

NIZC Committee Minutes
Tourism, Recreation & Environmental
August 3, 2006 – Mahoney State Park

The NIZC Tourism, Recreation & Environmental Committee gathered during the monthly meeting of NIZC, Aug. 3, 2006. The following are the minutes from that meeting.

Those present where: Katie Torpy, Christian Hornbaker, Jerry Maxwell, Carolyn Johnson, Marlin Petermann, David Potter, Dave Sands, Ian Hartfield, Sue Brauckmuller, Rodney Verhoeff, Virginia Miller, Dave Nielsen and Marsha Babcock.

Chairman Marlin Petermann distributed the agenda (attached) for the meeting. After the agenda was distributed, attendee's signed in and introduced themselves to the group. The meeting was divided into the following primary areas:

1. Key Issues
 - a. Platte River within the area is the Key element in the I-80 corridor upon which to focus this Committees issues of Tourism, Recreation and Environment. It also supplies a focal point to mix with other key elements such as potential major attractions.
 - b. With this in mind, Marlin handed out a fact sheet (attached) on a Platte River Environmental Carrying Capacity Study which is currently underway by the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance. This study is primarily looking at how much development the area can take with out major environmental degradation. Bio focus on present use –looks at starting with natural systems and builds from there to see how much development they can handle. Phase II (Task 2) of this study is set to begin soon and will look for the data gaps, update 25-year old land use maps of the Platte corridor from Fremont to Plattsmouth and find environmentally sensitive areas – the ultimate goal is to develop a conservation overlay. This overlay could also identify areas for appropriate Recreation (public lands), Tourism (attractions/lodging) and other Economic Development opportunities.

Question 1 – What is our area? Currently not really defined –Suggested that maybe Committee should focus on the 6 counties defined by LB 546.

Question 2 - River and I-80 cross so what portions should we cover? Dave Sands mentioned considering amenities from Fremont to Plattsmouth. Kathy McKillip raised the issue of focused regionalism.

Question 3 – How open to other ideas are we? Study can be a model and modified – so what is the end goal? To find areas best suited or not suited for development. Sands mentioned that this information is critical to determine what can be done.

Question 4 – It was noted that Economic Development needed to include consideration of adequate water supplies and balancing needs.

2. Study/Funding needs

- a. Funds from multiple sources may be needed.
- b. Tourism – more study of the needs, what works for this area.
- c. Recreation – Identify present use, potential sites and future needs
- d. Environmental – The environmental carrying capacity study requires \$720,000 to be completed (possibly \$350,000 through NIZC)(fact sheet handout distributed to the group).
- e. Scenic Highway/Byway Designation Study focusing on the Hwy 6 corridor and identifying trail corridor needs throughout the region.

3. Legislative Needs

- a. Support of the transfer of development rights to other areas/individuals (Landcaster County proposal) currently being studied by the legislature's Government Committee was suggested.
- b. Support of reintroducing legislation to allow a transferable State Tax credit for lands enrolled in Conservation Easements (Nebraska Land Trust proposal) similar to LB 997, Revenue Committee-2006, was suggested.
- c. It was suggested that this all could be summarized as gathering data, determining the areas of interest, and then create incentives to promote appropriate economic development. It was noted that many incentive programs of this sort already exist, such as conservation easements through NLT, Farm & Ranch Land Protection programs, National Guard funds (Camp Ashland is interested in buffering), etc. The key is to identify existing tools/funds and see what we still will need.

4. Action Items

- a. Pursue finding funds for environmental carrying capacity study and conservation overlay – phase II, (NIZC \$50,000 07, \$300,000 for 08)
- b. Pursue Legislative Items - Transfer of Development Rights, Conservation Easement State Tax Credit .
- c. Identify all of the various programs in existence – existing tools and funding sources.
- d. Gather tourism and river recreation use data for the region.
- e. Develop legislation that will provide more tools to use in recognizing/identifying and preserving areas of interest for environmental, recreation, tourism best use options

Next meeting will be Sept. 7th, 2006 @ Quarry Oaks Golf Course – Club House – 6:00pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy McKillip for Rodney Verhoeff

