

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The CANAMEX Corridor is an important trade, tourism and travel way for the United States, Mexico and Canada. In terms of population, it is the fastest growing region in the country, and includes four of the five fastest growing states. More than 65 percent of the freight moving in the Corridor originated outside of the region. Travel in the Corridor has increased 130 percent since 1970. The Corridor includes some of the most visited sites in America, including the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone National Park, and Hoover Dam. While large portions of the Corridor are in rural areas, it also passes directly through the urban areas of Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, and Phoenix.

In 1999, the Governors of Montana, Idaho, Utah, Nevada and Arizona created the CANAMEX Corridor Coalition (CCC) to spur economic development along the corridor. Following the development of a corridor plan in 2001, the CCC retained the Western Transportation Institute of Montana State University – Bozeman in 2002 to develop the CANAMEX Smart Tourist Corridor Initiative. WTI surveyed the needs of the CANAMEX states' tourism industry, analyzed each state's Intelligent Transportation System assets and plans, and researched communications technologies and information collection and dissemination systems. This Final Report is the action plan for development of the Smart Tourist Corridor.

Goals

The two primary goals of the Smart Tourist Corridor are:

- ***Increase tourism spending and length of stays by enhancing the tourist experience***
Rural economic development is a shared challenge among the CANAMEX states. For most rural areas, tourism supports local businesses, generates revenues and provides local employment. The Corridor has great potential for promoting tourism development through public/private partnerships; by extending visits "one more day", the Smart Tourist Corridor can significantly enhance rural economies.
- ***Establish CANAMEX as the safest, most secure and most efficient corridor for travelers within and through the region.*** The personal safety of travelers is the highest priority of the CANAMEX states, and is supported by the Federal Highway Administration, as evidenced in SAFETEA and other legislation. Security has increased in importance for all stakeholders in the post-9/11 environment. Efficiency of the transportation system is also essential for the region's continued economic competitiveness.

Smart Tourist Corridor Elements

Survey data collected through this project show that the number one need of travelers is *information*: what are the traffic and weather conditions on the road, and what can we do and where can we stay along the way? The Smart Tourist Corridor proposes to use a combination of emerging technologies and interstate/interagency coordination to provide seamless safety and tourism information to corridor travelers.

The plan for the Smart Tourist Corridor includes four integrated elements:

- The CANAMEX Gateway: Multi-portal website element will create a safety and tourism data gathering/sharing system that will form the heart of the Smart Tourist Corridor

concept. This element will make it possible for all participating agencies to receive relevant, real-time information and alerts, and will allow for the creation of the CANAMEX Gateway website, which will provide Corridor-wide information to travelers.

- The CANAMEX Communications element will consist of technological improvements that facilitate the dissemination of tourism and safety information to travelers, such as completing cellular coverage in the Corridor.
- Smart Devices Development consists of public-private partnerships that expand the ability of tourists and other travelers to use smart devices such as cellular phones, personal digital assistants, and in-vehicle navigation units throughout the Corridor.
- Safety, Security and Operations Improvements are a broad range of activities that will foster better coordination and cooperation among emergency response agencies throughout the corridor, as well as increased safety and improved emergency response.

These initiatives provide a powerful opportunity to integrate the informational databases of tourism and transportation agencies; in other words, combine the tourism inventory of venues and attractions with transportation's real-time travel advisories to improve the visitor experience and thereby increase tourist activity. In addition, these initiatives will promote and facilitate safe travel along the entire Corridor.

Costs & Funding

Full implementation of the CANAMEX Smart Tourist Corridor requires an estimated \$70 million over 10 years for equipment, systems development, and operations and maintenance. Of this amount, approximately \$27 million is necessary to develop the data sharing system and establish a multi-portal website to service the enhanced information services ("CANAMEX Gateway"), and approximately \$36 million is necessary for development of the technological infrastructure ("CANAMEX Communications"). Most of the costs (an estimated \$68 of the \$70 million total) will be the responsibility of state departments of transportation; a variety of federal funding opportunities exist to provide potential resources to the states.

The Smart Tourist Corridor Initiative will also yield significant benefits to all of the CANAMEX states, including increased tourism activity, improved visitor experience, increased safety and improved mobility for travelers, and ultimately job development for residents and their communities. Estimates indicate cost reductions of almost \$66 million from reduced accident and weather delays and increased tourism revenues of more than *400 million dollars* for the CANAMEX states over the next ten years, yielding an overall benefit-to-cost ratio of 7.1. As shown in Table 1, the benefit-to-cost ratio for public and private tourist entities is substantially larger at 167, reflecting their relatively smaller cost responsibility of only \$2.6 million for the five states over 10 years. The estimated benefit to the tourism industry is based on a conservative formula that assumes that 1% of tourists will spend "one more day" in the region as a result of the Smart Tourist Corridor initiatives.

Table 1: Summary of CANAMEX Benefits by Stakeholder Group

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	ESTIMATED BENEFITS (\$)	ESTIMATED COST (\$)	OVERALL BENEFIT-TO-COST RATIO
State DOTs	\$65,700,000 *	\$68,329,500	1.0
Tourism Industry	\$440,424,214	\$2,632,500	167.3
Traveling Public	\$65,700,000	\$0	n/a
TOTAL	\$506,124,214	\$70,962,000	7.1

* The cost savings due to reduction in accident and weather delays directly benefit the traveling public and are also counted as benefits to the State DOTs as it is in the DOTs' strategic interest to move people quickly and safely through the transportation systems.

Next Steps

Section 8 of this report contains a full discussion of project next steps for each initiative, many of which are dependent on the receipt of federal funds. There are many things the CANAMEX Corridor Coalition and its partner agencies, Transportation and Tourism, can do now to advance development of the Smart Tourist Corridor. The major opportunities are listed here (Table 2). Once funding has been secured, qualified contractors should be engaged to design the specific system linkages and protocols, and undertake operation of the Smart Tourist Corridor.

Table 2: Smart Tourist Corridor -- Recommended Next Steps

Action Item	Responsibility	Support	Approval	Timeline (Initiation Date)
Earmark: Advocate and obtain federal multi-year earmark for ITS implementation of Smart Corridor Operations	CANAMEX Corridor Coalition	CANAMEX Project Office, DOTs, Congressional Delegations	CANAMEX Corridor Coalition	Spring 2004. Dependent upon congressional action.
Framework: Establish organizational framework for managing project implementation and business plan	CANAMEX Project Office		CANAMEX Corridor Coalition	Spring 2004
Standards/Architecture: Identify ITS standards & architecture for deployment of data gathering and information sharing networks. Conduct gap analysis of existing standards and systems. Secure special project funding from FHWA.	ITS Coordinators	CANAMEX Project Office	CANAMEX Corridor Coalition	Summer 2004
CANAMEX Gateway Website: Create plan/prototype for website. Determine method for website implementation.	CANAMEX Project Office	ITS Coordinators; State Tourism Agencies		Spring 2004
Tourism Brand: Define Tourism brand for the Corridor	State Tourism Agencies	CANAMEX Project Office	State Tourism Agencies	Summer 2004
Tourism Partnerships: Develop data sharing partnership agreements and identify joint tourism promotional opportunities. Develop means for collecting data.	State Tourism Agencies	CANAMEX Project Office		Spring 2004
International Outreach: Engage Alberta, Sonora, federal land management agencies and the Department of Customs & Border Protection and define roles	CANAMEX Project Office; states of Montana and Arizona		State Tourism Agencies	Summer 2004
Funding Opportunities: Explore alternative federal funding opportunities to define tourism and traveler data sets that should be incorporated in the traveler information system (EDA, state and private resources etc.)	CANAMEX Project Office		State Tourism Agencies, CANAMEX Corridor Coalition	Summer 2004
Communications Plan: Develop an integrated corridor deployment plan to map wireless coverage of the various communications systems deployed throughout the corridor.	CANAMEX Project Office	State CIOs and technology agencies; ITS Coordinators	CANAMEX Corridor Coalition	Fall 2004

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ITS Device Deployment and Tactical Plan Develop a coordinated plan to continue deployment of ITS devices in the corridor.	ITS Coordinators	CANAMEX Project Office		Fall 2004
511 Linkage and Enhancement: Each of the CANAMEX states should adopt protocols to link their 511 systems and establish a project timeline for deployment. Also develop standards for adding tourism information, concierge services, and public lands information to 511.	ITS Coordinators	CANAMEX Project Office; State Tourism Agencies		Summer 2004
Private Sector / Telematics New Technology Testing: Promote the five-state, 1500 mile CANAMEX Corridor as an attractive platform for the private sector to test & pilot projects and as an opportunity to develop innovative risk and revenue sharing partnerships.	CANAMEX Project Office	ITS Coordinators; State Tourism Agencies	CANAMEX Corridor Coalition	Fall 2004
State Border Operations: Formalize multi-state agreements for DOTs and law enforcement agencies to coordinate operations at state borders (already noted in standards)	ITS Coordinators	DOT Directors	CANAMEX Corridor Coalition	Fall 2004
Incident Management Plans: Develop incident management plans within each state, and share with other states.	ITS Coordinators	DOT Directors		Fall 2004
Cost-Benefit Analysis: Collect additional data to refine estimates of increased tourism revenue potential for each state.	CANAMEX Project Office	State Tourism Agencies		To be determined based on need for the data.