ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAYS PROGRAM

The National Scenic Byways Program, established by Congress in 1991, recognizes historic, scenic, and culturally important roads, all of which promote economic development and tourism in communities around the U.S. There are more than 1,200 byways in all 50 states.

Indiana is home to 4 national scenic byways, including the Historic National Road, which has also received the distinction of being designated an All-American Road in 2002 – the gold standard for national scenic byways. The Historic National Road is joined by the Ohio River Scenic Byway, which was one of the original 14 scenic byways in the entire country and was designated as a state scenic byway in 1992. The State Department of Transportation has continued to investigate ways that they can comply with requirements to elevate some of their state scenic byways to meet federal standards.

KEY POINTS

- Indiana is home to 12 scenic byways, including 4 national scenic byways and 8 state scenic byways.
- In 2019, Indiana hosted 82.7 million visitors, who spent $13.7 billion.
- The money generated through tourism and travel in the state contributed $1.5 billion in state and local taxes in 2018.

Images: Indiana’s Historic Pathways (top), Indianan Lincoln Highway credit: Wikimedia commons (column)
All scenic byways exhibit one or more of six core intrinsic qualities — scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archaeological, or natural. For a road to be named a national scenic byway, it must first be designated a state, tribal, or federal agency scenic byway. Once achieving that, a road may apply for national scenic byway designation, but its intrinsic quality must be of regional significance. All-American Roads are the very best of the national scenic byways, demonstrating at least two intrinsic qualities of national significance.