

A Place Apart

The Peak to Peak Scenic and Historic Byway Corridor Management Plan

A Preservation Investment Strategy

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Corridor Management Plan*

A Preservation Investment Strategy

Prepared for
The Peak to Peak Scenic Byway Interest Group
and the Tourism and Recreation Program
of Boulder County

to meet the corridor management plan requirements
for the Colorado and Scenic Byway Program

Prepared by
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with assistance from
The National Trust for Historic Preservation -
Heritage Tourism and Rural Heritage Divisions,
and
Clarion Associates

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Program of Boulder County

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A Preservation Investment Strategy
A plan that uses the act of preserving
places as a way to assist the local
economy and further environmental
objectives, and/or a plan that identifies the
types of investments needed to achieve the
protection of local character.

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A Letter to the Peak to Peak Community

To Peak to Peak residents, property owners, government representatives, business owners, and visitors:

The purpose of this document is to lay out an easy to use and broadly acceptable blueprint for the future of the Peak to Peak corridor from Black Hawk to Estes Park. The sponsor of this effort was the Scenic Byway Interest Group for the Peak to Peak and the Tourism and Recreation Program of Boulder County. However, when we use the word "we" in this document, that word represents the many residents, business owners and visitors who participated in our surveys and workshops as well as the broad representation we have on the Byway Interest Group.

We seek to maintain the economic health of the corridor and to protect the character of this special area. In 20 years the Peak to Peak will offer a landscape, a roadscape and a quality of experience that matches or exceeds what is found here today.

These are grand ideas and to a certain extent they sound like the standard text one reads in all plans. But, we think we're on to something a little different along the Peak to Peak. We know that change will occur along the Peak to Peak, but the question is, how much and what kind of change do we want?

In public workshops and in a survey of Peak to Peak businesses, there was almost unanimous support for the idea of not letting happen up here what has happened *down there* along the base of the Front Range. The problem we seek to avoid is a level of development that compromises

or destroys the character that brought us to this place. When we look to other parts of the West and other parts of the country, we know that it could happen here if we are not careful.

We believe that we have the right combination of topography, public land ownership, government regulations and private interest to protect this place and to thus maintain its distinctiveness and separateness from the rapid growth of the Front Range. This is not to say that we think all change can be prevented or should be prevented, but rather that private and public decisionmakers should have a basic game plan to work from that will protect the most important ingredients of the character of this special place.

We felt it important to make a few initial statements so readers are clear about the philosophy of this strategy. The following are principles that we believe must be respected if the Peak to Peak Corridor Management Plan is to succeed.

1. **The Peak to Peak is a special place and a valuable place.** As development and growth proceed along the Front Range, there are fewer and fewer places that are *like they used to be*. Certainly, we have lost much of the area's original character over time. We believe that we must work to ensure that future change does as little damage to the corridor's character as possible. An underlying factor in this statement is that much of the aesthetic, economic

and cultural value of the Peak to Peak is derived from its current character. Most of the typical change that we see in other places will not increase the value of the Peak to Peak; it will erode that value.

2. **Individual and community rights must be respected.** This strategy attempts to strike a balance between individual property rights and community rights. Much of the Peak to Peak belongs to the general public through federal, state or county ownership. There are large areas of the Peak to Peak, however, that belong to individuals. This strategy acknowledges that those two types of lands must be managed in different ways. We assume that if the general public wants to avoid development on private lands, then full compensation must be paid.
3. **The many viewpoints along the Peak to Peak must be respected.** The communities along the Peak to Peak vary tremendously in their views on government planning, the pros and cons of more development and the role of tourism in the Peak to Peak economy. What was borne out through surveys as a common opinion is that the character of the corridor is valuable to all residents and business people. The careful management of that character will serve to benefit all Peak to Peak residents, business owners and property owners.

4. **Our strategies need to be affordable and accomplishable without full time staff.** This strategy does not seek to create another bureaucracy or to make the management of the Peak to Peak anyone's full time job. Instead, it seeks practical, affordable strategies that volunteer residents, property owners, business owners and local governments can reasonably do with their typical budgets and resources. Sources for grant funding are identified, but they are to implement specific projects rather than to do more planning.

Overall, we at the Scenic Byway Interest Group and the Tourism and Recreation Program believe that there are special places in the world that best serve humanity by not significantly changing, and by being places that recall what once was or that allow the natural landscape rather than the built landscape to be the predominant feature to the senses. We think that the Peak to Peak region is one of those places and that we owe it to ourselves, to our children and to visitors from around the world to take special care of this place.

Sincerely,

Scenic Byways Interest Group and
The Tourism and Recreation Program

The Peak to Peak Borders an Area of Rapid Growth

One of the major challenges for the Peak to Peak is that it lies within 20 miles of the most rapidly growing region in America—the Colorado Front Range.

- The Denver metro area is projected to grow by 1,000,000 people in the next decade.
- Douglas County was recently identified as the fastest-growing county in the U.S.
- Boulder County is expecting over 10,000 new jobs in the next year— a 6% increase.
- The Highway 36 corridor from Boulder to Denver is emerging as the next Silicon Valley.
- 92,000 new people will move to Boulder County in the next 10 years – a 36% increase.
- A survey by the Boulder County Board of Commissioners found that 96%, 93%, and 90% of residents believe that the protection of land for wildlife habitat, hiking opportunities and

protection of agricultural land are, respectively, issues of very high and high importance to the future of the County.

This growth is a threat and a sign of the need for a heightened level of management along the Peak to Peak. The threat is that Colorado's active economy will encourage more growth along the Peak to Peak. While no one expects this growth to occur overnight, the magnitude of over 1000 new homes would significantly erode the corridor's open space character.

We believe that nearby growth is also a signal that the Peak to Peak merits special attention. This byway, its canyon access roads and its Continental Divide ecosystems have always been a place where Boulder and Denver area residents, as well visitors from around the country, could get away. If we are to maintain this place's special "away from it all" character, then our byway planning effort must be creative, assertive and steady.

In the Peak to Peak Scenic Byway Interest Group's 1993 survey of Peak to Peak business owners, one of the most striking findings was that these people who depend on visitation for their livelihoods were not eager to see significant change along the Peak to Peak. We are using their opinions as a benchmark for how and why we manage change along the Peak to Peak.

A Sampling of Responses to the Peak to Peak Business Owners Survey

The following are responses to some of the questions concerning the future of tourism and the character of the Peak to Peak. All questions were framed along a scale of Agree, Neutral or Disagree. While the survey presents a fuller view of how business owners feel that tourism should be managed, these questions provide a flavor of the degree to which business owners believe that the protection of the corridor's character is a critical element to their businesses.

<u>Question</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
<i>This community needs an overall plan for tourism development</i>	69.4	14.7	15.8
<i>Tourism development increases traffic problems in an area</i>	70.2	8.5	21.3
<i>Visitor services in existing communities should be expanded</i>	72.3	19.1	8.6
<i>In my vision for the future, natural resources would be preserved</i>	77.5	6.5	16.2
<i>In my vision for the future, historic resources would be preserved</i>	79.8	12.8	7.5
<i>In my vision for the future, the area's character would be preserved</i>	69.5	12.6	17.9

Source: Nuckolls, Jonelle; Moss, James; Long, Patrick; and Tucker, Dean. 1993. *Peak to Peak Highway Region Tourism Business Study*. University of Colorado at Boulder. College of Business and Administration. December 1993.

A Place Apart:
The Community of Eldora

One of the gems of the Peak to Peak is the community of Eldora. Located just west of Nederland, in the valley formed by Eldorado, Spencer, Ute and Mineral Mountains, this historic community was built in the late 1800's to serve the needs of the Enterprise and other nearby gold mines.

By the end of second decade of the twentieth century, gold mining had faded and hopes were placed on tourism. Rail and auto routes to Eldora made it an accessible mountain getaway for people from Boulder and around the nation. Though large scale tourism never flourished in Eldora, the community's quaint character and small scale made -- and make -- it a favorite for those seeking peace and quiet. The community's desire for protection of its character led to the adoption of an historic district in 1989.

Eldora provides one model for how Peak to Peak communities might think about the value of character. Had Eldora's turn of the century buildings been torn down or significantly updated during the last 70 years, the place's historical roots would have been compromised. What will the other communities along the Peak to Peak be like in 70 years from now?

A Bit of History

During the 1990's, the people who live and work along the Peak to Peak Scenic and Historic Byway have been involved in an effort to figure out whether there is a need to guide growth and change or whether it is better to leave well enough alone. In 1989, the Peak to Peak Scenic and Historic Byway was officially designated by the state Scenic and Historic Roads Commission. In that same year, the Tourism and Recreation Program of Boulder County (TARP) was formed to provide a vehicle for public investments to flow to the Peak to Peak area. This organization sponsored a business survey, a number of brochures and marketing packages, two studies of the landscape and communities of the corridor, a video, a published history, and this corridor management plan.

In response to the byway designation, citizens and organizations along the byway formed the Scenic Byway Interest Group (SBIG). SBIG consists of representatives from Larimer, Boulder and Gilpin counties and multiple communities along the byway as well as representatives from Boulder's Tourism and Recreation Program of Boulder County, Rocky Mountain National Park and the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests. The group discussed issues related to economic development, the environment, planning and design, intergovernmental concerns



The Gold Miner Hotel, Eldora, Colorado

(since the byway crosses several county lines), and historic preservation. The Interest Group's primary goal was to establish a vision and eventually develop a realistic corridor management plan.

In June of 1993, the SBIG participants signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish a management framework for the Peak to Peak Scenic and Historic Byway. Through this framework, strategies for the enhancement, protection, preservation, marketing and management of various cultural and recreational aspects associated with the Peak to Peak were to be developed and implemented. The MOU stated that, strategies must place "an emphasis on sustainable development policies and practices that are socially and environmentally sound," and that "this effort [must] be pursued within the context of land management goals, objectives, and policies of SBIG's respective members."

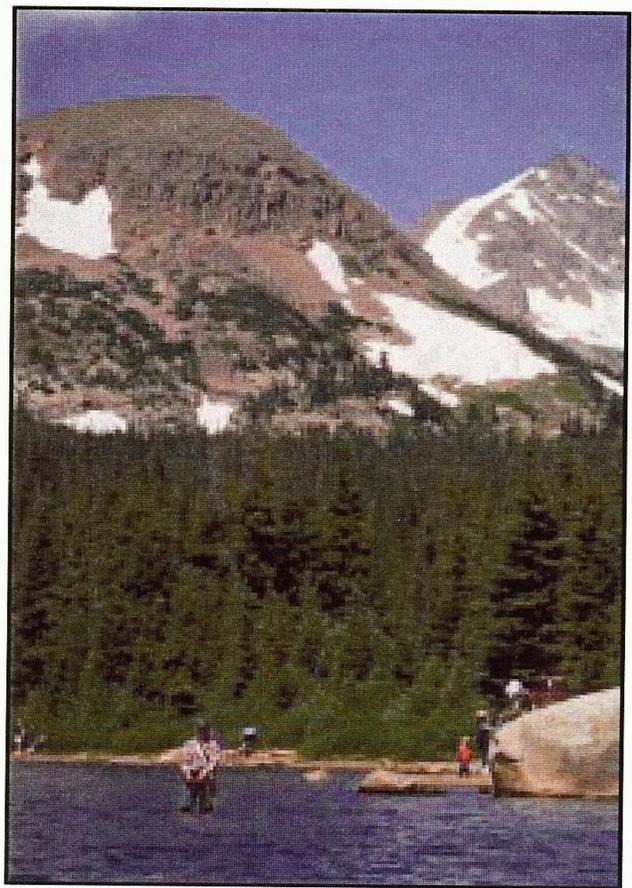
In January of 1997, SBIG and TARP initiated a project to develop a corridor management plan for the Peak to Peak. The planning process for this corridor management plan consisted of several steps. First, two workshops were held in Peak to Peak communities to identify basic concerns and to begin to define a vision for the byway. One on one interviews were then held with property owners, business people, residents and elected officials. This base of information was combined with past surveys to shape an overall strategy for the corridor. Focused attention was then applied to issues such as tourism management, roadway aesthetics, transfer of development rights and funding sources for key projects. Another round of workshops tested these ideas and shaped plan revisions. Final changes flowed from comments by Scenic Byway Interest Group members and interested citizens.

During the course of preparing this plan, it became clear that there was no uniform agreement for how the byway should be handled from one end to the other. Therefore, there was a need for a flexible approach with a few basic ground rules which defined the ways the interested groups and individuals could be involved. Secondly, the experience of TARP over the years indicated that the time had passed when tourism promotion was the most important objective. The time has arrived when the pressures of change — including those from tourism — are such that a more direct effort to protect the Peak to Peak will be needed. If this protection doesn't succeed, then the corridor will lose its distinctiveness and to many, its appeal.

A Place Apart: The Indian Peaks Wilderness

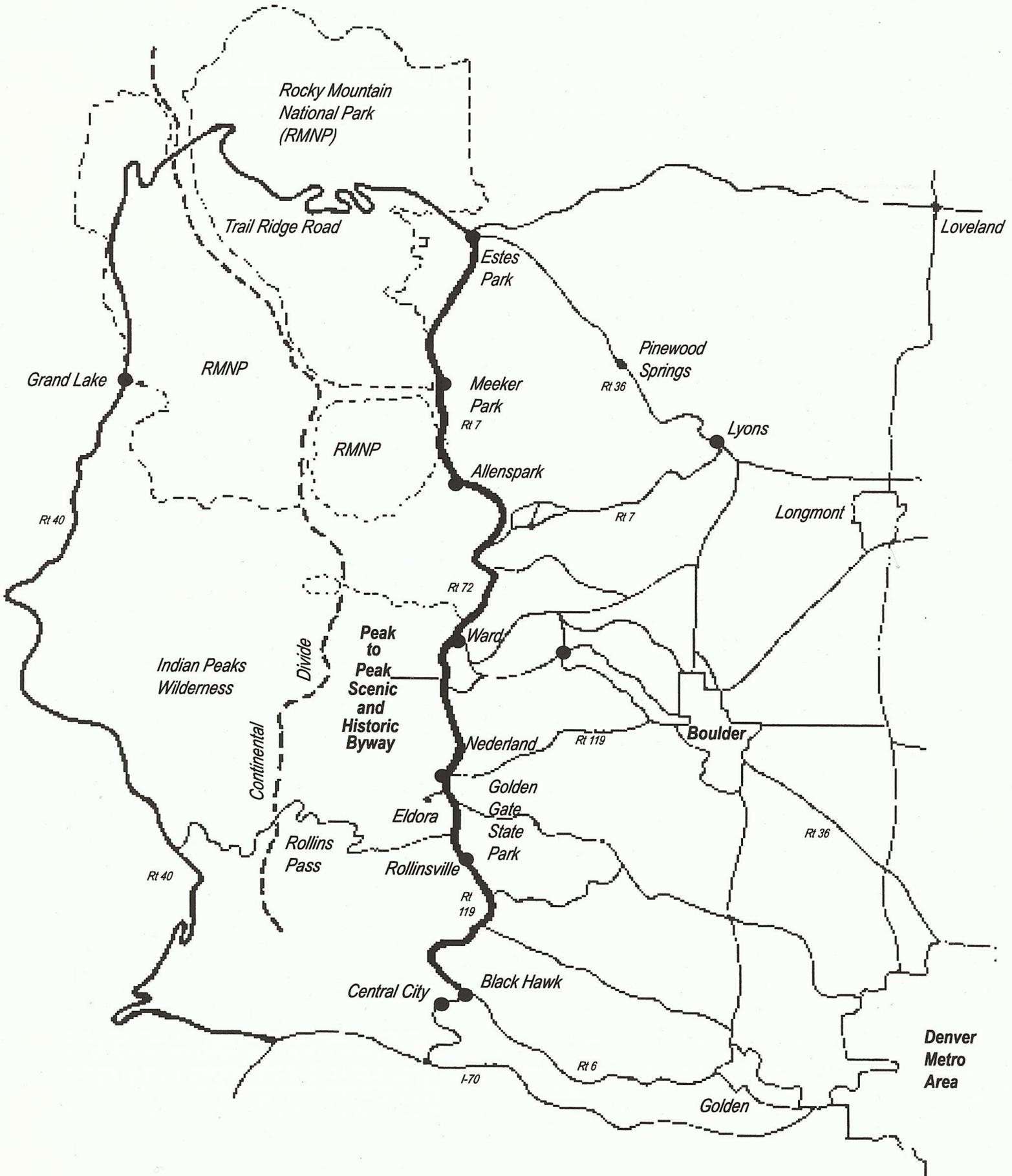
The Indian Peaks Wilderness envelopes the Continental Divide to the west of Peak to Peak. The non-wilderness portions of the Roosevelt National Forest, the County public lands and Rocky Mountain National Park are all much easier to access than the Indian Peaks Wilderness. While there are some trailheads into the Wilderness that are overused and congested in the summer, most of Indian Peaks Wilderness requires longer and more arduous hikes.

This difference in ease of accessibility to the public lands along the Peak to Peak is a great asset. It means that for years to come, there will always be parts of the landscape that will be less visited and more isolated. This concept of protecting parts of the byway from overvisitation is an important part of the overall strategy.



Brainard Lake at the edge of the Indian Peaks Wilderness Area

The Peak to Peak Scenic and Historic Byway



The Intrinsic Qualities of the Peak to Peak

Intrinsic qualities are the features of a byway that shape and define its character. The National Scenic Byways Program specifies six potential types of intrinsic qualities along byways: scenic, historic, recreational, natural, cultural and archeological.

The Peak to Peak clearly offers the first four and aspects of the fifth. To the degree that there are archeological resources along the highway, they are not sufficiently preserved and/or interpreted to make them accessible to the general public.

Scenic Qualities

The scenic qualities of the Peak to Peak have been well documented. Studies by the University of Colorado at Denver (Westin, Rex and Bardwell, Susan. Peak to Peak Scenic Highway Study. 1988 and Peak to Peak Scenic Byway, College of Architecture and Planning, University of Colorado May 1995) both performed detailed scenic inventories of the Peak to Peak landscape. For future efforts requiring an understanding of the visual environment along the Peak to Peak, these studies should be source documents.

The Continental Divide provides the backdrop to the "wide sweep" of the Plains below. It is a route of great beauty that traverses a high country of forests and meadows. It parallels the Continental Divide where the mountain vistas provide views of cirques and crevices dotted with remnants of glaciers. Arapahoe Glacier, the largest remaining glacier in Colorado, can be viewed from a pullout on the highway.

Historic Qualities

In addition to its natural beauty, the area encompasses the romance of the Old West where the 1860's Gold Rush set the stage of most of Colorado's history. Colorado Routes 119 and 72 traverse an area which saw the first important gold strikes of the State; later silver and tungsten were mined. Few mines remain in operation, but the area's mining past can be seen by passing numerous mine shafts and ore dumps in its canyons and gulches. The National Historic Districts of Black Hawk and Central City and the Redstone District of Lyons are located in the area. Many old miner's trails and ghost towns such as Balarat and Caribou are here to explore and enjoy. The former mining towns of Rollinsville, Eldora, Nederland, Ward, Gold Hill and others are proud of their historic past and heritage. It is a land where, for over 100 years, people have made their living out of the mountains.

Recreational Qualities

The area offers special recreational attractions for each season. Fishing, hunting, hiking, rock climbing, bicycling, bird watching, downhill skiing, cross country skiing and camping are popular activities. Back country vehicles, such as 4-wheel drives and snowmobiles, use the various old roads and trails to enjoy additional scenery. The region is drained by numerous trout streams and dotted with such lakes as Brainard, Long, Isabelle, Red Rock and Barker Dam Reservoir. Eldora Mountain Resort offers excellent high country skiing just outside of the Town of Nederland.

Natural Qualities

The ecology, plants and animals of the region are also of significance. The Peak to Peak Highway runs mostly through a montane lifezone that contains coniferous and aspen forests, open dry meadows and willow shrub wetlands. This lifezone lies roughly between 8,000' to 9,500'. The coniferous forests are dominated by lodgepole pine and Douglas fir. The aspen groves throughout the area add a colorful diversity to the landscape, especially in September when they are peaking in color. Carved, u-shaped glacial valleys dot the area and contain willow shrubs, sedges and reed grasses. A variety of bird, animal, fish and reptile species abound and can be seen from the Peak to Peak. The Byway provides views and access to two other lifezones. The subalpine zone (9,500'-11,500') is the highest forested lifezone. Fewer species of wildlife are to be found in subalpine areas. The alpine tundra, the land above the tree line, provides a dramatic backdrop as the third lifezone to be experienced in the region. It is a harsh environment above 11,500' where plant life is dominated by sedges, grasses and low-growing "cushion" plants. Wildlife is sparse, but some species have adapted to the cold weather and high winds.

Cultural Qualities

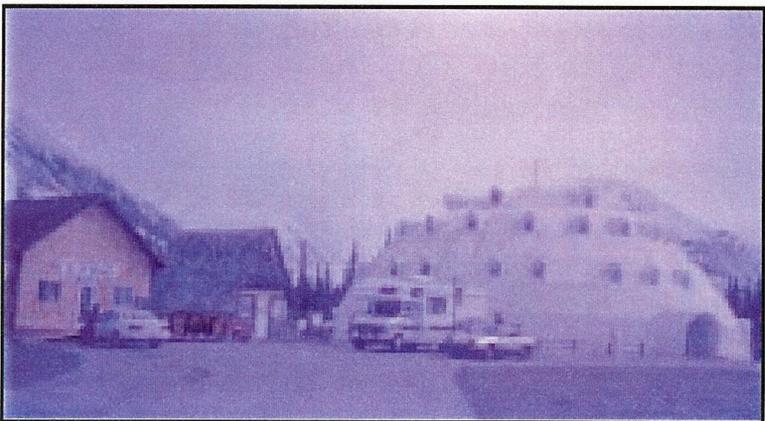
The primary cultural quality of the Peak to Peak is the glimpse it gives of past and present mountain culture. The mining history is still visible: old mines and tailings can be seen, there are plans for a mining museum, the architecture from the period is very evident, and the physical layout of mountain villages still echoes the overnight creation of places during the gold rush period. Festivals, interpretive and educational programs, and scientific research facilities are all present to tell this area's story.

The Peak to Peak Philosophy: Less is More

Lessons Learned: Roads Don't Stay Scenic by Accident

There can be a tendency to assume that roads will maintain their underlying scenic character without deliberate public policy and careful private action. Unfortunately, such an assumption is incorrect. Every state in the nation provides many examples of how development was managed so poorly that important place defining qualities of the landscape were lost forever.

Managing a roadway requires that clear guidelines be established for the types of development that will enhance the corridor and the types of development that will detract from the road's most important qualities. Only a vision for what a community wants coupled with continual attention to development details can shape a place and protect character.



500' Billboards and 35' Igloos are good examples of features that would detract from most any roadway -- even the rural Nevada and Alaskan scenic corridors where one can find these structures. The Peak to Peak must avoid development that is out of scale.

Less is more. This phrase, often mentioned during the process of preparing this corridor management plan, captures the essence of what many people along Peak to Peak corridor would like to accomplish over the coming decades: less overt change to the landscape with a more stable local economy. *Less is more.*

The West is big, or so people like to say. Some feel that there is always room for more of everything: more cars, more houses, more tourists. But most anyone in the Inter Mountain West and certainly in Colorado's Front Range can describe the ways in which the region has become smaller and more congested. Something inherent in the character of this region is lost as more of everything arrives and moves in.

That inherent something which is lost is *space*, that is, open lands with evidence of none or only a relatively few people living or working on the land. The character of the Inter Mountain West today is very much one that has been touched by people. Ranches, logging, mining, water projects and communities all display the evidence of the presence of humans. The issue in question here is that of the number of people and the types of impacts they bring.

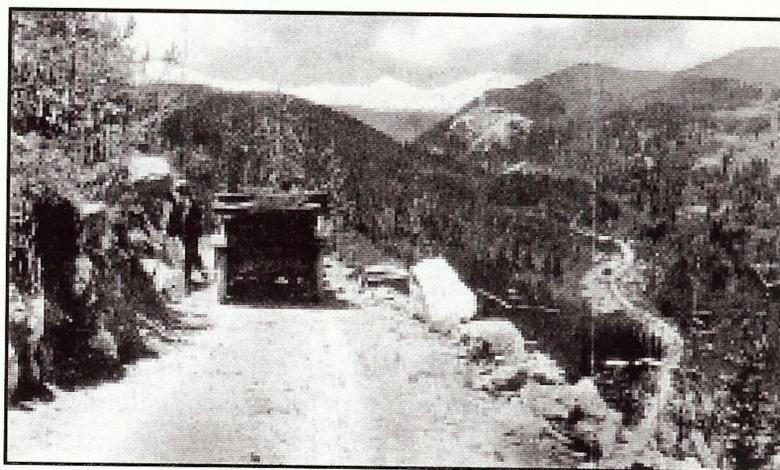
A landscape is more rural the less it is touched by the evidence of human occupation. The more houses, the less rural. The more people are evident in a landscape, the more urban the place looks. Space is a critical ingredient along the Peak to Peak. Its presence is of prime importance. Its loss affects wildlife and ecosystems, erodes the grand views and reduces the "away from it all" feel of the place.

Less is more. Less settlement is more Western. Less evidence of people is more true to the character of the Peak to Peak. The fewer houses one sees from the road, the more integrity the landscape offers to the viewer. The fewer cars one encounters while driving from Nederland to Allenspark, the more one feels the qualities that have made the Peak to Peak a destination drive since Stanley Steamers chugged along this road 80 years ago.

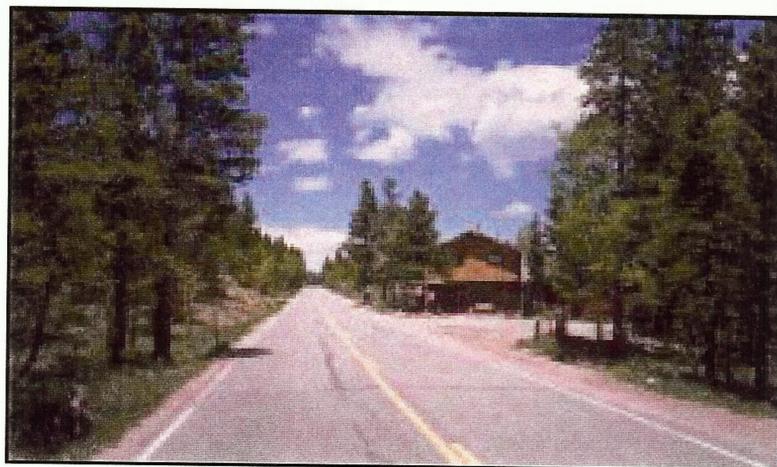
Less is more is not an antigrowth statement, at least not in the sense that all growth is bad. It does suggest that some types of growth in some places may be undesirable. *Less is more* also acknowledges that the less growth that is present or evident, the greater the degree to which we have protected viewsheds and ecosystems. A new building built in a settled community may be a good thing if the community desires new construction. A new building that is clearly seen from the roadway along an undeveloped section of the Peak to Peak may not be desirable. Everyone loses a little bit of the heritage and character that make up the Peak to Peak when growth occurs which makes the place feel less spacious and open and more like anywhere else in the state and the nation.

Less is more is also not based on the idea that more regulation is necessarily the answer to all problems. This plan is based more on incentives, information and private action to try to fill the gap. We believe that everyone stands to benefit from a plan that provides direction for both public and private decisions that will shelter the area's character.

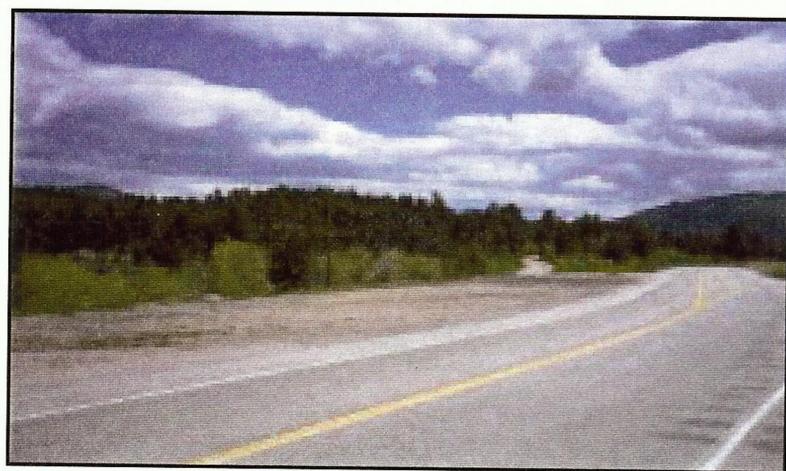
Lessons Learned:
Beware More Road Improvements



The Peak to Peak highway has gone through many changes. Originally, it looked like this photo.



Then with time, most of the road looked like the above image. This section of road is still intact north of Allenspark.



But, over the decade, the road received major investments to bring it up to state and federal standards for higher speed travel. Many sections of the road have a character similar to this road segment. Care should be taken with any future modifications that highway speed considerations do not compromise road character.

What Could Change? Where Do We Need to Be Careful?

Lessons Learned: The Great Smoky National Park

How much could the Peak to Peak change in the future?

The large amounts of public land along the corridor provide a certain amount of protection from significant change, but there are still thousands of acres of land in private ownership. Especially in Gilpin and Larimer counties, this private land is potentially subject to dramatic change.

There are numerous examples of places adjacent to national parks and forests where the presence of these public resources has generated intensive development. One of the most striking examples of this type of national park generated development is outside the Great Smoky National Park in Pigeon Forge and Gatlinberg, Tennessee. Intensive hotel and convention development along with entertainment development such as Dollywood has transformed these two sleepy communities into major tourism destinations. While the road connecting the two places is still intact due to public ownership of the corridor, the communities themselves are wall to wall commercial development.

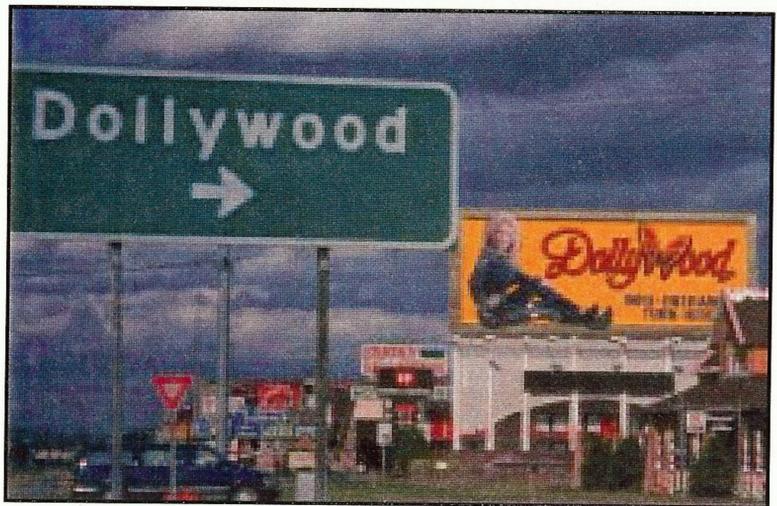
Along the Peak to Peak, special care must be taken to manage the potential development pressure extending north from Black Hawk and south from Estes Park. It is quite easy to imagine major mountain top entertainment projects linking themselves to the casinos of Black Hawk and Central City. These projects would conflict with the vision of this Plan.

We live in a nation that is slowly homogenizing— at least in terms of the landscape. Franchises look the same whether in Tennessee, Maine, Arizona or Oregon. They offer the same menus of goods and services everywhere. Most homes built in the growing communities of the Front Range look the same. While larger economies of scale may lower costs to the consumer, we as a nation appear to have adopted a standard for development that is based on the idea that everyone wants the same thing.

The Peak to Peak is not like everywhere else, USA. We do not want the same thing to happen to this place as has happened to other popular mountain areas.

This plan is built on the idea that there are a few key ingredients to try to retain a feeling of spaciousness and unsettledness to the Peak to Peak:

1. Direct growth, if any, to established communities, but only at their pleasure.
2. Minimize the visual impact of the growth that does occur between settled communities. To the greatest extent possible, hide and keep development in scale with historical uses and densities along the Peak to Peak. If the building cannot or should not be hidden from view, then match the new building's architecture to the historic styles found along the Peak to Peak such as *stick, log and rustic tourism*.



Pigeon Forge, Tennessee— a gateway to a National Park.

A critical aspect of this objective will be to make home builders — whether professionals or homeowners — more aware of the need for a greater attention to visual impacts from the roadway. In addition, there are just some uses that will never be appropriate along the Peak to Peak — a water slide, for instance, in our opinion, just does not fit here.

3. Work with county planning and zoning to keep as much of the corridor between these settled places as open and unsettled as possible. If development must occur, it should not be visible from the road or from other places from which the public will view the Peak to Peak's landscape. New construction and existing structures should be designed or retrofitted with materials that have the minimum visual impact. Roof colors, non-reflective materials and siding materials should minimize visual impacts on the landscape.
4. Seek ways to decrease congestion along the road and at popular spots along the Peak to Peak. Tourism businesses should target customers who will have the minimum impact on congested areas and the maximum impact on the economy. For example, a family who stays in overnight lodging, hikes near the lodge, doesn't often use a car during their stay and eats all their meals out will generate maximum economic impact and few congestion problems.

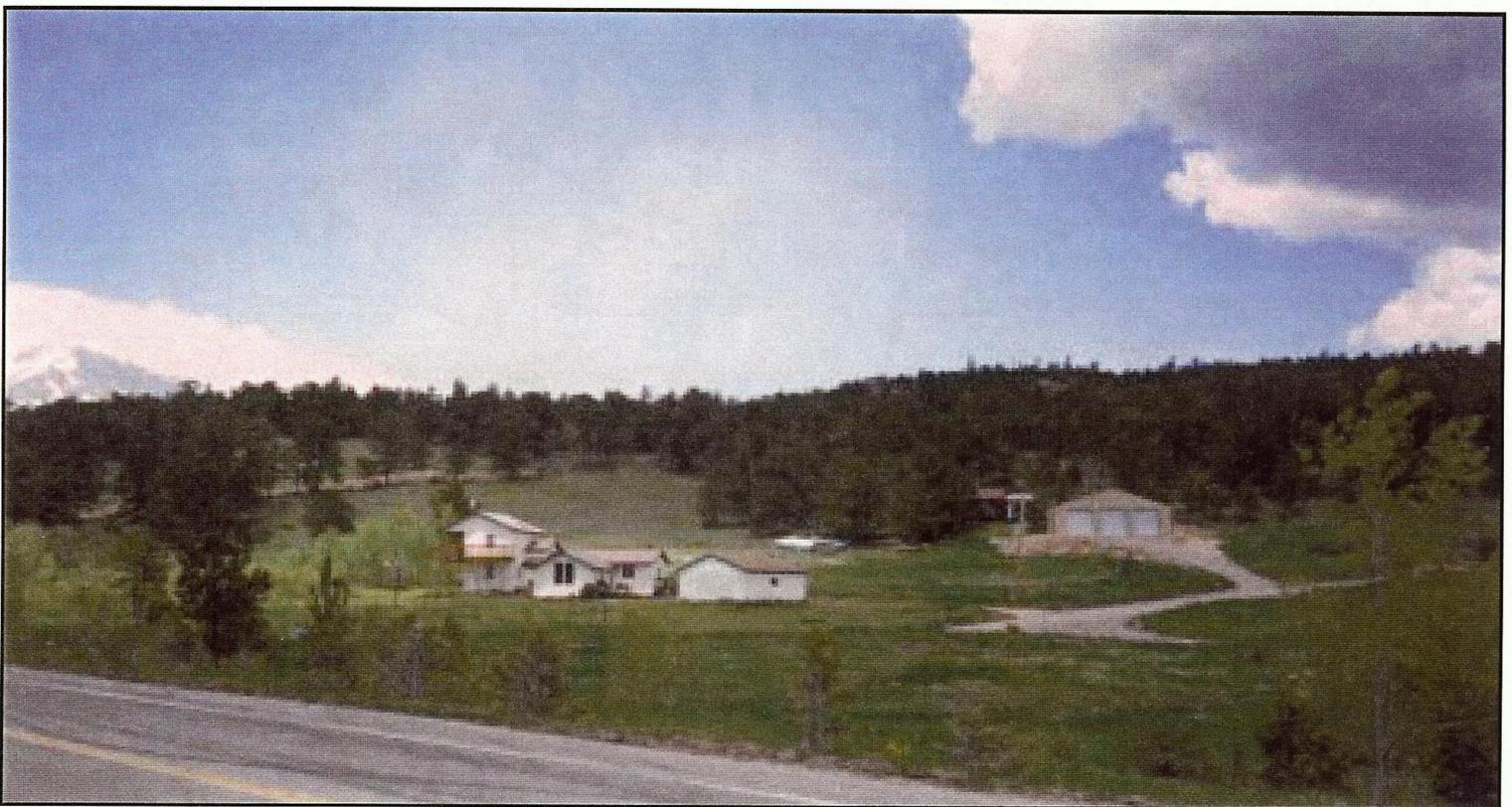
A Place Apart: The Meadows of the Peak to Peak

The mountain meadows of the Peak to Peak landscape are fragile. These meadows provide important visual relief and variety. In contrast to the dramatic mountain peaks, the meadows have a more intimate character. One can easily imagine sitting down next to a mountain wetlands and watching the birds. No day-long expedition is required to access these resources.

These meadows are also naturally suitable for development, but the placement of homes in the meadows can have a significant impact on the landscape. Homes sited in full view tend to dominate the scene; their presence is so obvious it is difficult to look past them to the background landscape.

On the other hand, careful placement of homes within the vegetated parts of the landscape rather than in the middle of the meadows can reduce the negative visual consequences of development. Attention to building design, color and materials can also greatly reduce the visual impact of new construction or renovations.

Property owners and development review agencies must manage this issue carefully along the Peak to Peak.

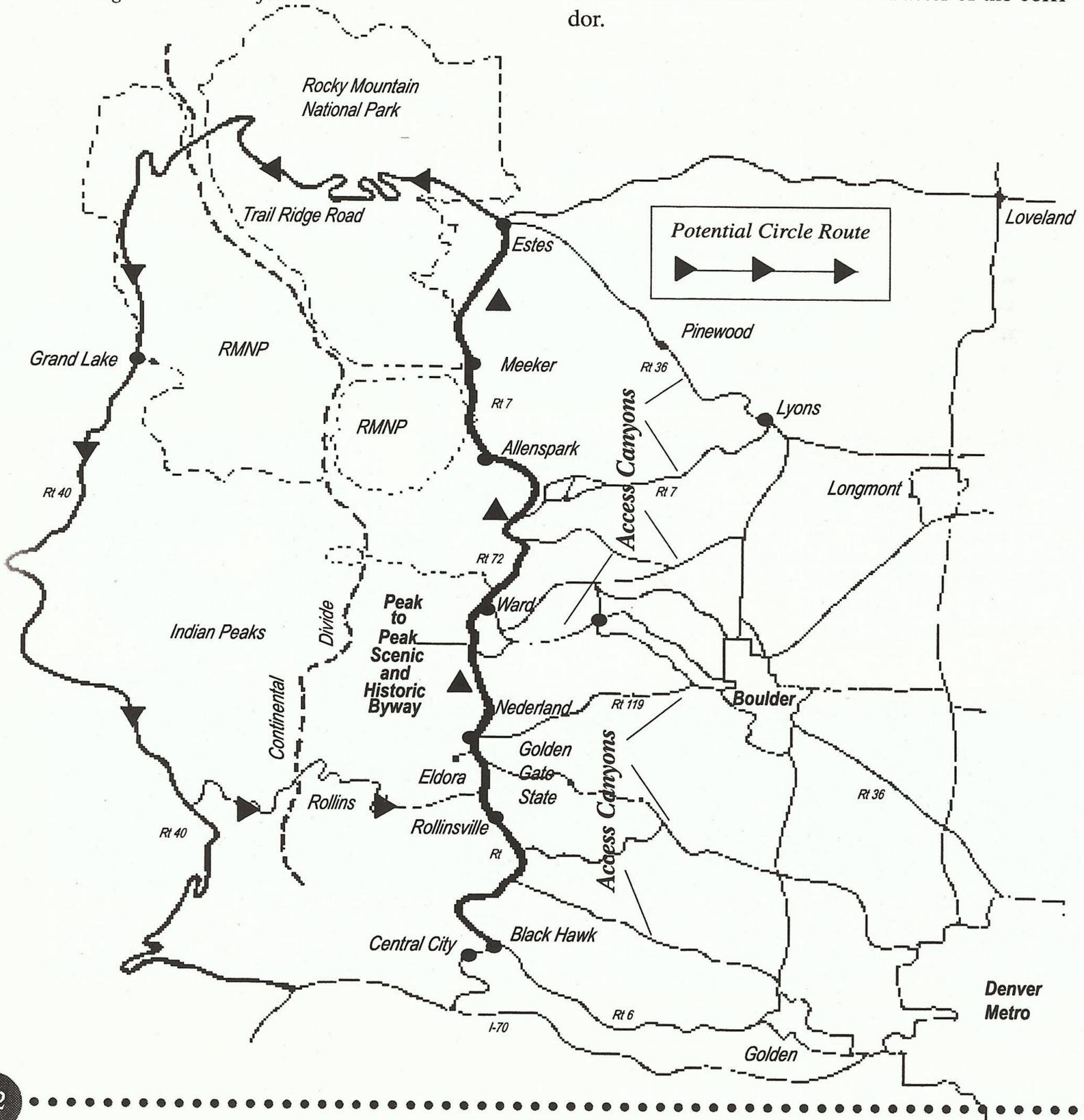


Two Siting Options, One Meadow: Homes placed along the edge of meadows can be less visually intrusive than those placed in the middle of open areas.

Peak to Peak Across the Divide

A very feasible vision for the future is that of uniting the Peak to Peak with east-west access routes across the Continental Divide. The result would be a spectacular circle route connecting the Peak to Peak with the western valleys holding Grand Lake, Highway 40 and Winter Park. The east-west connectors could consist of Trail Ridge Road and Rollins Pass for cars and cross-divide trails for hikers. Reopening Rollins Pass will be the critical action to bring this vision to life.

5. Work with the Colorado Department of Transportation to find ways to treat the Peak to Peak with greater design sensitivity and to better consider whether additional roadway expansions (i.e., wider shoulders, longer curves) are really necessary. Each modification should be considered carefully, for each change can remove another piece of the road's original character.
6. Find ways for the ideas in this strategy to be implemented with the least regulation and in a manner that encourages citizens and business owners along the Peak to Peak to participate in decisions that will affect both their lives and the character of the corridor.



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What Does This Strategy Mean for the People Who Care About the Peak to Peak?

We see several different constituencies for the corridor. This section discusses how we believe each group will be impacted by this strategy's ideas.

Current residents: If the previously stated ingredients for success or objectives are pursued, those who live along the corridor could benefit by seeing traffic levels stay approximately at today's levels. They will continue to have easy access to the natural resources that make the place so appealing. While more people will take up residence in the corridor, they will move primarily to the settled communities which have clear boundaries beyond which they will not grow. This pattern of growth will give everyone a sense of what the *buildout* for the corridor will be. In other words, people who plan to live in the corridor for the next 20 years will never have to worry about saying, "Oh, I don't recognize the place anymore."

Future residents: For those who move to the mountains in the future, the *less is more* philosophy will mean that they may have fewer options for finding a building lot on top of a ridge. But, it also means that neither newcomers nor natives must worry about seeing another home placed upon another ridge within their view. This is a tangible economic benefit from this strategy. Property values will be protected the greater the degree to which open vistas are maintained.

The Front Range Population: To many, the Peak to Peak is a get-away area for the people of Denver and Boulder and this will not change. No matter how much we build *up here*, it will always be less developed than *down there*. The plains along the Front Range are filled with houses and people and cars. Just drive up a narrow canyon and you leave that behind. The Peak to Peak is a valuable recreational and cultural resource for the Front Range population. Therefore, let's take good care of this place and manage it in a way that will create the most long term environmental, economic and cultural value for both the Front Range population and for Peak to Peak residents.

An Environmental View of the Economy

The book Lost Landscapes and Failed Economies by Thomas Michael Power offers important insights for projects like the Peak to Peak corridor management plan.

One of Power's central arguments is that the quality of life of rural places is one of the driving forces for economic activity in rural America. He demonstrates that the management of the non-economic aspects of community — recreation, open space, good schools, good government, public safety, strong civic institutions — is as important to rural economic success as the traditional issues of infrastructure and labor supply.

When all these non-traditional factors are combined, they suggest what Powers calls an environmental view of the economy. We have taken such a perspective for this project. The Less is More concept flows directly from this environmental view. More economic activity will not ensure economic health. Maintaining the character of the place will ensure community health.

Source: Power, Thomas Michael. 1996. *Lost Landscapes and Failed Economies: The Search for a Value of Place*. Island Press: Washington, D.C.

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Avoiding the Mistakes of Others: The Tourism Life Cycle

The tourism life cycle refers to what has been noted by researchers as the traditional pattern that communities follow during the course of tourism development. (See R.W. Butler's 1980 article The Concept of the Tourist Area of Evolution: Implications for Management of Resources, in Canadian Geographer 24 (1): 5-12, and D. Getz's 1992 article Tourism Planning and Destination Life Cycle, in Annals of Tourism Research 19 (4): 752-770.)

Historically, most communities begin with a pristine and unusual resource that is unknown to the general public. As it becomes better known, more tourism investment occurs. The market begins to shift from a select few customer groups to a larger mass market. As the community orients itself toward the mass market, more development occurs -- everybody is racing to get a piece of a steadily growing pie.

At some point, the character of the place begins to erode. The reasons why the place was popular begin to be less evident to visitors. The prices visitors pay in congestion, pollution and generally homogenized experiences begins to exceed the perceived value of the place. Once this downward trend begins, the image of the place changes. While tourism is still present, the market shrinks as consumers find other places that offer more value. Eventually, the place slides into recession with too many tourism oriented businesses and too few customers. Prices fall, quality falls and the original product is largely destroyed.

This is a fate that the Peak to Peak should avoid. While there is little evidence today of a rush of tourism investment which will erode the corridor's character, this could occur in the future in some locations and at the edges of the byway.

This strategy seeks to put in place a framework to prevent the tourism life cycle from destroying our highway and landscape.

Out of Region Tourists to the Peak to Peak: Some might argue that visitors to the Peak to Peak need more services and goods to make their stay enjoyable. We say that too many goods and services erode the qualities of the place for which people come. The Peak to Peak should always be a destination where visitors are ensured that they can find *the place* and that it is not hidden amidst the shops, port-a-toilets and billboards. In a world in which places with integrity are in retreat, we suspect the Peak to Peak will become a more valued and cherished place if it can protect its character from over-development.

The Business Community: The high seasons are already busy along the Peak to Peak. The off-seasons are slow. Some businesses start and go bankrupt because of this cyclical economy. Some new businesses are not tourism reliant; they do well throughout the year. Given that the seasons will go on forever and that road conditions will forever be suspect along the Peak to Peak from November to March, we see no reason to buck these trends and encourage more tourism. In our Peak to Peak surveys, business owners said themselves that they place the protection of the integrity of the corridor as a higher priority than more business. Our strategy is to encourage year round businesses that will fit within rather than compromise the objective of maintaining a *less* congested, *more* spacious environment.

How Can This Be Done?

There are four main actors who will shape the future of the Peak to Peak. Each has a separate set of interests and constraints. We describe each of these entities below and present a set of policies or principles to shape their decisionmaking.

The primary actors in future Peak to Peak decisions will be the following groups:

- Residents, private landowners and business owners who hold land on which new homes or businesses could be built or expanded
- The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT).
- The Scenic Byway Interest Group acting through the Tourism and Recreation Program of Boulder County, and other organizations such as landowners' associations, land trusts and environmental groups.
- Federal, county and local government entities along the corridor.

Mission Statement for All Groups

The vision for the Peak to Peak is that this is a byway seeking to sustain and improve its beauty and character for future generations. Therefore, there is a deliberate ongoing effort to enhance the character and culture of the byway. This sensitive character includes the landscape, commercial development, the amount of residential development, the natural resources and the roadway itself. We will seek to protect the byway from excessive or inappropriate change and preserve the byway in a state similar to today's character for future generations.

Other Themes for Byway Management

Roadway Safety: *This management plan places a priority on roadway safety. As the majority of the highway has already been upgraded in the last 15 years, there are few sections that do not meet AASHTO guidelines. The emphasis in this strategy and in other work prepared by the Scenic Byway Interest Group is on managing the details of aesthetics as they relate to road edges, signs, pull outs and landscaping.*

Road Aesthetics: *The Scenic Byway Interest Group will be working with the Colorado Department of Transportation to define very specific steps that the Department and localities can take to create more design consistency and improve the overall aesthetic experience of the byway. As noted in this strategy -- the details matter.*

Outdoor Advertising: *As a Scenic and Historic Highway, the Colorado Scenic and Historic Highways Commission has authority to coordinate budgets for improvements to scenic and historic highways. As such, the Commission can help to control and guide outdoor advertising which falls within the purview of the Department of Transportation. In addition, county ordinances also control outdoor advertising in Boulder County.*

Interpretation for Visitors: *A major effort in the years ahead will be encouraging interpretive efforts that disperse visitors and result in longer stays. Interpretation of the highway's natural, cultural, scenic, historic and recreational resources will all be pursued.*

Visitor Experiences: *Our philosophy along the Peak to Peak is to seek investments and protection strategies that will benefit not only visitors, but residents as well. Ancillary trail systems, interpretation and improved visitor services within established communities will meet this objective.*

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Management Principles for Residents, Private Owners and Business Owners

- *Seek financially acceptable alternatives to development.*

- *Minimize the impact of development.*

- *Understand mountain living.*

- a. Private landowners are encouraged to find alternatives to meet their economic objectives without pursuing a path of maximum development. Alternatives might include the sale of land to conservation organizations, use of conservation easements, use of transfers of development rights and other mechanisms.
- b. In cases, where development occurs, projects should seek to minimally impact the landscape and character of the Peak to Peak. Projects should be hidden from view of the road or extensively buffered from clear view; colors and types of materials should be compatible with historically used designs along the Peak to Peak; signage should have some historical precedent; site designs should emphasize the natural rather than the built environment; ridgeline development should be avoided in all cases; and the visual impact of the structure should be considered from a 360 degree perspective. Perhaps most importantly, the scale of all future developments should be kept small.
- c. All new homeowners and business owners should consult with local organizations (such as TARP) and county entities (such as the County planning office) to fully understand the implications of mountain living and business operations. Seasonality of the economy and severity of weather conditions should be fully understood before investments are made.

Management Principles for the Colorado Department of Transportation

- *Create a byway-specific planning and design process.*

- *Revise maintenance practices.*

- a. CDOT should create a special planning and design process for scenic byways that allows for local input and a more site specific approach to managing these sensitive roads.
- b. CDOT should work with byway organizations to revise current maintenance practices that do not support the overall objectives of the state designated byway.¹

1 The Green Book is a set of recommended design principles for highway construction. While the Green Book offers significant flexibility in highway design, those flexibilities are sometimes ignored by engineers due to time or cost constraints.

- c. CDOT should adopt a set of byway management and design principles to ensure that the maximum flexibility inherent in Federal Highway design requirements and standards is fully used.
- d. CDOT should seek to repair damages made to the Peak to Peak by past construction and modification activities such as mitigating road cuts.
- e. CDOT should adopt a stance of giving more attention to the road edge and foreground appearance of scenic byways. A more precise attention to detail is important.

- *Use flexibility and creativity with byways.*
- *Repair past damage.*
- *Attention to detail.*

Management Principles for the Scenic Byway Interest Group and the Tourism and Recreation Program of Boulder County and other Regional Organizations

- a. SBIG/TARP pursues a philosophy that “the little things count.” By this we mean that we must care enough about this road to manage it with an awareness of the importance that lies in the details of each incremental decision.
- b. SBIG/TARP should comment to local and county government review agencies on proposed development projects that affect the Peak to Peak.
- c. Protection of character is and will be the primary goal of SBIG/TARP and the Peak to Peak Management Effort. Within that framework, SBIG/TARP should work to protect the byway so that the economy is stable into the future. SBIG/TARP should provide information on the rigors of running a businesses along the Peak to Peak.
- d. SBIG/TARP should actively work on and support public sector funded and oriented projects that protect and enhance the cultural, physical and natural environment, and in this way provide support for the type of stable economic base described in this corridor management plan.
- e. SBIG/TARP should not actively promote the byway. They will respond to requests for information on the byway and should attempt to shape the message conveyed to the world so that the byway’s vision is expressed. They should discourage other groups from using promotional approaches that are counter pro-

- *The little things count.*
- *Comment on development.*
- *Protect character and thereby protect the economy.*
- *Invest in projects that protect character.*
- *Do not actively promote the byway.*



- *Raise awareness on sensitive development.*

- *Reduce overall development in the mountains.*

- *Encourage new development in settled areas.*

- *Protect open space.*

ductive to the broad goals of the Peak to Peak.

- f. SBIG/TARP should cooperate with other organizations to educate homebuilders and other commercial interests on ways to develop in the mountains with sensitivity.

- g. SBIG/TARP should encourage the use of acquisition, easements, transfers of development rights and regulatory means to reduce the amount of development in the mountains.

The Role of Federal, County and Local Governments

- a. Government entities should encourage new development to occur within existing settled areas. They should actively discourage development in areas lying between settled communities.

- b. Government should allocate financial resources for the acquisition of key open lands along the corridor.



Peak to Peak Strategies

The following actions will help ensure that the Peak to Peak maintains environmental, economic and cultural health. These recommendations are presented as a starting point for interested groups to pursue targeted strategies to reach the objectives described above. This section concludes with a three year action agenda.

The following departments, agencies, organizations and terms are noted as abbreviations in the strategy matrix:

BC Nature Assoc– Boulder County Nature Association
 CO- Colorado
 CDOT– Colorado Department of Transportation
 Co Open Lands– Colorado Open Lands– a statewide land trust
 DC– Washington, DC– reference to federal agencies
 EPA– U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 GOCO– Great Outdoors Colorado grant program

TARP– Tourism and Recreation Program of Boulder County
 TEA 2000– 1998 Federal Transportation Act
 TDR– Transfer of development rights
 SBIG– Scenic Byway Interest Group
 SHPO– State Historic Preservation Office
 Smart Growth Grant– State grant program to support planning

Landscape Management

Strategy Component	Problems Solved	Apply Where Along the Byway?	Who Does It?	Funding	Feasibility	Priority
1. Create public awareness materials on mountain development issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves chances that people will not poorly site or inappropriately design new homes Provide info on roof materials, color impact, good and bad photos 	Three counties	SBIG and County government	GOCO, EPA if linked to tourism and second homes	H	H
2. TDR program - Boulder County, Larimer County, Gilpin county, Nederland and other interested communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreases number of homes along byway Places homes where there are services 	Entire route	All jurisdictions	Boulder Open Space, GOCO	M-H	H
3. Purchase conserv. easements- landowners & tax relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease potential building sites Provide tax relief for owners 	Three counties	SBIG, land trusts, CO Open Lands, BC Nature Assoc.	GOCO, TEA 2000, local land trust	H	H

Landscape Management - continued

Strategy Component	Problems Solved	Apply Where Along the Byway?	Who Does It?	Funding	Feasibility	Priority
4. Create National Register Historic District along and including the roadway in the Allenspark area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives SHPO review for CDOT projects Framework to encourage appropriate development Doesn't create regulation 	Larimer line south to Camp Tahosa	Allenspark residents need to take the lead	TARP can provide Register survey funding	H	H
5. Create Advisory Design Guidelines for Critical Scenic and/or Historic Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows for local, non-regulatory review of construction projects 	Targeted, locally defined areas	Local government	Smart Growth grant, byway grant	M	M
6. Define Visual Impact Zones along the Byway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies priority parcels for sensitive development Provides more information for site plan review process 	Three counties	SBIG, TARP and Counties	Smart Growth grant, EPA grant, Byway grant	H	H
7. Create an Overlay Zone to require special review of projects within the highest impact zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides for mandatory review of projects within County site plan review 	Targeted objective areas along the entire byway	TARP and County planning	Little needed	M	M
8. Encourage national program to embrace preservation and sustainable development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates support from DC and in CO for what Peak to Peak is trying to do 	Entire byway	Consulting team, state byway coordin, Cong reps	Little needed	L	L

Access and Roadway Management

Strategy Component	Problem Solved	Apply Where Along the Byway?	Who Does It?	Funding	Feasibility	Priority
1. Develop maintenance and construction design guidelines for Peak to Peak.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor maintenance • Poor construction • Lack of design consistency • Lack of attention to scenic issues 	Entire length	Visual Impact Reduction project	Visual Impact Reduction byways grant	H	H
2. Develop a new model working relationship with CDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives CDOT some political cover to test the ideas without committing too much 	Boulder County and other counties	TARP	Visual Impact Reduction byways grant	H	H
3. Develop special strategies for sections of the road which are still unreconstructed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that sections with intact original character are protected 	Boulder, Gilpin and Larimer Counties	TARP	Visual Impact Reduction byways grant	H	H
4. Expand bicycle and walking paths along the corridor with an emphasis on paths that are off the highway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides more bicycling opportunities without necessarily placing more bikes on the Peak to Peak 	Entire route	TARP	Byways, Trails or Enhancement grants	M	M
5. Monitor development and change along road and consider de-designation of portions of road are not scenic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains high standard for quality 	Southern and northern sections may be first to consider	TARP, SBIG and state historic and scenic roads board	None needed	M	L
6. Restore historic trestle bridge and other resources to Rollins Pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protects resources • Opens pass 	West of Rollinsville	TARP and counties	TEA 2000	H	H
7. Support creation of James Peak Wilderness Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protects more back country 	Rollins to Berthoud Pass	SBIG	Forest Service	M	M
8. Support new train siding at Rollinsville and Ski Train stop in summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides mass transit from Denver to Peak to Peak 	Rollinsville	Counties	TEA 2000	M	M
9. Consider additional designations at areas such as canyons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain standards for quality 	Four entry canyons	TARP	None needed	M	M

Tourism Management

Strategy Component	Problem Solved	Apply Where Along the Byway?	Who Does It?	Funding	Feasibility	Priority
1. Adopt a clear policy position on TARP's role in tourism and land development review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminates confusion over TARP's role Clarifies what TARP works on 	Entire length	TARP	None	H	H
2. Respond to requests for information on the Peak to Peak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Puts TARP in a responsive, but not active promotional role 	Entire length	TARP	None needed	M	M
3. Encourage visitors to experience the landscape and the place and to be "invisible visitors." Encourage small experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shapes the image of what there is to "do" along the Peak to Peak. Emphasizes the things that compliment the long term sustainable health of the byway. 	Entire length	TARP	Preparation of materials via byway grant	H	M
4. Incorporate canyon access roads and mountain roads to and over the Divide into the corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasizes the full span of corridor resources 	Entire length	SBIG and TARP	Little needed	H	H
5. Define pathways into the landscape and the experiences offered (e.g., Switzerland Trail, Caribou Ranch, Mountain Research, mines, bike paths, etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get people off the road, disperse visitors, get them to go to the existing businesses, lengthen their stay and their expenditures while on the byway 	Entire length with specific sites targeted	TARP	Trails or Enhanc't grant from TEA 2000	M	M
6. Encourage projects that interpret the Peak to Peak through science, trails, museums, youth programs and other means	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives more information to visitors Raises awareness of Less is More 	Entire length	All entities	Various grants	H	H

Tourism Management - continued

Strategy Component	Problem Solved	Apply Where Along the Byway?	Who Does It?	Funding	Feasibility	Priority
7. Adopt a set of criteria for the type of tourism activities that compliment the Plan (e.g, must be educational, low environmental impact on landscape, should move people through awareness-understanding-appreciation-protection spectrum)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarifies what fits and what doesn't 	Entire length	TARP	None	H	H
8. Define a set of limited visitor services that still need to be provided. Make a policy statement regarding a general cap on the provision of additional services in the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address existing shortfalls (e.g., signage) but clearly take a position that what people have today is about all they will have in the future. 	Entire length	TARP	County, state byways grants	H	M
9. Use TARP as a funding agency/ applicant for important public sector building and construction projects that further this strategy's objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides non-profit funding receiver for projects such as museums, nature centers, educational centers and historic resources among others. 	Entire length	TARP and SBIG	All potential grants	H	H
10. Conduct ongoing surveys of corridor visitors and potential visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify needs of visitors and those who might be target market visitors 	Boulder Co. first, then rest of byway	TARP	County annual funds, byway marketing grant	H	H

Organization

Strategy Component	Problem Solved	Apply Where Along the Byway?	Who Does It?	Funding	Feasibility	Priority
1. Clarify the mission of TARP to the byway public through a higher profile in land use issues and by setting in motion efforts to protect the byway's character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove suspicion, confusion or lack of awareness of what TARP does • Present a positive image of TARP through its positive actions 	Entire length	TARP	See other actions	M	M
2. Support organization of businesses interested in joint and targeted marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives TARP a point of influence on how byway is marketed • Begins to create more cohesion between businesses 	Entire length	TARP holds education workshop to start campaign	Byway marketing grant	M	M
3. Create joint Nederland and County team to plan for TDR's. Encourage Larimer and Gilpin Counties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to create vision and plans for how this TDR's will enhance Nederland and the byway 	Nederland	Nederland and Boulder County planning offices	EPA grant, Smart growth grant	M	M
4. Encourage creation of Allenspark Byway Protection Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives that segment its own focus on protection • Begins to create local constituency for the byway 	Allenspark area	Allenspark residents	Little needed	H	H
5. Seek funds to have necessary technical assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports volunteer efforts 	Entire length	TARP	Various sources	H	H
6. Explore creation of a Heritage Area for the Peak to Peak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates broader vision for protection • Access to funding 	Entire length	TARP	Planning grant	M	M

Three Year Action Agenda

These are sample actions based on currently available projects and should not to be considered the only possible actions.

Year One

Action	Issue Addressed	Responsible Party	Funding Amount
Apply for Smart Growth Planning grant with counties in the lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify target parcels for protection Prepare land protection awareness brochures Hold meetings with landowners Work with local and statewide land trusts to structure preliminary arrangements on priority parcels 	TARP in cooperation with Boulder, Larimer and Gilpin Counties	\$20,000 grant amount with \$20,000 coming from the three counties. Total project is \$40,000.
Continue survey work with byway visitors and potential visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop better understanding of current visitor perceptions relative to whether more services are needed Understand how more Front Range residents can be encouraged to become sustainable customers to the Peak to Peak 	TARP with assistance from University of Colorado	No or minimal funding required
Apply for byway grant to support continued market research on how to increase overall revenues from fewer visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue survey work and expand to include study of Denver metro area Encourage formation of business partnerships along Peak to Peak 	TARP	\$15,000 \$30,000
Begin Visual Impact Reduction project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define guidelines and actions for CDOT to improve Peak to Peak and other byways 	TARP	Already available
Consider application to EPA sustainable development grant program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides funding for more in depth work on land acquisition Funding for awareness program on mountain development 	TARP and County	\$15,000 grant with County match
Award contract to perform historic resource inventory along sections of Peak to Peak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins process to consider whether National Register District may be appropriate tool for landowners in some sections of the byway 	TARP with County funding	\$10,000
Investigate Heritage Area opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins process to consider possible heritage area designation 	TARP with County funding	\$10,000

Years Two and Three

Action	Issue Addressed	Responsible Party	Funding Amount
Apply for Great Outdoors Colorado grants for land acquisition along Peak to Peak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to protect byway by purchasing or otherwise protecting key areas identified in above planning work 	TARP and County	As much as possible and as defined in planning work
Apply for TEA 2000 Trails or Enhancements funds to explore trail options and do initial design work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will assist with objective of dispersing visitors away from most congested areas into other areas deemed suitable for visitation 	TARP and County	\$50,000 to \$100,000 for trails and \$500,000 for Rollins Pass
Continue efforts toward historic preservation, landowner awareness and other Year One projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains continuity 	TARP	Unknown
Support interpretive ventures such as mining museum, additional books in "Peak to Peak" series, nature center with allied organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports visitor and resident education efforts 	TARP and allied organizations	County funds matched with other sources

Conclusion

Managing a byway is an ongoing process. There is no single jurisdiction to oversee the process. There is no over-arching authority vested in any one organization to manage all the resources. Instead, byway planning requires a cooperative effort that finds actions that can be mutually beneficial to many of the entities along the road. Only by finding the areas where interests overlap can progress be made.

The Peak to Peak Scenic and Historic Byway is no exception to this rule. This strategy is designed to recognize the many entities and interests that exist along the byway and lay out a doable program that will benefit both today's property owners and the broader constituencies of the Peak to Peak.