



CAPE COD
COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

Information from the Cape Cod Commission

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Old King's Highway Achieves National Scenic Byway Status

2021 designation makes it one of four in Massachusetts



Old King's Highway, Yarmouth Port, Photo Courtesy of William DeSousa Mauk

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (February 22, 2021) – With its new designation as a National Scenic Byway by the U.S Department of Transportation, the 34-mile Old King's Highway is now one of four in Massachusetts to achieve that status.

Old King's Highway was among three new Massachusetts designations approved in January 2021 and 49 additional across the country. The nomination was prepared by the Cape Cod Commission and the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce to preserve, promote, and enhance this unique roadway. The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) submitted the nomination to the Federal Highway Administration accompanied by letters of support from numerous local chambers of commerce and the Town of Barnstable.

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The Chamber's commitment to promoting the stories found along the byway was a component in securing this designation. "The scenic byway category recognizes that, like the environment, the Cape's history also drives the economy," Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce CEO Wendy Northcross said. "Along with our beaches, salt marshes and harbors, Route 6A captures what many residents and visitors think when they hear the words 'Cape Cod.'

The Commission's work developing a corridor management plan, initially in 1995 and updated in 2010, helped lay the groundwork for the national designation, making it eligible for nomination. That plan followed the roadway's 1992 designation as a Massachusetts Scenic Byway in recognition of its distinctive scenic and historic character.

"The Cape Cod Commission has long-recognized the important role played by the Old King's Highway in preserving the Cape's special sense of place," Executive Director Kristy Senatori said. "As we look to the future, it will be important to protect and preserve these cultural assets from the effects of climate change and other critical regional challenges for future generations."

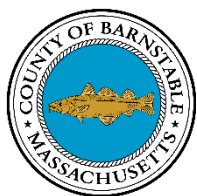
The Old King's Highway extends through seven communities along the Cape's north side from Bourne to the Eastham/Orleans border. It is the backbone of the Old King's Highway Regional Historic District, enacted in 1974. The district continues to be instrumental in preserving the historic character of the roadway.

The National Scenic Byways Program, part of the Federal Highway Administration, seeks to "create a distinctive collection of American roads, their stories and treasured places." Among the factors considered in designations are a roadway's intrinsic qualities – archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and scenic – national or regional significance; overall visitor's experience; and long-term sustainability.

Along with inclusion in the 2021 National Scenic Byways Program Designations Booklet, Old King's Highway will be added to the [America's Byways website](#).

The Mohawk Trail and Battle Road (Concord, Lincoln, Lexington, and Arlington) scenic byways were also designated this year. The Connecticut River Byway was approved in 2009.

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ABOUT THE CAPE COD COMMISSION: The Cape Cod Commission is the regional land use, planning, economic development and regulatory agency for Barnstable County, Massachusetts. It was created in 1990 to serve the citizens and 15 towns that comprise Cape Cod. The Commission works toward maintaining a healthy balance between economic progress and environmental vitality. "Keeping a Special Place Special" describes the agency's mission to protect the region's unique qualities. The 19-member volunteer Cape Cod Commission board represents a wide spectrum of the community and provides oversight for a staff of 40 professionals. For more information, visit www.capecodcommission.org