

Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway

“Interpreting the Arroyo Seco Parkway” Project

May 2012 - Executive Summary

ARROYO SECO BYWAY

Discovery Runs Deep



This plan was prepared for Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority (MRCA) in partnership with Caltrans with funding provided by a grant from the National Scenic Byway program, funded in part by Federal Highway Administration.

THE ARROYO GUILD

This project was managed by The Arroyo Guild, a Highland Park-based strategic planning and marketing firm specializing in environmental, historic and cultural preservation projects that create a unique sense of place.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Running from downtown Los Angeles to Pasadena, the Arroyo Seco Byway spans interests and eras that have shaped the greater Los Angeles experience. It is on the urban edge, where culture and nature have merged to create a mosaic of unexpectedly cool experiences. This place is off-the-beaten path, yet in the middle of it all. The experience of the Arroyo Seco Byway is shaped by the unique confluence of art and architecture, transportation, cultures and the environment. Whether you're a first-timer or a regular visitor, there's always something new to discover in the Arroyo Seco Byway: Discovery Runs Deep.

These five sentences are the overarching messages that will define the Arroyo Seco Byway and are at the core of the "Interpreting the Arroyo Seco Parkway" planning project. This project created the first-ever comprehensive plan for the Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway corridor that encapsulates recommendations for a new regional brand that will be unveiled and supported over time by an integrated interpretive and marketing plan.

Background

In 2004, the National Scenic Byway's Discretionary Grants program awarded a grant for a planning project entitled "Interpreting the Arroyo Seco Parkway," (SB-2004-CA-51). This federal grant required local matching funds and services to be provided.

"Interpreting the Arroyo Seco Parkway" grant was completed in 2012 for the Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority (MRCA) in partnership with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). A required 20% match was provided through the following local partners who provided matching funds and in-kind services (listed alphabetically):

The Arroyo Guild; Arroyo Seco Foundation; Arroyo Vista Inn; Audubon Center at Debs Park; City of Pasadena Department of Public Works, Parks and Natural Resources Division; Council for Watershed Health (formerly Los Angeles & San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council); Division 7; The Gamble House; Heritage Square Museum; Highland Park Heritage Trust; KCET Departures; Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority; National Trust for Historic Preservation; and, North Figueroa Association

There were a significant number of additional organizations and individuals who informally provided additional in-kind services and time that greatly supplemented the formal match. The Interpretive Plan Steering Committee, which consisted of destinations

located in the National Scenic Byway corridor, key tourism organizations and local organizations who participate in tourism or interpretation activities, provided essential local support and partnership. Without this large cross-section of the byway corridor represented, the consultant team would not have been able to complete such a comprehensive planning project.

Purpose

The grant's stated purpose: "This project proposes to develop a comprehensive visitor interpretation and marketing plan to share the numerous and diverse resources of the Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway with byway travelers based on the recommendations contained in the Corridor Management Plan."

The scope of work included a variety of activities that, when combined, resulted in a comprehensive approach to the unique Byway corridor. The project is really a series of reports, each completed by consultants in collaboration with the entire consultant team and under the direction of The Arroyo Guild, who served as the Project Manager and lead consultant to MRCA and Caltrans. Each report was designed to be self-guiding for its subject matter in addition to serving to connect and support the closely related work of the other consultants in order to fulfill the scope of the "Interpreting the Arroyo Seco" project.

"Interpreting the Arroyo Seco" project consists of the following reports:

- "Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway Interpretive Plan," dated May 2012; prepared by Engaging Places, LLC
- "Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway Brand & Marketing Plan," dated May 2012; prepared by WriteBrand
- "Arroyo Seco Corridor Interpretive Grant Signage & Wayfinding Guidelines", dated 2012; prepared by Treehouse Design Partnership
- "Arroyo Seco Parkway Inventory of Interpretive Assets," dated March 2012; prepared by National Trust for Historic Preservation
- "Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway Market Research on Affiliated Sites and Visitors," dated February 2012; prepared by The Community Land Use & Economics Group and Surale Phillips, Decision Support Partners

A short executive summary of each report follows in order to provide an overview of each report as well as the entire project.



INTERPRETIVE PLAN

Interpreting the Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway is a unique challenge and opportunity. The historic Arroyo Seco Parkway is the core resource in the larger National Scenic Byway, which is bounded by Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena on the north and the Four Level Interchange in Los Angeles on the south. The region is about ten miles in length and contains dozens of museums, historic sites, commercial districts, natural areas, and parks (referred collectively as “Sites”) within several distinct communities, it accommodates more than 150,000 people daily who travel on the Parkway and Gold Line, and sits within the greater Los Angeles region of nearly 13 million residents.

The Byway has one of the richest collections of historical, natural, and cultural resources in California, is easily accessed by car and Gold Line, and has major untapped market at its doorstep, however, the public does not recognize the Byway’s significance or even its name and the ability to attract and retain visitors is dampened by the low capacity of most Sites and regional organizations.

To overcome these challenges and meet these opportunities, this interpretive plan suggests focusing the content around **four interpretive themes** that strongly and clearly link most Sites throughout the Byway:

1. *A Laboratory for Art and Architecture:* In the Arroyo Seco, you can discover cutting-edge art and architecture that cuts across a more than a century of history--a laboratory of ideas testing what southern California can and should become.
2. *Heralding America’s Transportation Age:* When it was opened to traffic in 1940, the Arroyo Seco Parkway was celebrated as an aesthetic, engineering, and commercial triumph. But it also heralded the nation’s freeway age and is just one of the many path breaking and surprising ways that connect Los Angeles and Pasadena, two of California’s most popular cities.
3. *Diverse People, Distinctive Communities:* For more than a century, a diversity of cultures from around the world have lived in and near the Arroyo Seco, creating the densest concentration of distinctive communities in southern California.
4. *Revealing an Oasis:* Despite its name, the Arroyo Seco is not a dry river. A century of harnessing and controlling it has rendered it nearly invisible, but it is possible to restore it as an environmental, cultural, and recreational oasis for all of southern California.

Secondly, this interpretive plan recommends **focusing on five audiences** that not only represent significant segments of the community, but also have the greatest regional potential for growth by most of the Sites in the Byway:

1. *Aspiring Contemporaries*: leading edge local residents that are upward strivers, ethnically diverse, culture buffs, and technologically savvy.
2. *Affluent Suburbia*: well-educated, wealthy Baby Boomers and their children who are very active culturally and enjoy expensive recreation.
3. *Upscale America*: white-collar households that enjoy recreation, are active in community and civic groups, and heavy Internet users.
4. *Blue Collar Backbone*: diverse households concentrated among the very old or very young who are budget-conscious and prefer social activities and outdoor sports and recreation.
5. *Struggling Societies*: young, minorities, students, and single parents trying to raise families on low incomes and very tight budgets, who tend to focus on free entertainment such as sports and television.

While all the Sites should endeavor to welcome all residents in and travelers to Los Angeles County, not one has the resources to adequately reach and serve everyone. To be effective, Sites must prioritize their activities and programs among the five audiences, placing special focus on *Aspiring Contemporaries* because that market segment seems to be a bridge that is well positioned to reach the other four.

To bring together the Sites that have an intrinsic relationship to the historical and cultural significance of the Arroyo Seco Parkway, the **interpretive strategy of the Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway** is:

- *To share the historical, cultural, and natural resources associated with the Arroyo Seco Byway so that visitors feel they have discovered a place worth preserving and sharing with others and will become better stewards of the natural and built environment.*
- *To reach younger, leading edge local residents that are upward strivers, ethnically diverse, culture buffs, and technologically savvy (also known as Aspiring Contemporaries).*
- *To interpret the topics of art and architecture, transportation (particularly the Parkway), multicultural communities, and the Arroyo Seco river (presented as the themes of A Laboratory for Art and Architecture; Heralding America's Transportation Age; Diverse People, Diverse Communities; and Revealing an Oasis).*

This interpretive strategy intends to achieve the following objectives:

- 80% of visitors will be able to identify three historical, cultural, or natural resources associated with the National Scenic Byway.
- 60% of visitors will have visited at least three communities within the Byway.
- 40% of visitors will be able to identify the Arroyo Seco Parkway as a parkway (not as the Pasadena Freeway or a freeway) and is historically and culturally significant (e.g., recognized as a National Scenic Byway, listed on the National Register of Historic Places).

- 20% of visitors will describe their experience in the Byway using words like “worth preserving,” “will share with others,” and “inspired me to be better steward of the environment”.

Ideally, the efforts among the Sites within the Arroyo Seco National Scenic Byway would be led and coordinated by a dedicated non-profit or an existing non-profit organization with an allied mission. A non-profit regional association could coordinate collaborative projects and promotional efforts; act as a spokesperson for the region; pursue mutually-beneficial grants and donations; and provide training and technical support. An infusion of major support will accelerate implementation and should be primarily directed at regional efforts because they will provide long-term overall benefits to most Sites and visitors. Top priorities for regional collaborative efforts include:

1. *Wayfinding*: A clear and consistent system of signs to direct visitors to major Sites in the Byway.
2. *Regional Maps*: A simple single printed map of the region or subregions to help visitors plan their travel and navigate the Byway.
3. *Micro-visitor Centers*: A place where visitors can obtain information, plan their travel, and get recommendations from local experts.
4. *Website*: A single online source for information about the region to help visitors plan their travel and learn more about the Byway’s significant Sites.
5. *Creating a Destination*: Deliberately creating a national presence for a distinct region through unified and connected high-quality visitor experiences.
6. *A Grant Program to Support Marketing and Interpretation at Byway Sites*: Funding, even at the \$1000-\$10,000 level, is a significant incentive for participation, coordination, and implementation of the interpretive plan because it reduces risk and builds capacity.

Although National Scenic Byways are usually associated with a dedicated non-profit organization to coordinate and lead activities, the absence of such an organization in the Arroyo Seco Byway at present suggests that an interim solution would require work by individual organizations and small groups of Sites that will eventually lead towards a regional association supported by a large number of Sites. In many cases, the visitor experience can be strengthened simultaneously both on an individual Site and regional basis, however, given the limited resources at present, this most likely will need to first occur on an incremental basis by individual Sites. This plan includes a series of recommendations for building and retaining audiences for individual and groups of Sites.



BRAND & MARKETING PLAN

Brand Summary

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway is to deliver a-ha experiences that connect visitors to this place and that encourage further exploration and discovery of the area.

Promise (the essence of the experience):

The Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway offers a surprisingly layered experience that cuts across eras, influences and interests, making you want to see and do more.

Positioning (why it is unlike any other):

The Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway is a cultural and environmental laboratory that juxtaposes tradition and cutting-edge ideas in art, architecture, transportation and nature to create an evolving urban landscape that demands exploration.

Personality (what it feels like):

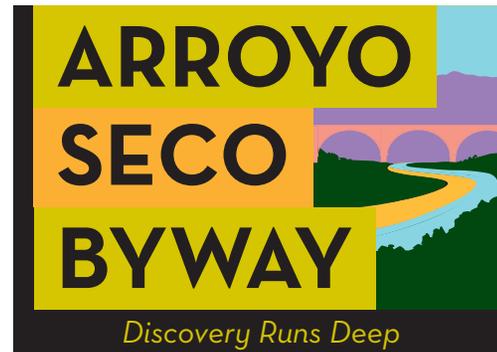
- Eclectic* - The people and places of the Arroyo Seco Byway do not follow one theme or genre. This place is diverse at its core. It is where urban culture and sophisticated tradition collide to foster new ideas and create new experiences. It is the intertwining of classic and modern, green and concrete, artistic and everyday that make it interesting.
- Resourceful* - This is a place with a relentless passion for moving forward. If the people here don't find what they want, they create it. From the natural environments to the innovative spirit, this area is marked by a pioneering mindset that has redefined the greater Los Angeles landscape, creating layers of interesting attractions that invite exploration and offer opportunities for personal and cultural growth.
- Ever-changing* - Urban evolution is evident throughout the Arroyo Seco Byway. This is not a place that gravitates to fads. These communities are incapable of remaining stagnant. They have been populated by people who plant their roots for the sole purpose of progress. It is a place where movements build over generations, where traditions evolve, and where new ideas take root and grow to become the way of the future.
- Classic* - The Arroyo Seco Byway is timeless, but never contrived. Here, history is captured and celebrated. It is where traditional styles and crafts are preserved. This is where they continue to evolve. And where visitors can come to see the city across eras and as it moves into the future. The Arroyo Seco Byway is a modern classic.

Tagline (memorable brand expression): **Discovery Runs Deep**

LOGO CREATIVE

Font family used for logo and recommended for use in documents and/or headlines: NEUTRA TEXT.
It is modern and easy to read yet distinctive. If used as a headline font, it can also be used in combination with almost any standard serif body text font.

"Flag" logo: Shape is basic rectangle, can be varied according to art (photos can replace the bridge art)



"Badge" logo: Simplified bridge/arroyo art based on Louis Quirarte's established illustration.



"Cloud/Mountain" logo: Primarily a text logo w/ streamlined references to nature. Easily read, colors can vary depending on useage.



Marketing Plan Summary

The marketing plan aims to identify programs that will attract visitors to the Arroyo Seco Byway and help create a connected experience throughout the sites in the area. All marketing efforts will strive to achieve the following:

- Increase awareness of and attract visitors to the Arroyo Seco Byway
- Connect visitors to other sites in the area while they are here
- Encourage return visits and further exploration
- Establish the Arroyo Seco Byway as a destination

The potential list of marketing activities has been narrowed to make achievement more realistic. Full descriptions of these suggested programs, as well as the expanded list of marketing ideas appears in the full plan.

Immediate Marketing Programs – Unifying the Experience for Current and Setting the Stage for New Visitors [One to Two Years]

Attract Visitors	Engage Visitors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create website • Hire Byway curator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make easily accessible maps of the region • Establish unifying insignia • Identify micro Arroyo Seco Byway Visitor Centers • Train sites for a broader perspective

Medium-Term Marketing Programs –Attracting New Local Visitors [Two to Five Years]

Attract Visitors	Engage Visitors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertise the Arroyo Seco Byway • Create unique experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement social media strategy • Merchandise the Arroyo Seco Byway • Develop signage

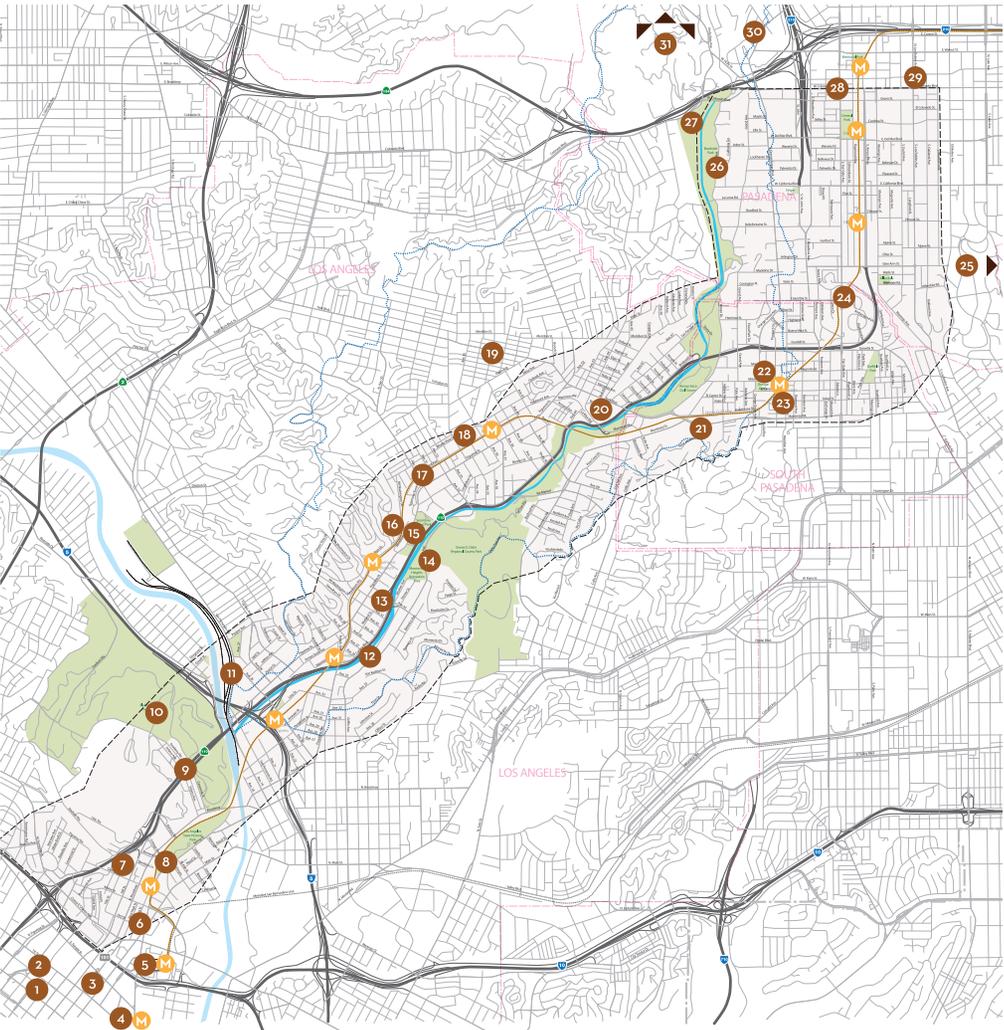
Long-Term Marketing Programs – Creating a Tourist Destination [Five Years+]

Attract Visitors	Engage Visitors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with local tour providers and tourist programs • Develop feature tours • Web-based advertising campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure as marketing • Create integrated programs



SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING GUIDELINES

Arroyo Seco Corridor Interpretive Sites



- 1 Grand Avenue Museums and Sites
- 2 Disney Concert Hall
- 3 Los Angeles City Hall
- 4 Japanese American National Museum / Little Tokyo
- 5 Union Station
- 6 Phillippe's
- 7 Chinatown
- 8 Los Angeles State Historic Park
- 9 Arroyo Seco Parkway
- 10 Elysian Park
- 11 Los Angeles River Center and Gardens
- 12 Heritage Square
- 13 Lummis Home
- 14 Audubon Center at Debs Park
- 15 Sycamore Grove Park
- 16 Southwest Museum of the American Indian
- 17 Avenue 50 Studio
- 18 Highland Park
- 19 Galco's Soda Pop Stop
- 20 Judson Studios
- 21 Arroyo Seco Accomodations
- 22 South Pasadena
- 23 South Pas. Historical Museum (Meridian Iron Works)
- 24 The Raymond Restaurant
- 25 Huntington Library, Art Collections & Botanical Gardens
- 26 Arroyo Craftsman Neighborhood
- 27 Lower Arroyo Park
- 28 Old Pasadena
- 29 Pacific Asia Museum
- 30 The Gamble House
- 31 Angeles National Forest

Arroyo Seco Corridor Interpretive Grant Signage and Wayfinding Guidelines

These guidelines have been developed to form the basis for the design, programming and implementation of a cohesive signage and wayfinding system linking four major transportation modes (the Arroyo Seco Parkway– formerly Pasadena Freeway, local streets, Metro’s Gold Line, a network of bicycle routes and pedestrian rights-of-way) with business districts and interpretive sites within the Arroyo Seco Corridor. This effort is part of the “Interpreting the Arroyo Seco” grant to develop a comprehensive Interpretive & Marketing Plan for the Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway (ASPNSB). This work is also supportive to the FHWA’s required Corridor Management Plan being finalized concurrently.

The overall purpose of these wayfinding guidelines dovetails with the larger goal of the strategic plan, which in essence is a reimagining of the Arroyo Seco Corridor– bringing back to life visions for the area that have been lost or covered over by a lack of cohesive planning and decades of neglect; revitalizing business districts that once thrived, enhancing the visitor experience and bringing a better quality of life to its residents.

A key element to the rebirth of the Arroyo Seco is the restoration of its waterway– in fact, none of the human activities in the Corridor, from the indigenous lifestyle of its earliest inhabitants, the Tongva (Gabrieliño) Indians, to the wide-ranging activities of today’s diverse urban population, would have occurred here had the watershed and environment of the Arroyo Seco not been such a significant resource. Bearing this in mind, every recommendation, no matter how seemingly insignificant, must be weighed against the need for sustainability, and the notion of sustainability must become part of every conversation about the future of this precious resource.

Lastly, for these guidelines to remain relevant, it will be important to update them as projects within the Corridor become implemented. The urban landscape is fluid and changing, and wayfinding must be responsive to those changes in order to be effective.



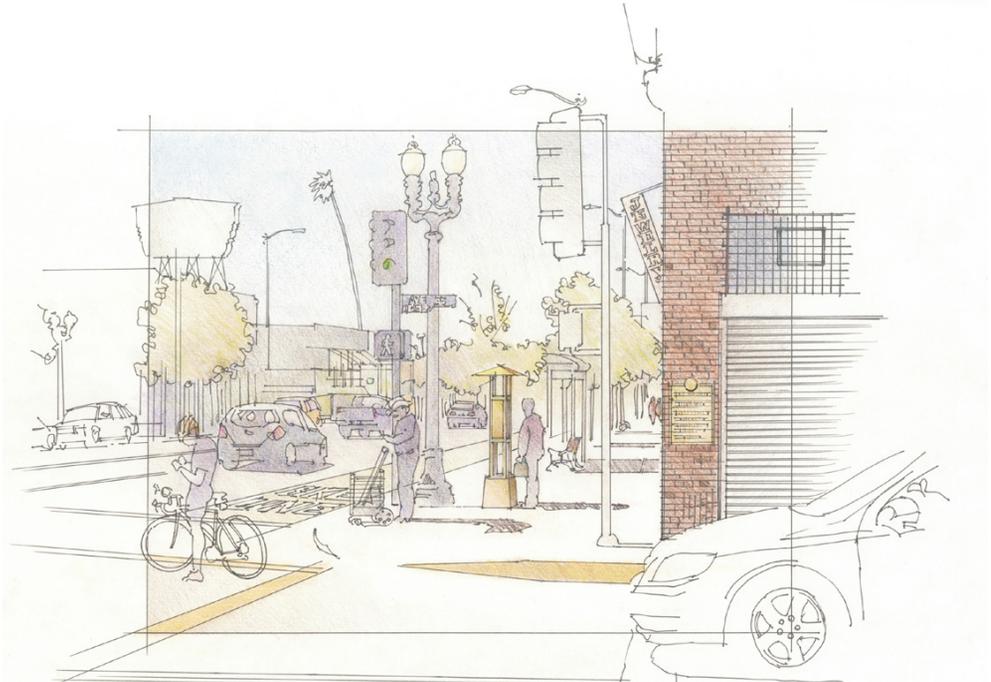
A family of colors that is harmonious with its surroundings yet distinctive enough to be visually engaging is essential to the success of any wayfinding system. The rich Arts & Crafts history of the Arroyo Seco can provide much inspiration in this regard.

Pedestrian Rights-of-Way

Considering the visitor on foot in an environment dominated for decades by the automobile creates challenges and opportunities. Fortunately the historic character of the Arroyo Seco Corridor, as evidenced by its natural landscape and the unique and diverse cultural heritage of its people, has the potential to transcend the damage done by over-reliance on this one mode of transportation. The fact that there is an almost continuous string of parks (a legacy of the Arroyo's original conception by Charles Lummis and others as an urban parkland/nature preserve), some well-known (Elysian Park, for example) and others seemingly underutilized and often only glimpsed by passers-by on the Parkway (such as Hermon Park or the small Arroyo Seco park at Avenue 60), signifies a major opportunity for enrichment of the pedestrian experience. Also, one of the historic Route 66 business districts, Figueroa Street in Highland Park, could see real economic benefit from better walkability of its environs (see rendering); this would help existing businesses thrive, with the synergistic effect of attracting new businesses to the area. In addition the accessibility of Metro's Gold Line provides an ideal link between the many diverse experiences and historic/cultural sites up and down the Arroyo. With all of these factors in its favor, there is every reason to believe that a more pedestrian-friendly environment will bring not only more enjoyment for visitors to the Arroyo Seco (and thus more visitors), but also lasting benefits for its residents.

A pedestrian-oriented wayfinding system provides an opportunity to forge a physical connection with the visitor— a map constructed of pleasingly tactile materials invites one to touch, reinforcing the sense that “you are here.” Since the Arroyo Seco Corridor has become fragmented historically by the Parkway, the interaction with the elements of a wayfinding system, its materials and aesthetics can help to weave together these fragments, enriching the visitor's sense of place, as long as care is taken in the selection, design and placement of these elements.

Over the past 50 years most urban wayfinding has been designed for vehicular traffic, and most maps of cities focus on drivers, not walkers. Street signs are



Sketch of Figueroa Street at Avenue 56 in Highland Park, showing an example of a pedestrian information stanchion on sidewalk and an historic marker on building

usually placed too high and are infrequently spaced; much existing signage is poorly designed and located. To properly address the pedestrian, we must first ask what is most needed. As pedestrians we need to be able to find our way with ease and confidence, to know the preferred walking routes to destinations, to know where it's safe to cross roadways, and to understand public transportation options and how to access them. We must also address the questions most pedestrians ask, such as “Where am I now?” and “How do I get where I want to go?” or “How far is it?” and “What else is in the area?”

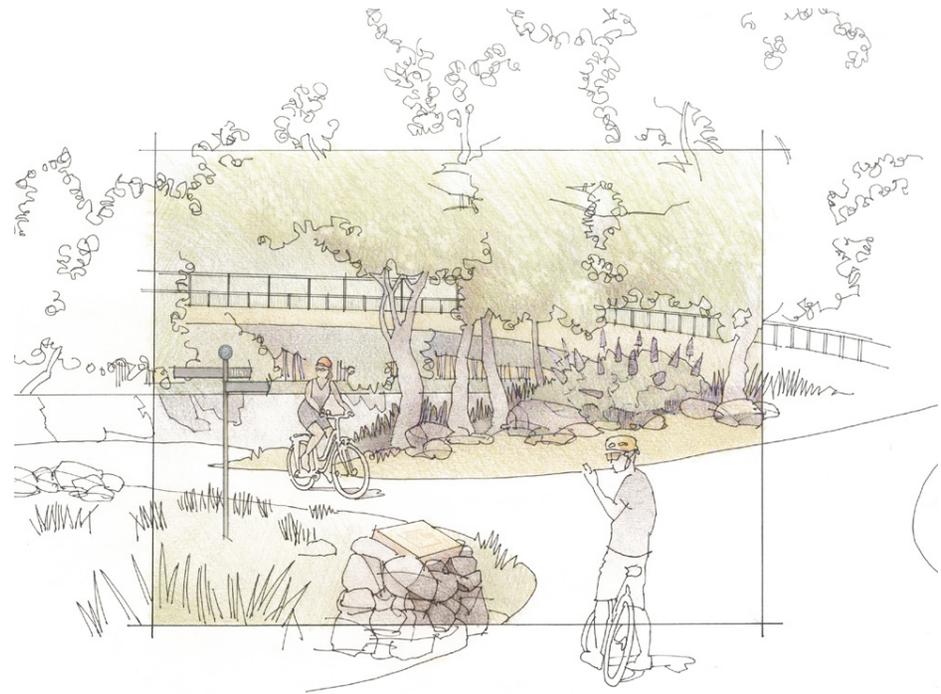
Informative maps and easy to read directional signs should be installed at reasonable walking intervals/decision points. Walking times should be provided on maps and, where possible, also on directional signs. Pedestrian-oriented maps should show all of the important destinations within walking distance.

Bike Route Signage and Wayfinding

One of the problems of wayfinding for cyclists, different from that for motorists, is that even though bicycles are allowed on most streets, special bike routes, lanes and paths are the exception rather than the rule, and cyclists who prefer to ride only where such amenities exist need a clear understanding of the route through a given area. This is not a complex objective when such a route is a simple one that might not deviate from a particular roadway for miles at a time, however:

A. Because the bike routes through the Arroyo are not always so straightforward, maps— not typically part of bike route signage systems, will be very useful in preparing the rider for what’s to come along the route. We recommend the judicious implementation of such maps, the execution of which could be handled differently as fits each condition. For example, maps along a bike path could be housed in a more substantial structure, one which may also contain appropriate interpretive information (see rendering). Along the Arroyo Seco Bikepath, interpretive guides to wildlife, restoration efforts, or historical facts could be grouped with more pragmatic information about the route; maps for bike routes or lanes in more urban environments, for instance along Figueroa Street, could be more straightforward and even be affixed to the standards that support the typical periodic “bike lane” signs. QR codes located on these maps, as well as specialized apps, could provide further information for cyclists with mobile devices.

B. In addition to bike lane signs and in-street painted markers (which will be standard with any jurisdictional approach to implementation), directional signage adjacent to roadways with bike routes will be important to incorporate at major decision points, and messaging for such signs should be considered carefully to guide cyclists to and from the most logical destinations. Where appropriate, distances should be included on signs, as well as special rider considerations (steep grades, heavy traffic, etc.). Such signage should be placed at vertical heights most appropriate and visible to cyclists, and maps located at controlled intersections where cyclists would normally stop. We suggest locat-



Sketch of bike path, east side of channel at Sycamore Grove Park pedestrian bridge, with landscaping and signage designed to harmonize with the Arroyo’s riparian environment

ing such maps at junctures between different bikeway networks, i.e, where the LA City Bike Plan’s “Backbone” and “Neighborhood” networks overlap.

C. Bike routes could also be shown on pedestrian maps of local areas, of the type discussed earlier under the Metro Gold Line section— this would help inform visitors of the extent of the bike route system, with the aim of encouraging greater bicycle use.

D. Any bike-sharing program, such as the one through Bike Nation currently proposed by the City of Los Angeles, should be considered in the planning of a wayfinding system for cycling: bike route maps at bike sharing kiosks should be coordinated with the latest bike route information, and sharing station locations should be shown on all maps within the system. The availability of mobile apps for updated sharing station information will be important so that cyclists can prepare during busy periods.



INVENTORY OF INTERPRETIVE ASSETS

The Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway includes a diverse collection of museums, historic districts, restaurants, retail businesses, transportation hubs, accommodations and other attractions. An inventory of potential interpretive assets was completed by a consultant team to provide a better understanding of potential interpretive themes for the byway. The goal was to identify between 25-30 priority interpretive assets from an initial list of 45 sites identified by local stakeholders. The final inventory includes 37 potential interpretive sites in four zones along the 9.4 mile long byway corridor: Downtown, Highland Park, South Pasadena and Pasadena.

The inventory includes information about the significance of each site as well as a description of the visitor experience for both individual and group travelers. Information regarding the visitor readiness of each site and potential partners helped to inform the development of interpretive and marketing recommendations for the byway. In addition to the narrative sections of the inventory, a database of interpretive sites was developed and included as an appendix to the asset inventory. This database serves as a reference tool for the byway, identifying the site address, website, hours of operation, admission fees, ease of access by car, access by Gold Line and access by bicycle, availability of visitor services, online marketing and other marketing.

A key goal in developing the inventory of interpretive assets was to identify common themes that could help to link sites into a cohesive visitor experience. This is especially challenging when considering partnership strategies for sites in different parts of the byway because each of the zones offers a distinctly different kind of experience, and also because the zones encompass three different municipalities (Los Angeles, South Pasadena and Pasadena).

The Arroyo Seco Parkway offers an experience that differs from most other National Scenic Byways. In addition to being an urban byway, the Arroyo Seco Parkway was designed as a new way to travel quickly and efficiently between Los Angeles and Pasadena in the 1940s. Due to dramatic increases in the amount of traffic as well as the average speed on the Arroyo Seco, one goal for the byway has been to offer alternative ways to experience the region, either using alternate roadways (such as parallel alignments of Route 66, public transportation or other alternate modes of transportation). The Gold Line was seen as having great potential to help link sites within the byway, with a number of key interpretive sites being easily accessed via Gold Line stops.



MARKET RESEARCH

The market research provides rich data about current Byway visitors and the potential to attract new visitors. It also articulates a strategy and springboard for future marketing, and a baseline against which future Byway visitor assessments can be compared.

Much of the data resulting from the research made intuitive sense. For example, visitor surveys at multiple sites confirmed that most visitors to the Byway’s sites come from Southern California, and Greater Los Angeles specifically. While some visitors were national or international, the primary and most accessible audience is nearby. Overall, 77% of visitors to the surveyed sites live in Greater Los Angeles. Of those coming from areas outside Greater Los Angeles, about 11% were visiting for the day and 11% stayed overnight for pleasure. The map below illustrates place of residence for all US-based survey respondents. (Two percent of survey respondents live outside the US.)

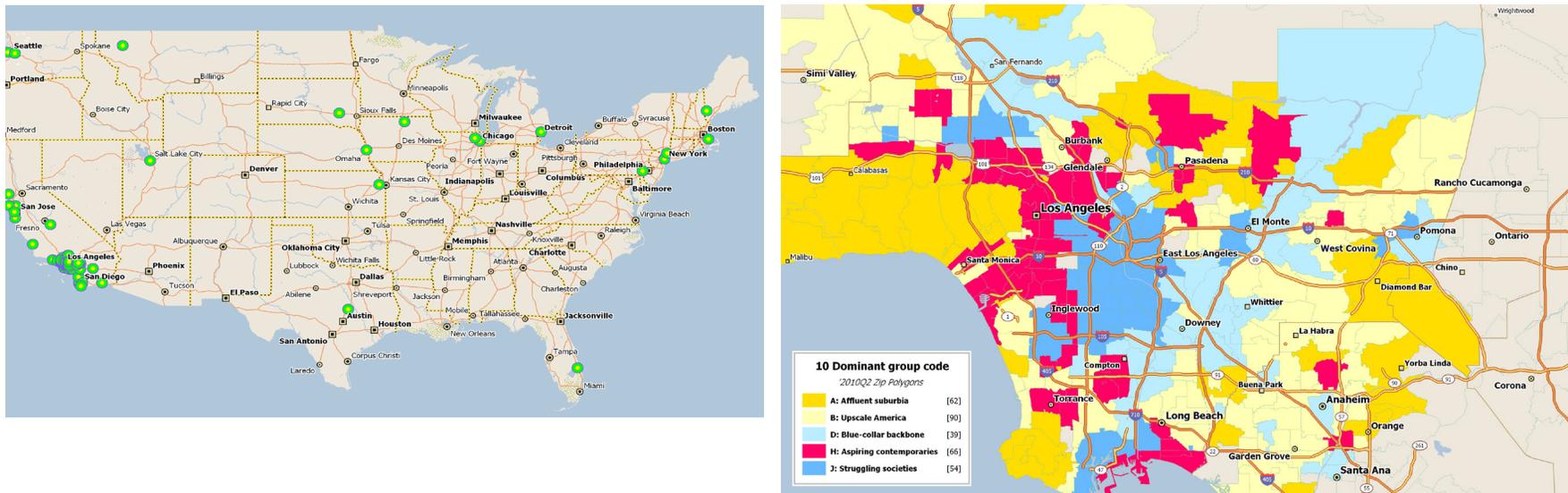
Follow-up interviews showed different types of people seek out different types of experiences. Interviews underscored the survey finding that most Arroyo visitors seek experiences “off-the-beaten-path”. However, the Byway’s sites are different enough from each other that their visitor markets vary from site to site. The challenge is to create a Byway experience cohesive enough to appeal to an audience that can be quantified and targeted.

We used the Mosaic™ lifestyle segmentation system to cluster visitors in ways that can make future marketing efforts effective. Several Mosaic segments rose to the top, but the “Aspiring Contemporaries” segment has the greatest potential to capture regional audiences for a large cross-section of ASNSB sites.

Mosaic segments	Households in 10-mile radius	Households in 30-mile radius
Aspiring Contemporaries	238,284	726,595
<i>“Piggyback” groups</i>		
Affluent Suburbia	79,707	500,425
Upscale America	100,343	760,739
Blue-Collar Backbone	116,233	473,642
Struggling Societies	297,554	546,096

Aspiring Contemporaries are younger, leading edge consumers, and we found this Mosaic segment to be prevalent across all ASNSB sites. Other research on Mosaic segmentation has shown that older, culturally included folks (e.g., in the affluent, suburban groups) tend to glance to Aspiring Contemporaries and follow their lead to “catch up” with what’s hot and new. Less affluent, less educated, and more economically challenged householders also look to Aspiring Contemporaries as their next rung on the social economic ladder, aspiring to be like them. Using Aspiring Contemporaries as an “anchor” for a local and regional marketing strategy (including targeted messaging, media placement, and positioning of the Byway corridor experience) will “bring along” other Mosaic segments.

The map below illustrates where each of the five most likely household types are dominant in Los Angeles area zip codes.



In addition to the Mosaic segmentation, interviews illuminated several characteristics shared by many visitors across the sites where they were surveyed:

- Most people are not familiar with the Byway designation and many are not familiar with the “Arroyo Seco Parkway” name.
- Byway visitors like to have many kinds of experiences, even in a single day.
- Many visitors are technologically and media-savvy, and many use smartphones and smartphone apps to discover places nearby.
- Many could be described as “cultural locavores.” They use social media (such as Facebook, Yelp, TripAdvisor, and others) to seek out places they want to visit, and they are influenced by peer groups in learning about what’s new and interesting.
- When asked about visiting other Byway locations, interviewees commented on how difficult it was to find information about the sites because there is no centralized source of information for the area.

Conclusions

Our research boils down to two principal findings which serve as a foundation for our conclusions and strategies:

1. Most current ASNSB visitors live nearby—and there are a lot of *potential* visitors who also live nearby.
2. Most current (and potential) ASNSB visitors like less-discovered, “off-the-beaten-path” experiences.

The first finding—that most current ASNSB visitors live nearby—narrows and focuses the target market. “Nearby” is defined broadly as Greater Los Angeles: an area that extends north to Palmdale, south to Irvine, and east to San Bernadino. However, the greatest concentration of visitors across Byway sites lives within five to ten miles of any of the Byway’s attractions.

The second key finding—that Byway visitors like “off-the-beaten-path” places and experiences—reframes how those who operate or market Byway attractions should view their mission from their audience’s perspective. In essence, even though some of the Byway sites are well-known to those partners involved in the ASNSB initiative, the sites are viewed by visitors as undiscovered places—the kinds of places that a “typical” tourist (or even a typical Angeleno) would not know about. This audience *likes* knowing about places that others might not know or visit.

Strategy: Market the Arroyo Seco Byway experience to visitors in Greater Los Angeles whose preferences align with the Aspiring Contemporaries Mosaic segment and, in doing so, also draw in their “piggyback” Mosaic segments.

- *The strategy is inclusive and specific.* Everyone is welcome to visit any of the Byway’s attractions and no one is excluded. But Aspiring Contemporaries (along with other market segments who aspire to be like them and follow their lead) represent a group that should be *deliberately* courted because their preferences and interests, as a group, align closely with the Byway experience as a whole.
- *Partner sites do not need to change their focus.* Some individual sites may already have a target audience and strategy which they are pursuing. The Byway market strategy can coexist with the sites’ individual strategies. The Byway strategy can be described as an “overlay strategy” for marketing the full Byway experience.
- *Focus on attracting people and connecting sites.* Marketing the Byway to Aspiring Contemporaries involves looking for geographic pockets where this audience lives, and then attracting them and exposing them to multiple sites.

The best outcome of this research will result if the Byway’s sites and partners come together, under an umbrella entity, for the purpose of telling a larger story and connecting multiple and diverse sites. Focusing on a discreet audience and a strategy creates a framework for that goal to be realized.