

Feb. 28, 2024

TRAIL OF THE ANCIENTS SCENIC BYWAY
CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN

STEERING COMMITTEE KICK-OFF MEETING





AGENDA

- Introductions
- History of the Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway
- Corridor Master Plan Update Schedule
- Project Components and Where You Can Help
- Next Steps

TEAM INTRODUCTION



Paul Sittig
BHI Project Manager



Liz Treat
BHI Public Engagement
Lead



Evan Williams
NWNMCOG Executive
Director



Brandon Howe
NWNMCOG Project Lead

MEETING ATTENDEES

Regional Stakeholders

Andrew DiCamillo, Community Development Director, City of Aztec

Anthony Dimas Jr, County Manager, McKinley County

Bill Lee, Gallup McKinley County Chamber of Commerce

Bruce Armstrong, Greater Gallup Economic Development Director

Byron Bitsoie, Navajo Nation Lands Department

Chad Gaines, Cibola Trail Alliance

Charles Riley, Acoma Pueblo

Dee Santillanes, City of Gallup

DJ Felipe, Acoma Pueblo

Eileen Chavez Yarborough, Cibola Communities Economic Development Foundation

Ingrid Gilbert, Visit Farmington, Assistant Director & Online Marketing Manager

Joan Monninger, Aztec Museum

Prudence Brady, City of Bloomfield

Northwest NM Council of Governments

Brandon Howe, TOTA CMP Update PM

Robert Kuipers, Regional Transportation PM

MEETING ATTENDEES, CONTINUED

New Mexico Department of Transportation

Lisa Vega, District Engineer, District 6

Arif Kazmi, Engineer Support Manager, District 6

Mike Neely, Local Government Supervisor, District 6

Angelica Trujillo, Scenic Byways Coordinator

Sullivan Moore, Government to Government Liaison

Bohannon Huston, Inc.

Denise Aten, Principal in Charge

Paul Sittig, Project Manager

Liz Treat, Public Engagement Lead

Clare Haley, Planner

Maggie Ramirez, Planner

Other State and Federal Agencies

Calvin Manuelito, New Mexico Tourism Department Customer Service Representative

Jim Glover, endeavOR New Mexico co-director

Kelly Fuhrmann, Director, El Morro NPS

Maria Lohmann, NM State Land Office, Outdoor Recreation Specialist

Nathan Hatfield, Supervisory Park Ranger Interpretation, Aztec Ruins NM and Chaco Culture NHP

KEY DEFINITIONS

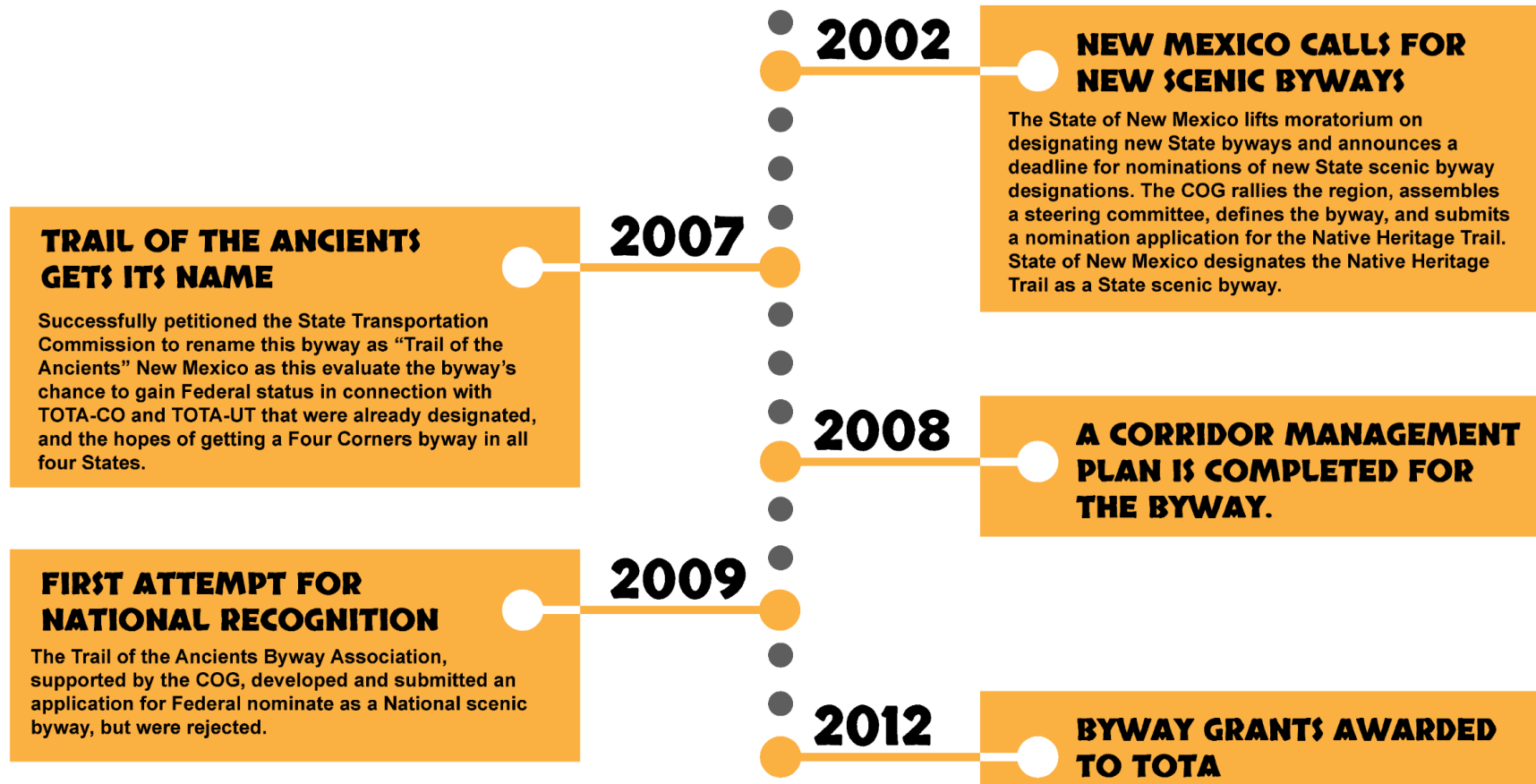
National Scenic Byways

In 1995, the Federal Highway Administration set forth the criteria for the designation of roads as National Scenic Byways based upon their **archeological, natural, cultural, recreational, scenic, and/or historic** intrinsic qualities.

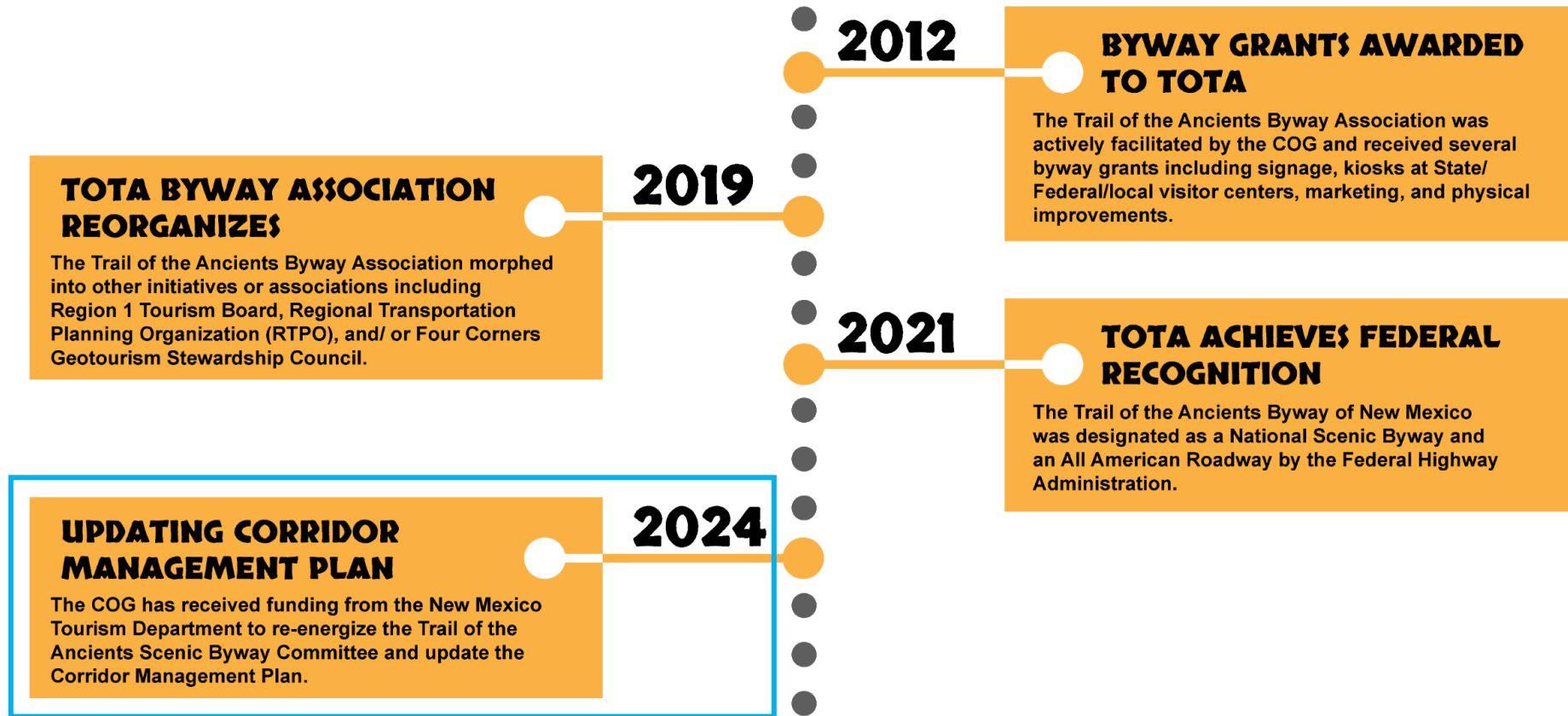
Intrinsic qualities are defined by the National Scenic Byways Program as “features that are considered representative, unique, irreplaceable, or distinctly characteristic of an area.”

To be designated as a **National Scenic Byway**, a road must significantly meet criteria for at least one of the above six intrinsic qualities.

HISTORY OF TRAIL OF THE ANCIENTS



HISTORY OF TRAIL OF THE ANCIENTS, CONTINUED



TRAIL OF THE ANCIENTS SCENIC BYWAY - *NATIONAL DESIGNATION*



ASSET INVENTORY (INTRINSIC QUALITIES)

Questions: what is this missing? Is anything closed (to the public)?

Archeological

- Aztec Ruins National Monument Visitor Center
- Casamero Ruins
- Chaco Culture NHS Visitor Center
- Crow Canyon Petroglyphs BLM
- El Morro National Monument Visitor Center
- Hawikuh Ruins National Historic Landmark / Zuni Pueblo Visitor Center
- Kin Bineola (*removing - closed*)
- Kin Ya'a (*removing - closed*)
- Peach Springs Archaeological District
- Salmon Ruins Museum
- Various Anasazi ruins near Shiprock
- Village of the Great Kivas / Zuni Pueblo Visitor Center

Natural

- Aztec Arches
- Bolack Museum of Fish and Wildlife
- Chuska Mountains
- Cibola National Forest
- Gallup area lakes
- Hogbacks – near Gallup and Shiprock
- Little Colorado Rivershed
- Riverside Nature Center
- Shiprock Formation
- Tohatchi Lookout

ASSET INVENTORY (INTRINSIC QUALITIES)

Cultural

- Ancient Way Arts Trail (*Highway 53*)
- El Morro Feed & Seed
- El Morro Old School Gallery
- El Morro Theater
- El Rancho Motel
- Farmington Museum / Convention & Visitor Center
- Gallup Cultural Center
- Gallup downtown murals
- Hogback Trading
- Inscription Rock Trading
- Joe Milo's Trading
- Navajo Nation Museum
- Navajo Weavers Association of Crownpoint / Auction Location
- Old Zuni Mission (*part of the Zuni Pueblo historic place*)
- Perry Null Trading
- Ramah Museum (*temporarily closed, per Google maps*)
- Richardson Trading
- Toadlena Trading Post
- Two Grey Hills Trading Post
- Window Rock Navajo Tribal Park & Veteran's Memorial
- Winfield Trading

ASSET INVENTORY (INTRINSIC QUALITIES)

Recreational

- Alien Run Bike Trail Parking Lot
- Ancient Way Cafe & RV Park
- Angel Peak Scenic Area (BLM)
- Asstec Acres Miniature Donkeys (*removing - closed*)
- Animas river
- Animas river trails in Farmington
- Aztec area UFO trails and bike trails
- Aztec Motorcross Track
- Bandera Volcano
- Bisti Badlands Parking / De-Na-Zin Wilderness
- Bluewater State Park
- Bowl Canyon Recreation - Asaayi Lake
- Continental Divide Trail
- Cox Canyon Arch
- Defensive Sites of Dinetah (BLM)
- Dunes Vehicle Recreation Area
- El Malpais Information Center NPS
- El Malpais National Monument Visitor Center NPS
- Four Corners Monument (keep?)
- Glade Run Recreation Area (BLM)
- Hawikku area lakes

ASSET INVENTORY (INTRINSIC QUALITIES)

Recreational, continued

- High Desert Trail
- High Desert Trail Head
- Ice Cave & Bandera Volcano / Ice Caves Trading
- Kart Kanyon Speedway
- Lake Farmington
- Mentmore Rock (climbing area and trail)
- Mentmore Shooting Range - Gallup
- Morgan Lake and other lakes near Shiprock (one description)
- Mount Taylor Ranger District (modify – district office)
- Pyramid Trail
- Quartz Hill Trail System USFS

- Ramah Reservoir
- Red Rock Park & Pyramid Rock Trail
- San Juan River
- Zuni eagle aviary

Scenic

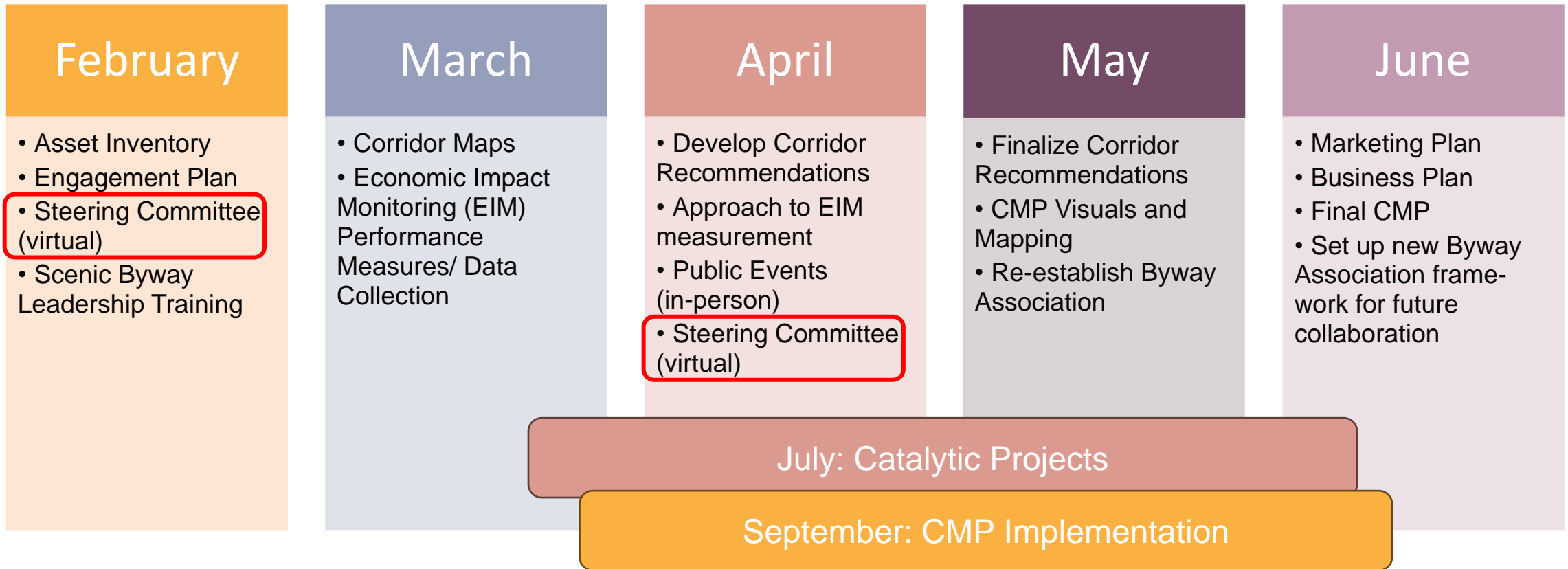
- Highway 64 west to Arizona border
- Red Valley to Lukachukai Road
- Route 66 Scenic Byway

KEY DEFINITIONS

Corridor Management Plan

A written document that specifies the actions, procedures, controls, operational practices, and administrative strategies to maintain the scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archeological, and natural qualities of the scenic byway.

PROJECT SCHEDULE



PROJECT COMPONENTS

- Byway Vision and Goals
- Summary of Existing Plans and Asset Inventory
- Public Outreach
- Economic Impact Monitoring
- Byway Association



BYWAY VISION

The vision defines the **ideal future** and can be ambitious but must technically be possible. The vision should address these questions:

1. How will the community or region **be a better place** as a result of the byway?
2. What **outcome do you want** your byway to have on the community, region, and society based on the intrinsic qualities?

Vision Statement Ideas or Components:

Economic improvement via additional tourism. (Answer for both questions)

Preservation of natural qualities through tourism and stewardship

promotes responsible and respectful management of archaeological, cultural, and natural resources of the area

Needs to address the outdoor recreation adventures as a bigger part of the trail. Even if the official name is Trail of the Ancients there can be sub-brand of Trail of the Ancients & Adventure.

Visitors will have a better understanding of the cultural and natural history of the area and respect it

Components should include: Culture - Heritage - History- Scenic Beauty-to generate tourism and create economic impact.

cultural resources and heritage inclusion for public kiosk and or viewing.

Trail of the Ancients Byway - Experience the Heart-chitecture of New Mexico's cultural and scenic heritage

1. Increase public awareness of the region's natural and cultural resources. 2. Increase tourism. 3. Increase visitor knowledge about the diversity of our region's tribes.

Providing a trail that visitors experience that has meaning and respect for communities, landscape, and structures.

BYWAY GOALS

The goals are established in alignment with the vision.

The **SMART** Goals process uses specific standards for success that feel feasible or realistically attainable. Research suggests that SMART goals [**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant and **T**ime-bound] result in stronger commitments to pursue the goal.

Ideas or Components for Goals:

Vision: be stewardship leaders, balancing resource preservation and the visitor experience

To bring X new visitors who never experienced the byway, providing an experience to come again.

The vision should include the health/fitness side of enjoying the trail and seeking out outdoor recreation adventures. This is now a big part of New Mexico economy.

Market heavily to ABQ, SF, Rio Rancho and other 4 corners states Market specifically to colleges & universities in region - esp. Students

Use the trail to increase and promote climate change awareness.

Increase tourism, establish regional association, partnership, intergovernmental collaboration, stewardship, preservation, experience

Promotion of the trail by way of advertising

more than tourism dollars, develop meaningful experiences to promote cultural and environmental respect of place

promote climate goals and include vehicle charging along the way (maybe in places where folks can stay a while and have a good experience)

Discussion and empowerment

Link technology to preservation

Need to make sure that all alliance partners work to deliver a great experience when people seek out the trail. It's not enough to just market the trail but need to ensure people have a great time.

Technology that makes the trail more interactive - especially something that can be used over the expansive distances the trail covers.

Direct public contact/education opportunities

To empower tri-county community members to explore archeological natural, cultural and recreational sites along the Ancient Way.

Sustained byway implementation

Consciously build in linkages to ongoing "living" culture & social tourism

Geo fencing

PLANS REVIEWED

NMDOT:

- 2018 NM Bicycle Plan
- 2021 Strategic Highway Safety Plan
- 2023 Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment
- 2023 NWNM Coordinated Public Transit—Human Services Transportation Plan
- 2045 NM Freight Plan
- 2045 NM Long Range Statewide Transportation Plan

Regional Plans:

- 2020 McKinley County Comprehensive Plan
- 2022 Cibola County Comprehensive Plan
- San Juan County five-year Strategic Plan
- 2021 NWRTP Regional Transportation Plan
- 2021 NWNMCOG CEDS Plan
- 2021 Navajo Nation Long Range Transp. Plan
- Farmington Comp. & Transp. Plans

PROJECTS ALONG THE BYWAY

Examples of STIP Projects on the Byway

- Safety project in front of Shiprock High School, Middle School, and Diné College
- US 491 Truss Bridge over the San Juan River
- US 64/N 5031 Intersection
- NM 124 realignment-NEW
- US 491 Bridge Rehab
- East Blanco Bridge
- US 550 Pavement Rehab

NWRTPO RTIPR

- Intersection of NM53 & BIA125 Road - Interchange/Intersection (4)
- Redesign NM122 (Rt. 66 / Santa Fe Ave.) to promote economic development & tourism
- Construct Mill Road Rail Crossing Improvements along with accel / decel turn lanes on to NM122
- NM371 / N-5 Road Safety Audit to improve Intersection turn lanes, add street lights, signage, and rumble strips on both highways

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Steering Committee, Survey, Website

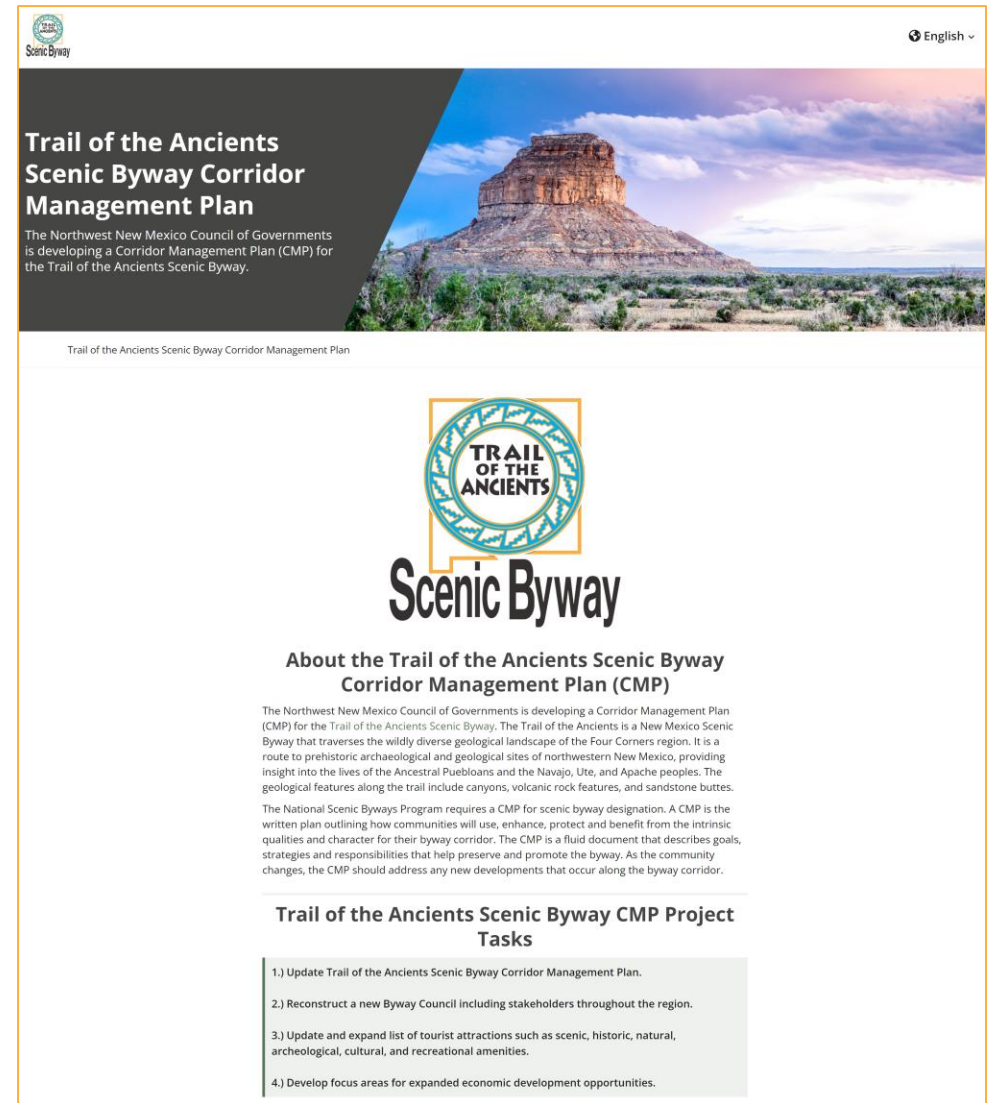
Steering Committee

- Who are we missing? Who needs to be involved?

Survey

- Launching in March
- Will cover much of what we present here today
- Help us spread the word!


Website: <https://engage.bhinc.com/TOTA>



Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway

Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan

The Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments is developing a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) for the Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway.



Scenic Byway

About the Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan (CMP)

The Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments is developing a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) for the Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway. The Trail of the Ancients is a New Mexico Scenic Byway that traverses the wildly diverse geological landscape of the Four Corners region. It is a route to prehistoric archaeological and geological sites of northwestern New Mexico, providing insight into the lives of the Ancestral Puebloans and the Navajo, Ute, and Apache peoples. The geological features along the trail include canyons, volcanic rock features, and sandstone buttes.

The National Scenic Byways Program requires a CMP for scenic byway designation. A CMP is the written plan outlining how communities will use, enhance, protect and benefit from the intrinsic qualities and character for their byway corridor. The CMP is a fluid document that describes goals, strategies and responsibilities that help preserve and promote the byway. As the community changes, the CMP should address any new developments that occur along the byway corridor.

Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway CMP Project Tasks

- 1.) Update Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan.
- 2.) Reconstruct a new Byway Council including stakeholders throughout the region.
- 3.) Update and expand list of tourist attractions such as scenic, historic, natural, archeological, cultural, and recreational amenities.
- 4.) Develop focus areas for expanded economic development opportunities.

IN-PERSON MEETINGS IN EACH COUNTY

Public Events

First week in April is our target period, one county per day

- San Juan County events?
- McKinley County events?
- Cibola County events?

Otherwise, we plan to go to coffee shops or grocery stores in the morning

Targeted focus/agency group outreach

Following the public meetings in the morning, we'll hold targeted meetings in the afternoon:

- McKinley County training center
- Cibola County locations
- San Juan County in Aztec

Question: are there upcoming events we can join to do outreach for the plan?

MARKETING AND BUSINESS PLAN

Strategies and Projects

Marketing Plan

- Brochure
- Permanent website
- Cross-marketing
- How else to promote the byway?

Business Plan

- Operations
- Project recommendations
- Cost-estimates
- What are projects that you think would benefit your community and/or the region?
- What are areas for improvement, or needs to address?

ECONOMIC IMPACT MONITORING

Question: Is there data that you have or collect?

Data Types and Sources

- **Monitor and track the number of byway visitors**
 - **Occupancy rates at hotels** and short-term rentals
 - Big Data analysis (should be able to pull out local/regional residents and visitors)
 - Visitor analytics (embedded hardware + software to track and report on smart devices)
 - QR codes (likely lower cost, but lower capture rate)
- **Visitors' origins**
 - **NM Tourism statistics**
 - Big data analysis (should be able to capture and report on visitors' origins)
- **Visitors' economic investment into the region**
 - **Sales taxes from attractions and restaurants, and lodgers taxes**
- **Visitors' experiences in the region**
 - **Social media scores, sentiment analysis, or other aggregation of reviews**

Note: highlighted text is data that will be collected to set a regional baseline

PROTECTING THE BYWAY

Hazard Mitigation

- What natural disasters have impacted the area?
- How did you respond and recover?
- What has changed, and what could change, to be more resilient to future events like this?
- And what plans are in place now?

Changes in the Region

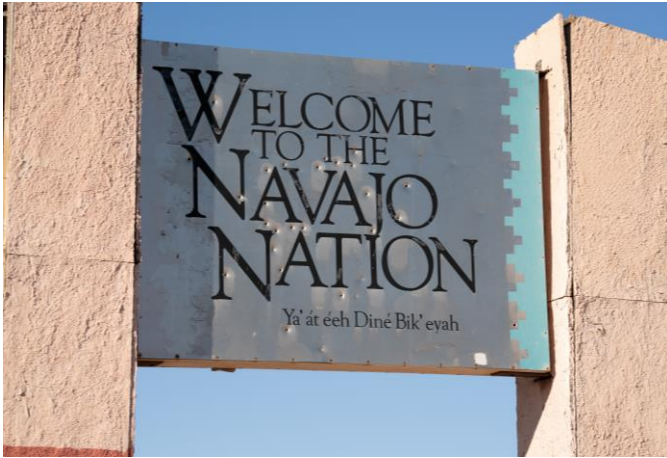
- What is different now from 2008?
- What do you think could change in the next 15-20 years?
- What changes do you want to encourage?
- What changes do you want to prevent?



Next Steps

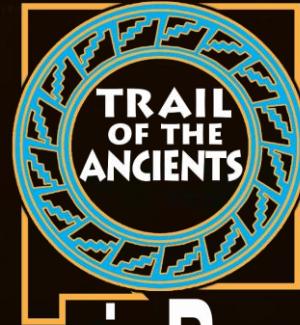
NEXT STEPS FOR THE STEERING COMMITTEE

- **Provide additional feedback on vision, goals, and assets, and other questions posed**
 - Look for an email with reminders of the questions posed today
- **Submit feedback and comments through in-person meetings, the survey, and map**
 - We'll include you in information distribution about those meetings and the survey
 - You can add comments to the interactive map any time
- **Review draft Corridor Management Plan and provide feedback**
 - We'll post the draft online and email information, too
- **Meet again in April to discuss the draft plan and *next next steps***
 - Another chance to provide feedback prior to our finalizing the TOTA CMP Update
 - Sign on to be a member of the Byway Advisory and help continue this work



SUMMARY

- Making progress on the plan
- We'll reach out with reminders, a survey, and more information
- Join us in person in April
- We'll reconvene this Steering Committee in April
- Finalize the plan in June
- Shift to Byway Advisory in September/October



Scenic Byway

THANK YOU

Paul Sittig, AICP | psittig@bhinc.com