

TOWANDA, IL ROUTE 66 PARKWAY & ARBORETUM

Self-Guided Tour Stops:

Southbound from 4 Way Stop:

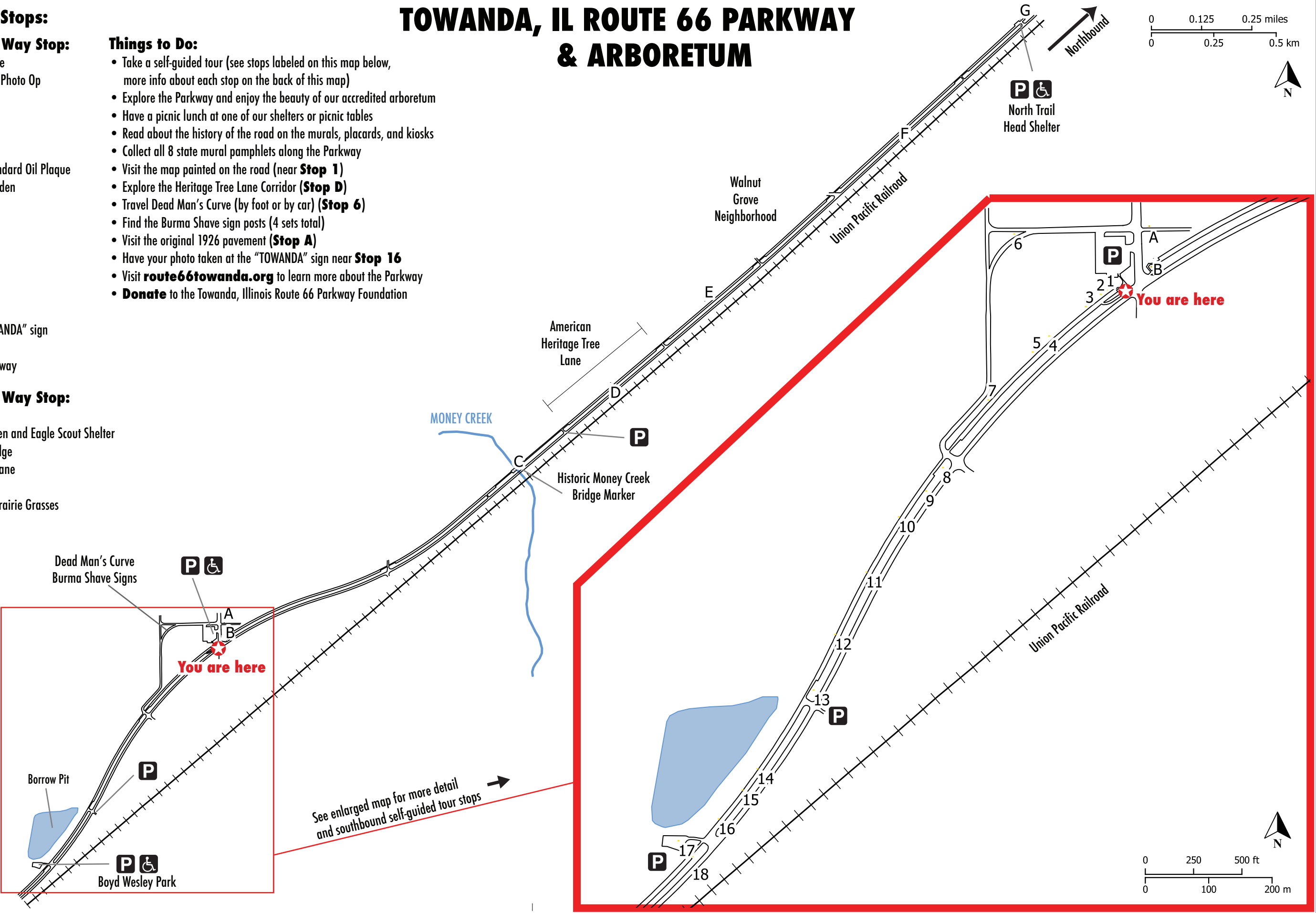
1. Pure Oil Truck Stop Plaque
2. Activity Sheet & Flagpole Photo Op
3. Illinois Mural
4. Missouri Mural
5. Kansas Mural
6. Dead Man's Curve
7. Henderson's Dairy & Standard Oil Plaque
8. Henderson Memorial Garden
9. Fern's Cafe Plaque
10. Oklahoma Mural
11. Texas Mural
12. New Mexico Mural
13. Guth Memorial Garden
14. Arizona Mural
15. Borrow Pit Plaque
16. California Mural & "TOWANDA" sign
17. Boyd Wesley Park
18. Southern End of the Parkway

Northbound from 4 Way Stop:

- A. Original 1926 Pavement
- B. Memorial Blue Star Garden and Eagle Scout Shelter
- C. Historic Money Creek Bridge
- D. American Heritage Tree Lane
- E. Burma Shave Signs
- F. Native Wildflowers and Prairie Grasses
- G. Northern End of Parkway

Things to Do:

- Take a self-guided tour (see stops labeled on this map below, more info about each stop on the back of this map)
- Explore the Parkway and enjoy the beauty of our accredited arboretum
- Have a picnic lunch at one of our shelters or picnic tables
- Read about the history of the road on the murals, placards, and kiosks
- Collect all 8 state mural pamphlets along the Parkway
- Visit the map painted on the road (near **Stop 1**)
- Explore the Heritage Tree Lane Corridor (**Stop D**)
- Travel Dead Man's Curve (by foot or by car) (**Stop 6**)
- Find the Burma Shave sign posts (4 sets total)
- Visit the original 1926 pavement (**Stop A**)
- Have your photo taken at the "TOWANDA" sign near **Stop 16**
- Visit route66towanda.org to learn more about the Parkway
- **Donate** to the Towanda, Illinois Route 66 Parkway Foundation







Guided Walking Tour

Join us for a self-guided walking tour along the original Route 66, or drive to designated parking areas, to learn more about our preserved section of the Mother Road.

From the 4-way stop, the linear Parkway extends both north and south. Each route is included in this pamphlet. There are also parking areas at each end of the Parkway if you would prefer to drive and park at those areas. There are also parking areas along the Parkway.

SOUTHBOUND from 4-way Stop (1.6 miles round trip, 0.8 miles one way to Boyd Wesley Park parking):

1. Take a moment to read about the history of the Pure Oil Truck Stop (originally called the Delco Truck Stop), run by the Baize family who provided gas, repairs, souvenirs, a good meal, and lodging to truckers and travelers.
2. Complete the activity sheet by interacting with the U.S. outline map and directional signs just south of stop #1.
3. The starting point for the westward journey along Route 66 and the state you're currently in, Illinois! Learn about attractions such as the Willis Tower, Steak n' Shake, and Abraham Lincoln's legacy in the Land of Lincoln.
4. The next state to our southwest is Missouri. Take a look at the mural and grab a brochure to read about sites like the Gateway Arch, Meramec Caverns, and Route 66's birthplace.
5. Not even 13 miles, 12.8 miles to be exact - that's how long Route 66 is in Kansas. Despite its short length, the route passes through three towns that are rich in Cowntown, mining, and Route 66 history - Galena, Riverton, and Baxter Springs.

6. Dead Man's Curve is a dangerous stretch of road on Old Route 66 known for its many accidents during the 1930s, 40s, and early 50s. Surprised by the sudden 90-degree curve, unwary motorists were often involved in accidents at this site. We invite you to walk or drive Dead Man's Curve by entering the road at Henderson's Garden (two stops ahead), or just northwest of the BP gas station.

7. For many years, the Hendersons operated a small dairy and Standard Oil gas station on this site. Due to shortage of labor during World War II the dairy closed. Following the war, in 1947, Jerry Henderson opened Henderson Standard Service Station.

8. This garden is dedicated to longtime Towanda residents Jerry & Mary Lou Henderson. Jerry was a former mayor of Towanda and Mary Lou contributed much time and effort in developing this stretch of the Parkway.

9. Fern and Mac McCurdie opened Fern's Cafe in 1951 and closed in 1969 with a cup of coffee selling for only 5 cents. Adjacent to Fern's Cafe stood a Texaco service station. During the Great Depression, people would exchange anything they owned for small amounts of gasoline. One man even traded his wife's wedding ring for a few gallons to get to the next town! Like so many other small businesses, Texaco closed its doors, as I-55 neared completion around Towanda in 1977.

10. After Kansas, Route 66 travels through Oklahoma. Learn more at this mural about popular attractions, Will Rogers, effects of the Dust Bowl during the Great Depression, and Oklahoma's "black gold."

11. Discover what the panhandle of Texas offers Route 66 travelers like the Cadillac Ranch and numerous museums. About 90% of the original Mother Road in Texas is still in place today.

12. Containing the longest stretch of 66 in the country at 487 miles, New Mexico is home to exciting attractions like the town of Tucumcari, important Native American cultural history, and beautiful southwestern scenery. Please note that Native Americans in this part of the country generally did not live in teepees or ride horses bareback. The images shown here depict roadside attractions along this stretch of Route 66.

13. You are invited to pause and enjoy this garden devoted to Helen & Emerson Guth. The Guths were longtime area residents who were active in the community.

14. Known for its scenery, Arizona is the next state on our trip west on Route 66. Grab a brochure at this mural to learn more about this state's National Parks, historic towns, and Native American culture and history.

15. Have you ever wondered how water features are formed? Stop at the borrow pit to learn more about how this pond was created and why it is located here.

16. After visiting 7 states on our way to California, take a break at this mural to learn more about the "Promised Land" and what it offers travelers including the Mojave Desert, the famous Hollywood sign, and finally, Route 66's endpoint at Santa Monica on the Pacific Ocean.

17. If you prefer to drive to some of our attractions, there is plenty of parking at Boyd Wesley Park, next to the borrow pit. Take a walk around the pond, admire the garden initially planted by the local 4-H club, or have a picnic at the tables under the pavilion.

18. This placard marks the end of the journey and 4-H garden. Take a moment to visit this sign and consider both your journey today, as well as the 2,448 mile journey that many travelers took on this road in its heyday!'

NORTHBOUND from the 4-way stop (6.6 miles round trip, 3.3 miles one way to the North Trail Head Shelter parking):

A. Visit the original 1926 road alignment and existing pavement across the street from the BP gas station and experience the narrow 16' width of the original road. Look for the brown "Original Route 66" sign.

B. Just to the east (towards the 4-way stop) enjoy the Blue Star Memorial Garden planted by local 3rd graders from Towanda Elementary School and have a picnic under the shelter built by a local Eagle Scout. Reflect on your time here by observing the Blue Star Memorial Highway plaque. This marker and plot pay tribute to the armed forces that have defended the United States.

C. The Parkway you're visiting started with a group of dedicated teachers, local high school students, and community minded citizens. Geography and history students used this abandoned stretch of Route 66 to learn about its historical, geographical, and economic impact and to preserve it for current and future generations. The Historic Money Creek Bridge was contracted to be demolished in 1999 thus dissecting the developing Route 66 Parkway. Students petitioned to save the bridge, gathering over 1,000 signatures to preserve it. From the experience students learned to become active citizens in the communities where they reside.

D. The American Heritage Tree Lane includes 17 trees grown at historic locations throughout the United States. Examples include George Washington's Mount Vernon's sycamore and Robert Frost's birch from his New Hampshire farm. This section of the Parkway offers opportunities to learn about historical sites, individuals, and events occurring near the original tree. All of these trees were propagated from seeds or cuttings from the ancestral tree. The entire length of the Parkway consists of over 400 trees of 93 species, along with numerous shrubs and grasses. The heritage trees are a unique part of our Parkway's accredited arboretum.



Mr. Fred Walk
10 Bent Tree Lane
Towanda, IL 61776

Make checks payable to
the Towanda, IL Route
66 Parkway (a 501(c)3
organization)

Please support this exhibit by scanning the QR code or sending tax-free contributions to: