

Subject: New submission ALBANY Arts, Culture, and Tourism Application**Date:** Friday, June 30, 2023 at 1:18:58 PM Eastern Daylight Time**From:** jnytko@govsol.org**To:** jnytko@govsol.org

General Information
Date of application
06/30/2023
Name of Entity
Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway Coalition Inc
Entity TIN, EIN or Social Security Number
01-0741964
Entity physical address
247 Columbia Street Cohoes, New York 12047 United States Map It
Is the physical address different from the mailing address?
No
Website (if available)
https://www.mohawktowpath.org
Primary Contact Information
Primary contact name
Edward Tremblay
Primary contact title
Board of Directors Treasurer
Primary contact phone
(518) 235-4311
Primary contact email
etrembl1@nycap.rr.com
What is the primary contacts preferred method of contact?
Either
Entity Info and Structure
Which structure best describes the entity?
Non-profit organization
What is the date of establishment?
April 2022

If applicable, is the entity a W/MAM (Minority or Women-Owned Business Entity)?

No

Have you or the entity ever received any form of COVID-19 relief funds or loans specific to the negative impacts of the Pandemic?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please specify the type(s) and amount(s).

Town of Clifton Park \$7,000

General Project Information

Describe the arts/cultural/tourism activities your organization provides in Albany County.

The Mohawk Towpath National Scenic Byway is a route which begins in Waterford, NY and extends to Schenectady, NY that was specifically designated a scenic and historic route by the Federal Highway Administration. The Byway is a tourism attraction – an asset that attracts visitors to the area, the same as the other more than 1,000 Scenic Byways across the country. Visitors come to the area, drive the Byway, stop to explore the natural and historic attractions along the route, dine in area restaurants, stay in area hotels and return home having had a satisfying, relaxing trip. In addition, Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway holds a series of events each year that attract different visitor markets to the Byway, who also stay for the duration of the event in commercial accommodations, dine in area restaurants and shop, should the need or desire arise.

In addition, the detailed, visitor-ready itineraries that were produced and are promoted to draw visitors to the Byway include locations in Albany proper, including the NY State Capitol Building, Empire State Plaza, NY State Museum, Albany Institute of History and Art, Schuyler Mansion State Historic Site, Ten Broeck Museum and Historic Cherry Hill, as well as Riverpark Cohoes Visitor Center and Cohoes Falls. Overnight accommodations, dining and retail locations in Albany are included as well.

If an award is made, describe how Albany County will benefit. Where possible, please quantify impact.

The Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway delivers economic impact and development to the area. On average throughout the nation, Scenic Byways generate between \$250K-\$450K per mile, per Byway, per year in visitor spending. Based on that figure, at the low end of the average, the Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway delivers approximately \$2 Million in visitor spending to Albany County each year. Typical Byway travelers, who are educated and stay in accommodations, stay longer, spend more, and explore more attractions.

If an award is made, describe how the funds will help you to sustain your operations in Albany County.

The award will enable promoting the Albany County portion of the Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway specifically.

Describe the extent to which the COVID-19 pandemic increased or decreased demand for your services. As an option, you may attach to this application any optional information that supports you're the service increase or decrease being described below.

When the Covid-19 lockdown occurred, the use of the municipal recreation facilities, especially those that offered passive recreation, went up dramatically. This situation brought in University students who could not travel home and had no place to get outside. As travel restrictions continued in select locations, visitors from states along the I-90 Corridor from Massachusetts, Ohio, Maine, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut were observed parked in trailhead parking lots. Observing that the same vehicles were parked in the lots late in the day and early the next morning, meant individuals used the parking lots to "camp" in their cars.

Thus, Covid-19 increased the demand for the recreational services provided by the municipal recreational facilities on the Byway, which the Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway assists to maintain, which increased the revenue that had to be allocated to maintenance of facilities along the Byway. Covid-19 also decreased the demand for event services of the Byway, preventing the annual events that produce revenue from being held. In other words, the pandemic increased the money that had to be spend on maintenance, while at the same time, decreasing revenue that covers maintenance spending.

With the Covid lockdown in place, which did not permit public gathering, the Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway was not able to hold events, which provide supporting revenues. The result of not being able to hold the Byway's major annual event, revenues were cut by at least a third. The lack of other events cut revenues even further. Byway events did not regain their momentum until 2022, which created a decrease in revenues for two years.

Please select the grant opportunity you wish to apply to

Project Information – Promotion Grants

Please select whether the proposed project is new or existing

Expands an existing initiative or project

Please provide a short summary of your proposed project including a project name, general description, total cost, reason(s) why you are pursuing the project and anticipated impact:

Promotion of Albany County Portion of the Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway This grant offers the opportunity to increase the promotion and enhancement of the Albany County portion of the Byway, as opposed to other funding, which has had to be allocated to promotion of the Byway. No visit to the Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway is complete without a visit to Cohoes and Cohoes Falls, the easternmost anchor of the Byway. Seeing the Falls at their finest in the fall surrounded by fall foliage, visitors will want to return to enjoy the falls in other seasons. If they are not staying in Albany, as the detailed itinerary recommends, quaint, historic accommodations in Latham and Colonie will round out their experience.

The project will begin with the addition of a stop on the current cell phone self-guided tour, which requires development of the text and supporting materials. This change will also require updating and reprinting of the cell phone self-guided tour brochure.

When those actions are complete, the website will be changed to feature Cohoes and Cohoes Falls, included in the Albany County portion of the Byway and promoted through a robust digital marketing program for six months, modeled on a previous digital marketing program featuring the entire Byway that appeared on eight social media platforms, three times a week throughout the six month period during which the Byway appeared in 157,161 Google searches.

What amount of funding is being requested?

\$5,000.00

Please describe the entity's capabilities to implement the project you propose including organizational structure, staff members involved, a summary of similar initiatives you have undertaken and the date they were completed:

Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway is a 501c3 Nonprofit founded in 2002, governed by a Board of Directors and supported by both a Friends of the Byway organization that manages as many as 50 volunteers and dedicated contractors who are very experienced supporting the Byway. Over the past more than 20 years, the Byway organization has undertaken multiple projects, including development of the cell phone self-guided tour, enhancing and upgrading multiple locations along the Byway, keeping the Byway maintained, and promoting the Byway through a website and ongoing promotional programs. The Executive Director will manage the project, supported by volunteers and contractors.

Please describe, in detail, the impact your proposed project will have on Arts, Culture and/or Tourism in Albany County. Describe how your project will attract new visitors to Albany County. Where possible use metrics/estimates of impact (i.e. increased visitation etc.).

As was noted above, the Byway currently delivers approximately \$2 Million in annual visitor spending to Albany County. The proposed six-month digital marketing program will include page tagging including all of the I Love NY social media platforms, as well as those of the Albany CVB and attractions in the area. Social media posts are piggybacked on local events, especially those at locations featured in the detailed itineraries, which draw visitors to these locations. All of these actions will increase the value of visitor spending in Albany County.

How will you track performance goals and define success? Include at least two key performance indicators and expected annual outcomes/impact during the reporting period (September 2023 - December 2026).

All of the social media platforms compile the metrics for these sites and Google encompasses all activity that occurs on Google that results from marketing and promotional programs. Other metrics will increase in visitation at the various locations promoted by the program, which will be tabulated on a bi-annual basis.

What is the proposed project start date?

Upon award of the grant.

What is the anticipated date of completion?

9 months after the award of the grant, allowing for implementation of the entire six-month digital marketing program.

Please provide key performance indicator(s) demonstrating anticipated results

Indicator	2024	2025	2026
Increased visitors	10% increase	15% compounded increase	15% additional increase
Google searches	20% increase	10% compounded increase	10% additional increase

Please provide key project milestones inclusive of the anticipated timelines and descriptions

Milestone	Anticipated Timeline	Task Description
Adding Stop on Cell Phone Tour	1 month	Development of information
Brochure Updating and Printing	1 month	Graphic design and printing
Updating Website with Cohoes Information	1 month	Revision of website to include
Robust Digital Promotion Program	6 months	3 weekly posts on 8 social media platforms with page and hash tagging

At the top of this page is a downloadable project budget. Please download the budget form and upload it here.

- [ARTS-Budget2.pdf](#)

Is any upfront funding needed to successfully implement your proposed project?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please specify below.

One-half of ARPA funding will be required upfront.

Describe how the funding will support a sustainable Arts/Culture/Tourism initiative that will continue to serve Albany County residents after ARPA funds have been exhausted .

The Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway is currently developing four different funding streams that will sustain the Byway and marketing and promotion into the foreseeable future.

Explain why ARPA Funds Are Needed to Complete the proposed program/project. Would the proposal be Possible Without ARPA Assistance? Describe how your proposal would be impacted if you are awarded a smaller grant than requested?

Unless there are funds specifically designated to promote the Albany County portion of the Byway, it is not possible to promote just that portion. This grant funding will enable doing so.
The project will be modified as needed if a smaller grant is awarded

Risk Assessment

Has the entity adopted and/or implemented policies relating to: records retention, conflict of interest, code of ethics, and/or nondiscrimination policies?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please specify which policies have been adopted

Byway organizational records have been organized and retained for the past more than 20 years. The Byway organization is inclusive and does not engage in discrimination in any of its activities or efforts.

Is the entity properly insured?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please specify which types of insurance(s) are held and the limit(s).

The members of the Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway Coalition Inc are representatives from the various municipalities along the Byway. They are insured through their own organizations. The Friends of the Byway is a separate 501c3 with its own arrangements.

Does the entity have a financial management system?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please provide details about the financial management system.

Yes, the financial are managed in a traditional non-profit system. Due to the non-profit status of the Byway and assets of less than \$50,000, the organization is now required to prepare a tax return, instead reports on the shortform. Likewise, the NYS Charities Registration requirements don't require detailed reporting.

Has there been any change in the entity's key staffing positions in the last 2 years?

No

Has the entity previously done work for the Federal government (i.e. Is the entity experienced in managing Federal funds)?

Yes

If "Yes" above, please provide details on the Federal funds managed

During the period between 2002-2012 when Federal funding was available for Scenic Byways, the Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway was awarded and successfully managed and completed several Federal grants.

The County is careful about identifying and avoiding conflicts of interest, especially with grants awarded through the County. A conflict of interest arises when a person's self-interest and professional interest or public interest intersect. In this situation, there is the potential for biased professional judgment and lack of objectivity which creates a serious conflict when one of the interests can benefit financially or personally from actions or decisions made in the official capacity. A conflict of interest exists whether or not decisions are affected by a personal interest; there only needs to be the possibility of bias for a conflict. If your organization knows of a possible conflict of interest with your application for funds please disclose that information here. Otherwise write "None."

None

Certifications

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 1

- I Have Been Provided a Copy and Understand the U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Guidance for State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (see link or PDF included at the top of page)

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 2

- Should the County Allocate ARPA Funds, I am Able to and Pledge to Adhere to ALL Compliance and Reporting Requirements of the U.S. Treasury as it relates to any State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 3

- I Understand the County Will Contact me if/when Additional Information is Needed and that Information will be Promptly Provided to the County to Support Reporting Requirements

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 4

- If for Any Reason I am Unable to Comply with the U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Requirements I will Immediately Notify the County in writing by email or letter

US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 5

- All Information Submitted in this Application is True & Accurate

Electronic Signature Agreement

- I Agree

Type name

Edward Tremblay