HISTORIC QUALITY

History is the defining intrinsic quality on the Byway. Historic resources are found throughout the Byway Corridor, with the highest concentration along the Des Moines River, as shown on Map x. Of 177 resources inventoried in the Byway Corridor, 106 relate to the history of the area. Table X. lists the historic resources inventoried in the Corridor.

The story to be told on the Byway is of the nation’s Westward Movement in the 1800s. The Byway’s historic resources present travelers with visible reminders of the Euroamerican settlement of both Iowa and the United States.

ASSESSMENT AND CONTEXT

Though human occupation of the Corridor dates back over 8,000 years ago (Haury-Artz 2013). Iowa’s historic period starts after Europeans arrived and began written documentation of people, places, and events.

In the late 1600’s a few French trappers and traders were operating in what would become Iowa. By 1800 British fur traders were working at outposts on the Des Moines River from the mouth to present-day Des Moines. The Louisiana Purchase brought the state under the control of the United States in 1803, though Euroamerican settlement of the Iowa Territory officially began in 1833 under the terms of the treaty known as the Black Hawk Purchase. Iowa became a state in 1946.

Most of the Byway’s documented historic resources originated after 1833. By the late 1830s many present-day Corridor communities were already established. These communities include Farmington, Bentonsport, Bonaparte and Keosauqua.

Buildings still stand from early settlement including churches, schools, barns, courthouses and commercial buildings. Within the Corridor, 40 historic structures and 5 historic districts have been recognized and placed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). (sidebar). In addition to historic buildings, 17 museums house artifacts that interpret the history of the area.

Further solidifying the historic quality as highly significant is the Westward Movement as an underlying theme. An inventory and analysis of the Byway’s historic resources also revealed nine subthemes.

FHWA Definition:
The historic quality of the byway depends on the connection between the road and the individual historic resources along the corridor. The byway must contain enough features to create a story with a certain level of continuity and coherence. The historic story should provide a link among resources along the byway and a means of interpreting these resources to the visitor.

The historic elements should reflect the actions of people and may include buildings, settlement patterns, and other examples of human activity. Historic quality can be based on events, such as use of the road as a pony express route. The historical significance can demonstrate an evolving historical story that links diverse events through time. A road can also be historically significant because of its importance in developing a national or regional transportation network. (FHWA 2001)
### Table X. Historic Resources in Byway Corridor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>NRHP</th>
<th>County</th>
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Mormon Trail
From 1846 to 1869, over 70,000 members of Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (commonly referred to as “Mormons”) fled religious persecution in Nauvoo, Illinois, taking flight across Iowa en route to the Great Salt Lake. The Mormon migration is “one of the greatest overland Euroamerican migrations in American history, and has both state and national significance (EVE 2015).”

Though often referred to as “the Mormon Trail,” the Mormons followed many routes on their journey (map). The path taken varied over time, by season and as modes of transportation changed. Historic Hills Scenic Byway nearly parallels one of the main routes, often referred to as the “Mormon Pioneer Trek.” The first major wave of migrants followed this route, leaving Nauvoo in February 1846 and heading across the Mississippi River into Lee County Iowa. Brigham Young led the “Camp of Israel,” a group of about 500 wagons.

The Camp of Israel began their advance west from Sugar Creek on March 1, 1846. They would reach the Des Moines River at present-day Bonaparte on day five and soon made an extended two-week stop at Richardson’s Point, twenty-two miles to the west of Bonaparte. While there, men found work building cabins and houses, cutting wood, splitting rails, and other tasks for pay or supplies. Captain William Pitt’s Nauvoo Band gave concerts for pay at Farmington and Keosauqua (including three held at the Van Buren County Courthouse, which still stands). The companies then moved northwest along the Fox River passing just north of Bloomfield and “leaving this last settlement that they would find in Iowa, they headed southwest to skirt the Missouri border. (EVE reference)

As the first wave continued across the state, a second wave of about 10,000 people moved out of Nauvoo through the month of May. With improved weather and traveling conditions, these later groups caught up with the Camp of Israel before they reached Council Bluffs.

Most followed the Camp of Israel’s route only as far as present-day Drakesville. Many passed through Bonaparte—on May 29, forty teams backed up at the Bonaparte Ferry, causing long delays. Just west of Drakesville, the spring groups left Brigham Young’s route where it turned south; instead, they went west and northwest on the ‘Alternate Mormon Trail.’

This route went to present-day Unionville, then turned north and crossed South Soap Creek, continuing northward to present Moravia, and then ran west to present Iconium … Other Mormons left Montrose and Fort Madison not on the Mormon Trail route but, instead, headed northwest and crossed the Des Moines River higher up—at Iowaville, Ed-dyville, or near present-day Des Moines. (Hartley 2000)

The final wave left Nauvoo in September 1846 when they were driven from town by angry mobs. Many of this final group were ill or otherwise unprepared for the journey. A higher number of this wave stopped short of their final destination to rest, work or stay indefinitely.

Of some 14,000 Saints who left the Nauvoo area for the west in 1846, a reasonable estimate is that between 2,000 and 3,000 lagged behind, halting temporarily in southeastern Iowa or northern Missouri. Lacking food, funds, good wagons and teams, or decent health, many sought housing and jobs, and did not reach the LDS camps at the Missouri River for months or even years. These people are the sources of such ‘imprints’ in southeastern Iowa as Mormon Creek east-northeast of Moravia, Bentonsport’s Mason House Inn (whose sign in front says it was built by Mormon workmen in 1846), reputed Mormon graves in Louisa County, and others too numerous to list [Hartley 2000].

The Byway’s most significant historic resources are those associated with the Mormon migration. With that in mind, Pathfinders RC&D contracted for a statewide study of the Mormon Trail’s historical and archaeological resources. The study (EVE 2015) refined maps of the various routes, noted resources in
HISTORIC HILLS SCENIC BYWAY
MORMON TRAIL RESOURCES

- Mormon Trail Routes
- Mormon Trail Points of Interest
- Byway - Paved
- Byway - Gravel
- US Hwy
- State Hwy
- County Hwy
- Byway Corridor
- County Border
- Waterbody
- River
- Cities

Sources: Pathfinders R.C.D., Northeast Iowa R.C.D., IDOT, & IDNR
Prepared By: Pathfinders R.C.D.
Published: June 2016
the Byway Corridor that need protection and identified opportunities for interpretation. The report identifies more than 50 points-of-interest within the Byway Corridor including camps, wagon ruts, grave sites, interpretive panels, memorial markers, Mormon-built structures, river fords, and waypoints.

Assessment: Though there are a large number of Mormon trail resources, many need interpretation to assist visitors with understanding their significance. In addition, many points-of-interest are located on private property.

The greatest need is for a statewide marketing and interpretation plan. Ideally, there would also be a preservation plan developed.

Significance: National

Related Resources:

- Bent oak tree
- Bonaparte/Des Moines River Ford
- Bonaparte Cemetery & Marker
- Boston Cemetery
- Brattan's Grove (marker)
- Denny Cemetery
- Ely's Ford Historical Site/Markers
- Fordyce Cemetery
- Fordyce Tavern
- Fox River Crossing
- Harbour Mormon Cabin
- Mason House Inn
- Mormon Cemetery (Vernon)
- Mormon-built log cabin (Drakesville)
- Oak Point Cemetery
- Philips Cemetery
- Pittsburg Crossing
- Prominent trail swales (two locations)
- Richardson's Point – camp & graves
- Stone House
- Stringtown Cemetery Site
- Trail Marker (Unionville)
- Trail Ruts (several locations)
- Vernon Prairie

Iowaville

The name “Iowaville” is commonly used for two settlements located on the Des Moines River between present day Eldon and Selma.

From about 1770 to 1820 it was the site of a major Ioway village that once housed around 800 people (Petersen, Artz, 2006.) Ioway leaders and other high-ranking men lived at Iowaville, including two who met with officials in Washington D.C. It is not certain why the Ioway left but after they moved, a Sauk band lived close to the site. Chief Black Hawk reportedly had a summer residence in the area and is memorialized at the Iowaville Cemetery. Though this village existed during the historic period, it is mainly an archaeological site. Additional information is on page X of this document.

In the 1830s Euroamerican settlers established a trading post close to the Ioway village site. This settlement became the town of Iowaville which once had a population near 200. By 1878 only a few houses, stores and the cemetery remained (Haury-Artz 2013).

Assessment: Currently the only visible resource is the Iowaville Cemetery. The cemetery has interesting stones dating back to the early 1830s and a marker memorializing Chief Black Hawk. The cemetery is relatively well-known and may draw travelers interested in Native American history.

There is an effort underway to purchase the Ioway village site. The site is privately owned and is currently in row crop production. Collectors can legally take artifacts as long as they have permission from the landowner. Under public ownership, collection by individuals would longer be legal. In addition, the area would be seeded to permanent cover to further protect the site. This is a high priority due to the significance of the site and the urgent need for protection.

Significance: National

Related Resources

- Iowaville Cemetery
- Chief Black Hawk Memorial Marker
- Iowaville Archeological Site (on private property not accessible to the public)
**Civil War & Underground Railroad**

While there were no Civil War battles fought in Iowa, a skirmish was fought just across the Des Moines River from Croton, Iowa. Shots from the battle landed in Iowa.

The battle is described on the Battle of Athens State Historic Site webpage (reference):

“The Battle of Athens was an American Civil War skirmish that took place in northeast Missouri in 1861 near present Revere and southeast Iowa along the Des Moines River across from Croton (3 miles southeast of Farmington). The Union victory has the distinction of being the most northerly of Civil War Battles fought west of the Mississippi, and also of being the only such battle fought along the Iowa border.

Pro-Unionists rallied around David Moore, who had raised a force of about 500 men. Moore entered and occupied Athens on July 24, seizing homes and businesses from pro-South supporters to quarter and provision his troops. Pro-South supporters rallied around Col. Martin Green. Green raised a force of about 3,000 men, including two of Moore's sons.

The confrontation between Moore's and Green's forces took place at Athens on Aug. 5, 1861. The battle began around 5 a.m. Moore and his Unionists were surrounded on three sides by Green's troops, with the Des Moines River to their rear. Despite being outnumbered at least five to one, Moore's men were better trained and equipped. After about two hours of fighting, at least 50 soldiers had been wounded or killed and the pro-South side was demoralized and in full retreat.”

In addition to the battle between regular armies, a “Guerrilla Raid” took place in Davis County in October 1864. A band of Confederate guerrillas dressed in Federal uniforms crossed from Missouri into Iowa. The raiders killed three local residents and left a string of robberies in their wake. It is purported to be the northern-most Confederate incursion into Federal territory (reference to http://daviscountyraid.com/raid-info/). A memorial south of Bloomfield commemorates the raid.

Perhaps Iowa’s most significant contribution to the Civil War was its location on the path of freedom for slaves. Iowa was a free state and Missouri was slave so fugitives could reach freedom by crossing the border. Pathways on the Underground Railroad passed through parts of the Byway Corridor and the Pearson House in Keosauqua was one of the many refuges along the way. Visitors to the house and museum can still see the trap door that allowed fugitives to hide in the basement. (reference http://iavanburen.org/historical_society.htm).

**Assessment:** There are only a few resources in this subtheme but all are readily available to the public and have some interpretation. There are travelers who seek out Civil War sites but the Byway’s Civil War resources are relatively unknown. The greatest need is for marketing and additional interpretation.

**Significance:** National

**Related resources**

- Croton Memorial
- Battle of Athens State Historic Site
- Guerilla Raid Memorial
- Pearson House

**Des Moines River Navigation**

The Des Moines River has been important to humans since prehistoric time and remains so today. Native Americans traveled on the water with small boats and took advantage of diverse resources in the river valley that supplied food, tools and protection from the elements.

When Euroamericans began moving into Iowa, the Des Moines River was used for trade and transportation. Boats brought supplies, transported products and carried settlers into the state. The Des Moines was the first river in Iowa navigated by steamboats and looked to as a “gateway to the West.”

*Lockkeeper’s House, Eldon*
As early as 1837, a steamboat ascended the Des Moines River to Iowaville and in 1843 a steamboat reached the Raccoon Fork of the Des Moines River (Iowa Gen Web reference). Dependence on steamboats increased but it became clear Iowa’s rivers were too shallow for steamboat traffic most of the year. To overcome this and improve navigation, a lock and dam project was planned from the Mississippi River to present-day Des Moines. While the engineering called for 28 dams and 9 locks, only 7 lock and dam systems were completed (Haury-Artz 2013) Remnants of two locks and dams are visible at Keosauqua and Bonaparte. In addition, a limestone building known as the “Lock Keeper’s House” stands downriver from Eldon. Local lore claims this structure was built as the lock keeper’s residence but never used in that capacity. There is no proof to confirm this claim.

In Bentonsport, the Mason House Inn was built in 1846 as a hotel for steamboat traffic. The Hotel Manning in Keosauqua built in 1854 was developed in the steamboat gothic style, but was completed as the steamboat era ended. With the arrival of the railroad in the mid 1850s, trains quickly replaced steamboats as the main mode of transportation.

Assessment: There are only a few resources in this subtheme but all have good integrity and are readily available to the public. The greatest need is for interpretation.

Significance: Regional

Related Resources:

- Lock & Dam #5 at Bonaparte
- Lock & Dam #7 at Keosauqua
- Lock Keepers House
- Mason House Inn
- Hotel Manning

Railroads played a major role in the settlement of the West from 1850-1890. Railroads came to Iowa in 1855 and by 1870 there were 2,680 miles of track (Iowa Department of Transportation XXXX). Trains brought new settlers to Iowa, imported manufactured goods and transported agricultural products.

Railroads peaked in 1911 with the advent of cars, trucks and highways. Nearly every town connected to the railroad had a depot at one time. Now the only towns with operating depots are those with Amtrak connections. Train enthusiasts across the nation have helped preserve historic depots. The Byway Corridor boasts seven restored depots. Four of these have museums with artifacts and interpretative information.

Assessment: There are many resources in this subtheme found across the Byway. All have good integrity and are readily available to the public. There are travelers interested in railroad sites and history, so a marketing plan to highlight these assets is desirable.

Significance: Local

Related Resources:

- Douds Depot
- Eldon Depot Museum
- Milton Train Depot
- Peavine Line Railroad Depot & Museum (Stockport)
- Pulaski City Park & Historic Depot
- Railroad Park & Museum (Donnellson)
- Wabash Depot Combination Depot & Museum (Moravia)
- Trestle Bridges - DM&E - Foster Viaduct #1, #2, #3
**Industry on the Des Moines River**

In addition to transportation, the Des Moines River played a significant role in several industries in the Byway Corridor. Coal and clay were mined from the river’s banks and water-powered mills produced flour, wool and lumber.

The Corridor’s pottery industry took hold when the first kiln was built in 1936 downriver from present-day Bonaparte (Haury-Artz 2013). The industry expanded to include 251 named potteries across 34 counties in the state. The largest concentration was along the Des Moines River, particularly the lower reaches in Wapello and Van Buren County (figure). An excellent example of these nineteenth century potteries was unearthed during the flood of 1993. Parts of the Bonaparte Pottery, as it is known today, were exposed when floodwaters retreated. Archeologists later excavated the site and found the pottery remarkably well-preserved. Originally founded as the “Parker and Hanback Pottery” in 1866, it operated until 1895 when mass-produced pottery took over the market.

The site includes the pottery factory building and the remains of two kilns. There is also a vast area along the river bank with visible deposits of stoneware pieces, whole vessels and other waste. During the excavation process in the 1990s, intact pottery molds were discovered. These molds are used today to produce pottery pieces. The pottery site is open to the public on an intermittent basis. The pottery is privately owned and the future of the site is in question.

Mills, especially gristmills that ground wheat, were essential businesses in Iowa’s early days. Bonaparte was home to flour, woolen and saw mills beginning in 1937. The mills operated until about 1903 when floodwaters destroyed the dam that provided power to the mills. The mill buildings have held a variety of operations since then, including one which now houses a restaurant. The mills and associated commercial buildings that remain are part of Bonaparte’s Historic Riverfront District.

**Assessment:** While there are only a few resources in this subtheme, the integrity is outstanding. They are restricted to one location on the Byway but the subtheme ties in well with the overall theme.

The greatest need is to assure preservation of the Bonaparte Pottery. Ideally, it would be protected through public ownership or under easement. Regular open hours and staff to give tours could make this a popular attraction.

The Woolen Mill is vacant currently and could quickly deteriorate if left that way.

Secondary to preservation of the structures, marketing and interpretation of this subtheme is needed to attract travelers.

**Significance:** Regional/Local

**Related Resources:**

- Bonaparte Pottery & Archeological District
- Bonaparte Riverfront Historic District
- Bonaparte Retreat aka Meek’s Flour Mill (restaurant)
- Meeks Pants Factory (private residence)
- Woolen Mill (vacant)

**Schools**

The Corridor has many examples of typical Iowa schoolhouses dating from 1865 to the early 1920s. The Vernon School located across the river from Bentonsport, is a spectacular and well-preserved example of a nineteenth century public school built in the Italianate architecture. The Oak Grove Historic School near Douds-Leando is one the few remaining examples of a church-school combinations left in Iowa.

*Meek’s Grist Mill, now Bonaparte Retreat, Bonaparte*  
*Image © 2011 Kenneth G. West Jr., all rights reserved. www.iocosapes.com*
Troy Academy, founded in 1853, was one Iowa’s earliest institutions of higher learning. It was founded as a “seminary of learning” with the purpose of training teachers. At one time the academy had as many as 167 students and 4 faculty members. It ceased operating as an academy in 1888. The building stood vacant until it became part of the Troy Independent School District from 1904-1917 (reference to NRHP application).

The National Register of Historic Places application explains its historic importance, noting that:

“in the early years the struggling Academy was the then Athens of Davis County. It drew students from all this County and its graduates carried its influence in an ever widening circle. No doubt its influence later caused the organization of the Southern Iowa Normal School at Bloomfield.”

Efforts to restore the historic academy began in the 1970s. The building is open to the public for special occasions. Preservation Iowa named Troy Academy to its 2016 list of “Iowa’s Most Endangered Properties. (reference to Preservation Iowa website).”

**Assessment:** Most of the school resources are not unique and mainly of local significance. The integrity of the school buildings is good. Most are restored as museums and open to the public, at least occasionally. These buildings fit in well with the feel of the Byway and there are travelers who make a point of visiting schools. Marketing this subtheme might draw additional travelers.

Troy Academy is a unique resource and also the one most in need of attention. There are structural issues needing to be addressed and it currently is open to the public only on special occasions.

**Significance:** Regional/Local

**Related Resources:**
- Troy Academy
- Vernon School
- Township Hall (Cantril)
- Milton School
- Valley School No. 3
- White Schoolhouse No. 5
- Oak Grove Historic School & Church
- Center No. 5 School
- East Union School
- Ellis School

**Agriculture**

The history of Iowa is closely tied to its rich soil and productivity. Many historic barns, corn cribs, and farm houses stand throughout the Corridor as evidence of past agricultural practices. A few agricultural buildings and sites have been recognized through the National Register of Historic Places (NHRP) program. While many others exist and can be seen from the Byway, no inventory has been conducted.

Trimble/Parker Historic Farmstead District near Bloomfield is a well-preserved example of an early twentieth century purebred stock farm. Many original buildings have survived, along with others built in later years. The house, c. 1914, is currently used as a Bed & Breakfast.

According to the NRHP application, “The survival of so many of its original buildings, including a diverse set of livestock buildings reflecting the varied stock types and operations carried out on this farmstead between 1901 and 1952, is unusual and notable in the current stock of surviving farmstead buildings in Iowa. Operations reflected in these buildings include the registered cattle and dairy cattle operations as well as horses and sheep raised on this farmstead.”
Midway Stock Farm Barn, built in 1880 near Keosauqua, is a well-preserved example of a nineteenth century stock building. Its real historic significance, however, is the presence of a Louden Pulley System. The barn was converted to dairy farming through the installation of this equipment around 1918. The Louden Machinery Company of Fairfield, Iowa, invented the patented hay carrier system that made two-story barns practical.

The oldest operating orchard in Iowa is located in the Byway Corridor near Donnellson. The first apple tree was planted in 1852 on the property that is now Appleberry Orchard. Appleberry Orchard operates an agri-tourism business including a farm market and a petting zoo in a historic 1882 barn.

The McGreer Farmstead near Donnellson was established in 1837. The Pennsylvania-type barn and banked/basement crib that still stand on the farmstead today were built between 1884-1898. They represent excellent examples of a late nineteenth century livestock operation.

Morris Park, near Stockport, has several buildings containing a large collection of artifacts from the county’s farming past. The park was established around 1940 in honor of Henry and Jane Morris who settled the area in 1938. The first building constructed was a replica of the original log cabin. Other buildings include a school house, Music Hall, Art Hall and a replica of a turn-of-the-century barn. The Van Buren County Conservation Board owns and manages the site with the assistance of the Friends of Morris Park.

The site of Iowa’s oldest county fair is Lee County Fairgrounds in Donnellson. In 1841 local residents organized the first fair as an exhibit of local livestock.

**Assessment:** There are only a few resources in this subtheme but all have good integrity and most are available to the public. There are also other historic barns and agricultural buildings in the Corridor. These resources fit with the overall rural feel of the Byway, making them an important piece. The greatest need is for marketing and interpretation.

**Significance:** Regional/Local

**Related resources**
- Appleberry Orchard
- John McGreer Barn & Crib
- Livery Barn at Davis County Historic Complex
- Midway Stock Farm Barn
- Morris Park
- Trimble Parker Historic Farmstead District
- Wickfield Round Barn

**Churches**
Churches and other places of worship are often the heart of a community. Ten historic churches constructed from 1850 to the early 1900s have been identified in the Corridor. All ten are well-preserved and several still have active congregations. Four of the churches are museums or part of museum complexes.

The Mars Hill Log Church, c. 1850, is believed to be one of the oldest and largest log churches still in occupancy in Iowa.

**Assessment:** There resources in this subtheme are well-distributed across the Byway Corridor and integrity of the buildings is outstanding. The greatest need is for marketing and interpretation.

**Significance:** Local

**Related resources**
- Fairview Church (Moravia Historical Complex)
- Historic Presbyterian Church
Byway Museums

There are four historical complexes and thirteen museums in the Corridor, most located in historic buildings. These entities curate artifacts related to the museum’s mission. They also interpret local historic resources that may extend beyond the museum and site itself.

In 2014, the Byway Council created the Southeast Iowa Museum Guide, a brochure promoting museums in and around the Corridor. A “museum crawl” was held in 2014 and 2015.

Assessment: Museums on the Byway are an important resource. The greatest threat is that many rely on volunteers for management and staffing. Additionally, most museums likely have no preservation plan and all have insufficient funding.

Interpretation and marketing are needed, along with assistance to develop sustainability and preservation plans. Continuation and expansion of the Southeast Iowa Museum Crawl should be encouraged.

Related Resources: See box to right

PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT

Protection and enhancement of the Byway’s historic resources is crucial. Historic structures are especially vulnerable. Everything from new development to natural disasters can destroy an irreplaceable piece of history. Inventory, planning and preservation are key strategies for protecting this valuable resource.

In addition to conserving historic structures, there are stories in need of preservation. As the eldest of the population passes on, historical accounts of people, places, and events are left untold or unwritten. Older
volunteers often manage local historical societies and museums. When those volunteers are gone or unable to serve, it often leaves a gap in knowledge about the site and the artifacts.

Artifacts and documents are also in danger due to improper storage and curation. While there are professional techniques for preserving and tracking these materials, volunteers may be unaware of the best methods to use. In addition, there are costs involved with preservation and many small museums lack funding for that work.

**Threats**

Threats likely to cause a structure to be lost include:

- Inadequate funding
- Aging volunteers/Decreasing volunteers
- Business failure
- Structural failure
- Lack of knowledge & appreciation by the public
- Private property owners lack of knowledge about historic preservation
- Increased flooding on the Des Moines River
- Lack of historic preservation plans and ordinances

Threats likely to leave historical narratives, documents and artifacts and documents at risk:

- Lack of knowledge about document and artifact preservation
- Lack of preservation plans
- Inadequate funding
- Aging local historians

**Solutions**

Communities in the Corridor have done a remarkable job of preserving historic properties. There are also individuals and organizations in the Corridor who work tirelessly to document and care for the area’s historic resources. However, more can and should be done. The list below summarizes resources currently available.

**National Register of Historic Places Program**

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is the official list of the nation's cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the NRHP program is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect historic and archeological resources. The National Park Service (NPS) administers the program.

Listing on the NRHP assists in preserving historic properties through:

- Recognition that a property is of significance to the nation, state or community
- Consideration in the planning for federal or federally assisted projects
- Eligibility for federal tax benefits
- Qualification for federal funding assistance for historic preservation

The first step in the process to nominate a property is evaluation and research to determine the significance and integrity of the property. To be considered eligible, a property must meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. This involves examining the property’s age, integrity, and significance.

- Age and Integrity: Is the property old enough to be considered historic (generally at least 50 years old) and does it still look much the way it did in the past?
- Significance: Is the property associated with:
  - Important events, activities, developments, or people?
  - Significant architectural history or engineering achievements?

The application is submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office of Iowa prior to being forwarded to the NPS for final review and listing. Submission of a good application to NRHP is a large undertaking. The State Historic Preservation Office of Iowa may offer technical assistance but it is the responsibility of the applicant to complete the submission. Many property owners hire historians to assist with the process.

http://www.nps.gov/nr/
The Byway Corridor currently has 38 individual properties and 7 historic districts recognized as worthy of preservation by the National Park Service.

### Historic Properties
- Abner Martin House
- American Gothic House
- Asa Wilson House
- Aunty Green Hotel
- Bentonsport Bridge
- Big 4 Fair Art Hall
- Bloomfield Public Library
- Bonaparte Retreat
- Burg Wagon Works
- Davis County Courthouse
- Des Moines River Lock & Dam at Bonaparte
- Des Moines River Lock & Dam at Keosauqua
- Eisenhower Bridge
- Eldon Carnegie Public Library
- Goodin Building
- Henry Wishard House
- Hotel Manning
- John McGreer Barn & Crib
- Kilbourn Bridge
- Lacey Keosauqua State Park - Bathing Area
- Lacey Keosauqua State Park - Lodge Area
- Lacey Keosauqua State Park - Picnic Group
- Lockkeeper's House
- Mars Hill
- Mason House Inn
- McHaffey Opera House
- Midway Stock Farm Barn
- Pearson House Museum
- Troy Academy
- Van Buren County Courthouse
- Vernon School
- Voltaire Twombly Building/Museum
- Wabash Depot Combination Depot & Museum
- Weaver House
- West Grove United Methodist Church
- Whitely Opera House
- Wickfield Round Barn
- William Findley House

### Historic Districts
- Bentonsport Historic District
- Bloomfield Square
- Bonaparte Historic Riverfront District
- Bonaparte Pottery Archaeological District
- Herschler Winery and Historic District
- Sharon Cemetery Historic District
- Trimble Parker Historic Farmstead District
Main Street America Program

*National Main Street Center, Inc.* is a membership organization that works with local communities to encourage preservation-based community revitalization. Since 1980, the program has equipped more than 2,000 older commercial districts with the skills, and organizing framework they need for renewal.

Bonaparte and Bloomfield are Main Street communities.


Certified Local Government program

The National Historic Preservation Act established a nationwide program to encourage preservation and wise use of our historic resources. Among other things, the Act created the Certified Local Government (CLG) program to support local governments' historic preservation programs.

The CLG program provides training, technical assistance and funding to its participants. The Iowa State Historic Preservation Office administers the program but local governments must follow certain guidelines to qualify. Requirements include operating under and enforcing a historic preservation ordinance or resolution and establishing a historic preservation commission.

In the Corridor, five cities and counties participate in CLG. Appanoose, Monroe and Lee counties do not participate but each have towns outside the Corridor in the CLG program. It may be beneficial to hold discussions with counties that are not certified to determine the barriers and benefits of participation.


CLG Communities in the Corridor

- Bloomfield Historic Preservation Commission
  Contact: Jon Douglas Dixon, Bloomfield
- Davis County Historic Preservation Commission
  Contact: Deb Baughman, Pulaski
- Eldon Historic Preservation Commission
  Contact: Gerald Cranston
- Van Buren County Historic Preservation Commission
  Contact: Larry Streed, Mount Sterling
- Wapello County Historic Preservation Commission
  Contact: Steve Siegel, Ottumwa

Local Historic Societies

Local historical societies are critical to historic preservation in the Corridor. They not only work to preserve historic resources, they also foster a love and appreciation for local history. Each Corridor county has a historical society. Equipping these organizations with more resources in the forms of funding and personnel would be a great benefit to the Byway.

- Van Buren Co. Historical Society
  PO Box 423, Keosauqua
- Davis County Historical Society
  201 S Dodge St, Bloomfield
- Appanoose County Historical Society
  100 West Maple Street, Centerville
- Wapello County Historical Society
  242 W Main St, Ottumwa
- Monroe County Historical Society
  114 A Ave E, Albia
- Lee County Iowa Historical Society
  P.O. Box 125, Keokuk
- North Lee County Historical Society
  P.O. Box 285, Fort Madison

Historic Preservation Easements

Preservation easements (also known as covenants or restrictions) are conservation easements that protect properties having historic, architectural, or archaeological significance. Easements are flexible tools that can address the specific characteristics of a property, the property owner's interests, and the mission, goals, and interests of the easement-holding organization. In many instances, preservation easements protect historic properties not governed by local historic preservation law, and may well be the only protection against demolition or alteration of a...
property’s significant historic resources.

http://www.preservationnation.org/

**Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs**
The Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) is the state agency with responsibility for “development of the state’s interest in the areas of the arts, history and other cultural matters.” http://www.culturalaffairs.org/

The State Historical Society of Iowa is the division of the DCA that deals with education and preservation of the State’s history.

The DCA administers programs that provide technical assistance and funding.

**Funding Sources**

*Community Development Block Grants*
The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a flexible program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. The CDBG Downtown Revitalization Fund provides grants to communities for a variety of projects and activities contributing to comprehensive revitalization in historic city centers.

http://www.iowaeconomicdevelopment.com/CDBG/DowntownFund

*REAP/Historical Resource Development Program*
The purpose of the REAP/HRDP Grants Program is to provide funds to preserve, conserve, interpret, enhance, and educate the public about the historical resources of Iowa.

The following entities may receive HRDP grants:

- Nonprofit corporations
- Governmental units
- Traditional tribal societies and governments of recognized resident American Indian tribes in Iowa
- Individuals
- Private corporations and businesses

HRDP grants can fund the following:

- Acquisition and development of historical resources
- Preservation and conservation of historical resources
- Interpretation of historical resources
- Professional training and educational programs on the acquisition, development, preservation, conservation, and interpretation of historical resources

http://www.iowahistory.org/about/grants/hrdp/index.html

**Country School Grant Program**
The State Historical Society’s Country School Grant program provides up to $5,000 per applicant for the preservation and maintenance of Iowa’s one and two-room country schools. The funds may also be used for interpreting the history of country schools or for educational activities taking place in a country school.


**Training Opportunities**
Volunteers, local officials and property owners can be more effective in historic preservation if they know what resources are available. The Byway Coordinator and Council can assist in bringing workshops to the area and in distributing information about workshops online or in other locations. Examples include:

- Grant writing workshops
- Story gathering workshops/projects
- Best practice workshops for museums and historical societies
- How to apply for NRHP status

**Interpretive and Education Efforts**
Educating the public about the importance of the Corridor’s historic resources is critical in preserving them. The Byway’s interpretive plan should have a strong emphasis on helping local residents learn about these resources, as well as Byway travelers.
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a plan for public education and involvement.
- Assist communities and organizations in holding/attending training workshops.
- Work with museums to develop plans for preservation and volunteer recruitment.
- Encourage events and festivals that promote historic resources.
- Stay informed of efforts to purchase and protect the Iowaville site.
- Determine and publicize the direct and indirect economic impacts of preservation activities.
- Seek funding for local preservation programs and activities.
- Coordinate existing revitalization efforts in each community with Byway initiatives.