Southtowns” was of great importance for identification purposes. The term Western New York is well-known but how do we distinguish the area that we want to highlight? So many people identify jewels of Western New York by looking north. Things that come immediately to mind are: the University of Buffalo, North Buffalo (Elmwood), and the Albright Knox. Thoughts of historical and cultural events may flow to the north. So the sojourn to bring wide identity to the “Southtowns” was commenced in an effort to broaden those views.

The extensive Corridor Management Plan that was required for approval of the WNYSSB noted myriad places to attract visitors. The ten signs of the Byways Interpretive Sign effort barely touch the surface of all that is worth shouting about. The Byway’s route signs give identification and understanding to the WNYSSB. The Identification Sign project shows the benefits that a byway can bring to a region. These hard won accomplishments only moved the WNYSSB to the starting line of its mission statement.

The budget and funding plan that we propose are parts of our business plan. The next step is to quantify how we plan to put the funds to work.

The WNYSSB must be viewed as a working asset of the community. When anyone wants to know what is going on in the Southtowns they will automatically seek out the WNYSSB. Communication of our mission will come through a wide distribution of brochures, and active website, and our presence in the Byway Communities. The towns, villages, places to stay, places to eat and the numerous historical and cultural places will have brochures to distribute. The brand “Southtowns” must become prominent in community discussions. We must be viewed as a dependable friend, someone to aid the Southtowns as per our mission statement. Public event contributions by the Byway as a sometime sponsor and sometime active participant are a must.

The proposed budget has allocations for brochures, website expansion, media advertising, and public involvement.

The Byways most significant challenge is a lack of public awareness. People do not know what a Byway is and what it can do for the community. Changing this is the crux of this work plan.

Government has provided the resources to get us to this point. However going forward the private sector must become active participants. The only way to get them to join us is to demonstrate benefits in doing so. We are here to promote the Southtowns in an effective and efficient manner. The dollars needed for our success are relatively small compared to the total of just a few mainstream media advertisements.

How will our success be measured? We see it as the day when towns, villages, and the private sector start to seek us out for membership and advertising. We can be well on the road to this success with the implantation of this plan.

A vision:

The Byway should be brought to a status where we can concentrate on our mission. The days of living donation to donation in order to cover the next liability must end. We want the Byway to be the community driven marketing force for the Southtowns. When someone wants to know what is going on in the Southtowns they will look to us to find out. This is our motto but by and large we tell them little. The Byway should be a partner and sponsor in community events. We need people, funds, and community involvement to make this happen.

Recently a few towns have asked how they can join us. I'll be following up with them. If we are successful towns and businesses will call us to join up, and the conversation will be two ways and not just our call out in a loud environment with few hearing and even fewer getting the message.

A budget:

1. **\$5,000 for Brochures:** (10,000) and maps for distribution.
2. **\$2,000 for a Revised and Improved Web Presence:** A new website, one that can be fairly easily updated by a couple of us with current events, abilities similar to activity on our Facebook page. Ease to install photos, blogs, a calendar. On the same line a web based "Beacon" in a format that can easily be used by non-professional members. If this requires the Byway purchasing to put in place then we should have funds to pay for it. If the services of our webmaster should receive compensation for a new website, ongoing maintenance, and prompt action on needs then funds should be available.
3. **\$1,500 for Insurance.** A cost of doing business.
4. **\$500 for Chamber memberships.** I think we should lobby hard for gifts in kind from all chambers. The gifts in kind should be free memberships and at least one or two free inclusions of our brochures in chamber mailings.

5. **\$2,000 for “Meet and Greet”.** We need to put on at least 3 to 4 public events. Small local gatherings, pizza & wing situations, etc.
6. **\$5,000 for Media advertising.** Just minimal advertising in local publications, CVB distributions, Seaway Trail brochures, etc.
7. **\$1,500 for Community support.** The byway should be an active participant in community events, and be noted as a silver sponsor or some level of identification.
8. **\$1,000 for Promotional materials.** Cups and shirts and the like. Board members should be wearing byway shirts, and we should be giving them out at events to “a lucky winner”.
9. **\$1,500 for General operating expenses.** This would cover miscellaneous expenses such as sending printed materials to each business along the Byway.

Total Budget (Costs) = **\$20,000**

A plan to raise capital

Funding sources for all not for profits have come under strong pressure, especially with the difficult economy. Pleas from many worthy causes constantly hit the desks of business owners. The challenges to meet the financial goals of this business plan are formidable, but are still achievable. Government enabled us to get to this point. Our future is tied to private sector support.

Everyone connected to the Byway would be relieved if we could limit these duties to the fall of each year. We also believe that if we are successful with this 2012 effort, that public awareness and acceptance will be at levels that advertisers will come to us, and hopefully over the years all that will be needed is to send out renewal notices.

The realization of these goals requires a buy in by all board members, and to demonstrate this point each byway board member has agreed to take on specific fund raising challenges. This organization in a very efficient fashion desires to be a major community contributor.

The dollars we seek will develop into a significant multiple returns to the community. A highly populated advertising section in our brochures, website, and all other available mediums will provide the path to meet our mission.