



ROUTE 57
CORRIDOR PLAN

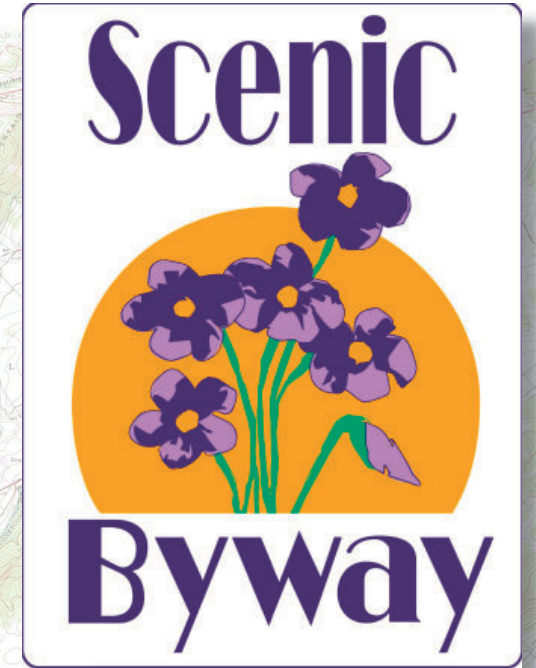
STATE SCENIC BYWAY DESIGNATION

Heritage Conservancy, with the support of the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), has initiated an effort to assist the municipalities along Route 57 in pursuing a potential scenic byway designation for the highway. The Scenic Byway initiative would complement other planning, conservation and economic development initiatives already underway in the corridor. The proposed byway would be composed of the entire section of Route 57 between Hackettstown and Phillipsburg.

WHAT IS A SCENIC BYWAY?

A Scenic Byway is a transportation route which is adjacent to or travels through an area that has particular scenic, historic, cultural, or recreational qualities.

The National Scenic Byway Program was authorized under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, and reauthorized by the 1998 Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and the 2005 Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA-LU). Under the federal program, the U.S. Secretary of Transportation recognizes certain roads as national Scenic Byways or "All American Roads," based on their intrinsic qualities. The Federal Highway Administration's program guidance for the National Scenic Byways Program states that for a



This is a sample of the official NJDOT road signs that have been placed along designated State Scenic Byways.

corridor to qualify as a scenic byway it must possess one or more of the following six intrinsic qualities: scenic, natural, historic, cultural, archaeological, and recreational.

New Jersey has a complementary State Scenic Byway Program that was begun in 1996 and is administered by the NJDOT, NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), NJ Commerce Office of Travel and Tourism, and NJ Office of Smart Growth (OSG). Several corridors - have been designated as State Scenic Byways, including the Delaware River Scenic Byway (along Route 29 from Trenton to Frenchtown) and the Millstone Valley Byway (25-miles between Kingston and Millstone).

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF DESIGNATION?

- Recognition
- Increased Tourism
- Technical Assistance
- Planning for Scenic Protection and Managed Growth
- Consideration for Financial Assistance



Route 57 offers extraordinary views of the rural landscape of Warren County.

State Scenic Byway designation will give the Route 57 corridor unique status at the NJDOT, with increased opportunities for context-sensitive design treatments, potential for unique federal funding, and support for conservation of the byway's intrinsic qualities as well as tourism, promotion, and marketing.

GOALS OF THE ROUTE 57 SCENIC BYWAY

A Corridor Committee has been formed to discuss the nomination procedure for a State Scenic Byway along the Route 57 corridor. The team is composed of county

DOES ROUTE 57 HAVE SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERISTICS THAT MEET THE CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION AS A STATE SCENIC BYWAY?

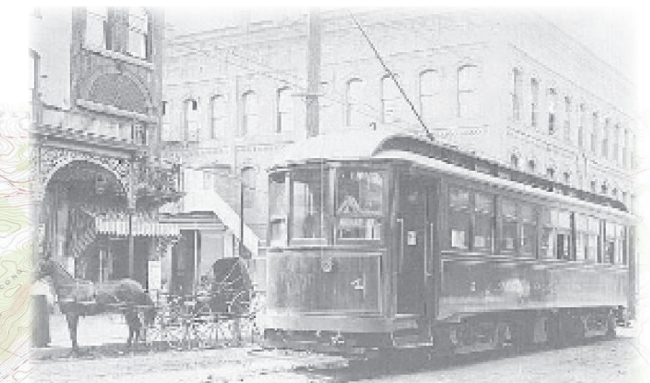
Yes! The Route 57 corridor is rich in scenic, historic, and culturally significant locales. Evidence for all of the six intrinsic qualities of Scenic Byways can be found along Route 57:

- **Scenic**
 - *Program Guidelines:* Must contribute to the overall visual quality of the landscape, based on the existence of significant scenic views from the road and absence of detracting features.
 - *Examples:* scenic viewsheds of the agricultural river valley and the Highlands are found throughout the corridor.
- **Natural**
 - *Program Guidelines:* Visible features relatively undisturbed by human influence.
 - *Examples:* Merrill Creek Reservoir, Musconetcong River.
- **Historic**
 - *Program Guidelines:* The historic quality depends on the connection between the road and the individual historic resources along the corridor. The historic story should provide a link among resources along the byway and a means of interpreting these resources to the visitor.
 - *Examples:* Beattystown Historic District, Guy's Washington Filling Station, Port Murray, Victorian homes in Hackettstown, and the Morris Canal.
- **Cultural**
 - *Program Guidelines:* Resources that reflect the distinctive character of the communities, including events, traditions, food, and art.
 - *Examples:* Warren County Farmers' Fair, annual car shows, antique shops, and outdoor concerts.
- **Archaeological**
 - *Program Guidelines:* Physical evidence of historic or prehistoric human life that is important and accessible.
 - *Examples:* evidence of prehistoric native culture, Lenape place names, and traditional transportation routes.
- **Recreational**
 - *Program Guidelines:* Active and passive outdoor activities that are dependent upon the natural and cultural elements of the landscape.
 - *Examples:* hiking trails, trout-fishing streams, public golf courses, and hot air ballooning.

and municipal officials, representatives of local tourism, environmental, and historic preservation organizations (including the Musconetcong Watershed Association, Skylands of New Jersey Tourism, and the Warren County Morris Canal Committee), the Heritage Conservancy, and planners and engineers from the New Jersey Department of Transportation. The Corridor Committee is developing a vision for the byway, with special emphasis on the following dominant themes:

- **A Transportation Heritage** – from Native American trails and footpaths, to the Morris Turnpike and Morris Canal; from the Morris and Essex Railroad and Easton and Washington trolley, to the modern state highway, this corridor has been a crucial east-west route through the Musconetcong valley for centuries.
- **A Working Landscape** – a scenic corridor that has been shaped by generations of farmers, manufacturers, residents, and visitors, Route 57 includes working villages, farmland, preserved open space and viewsheds, and an ecosystem that supports a variety of wildlife. The landscape along the Musconetcong has been marked by growth and development, as well as preservation of unique natural and scenic resources.
- **A History of Innovation** – historical and physical evidence of a wealth of discoveries and significant progress in the 19th century, including Thomas Edison's Portland Cement Company and New Jersey's first concrete mile, the Cornish Piano and Organ Factory in Washington Borough, and the engineering marvels of the Morris Canal.

Through these themes, the Corridor Committee is working



The Easton & Washington Traction Company trolleys (above) once ran along Route 57. Some sections of the corridor already have informative signs alerting visitors of the transportation heritage of the area (see below).

to develop a Scenic Byway that will emphasize the unique qualities of the towns, villages, and environment along Route 57 for both residents and visitors. The Route 57 Scenic Byway also aims to preserve and enhance the beauty of natural, cultivated, and built landscapes and their relationship to our history, culture, and future; to enhance tourism in proximity to centers of recreation and commerce; and to encourage land uses that create and complement scenic viewsheds, vistas, and panoramas. Opportunities will be available for the public to participate in further defining the vision for the byway.

RESOURCES

America's Byways. <http://www.byways.org/> Information on the diverse national and state scenic byways across the country, including other scenic byways in New Jersey. This website is run by the Federal Highway Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Heritage Conservancy. <http://heritageconservancy.org/> Doylestown, PA-based organization that is compiling the nomination for this effort and has worked with local representatives to develop the Musconetcong Wild and Scenic Rivers application.

Skylands Tourism. <http://www.skylandstourism.org/> Suggestions on heritage-based tourism, ecotourism, and other attractions in northwestern New Jersey.