

Turquoise Trail Corridor Management Plan

Version 1.0

17.0 Visitor Experience Improvements

Effective visitor management is necessary to ensure long term economic development through tourism. User facilities must be accessible, convenient and well-maintained. The congestion of visitors and traffic at key points along the byway during peak travel season, if not properly managed, will diminish the region's appeal as a recreational and tourism destination.

Effective visitor management can:

- Avoid conflicts among visitor types competing for the same views and experiences
- Allow resource managers to target specific visitor types
- Allow resource managers to redirect visitors to locations that are better able to handle increased visitation
- Allow residents to continue to enjoy their own backyards
- Ensure that visitors recreate in areas best suited to their abilities, thus reducing emergency situations
- Encourage visitation growth in the shoulder and off-season to support businesses dependent on a tourism economy and
- Manage traffic speeds in areas of intensive visitor use, such as in Madrid on the weekends, and typical rush hours for commuters.

Safety, beauty and efficiency need not be mutually exclusive. The beauty of the Turquoise Trail Scenic Byway should assist and guide management decisions regarding the road and viewshed. Safety improvements should be undertaken only with an understanding of reduced accident statistics, but also with an understanding of any impacts such improvements may have on the aesthetic quality of the corridor. This is not to suggest that safety take a "back seat" to scenic views, but rather suggests that the Turquoise Trail warrants additional consideration due to its outstanding scenic qualities. This plan simply seeks the acknowledgement of these additional considerations during the planning phase of future projects. If, for example, lighting is needed at an intersection for increased safety, this plan encourages further question: "What type of lighting will provide the desired safety effect and have the least visual intrusion on the natural landscape?"

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17.1 VISITOR EXPERIENCE GOALS

- A. Ensure a TTSB visitor's actual visitation experience meets and exceeds their expectations.

17.2 VISITOR EXPERIENCE OBJECTIVES

- A. Hospitality - Provide high quality customer service at all visitor contact points on the TTSB.
- B. Infrastructure - Provide the necessary infrastructure along the TTSB to accommodate visitors. Define, in each community, what is required. It is important that visitors feel comfortable and safe.
- C. Evaluation - Develop a quantifiable method of reviewing whether visitors' experiences meet or exceed their expectations.

17.3 VISITOR EXPERIENCE STRATEGIES

- A1. Inventory all visitor contact points on the TTSB and develop a database. (This activity completed with tourism asset inventory.)
- A2. Invite front-line tourism employees and business owners to participate in free hospitality training workshops.
- A3. Invite deputies from county sheriffs departments.
- A4. Implement workshops focusing on customer service, cultural awareness, the importance of tourism to the economy, and "What's there to do around here?"
- B1. With input from the SBAC and other stakeholders, develop optimum plans for restrooms, parking, trash facilities, roadway improvements, signage and maintenance.
- B2. Provide this plan to the proper government authorities and request support and commitment to implementation.
- B3. Develop a fund raising plan to assist in project implementation.
- B4. Restrooms in Cerrillos and Madrid
- B5. Road side rest stops and viewing areas
- B6. Integrated information centers in each community
- C1. Develop a visitor experience questionnaire.
- C2. Train local visitor contact people in the administration of the questionnaire.
- C3. Develop an incentive for completing the questionnaire.
- C4. Award contact people who have the most questionnaires completed.
- C5. Determine a period of time for questionnaires to be completed.
- C6. Analyze questionnaire responses and report to the TTA any changes that should be implemented based on results.