

CASE STUDIES OF BICYCLING & WALKING IN SMALL COMMUNITIES: *TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES, NEW MEXICO*



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COVER IMAGES

Front Cover Top: A mural along Main Street

Front Cover Middle: A mural in an alleyway between Broadway and Austin

Front Cover Bottom: The Healing Waters Trail

The back cover presents a photo collage of people walking and bicycling in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, as observed by the case study researchers while on-site.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this case study was to identify bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and programs in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico that would be of interest to other peer communities. Many residents were walking and bicycling, primarily in the downtown core. The sidewalk completed along Date Street, connecting downtown Truth or Consequences to the development closer to Interstate-25 is a well utilized facility. The Healing Waters Trail, utilized by locals and visitors alike, is one of the walking highlights within the community. Along it, there is at least one section of sidewalk that has been repaired; improving the sidewalks in the community have been identified in several plans. The concept of the Turtleback Trails Network, which aims to build on the existing Healing Waters Trail, suggests much hope for the community in the future. Being able to easily access these resources from the core of the community, without the need for a private vehicle, provides much opportunity.

INTRODUCTION

Walking and bicycling have become increasingly popular modes of transportation and the existence of dedicated infrastructure to support active modes offers benefits to a community and its residents. While examples of active transportation infrastructure found in larger communities are well documented, this infrastructure can look different in rural communities and documented examples are lacking. This research effort aims to address this gap. Case studies from fifteen communities with fewer than 10,000 residents were developed. The case studies feature existing rural bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure located across five states, to include: Arcadia, LaBelle, and Taylor Creek in Florida; Calvert City, Corbin, and Morehead in Kentucky; Pelican Rapids, Pipestone, and Walker in Minnesota; Ruidoso, Silver City, and Truth or Consequences in New Mexico; and Fair Haven, Morristown, and the Town of Hartford in Vermont. Communities were selected using a prioritization process developed through a cooperative effort between the state departments of transportation and the researchers. More details about the research project, Case Studies of Communities of Less Than 10,000 People with Bicycle & Pedestrian Infrastructure, as well as additional case studies can be found at:

https://westerntransportationinstitute.org/research_projects/case-studies-of-communities-of-less-than-10000-people-with-bicycle-pedestrian-infrastructure/

Case studies provide a detailed description of each community including a discussion of recent planning efforts related to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, supporting programs, and partnerships. Site visits, approximately one day per community, were conducted from June through December of 2021. During these visits, researchers collected spatial data and photographs to document existing infrastructure. Within this day visit, researchers also captured photos of people walking and bicycling in the communities, which can be found on the back cover of each case study. They also reached out to local advocates and community leadership. Lessons learned and best practices were documented from reviewing the planning documents and speaking with advocates and community leadership. The case studies aim to provide peer communities with the knowledge and encouragement to support additional implementation of active transportation infrastructure in rural communities across the US.

This case study focuses on Truth or Consequences, New Mexico.

BACKGROUND OF THE COMMUNITY

Truth or Consequences, New Mexico has approximately 5,894 residents (2019), and has experienced a 9.0% population decrease since 2010. While a small population, the population of Truth or Consequences constituted a staggering fifty-four percent of the total population of Sierra County in 2010. It is located in and serves as the county seat for Sierra County in southern New Mexico. Truth or Consequences has held this honor since 1937, when it was transferred from Hillsboro. The Rio Grande runs next to Truth or

Consequences. The town is located about half-way between Albuquerque, New Mexico and El Paso, Texas. The community's boundaries encompass 28.1 square miles.

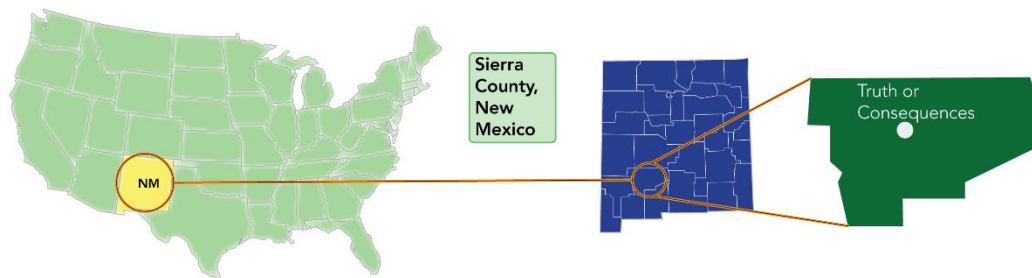


Figure 1: Location of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico of Sierra County in southwestern New Mexico.

The following paragraphs provide demographic and socioeconomic data about the community, so that peer communities can better understand similarities and differences between their community and this case study community.

The average age of Truth or Consequences residents is 51.5 years old (2019) and is “significantly higher” than that of the State of New Mexico reflecting its attractiveness to retirees. Approximately 24.5% (2019) of homes in Truth or Consequences are vacant which includes seasonal housing, vacant housing for rent/sale, and vacant housing held off the market.

Approximately 41.7% (2018) of Truth or Consequences residents are employed within the community; a statistic which may provide a level of understanding regarding residents' commute distance and potential interest in walking or biking to work. According to the 2019 American Community Survey, 5.6% of people in Truth or Consequences walk and 0.7% bicycle to work for their daily commute. The town has a 10.7% (2019) unemployment rate. Truth or Consequences' median household income is \$23,988 (2019), with 16.2% of households earning less than \$10,000 and 1.2% earning more than \$200,000. Approximately 33.4% (2019) of Truth or Consequences' population lives in poverty, defined by the Office of Management and Budget's Statistical Policy Directive 14.

COUNTY TYPOLOGY

According to the rural classification methodology used in *Emerging Technology and Opportunities for Improved Mobility and Safety for Rural Areas*, Truth or Consequences is located within a county that was designated as a Remote County Type. A Remote County Type, as applied to Sierra County, is defined by having less than ten people per square mile.

COMMUNITY HISTORY

Truth or Consequences was originally called Hot Springs. The name reflected the natural hot mineral springs that brought many health-seekers in the early 1900s. When the Rio Grande changed course in 1907 because of flooding, new hot spring resort building sites were available. There are thirty-five artesian wells in the Downtown District. While the

original settlement was reflective of the draw of the hot mineral springs, additional development occurred with the construction of the nearby Elephant Butte Dam from 1911-1916. The dam can hold up to 2,210,298 acre-feet of water, providing both irrigation and year-round power generation. At the time, it was the second largest dam outside of Egypt. The dam and lake were designated as Elephant Butte Lake State Park in 1965. Today, the park is said to be the primary revenue generator for the community. Spanning forty miles and consisting of 36,000 acres, Elephant Butte Lake is the largest and most popular lake in the New Mexico State Park system. The state park draws more than 100,000 people Memorial Day weekend when it opens for the season.

New Deal construction projects are reflected in the construction of Spanish-Pueblo Revival and Territorial Revival style buildings found in the community as well as the Works Progress Administration (WPA) sidewalks and curbs.

Unlike many other parts of New Mexico, with the dominance of the Apache Nation, no Spanish settlements were established in the 1600s. Today, the influence of the Apache Nation is reflected in the place names. In addition, some residents within Truth or Consequences trace their heritage to the Apache Nation.

After World War II, interest in traveling to the community for health reasons declined. Consequently, the community saw opportunity in a national contest promoted by a radio quiz show hosted by Ralph Edwards to change their name. Doing so would result in a yearly visit to the community by the host, a live, coast-to-coast broadcast, and free publicity. Hot Springs was changed to Truth or Consequences on March 31, 1950. Unfortunately, visitation continued to decline. Today, to commemorate this history, Truth or Consequences annually hosts the Ralph Edward's Fiesta on the first weekend in May.

In 2005, the fifty-six-acre Hot Springs Bathhouse and Commercial Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The period of significance ranges from 1916 to 1950, with one hundred twenty-five contributing and eighty-seven non-contributing properties. The majority are located on Broadway Street, Main Street, Austin Avenue, and McAdoo Street.

As reflected in the original name, the historic core of the community has water so close to the surface that construction of multi-story buildings can be a challenge. It was reported that a hotel once tried to add a third story and the foundation sunk.

In 2006, funding for the construction of the New Mexico Spaceport, to be located about twenty-five miles south of Truth or Consequences, was designated by the New Mexico State Legislature. As development of the Spaceport has languished, the potential impact that Spaceport America may have on the community is yet to be seen. Estimates suggest that Spaceport America could eventually attract around 200,000 annual visitors.

A lot of the larger chain grocery stores are located closer to Interstate-25 (I-25) (Figure 2). However, there is a local, well-stocked and very popular grocery store in the historic downtown. The library is located a little north of downtown, and although there are not any

marked bicycle facilities connecting it to other parts of the community, there is a bicycle rack provided at the library. There is a post office both in the historic downtown and an additional location near I-25. The location closer to I-25 has a bicycle rack.



Figure 2: City map of the downtown core of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico showing boundaries and services.

TIMELINE

A timeline of events is provided in Table 1 to describe major milestones for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure development and supporting programs in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico.

Table 1: Timeline of major milestone events for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

Year	Events
1907	The Rio Grande changed course
1911-1916	The Elephant Butte Dam was constructed
1916	Hot Springs (Truth or Consequences' original name) was incorporated
1937	Hot Springs became the county seat of Sierra County
1950	On March 31, 1950, Hot Springs officially changed their name to Truth or Consequences
1997	Designation of the Geronimo Trail National Scenic Byway
2000	Broadway Street and Main Street were rebuilt with new sidewalks and curb extensions

Year	Events
2005	The Hot Springs Bathhouse and Commercial Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places
2006	The New Mexico State Legislature announced the funding and construction of the New Mexico Spaceport twenty-five miles south of Truth or Consequences
2007	Sierra Soil Water and Conservation District applied for Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) from the National Park Service
2008	The vision of a Healing Waters Trail gained momentum; the Healing Water Trails Steering Committee was formed
2009	The City of Truth or Consequences applied to be designated as an Emerging MainStreet Organization
2012	A conceptual plan was developed for the Healing Waters Plaza
2013	A three-hour walking tour was held in downtown Truth or Consequences as part of the development of the Downtown Master Plan
2014	A community open house was held on Monday, February 10, 2014, at the Lee Belle Johnson Senior Recreation Center
2014	A City Commission Workshop was held on July 22, 2014
2014	A second City Commission Workshop was held on September 9, 2014, to adopt the Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) designation
2014	The Downtown Master Plan was adopted on October 14, 2014, as the official planning guide for the downtown area of the City of Truth or Consequences

EVOLUTION OF *PLANNING* FOR BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

This section highlights five planning documents that discussed walking and bicycling related to Truth or Consequences, New Mexico: 1) the 2008 Geronimo Trail National Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan, 2) the 2009 The Healing Waters Trail plan, 3) the 2014 Downtown Master Plan/Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan, 4) the 2014 City of Truth or Consequences Comprehensive Plan, and 5) the 2021 Truth or Consequences, NM Multimodal Transportation Safety Plan.

GERONIMO TRAIL NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

In 2008, a Geronimo Trail National Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan was created. While the plan focused on vehicular travel along the Geronimo Trail, developing hiking trails and walkways were also described within the plan. In particular, the plan identifies the Healing Waters Trail Project and the Rio Grande Trail as two projects supported by the Geronimo Trail National Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan. The plan notes a desire to better engage the public in the planning process.

THE HEALING WATERS TRAIL

A report completed by the University of New Mexico in collaboration with the City of Truth or Consequences helped to plan for the Healing Waters Trail. The plan was intended to be used by the Healing Waters Trail Steering Committee to apply for trail implementation funding.

The goal of the project was to create a trail system that begins in downtown Truth or Consequences in the Hot Springs Bathhouse and Commercial Historic District, head along the banks of the Rio Grande up to the Veterans' Memorial Park, and then loop back to the Geronimo Springs Museum. The proposed trail would be approximately 3 miles in length and would incorporate many of Truth or Consequences' historic hot springs, parks, and wetlands.

The Healing Waters Trail concept was developed in 2007 by residents. The original concept was created in coordination with the City of Truth or Consequences, the Truth or Consequences Rotary Club, the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club, the Veterans' Memorial Park, Sierra Soil and Conservation District, and local residents and business owners. This trail concept aimed to address recreational needs, support public health initiatives in the area, support the economic revitalization of downtown, and conserve the natural areas that make Truth or Consequences a unique community.

In 2007, the Sierra Soil and Water Conservation District applied for Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program funding from the National Park Service (NPS). Upon award of funding, NPS provided technical assistance to develop a trail plan and to help coordinate development of funding to support a trail system. In 2008, a planner from RTCA worked with community members in Truth or Consequences to form the Healing Waters Trail Steering Committee. This Committee met every four to six weeks to discuss trail planning and schedule workshops to obtain community feedback. The Committee identified four focus areas: 1) Downtown Segment, 2) Rotary Park and Wetlands Segment, 3) Carrie Tingley Mesa Segment, and 4) South Broadway Segment. The Committee ultimately decided that the Rotary Park and Wetlands Segment should receive individual planning to emphasize the complex issues surrounding wetlands conservation. This report focused on the initial planning and recommendation phases for the Downtown Segment and the Rotary/Wetlands Segment of the trail.

A vision for the trail was created in 2008 through discussions with community members. This vision highlights that, "The Healing Waters Trail weaves together a multitude of historic, cultural, artistic, and natural elements into a unique tapestry."

Along with regular Steering Committee meetings, community members were invited to participate in a downtown walkability workshop and a wetlands restoration and Rotary Park improvements workshop. As a part of these workshops, a group of around twenty community members participated in a walkability audit along a 1.2-mile loop within the historic downtown district. This audit identified challenges and opportunities related to safety, aesthetics, and the historical nature of downtown. Opportunities included WPA-era sidewalk stamps, active storefronts, benches, and social interaction with people on the streets. Challenges found included gaps in pavement, broken sidewalks, uneven surfaces, poor lighting at night, and insufficient shade. The walkability audit suggested the following improvements to downtown sidewalks: improve crosswalk visibility, repair sidewalks, create additional seating, increase the number of plantings, improve signage, and add dog waste stations.

Planning efforts for the Healing Waters Trail were completed in alignment with existing and ongoing local and regional planning efforts including the Truth or Consequences Comprehensive Plan, the South-Central Council of Governments Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, among others. This includes recognition that the Healing Waters Trail could provide a connection to the Rio Grande Trail which was in the early stages of planning during the time of the report.

This assessment served three purposes: 1) provide a comprehensive examination of heritage resources, 2) identify cultural and natural resources that would be suited for interpretation along the Healing Waters Trail, and 3) identify recommendations. The historic landscape of the downtown consists of the Hot Springs Bathhouse and Commercial Historic District which extends from Main Street to Van Patten Street and from Date Street to Post Street. This area contains geothermal resources as well as 125 contributing (integral to the historic context and character of a community) and 87 noncontributing historic buildings identified in the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Roads in this area are in fair to good condition but generally noted that painted crosswalks are fading and need maintenance. Sidewalks in the area are described as fair to poor condition, having been constructed by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) in 1935 and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) from 1938-1941 and seeing little maintenance since that time. Secondary streets like McAdoo, Clancy, Post, and Van Patten are described as having variable sidewalk condition and often missing sections of sidewalk completely. The report notes that a goal of the Healing Waters Trail segment through downtown should be to improve the sidewalks and walkability throughout downtown and that the FERA and WPA stamps should be maintained where possible.

General design recommendations for the Downtown and Rotary Park/Wetlands segments of the Healing Waters Trail were provided. The Trail is expected to draw both locals and visitors for walking, bicycling, birdwatching, shopping, and educational purposes. This trail is intended to provide a pedestrian connection between numerous destinations including heritage and cultural sites, and local businesses and restaurants.

Public art is described as a crucial component of the trail to provide a sense of place and community. Public art should include involvement of local artists, students, and citizens. The plan notes that a public art advisory board should be established to solicit public art contributions. In 2008, the Healing Waters Trail Steering Committee held a trail logo

competition. The winning entry was created by a local spa owner and is used for trail marketing and signage (Figure 3).

Downtown Segment

Using feedback found in the walkability audit described above, the following seven design recommendations were identified for the Downtown Segment:

1. Create awareness of the Healing Waters Trail and promote its use. This includes information kiosks, wayfinding signage, and embedded trail logos on buildings, fences, and sidewalks along the route.
2. Preserve character, create interest, and enhance aesthetic quality of the streetscape. This included retaining the WPA and FERA stamps on sidewalks where possible, repairing and adding sidewalks where compatible with the historic character, creating an interpretive plan for historic sites, and working with local artists and students to create public art installations.
3. Encourage and reinforce pedestrian activity downtown. This included maintaining adequate sidewalk width, encouraging sidewalk seating for downtown restaurants, and retaining plans for community events like art festivals and gallery walks.
4. Ensure accessibility. The Downtown Segment of the Trail has the most potential to be accessible for all trail users. This goal highlights the need to meet Americans with Disabilities Act compliance including providing stable and even surfaces, ensuring that sidewalks are four feet wide, providing curb ramps and more.
5. Enhance pedestrian comfort. These recommendations aim to encourage trail use. These include providing street furniture and shade, bike racks, and pedestrian-scale lighting.
6. Install street trees and plantings.
7. Improve crosswalk safety. This includes maintaining curb extensions along Broadway and Main Street, ensuring crosswalk visibility and providing signage/blinking lights where appropriate.

Rotary Park/Wetlands Segment

The Rotary Park/Wetlands Segment contains the natural resources that are most significant along the Healing Waters Trail route. The property includes a wetlands area and a bladed area where the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation stores a pile of dirt and rock that is used to temporarily dam the river. The goal of the Healing Waters Trail is to expand the Rotary Park



Figure 3: Winning design for the Healing Waters Trail signage.

to include the wetlands and bladed areas while working to restore this natural feature. Design goals and recommendations for this segment include:

1. Expand Rotary Park to better conserve the hot springs wetlands.
2. Improve access for and reduce conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. This includes construction of a parking lot on the city-owned land, creating highly visible crosswalks from the parking lot to the Rotary Park, and ensuring that all pathways are accessible.
3. Enhance comfort for park visitors and trail users. This goal includes providing shaded seating, creating public art, providing public restrooms, and creating an official Healing Waters Trailhead that includes a map and other information.
4. Create an educational experience for park visitors and trail users. This includes creating interpretive panels and public art.
5. Provide for multiple park and trail uses, creating a broadly appealing destination along the Healing Waters Trail. This recommendation includes creating bird blinds for wildlife viewing and providing a shade pavilion, bike racks, and fishing piers along the river.
6. Provide connectivity between the Downtown and the Carrie Tingley Mesa segments of the Healing Waters Trail and connect to the Rio Grande Trail.
7. Promote park cleanliness by providing trash cans and dog waste stations as well as hosting regular clean-up events.

Interpretation

Interpretive goals of the Healing Waters Trail include educating trail users on the relationship between the natural geothermal resources of the Hot Springs Artesian basin and the people who settled in the area. An interpretive plan should be created to ensure that a diverse range of stories are included. The report recommends that an overarching theme or message should be considered and that a specific interpretation plan be created. Interpretive design ideas for the Healing Waters Trail could include improvements like public art, wayfinding kiosks, historic building plaques, and interpretive panels. A draft walking tour brochure was created that guides readers to various points of interest along the trail.

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN/METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

In 2014, Truth or Consequences developed a Downtown Master Plan/Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan. The plan's Steering Committee identified the four following qualities to describe Truth or Consequences: 1) hot mineral water; 2) affordable; 3) quirky and unique, arty; and 4) healing. The plan talks about the need to create a "more attractive and inviting experience through pedestrian amenities, window displays, street furniture, landscaping, shade, and a wayfinding system...." It suggests that "good design" will encourage people to linger and walk around the downtown for a longer period. It describes Truth or Consequences as having a "walkable sense of place." In addition, it notes that, "Pedestrian accessibility is crucial to fostering a vibrant Downtown." As a part of the plan, a three-hour downtown walking tour was held on September 14, 2013. Among other aspects, sidewalk conditions were reviewed.

The plan describes a somewhat unique experience that can be found in downtown Truth or Consequences: residences are located on the first floor of several buildings. The plan suggests changing the zoning to restrict residences to second floors, with the first floor reserved for commercial properties. The plan suggests that this will result in a “vibrant, pedestrian-oriented retail shopping district.”

The plan suggests that “Traffic speeds are excessive,” resulting in a pedestrian feeling “unsafe.” It proposed two roundabouts at either end of the downtown area to provide traffic calming and serve as a gateway to the downtown.

The plan identifies a need for repair of the sidewalks *outside* of Broadway Street and Main Street (state roadways). They noted that Americans with Disabilities Act curb ramps are missing, pavement is failing, the sidewalks are narrow and/or deteriorating, and in some areas, there is no sidewalk. The plan talks about how most of these sidewalks were built during the Works Public Administration (WPA) era (1930 to 1939) and have a “WPA 1939” stamp on it. Consequently, they are “at least 75 years old, and beyond their useful lives.”

The plan notes that there are no bicycle facilities in the downtown area. Consequently, bicyclists typically ride on the sidewalk (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Bicycle riding on a sidewalk in downtown Truth or Consequences.

The plan suggests that the limited hours kept by restaurants are unappealing to visitors. It also talks about the possibility of the “Healing Arts Plaza,” west of the Lee Belle Johnson Senior Recreation Center.

When designated as an Emerging MainStreet Organization, the plan identified several recommendations. In 2009, it suggested converting the two, one-way pairs (Main Street and Broadway Street) back into two separate two-way streets. The one-way coupled streets are said to have been configured as such for more than a decade. 2012 New Mexico Department of Transportation data suggest that twenty percent of traffic on these streets consists of heavy vehicles. In addition, it recommended creating a walking tour and a map of the district. A follow-up assessment in 2010 recommended encouraging more volunteers and building community involvement in the effort. They also recommended replacing benches.

The assessment also suggested becoming a Certified Local Government (CLG), pursuing a University of New Mexico Design and Planning Assistance Center (DPAC) study, and looking into the National Geographic Center for Sustainable Destinations program. CLGs were reportedly mandated by Congress in 1980 because of an amendment to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The program aids local governments with “integrating historic preservation initiatives at the local level.” The plan reported that the first step in becoming a CLG is to contact the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), which Truth or Consequences had reportedly done. The National Geographic Center for Sustainable Destinations program no longer exists.

An assessment in 2011 identified further recommendations. These include addressing drainage issues and the “poor sidewalk conditions.” Ponding of storm water has been known to rise to the top of the curb on Broadway Street, resulting in some businesses placing sandbags in front of their doors so they do not get flooded. A suggested reason for some of the drainage issues in the downtown is the crown in the center of the roadway on Broadway Street, resulting in ponding of storm water instead of allowing it to drain to the Rio Grande. In addition, the curb extensions installed in 2000 on Broadway Street reportedly “block the natural drainage around the curb returns.”

The plan discussed the emergence of Truth or Consequences “art scene” as identified by the presence of murals (see center right photo on the cover page and Figure 5) and colorful buildings (see cover page, top left photo).

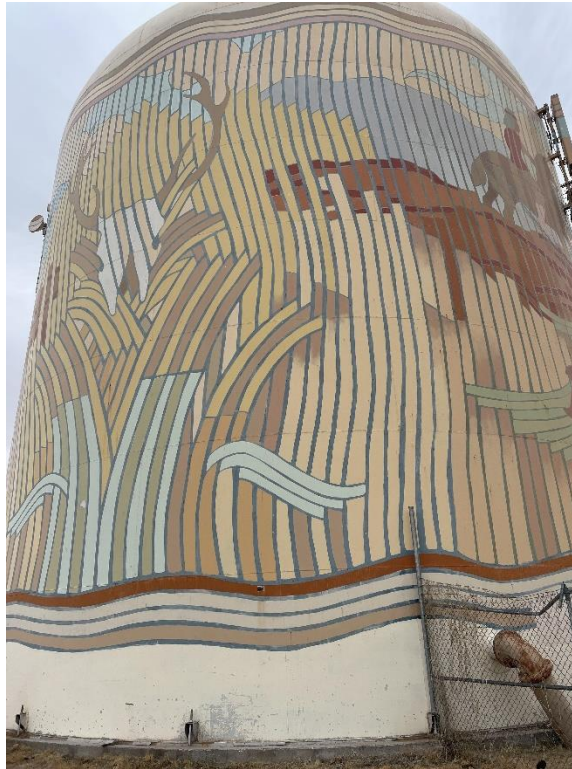


Figure 5: Mural on the water tower.

The plan itself talks about the contradiction between the existing locations of buildings adjacent to the sidewalks and the community's development standards, which require a twenty-foot setback. In addition, the community's development standards required private streets or drives to be at least twenty-four feet in width. Their requirements for parking also did not consider the potential use of on-street parking.

The plan indicates that the Geronimo Trail National Scenic Byway (GTNSB) was designated in 1997. As a part of the 2008 Corridor Management Plan, three projects were identified for Truth or Consequences as a part of the GTNSB, including the Healing Waters Trail Project. Truth or Consequences Main Street had partnered with the Healing Waters Trail to install new benches and trash receptacles. However, an identified need was to provide shade from the "blazing sun."

Although it does not sound as if implemented, the plan also discusses the use of pop-ups that may assist in changing "community perceptions about public places."

The plan describes the purposes of Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas (MRAs), noting that the entire MainStreet District was designated as such. For neglected areas of a community, the intent of an MRA designation is to stimulate public/private investment. The plan suggests that an MRA is a "major financial tool."

The plan discusses the potential use of a Public Improvement District (PID) for public infrastructure improvements, including sidewalks and trail improvements.

Several goals of interest were identified in the plan. One was to develop a walking tour, ensuring its appeal to younger individuals by employing an application or QR code. A second included developing a comprehensive wayfinding system. A third suggested working with the New Mexico Department of Transportation to redesign Broadway Street and Main Street to make them more walkable and bikeable. These roadways were identified as having sixty feet of right-of-way (ROW). Having a wide ROW enables the cross-section to be more creatively allocated to a combination of needs including vehicular travel as well as providing a defined space for walking and bicycling. The plan suggests that the hourly vehicle volume available in each lane is “well above existing traffic volumes,” suggesting that there was an overabundance of vehicular space currently being provided. Pedestrian amenities, like benches, were suggested to be included as a part of the redesign. A fourth goal was the development of an outdoor community space (i.e. the Healing Waters Plaza). A fifth goal was identified as becoming a Certified Local Government. A sixth goal suggested the improvement of water and sanitary sewer systems. A seventh goal was to replace and install sidewalks, crosswalks, and Americans with Disabilities Act ramps where applicable to ensure handicapped accessibility. An eighth goal was to improve the safety of the downtown through traffic calming and road diets, and potentially adding bike lanes.

Ultimately, the plan presented several alternatives for consideration, including whether or not bicycle lanes were provided, if they were protected, if the Main/Broadway couple were maintained as one-way roadways, if sidewalks should be widened, if parking should remain as parallel or be changed to angle (or back-in angle) parking, and if street trees should be added. Feedback on these designs suggested that the community was interested in retaining WPA date stamps found on sidewalks and curbs (Figure 6), like that which was done in Clayton, New Mexico. Reportedly, the stamps can be cut-out as “bricks” and then integrated into a new concrete sidewalk.



Figure 6: WPA date stamps on local sidewalks.

Feedback also suggested that adding bicycle lanes to Broadway Street, Main Street, and Austin Avenue (parallel to Broadway Street) was desirable.

An evaluation of the existing pedestrian infrastructure as a part of the plan suggested that the current state of sidewalks is “hampering pedestrian accessibility to the MainStreet District and therefore, is negatively impacting the businesses. Lack of walkability within a Downtown district that depends on tourism for its very survival has a harmful impact on its overall success.” The plan goes on to highlight streets that have missing sidewalks, streets that need sidewalks replaced, including those with “very narrow sidewalks.” Within the plan, there are several maps of the locations of where sidewalk replacements and

installations are needed. At least one sidewalk was found to be repaired along Foch Street (Figure 7); it contains a MainStreet stamp.



Figure 7: Repaired sidewalk with a MainStreet stamp.

In the appendix of the plan, comments received as a part of the open houses are listed. One statement suggested, “I don’t think we should make bike routes for the two people who ride bikes downtown.... homeless.” Yet, while on site in December of 2021, six people were observed riding a bicycle over the course of about a day in the community, including one on a very expensive commuter bike (see the back page, middle photo on the left). Therefore, it seems there is a need to better inform community members about the variety of people

walking and bicycling within the community. Other comments of interest that contradict one another include: “when it is hot, people do not want to walk a lot” in comparison with, “Many customers love to walk.” Finally, while considering the presence of murals, one comment suggested that, “Painting fades quickly in the sun here.”

Another suggestion found in the appendix is to provide a bridge across the Rio Grande.

At the conclusion of the plan, a table of projects is presented. Within the table, partnerships and responsible agencies are identified. Furthermore, the table lists potential funding sources.

FINAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The City of Truth or Consequences initiated their comprehensive planning process in 2013 as an update to their previous 2004 plan. Public feedback was a large component of the comprehensive plan. Outreach efforts included public meetings, stakeholder interviews, a recreation advisory board workshop, and a city commission workshop. Community visioning meetings were held in 2013 to discuss the goals and objectives that should be included in the plan. Transportation visions centered around general maintenance and revitalization of major transportation corridors including sidewalks and street furniture.

Transportation within Truth or Consequences is highly influenced by Interstate 25, State Route 51, and State Route 181. The Town itself grew around the intersecting state roadways (51 and 181) which serve as the main arterials. Preventative maintenance of transportation infrastructure is highlighted through the plan, noting that it should be completed on a 20-year cycle and that the City of Truth or Consequences should forecast an annual budget of \$190,000 for installation of Americans with Disability Act (ADA) compliant ramps. At the time of the plan, the New Mexico Department of Transportation controlled facilities Date/Main Street and Broadway Avenue were the only streets in Truth or Consequences that had ADA compliant ramps. The Plan notes that the recent Downtown Master Plan also called for slowing traffic through downtown to accommodate a one-way bike lane and other walkability improvements. Additionally, the plan suggests an opportunity to connect the City of Truth or Consequences, the City of Elephant Butte, and the Village of Williamsburg, and the nearby State Park with a regional bicycle trail network in order to improve recreation opportunities in the area.

The plan highlights that the influx of “snowbird” travelers in the winter generates pedestrian traffic near the recreation vehicle parks in town and that improvements to sidewalks including improving ADA accessibility in these areas could benefit all community members. Of note were sidewalks that were being replaced along Date Street and a project slated for Broadway Street from Williamsburg to the Veterans’ Park.

Many goals in the comprehensive plan directly relate to active transportation infrastructure, including:

- Economic Development Goal 3: Affirm and strengthen Downtown Truth or Consequences' position as the City's primary retail center and tourism attraction.
 - Objective: To invest public money into improving the sidewalks, streets, lighting, and other amenities to make it safer and more attractive for visitors and more conducive to private investment.
- Community Services Goal 1: Create and maintain recreational opportunities for residents of all ages.
- Community services Goal 2: Support the completion of the Healing Waters Trail network.
- Transportation Goal 1: Maintain and improve street conditions throughout Truth or Consequences (including providing a more walkable streetscape).
- Transportation Goal 2: Support the regional transportation system in Sierra County (including multi-modal opportunities).
- Transportation Goal 3: Promote and maintain a safe, convenient transportation system that balances the needs of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles. (Includes pursuing funding and promoting active modes of transportation as well as encouraging participation in Safe Routes to Schools Program to support children walking and bicycling to school).

MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY PLAN

The New Mexico Department of Transportation, the City of Truth or Consequences, and Lee Engineering collaborated to develop a multimodal transportation safety plan for Truth or Consequences which was recently completed and adopted in 2021. This plan allowed local stakeholders and residents including the Sierra County Road Department, the Police Department, the City of Williamsburg, and the Municipal Schools to provide input to improve transportation safety in their community.

This safety plan focused on three priority areas in Truth or Consequences: 1) Downtown (blue lines in Figure 8), 2) Smith Avenue and Silver Street (corridor that provides access to Elementary School, Sierra Vista Hospital, and Sierra Health Care) (green line in Figure 8), 3) New School Road/North Pershing Street (corridor provides access to middle school and high school) (red line in Figure 8).

Historic traffic volume data was used as well as traffic volume, vehicle classification, and speed profile data collected at the study corridors during February 2021 via video cameras and pneumatic tubes. The plan notes that this data collection period was completed during the COVID-19 pandemic and that while it does not reflect typical traffic patterns, important trends were found. Historic crash data from 2014-2018 was analyzed for each priority corridor. Public outreach was conducted through multiple avenues (email, virtual meetings, virtual meeting registration pages) during the planning process. Community members identified five safety challenges that needed to be addressed: 1) speed compliance, 2) pedestrian safety, 3) lack of pedestrian infrastructure, 4) non-uniform traffic control devices, and 5) non-compliance with ADA standards.

Related to bicycle and pedestrian activities, the following findings and recommendations were highlighted for each priority area.

Priority Area 1: Downtown Truth or Consequences (Main Avenue and North Broadway Street)

The Hot Springs Bathhouse and Commercial Historic District generate significant pedestrian activity. ADA-accessible sidewalks exist on both sides of Broadway Street and on most of Main Avenue. No sidewalk exists on the north side of Main Avenue between North Foch Street and Garst Street. Marked crosswalks are available along Main Avenue and North Broadway Street, as well as a pedestrian traffic sign. While the posted 25 mile per hour speed limit is observed by half of traffic, motorists tend to increase their speed as they travel through downtown.

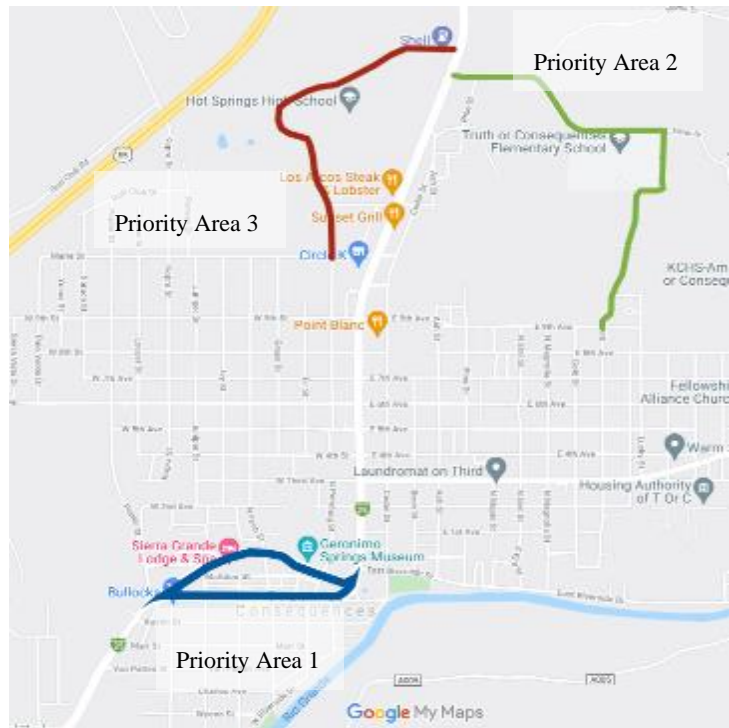


Figure 8: A map of the three priority areas in the Truth or Consequences Safety Plan.

Camera observations collected over four days in February (Thursday, February 18, 2021 – Sunday, February 21, 2021) showed high pedestrian activity on Main Avenue near Jones Street and moderate pedestrian activity on North Broadway Street. On weekends, pedestrian activity was higher on North Broadway compared to Main Avenue. Bicycle activity was found to be higher on North Broadway Street. Due to elevation changes, bicyclists may prefer routes other than Main Avenue when traveling west. These observations were collected after a recent snowstorm and may underrepresent typical bicycle and pedestrian activities. Further data should be collected during non-winter months.

There were seven crashes in the downtown area during the 2014-2018 period, with one crash involving a pedestrian which resulted in a minor injury. The top contributing factors for crashes in the areas include speeding too fast for conditions and driver inattention.

Recommendations

- Repaint center line and edge line striping
- Repaint crosswalks
- Install in-street pedestrian signs on the centerline and edge lines of the driving lanes
- Narrow driving lanes to 10-feet for traffic calming purposes
- Address uneven and narrow sidewalks and develop a regular maintenance schedule to keep sidewalks accessible
- Replace existing pedestrian warning signs with Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Device (MUTCD) compliant pedestrian warning signs along Broadway Street, install an additional pedestrian warning sign at Broadway and Mims Streets
- Construct a community gateway to improve the roadway aesthetics and reinforce that the roadway environment has changed when entering downtown to help with speed compliance
- Regular speed enforcement
- Pursue a roadway exchange and transfer ownership from NMDOT to the town; this would allow the local community to address roadway challenges more directly in the downtown area

Priority Area 2: Smith Avenue/Silver Street

This corridor provides access to Truth or Consequences Elementary School, Sierra Vista Hospital, and Sierra Health Care. The speed limit on these roads is 25 miles per hour, except in the school zone where the speed limit drops to 15 miles per hour. The only pedestrian infrastructure in the corridor is an approximately 1,000 foot length of sidewalk on the south side of Smith Avenue just west of the elementary school. Data collected on-site found that nearly half of observed traffic on Smith Avenue and Silver Street traveled at the posted speed limit and fifteen percent exceeded the posted speed limit by five to six miles per hour. There were two crashes in priority area 2 between 2014-2018; neither involved a pedestrian or bicyclist. The top contributing factor for these crashes was driver inattention.

Recommendations

- Add centerline and edge line markings to Smith Avenue and Silver Street
- Update pedestrian warning signs at crosswalk
- Repaint crosswalk
- Install in-street pedestrian signs on the centerline and edge lines of the driving lanes near the crosswalk
- Install signs that indicate when the school zone speed limit is applicable
- Install a 15 miles per hour speed limit sign and dynamic speed feedback capabilities near the school's western entrance for east-bound motorists
- Install sidewalks along Smith Avenue to fill the gap between North Date Street and the sidewalk near the elementary school
- Install sidewalks on the west and east sides of Silver Street to provide accessibility from residents on 9th Street to the hospital and the elementary school
- Install sidewalks on the elementary school property to ensure a safe connection to the school from Silver Street

Priority Area 3: New School Road/North Pershing Street

This corridor provides access to the high school and middle school. Pedestrian infrastructure is minimal with about 1,400 feet of sidewalk on the south side of New School Road, just east of the high school. In addition, marked crosswalks exist on New School Road between the middle school and high school. Data was collected at the school zone where the posted speed limit is 15 miles per hour. Many motorists observed in this corridor were exceeding the posted speed limit. Only one crash was reported between 2014-2018. It occurred at the intersection of New School Road and North Date Street and did not involve a pedestrian or bicyclist. This intersection is currently being redesigned as a roundabout to accommodate pedestrians.

Recommendations

- Add centerline and edge line markings to New School Road and North Pershing Street
- Install signs that indicate when the school zone speed limit is applicable
- Install a 15 miles per hour speed limit sign and dynamic speed feedback capabilities near the school's western entrance for east-bound motorists
- Update pedestrian warning signs at crosswalk
- Repaint pavement marking to indicate left and through travel near the middle school and high school
- Repaint crosswalk
- Install in-street pedestrian signs on the centerline and edge lines of the driving lanes near the crosswalk
- Install sidewalks on New School Road to provide pedestrian access from the middle school crosswalk to the high school crosswalk
- Install sidewalks throughout the New School Road corridor

- Install sidewalks on the east side of North Pershing Street to provide accessibility to residences south of Marie Street to the middle school and high school

Next Steps

Next steps noted several funding opportunities to address these safety challenges. These include: Highway Safety Improvement Program, Transportation Alternatives Program, Recreational Trails Program, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, Local Government Road Fund, Capital Outlay, Transportation Project Fund, Community Development Block Grant Programs, Federal Transit Administration funds, and Great Blocks on MainStreet.

EXISTING BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

Table 2 summarizes bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure identified across all case study communities, noting which ones were observed while on-site in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico.

Table 2: Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure found across all case study communities, with those found in Truth or Consequences noted.

Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Infrastructure in Case Study Communities	Presence in Truth or Consequences
Bicycle Lane	
Bike Rack	X
Shared Lane Markings	
Side Path	
Defined Bike Route (by signage)	
Multi-Use Pathway	
Trail (soft surface)	X
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) Crossing	
Mid-Block Crossing	X
Crosswalk	X
Sidewalks	X
Bridges that enable walking or biking	X
Underpasses that enable walking or biking	
Parklet	
Benches	X
Repair Station/Air Pump	
Speed Bump/Speed Table	X
Speed Feedback Sign – Permanent	
Speed Feedback Sign – Portable	X
Signage	
<i>Bike/Ped Crossing Sign with light emitting diode (LED) lights</i>	X
<i>Bicycle May Use Full Lane</i>	
<i>Share the Road</i>	
<i>State Law, Yield/Stop for Pedestrian in Crosswalk</i>	

Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Infrastructure in Case Study Communities	Presence in Truth or Consequences
<i>Steep Grade</i>	
<i>Drive Slow in Residential Areas/Please Slow Down</i>	
<i>Traffic Calming Area</i>	
<i>Weight Limitations</i>	
<i>Interpretative/ Wayfinding Information</i>	X
<i>Walking Routes</i>	X
<i>Entertainment District</i>	

The Healing Arts Plaza, discussed in the 2014 Downtown Master Plan/Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan, appears to have been developed as envisioned, and even includes a bicycle rack.

The community is currently working on the Turtleback Trails Network. To engage and obtain input from the public, an innovative approach was used. A chalkboard near a trailhead to the existing Healing Waters Trail, had new questions posted once every two weeks (#1 in Figure 12). People were able to provide a response using provided chalk.

In several locations throughout the community, Works Progress Administration (WPA) marked sidewalks and curbs were found (#2 in Figure 12). These markings suggest that the infrastructure is at least eighty-two years old. Rural New Mexico reportedly was the recipient of “extensive 1933-42 New Deal projects,” as previously discussed in the planning documents.

In the core of Truth or Consequences, in its historic downtown, a bicycle shop rents and repairs bicycles (#3 in Figure 12). Riverside Drive (Figure 9) is one suggested location for bicycling within the community. It is a low volume, gravel road.



Figure 9: Riverside Drive, a gravel road.

Several crossings, including this one that has curb extensions can be found on Main Street (#4 in Figure 12), a one-way state roadway. Another example with a yellow flashing beacon can be found on Main Street (#5 in Figure 12). In addition to the aforementioned crossings on Main Street, Broadway Street, which is the one-way pair to Main Street, also has this defined crossing (#10 in Figure 12).

Ralph Edwards Park, on the north end of the historic downtown, has wide concrete sidewalks (#6 in Figure 12). The annual event is held here commemorating the renaming of Hot Springs to Truth or Consequences.

The summers can be very hot in Truth or Consequences, so shade structures like this one are a welcome respite on the Healing Waters Trail (#7 in Figure 12). Bridges (Figure 10) can be found along the Healing Waters Trail; however, due to their size, they provide the indication that the trail's focus is on walking, not bicycling.

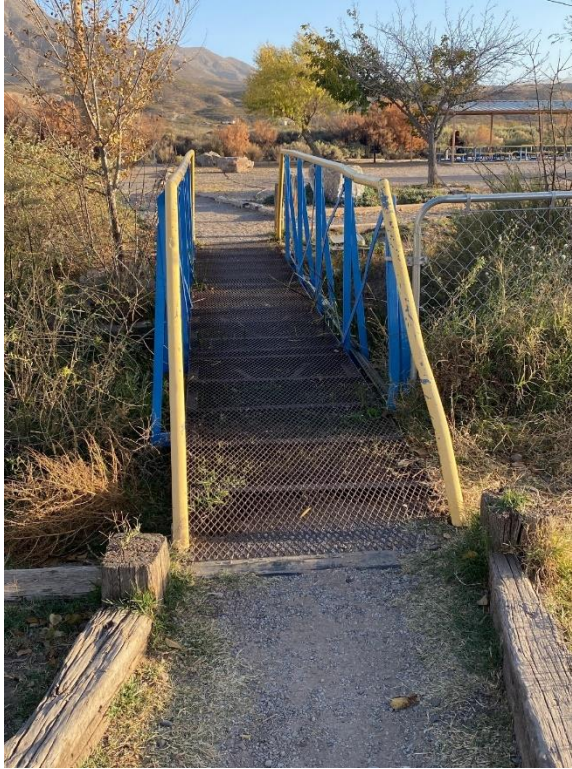


Figure 10: A bridge on the Healing Waters Trail.

Similarly, because the Healing Waters Trail travels from lower ground to the bluff above, there is also a set of stairs (Figure 11).



Figure 11: Stairs along the Healing Waters Trail.

Truth or Consequences has several murals throughout the community (see the right center photo on the cover page; Figure 5; and #8 in Figure 12).

Downtown Truth or Consequences has a unique bicycle rack outside of a downtown shop (#9 in Figure 12).

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN MAP

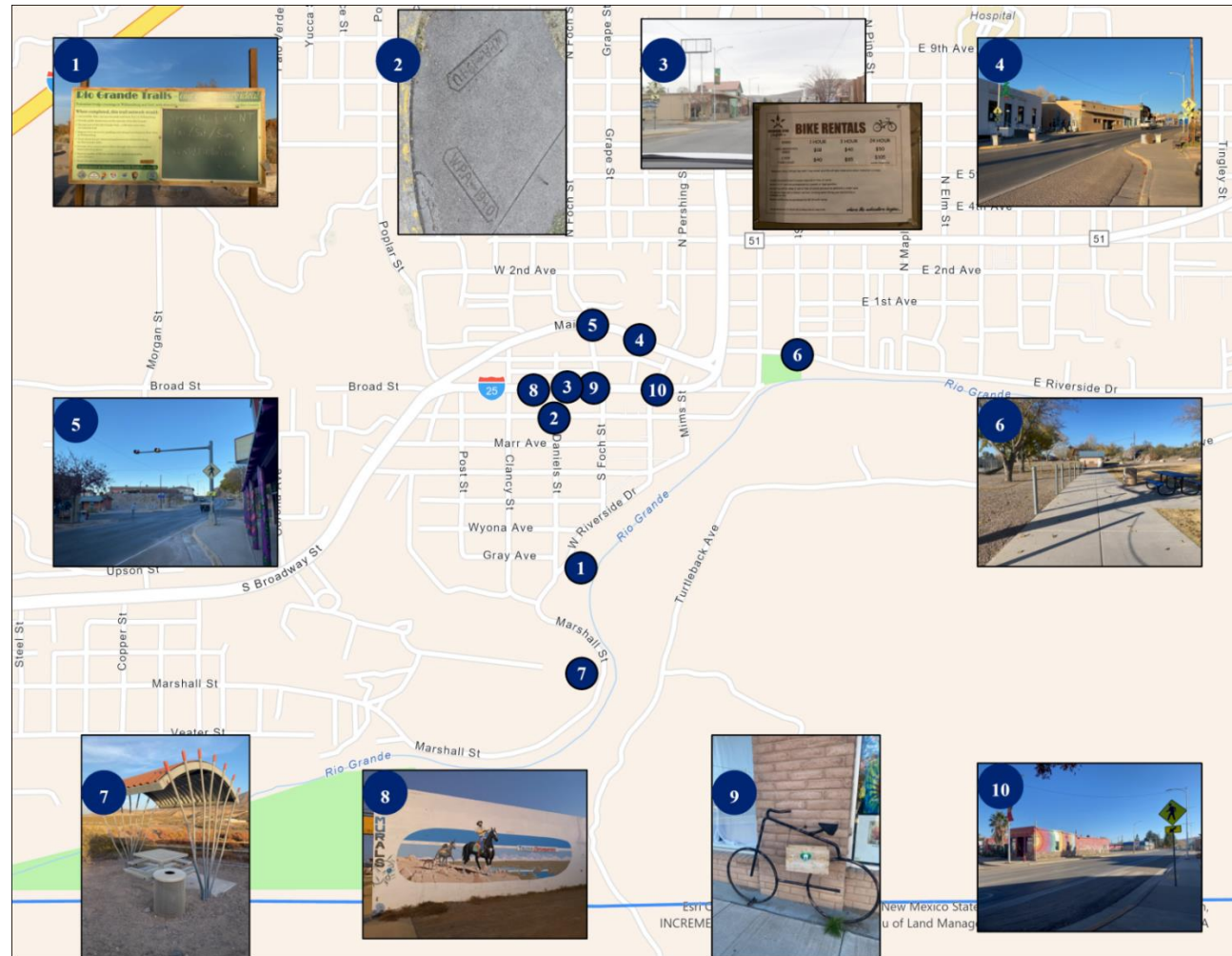


Figure 12: Truth or Consequences Bicycle & Pedestrian Infrastructure Map.

SUPPORTING PROGRAMS FOR BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

Truth or Consequences has implemented two programs that support walking and bicycling within the community that were observed while on-site or documented in reports (Table 3).

Table 3: Bicycle and pedestrian supporting programs in case study communities, noting those found in Ruidoso.

Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Supporting Programs in Case Study Communities	Presence in Truth or Consequences
Demonstration/Pilot Projects	
Art Walks/Historical Walk/Children's Walk/Health Walk	X
Sculpture(s)/Statue(s)	
Mural(s)	X
Little Free Library	

A group that has dubbed themselves the “young DaVincis” is working to “beautify and add public art into Downtown.”

Several committees had been formed over the year in association with the plans. One such committee is the Geronimo Trail Scenic Byway Advisory Committee. While focused on the needs of vehicular travelers, the Geronimo Trail Scenic Byway Advisory Committee identified their coordination with the Healing Waters Trail Committee.

PARTNERSHIPS TO PLAN & IMPLEMENT BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

The Geronimo Trail Scenic Byway Advisory Committee is a partnership between the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the New Mexico Tourism Department, the New Mexico Department of Transportation, towns and cities along the Byway (including Truth or Consequences) and private sector entities, such as banks.

The original concept of the Healing Waters Trail was created in coordination with the City of Truth or Consequences, the Truth or Consequences Rotary Club, the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club, the Veterans' Memorial Park, Sierra Soil and Conservation District, and local residents and business owners.

Truth or Consequences is unique when compared with other case study communities in that planning for The Healing Waters Trail was coordinated in part by a masters student at the University of New Mexico.

The Turtleback Trails Network is a partnership between: Sierra County Tourism Board, the City of Truth or Consequences, the Village of Williamsburg, local schools, New Mexico State Parks, Sierra County, the Bureau of Reclamation, the National Park Service, MainStreet,

Jornada Resources Conservation and Development Council Inc., Sierra Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Sierra County Cooperative Extension Office.

FUNDING FOR BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

The Truth or Consequences downtown master plan was funded by the New Mexico Economic Development Department's MainStreet Program.

The original planning and creation of the Healing Waters Trail Steering Committee was completed using technical assistance funding from the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program. Construction of the Healing Waters Trail was funded through the Recreational Trails Program, which is administered by the New Mexico State Parks.

The downtown master plan suggested the following as potential funding sources to address needs in the downtown area: Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program, Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas (MRAs), Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) and Tax Increment Development Districts (TIDD), the Community Development Revolving Loan Funding, a Cooperative Agreements Program (COOP) Local Government Road Fund, a Local Government Planning Fund, a Municipal Arterial Program (MAP) Local Government Road Fund, a Public Project Revolving Fund (PPRF), Rural Economic Action Partnership (REAP), Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), USDA Rural Development Programs, McCune Charitable Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), crowd-funding, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, State Tax Credit for Registered Cultural Properties, NM Historic Preservation Loan Fund, MainStreet Revolving Loan Fund, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Transportation Enhancements through the U.S. Department of Transportation, Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP), SMART Money Loan Participation Program, SBA 504 Loan Program, SBA 7a Loan Program, WESST, The Loan Fund, ACCION New Mexico, the New Mexico Manufacturing Extension Partnership, and the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority (MFA) The downtown master plan also suggested that Truth or Consequences become a Certified Local Government (CLG), noting that in 2013, only eight CLGs could apply for three grants. As part of the CLG program \$165,000 was reportedly awarded in the 2013-2014 grant cycle.

The Multimodal Transportation Safety Plan suggested some additional funding programs that could support the pedestrian and bicycle improvements recommended in the plan. These included: Highway Safety Improvement Program, Transportation Alternatives Program, Recreational Trails Program, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, Local Government Road Fund, Capital Outlay, Transportation Project Fund, Community Development Block Grant Programs, Federal Transit Administration funds, and Great Blocks on MainStreet.

LESSONS LEARNED

One of the biggest success stories for Truth or Consequences is the implementation of the Healing Waters Trail. Truth or Consequences has also been trying to address identified repairs needed to their sidewalks, as was seen by the section repaired with the MainStreet stamp; however, a lot of need remains. The community has been very successful with planning but has encountered some challenges with implementing the ideas identified in the plan.

THE FUTURE OF BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE COMMUNITY

In 2019, a coalition of local trail runners worked with the City of Truth or Consequences to apply for technical assistance from the National Park Service to improve access to recreational opportunities across the Rio Grande. The vision for what will be called the Turtleback Trails Network is to have three pedestrian bridges crossing the Rio Grande (two in Truth or Consequences and one in nearby Williamsburg) and develop a trail that would connect all the bridges creating another trail loop. A steering committee was formed and includes members from the Sierra County Tourism Board, the City of Truth or Consequences, the Village of Williamsburg, local schools, New Mexico State Parks, Sierra County, the Bureau of Reclamation, the National Park Service, MainStreet, Jornada Resources Conservation and Development Council Inc., Sierra Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Sierra County Cooperative Extension Office.

The steering committee has conducted multiple outreach activities including use of chalkboards in the Rotary Park and in Williamsburg to gather community feedback, a project Facebook page, created project brochures that were distributed at farmers markets and local businesses, and worked with local media to get the word out.

The proposed Turtleback Trails Network would consist of four trail corridors: 1) Rotary Park to Williamsburg Community Park, 2) Rotary Park to Ralph Edwards Park, 3) nearly 60 miles of hiking/mountain biking/horseback riding trails along the Caballo Mount and Palomas Gap on Bureau of Land Management managed lands, and 4) a connection to the proposed Rio Grande Trail segment that will run near Elephant Butte State Park. Three pedestrian bridges are proposed to provide access to these trails, one at Williamsburg Community Park, one at the Rotary Park, and one at Ralph Edwards Park. Trail facilities like shaded seating, educational signage/exhibits, outdoor classrooms, and wayfinding are planned. Benefits of the proposed trail network would be increasing access to the recreational opportunities available near Truth or Consequences. One community member reported hopes that the trail can help fuel business for the local bike shop located in downtown Truth or Consequences or spur the need for additional outdoor economy (outdoor recreation shops, bicycle education programs, etc.).

KEY POINTS

The significant focus of the redevelopment of downtown as identified in the Downtown Historic Plan was the need to ensure that it was walkable. Most eloquently said in the plan, “Pedestrian accessibility is crucial to fostering a vibrant Downtown.” Consequently, this sentiment suggests that small, rural communities do need places for people to walk and bike. If, as many suggest, that rural America does not need facilities to support walking and bicycling, community members would not be observed biking on the sidewalks and there would not be a plan that discusses how a community could be made more walkable.

SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES TO APPLY IN OTHER SMALL COMMUNITIES

The following are successful strategies employed by Truth or Consequences that can be applied in other small communities:

1. **Community engagement.** To obtain input from users, the community posted questions on a chalk board and allowed users of the facility to respond. In addition, while completing the downtown master plan and planning for the Healing Waters Trail Downtown Segment, Truth or Consequences engaged community members’ feedback by hosting walking audits.
2. **Leverage university assistance.** As a part of her master’s thesis, a University of New Mexico graduate student helped provide planning guidance for the Healing Waters Trail.
3. **Engage available resources.** Twice, first with the Healing Waters Trail and now with the on-going Turtleback Trails Network, the community has successfully engaged the assistance of National Park Service’s Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program.
4. **Promote your community assets.** The City of Truth or Consequences recognized their unique historic, cultural, and natural resources which draw community members and visitors to the area. Understanding these assets helped lead to the creation of the Healing Waters Trail.

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