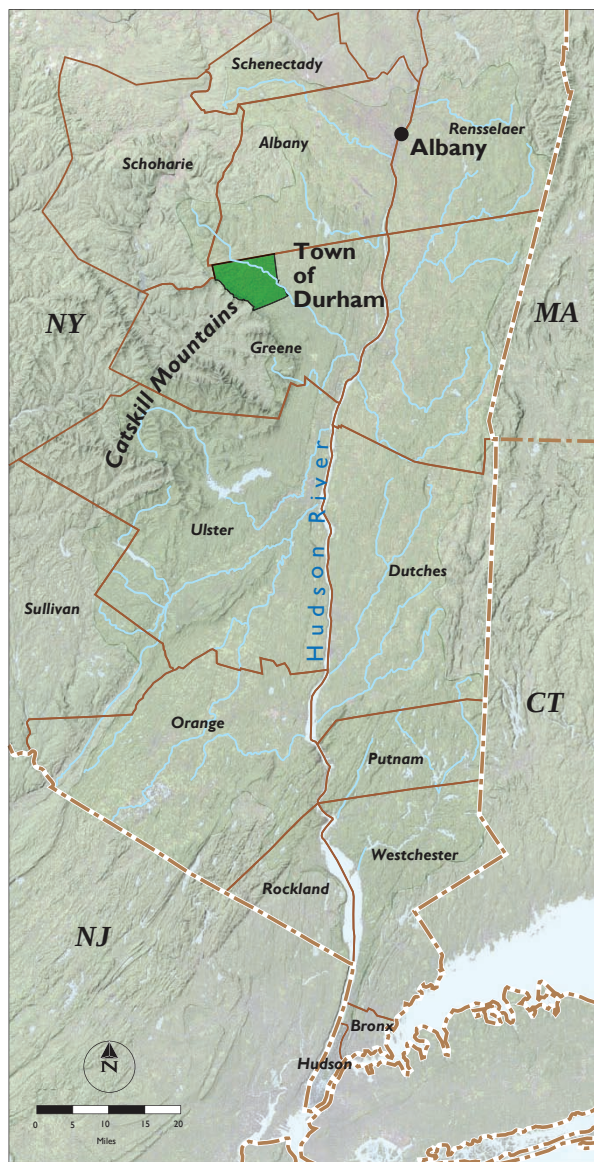




Introduction



The Durham Valley is part of the geographic area loosely defined as the Mid-Hudson Valley.

The Durham Valley Scenic Byway is located in the Town of Durham, Greene County, New York, about 24 miles northwest of the Village of Catskill and about 30 miles southwest of the state capital, Albany. The Scenic Byway Corridor slopes from the northernmost escarpment of the Catskill Mountains to a plain that gently rolls north to Albany and east to the Hudson River Valley. The Durham Valley is part of the geographic area loosely defined as the Mid-Hudson Valley.

The Durham Valley Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan provides the vision, goals, and management recommendations for protecting and enhancing 21 miles of mostly contiguous New York State-designated Scenic Roads in the Town of Durham. The Durham Valley Scenic Byway encompasses several roads in the Hamlets of Durham and Cornwallville. The Setting figure on the following page highlights these roads and a description for each road is provided below.

- **County Route 20** – 4.0 miles from the Schoharie County line east to the Hamlet of Durham (this portion being also known as the Susquehanna Turnpike) 0.8 mile then continuing south to Cochrane Road (this portion being also known as Dugway Road); 0.7 mile then continuing east to the junction with Gulf Schoolhouse Road; then excepting the 0.1-mile segment from Gulf Schoolhouse to the forked intersection at Stonebridge Road; 0.9 mile then continuing south to Sutton Road; 3.0 miles then continuing east through Cornwallville to the junction with County Route 20B.
- **County Route 10** – 1.4 miles from County Route 20 (Susquehanna Turnpike) south to the Town of Durham line.



- **Cochrane Road** – 3.0 miles from County Route 20 (Susquehanna Turnpike) east to rejoin County Route 20 (at the southern end of Dugway Road).
- **Prink Hill Lane** – 0.7 mile from County Route 20 (Susquehanna Turnpike) south to Cochrane Road.
- **Stonebridge Road** – 1.0 mile from Shady Glen Road west to County Route 20.
- **Cunningham Road** – 0.4 mile from the Town of Durham line east to Sutton Road.
- **Sutton Road** – 3.4 miles from Cunningham Road east to County Route 20.
- **Cornwallville Road** – 0.3 mile from County Route 20 in the Hamlet of Cornwallville south to the Flinn Road junction; then excepting the approximately 1.2 mile-segment between Flinn Road and Fall Creek; 0.8 mile then continuing to the Hervey Street junction; then excepting the 0.3-mile segment between Hervey Street and Throp Creek; 0.4 mile then continuing east to a point beyond the next creek (unnamed); then excepting the approximately 0.5 mile remaining to the State Route 23 junction.



Corridor Identification

Unlike many other state designated scenic and historic byways that consist primarily of one long linear corridor, the Durham Valley Scenic Byway is a network of historic corridors that traverses the Durham Valley. All of the scenic roads contribute a distinct individual character, making the network of scenic roads an authentic and high quality experience that expresses the intrinsic values of the Durham Valley. The intrinsic values include broad scenic views across the Durham Valley, cultural resources including historic houses, farms, stone bridges and walls, and natural resources such as the backdrop of the Catskill Mountains and the Durham Valley's streams.

The Durham Valley has been an agricultural community for several hundred years and is defined by working farm landscapes interspersed by several hamlets. All are connected by a network of county and town roads, many of which are scenic roads. The scenic roads are the most significant of these historic road corridors. The east-west scenic roads traverse valley hillsides, while the north-south scenic roads loop up and around rolling hills and down into stream valleys. The forested hillsides of the Catskills Mountains to the west contrast the geometric patterns of the rural agricultural lands that surround the hamlets of gridded streets and historic buildings.

Definition of the Scenic Byway Corridor

The term "Scenic Byway Corridor" refers to more than just the 21 miles of designated scenic roads and immediately adjacent areas because of the unique corridor identification. Although there are discontinuities, each of the designated scenic roads contributes to the overall network through its distinct natural and cultural attributes. Each road has an individual character that is built upon its topography, views, geographic presence, and cultural features.

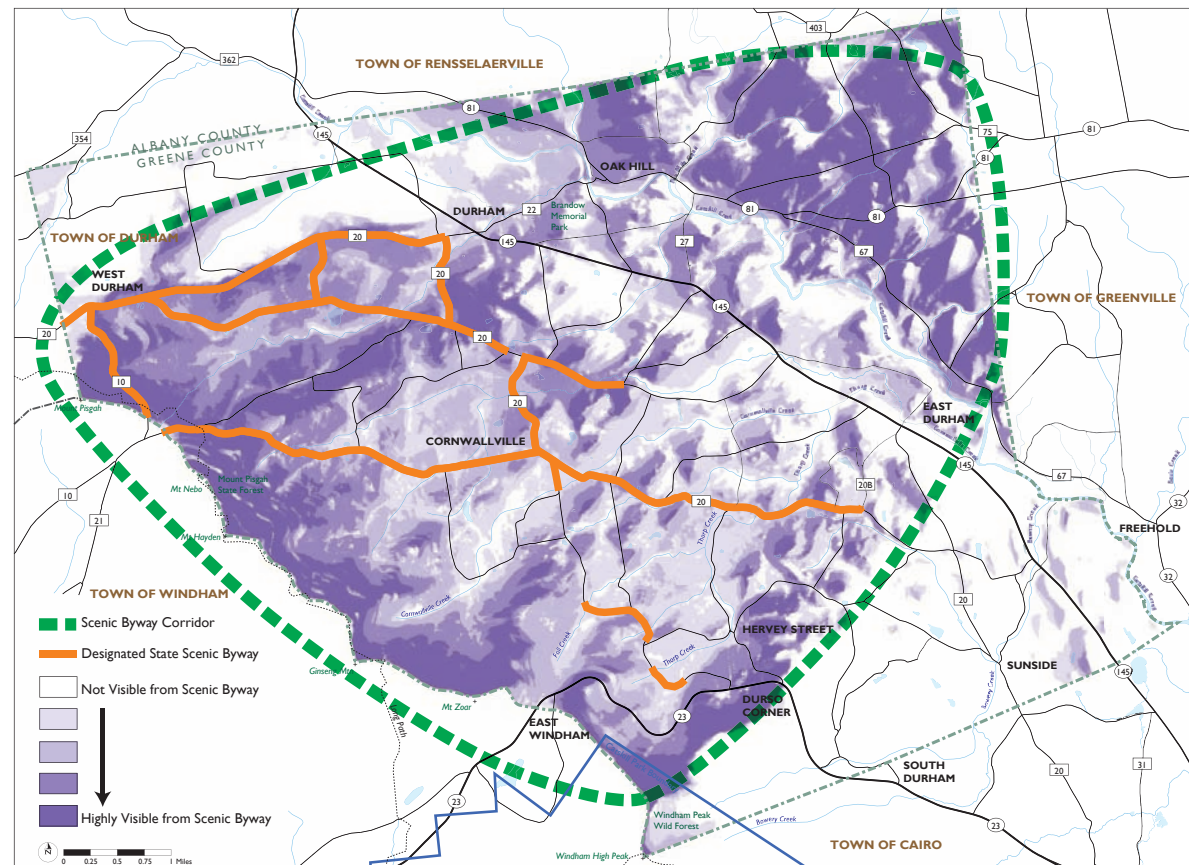
For example, a road such as Sutton Road follows the contours of the land and offers broad open views of Durham Valley showcasing the distinct rolling hills of farm fields, farmsteads, and stream corridors. In contrast, a road such as Cornwallville Road follows the rolling topography and offers close views of tree-lined drives, sugar maple rows, and historic dairy barns.

In order to define the Scenic Byway Corridor for the purposes of this document, the Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee conducted a visual analysis to identify those areas of the Durham Valley visible from the designated scenic roads. This viewshed mapping (see below) captures from

a graphic perspective the extent to which the landscape influences the Scenic Byway's intrinsic qualities. It is this viewshed mapping that captures the greatest concentration of resources and visitor opportunities. It is this viewshed mapping that defines the Scenic Byway Corridor for which this Corridor Management Plan is designed.

Description of the Durham Valley Scenic Byway and Corridor

The Durham Valley Scenic Byway (Scenic Byway) spotlights a region where mountains begin quite dramatically with the Catskill Escarpment rising up suddenly from the Hudson Valley. In a press release



Viewshed mapping captures from a graphic perspective the extent of the Scenic Byway Corridor.

at the time of the scenic road designation, New York State Environmental Conservation Commissioner Thomas C. Jorling noted the *“extraordinary scenic quality along these roads,” and observed that “Marvelous vistas, mountains, woodlands and other natural features in the Town of Durham have made these roads worthy of the scenic roads designation... This designation will help focus attention on the importance of preserving, protecting and enhancing the natural, historical, and cultural qualities these roads possess.”*



Transportation into and through the Durham Valley was revolutionized by construction of the Susquehanna Turnpike in the period of 1800 to 1806. The Susquehanna Turnpike was particularly important because it provided a route from the Mid-Hudson Valley over the northern tip of the Catskills and down to the Susquehanna River Valley, a significant transportation route and settlement area. First listed on the National Register in 1974, the Susquehanna Turnpike is the backbone of the Scenic Byway Corridor and provides some of the most spectacular views from the Scenic Byway.

Most of the western boundary of the Town of Durham was set at the top of a ridge of mountains surveyed by David Baldwin in 1806. The ridge, which defines the western border of the Scenic

Byway Corridor, runs from the top of Mount Pisgah (2,912 feet), over Mount Nebo (2,590 feet) and Mount Hayden (2,830 feet), then across Barlow Notch (2,330 feet) to Ginseng Mountain (2,810 feet), and across Jennie Notch (2,430 feet) to Mount Zoar (2,730 feet), and from there across State Route 23 and up Windham High Peak (3,524 feet). Today, this ridge is also the route of the Long Path, a 326-mile public hiking trail that extends from the George Washington Bridge, traverses the Scenic Byway Corridor, and continues on toward Albany.

The Durham Valley retains its rural character. At upper elevations, second growth mixed-hardwood forest stands have reclaimed the mountaintops, due in part to replanting efforts by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). At lower elevations, fallow agricultural fields are juxtaposed with highly productive plantings of corn, wheat, and hay; second growth forests; and thick brush. The Durham Valley is an intimate landscape that offers travelers a chance to sample the local flavor and interact with the regional character of the Town of Durham in Greene County. Part of that flavor and character are the Catskill Mountains, diverse natural and scenic beauty, agricultural heritage, and the variety of historic and cultural sites along the Scenic Byway.



Benefits of a Scenic Byway

Like all scenic byways, the Durham Valley Scenic Byway is a source of local pride, a chance for citizens to showcase the beauty of their region. Moreover, the Scenic Byway provides the community with what one proponent called a “road map to the future” — a way for stakeholders to determine what they like about their community and how to preserve these qualities while encouraging economic growth. The scenic byway designation is a unique tool, in that it can be used to achieve a wide variety of the Durham Valley community’s goals.

Purpose of the Corridor Management Plan

A Corridor Management Plan reflects the value the public places upon a particular resource. A Corridor Management Plan articulates a vision of the public for a scenic byway and represents a commitment to conserve and enhance the byway’s intrinsic qualities. The Corridor Management Plan specifies the actions, procedures, operational and administrative practices, and strategies to maintain the natural, scenic, recreational, historic, cultural, and archaeological qualities of a byway corridor while recognizing the need to promote tourism and economic development. A Corridor



Plan Contents

This Corridor Management Plan provides a vision for preserving and enhancing the Durham Valley Scenic Byway and prescribes management strategies, including:

- Preservation of the Scenic Byway's intrinsic qualities
- Development of interpretive features to enhance the visitor experience
- Recommendations on existing and future marketing needs
- Implementation of the Corridor Management Plan
- Continuing agency, organization, and community participation

This plan has been prepared under the guidance of the Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee and cooperatively funded by a grant from the Federal Highway Administration through the National Scenic Byways Program and matching funds from the Durham Valley Land Trust.

Management Plan also is a working document. Therefore, the Corridor Management Plan will be reviewed continually and revised as new information arises. The Durham Valley Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee (Scenic Byway Coordinating Committee) comprises interested individuals and stakeholders who will continue to work to implement the Corridor Management Plan and update it as needed.

The Corridor Management Plan is not a document of new laws, regulations, or ordinances, but instead draws on existing land use plans plus recommendations, by property owners and stakeholders, to assist in protecting and promoting the Scenic Byway.