

Proposed Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway (HTURB)



Sharing Authentic Stories of Harriet Tubman and Freedom Seekers in New York

What is a NY State Scenic Byway: A New York Byway is a self-guided public road recognized by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) for its special scenic, historic, cultural, recreational, archaeological, and/or natural qualities recognized through legislation. Byways offer a unique alternative to interstate travel, inviting travelers to explore and enjoy attractions along the designated route. They enhance travel experiences and contribute to the vitality of local economies. In addition, designated New York State Byways have seen a significant economic impact within their local communities.

The Proposed Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad New York Byway offers opportunities to share authentic stories of Harriet Tubman and Freedom Seekers in New York.

As a vehicle for education, preservation, and economic growth, the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad New York Byway fosters community pride, enhances residents' quality of life, preserves its historic and natural assets, inspires visitors to be agents of change, and elevates the authentic stories of Freedom Seekers on their journey to Freedom by providing exceptional and inclusive experiences along its 550-mile route.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF SCENIC BYWAYS SIMILAR IN LENGTH AND SCOPE:

Maryland's
Harriet Tubman Byway
(Spans 125 miles)

Contributes **\$23 million** in sales annually to the area;
supporting **363 jobs** for **\$9.9 million** in earnings.

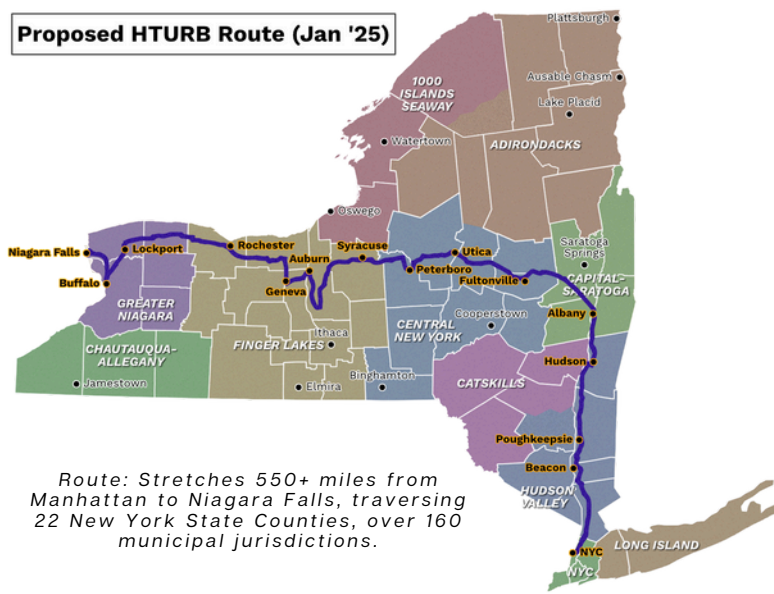
Natchez Trace Parkway
(444 miles through 41 county and
municipal jurisdictions in Mississippi,
Tennessee, and Alabama):

Generates **\$18.4 billion** of direct spending in
communities within 60 miles of a national park;
supports **271,544 jobs** in neighboring communities.

Journey Through Hallowed
Ground National Scenic Byway
(15-county byway region of Maryland,
Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia)

Generates **\$1.06 billion** in total business sales, more
than **6,500 jobs**, and an increase of approximately
\$165.1 million in earnings.

Proposed HTURB Route (Jan '25)



TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION

2025

- March: Finalize Municipality Resolutions
- April-June: Public Feedback on CMP
- June- Sept: Submit CMP to NY State DOT
- Sept-Dec: Prepare documentation for legislative bill

2026

- Jan: Introduce Legislation
- March: Host Celebrations on Designated Byway



Frequently Asked Questions



What is a Scenic Byway?

The New York Department of Transportation (NYDOT) describes a scenic byway as “a public road having special scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archaeological, and/or natural qualities that have been recognized as such through legislation or some other official declaration.”



Why is designation as a scenic byway important?

The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) designates Byways that are of particular statewide interest as “New York State Scenic Byways”. Communities along official Scenic NYS DOT Byways have seen tremendous economic impacts.

The NYSDOT State Scenic Byway program encourages both economic development and resource conservation, recognizing that each of these aspects of a byway must be fostered to ensure the success of the other. There are also Billboard restrictions for New York State Byways. Source: <https://www.dot.ny.gov/display/programs/scenic-byways/programs>



What are the local costs for the Corridor, if any?

There are no costs to local municipalities or individuals to apply for the designation. The Underground Railroad Consortium of New York State received a grant to create the Corridor Management Plan.



What is a Corridor Management Plan?

A Corridor Management Plan (CMP) guides the future promotion, preservation, tourism development, and enhancement of a designated byway. The plan results from local governments, community organizations, and byway residents working together to establish goals and objectives they hope to achieve through designation. These goals may include promoting tourism, preserving historic and natural resources, or interpreting scenic views.

The CMP is not a document of new laws, regulations, or ordinances. Instead, it utilizes existing land use plans plus local stakeholders' recommendations to take care of the byway voluntarily.



Who will implement and manage the Corridor Management Plan (CMP)?

The Underground Railroad Consortium of New York State is sponsoring the creation of the CMP and leading the designation process. A steering committee of local stakeholders will help create the CMP with assistance from Hargrove International, Inc., a heritage tourism and byway consulting firm. Once designated, the CMP will be implemented by a management entity as described in the final CMP.



What signage will be put on the byway and who will pay for them?

The NYS DOT will assume the cost of all official signage along the Scenic Byway. There is no financial commitment from the municipalities.



Regarding Billboards, please explain the resolution to “not approve any new requests for outdoor advertising along the Proposed Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway.

The intent is to prohibit permitting any NEW commercial billboards and refers to any outdoor sign containing advertising unrelated to any use or activity on the premises on which the sign is located. It does not include directional signs.



How will living on the Scenic Byway affect my property?

The New York Department of Transportation has only one land use restriction – the prohibition of constructing new billboards that accompany the Byway destination. This rule applies to the Interstate, National Highway, or Federal Routes. Living on a Scenic Byway will create a greater sense of pride for landowners and may increase property values.



Does designation as a Scenic Byway mean that NY DOT will exercise Eminent Domain?

No. Designation as a Scenic Byway does not facilitate NY DOT's ability to “take” your property or increase the likelihood of such an action.