

CHAPTER 132
IOWA BYWAYS PROGRAM

761—132.1(306D) Purpose, overview and information.

132.1(1) Purpose. The purpose of the Iowa Byways program is to designate and support qualifying Iowa roads as byways on the basis of scenic byway, heritage byway, or a combination of scenic and heritage byway qualities. These designations are intended to preserve the state's scenic, natural, and historic resources; to support economic development through travel and tourism; to highlight distinctive experiences; and to maintain the integrity of the Iowa Byways program.

132.1(2) Overview. Under the Iowa Byways program, proposed routes are identified via an application process. The department inventories the proposed routes and consults with program stakeholders before evaluating those routes for designation. The department provides identifying signs for the designated routes. Routes designated as an Iowa Byway are part of Iowa's scenic byway program and are therefore subject to the prohibition set forth in 23 U.S.C. Section 131(s).

132.1(3) Information and forms. Information, instructions and application forms may be obtained from the Systems Planning Bureau, Iowa Department of Transportation, 800 Lincoln Way, Ames, Iowa 50010; by telephone at (515)239-1664; or through the department's website at www.iowadot.gov.
[ARC 3298C, IAB 8/30/17, effective 10/4/17; Editorial change: IAC Supplement 8/11/21; ARC 6931C, IAB 3/8/23, effective 4/12/23]

761—132.2(306D) Definitions.

"Department" means the Iowa department of transportation.

"Designation" means department approval of a route as an Iowa Byway.

"Heritage byway" means a route that has historic or cultural significance along its length or connects various areas or sites of historic or cultural significance along its length.

"Scenic byway" means a route that has naturally scenic features visible along its length.

"Stakeholder" means a group, state agency, local jurisdiction or organization with a vested interest in the Iowa Byways program or that may be impacted by the designation of a route. Examples may include but are not limited to an adjacent scenic, natural or historic resource or other tourism attraction; other designated Iowa Byways; private associations related to economic development or outdoor advertising; and organizations charged with the marketing of the state, regions or localities for tourism purposes.
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761—132.3(306D) General requirements.

132.3(1) A route eligible for designation as an Iowa Byway must meet the definition of either a heritage byway or a scenic byway. A route may also be eligible for designation if segments of the route meet a combination of either a heritage byway or a scenic byway along its entire length.

132.3(2) Primary roads, secondary roads and city streets are eligible for designation as Iowa Byways.

132.3(3) A route eligible for designation as an Iowa Byway should be continuous and at least 20 miles in length.

132.3(4) The governing body of each city and county through which a route passes must pass a formal resolution endorsing the application for Iowa Byway designation and agreeing to the responsibilities of having jurisdiction over a portion of a designated route.

132.3(5) The initial installation of signs identifying an Iowa Byway including the accompanying posts and hardware necessary for installation shall be paid for and furnished by the department. Each roadway jurisdiction is responsible for the inventory and maintenance of signs provided by the department following the initial installation. The department will provide replacement signs for those that are damaged or missing and will be responsible for reinstallation on primary roads. The roadway jurisdiction will be responsible for reinstallation on secondary roads and city streets.
[ARC 3298C, IAB 8/30/17, effective 10/4/17; ARC 6931C, IAB 3/8/23, effective 4/12/23]

761—132.4(306D) Application and approval process.

132.4(1) Program cycle. The department may periodically announce a solicitation of applications for designation as demand and interest requires. Field inventories, evaluation, and rating of proposed routes will precede the designation of any new routes.

132.4(2) Application. Application to designate a route as an Iowa Byway or to propose an extension or loop to an existing route shall be on a form provided by the department and shall be received by the department by the stated application deadline included in the solicitation. The application must be accompanied by a formal resolution described in subrule 132.3(4). Applications must provide some discussion of the planned administration and governance of the proposed Iowa Byway as well as how the byway will be marketed to visitors.

132.4(3) Initial review. Applications shall be reviewed by the department. Program stakeholders will be consulted to gather information on the existence and quality of scenic, archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, and recreational resources along a proposed route; the proposed route's contribution to a diversity of experiences along designated routes; and the overall impact of the proposed route on the program's integrity.

132.4(4) Field inventory. The department shall conduct a field inventory of proposed routes which will address the following qualities:

a. Scenic value. Types and qualities of views along the proposed route contributing to the scenic quality of the route shall be identified as well as views that distract from or negatively affect the scenic quality of the route. The field inventory will provide an assessment of the visual character of the proposed route along its length.

b. Cultural and historic resources. Known cultural and historic resources will be identified along the length of the proposed route. Such resources may include archaeological, architectural, historical or other cultural sites of national or state significance and may also include interesting or unique local cultures or architecture that may appeal to visitors.

c. Natural resources. Resources including but not limited to agricultural lands, forests, river basins, and other distinctive landforms will be identified.

d. Recreational resources. Public lands and facilities providing opportunities for organized sport, outdoor recreation, or other recreation will be identified.

e. Transportation. An assessment will be made of existing and future traffic conditions, planned improvements to the proposed route, and any safety concerns whether existing or anticipated. If the route is being considered for heritage byway designation, historic elements specific to transportation will be identified.

132.4(5) Evaluation and rating. The department shall compile and evaluate the field inventory data for each proposed route, calculate an overall quality rating for each proposed route, and prepare a written report documenting these findings. The written report shall also consider the sustainability of the proposed route based on the information provided in the application for planned governance and marketing plans as well as how the proposed route will complement the existing Iowa Byways.

132.4(6) Designation. The department shall review the evaluations and will consider designating routes as Iowa Byways based on this information.

132.4(7) Signing. Upon the designation of Iowa Byways, the department will proceed with the initial design and installation of signage identifying new Iowa Byways.

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761—132.5(306D) Reevaluation. At its discretion, the department may inventory and evaluate designated Iowa Byways or portions of byways to determine their continued eligibility for the program. The department reserves the right to remove a route or portion of a route from the program if the route no longer meets the designating criteria or if the route signage has not been maintained. The department may modify an existing route if an alternative route would better benefit the traveling public in cases of poor road conditions, closures or changes in available amenities.

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761—132.6(306D) Promotional and tourism efforts. The department is not responsible for economic development, promotional, or other tourism efforts for Iowa Byways.

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These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 306D.

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