St. Joseph Charette

Planning, Design, and Interpretive Concepts

November 9, 2018
Charette Agenda

Monday, November 5, 2018 - Field Day

• St. Joseph field work and site visit by NPS Team

Tuesday, November 6, 2018 – Charette Stakeholder Workshop

Wednesday-Thursday, November 7-8, 2018 – Team Work Days

Friday, November 9, 2018 – Public Presentation

• Presentation of concepts, drawings, and interpretive themes by NPS
EXISTING CONDITIONS

Historic RR Depot Location

8th Street
EXISTING CONDITIONS

Downtown

Francis Street
EXISTING CONDITIONS

Riverfront Park

St. Joseph
National Trails
Intermountain Region
Public Meeting and Stakeholder Design Charette
Goals

• Create a unique California and Pony Express experience that will attract new visitors and engage St. Joseph residents.

• Raise awareness of and relevance for St. Joseph’s role in history.

• Develop the national historic trail experience in the St. Joseph area to be inviting, safe, and accessible to a diverse audience of people.

• Connect national historic trail sites in the project area together in an understandable and meaningful way.
Preferred park elements

Charette participants identified preferred elements through a group exercise and voting on a variety of example images.
Preferred park elements

Results from the group breakout discussions and ranking exercises

Trail Programmatic Elements
• Guided options
• Self-guided options for anytime
• Restored or preserved structures
• Engages the visitor in the history and story of the area
• Options for walking and/or biking
• Trail is recognizable and visually special
• Safe for visitors

Site Programmatic Elements
• Create connections to other existing and proposed future trails/sites
• Green space
• Connection to the river
• Restrooms
• Signing and wayfinding
• A special one-of-a-kind attraction to draw visitors
• Clean

Historic Trail Elements
• Sculptures
• Clearly marked trail
• Pony Express and/or California Trail retracement experience
• Physical map of the trail
• Wayside exhibits
• Lots of visual elements
• Interactive learning tools for kids
St. Joseph Design Concept
Pony Express
National Historic Trail
St. Joseph

National Trails
Intermountain Region

PONY EXPRESS NHT RETRACEMENT TRAIL

Riverfront Park: NODE

New overhead signage

“Breadcrumb” - Conceptual location

Felix Street Square: NODE

Rider Statue: NODE

“Breadcrumb” - Conceptual location

Ground plane NHT logo - Conceptual location

Former site of Hannibal and St Joseph RR Station: NODE

Patee House: NODE

Pony Express Museum & Stables: NODE
Pony Express NHT Retracement Trail
Phase 1 trail marking options
Pony Express NHT Retracement Trail
Phase 2 trail marking options
Pony Express NHT Retracement Trail
“Breadcrumb” trail elements
Pony Express NHT Retracement Trail
Former site of Hannibal and St. Joseph railroad depot
Pony Express NHT Retracement Trail
Approach to Riverfront Park
St. Joseph Design Concept
Riverfront Park
Concept Features

1. Pedestrian bridge over railroad
2. Clearly marked park signage
3. Smaller well defined parking lot
4. Bike trail continuation
5. National historic trail sculptures
6. River overlook and interpretive area
7. Natural seating area
8. Green flex space – for future programming
Entrance Area Features

1. Orientation to downtown national historic trail experience
2. Safe pedestrian crossing across railroad tracks
3. Walking/biking trail connection to downtown
4. Park entrance sign location
5. Riverfront trail – Brick surface within park
Riverfront Detail: Proposed Signage

St. Joseph Riverfront Park

Lewis and Clark, California, and Pony Express National Historic Trails
Riverfront Detail: National Historic Trail Experience

1. Main trail system through park
2. National historic trail sculptures
3. River overlook with lighting, interpretive exhibits, and ground plain trails map
4. Natural seating area
Riverfront Detail: National Historic Trail Experience

3-D sculptures

Steamboat Ferry

Natural features

Limestone cobble stones

River Trail with lighting
St. Joseph

Conceptual perspective: Riverfront Park

“National historic trail sculptures”

- Sculptures depict Pony Express rider, California Trail travelers, livestock, and ferry boat supplies
- Sculpture area paved with limestone cobble stones
- Secondary trail leads to a river overlook with seating, interpretation, ground plain trail map, and unique light features
- Natural seating area/amphitheater looks onto the river
- Area replanted with grass and native trees
St. Joseph Design Concept

California

National Historic Trail
St. Joseph

National Trails
Intermountain Region

CALIFORNIA NHT EXPERIENCE
St. Joseph Charette

Interpretive Concepts
INTERPRETATION

Defining Interpretation

- Interpretation is an activity that facilitates an intellectual and emotional connection between the interests of the visitor and the meanings of the resource.
INTERPRETATION
Choosing Interpretive Media

• Message

• Audience

• Resources

*Remember:* Visitors are choosing to spend their leisure time at your site.
INTERPRETATION

Successful Interpretive Media

• Text, graphics, design, and other elements work together to create opportunities for the audience to make connections

• A process model is used to identify tangibles, intangibles, and universal concepts to create a meaningful, possibly life-changing, experience

• California and Pony Express NHTs tangibles - river, town plat, buildings, illustrations, oral history, documentation, routes
INTERPRETATION

St. Joseph Interpretation Points

- Exhibits (multiple areas)
  - Orientation: Riverfront entry from parking lot
  - Orientation: Riverfront pedestrian bridge heading to park and downtown (double-sided)
  - Interpretation: Wyeth Park
  - Interpretation: Fort Smith
  - Interpretation: Riverfront
INTERPRETATION
St. Joseph Interpretation Points

• Interactives
  • St. Joseph town, bluffs, river tactile element

• Education
  • Scavenger hunt or junior ranger
Riverfront Detail: National Historic Trail Experience

National Historic Trail Features
1. Main trail system through park
2. National historic trail sculptures
3. River overlook with lighting, interpretive exhibits, and ground plain trails map
4. Natural seating area
INTERPRETATION
St. Joseph Interpretation Points

• Exhibit style – one shape, two trails, three areas
  • Pony Express silhouettes
  • Sculpture area
  • Historic buildings
INTERPRETATION
St. Joseph Interpretation Points

• In the ground
  • Medallion logos
  • Exhibits
INTERPRETATION
St. Joseph Interpretation Points

- Digital media (multiple types)
  - Website
  - Mobile app
  - Virtual or augmented reality
- Rack card
  - Market the trails experience
- No on-site paper publication
INTERPRETATION

Trail-wide Themes

- Impact on American Indians
- National Heritage
- Past, Present, and Future Corridors
- Strength and Survival
- Intercultural Contact
- Nature’s Influence
- Superhighways
- Suffering and Hardship
- Natural Roads
INTERPRETATION

California Sub Themes

- Emigrant Diversity
- Economic Hopes
- National & International Influence
- Transient Young Men
INTERPRETATION

Pony Express Sub Themes

• Transcontinental Speed
• Complex System
• Land and Water
• Short Run, Vital Role
• Confrontation
• Men and Mythology
INTERPRETATION

Goal

Using the St. Joseph waterfront park, downtown, and retracement path to connect visitors with the Pony Express and California Trails heritage of St. Joseph, and its role in shaping the history of the American West.
INTERPRETATION

Objectives

• Attract new visitors and engage St. Joseph’s residents
• Reveal layers of trail history in an urban site
• Raise awareness of and relevance for St. Joseph’s role in American history
• Describe outfitting pioneers, emigrants, and adventurers
• Identify relevant historic locations in town
• Recognize diversity - Indians, Platte Purchase
• Develop untold stories
• Connect to additional trails or historic routes
INTERPRETATION

Objectives

- River and ferry landing looking towards the unknown West
- River as boundary
- Geography and location choice allowed
- Incorporate physical activity
- Utilize existing infrastructure
- Advances and solutions for transportation and communications
- Dangers of travel, including cholera
INTERPRETATION

Major Points

1. Two trails of national significance jumped off at St. Joseph, a place where the river and surrounding geography formed a westernmost route to western expansion.

2. The California and Pony Express trails prompted the development of the river crossings as well as the development of the town of St. Joseph.

3. Today the river still flows but the shape of the river has changed greatly due to navigation.
INTERPRETATION

Major Points

4. The American Indian experience here portrays the variety of experiences they faced during US westward expansion.

5. Downtown St. Joseph seems quiet today, but it was an active scene during the trail era with hundreds of wagons and thousands of animals preparing to cross the river.

6. The trail offers both recreation and heritage activities for local and destination visitors.
INTERPRETATION

Theme for California NHT experience in St. Joseph

St. Joseph was a transportation and cultural crossroads, where a major trail met a big river and emigrants’ needs fed entrepreneurial enterprise.
INTERPRETATION

Theme 1

The Missouri River was both a connector and a divider, linking St. Joseph to other river towns and cultures while separating Indian Territory from white settlements, open prairie from farmlands, freedom from enslavement, and unlimited possibilities from restricted realities.
California National Historic Trail
Downtown St. Joseph Tour

MISSOURI VALLEY TRUST COMPANY
1859
The savings bank opened in 1857 to...

California National Historic Trail
Women and the Trail

Mary Alicia Owens always called St. Joseph home although research carried her across the globe. Born on January 29, 1860, the noted folklorist was inspired by stories she heard as a child growing up through the trials of people from many different cultures

California National Historic Trail
Outfitting Challenge

Think you’re ready to hit the trail? Follow the clues to outfit your crew. Think competition is a new thing? Who will get out of St. Joe first?
In the early 19th century, the Ioway, Sac, and Fox Indians who controlled Missouri River traffic through this area freely engaged with explorers and fur traders, foremost among them Joseph Robidoux and his busy Blacksnake Hills trading post.
INTERPRETATION

Theme 3

The St. Joe Road, an 1844 Oregon Trail cutoff across northeastern Kansas, transformed tiny St. Joseph from a struggling frontier settlement into a bustling river port, outfitting town, and trailhead for the overland emigrations.
St. Joseph developed into a busy transportation hub, with its Missouri River “highway” bringing Indian canoes, explorers’ keelboats, fur trade pirogues, simple ferries, and steamboats filled with passengers, freight, and sometimes deadly contagions, while feeder trails and railroad funneled in emigrants, livestock, entrepreneurs, and mail.
INTERPRETATION

Theme 5

While hundreds of thousands of Americans traveled the California Trail to escape economic adversity or get rich quick in the gold rush, entrepreneurs in St. Joseph took advantage of the opportunity to outfit travelers going westward.
INTERPRETATION

Theme for Pony Express NHT experience in St. Joseph

St. Joseph was the headquarters and eastern terminus of a complex mail relay system that relied on rail, ferry, horse, and rider to meet a critical national need.
Pony Express riders were not necessarily orphans, but they all were tough, “willing to risk death daily,” and deserving of lasting recognition for their contributions to a difficult, risky American enterprise that linked East and West during a difficult time in the nation’s history.
INTERPRETATION

Theme 2

With sectional differences between North and South pushing the nation toward Civil War and both sides desperate to secure California for its own cause, the federal government needed a reliable, speedy, year-round mail system to carry communications across the continent – and the Pony Express presented a short-term solution to a big problem.
INTERPRETATION

Theme 3

The Pony Express mail relay was a complex system of closely coordinated, fast-moving parts that moved “light mail” in two directions simultaneously across thousands of miles of plains and peaks.
INTERPRETATION

Theme 4

In 1860 the Hannibal & St. Joseph was the only railroad in the US that reached the Missouri River, which meant that mail could efficiently be transported from the East to this westernmost terminal and then continue west by Pony Express.
Rails and Mails

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St. Joseph’s mayor defiantly tore down the US flag from the roof of the Post Office shortly after the start of the Civil War in 1861, triggering a sequence of back-and-forth raids that ultimately disrupted the Hannibal & St. Joseph Railroad and forced the Pony Express to shift operations to Atchison, Kansas.
St. Joseph Charette
Planning, design, and interpretive concept document

Next Steps

1. Concept refinement/revisions
2. Draft document for review
3. Finalize document and distribute
THE END!
Questions?