



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

KIRK T. STEUDLE
DIRECTOR

December 22, 2014

The Honorable Rick Snyder
Members of the Michigan State Legislature
Members of the Michigan State Transportation Commission

Dear Governor Snyder and Members of the Legislature and State Transportation Commission:

It is our pleasure to provide you with the annual report on the status of Michigan's Heritage Route Program. Public Act 69 of 1993, Michigan Heritage Routes (MCL 247.958, Section 8), requires the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to report each year to the State Transportation Commission, the Governor, and the Legislature on the following information regarding this Act:

- (a) Routes designated in the previous year.
- (b) Deletions or changes in the Heritage Route system or program during the previous year.

No new designations or deletions have occurred in 2014.

On December 17, 2014, the Michigan State Senate passed House Bill 5072 to change the name from Heritage Route to Pure Michigan Byway. This action is part of a rebranding and reinventing of the program to align it with statewide travel and tourism initiatives.

This rebranding will result in replacement of the existing highway sign with a new design being developed in cooperation with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, MDOT, and Byway committees. The new design will incorporate elements of the "Pure Michigan" campaign logo and the word "Byway," which is used nationwide in 45 other state programs. Signs with the new design will be fabricated as needed to maintain inventory levels and installed according to statewide sign replacement schedules and maintenance requirements. The sign installation process may be advanced provided the availability of financial assistance from another state or local agency and/or interested partner.

Other program changes previously introduced include adding three intrinsic qualities to the program, bringing the total to six. The newest additions are noted below in italics. A state highway nominated for designation must possess at least one of the six qualities. Intrinsic qualities are features along the roadway corridor that contribute to the character of the roadway. Basing the designation on these features highlights the road's outstanding qualities. The six intrinsic qualities are:

- Scenic: A state highway having outstanding natural beauty.
- Historic: A state highway having outstanding historic resources along its length.
- Recreational: A state highway maintained not only to serve the recreational driver, but also to capture the recreational setting of the area itself, and set the mood for recreational experience.
- *Cultural*: A state highway traversing an area with unique cultural and/or ethnic heritage amenities such as art galleries, theaters, opera houses, restaurants, markets, and music venues.

The Honorable Rick Snyder
Members of the Michigan State Legislature
Members of the Michigan State Transportation Commission
Page 2
December 22, 2014

- *Archaeological*: A state highway traversing a corridor with ruins, artifacts, and structural remains.
- *Natural*: A state highway that traverses a corridor with natural features that are relatively undisturbed, unique geological landforms, vegetation, water bodies, or conservation areas.

Listed below are the current state designated Heritage Routes and National Scenic Byways:

- Copper Country (US-41), Houghton and Keweenaw Counties.
- Tahquamenon Trail (M-123), Chippewa and Luce Counties.
- Leelanau Heritage Route (M-22), Leelanau County.
- Tunnel of Trees (M-119), Emmet County.
- Peninsula Heritage Route (M-37), Grand Traverse County.
- Heritage Trail (US-2), Iron County.
- Center Avenue (M-25), Bay City.
- Territorial Road (I-94 Business Loop), City of Marshall.
- US-12 Heritage Trail (US-12), Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, Branch, Hillsdale, Lenawee, Washtenaw, and Wayne Counties.
- Monroe Street Heritage Route (M-125), City of Monroe.
- Miles of Smiles (M-15), from Clarkston to Bay City in Oakland, Genesee, Tuscola and Bay Counties.
- Chief Noontday (M-179), from US-131 to Hastings in Allegan and Barry Counties.
- Woodward Avenue (M-1), from Detroit to Pontiac in Wayne and Oakland Counties.
- Sunrise Side Coastal Highway (US-23), from Standish to Mackinaw City in Arenac, Iosco, Alcona, Alpena, Presque Isle, and Cheboygan Counties.
- River Road (M-65) Iosco County.
- U.P. Hidden Coast (M-35) Menominee & Escanaba Counties.
- I-69 Branch and Calhoun Counties.

Routes currently under consideration for nomination under the new program name "Pure Michigan Byway":

- M-134, (North Huron) Mackinac County from I-75 to Drummond Island (application submitted).
- US-31 (West Michigan Pike) from the state line to Ludington (application not yet received by MDOT).

If you have any questions, please contact either me or Denise B. Jackson, Administrator, Statewide Transportation Planning Division, at 517-335-2962.

Sincerely,



Kirk T. Steudle
Director