

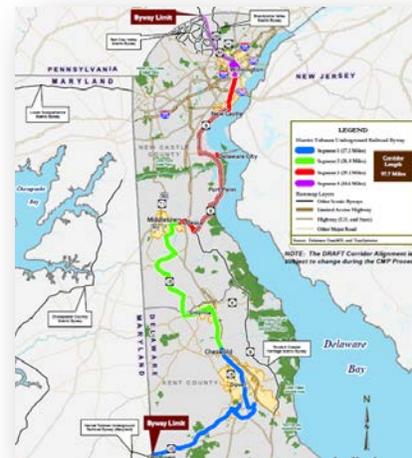
Chapter 1.0 Introduction to the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway (HTURB) Corridor Management Plan (CMP)

The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway (HTURB) Corridor Management Plan (CMP) is intended to provide a collection of information that will assist in the preservation, promotion, interpretation, enhancement, and management of the intrinsic resources found throughout the HTURB corridor. This CMP will attempt to foster economic development, continued research, and set a clear course for future actions (projects) within the HTURB communities. This CMP is an extension of the people – the people of the HTURB. The diverse goals and wishes of the many communities along the corridor have been assembled and unified in this CMP, to give a common voice that will be heard and understood for years to come.

Throughout the CMP are brown text-boxes (see National Scenic Byway CMP Point #1 below) that call-out the section of the CMP that addresses one of the 17 points or criteria required by the National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP) for a CMP to be eligible for All-American Road (AAR) – the intent of this CMP (see Section 1.3 for more details).

1.1 Corridor Limits

The HTURB corridor is approximately 98 miles in length travelling through the State of Delaware. For the purpose of this CMP the corridor is divided into four (4) main segments and travels from Sandtown (where it meets the terminus of the Maryland Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Scenic Byway) in the southwestern part of Delaware, north to Wilmington, and beyond to the Delaware/Pennsylvania border. The corridor passes through the communities of Sandtown, Camden, Dover, Smyrna, Clayton, Townsend, Middletown, Odessa, Port Penn, Delaware City, New Castle, Wilmington and Centerville. The corridor limits are displayed on Figure 1.



National Scenic Byway CMP Point #1

A map identifying the corridor boundaries, location, intrinsic qualities and land uses in the corridor.

The corridor has been divided into four (4) main segments in an effort to make the mapping and narrative sections of this CMP more manageable and detailed. The individual segment maps are displayed in Figures 2 through 5. The maps/figures provide a detailed perspective of the corridor as it travels through the State of Delaware.



HARRIET TUBMAN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD BYWAY

Delaware

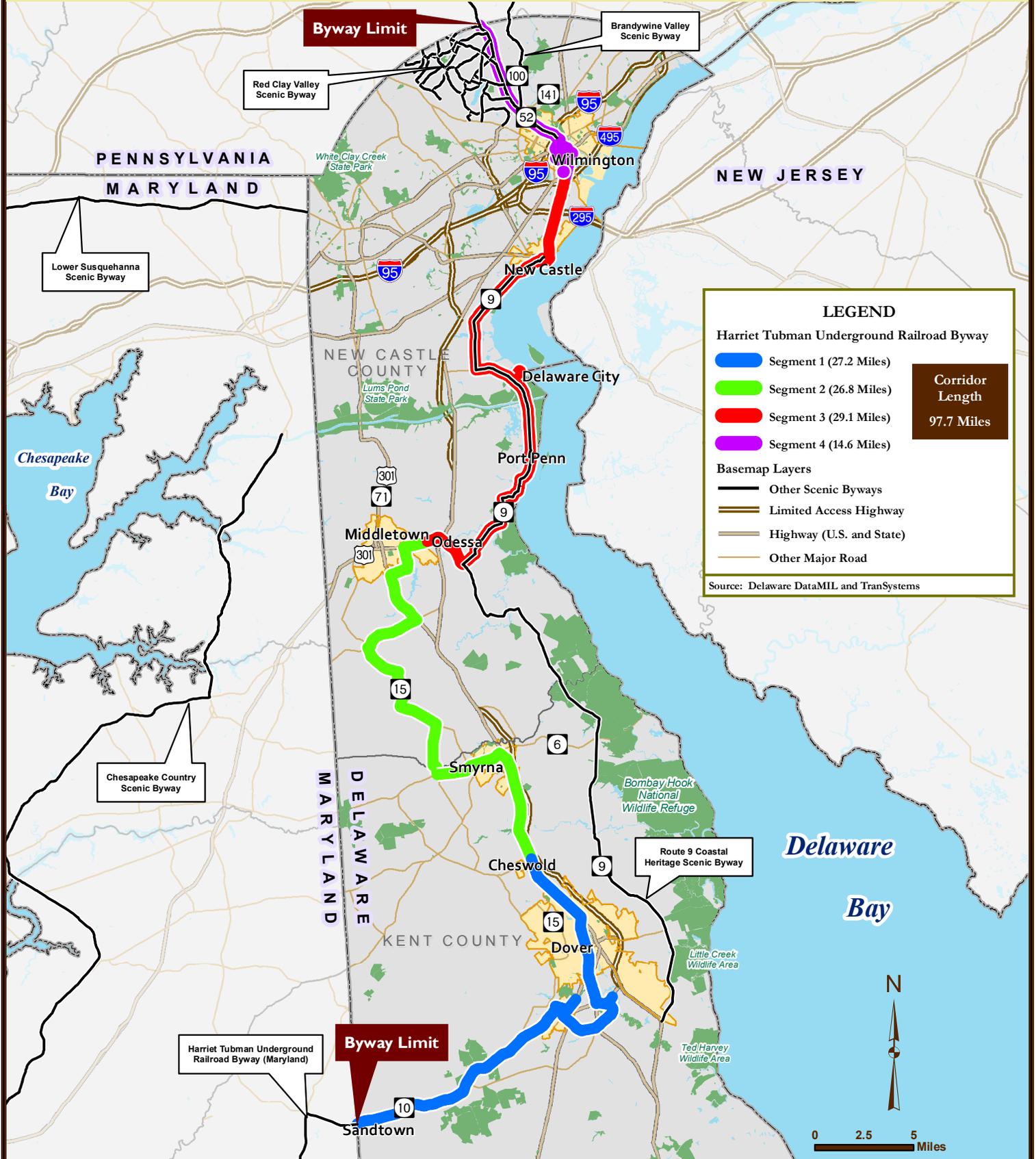
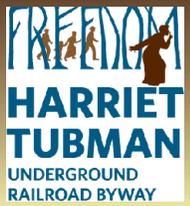


Figure 1: Corridor Limits Map





HARRIET TUBMAN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD BYWAY

Delaware

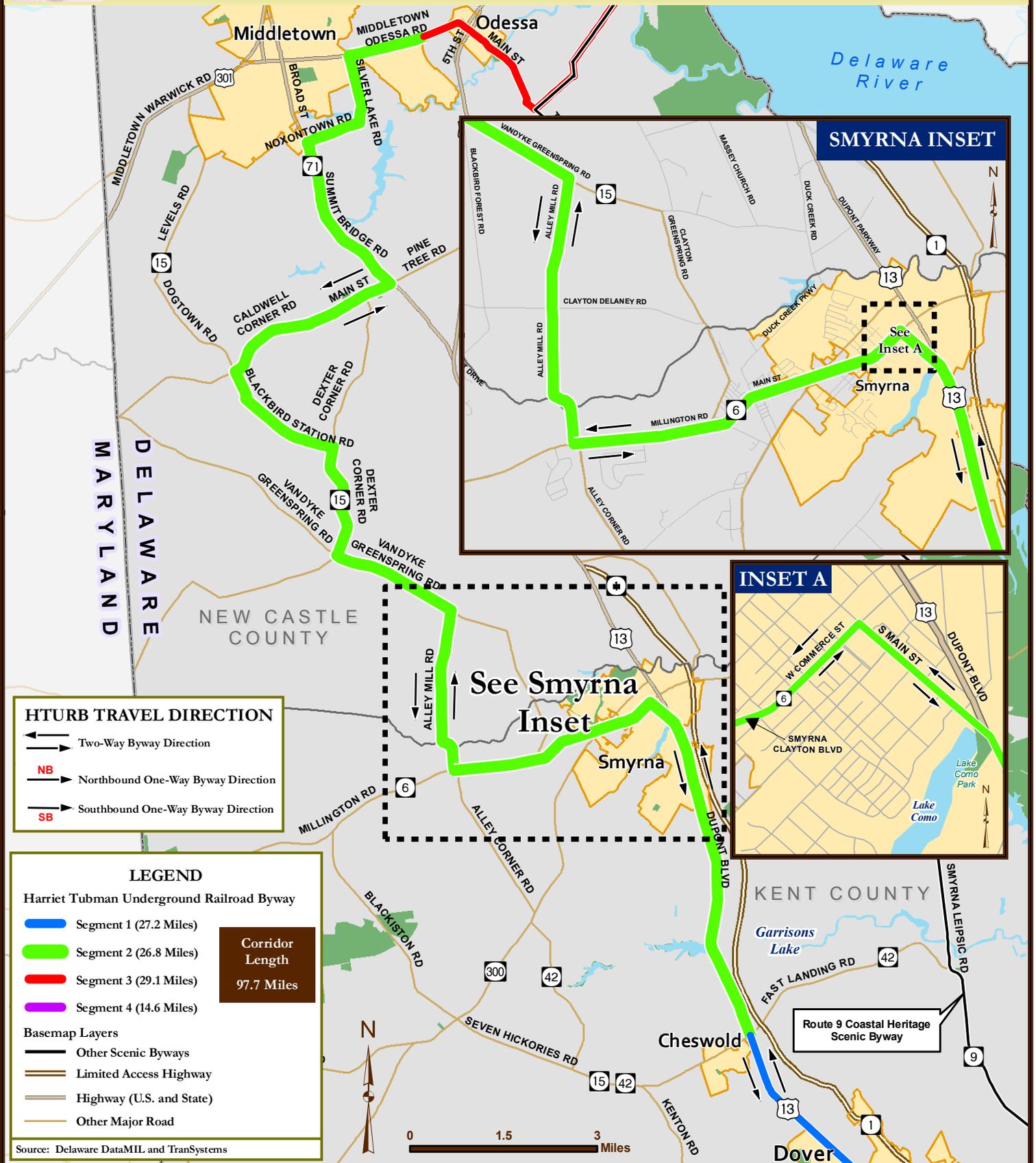
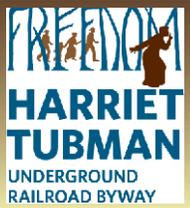
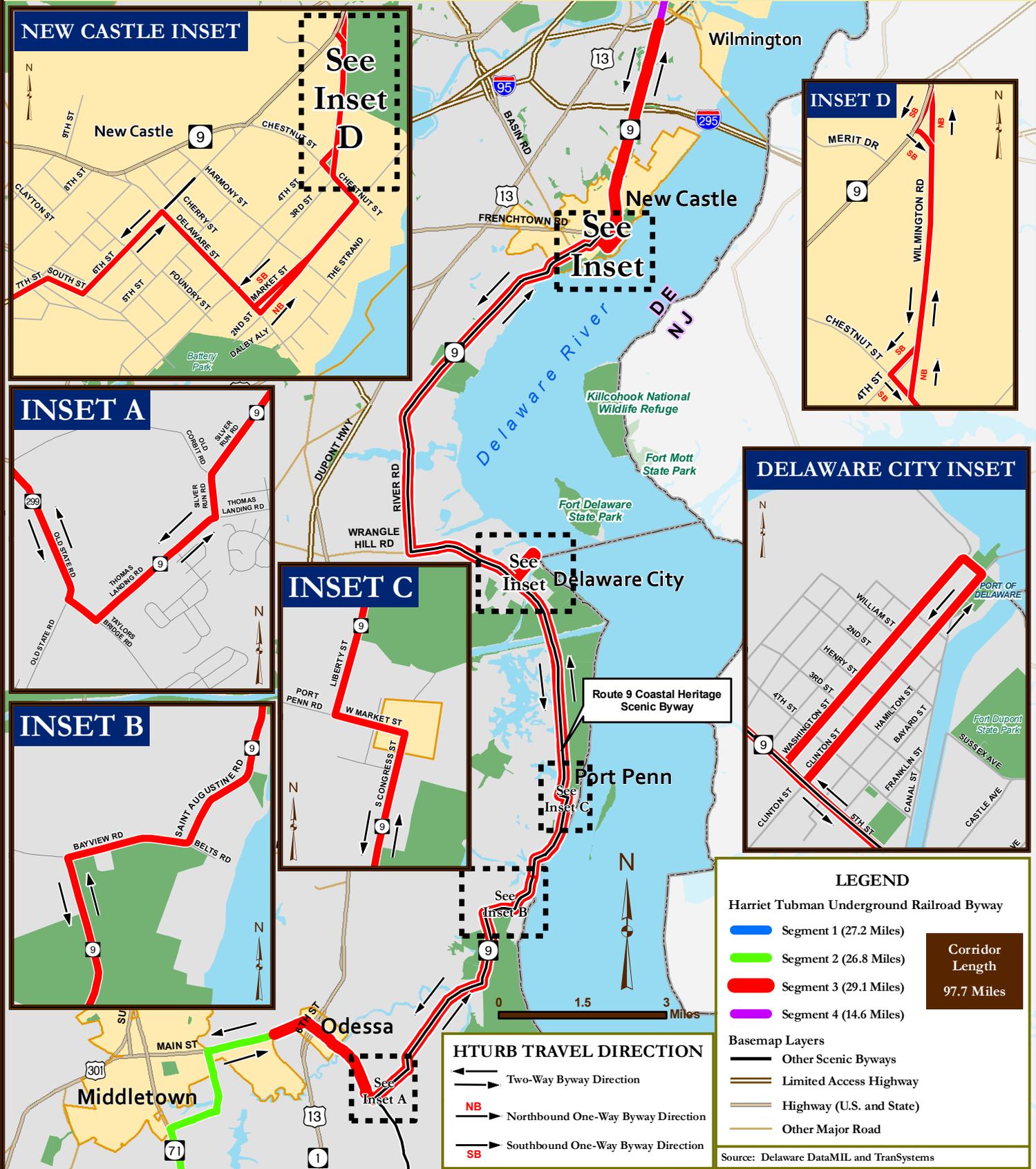
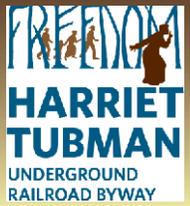


Figure 3: Project Study Area (Segment 2)



HARRIET TUBMAN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD BYWAY

Delaware



LEGEND

Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway

- █ Segment 1 (27.2 Miles)
- █ Segment 2 (26.8 Miles)
- █ Segment 3 (29.1 Miles)
- █ Segment 4 (14.6 Miles)

Corridor Length
97.7 Miles

Basemap Layers

- Other Scenic Byways
- Limited Access Highway
- Highway (U.S. and State)
- Other Major Road

Source: Delaware DataMIL and TranSystems

HTURB TRAVEL DIRECTION

- ↔ Two-Way Byway Direction
- Northbound One-Way Byway Direction
- ← Southbound One-Way Byway Direction

Figure 4: Project Study Area (Segment 3)



HARRIET TUBMAN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD BYWAY

Delaware

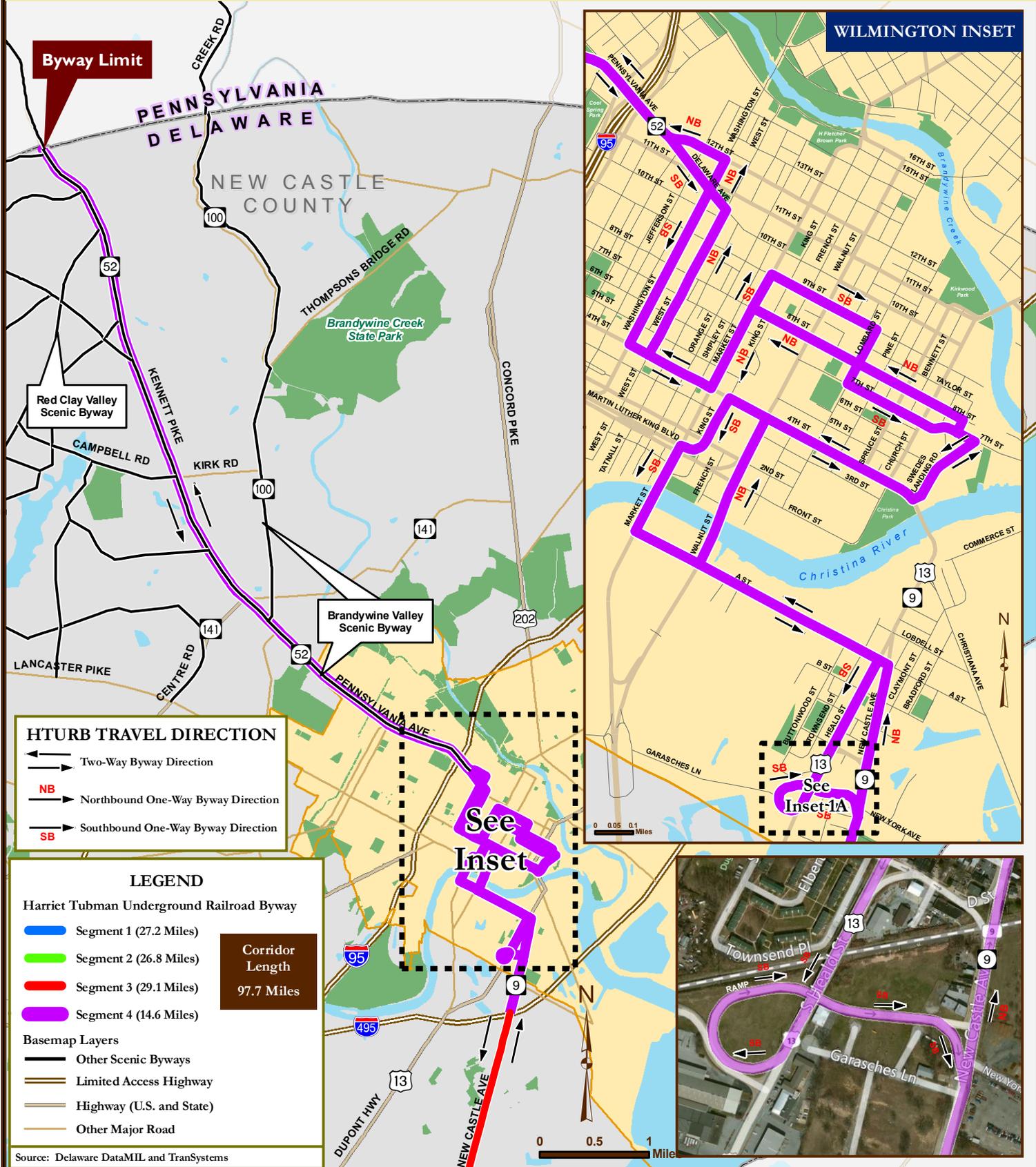
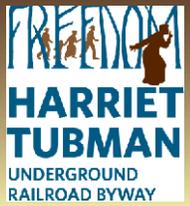


Figure 5: Project Study Area (Segment 4)

1.2 Stakeholders

The HTURB has an extensive and diverse group of vested, interested and concerned stakeholders. These include citizens, business owners, government and other public agencies, religious entities, private entities and others. In an effort to include and coordinate with as many entities as possible the following groups (discussed below) were coordinated with throughout the development of the CMP.

1.2.1 Steering Committee

The Steering Committee, which formed in the early stages of the CMP development (2010), acted as an advisory committee to assist in research, implementation, review and approval of all documents and deliverables. The Steering Committee was comprised of a variety of individuals including Underground Railroad (UR) Coalition members, concerned citizens, business owners, government agency staff, college/university professors, tourism leaders and entities, neighborhood organizations, DeIDOT staff, and other vested interests.

1.2.2 Focus Groups

The Focus Groups were composed of individuals from communities along the corridor that had a vested interest in the Scenic Byway and offered insight related to the community's wishes and direction for the development of the CMP. The purpose of the Focus Group was to provide the CMP development project team (DeIDOT, Steering Committee and Consultants) with direction and insight. The Focus Groups contained individuals that were experts about the HTURB, its communities, the corridor story and the intrinsic resources that are within the corridor.

During the development of this CMP there were two (2) series of Focus Group meetings held along the corridor in March 2011 and November 2011. Each series of Focus Group meetings included seven (7) individual Focus Group meetings located in the following communities along the Byway corridor:

- Camden
- Dover
- Smyrna
- Delaware City
- Odessa
- New Castle
- Wilmington

The Focus Group meetings allowed attendees to review the CMP and associated sections. Maps, data, and other important sections of the CMP were reviewed and discussed to allow for comments and revisions. Interactive

Be a Part of Something Great!

Join us for a Focus Group meeting to provide input and comments on the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway Corridor Management Plan (CMP) in your community.

Project Purpose

The Focus Group meeting will provide an opportunity for you to contribute your thoughts and ideas for the development and future of Delaware's Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway. The CMP will develop a vision with goals and strategies for the future preservation, promotion, and enhancement of the Byway and its communities.

Focus Group Meeting Details

There will be two (2) series of Focus Group meetings scheduled for March 2011 and October 2011. Each series of Focus Group meetings will include seven (7) individual Focus Group meetings.

You are invited to attend the Focus Group meeting of your choice, listed in the sidebar to the right.

For more information, please contact:

- Annamay Decker, (302) 760-2114, annamay.decker@state.de.us
- Carol Truppi, (302) 760-2128, carol.truppi@state.de.us

Visit our website at www.harriettubmandelaware.com.

Meeting Dates and Times

Monday, March 28

Wilmington - Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitors Bureau
100 West 10th Street, Wilmington
2:00pm - 3:30pm

Delaware City - Delaware City Library
250 5th Street, Delaware City
7:00pm - 8:30pm

Tuesday, March 29

Odessa - Historic Odessa Bank
201 Main Street, Odessa
10:30am - Noon

New Castle - New Castle Courthouse Museum
211 Delaware Street, New Castle
2:00pm - 3:30pm

Smyrna - Smyrna Opera House
7 W. South Street, Smyrna
6:30pm - 8:00pm

Wednesday, March 30

Dover - Old State House First Floor Courtroom
25 The Green, Dover
4:00pm - 5:30pm

Camden - Camden Town Hall First Floor King Meeting Room
1783 Friends Way, Camden
7:00pm - 8:30pm

Logos for DeIDOT and Delaware Byways are shown at the bottom.

exercises were utilized to elicit comments and discussion by the attendees, including a feedback session that was focused on the Action Plan and future implementation goals for the corridor. Detailed notes were taken by the consultant team to ensure efficient documentation of feedback.

1.2.3 General Public

The general public was afforded the opportunity to review all CMP related materials to ensure that the CMP was a by-product of the communities and those with a vested interest in the corridor. The general public was provided multiple opportunities to provide input pertaining to their vision, goals, actions, and wishes for the future of the HTURB. Two (2) series of Public Workshops were held in communities along the Byway to ensure adequate public input. The Public Workshops were held in June 2011 and March 2012 in multiple locations along the Byway.

1.3 The Delaware Byways Program and the National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP)

The Delaware Byways Program was developed during the 2000 legislative session after the State of Delaware General Assembly passed Senate Bill 320 authorizing the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) to develop and manage the program. Its purpose is to provide recognition to Delaware roadways possessing certain intrinsic qualities that create special visual experience to people traveling the roadways.

To date (August 2012), Delaware has six (6) state designated Scenic Byways:

- Brandywine Valley (National Scenic Byway)*
- Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway
- Lewes Byway
- Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway
- Route 9 Coastal Heritage Scenic Byway
- Western Sussex Byway

**Note: The Brandywine Valley Scenic Highway is also designated as a National Scenic Byway.*

A Scenic Byway in the State of Delaware is a transportation route, which is adjacent to, or travels through an area that has particular intrinsic scenic, historic, natural, cultural, recreational or archeological qualities. It is a road corridor that offers an alternative travel route to our major highways, while telling a story about Delaware's heritage, recreational activities or beauty. It is a route that is managed in order to protect its special intrinsic qualities and to encourage appreciation and/or development of tourism and recreational resources.



The National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP) is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. The program is a grassroots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States. Since 1992, the National Scenic Byways Program has funded more than 3174 projects for state and nationally designated Byway routes in 50 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. The U.S. Secretary of Transportation recognizes certain roads as All-American Roads or National Scenic Byways based on one or more archeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic qualities. (Source: <http://www.Byways.org>)



Scenic Byways may be designated as either a National Scenic Byway (those that represent one resource category significantly at a national level) or an All-American Road (those that significantly represent two or more resource categories). All-American Roads are the top tier of Scenic Byways in the United States, with National Scenic Byways falling under them, and State Scenic Byways falling next in line, in order of significance.

The National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP) requires that a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) meet the following fourteen (14) criteria, plus an additional three (3) criteria for those Scenic Byways that are seeking All-American Road designations, which require a total of seventeen (17) criteria.

17 Criteria of the NSBP CMP Requirements for All-American Road Designation

1. A map identifying the corridor boundaries, location, intrinsic qualities, and land uses in the corridor.
2. An assessment of the intrinsic qualities and their "context" (the areas surrounding them).
3. A strategy for maintaining and enhancing each of those intrinsic qualities.
4. The agencies, groups, and individuals who are part of the team that will carry out the plan, including a list of their specific, individual responsibilities. Also, a schedule of when and how you'll review the degree to which those responsibilities are being met.
5. A strategy of how existing development might be enhanced and new development accommodated to preserve the intrinsic qualities of your Byway.
6. A plan for on-going public participation.
7. A general review of the road's safety record to locate hazards and poor design, and identify possible corrections.
8. A plan to accommodate commercial traffic while ensuring the safety of sightseers in smaller vehicles, as well as bicyclists, joggers and pedestrians.
9. A listing and discussion of efforts to minimize anomalous intrusions on the visitor's experience of the Byway.
10. Documentation of compliance with all existing local, state, and federal laws about the control of outdoor advertising.
11. A plan to make sure that the number and placement of highway signs will not get in the way of the scenery, but still be sufficient to help tourists find their way. This includes, where appropriate, signs for international tourists who may not speak or read English fluently.
12. Plans of how the Byway will be marketed and publicized.

13. Any proposals for modifying the roadway, including an evaluation about design standards and how proposed changes may affect the Byway's intrinsic qualities.
14. A description of what you plan to do to explain and interpret your Byway's significant resources to visitors.

All-American Road Criteria

15. A narrative on how the All-American Road would be promoted, interpreted, and marketed in order to attract travelers, especially those from other countries. The agencies responsible for these activities should be identified.
16. A plan to encourage the accommodation of increased tourism, if this is projected. Some demonstration that the roadway, lodging and dining facilities, roadside rest areas, and other tourist necessities will be adequate for the number of visitors induced by the Byway's designation as an All-American Road.
17. A plan for addressing multi-lingual information needs.



(Source: Federal Register: May 18, 1995 (Volume 60, Number 96, Pages 26759-26762))

The following list provides the location within this CMP of each National Scenic Byway Program criteria:

Table I-1: NSBP Criteria Location in the HTURB CMP

NSBP Criteria #	Section of CMP
1	1.1
2	3.0
3	5.0
4	6.0
5	5.0
6	6.0
7	4.13
8	4.15
9	5.5
10	4.12
11	11.3
12	8.0
13	4.14
14	11.0
15	8.3
16	7.0
17	8.9

1.4 Benefits of National Scenic Byway / All-American Road Designation

Scenic Byways are roads that highlight and capture the significant cultural, historic, archeological, recreational, natural, and scenic features of an area. These significant roadways provide an enjoyable experience for travelers, while providing local communities with economic development opportunities, sustainability, and tourist revenue. Designating and protecting our country's Scenic Byways is a way to preserve and enhance America's beauty and heritage for future generations to experience and enjoy. For designation as a National Scenic Byway (NSB) or All-American Road (AAR) a road must possess intrinsic qualities that are nationally or regionally significant. Once designated the Scenic Byway becomes part of the collection called America's Byways. In addition, a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) must be prepared that identifies significant intrinsic resources, potential impacts to those resources, preservation, maintenance, enhancement strategies and promotion/marketing plans. Benefits of National Scenic Byway designation include the following:



America's Byways Locations (August 2012)

National Recognition

National Scenic Byway designation recognition carries with it not only a heightened awareness of the corridor as one of the premier corridors in the country, but also recognition of the entities, Stakeholders, agencies, organizations, businesses, and communities that worked so hard to achieve designation. Identification of the route on local, state, and federal maps can lead to more tourism opportunities for the area. National Scenic Byway designation also provides recognition through international and national marketing and promotional opportunities via the National Scenic Byways Program website and marketing literature, as well as local, state and national tourism entities and their collective marketing/promotion information. It is also anticipated that the HTURB corridor group will develop marketing and promotional materials in the future to continue the recognition and promotion of the corridor.

Increased Pride

National Scenic Byways are a source of local community pride and provide a chance for citizens to showcase the beauty and unique qualities of their region. This CMP provides a way for Stakeholders to determine what they prefer to highlight and enhance in their communities. It also identifies methods of preservation for intrinsic resources while encouraging thoughtful and sustainable growth and development. National Scenic Byway designation is a means to a communal goal. It provides a network opportunity for like-minded individuals in all of the communities along the corridor to come together and share a voice for the good of the corridor and its resources.

Increased Funding Opportunities

State and National Scenic Byway designation will help the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway become eligible for federal funds, as well as other funding sources and potential partnership opportunities that may not have been available otherwise.

For further information on funding please refer to Chapter 9.0 of this CMP.

1.5 Corridor Story

Before the American Civil War, enslaved African Americans struggled to liberate themselves from bondage by fleeing their enslavers and the communities that denied them their liberty. Though enslaved people had been escaping from slavery for a long time before the Civil War, the network of people, places, and modes of transportation aiding in their flight became known as the “Underground Railroad” (UGRR), after the then newly built railroad system of the late 1820s. As a slave state bordering the free states of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, Delaware was a critical but dangerous gauntlet to freedom.

Harriet Tubman, one of the most prolific and famous Underground Railroad “conductors” in American history, traversed these landscapes throughout the 1850s during her daring rescue missions into Maryland.



Slavery was the reason the Underground Railroad existed. Despite having the smallest number of slaves of any state in the South prior to the Civil War, Delaware’s legal, social, and economic foundations stood firmly in support of the institution of slavery and aligned it with its neighboring slaveholding states. Its close proximity, however, to Free states also made it an important corridor for Virginia and Maryland freedom seekers striking for liberty further north.

The Underground Railroad was an evolving system and network of real people, places, and methods – including modes of transportation, means of disguise and deception, and other schemes of thwarting barriers to the pursuit of freedom - which facilitated and often encouraged attempts by enslaved people to escape bondage. The Underground Railroad was not a building, place or a person, although buildings, places and people were part of it. The Underground Railroad was also *movement* rooted in the evolving political, religious, moral, and personal ideologies of freedom and equality nourished by Enlightenment thought, the American Revolution and the desire of people to be free and in control of their own lives. This *movement* expanded politically and geographically over time, from isolated independent action, to organized and well-orchestrated collective efforts across great distances throughout the United States, its territories, and beyond to the Caribbean, Mexico, Canada and the larger Atlantic World. The Underground Railroad was a part of a larger Anti-Slavery and Abolition movement that had been slowly expanding throughout the late 18th century to the mid-19th century and, ultimately, it played a role in facilitating the end of American Slavery.

The Underground Railroad was a real set of paths to freedom. Individuals and groups of people tended these paths from a variety of ethnic, cultural, religious, and social backgrounds, and they were devoted to helping enslaved people find their way to freedom. They believed that slavery was wrong and that all people deserved to be free. The name “*Underground Railroad*” first appeared in the early 1820s during the development of the railroad industry and the invention of rail cars. These secret routes to freedom had been working to help slaves run away for many years before then and arguably since the first enslaved Africans landed on the shores of America. People who participated in this illegal and secret business called themselves *agents, conductors, engineers, and stationmasters*, names of positions on actual railroads. Enslaved people who were fleeing slavery are sometimes referred to as *runaway slaves, freedom seekers and self-liberators*. During the height of Underground Railroad operations in the mid 1800’s, runaway slaves were sometimes referred to as *passengers, cargo, goods, and freight*.



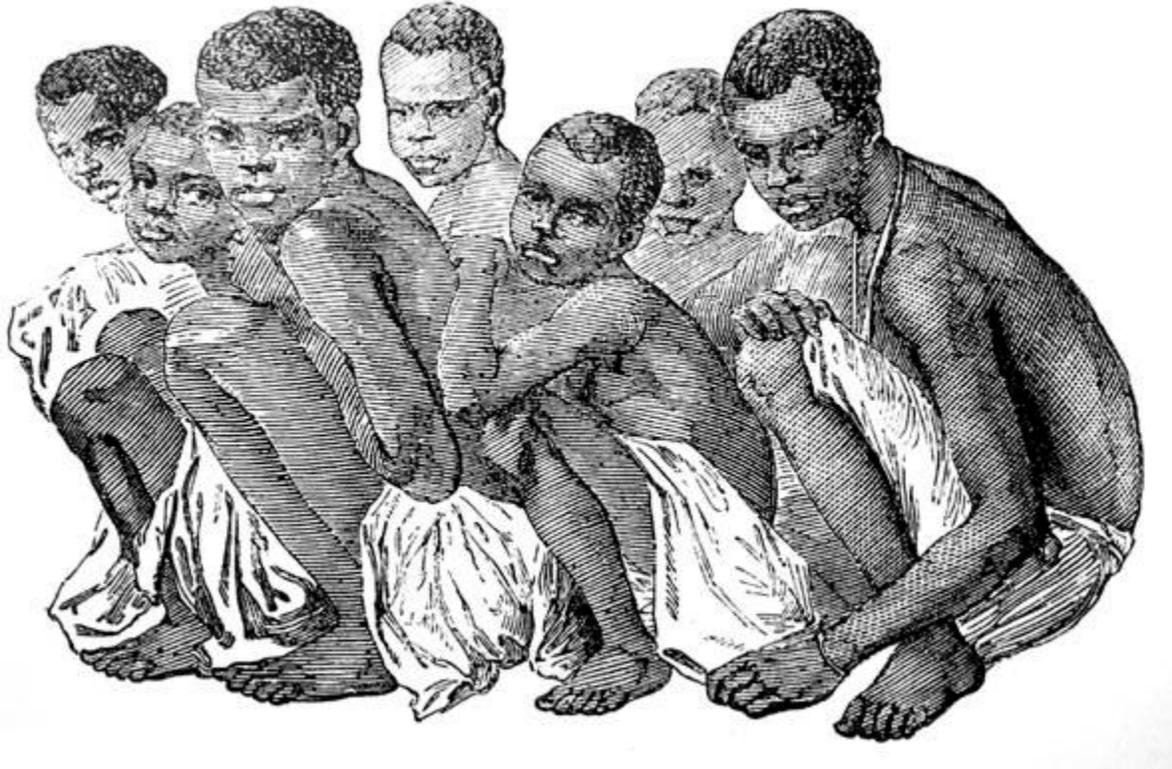
Its operations were illegal so secrecy and confidentiality were critical. The risks were enormous, particularly for self-liberators and African American Underground Railroad supporters in the slave states. Some enslaved people also acted as agents, conductors, engineers, and stationmasters, too, often at remarkable risk to themselves. Total trust and secrecy was necessary for smooth operations of the network. The threat of arrest, physical punishment, sale into slavery, or death was ever present.

North American slavery expanded slowly at first during the early years of the colonial development, but as tobacco, then rice, production exploded and demands for more labor sources increased, slave labor expanded dramatically in the Mid-Atlantic, Chesapeake Bay, and Deep South regions. By the mid-18th century, regular shipments of captured Africans and creoles from the West Indies were brought to markets along the Chesapeake, in Philadelphia, New York, and New England. Delawareans could purchase enslaved Africans from various ports along the Chesapeake, in New Castle, or in Philadelphia.

By the middle of the 1700s, many Americans relied on slave labor, particularly in the south where large farms and longer growing seasons required many workers to plant, tend, and harvest crops. After the American Revolution, however, some Americans were deeply and profoundly influenced by the ideology that, “all men are created equal.” In the decades that immediately followed the Revolution, all the northern states abolished slavery. However, in southern states, the system of slavery thrived and expanded.

Since it was illegal for slaves to flee their masters, those who did were called *fugitives* from the law, or fugitives from labor. Slave owners complained loudly to the government about the help that their runaway slaves were receiving from anti-slavery sympathizers. In 1793, the federal government passed the first Fugitive Slave Act to help enslavers in the south legally retrieve

their enslaved “property,” though it did little to stop people from fleeing. In 1850, as part of a congressional compromise to bring California into the union as a free state, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was passed. This law was far more punitive than the Act of 1793, forcing northern authorities and ordinary citizens to assist in the capture and return of runaway slaves to southern masters or face steep fines and jail time if they refused. Nevertheless, these laws did not stem the tide of enslaved people running away, nor did it discourage their supporters. It just made it more dangerous.



Source: Harper's Weekly, June 2, 1860

Professional slave catchers and bounty hunters traveled the countryside, cities, and towns, chasing self-liberators for cash rewards. The payments offered by slave owners were sometimes very high, making it even more difficult for freedom seekers to escape successfully, and making it risky to trust anyone, black or white. Newspaper advertisements and wanted posters featuring information describing runaways helped identify them and enabled slave catchers to capture them.

By the 1820s, the Underground Railroad system, or network of people and places, became larger and more organized. More people began protesting the existence of slavery in the south. Though some people held strong religious beliefs that slavery was wrong, like the Quakers, people of many ideological backgrounds began working together to end slavery, and some of them participated in the Underground Railroad, too. Early Methodist churches and Quaker meeting houses dotted the landscape, providing breeding grounds for anti-slavery ideas.

By the early 19th century however, as Quakers had committed themselves to abolition, southern Methodists and Baptists were becoming more accommodating of the institution. Free

blacks in the north rebelled against this change in religious thought and began establishing their own Methodist congregations.

For slaves, the decision to escape slavery was often a difficult one. It could be a life or death decision. Fear of imminent sale precipitated many flights, but the gamble for freedom was sometimes considered worth the risks. Though some freedom seekers remained hidden within and near their old neighborhoods to be close to family and friends, a successful flight to freedom often involved leaving behind family and friends, and could mean never seeing them again.

Once slaves escaped from the homes, farms, and businesses where they were held in bondage, their chances of success depended upon many factors. Connecting with an established UGRR network was not always a guarantee of success. Runaway slaves sometimes walked all the way to freedom, but sometimes they traveled in wagons, carts, on horseback, on ships and small boats, and even on real trains. Many used their knowledge of the North Star and the use of constellations, and other natural phenomena to guide them north. This was particularly true of maritime communities such as those throughout the larger Chesapeake, Delaware, and Eastern Atlantic seaboard regions where maritime trades and networks were a daily part of life.

While some freedom seekers rested comfortably in the homes, businesses, or churches of friendly supporters, others hid in root cellars, under beds, or in attics, barns, fodder houses, icehouses, root cellars, swamps, and wooded thickets. Some wore disguises or created elaborate ruses to deceive their pursuers and enslavers. A large number of freedom seekers probably found their way to freedom without any help from Underground Railroad networks. A significant number of slaves who fled their masters were not successful; they were often caught close to their own neighborhoods, unable to find a safe haven or to get away quickly enough to elude pursuers. Some freedom seekers did not know which way to travel to freedom; and many claimed they merely stumbled upon random help during their journeys.

Sometimes, an Underground Railroad network was temporary in nature, while some persisted for years and even decades. Those who participated in this movement included individuals who offered one or more necessities such as shelter, food, medicine, money, information, disguise, or transportation.

Some people were paid for their participation in the system; boat captains, for instance, sometimes required payment for passage for freedom seekers. Some agents and conductors only needed their expenses covered. A few farmers required payment to hide or transport fugitives; some took payment to create forged passes, while others were paid for their silence.

Harriet Tubman, born Araminta Ross in 1822 in Dorchester County on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, eventually earned the name "Moses" for her exceptionally successful role as a conductor to freedom for almost 70 family and friends from the region. She was also an effective informant whose instructions aided another 70 or more who found their way to liberty on their own. In 1849, when news arrived that she could be sold, she fled her own enslavement to Philadelphia and freedom. She would spend over 10 years traveling clandestinely back and forth to Maryland to retrieve loved ones trapped in bondage. Records

documenting her passage through Delaware are in the collected writings of several Underground Railroad agents, abolitionists and interviewers who recorded her stories.

Free blacks and enslaved people stood to lose the most – their freedom, families, and sometimes their lives. Whites could be arrested, thrown in jail, and fined, but they could not be sold into slavery. Some were affected financially, like Thomas Garrett who was heavily fined for helping the Hawkins family escape in 1844.

Those who stood in opposition to the liberation of slaves in any form forced this underground system to demand loyalty, trustworthiness, and dependability. Those who stood in opposition to freedom for slaves, like slave catchers, slave patrols, local and state government officials, and slaveholders, had the law on their side. The risks in opposing such forces were enormous, and the financial and physical toll was great. Large rewards for the return of runaways guaranteed the active pursuit of freedom seekers and reinforced the power of the slave system.

The extensive Underground networks supported by Delaware activists frustrated Maryland slaveholders. During 1859 and 1860, the Maryland State Legislature passed a resolution condemning Thomas Garrett and his Underground Railroad activities. They were deeply frustrated by Garrett's public flaunting of his success in assisting well over 2,000 enslaved people flee their masters. Maryland delegates attempted to legislate the payment of a \$5,000 reward for his arrest and confinement in a Maryland jail to face charges of stealing slave property. Fortunately, the provision failed to get enough votes to pass Maryland's House and the funds were never authorized, or Garrett could have had found himself tracked relentlessly by Maryland bounty hunters.

One person, no matter how deprived and disadvantaged, has choices and can facilitate change and influence a community. Freedom is a basic fundamental experience. The history of the Underground Railroad movement embodies and underscores the value and meaning of freedom, equality, justice, self-determination, and interracial cooperation.

Introduction to the Delaware Byway

The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway traces known and likely paths and places associated with the Underground Railroad and Delaware's historic connections to slavery, abolition, and the pursuit of liberty, revealing the precarious nature of Delaware's unique passages to freedom as dangerous pathways of hope and sorrow. Interpretation along the Byway will honestly and accurately portray the evolving nature of research into this topic. Whether describing the surviving oral traditions or a court trial, the visitor can expect to hear both well-documented history and tradition, interpreted to distinguish between them.

The history of the Underground Railroad in Delaware is one of the most important stories of resistance to slavery in America. Bordered by Free states to its north and east, and larger and more powerful slave states to its west and south, including Maryland and Virginia, Delaware stood at a real and virtual crossroads between slavery and freedom. As a slave state, however, Delaware's communities struggled with their place as a "middle ground" between powerful slave interests and defiant and vocal anti-slavery groups. Strident anti-slavery communities, particularly in the central and northern tiers of the state, relatively large free black communities

in all three of the state's counties, and unique physical landscape features, underscored and sustained a variety of avenues to freedom.

Today, Delaware's vast and varied landscapes, which held the promise of paths to freedom but also formidable barriers, retain some of the physical characteristics of the antebellum period. Its rich historic communities have preserved valuable oral and written traditions, carrying memories of both pain and triumph of those days long ago. These descendant communities offer visitors direct links to the past. In vivid detail, interpretation along this Byway reveals the challenges facing freedom seekers and their supporters as they struggled for freedom, equality, justice, and self-determination. Illuminating the history of slavery challenges us to confront a dark and difficult part of our nation's history. Through the lens of the Underground Railroad, the Byway is positioned to interpret the history of the pursuit of freedom within the context of slavery, leaving visitors with a feeling of hope and appreciation for our ancestors', both black and white, struggles and conflicts.

The HTUGRR Byway highlights the diversity of operation of the Underground Railroad, illustrating the network of Underground Railroad operations in areas very different in character but connected through personal relationships and established transportation corridors. Whether utilizing overland road networks or water based transportation or the actual rail lines, helping people on their clandestine journey relied on networks of contacts. Located in the central part of the state, Camden, Delaware was well situated between the major means of transport around the upper Delmarva Peninsula. Noted as home of much anti-slavery sentiment by the late 18th century, the Camden area was home to a large Quaker population with roots back to the early part of that century. Although a reasonably small place itself, Camden was surrounded by communities populated by free people of color. Like-minded individuals developed networks of connections across racial lines to assist those escaping through the Delaware landscape. This task was aided greatly by the location of Wilmington, Delaware along the main transportation routes between the south to the northeastern hubs of Philadelphia, New York and points beyond. An extensive network of connections to assist the large numbers of people coming through the area was developed with Thomas Garrett as its most forceful and vocal spokesman. He reported assisting 2400 people pass through Wilmington by the time of the Civil War. For comparison, the obituary of John Hunn, the Underground Railroad operative who was based in the vicinity of Camden, noted that he assisted fewer than 200 people traverse the central Delaware landscape from 1848 to 1862.

Antebellum Delaware

Delaware planters, like their neighbors in Maryland and New Jersey, abandoned tobacco farming by the end of the 18th century for less labor-intensive seasonal agriculture based on corn and grain production. At the same time, territorial expansion into the Deep South and Southwest in part due to the introduction of cotton drove an almost insatiable demand for enslaved labor. With the banning and criminalization of the international slave trade in 1808, which made the importation of African captives illegal, the demand for enslaved labor forced the creation of a new internal market within the United States. Upper south planters found financial opportunities in selling their enslaved people to planters in the expanding regions of the south and west who were willing to pay high prices to get the labor they required. This process destroyed black families and individual lives through permanent separations

Before the American Revolution, nearly thirty percent of colonial Delawareans owned one or more slaves. By that time, pro-slavery forces in the state were struggling against three strong religious groups that were vocally anti-slavery: the Religious Society of Friends, commonly known as Quakers, Baptists and early Methodists. Delaware was a hotbed of evangelical Methodism during the colonial period and into the early nineteenth century. Members of these religious faiths began setting free, or *manumitting*, their enslaved people in response to the anti-slavery preaching of their ministers. After the Revolution, waves of manumissions resulted in fewer Delaware families owning slaves, and by 1800, the percentage had dropped to twenty-two percent. With that decline in slave ownership, the African American population in Delaware formed settlements across the state. The choice to stay in Delaware in these small communities resulted in a landscape that was very diverse and divided along economic, political, and social lines. But these free people of color were not completely safe from being sold South. Gangs of kidnapers worked in Delaware preying on the African American population. Two of the larger organized groups were the Johnson Gang in Reliance, Delaware on the Maryland Border to the south and the Gap Gang who operated out of Gap, Pennsylvania. Although illegal, kidnapping was lucrative and remedies for those unjustly caught up in it risked a life of enslavement without recourse.

By 1837, only eight percent of Delaware households owned slaves. Unfortunately, this reflected the reality that generations of enslaved people – children, women and men alike - had already been sold to the expanding Deep South markets.

By 1860, on the eve of the Civil War, there were only 1,800 enslaved people in Delaware, compared to neighboring Maryland, where nearly 88,000 people remained in bondage. Although present in all three Delaware counties, the highest concentration of slaveholders lived in Sussex County, the largest, most southern, and economically the most agriculturally based of the three.

The Underground Railroad in Delaware

Throughout Delaware people, working independently as well as cooperatively through networks of communities and individuals characterized the Underground Railroad. At one end of the spectrum of Underground Railroad, supporters were one-time participants; on the other end stood people who committed their lives to aiding freedom seekers and actively challenging the slave system. Some individuals chose to remain anonymous because of the great danger to their lives, including black UGRR agents like the Brinkley's, and the Gibbs', while others were brazenly open about their commitment to aiding freedom seekers, like Thomas Garrett. Garrett's 40-year commitment of support and aid continued evolving and expanding throughout the region.



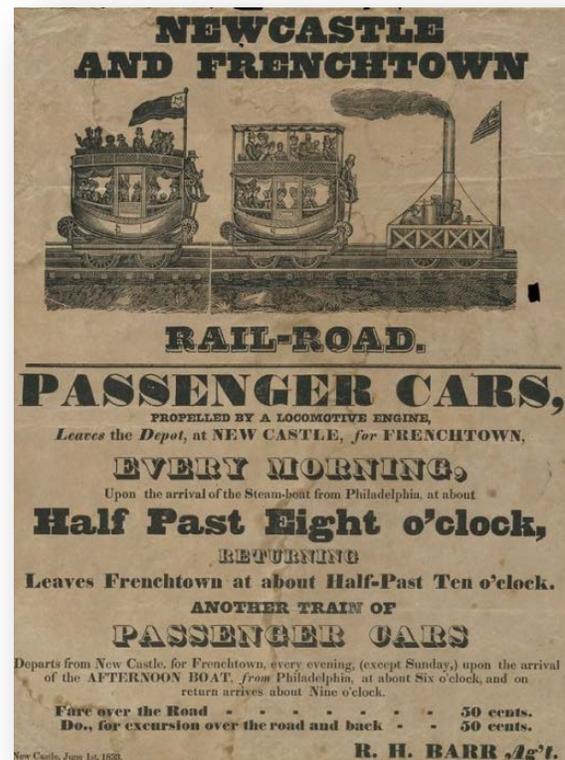
Wilmington, DE Skyline in the 1800s

Source: Unknown

Many records that survive of slaves escaping north and to freedom by passing through Delaware reveal they fled mostly from Virginia, North Carolina, and Maryland. Some of the best documented came from the neighboring Upper and Eastern Shore counties of Maryland along Delaware's western border, where thousands of enslaved people lived and labored, all within a day or two walk to Delaware's border. Constant vigilance on the part of Maryland slaveholders and their supporters made the journey through Maryland and Delaware extremely dangerous. There were many failed escape attempts. Captures were frequent and rewards were lucrative, feeding the business of slave catching with new recruits.

While there are many, many routes to freedom that existed throughout the state of Delaware, by both water and land, the land routes that led from Camden in Central Kent County, through the Middletown/Odessa area, to Wilmington, and then on into Pennsylvania, are the most extensively documented. These Central and Northern Delaware routes were most often used by Maryland runaways, who accessed these Delaware routes through feeder, or branch lines of the Underground railroad coming out of Dorchester, Caroline, Talbot, Queen Anne's, Cecil and Kent counties, Maryland.

The link between the clandestine travelers and the hospitable safe houses along the way was sometimes the conductor, and several of the most well-known and well-researched conductors in Delaware are African-American. Harriet Tubman and Samuel Burris are but two of the most famous African American conductors



traveling through Delaware ferrying freedom seekers. Harriet Tubman was never captured during her approximately 13 trips into the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Samuel Burris, a free black man who was born in Kent County, and a schoolteacher in Wilmington, was eventually caught, prosecuted, sentenced and auctioned into slavery for his role in assisting a family of slaves to escape. There were others, too, including William and Nathaniel Brinkley, Abraham Gibbs, George Wilmer, among many others.

Ship captains sometimes secreted freedom seekers on their vessels as they traded throughout the Chesapeake, Delaware Bay, and beyond. Captain James Fountain plied the ports of the Chesapeake as a cargo shipper, but he also secretly carried hidden cargo – freedom seekers fleeing ports in Virginia and North Carolina. He landed some of his freedom-seeking guests in Wilmington, where Thomas Garrett and others helped them along to Pennsylvania and freedom.



The Byway Experience

The main route of the Delaware section of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway came from an interview in 1897 when Harriet Tubman recounted some of her Underground Railroad routes and revealed the names of some of her supporters to Professor Wilbur Siebert of Ohio. She told Siebert that she stayed with Reverend Samuel Green, of East New Market in Dorchester Co., MD, and at Poplar Neck in Caroline County along the Choptank River, where her aged parents were then living and working. In Baltimore, she relied on help from friends and relatives living along the waterfront. She also said that she stopped in Sand Town, Delaware, on the Maryland border near the head of the Choptank, and she pointed to Willow Grove in Kent County, Delaware. Near Camden, she stayed with William and Nat Brinkley and Abraham Gibbs in Camden, where, she told Siebert, she felt “safe and comfortable.”

Many agents remain unknown, however. Tubman once told an UGRR agent in New York City that she found shelter with an unidentified black woman in New Castle, who hid her and Tubman fellow freedom seekers in her root cellar until they could be safely passed along to agents in Wilmington. Garrett became one of Tubman’s closest identified friends and greatest admirers and supporters. He later noted that she came through his home eight or nine times

throughout the 1850s. Entrusting Garrett with her life, Tubman brought her brothers, friends and other family members through his home in Wilmington.

Wilmington, one of the most significant destinations for Underground Railroad activity in Delaware, had a broad and deep Underground network of black and white agents. Specifically, it was home to many African Americans who acted as conductors, including Joseph Walker, Comegys Munson, Severn Johnson, Henry Craige, George Wilmer, Abraham Shadd, and Davey Moore. All of these men worked with Thomas Garrett in some capacity, sometimes sheltering freedom seekers in their homes and sometimes guiding parties from Wilmington to Pennsylvania.

The Delaware HTUGRR Byway connects many known sites where Underground Railroad activity occurred, as well as public and private places associated with the story of slavery and the denial of freedom enhanced by cultural and historic sites that place these stories in a broader and more meaningful context. Delaware's pathways to freedom included forests, fields, roads, canals, rivers, streams, marshes, bays, creeks, cityscapes, home sites, bridges, railroads, courthouses, jails, and places of enslavement. Sites of safe houses, of public slave auctions and trials of people accused of aiding and abetting escapes, historic free black communities, and other significant cultural and historic sites share pristine landscapes and preserved historic structures with places deeply altered by modern growth.

The Byway also connects places associated with known Underground Railroad participants and supporters. Three Quaker meeting houses on the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway are considered significant Underground Railroad sites. Appoquinimink Meeting House, founded in Odessa in 1785, was the spiritual center for several of the area's most famous Underground Railroad supporters, including John Hunn and John Alston. The Camden Friends Meeting House was built in 1805 and was frequented by many prominent Delaware abolitionists during the antebellum era. It is the burial site of John Hunn, who was laid to rest there following his death in 1894. Quakers built the Wilmington Friends Meeting House in 1816 on a site that was in use beginning in 1738. Thomas Garrett attended the Wilmington Meeting, and after his death in 1871, he was buried in the adjoining graveyard.

Black congregants who began meeting in 1845 established Zion African Methodist Episcopal [AME] Church in Camden. Churches, like Star Hill AME Church outside of Camden and Ebenezer Methodist Episcopal in the forested rural area outside of Townsend represent the antebellum free black communities that once thrived in these locations.

The Byway also connects sites where history happened or important people lived, but through time the buildings associated with this history have not survived. This is most poignant in Wilmington where the Byway takes a route that connects home sites of several important conductors and operatives and Tubman-Garrett Park, along the Wilmington riverfront, commemorates this history and has interpretive signage.

Documentation is a fundamentally important aspect of this project and research venues that have specialized Underground Railroad related documents or where research can be conducted, including the Delaware Public Archives and the Delaware Historical Society are also included along the Byway.