

HISTORIC ROAD CATEGORIES AND RISKS TO HISTORIC ROADS FROM THE PRESERVING THE HISTORIC ROAD INTERNATIONAL PRE-CONFERENCE ONLINE SESSION, 10 NOVEMBER 2021

The following document presents the results of discussions held on November 10, 2021 during the **Preserving the Historic Road International (PHRI) Pre-Conference Online Session**, identifying an initial list of high priority historic roads and the risks associated with these roads. This initial list of high priority roads and risks will be the focus of the **2022 PHRI Conference** in Portland, Oregon, September 22-24, 2022.

HISTORIC ROADS CATEGORIES

PHRI has adopted the three classifications for historic roads: Aesthetic, Engineered and Cultural, (Marriott, *Saving Historic Roads*, New York: Wiley, 1998). Within these classifications, PHRI now recognizes two general categories of historic roads: Emerging Historic Roads and Established Historic Roads, as defined below.

Emerging Historic Roads:

Roads, highways, corridors, and streets that are recently or newly recognized for their aesthetic, engineered, and/or cultural qualities. These roads have been informally identified or recognized but have not received a formal designation or recognition, such as US National Register of Historic Places (National Register) listing or National Register determinations of eligibility (DOE) through the Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) review process, US National Scenic Byway, US National Heritage Corridor, and similar designations at the national, indigenous, state, provincial or local level. Subsets for Emerging Historic Roads include, but are not limited to:

- Roads associated with Native Americans, Alaska Native Peoples, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the US, First Nations in Canada, Indigenous Australian Peoples and other Indigenous Peoples around the world; and roads associated with underrepresented communities including but not limited to Black, Asian, Hispanic and other communities.
- Roads associated with understudied historic, cultural, and social movements.
- Roads of the recent past (post-World War II).
- Roads that may be significant under National Register criterion A for association with broad patterns of events important at the national, territorial, tribal, state, and local level in the US, and similar established recognitions around the globe.
- Predecessor plans, constructions and concepts for transportation including trails, pathways and corridors.
- Rural landscapes and agricultural routes of transport and commerce, including, but not limited to farm-to-market roads and public highways.

- Complex historic corridors that have been traveled over extended periods of history and/or have been modified over time to accommodate new modes of transport and communication.
- Abandoned historic roads and corridors that are no longer in use but represent historic road typologies and help to define settlement, commercial and communication patterns in the landscape and the community.
- Byzantine Road in Macedonia replaced by a modern highway and 77 tunnels.
- The US Marshall Plan post-WWII used in European countries to repair/improve infrastructure.
- Consideration of those who were forced to build roads - the use of indigenous, enslaved and prison labor to build infrastructure.

Established Historic Roads:

Roads, corridors, and streets that have been recognized and formally designated at the national, tribal, state, or local level in the US and corresponding categories in other nations. Subsets for this category include, but are not limited to:

- National Register-listed roads, or similar national designations
- Roads determined to be National Register eligible (DOE), or similar designations.
- National Historic Landmark roads in the US or similar highest designation.
- World Heritage Roads.
- Roads designated as National Scenic Byways (US) or scenic or touring routes by a national authority.
- Roads designated and/or within Heritage Corridors or Heritage Areas or other defined districts or regions of historic significance.
- Roads recognized by professional organizations such as National Historic Civil Engineering Landmarks (US) and other global organizations.
- Historic temporary roads, routes, trails and corridors for travel or recreation, including, but not limited to: marathon routes, routes of protest or routes of migration.
- Roads as nation building based on transport or economic development, such as the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and New Deal roads constructed in the US during the Great Depression, the twentieth-century automobile system in Spain, Route Nationale 7 in France, Great Ocean Road in Australia and WWII era defence roads in Australia - e.g., Stuart Highway, Eyre Hwy.

RISKS TO HISTORIC ROADS:

PHRI has identified the following risks to historic roads. These include both immediate and long-term risks based on policy, perception, technology, funding, and climate change:

1. Climate change, including impacts due to sea level rise, fire, landslide, flooding and other extreme weather events. This includes the waiving, reduction or postponement of laws and regulations protecting heritage resources to expedite URGENT climate responses, including actions by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and state emergency agencies in the US during and after a declared national or state emergency.
2. Transportation project designers and planners unaware of the historic significance of historic roads.
3. Transportation policies, programs and projects that do not consider impacts to the integrity of historic roads (in the US, the Section 106 National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process). This includes unwillingness or inability to use design exceptions in developing projects to avoid adversely affecting historic roads.
4. Transportation maintenance policies, programs, and procedures that do not take into account the preservation and protection of character-defining features of historic roads.
5. Preservation and heritage agencies that have jurisdiction over historic roads, or participate in the application of heritage laws, regulations or policies involving historic roads are not sufficiently informed or trained in the conservation needs of historic roads.
6. In the US, federal, state and tribal agency staff may not have the knowledge or experience to effectively evaluate the current integrity of National Register-listed or determined eligible historic roads or assess if a proposed development project will adversely affect these roads.
7. Inflexibility of reviewers/regulators in the US to not evaluate historic roads on equal standing as afforded other historic property types under the Section 106 review process.
8. Regional and local land use planning that does not consider potential developmental impacts to scenic elements and viewsheds and adjacent historical features associated with historic road corridors.
9. Transportation agencies making design decisions involving historic roads based on concerns over legal liability. As a result, project designers avoid non-standard, flexible roadway design options or alternatives. In the US, some transportation agencies are unaware of American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) policies and some state highway design manuals that include statements providing for flexible design or design exceptions.
10. Inadequate funding in the US for statewide historic road inventories and resource studies.
11. Terminology confusion. Many heritage and engineering terms are identical but have different meanings. For example, 'improvement' for a heritage professional may represent restoration or rehabilitation of historic road elements and character-defining

- features; 'improvement' by an engineering professional may represent extensive redesign or total reconstruction of a historic roads to modern highway standards.
12. New infrastructure for multimodal efforts and how to balance such infrastructure with historic resources. Recognizing that historic roads have evolved over time, how can new changes be accommodated appropriately.
 13. Insufficient staffing to hire preservation specialists.
 14. Insufficient involvement of heritage professionals in long range transportation planning strategies.

ACTIONS/RESOURCES/CONCERNS

The following comments were listed by PHRI Pre-Conference Online Session participants under the 'risk' category, but represent larger ideas regarding actions, resources and general concerns. They are listed here as important concepts that should be considered.

1. Development of model guidance, procedures and protocols to address emergency events that impact historic roads. In the US, this includes the inclusion of emergency provisions in statewide Federal Highway Administration and state Departments of Transportation Section 106 programmatic agreements and other types of agreements that fully consider impacts to historic roads during emergencies.
2. Pro-active heritage teams pre-identified to assist in historic review during emergencies would be helpful.
3. Applying the US Federal Highway Administration's Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) initiative might be useful for historic road purposes, getting heritage professionals with knowledge of historic roads involved in early transportation planning.
4. There is a concern that future federal efforts will expedite infrastructure projects by exempting projects from Section 106 and other historic preservation/environmental compliance reviews.
5. How do we match historic road qualities to the vehicles that are allowed to use them?