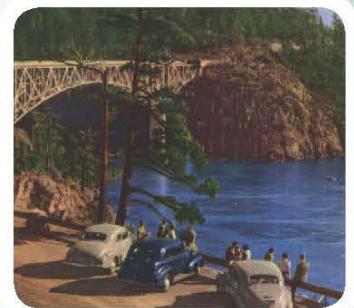


# HISTORIC ROADS HISTORIC CONTEXT

## Options for Managing Significant Historic Roads in Island County, Washington



Prepared by the SRI Foundation

For

Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Washington State Department of Transportation

Island Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization

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## 1. Introduction

Artifacts Architectural Consulting, Inc. (Artifacts), in partnership with the SRI Foundation (SRIF), developed historic roads historic contexts for two regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs). The RTPOs include the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), and the Island Sub-Regional Transportation Planning Organization (Island RTPO), which together encompasses Island, Snohomish, Pierce, King, and Kitsap counties in Washington State (Appendix A). These historic road historic contexts <sup>1</sup> were prepared under a Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Transportation Enhancement grant administered by the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). The overall objective of the historic contexts was to assist the RTPOs and DAHP in identifying historically significant state roads within the two regional planning areas. For the purpose of this project, “historically significant state roads” includes state roads that are both recommended as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places,<sup>2</sup> and can serve as focal points for promoting heritage tourism. The term “historic roads” is used generically to mean roads that date to and exhibit characteristics of earlier transportation eras in the nation’s and Washington State’s history.

The following report, prepared by the SRI Foundation, provides options and recommendations for the management of historically significant state roads in the Island RTPO planning area. Recommendations are also provided for historically significant state roads that can be used by the Island RTPO to promote local history and heritage tourism. The development of these management options and recommendations is a second component of the WSDOT/DAHP Transportation Enhancement grant project.

As a first step in developing the historic roads historic contexts, and to develop the management options for significant historic state roads, SRIF and Artifacts met with stakeholders from the Island RTPO in December 2012 to determine 1) how best to approach the identification of historically significant state roads, and 2), how these properties should be managed in the future. The Island RTPO stakeholders, as reported by the SRI Foundation,<sup>3</sup> identified the following management goals:

- Maintain the rural character of roads
- Manage/preserve character defining features of the roads
- Protect roadside viewsheds
- Calibrate management of the roads depending on their significance

These management goals guided the development of this report. The report is organized into four sections. Section two provides an overview of historic roads as engineered structures and discusses the challenges and opportunities of preserving and managing these actively used structures as historic properties. In Section three, we provide a brief summary of state roads identified and evaluated by Artifacts within the Island RTPO planning area. Next, in Section

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<sup>1</sup> Artifacts Architectural Consulting, Inc. 2013

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service 1991

<sup>3</sup> SRI Foundation 2012

four, management recommendations are presented and discussed. Section five addresses the connection between historic preservation and heritage tourism. Lastly, in Section five we summarize our findings and recommendations.

## 2. Preserving Historic Roads

Roads are dynamic engineered structures that have played, and still play, a vital role in the growth and development of our communities. Paul Daniel Marriott, in the opening of his book entitled, “Saving Historic Roads” remind us that as a nation, we have a rich history of road development.

“From early overland routes such as the Boston Post Road in New England and El Camino Reals (Spanish Royal Ways) in California, Texas, and New Mexico to the National Road, the first federally funded interstate between Maryland and West Virginia in 1806 and innovative parkways and park roads of the early twentieth century, we have been striving in ever creative ways to link our people, resources, and communities.<sup>4</sup>

As engineered structures, historic roads represent the sinews that bind communities together across the countryside and through the generations. They can have significance on the local, state, and national levels for their historical values and associations. For these reasons, historic roads can be historic properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Of necessity, however, roads change as transportation needs change over time. The principle modifications and alterations to, or abandonment of historic roads include realignment and replacement either through single, planned transportation projects or through the cumulative impacts of multiple improvements and maintenance activities over time.<sup>5</sup> The preservation challenge is how to manage historic properties that undergo constant modification while also protecting the characteristics that make them historically significant. To do so requires knowing what makes a road historically significant and thus worthy of preserving; and, considering historically important roads within the context of modern road design.<sup>6</sup>

The federal government uses a road classification system to establish national engineering and performance guidance for all state Departments of Transportation (DOTs).<sup>7</sup> Four standard classes are defined: freeways, arterials, collectors, and local roads. Each class has guidance recommendations for lane width, shoulders, turning radii, etc. Freeways are limited access highway with grade separated interchanges. Arterials are principle high volume and high speed roads within communities and also connecting communities. Collectors funnel traffic between local roads and streets and arterials. Lastly, local roads enable access from homes and businesses to collector roads and the greater transportation system.<sup>8</sup> In addition to road class, a further distinction is made for rural versus urban roads; an arterial within an urban setting will have a different set of design recommendations than a rural arterial connecting two towns.

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<sup>4</sup> Marriot, Paul Daniel, 1998: 3

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> McCahon, Mary E, Larry Sutherland, and Steven Shaup 2012

<sup>7</sup> Marriot, Paul Daniel 2010

<sup>8</sup> Marriot, Paul Daniel 1998

The federal road classification system, and the accompanying guidance, was developed by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). AASHTO, and its predecessor the American Association of State Highway Officials, is a private, nonprofit organization representing transportation departments in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.<sup>9</sup> AASHTO was formed in 1973 to provide transportation agencies with national guidance on highway safety and design based upon extensive research and rigorous testing.<sup>10</sup> In 1984, ASHTO published “*A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*,” otherwise known as the “Green Book,” which has subsequently been updated and revised. This document, representing the culmination of many decades worth of highway and road design experience, established a national baseline for road design. Many state and local transportation agencies have adopted the Green Book, in whole or in part, as prescriptive design standards even though it is presented only as guidance document. WSDOT’s own Design Manual is also based on the AASHTO Green Book, and in certain areas, has exceeded the AASHTO design recommendations (Scott Williams, personal communication).

AASHTO recognizes that local conditions will vary and that state and local transportation agencies require latitude in meeting their road design needs. As such, the Green Book allows for flexibility, offering a range of design alternatives which have been tested for safety (Marriott 2010). For example, the Green Book allows for alternative design speeds when “significant constraints,” such as historic roads are encountered. Lower design speeds may allow for the retention of historically important geometric features.<sup>11</sup> The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has adopted the Green Book as its design standard for all federal projects involving the National Highway System (NHS), including the Interstate Highway system. Yet, even within the NHS, design exceptions for historic preservation and other considerations are allowed provided these exceptions are legally justifiable and meet safety parameters.

The recommendations contained in the AASHTO Green Book apply only to new construction (built on a new alignment) and full-depth reconstruction, (rebuilding a road along the existing alignment with a complete replacement of the roadway).<sup>12</sup> For projects that do not involve major realignments or reconstruction, state or local design criteria may be followed. Projects of this kind include resurfacing, restoration, and rehabilitation (“3R”) for existing roads whose purpose is to maintain and preserve road surfaces. Typically, 3R projects are limited to resurfacing, addition of shoulders, widening of lanes, minor realignments and other safety improvements (Marriott 1998). Even projects of this limited nature, however, can have an adverse effect on historic roads by altering or removing attributes that are historically distinctive, such as lane width, shoulder treatment, curbs and gutters, etc.

Modern road design criteria are based upon the safety and performance requirements of modern automotive transportation. Historic roads, however, were built to the standards of another era leading to a common misperception that historic roads are by definition unsafe.<sup>13</sup> Historic roads

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<sup>9</sup> Marriot, Paul Daniel 2010

<sup>10</sup> McCahon, Mary E, Larry Sutherland, and Steven Shaup 2012

<sup>11</sup> Ibid: 5-8

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

<sup>13</sup> Marriot, Paul Daniel 2010

can be safe roads; however, retaining their use requires balancing safety needs with the preservation of historic character defining features. There are numerous case studies from across the country in which preserving character defining features of historic roads and road corridors was included in project design.<sup>14, 15</sup>

The authors of the National Cooperative Highway Research Program web-only publication “Design and Management of Historic Roads,”<sup>16</sup> identify 13 design criteria that control safety and operational performance of any roadway design. These are reduced to five design controls: design speed, traffic volume, functional classification of the roadway, terrain, and locale.<sup>17</sup> It is within these parameters that roads, including historic roads, must function. Preserving and maintaining historic roads as part of modern transportation systems requires working within these design criteria to achieve a balanced solution to historic preservation, road safety and performance. For example, horizontal and vertical alignments are important because of their effect on road geometry, which in turn affects the nature and location of features that define the historic character of a road. Horizontal alignment refers to curve radii and superelevation needed to create a travel lane at a particular design speed. Vertical alignment is the grade the travel lane follows and affects drainage and line of sight. Where and how a road was laid upon the land is a reflection of transportation problems faced by communities in the past and the solutions that were available to them at the time. As such, road alignment can be important to determining if a historic road retains sufficient integrity of location, materials, workmanship, and setting, to be eligible for listing in the National Register.

McCahon et al (2012)<sup>18</sup> offer design alternatives to preserve historic character defining features related to alignment. They suggest, for instance, that when curve radii and road cross sectional geometry are historically important transportation agencies should avoid full-depth reconstruction of the curve to meet design speed and instead increase superelevation to preserve the tighter curve in the original alignment. The safety of a tighter curve may be enhanced with warning and advisory signs or pavement markings in advance of the curve. Such safety warnings might also be viable as an alternative to construction thus preserving the original historic alignment and reducing project costs.<sup>19</sup> Grade is a product of the terrain and road classification and is needed for proper drainage. Where grade improvements are needed for drainage, modifications to any original features such as curbs, gutters, and culverts should be minimized, if these are historically important. Alternatively, transportation agencies should replace or repair these elements in ways that are visually compatible with the original elements.<sup>20</sup>

Preserving historic roads is more than a technical exercise in road design, however. The Green Book allows for design flexibility, and guidance, such as the aforementioned NCHRP web-only report (2012), is available on how to accommodate preservation. The answer to the question

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<sup>14</sup> Marriot, Paul Daniel 1998

<sup>15</sup> KSK Architects and Planners Historians Inc. 2012

<sup>16</sup> McCahon, Mary E, Larry Sutherland, and Steven Shaup 2012

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> Ibid:5-10

<sup>20</sup> McCahon, Mary E, Larry Sutherland, and Steven Shaup 2012

“why preserve” should come from the transportation agency in consultation with the affected communities. Over the past 10 years, the FHWA has adopted a policy referred to as “Context Sensitive Solutions” (CSS) that encourages transportation planners to work with local stakeholders to ensure that federally funded transportation projects consider community priorities, including preservation of natural and cultural resources. The policy is designed to achieve better project outcomes by balancing transportation needs with other community values. WSDOT’s Design Manual defines CSS as follows:

A collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. CSS is an approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist.<sup>21</sup>

The key to successful CSS is early public outreach during planning, so that community priorities can be identified and considered in project design. Often, these concerns are linked to more deeply held convictions about sense of place and community identity.<sup>22</sup> Identifying and managing historic roads as a community priority requires working with stakeholders to determine which character defining features of the road or its setting should be retained as part of project design.<sup>23,24</sup> The details on character defining features will affect the nature and scale of preservation. For example, if the physical aspects of the road itself (e.g., lane width, road prism, shoulders) are historically important then the focus of preservation should be on avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating for effects to these features. Alternatively, if the corridor beyond the roadway is what makes a road historically important to the community, then management should focus instead on the road setting and less on the material aspects of the road itself.<sup>25</sup>

In sum, under federal, state, and local transportation design guidance and policies, preserving historic roads is possible, even encouraged in the context of CSS. Identifying and evaluating historic roads as historic properties (i.e. eligible for listing in the National Register), however, is complicated by differences in scale between the size of the road and the scope of most transportation projects. Road projects are typically limited to a small portion of the road as a whole. Roads can be hundreds of miles long, whereas the project itself may only affect a fraction of its length. In the absence of a “big picture” view of the road or road system in its entirety, it is very difficult to evaluate National Register eligibility. Without knowing what makes a historic road a historic property it is equally difficult to know how the road project will affect those qualities that make it historically significant. In many instances transportation agencies assume (guess) the road is a National Register eligible property, and then do their best to determine if their project will affect and diminish the road’s integrity. This problem is not limited to roads but also applies to other kinds of linear features such as canals and irrigation systems, railroads, pipelines, etc., all of which suffer from this incongruity in scale between the scope of the typical project and the size and length of the resource that may be affected by the project.

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<sup>21</sup> Washington State Department of Transportation 2012: 130-2

<sup>22</sup> KSK Architects and Planners Historians Inc. 2012

<sup>23</sup> Marriot, Paul Daniel 1998

<sup>24</sup> McCahon, Mary E, Larry Sutherland, and Steven Shaup 2012

<sup>25</sup> Ibid

The Island RTPO historic roads historic context is designed to overcome the limits of transportation project- funded identification and evaluation efforts, and takes a broader view of roads as engineered structures at a scale that is appropriate to their size and nature. The Island RTPO historic context, summarized in the next section, gives WSDOT, DAHP and the RTPOs the information they need to make informed decisions regarding the management of historically significant state roads.

### **3. Summary of Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization Historic Roads Historic Context Findings**

Artifacts prepared the Island RTPO historic roads historic context, providing recommendations on which state and former state roads may be National Register eligible. The historic context also provides a framework and recommendations for conducting additional research on roads that may be potentially eligible. These National Register recommendations are based on 1) a set of important historic themes and time periods associated with the state's transportation and development history, 2) the character defining features a road should have in order to be associated with these themes and time period, and 3) the level of physical integrity the roads must have in order to convey these important themes and time periods (that is, the integrity of relevant character defining features associated with a road). The evaluation of integrity was made through the development and application of a GIS-based integrity screening tool, which provided an integrity ranking (low to very high). This screening tool evaluated the integrity of a road (e.g., the road prism, shoulders, alignment, road structures such as culverts and retaining walls, etc.), the immediate setting of the road (i.e., the road corridor), and the road's associated viewshed, and then combined the integrity scores of these three elements into one overall integrity score for the road. Table 1 summarizes the results of Artifacts' integrity analysis of state roads and former state roads in the Island RTPO (for additional information on the integrity analysis and descriptions of the road see Artifacts Architectural Consulting Inc. 2013). It should be noted that National Register recommendations provided in this report do not reflect the opinion of, or imply any concurrence with, either the Washington State Department of Transportation or the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

Island County is composed of two islands north and east of the Seattle metro area: Whidbey Island and Camano Island. The former contains two state roads, State Route (SR) 20 and SR 525, which run up the island's spine. SR 525 extends from the town of Clinton in the south to intersect with SR 20 outside of Coupeville. SR 20 passes through the towns of Coupeville and Oak Harbor to lead travelers north and off island over the bridge at Deception Pass. In the central part of Whidbey Island surrounding the town of Coupeville is the Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve (Ebey's Landing Reserve), a 17,000 acre agricultural conservation area established in 1978.<sup>26</sup> Since there are only two state roads in Island County, the analysis was expanded to include former state roads within Ebey's Landing Reserve that are now managed by Island County.

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<sup>26</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service 2006

Table 1: States Roads and Former State Roads by Integrity Rank for Island RTPO

Route No.	Character Defining Features	Integrity Rank	Comments on Integrity Rank
SR 525	2 lanes, rural, mostly forested, ditches, views of mountain ranges and Puget Sound, historic farmsteads, development set back from corridor.	Low to moderately low	Moderately high in vicinity of Freeland.
SR 20	2 lanes, rural, mostly forested, narrow to no shoulders in some places, ditches views of mountain ranges and Puget Sound, historic farmsteads, development set back from corridor, historic residential (including houses, auto courts [motels], commercial and agricultural properties, rustic, stone and log guardrails) at Deception Pass State Park and Bridge.	Low to moderately low	High integrity from Mile Post 17 to 27 passing through Ebey's Landing Reserve, and within Deception Pass State Park.
Fort Casey Road Engle Road Wanamaker Road Keystone Road Patmore Road Parker Road* Front Street* Main Street* Ebey Road Terry Road* Sherman Road Cemetery Road Cook Road Madrona Way* Libby Road Zylstra Road Perm Cove Road Monroe's Landing Road Scenic Heights Road Van Dam Road West Beach Road	2 lanes, rural, narrow road widths, narrow to no shoulders, ditches, fences along roadway. (Note: roads marked with an asterisk exhibit partially intact character defining features).	High to very high	All roads are managed by Island county or the Town of Coupeville within Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve. Part of historic circulation pattern.

SR 525 is ranked with low to moderately low integrity and is not recommended as meeting the criteria for National Register listing. SR 525, however, still retains qualities that are conducive to the use of this road as a heritage tourism corridor. These qualities relate to the road's rural nature and viewshed opportunities. Artifacts has also ranked SR 20 as having a low to moderately low integrity due to extensive realignment over the years affecting most of the roadway.<sup>27</sup> Even so,

<sup>27</sup> Artifacts Architectural Consulting, Inc. 2013

the segment between Mile posts 17 and 27 passing through Ebey's Landing Reserve still retains high integrity at the road and corridor levels. A short segment of SR 20 within Deception Pass State Park at the north end of the Island also exhibits high integrity. These two segments of SR 20, like SR 525, retain high value for heritage tourism.

The county roads in Ebey's Landing Reserve date to 1899; seven of the roads predate 1870. All are on their original alignments with minor changes to lane width and shoulder treatment. Thematically, the roads are associated with the “Territorial” (1848-1888) and “Early Statehood” (1889-1910) periods of the state’s history. These roads are recognized as contributing elements to the Central Whidbey Island National Historic District.<sup>28</sup>

## 4. Management Recommendations

Managing and preserving historic roads as historic properties can be guided by the Secretary of the Interior’s (SOI) Standards for Rehabilitation<sup>29</sup> (See Appendix B). While intended for architectural resources, the rehabilitation standards are general enough to be applicable to roads and other structures, including those in Island County. Under the SOI standards (Standards), rehabilitation is defined as “the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural and cultural values.”<sup>30</sup> The Standards are not intended to be prescriptive, and not every recommendation is applicable to all property types. They implicitly acknowledged that preservation cannot be achieved at all times under every circumstance but that efforts should be made to follow the standards where possible. As such, the Standards allow for a sliding scale of preservation options from strongest to weakest to achieve historic preservation goals. Preservation of the original materials in their original configuration is preferred. Where this is not possible, then replacement in-kind is recommended. When replacement in-kind cannot be achieved, then modern materials may be used that are sympathetic to the original materials and design. When this latter option is not possible, then recording and other mitigation strategies may be required. The SOI Standards for Rehabilitation provide a reasonable basis for considering the preservation of historic roads as historic properties in Island County.

As stated in Section one above, Island RTPO stakeholders identified four management priorities for historically significant state roads. These can be grouped into two over-arching goals.

1. Manage/preserve character defining features of the roads and calibrate their management depending on their significance
2. Maintain the rural character of roads and protect roadside viewsheds

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<sup>28</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service 1973, amended 1980

<sup>29</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service 1995: 62

<sup>30</sup> Ibid: 60

The first goal addresses the management of historically significant state roads and related character defining features, whereas, the second goal relates to larger issues of land use that are applicable to roads as travel corridors. Each is addressed below.

*Goal 1) Manage/preserve character defining features of the roads and calibrate their management depending on their significance*

As stated in Section 3, Artifacts has determined that while SR 20 and SR 525 do not exhibit sufficient integrity to make them National Register eligible, the county roads within Ebey's Landing Reserve are historically significant. Discussion of goal one will, therefore, focus on the historically significant roads within the Ebey's Landing Reserve.

Ebey's Landing Reserve was created by Congress as a unit of the National Park Service (NPS) in 1979 to

“Preserve and protect the cultural landscape and to commemorate the history of a rural community, which provides a continuous record of exploration and American settlement in Puget Sound from the nineteenth century to the present.”<sup>31</sup>

Comprising approximately 17,000 acres, the Reserve is defined by the boundaries of the Central Whidbey Island Historic District, which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1973. In 1980 the NPS drafted a comprehensive plan in which 91 historic buildings were identified as part of a general protection plan for lands, viewsheds and shorelines within the Reserve.<sup>32</sup> The plan also recommended the formation of a governing Trust Board to be composed of representatives of the NPS, the Town of Coupeville, Island County, and Washington State Parks. Ebey's Landing Reserve is jointly administered by the Trust Board and all private development within the Reserve is reviewed by an historic advisory committee. The NPS prepared a general management plan in 2006 in response to development pressures affecting the ability of the Trust Board to preserve the Reserve's rural setting in accordance with the congressional mandate. The general management plan notes that the current road system within Ebey's Landing Reserve is based on historic routes and circulation patterns in which early roads followed property lines and natural landforms. The management plan notes that “Roads are structures and many of the primary and secondary roads in the Reserve are historic.”<sup>33</sup>

The roads within Ebey's Landing Reserve are administered by Town of Coupeville, as well as the NPS; however, most of the roads within the Reserve, and all those analyzed in the Island RTPO historic context, fall under the jurisdiction of Island County. Artifacts has determined that the county roads have high to very high integrity for their association with early road development during the Territorial (1848-1888) and Early Statehood (1889-1910) periods<sup>34</sup> (See Table 1). Character defining features include narrow, two lane roads, with little to no shoulders in their original vertical and horizontal alignment.

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<sup>31</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service 2006:1

<sup>32</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service 1980

<sup>33</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service 2006: 37

<sup>34</sup> Artifacts Architectural Consulting, Inc. 2013

To ensure that the historic character of the roads is maintained, we recommend that Island County, in consultation with its partners on the Trust Board, consider amending the transportation element of the county's Comprehensive Plan to make maintaining the historic nature and appearance of the historic roads within Ebey's Landing Reserve a planning priority. Ensuring the safety of the travelling public must be paramount, however, where possible, Island County should integrate the preservation of these historic roads into its management procedures. To achieve this priority, it is further recommended that the County develop design guidelines to preserve the roads, when possible, in a manner that is consistent with the SOI's Standards for Rehabilitation (See Appendix B).

In developing design guidelines for historic roads in the New Jersey, KSK Architects and Planners Historians, Inc. explain that design guidelines are "...intended to give roadway project designers a framework for thinking about projects and selecting design solutions that are appropriate to historic roadways and their surroundings."<sup>35</sup> Design guidelines for historic roads are planning tools that identify character defining features and then provide options for integrating their preservation into road projects. Preservation options are presented by feature category such as road surface, shoulders, traffic control devices, sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, signage, etc.<sup>36</sup> Design guidelines for managing the National Register eligible historic roads within Ebey's Landing Reserve will enable Island County to assess the potential impacts of proposed road projects early enough in the planning process, to determine if design modifications can be made to safely accommodate road preservation. The design guidelines should identify those features that are historically important. Features most relevant to the periods of historical significance for the roads in Ebey's Landing Reserve include:

- Horizontal and vertical alignment
- Lane number and width
- Shoulder treatment
- Drainage
- Fences

Design guidelines for the Reserve's historically significant roads should also include recommendations for minimizing intrusions that may degrade the viewshed from the roads, such as signage and new vegetation. Given the high historic integrity of the county roads, preservation of original materials and design in their original configuration is recommended in a manner consistent with the SOI Standards for Rehabilitation (See Appendix B). Where this is not achievable, then replacement in-kind is recommended.

Certain actions may be exempted from management considerations if these actions will not affect the historic character of the roads, and these too can be identified. Exempted actions may include repaving or restriping the existing road surfaces, replacing in-kind guard rails and other safety features, mowing the road rights-of-way, etc. When, for safety reasons, it is not possible to preserve the nature and appearance of the roads, we recommend that Island County, in consultation with the Trust Board, consider alternatives that are sympathetic to the original

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<sup>35</sup> KSK Architects and Planners Historians, Inc. 2004:4

<sup>36</sup> Ibid

historic fabric of the roads. Mitigation may be needed nonetheless, when minimizing impacts is not achievable. Mitigation may take any form that meets the purpose of Ebey's Landing Reserve, ranging from simple before and after recording of historic character defining features to public interpretation.

Under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21), funding for historic preservation is available through the Transportation Alternatives Program. Eligible applicants for these funds include local governments, such as Island County, as well as the Skagit-Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization. Funding to prepare design guidelines for the purposes of preserving the county roads within Ebey's Landing Reserve may be available through this program (Mary Ann Naber, personal communication 2013). The TAP program in Washington State is administered by WSDOT (For more information on this program see <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidetap.cfm>).

WSDOT's "Six Year Transportation Improvement Program from 2013 to 2018" shows that Island County has multiple projects scheduled for construction in the near future. These include pavement repair and rehabilitation, sidewalk construction and replacement, transit pull outs, right turn lane construction, intersection improvements, signalization, new road construction, and a variety of pedestrian and bike trail projects. Three projects will affect portions of the historically significant roads within the Ebey's Landing Reserve: Parker Road, Madrona Way and Libby Road. Three other projects will involve SR 20, one of which consists of a transit park and left turn on SR 20 at Parker and Morris Roads. While none of these project alone would directly affect the historic integrity of Ebey's Landing Reserve, together, they could impact the setting along the SR 20 alignment as it passes through the Reserve. The combined impact of road projects along SR 20 is noted in the Ebey's Landing Reserve General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement.<sup>37</sup> "WSDOT improvements along SR 20 – a State Scenic Highway and the main highway through the Reserve – are incrementally changing the historic road patterns and increasing speeds in favor of the commuter at the expense of the Park Visitor."<sup>38</sup> Developing design guidelines for the county roads within Ebey's Landing Reserve, as recommended, will allow WSDOT and Island County, in consultation with all the affected local, state, and regional partners, to preserve the historic and scenic character of these roads and the cultural and natural landscape through which they pass.

### *Goal 2) Maintain the rural character of roads and protect roadside viewsheds*

Preserving the rural nature of the landscape and protecting view sheds are Ebey's Landing Reserve priorities, but these are also consistent with planning goals identified for Whidbey's main state routes: SR 20 and SR 525. In 2004, Island County prepared the "Whidbey Scenic Isle Way Corridor Management Plan" to establish priorities for future growth and to guide development in the context of these priorities.<sup>39</sup> The corridor management plan was prepared to meet the requirements of the Washington Scenic Byway and the FHWA Scenic Byway programs, and covers the road corridor from the Town of Clinton to Deception Pass.

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<sup>37</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service 2006

<sup>38</sup> Ibid:i

<sup>39</sup> Island County Washington 2004

The corridor is characterized by two lane roads passing through forested landscapes and open prairie countryside that in places provide stunning views of Puget Sound as well as, the Olympic and Cascade Mountains.<sup>40</sup> In recognition of its scenic values, in 1967 the State of Washington listed the corridor in the state's Scenic Byway program; later, in 1978, it was added to the Cascade Loop, a larger scenic road system.<sup>41</sup> The corridor management plan was developed to expand upon the known scenic qualities of the corridor to preserve the rural character and way of life for Island County communities.<sup>42</sup>

The National Scenic Byways Program, eliminated by Congress in 2012, required applicants to focus corridor planning on six intrinsic qualities or “distinctive features that create an overall sense of the corridor’s character, history or culture”.<sup>43</sup> These include: natural, recreational, scenic, historic, cultural, and archaeological. The corridor management plan is organized around these six qualities, all of which are identified on Whidbey Island and are relevant to the SR 20/SR 525 corridor. While advisory only, the corridor management plan includes recommendations for achieving identified planning goals, including proposals to preserve the viewshed from the road and the rural nature of the road corridor itself.

Transportation recommendations of the corridor management plan include:<sup>44</sup>

- Maintain the scenic character of roadway through cooperative design.
- Evaluate alternatives for lane widening, embankment/side slope design, horizontal and vertical curvature and other highway elements with the intent of preserving visual and scenic character of the byway.
- Bring appropriate native vegetation to the roadway edge.

Additional recommendations of the corridor management plan are relevant to the scenic qualities of the corridor and include:<sup>45</sup>

- Prepare design and development guidelines for construction along the corridor.
- Purchase scenic easements for the purpose of protection land adjacent to the corridor.

The corridor management plan further recommends that to achieve these recommendations, the state and local governments with jurisdiction along the corridor work together, where appropriate. These state and local governments include Island County, the incorporated jurisdictions of Coupeville, Langley, and Oak Harbor, WSDOT, and Ebey's Landing Reserve, where the corridor passes through the Reserve. All of these recommendations, if fully

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<sup>40</sup> Artifacts Architectural Consulting, Inc. 2013

<sup>41</sup> Island County Washington 2004

<sup>42</sup> Ibid

<sup>43</sup> Ibid: 27

<sup>44</sup> Ibid: 46

<sup>45</sup> Ibid: 78

implemented, would also meet the second planning goal for significant historic roads identified by Island County RTPO stakeholders.

To these ideas, we would recommend that Island County explore the transfer of development rights (TDR) as a possible addition to the acquisition of scenic easements. TDR programs involve local jurisdictions working with willing private land owners to achieve local land conservation goals. The land owners can donate or sell the development potential of their land while retaining ownership. These rights can be purchased by developers who wish to build in areas with lower conservation values in exchange for development incentives (Washington State Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development, 2009). The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) is a participant in the Regional Transfer of Development Rights Alliance involving King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap Counties. This TDR program can serve as a model for the Island RTPO (See <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/Services/localgovernment/GrowthManagement/Regional-TDR-Rights-Program/Pages/default.aspx>).

Developing a scenic easement master plan, to identify needs and opportunities for preservation, was included as an action item in the Whidbey Isle Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan.<sup>46</sup> Such a master plan could identify where the scenic values are highest and those lands owners who might be willing to participate in either an easement program or who might be willing to sell their development rights for scenic protection. The viewshed analysis conducted by Artifacts, using the above discussed integrity screening tool, could assist the County in developing an easement master plan. Short of these voluntary measures, Island County could also consider restructuring its zoning and land use ordinances to increase lot sizes, lower density thresholds for development, or modify setback requirements on lands identified as having high values for scenic views from the SR 20/SR 525 corridor.

## 5. Heritage Tourism

The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines heritage tourism as “traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past.”<sup>47</sup> Heritage tourism is a driving force for the economy in Island County, particularly Whidbey Island, and has been for many years. Visitors from the Seattle metro area are attracted to Whidbey Island’s rural character, open spaces, shorelines, and scenic vistas. Public interpretation is called out as a planning objective in the Whidbey Scenic Isle Way Corridor Management Plan.<sup>48</sup> In defining this objective, the corridor management plan explicitly recognizes the link between history and economic development through tourism. As discussed above, we have recommended that the history of SR 20, SR 525, and the county roads within Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve be formally recognized. The story of Whidbey Island is, among other things, a tale about how people used the land and transportation by both sea and land played a vital role in the Island’s settlement over time. As such, we further

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.preservationnation.org/information-center/economics-of-revitalization/heritage-tourism/?gclid=CN3uioil-LgCFSDp7AodtD0A8g>. Accessed 8/12/2013.

<sup>48</sup> Island County Washington 2004

recommend that the roads and their stories be included in any interpretive master planning that Island County, and its partners, undertake.

Artifacts, in their historic road historic contexts (2013),<sup>49</sup> has identified five heritage tour routes along roads that combine history and scenery. Not all roads or road segments are recommended as National Register eligible; however, each exhibits sufficient integrity to make them worthy of recognition for their heritage tourism value. The SR 20/525 corridor on Whidbey Island is one of these routes. Text and digital imagery on the history of the SR 20/525 corridor was developed by Artifacts as part of the Island RTPO Historic Roads Historic Context project. This content has been submitted to DAHP, WSDOT and the Island County RTPO, and can be used as a foundation for future educational and interpretive programming, in addition to the promotion of heritage tourism in Island County.

Lastly, we recommend that the Island RTPO, working with its local, state, and federal planning partners, make these educational and public outreach materials available for use in heritage tourism. Issues of where the electronic text and imagery resides, in what format, how it will be used and who maintains it can be addressed through information sharing agreements or other similar vehicles. WSDOT and DAHP may also post content on their respective websites or other appropriate public outlets already in use.

## 6. Summary and Conclusions

The Island RTPO historic roads historic context was prepared to assist the RTPO and DAHP to identify and evaluate historically significant state roads in the RTPO planning area. Historic roads are engineered structures that may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as historic properties, for their association with themes, time periods, and locations that made a significant contribution to American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture.<sup>50</sup>

Historic roads, however, are transportation facilities, and must be maintained, repaired, and upgraded to meet current and future needs in a safe and effective manner. That said, it is possible to both preserve the qualities that make a road historically significant and meet transportation needs. Flexibility in federal, state and local transportation agency design guidance makes it possible to find the necessary balance and accommodation to preserve historic roads as historic properties and to ensure their continued use as transportation facilities.

Island County has developed the Whidbey Isle Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan for the SR 20/SR 525 road corridor in accordance with state and federal scenic byway program requirements. This plan has identified scenic and historic intrinsic values, among others, to be worthy of preservation. The findings of the Island RTPO historic roads historic context compliment the planning priorities of this corridor management plan. Based on the Island RTPO historic roads historic context, we offer the following management recommendations:

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<sup>49</sup> Artifacts Architectural Consulting 2013

<sup>50</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service 1991

1. Twenty former state roads, now managed by Island County, within the Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve have high historic integrity.<sup>51</sup> These roads are historically significant as contributing elements to the Central Whidbey Island Historic District; they also play an important role in defining the scenic and historic landscapes within Ebey's Landing Reserve. SR 20 and SR 525 were identified as having low to moderately low integrity and are not recommended as eligible to the National Register; however, these roads have other natural and scenic qualities that make them attractive as a heritage tourism corridor.
2. Island County, with jurisdiction over the county roads within Ebey's Landing Reserve, should consider amending the county's transportation element of the comprehensive plan to recognize the historic nature of the county roads within the Reserve, and to make their preservation a planning priority.
3. It is further recommended, that the county, in coordination with the Ebey's Landing Reserve Trust Board, develop road design guidelines, in which the historic character defining features associated with the roads are identified and specific recommendations for their preservation and maintenance are presented. Funding to prepare the design guidelines may be eligible under the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) (MaryAnn Naber, personal communication 2013). WSDOT administers the TAP program for the State of Washington.
4. The Whidbey Isle Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan recommends developing a scenic easement master plan to protect scenic views from the SR 20/SR 525 corridor. To this end, we recommend Island County explore a transfer of development rights (TDR) program similar to the Regional Transfer of Development Rights Alliance involving King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap Counties. Data on visual integrity developed by Artifacts for this study could be used to assist in identifying suitable lands for a TDR program.
5. We recommend that Island County and its local government planning partners include the histories of SR 20, SR 525 and the county roads within Ebey's Landing Reserve in any interpretive master planning that it engages pursuant to goals identified in the Whidbey Isle Scenic Byway Corridor Master Plan.
6. Lastly, we recommend that Island RTPO, in cooperation with its local, state, and federal planning partners, make available to the public the SR 20/SR 525 corridor heritage tour guides and related materials prepared by Artifacts for this study. These educational and public outreach materials can be used as the basis for future educational and interpretative programming and to promote heritage tourism in Island County.

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<sup>51</sup> Artifacts Architectural Consulting 2013

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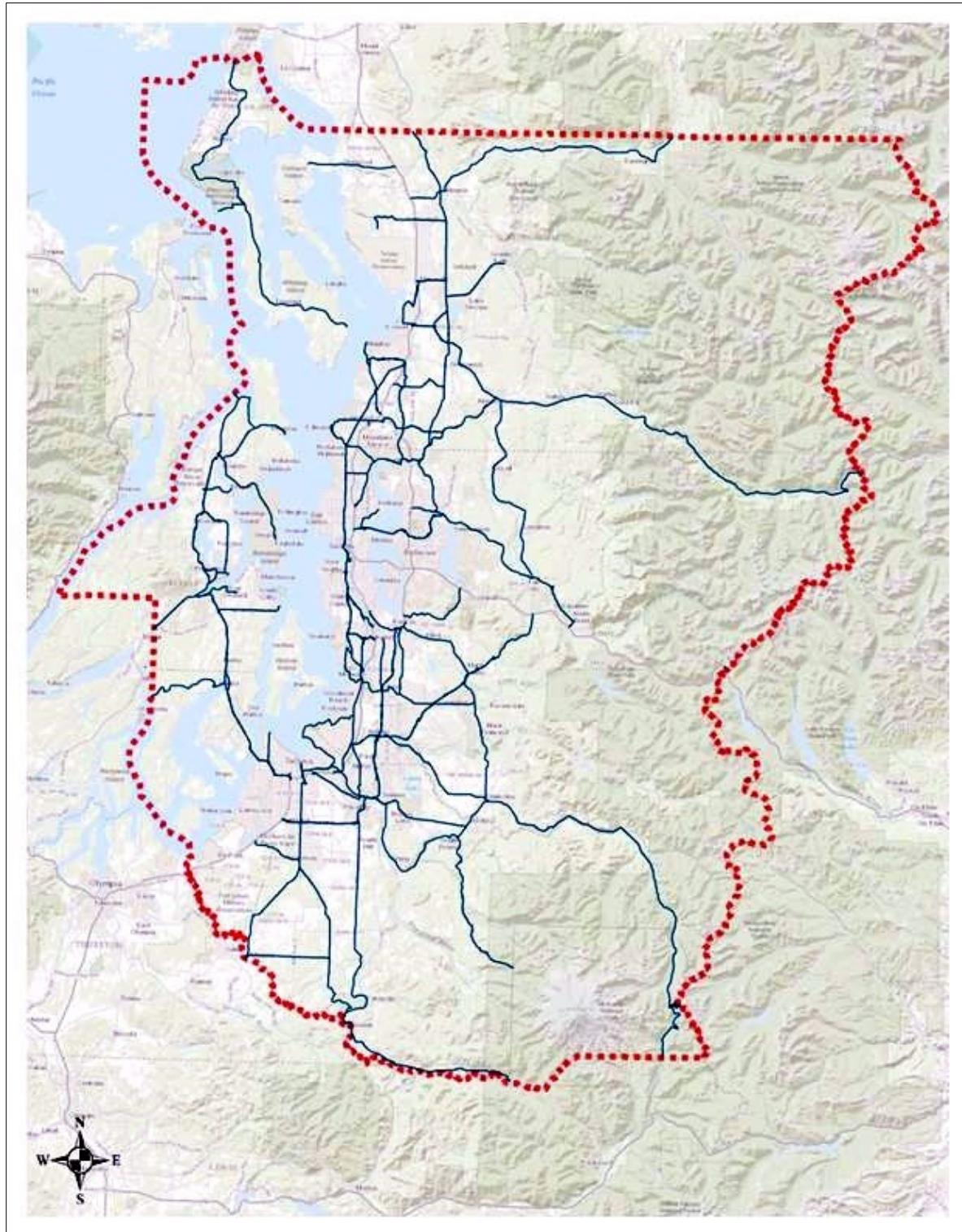
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## Appendix A: Map of the Historic Roads Historic Context Planning Area



## **Appendix B: Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation<sup>52</sup>**

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

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<sup>52</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service 1995: 62