

Partnership Agreement

“Grand Unified Santa Fe Trails Organization” (GUSTO)

The “Grand Unified Santa Fe Trails Organization” (GUSTO) is a community effort to study and develop an integrated and unified trail system in and around the Santa Fe area. The vision of the GUSTO initiative is an interconnected trail system that allows non-motorized users to travel in a loop around the greater Santa Fe area as well as between the city center and the periphery. The GUSTO Initiative will lead community participation efforts to have a unified, sustainable trails system built around the entire metropolitan area.

This document serves as a Partnership Agreement between government agencies, community organizations, private landowners, and businesses interested in the development of trails in the Santa Fe, New Mexico, region for purposes of health, environmentally-friendly recreation, heritage tourism, historic preservation, transportation, and economic development.

Background

The development of outdoor recreation and transportation through non-motorized trails is good for our health, environment, and economy. The rugged, natural areas surrounding Santa Fe, as well as the area’s rich and diverse cultural heritage, provide unlimited opportunities for outdoor recreation pursuits. Hikers, mountain bicyclists, horseback riders, and other outdoor enthusiasts can explore canyons, ridgetops, and meadows in pinon/juniper-clad foothills, riparian areas, and ponderosa pine forests as well as centuries of cultural heritage along various deeply historic trail alignments.

Within developed areas of Santa Fe, natural corridors such as the Santa Fe River and the Arroyo de los Chamisos, and historic alignments such as the Acequia Madre and the Santa Fe Southern Rail line, have already become linear parks with trail systems linking people to schools, health facilities, businesses, and other neighborhood destinations.

Surrounding the City are enticing networks of natural-surface trails including the La Tierra Trails; Dale Ball and Connecting Trails; Winsor National Recreational Trail, Atalaya Trail, Caja del Rio and other Santa Fe National Forest Trails; Arroyo Hondo Open Space Trails; Galisteo Basin Preserve Trails; and many more public and privately owned trails. Completing the connections between these facilities and various other community resources requires continued work by public agencies in cooperation with private landowners to address issues of land ownership, access and financial resources.

Historic alignments that can be integrated into this network of local trails include three congressionally-designated national historic trail routes which start or end at the plaza: the Santa Fe Trail, Old Spanish Trail, and El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. The possible development of retracement trails along these alignments holds significant potential for heritage tourism, recreation, historic preservation, quality of life improvement, and economic development.

Strong community interest for a “grand unified trail system” has surfaced during the past few years particularly with the development of private trail-oriented associations such as the Santa Fe Fat Tire Society and the Trails Alliance of Santa Fe. General and specific aspects of the GUSTO concept are supported by a variety of public planning documents, including

- City of Santa Fe, Parks, Open Space, Trails, and Recreation Master Plan

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- City of Santa Fe, La Tierra Trails Master Plan
- Santa Fe Metropolitan Bicycle Master Plan
- Santa Fe County, Sustainable Growth Management Plan
- Santa Fe County, Open Land and Trails Plan
- Santa Fe County, Economic Development Plan
- Comprehensive plans for the three national historic trails originating in Santa Fe

Goals

The GUSTO initiative is about developing outdoor recreation opportunities in order to improve health and quality of life for Santa Feans; to create jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities, expand and retain businesses, and support community-based development; to encourage heritage tourism; and to increase appreciation of our natural environment and public open spaces. Specific objectives under GUSTO include:

1. A Soft-Surface Loop Trail, or a Route for non-motorized users, around the City of Santa Fe
2. A metropolitan bikeway and pedestrian network that links urban areas with all City, County, federal and privately-owned trail systems
3. A looped network of multi-use paths for walking, running, cycling, and horseback-riding.
4. More function-specific trails
5. Development of trails following historic routes to the extent practicable as non-motorized retracement trails.

Coordination of the GUSTO initiative will be accomplished jointly through annual action plans established by the GUSTO steering committee, composed of representatives of government agencies, community organizations, private landowners, and businesses interested in the long-term development of trails and greenways in the Santa Fe region.

Proposed Action

The parties committed to this partnership are united by a mutual goal of improving the lives of Santa Fe residents and visitors through the development and improvement of trails and greenways. The parties recognize that Santa Fe's future quality of life and economic prosperity is partially dependent on providing trails and outdoor recreation opportunities and preserving our nationally and internationally significant cultural heritage.

We, the undersigned, concur that quality of life issues and economic development opportunities can be addressed through trails and greenways. Therefore, we will work in partnership with other community members to support the Grand Unified Santa Fe Trails Organization (GUSTO) regional project.

Signature of Representative

Name of Supporting Group or Agency

Date