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Program Overview

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10/28/2026

Iowa Byways™ Program Overview

The Iowa scenic byway routes exist to provide Iowans and visitors a pleasurable driving experience that is unusually scenic and has interesting landscapes.

The intent of the 1988 program was to identify, protect, and enhance roadways and assets which exemplified the state's scenic qualities and historic resources.

Program Framework of 1988 Iowa legislation and administrative code

- Iowa DOT is directed to evaluate, designate, and provide signs for recognized Iowa Byways
- Local volunteer work and cooperation between citizens, organizations, local governments, and the Iowa DOT
- Economic development and tourism efforts are NOT assigned to the Iowa DOT

Designations (scenic, heritage) in Iowa

There are 14 designated byways in Iowa.

National Scenic Byways (3): Loess Hills, Iowa Great River Road, Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway

All-American Road Byway (1): Iowa Great River Road



Latest National Scenic Byway Program (FHWA) Designations in Iowa



All-American Road



National Scenic Byway

2021: The US DOT approved 49 designations to the America's Byways® collection, including 15 All-American Roads and 34 National Scenic Byways in 28 states.

Program Funding (annually)= $500,000 appropriated by the Iowa Transportation Commission in the Five-Year Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

SIGNING	BRANDING	DEVELOPMENT	SUSTAINABILITY
All 14 byways signed	**Iowa Byways™ Brand**	**2018 – 2026**	**Phase IV: 2017 - 2026**
• Design • Plans • Purchase • Installation • Maintenance • Replacement	• Legal trademark protection and licensing • Media content of the Iowa byways on a website hosted by Travel Iowa • Some design and printing, as in-kind at the Iowa DOT • Printing the byways' *Travel Guide* (in-house)	• Solidify fiscal/managing organization • Complete the Corridor Management Plan (CMP) • Complete an Interpretative Master Plan (IMP) • Develop the brand • Complete sign inventories	• Preserve/update Corridor Management Plan (CMP) development and implementation • Implement Interpretative Master Plan (IMP) items • Keep local organizations/efforts strong • Cultivate support from partner agencies • Complete sign inventories

Iowa Byways: Development & Sustainability

DEVELOPMENT

The byways receiving Development funding are managed by various managing organizations.

Covered Bridges Scenic Byway
- Managed by the Madison County Chamber of Commerce & Covered Bridges Scenic Byway, Inc.

White Pole Road Scenic Byway
- Managed by the White Pole Road Development Corporation

Jefferson Highway Heritage Byway
- Currently, no managing organization

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IA Mississippi River Parkway Commission (MRPC)

*Manages the Iowa Great River Road

*Participates in program, but has separate $40,000 legislative appropriation and doesn't receive additional funding through the IA DOT

SUSTAINABILITY

The byways receiving Sustainability funding are managed by various Resource and Conservation & Development (RC&D) organizations.

Northeast IA RC&D
- Delaware Crossing Scenic Byway
- Driftless Area Scenic Byway
- Grant Wood Scenic Byway
- River Bluffs Scenic Byway

Golden Hills RC&D
- Glacial Trail Scenic Byway
- Loess Hills National Scenic Byway
- Western Skies Scenic Byway

Prairie Rivers RC&D
- Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway
- IA Valley Scenic Byway

Pathfinders RC&D
- Historic Hills Scenic Byway

Partner Agencies

IA Economic Development Authority	Iowa Arts & Culture (IA Economic Development Authority)	IA Dept. of Natural Resources	Other Partner Organizations
Iowa Tourism Office	**Iowa Arts Council**	**IA DNR**	**Non-State Organizations**
• Provides grants and support • Hosts Travel Iowa webpages & the Passport app: www.iowabyways.org • Provides economic information to byways • Supports marketing partnerships • Hosts the annual Tourism Conference	• About the Iowa Arts Council: www.iowa.gov/arts-and-culture • Provides grants and consultation support	• About the Iowa DNR: www.iowadnr.gov • Provides grants and support • Provides the State Parks Passport app • Provides support for scenic easement acquisition	• Resource Conservation & Development (RC&Ds) • Local governments, byway boards • MPOs, RPAs • County Conservation Boards (CCB) • Byways of Iowa Foundation (BIF) • Travel Federation of Iowa • Chambers of Commerce

Economic Development/Tourism in Iowa

Visitor spending increased 1.2%, reaching $7.6 billion. Of the $7.6 billion spent, transportation spending accounted for $1.8 billion – 24% of all visitor spending.

Food and beverage purchases also represented 24% of total visitor spending, $1.8 billion.



Source: Tourism Economics

Note: Lodging includes all accommodation types, and transportation includes both ground and air transportation.

National Scenic Byway Program (FHWA) [1991 – 2024]

- **1991:** Established under the **Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act** that provided **$74.3 million** in discretionary grants
- **1998:** The **Transportation Equity Act** for the 21st Century (**TEA-21**) authorized **$148 million** for technical assistance & NSB grants.
- **2005-2012:** The **Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act** – (**SAFETEA-LU**) authorized **$175 million** for technical assistance and grants to States and Indian Tribes.
- **2021:** The **Dept. of Transportation Appropriations Act** appropriated **$16 million** for the NSBP.
- **2022:** The **Consolidated Appropriations Act** appropriated **$6 million** for grants and technical assistance to States or Indian Tribes
- **2023:** The **Consolidated Appropriations Act** appropriated **$20 million** for NSBP.
- **2024:** The **Consolidated Appropriations Act** appropriated **7.5 million** for NSBP Grants and Technical Assistance.

National Scenic Byway Program Projects in Iowa

Year	Number of Projects	Funding Amount
1993	4	$303,224
1994	1	$19,600
1996	1	$130,000
2000	1	$60,000
2001	3	$107,918
2002	3	$778,376
2003	5	$795,906
2004	4	$252,000
2005	6	$7,740,945
2006	9	$694,766
2007	9	$1,079,851
2008	7	$1,164,983
2009	6	$1,916,927
2010	3	$771,680
2011	3	$1,525,000
2012	6	$4,085,316
2022	2	$1,786,004
Total	69	$23,212,496

Completed projects include:

- Corridor Management Plans
- Signage
- Constructing Interpretative & Tourism Centers
- Interpretative item implementation
- Riverfront access
- Training
- Observation deck
- Overlooks
- Bridge rehabilitation
- Statewide interpretative kiosks

Questions?

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