

A Framework for Wayshowing:

The Lariat Loop

Jefferson County
Colorado



June 2013

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Executive Summary

Wayshowing is a collection of maps, signs and electronic media that have been developed to aid travelers in their journey. A system of such information is critical to help travelers successfully choose a destination and plan their itinerary as well as to help them navigate once they arrive. As such, efforts to enhance a regional tourism economy must consider the strengths and deficiencies of existing wayshowing elements located along the full length of a byway corridor. The plan that follows assesses the current elements of the wayshowing system that exists throughout the Lariat Loop National Scenic Byway, designated as one of 11 National Scenic Byways in Colorado and 150 across the nation.

Utilizing a “front-seat back-seat” approach, travelers unfamiliar with the area took to the road with a list of significant historical, cultural and recreational sites to locate. Neophytes in the front seat searched for signs, used digital devices, studied maps and ask for directions. Meanwhile, transportation and tourism specialists in the back seat recorded the navigational challenges of those “new to the byway” travelers in the front. Two teams of four set out to assess the wayfinding system; one team was in search of historical and cultural attractions, the other looked for recreational sites.

An analysis of this formal assessment exercise combined with the input of local officials, transportation, and tourism specialists resulted in recommendations that can improve the ease of navigation for visitors and better capitalize on the potential for increasing travel-related revenues for the communities along the byway.

Recommendations include:

- A. Capitalize on the excellent connectivity for cell phones, Internet and GPS. Focus direction of new traveler aids on electronic applications including mobile apps and e-books. The byway should continue to develop traditional print materials and resources to support different methods of wayfinding. Consider a tear-off map (improve brochure) for the byway as an inexpensive wayfinding tool.
- B. Conduct a signage inventory to determine if additional byway signs are needed for traveler reassurance on the byway route. Prioritize placement of navigational signs (Columbine/Lariat Loop logo signs) to focus on getting travelers from I-70 and US 6 to the byway.
- C. Continue to work with the City and County of Denver to develop a safe and information rich pull off at the Buffalo Herd Overlook along I-70. This is clearly a major attraction for travelers. Also consider developing Beverly Heights Park as a major orientation site to the byway on the north end with appropriate navigational and expanded interpretive signage.
- D. Cross check attraction names between Google Maps, printed maps, and brochures to ensure consistency. Nomenclature discrepancies created considerable confusion for travelers, i.e. Clear Creek History Park vs. History Center; Evergreen Interpretive Wall/Mural/Interpretive kiosk; Beverly Heights Park vs. Pillars Park.
- E. Inventory and determine if additional Share the Road signs are needed along the byway. Signage should alert drivers to segments that are heavily used by bicyclists and motorcyclists.

The Lariat Loop is incredibly important to Colorado tourism, hosting travelers with widely divergent interests. Domestic and international travelers who come to Denver on business or for sporting events shift their schedules to fit in a half day or full day excursion to the mountains, bicyclists in the thousands head to the foothills to gain some altitude training, motorcyclists to take tight turns, and families from throughout the Denver metro area to use Denver Mountain Parks for family picnics and get-aways.



Pillars near Beverly Heights Park

Strengthening the existing wayshowing system can result in greater safety for cars, bicyclists, and motorcyclists alike. Enhancements to the excellent existing interpretive signage will deepen the understanding for visitors of historic and recreational assets. Finally, enhanced information will serve to connect travelers with local communities, thus giving local businesses a better chance to sell their goods and services to travelers.

Introduction

The deployment of an effective system of wayshowing is an essential component of successful regional tourism strategies. Wayfinding and wayshowing are related but distinct concepts. **Wayfinding** is the mental process performed by travelers in identifying and locating their travel destinations. **Wayshowing**, on the other hand, is the communication in the form of maps, signs, and other media intended to aid the traveler in their wayfinding.

The purpose of this document is to provide a preliminary plan for an enhanced wayshowing system along the Lariat Loop in Jefferson County. In achieving this purpose, the plan aims to:

- Provide an outline of key concepts of wayshowing and wayfinding
- Assess the inventory of existing directional signage to key sites along Interstate 70, US Highways 40 and 6, State Highway 74, and Jefferson County Roads like Lookout Mountain, Road, Lariat Trail, and designation signage along the same routes.
- Provide recommendations for enhancing directional signage to key sites.
- Provide an outline for subsequent action.

Keys to Effective Wayshowing

An effective system of wayshowing responds to the needs of travelers at all stages in their journey. At a minimum, effective wayshowing for the traveler must:

- Support how people find their way in unfamiliar travel environments
- Provide a guidance system of reliable and consistent components on the byway
- Respond to the unique characteristics of the byway
- Integrate pre-visit, visit, and post-visit stages of the byway experience
- Contribute to a safe roadway and travel environment
- Become a widely practiced body of knowledge among byway providers

Stages of Wayshowing

Effective wayshowing is essential not only to ensuring good experiences for the visitor, but also in attracting that visitor in the first place. While wayshowing may seem to begin and end with the traveler on the road, it also plays an important role in attracting visitors, assisting in their trip planning, and in enhancing their recollections with others after their trip is complete. Consider the travel experience as five distinct stages:

Choose

The point at which the traveler decides his or her travel destination or destinations. *Wayfinding Needs: What are the travel routes? What is there to see and do and where are these activities located? How much time is required for the trip?*

Prepare

This is the stage in which the prospective traveler plans and prepares for their trip, including making reservations or other advance travel arrangements. *Wayfinding Needs: How will we get there? Where will we stay, eat and stop? How much time should we allot to travel to and on the travel route? Where are the heritage, recreational, and cultural attractions of the area?*

Go/Do

This stage is the event itself as the visitor makes his or her way to or around their destination. *Wayfinding Needs: Where are the entry points to the route? How do we get back on track if we get off the route? Where are the attractions along the route? Where can we get information along the route? Where do we get gas, food, or lodging?*

Recall

This is the stage in which the memories of the trip extend its enjoyment beyond the time spent away from home. With travel completed, visitors typically want pictures, maps, souvenirs or other items to assist their recollection of a memorable trip. *Wayfinding Needs: What will help us recall the good times we had on the trip? Where were the sites we really enjoyed?*

Do Again

It is hoped that with an enjoyable and memorable trip, many visitors will return. *Wayfinding Needs: Where are those good maps from our last trip? We need to show our friends and family what they might like.*

With the assistance of an effective wayshowing system, successful travelers should be able to:

1. Identify origin and destination
2. Determine turn angles
3. Identify segment links and directions of movement
4. Recognize on-route and distant landmarks
5. Mentally embed or visualize the route in a larger reference frame: a cognitive map.

Wayshowing Components

A successful wayshowing system includes multiple components that not only direct the traveler, but provide interpretive information. Wayshowing does not start and stop on the road, but exists to provide the traveler with information to plan their trip and assist in the recollection of it afterwards through maps, websites and other media that can be accessed away from the physical roadway. Essential elements of a wayshowing system include the following:

- Entrances, Exit and Gateway Signage- Identification of where to enter and exit a route or byway so that travelers know their position relative to accessing and leaving a byway or other route.
- Orientation Stops- Pull-offs, turn-outs and other places for motorists to stop and help them create, refresh, and expand their mental maps of a byway or other route, its intrinsic qualities, and overarching interpretive theme with exhibits, maps, and other means of communication.
- Repetitive Route Markers- A sequence of visual cues for motorists to follow along a byway or other route.
- Direction Signage to Planned Destinations- Signs that alert and guide motorists to featured stops and attractions along or near a byway or other route.
- A Portable Map- A carry-on map of a byway corridor or travel region and its various attractions and amenities.

History of Wayfinding Development on the Lariat Loop

The Lariat Loop was designated as a Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway in 2002 and as a National Scenic Byway in 2009. Beginning in Golden, the byway travels 40 miles, connecting Golden, Lookout Mountain, Evergreen, and Morrison and following US 6, Lookout Mountain Road, US 40, I-70, State Highway 74, Jefferson County Road 93, and Heritage Road. This route provides access to Denver Mountain Parks, Jefferson County Open Space, spectacular views of mountains, canyons, and plains and serves as the “Gateway to the Rockies.”

The byway uses the State scenic byway logo (the Columbine sign) as directional signage to mark the route. On a regional scale, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is responsible for signage along state highways throughout the area, including Interstate 70, US Highways 6, 40, and State Highway 74. Jefferson County is responsible for signage along County Road 93 and Lookout Mountain Road.

The Lariat Loop National Scenic Byway received funding from the National Scenic Byways Program, Federal Highway Administration in 2004 to develop a corridor management plan (CMP). The plan was completed in 2006 and included a comprehensive interpretive plan that outlined interpretive signage

needs. The Corridor Management Plan also identified several locations in need of wayfinding improvements. These include Interstate 70 at the Evergreen Parkway and Mt Vernon Canyon exits and US Highway 6 at US 40, Heritage Road Intersection in Golden. The plan noted that these are all key entry points to the byway.

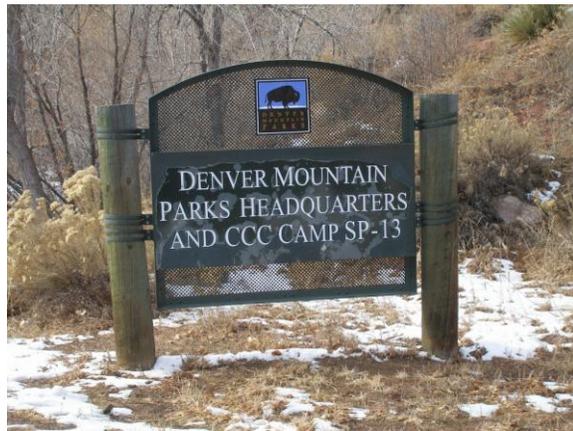
Subsequent grants in 2006, 2007 and 2012 have provided funding for implementation, which is still ongoing. Interpretive signs have been installed in Golden, Morrison and Evergreen and at various locations along the byway including the Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave, funded through grants from the National Scenic Byways Program. An interpretive mural was painted on the side of a restaurant in the town of Morrison. A pullout is proposed for construction at the Genesee Buffalo Herd Overlook along I-70 in partnership with the City and County of Denver.

The Lariat Loop National Scenic Byway also benefits from interpretive signs installed by byway partners at various attractions along the route. There is good signage for the major attractions such as the Boettcher Mansion and Lookout Mountain Nature Center, the Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave, Dinosaur Ridge, Mother Cabrini Shrine and Red Rocks Park & Amphitheatre.

The Colorado Department of Transportation has provided large brown directional signs along the Interstate for some of the byway attractions. The City & County of Denver has installed signage for the Denver Mountain Parks System, including entrance signs for a number of the parks and museums located along the byway.



Interstate Signage



Denver Mountain Parks Signage

Lariat Loop National Scenic Byway Wayfinding Assessment

Often the difficulty in providing effective wayshowing lies in understanding where travelers require assistance and in what form. Additionally, maps, signs, brochures and other media from multiple sources can often provide conflicting information. In January 2013 an on-the-road experiment was conducted along the Lariat Loop to answer some of these questions. Specifically, the experiment sought to:

- Identify gaps in navigational clues for travelers by identifying points of certainty, and points of confusion; and
- Identify points of disconnect between what a traveler sees through the windshield and what they read from maps, brochures, mobile devices, web sites in their laps.

A list of significant historical, cultural, and recreational sites along the byway was developed for use during the Wayfinding Assessment. Many of these sites were identified by several members of the Lariat Loop Byway Committee at a meeting in December 2012. A signage assessment survey of Committee members was also conducted. Representatives were asked to list the top ten heritage, cultural, and/or recreational sites in their respective counties and provide an assessment of the existing directional signage. Approximately eighteen sites were chosen for the Wayfinding Assessment. The attractions and sites chosen for inclusion in this exercise appear in Table 1.

Table 1: Lariat Loop Wayfinding Assessment Route

Team # 1: Heritage Sites	Team #2: Recreation Sites
Clear Creek History Park Miller Coors Visitor Center Colorado Railroad Museum Beverly Heights Park interpretive signs NREL Visitor Center Mother Cabrini Shrine Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave Lookout Mountain Nature Center Boettcher Mansion Buffalo Herd Overlook Humphrey Memorial Park & Museum Hiwan Homestead Museum Historic Downtown Evergreen Mural Red Rocks Trading Post/Welcome Center Red Rocks Park & Amphitheater Visitor Center Dinosaur Ridge Historic Downtown Morrison Kiosk and Mural Morrison Natural History Museum The Fort	Hogback Geological Point of Interest Heritage Square Apex Park Triceratops Trail Clear Creek River Walk Beaver Brook Trail Genesee Mountain Park Bergen Mountain Park Dog Park at Elk Meadow Park Dedisse Mountain Park Evergreen Lake House O’Fallon Park Lair O’Bear Park Bear Creek Trail – Morrison Red Rocks Trail Mathews Winters Park Prairie Dog Colony at Dinosaur Ridge The Fort

Two four member teams were assembled to travel the byway using a “front seat, back seat” approach. In the front seat were neophytes, new to the region with limited knowledge of the area. They were given the list of attractions and sites to locate using highway signage, verbal directions and printed materials such as brochures and maps available at Visitor Centers and other public outlets. The “front seaters” were also allowed to use any mobile devices available to them.

Transportation and tourism specialists occupied the backseat. The “back seaters” recorded the experience of the “front seaters” in detail. “Back seaters” recorded the exact locations where the “front seaters” encountered confusion or uncertainty in navigating the region. They also recorded any disparities between written information in maps, brochures and other media and actual conditions as observed through the windshield.

While the neophytes in the front seat navigated their way through unfamiliar territory, the specialists in the back seat were given the following assignment:

- Observe the actions and discussions of the “front seaters.”
- Record locations where “front seaters” expressed uncertainties and confusion and note apparent reasons.
- Quiz “front seaters” on effectiveness of signs, maps and other driving instructions.
- Note which wayshowing devices “front seaters” are using most often and which they are not.
- Resist giving any travel or driving advice unless an immediate safety issue warrants.
- Conduct post-trip discussion with “front seaters.”

After the conclusion of the wayfinding exercise, participants were asked to record observations and make recommendations based on their on-the-road experience. A full list of the comments and observations by the two teams is found in the Appendix.

Summary of the Key Observations from the two Assessment Teams

Navigational signs Overview

- Columbine Byway signage is inconsistent; ironically there are more signs to redirect back to the Loop than actual signs on the Loop itself
- About half the targeted sites have excellent signage; consideration should be given to modifications to the other half
- Some directional signs to attractions are available to travelers approaching from one direction only (no signs for those coming from the other direction)
- Byway signs on the Interstate are missing in some places
- Lack of pre-notification makes it often too late to safely react when coming upon an attraction
- Too much signage in one place confuses the driver; to create a balance some signs may need to be removed

Site specific navigational observations

- Clear Creek History Park - No sign identifying Park; confusion with Google Map; confusion about History Center vs. History Park
- Miller Coors – confusion about existence of a visitor center; tour parking area is well marked; website is clear about the scope of the tour that is offered
- CO Railroad Museum – need pre-notification sign; no signage between Golden Visitor Center and museum
- Triceratops trailheads were most difficult for parking – some was metered; drivers had to rely on information from hiking books
- On 19th Street, there is no reassurance byway sign once you start the climb up Lariat Trail
- At the Pillars – there is no name of the park and the byway sign is twisted and parallel to the road
- Buffalo Bill Museum – amount of signage is perceived by some neighbors as being a problem between the Interstate and the museum
- Mother Cabrini – road is winding and narrow, no guardrails, no speed limit
- There is a byway sign off I-70 at Evergreen Parkway but there is no sign at the Walmart light by El Rancho and the next byway sign is not until the Squaw Pass Road
- Humphrey Memorial Park & Museum – no navigational signage
- Hiwan Homestead Museum – sign is directly across from the left turn off SH 74; confusing to driver if the site is ½ mile ahead on SH 74 or ½ mile on the side road
- No signs for Evergreen Lake House
- Evergreen – sign clutter at turn into town – no byway sign
- Morrison Natural Historic Museum – good signage in Morrison directing traveler towards museum; needs signage after turn off SH 74 for reassurance; good signage on the building itself
- No sign for Bear Creek trailhead or Red Rocks Trail

Interpretive signs Overview

- The Lariat Loop National Scenic Byway displays excellent interpretive signage throughout
- It is clear that both the Byway organization and its partners such as Denver Mountain Parks, Jefferson County Open Space and individual towns and museums have a shared intent for excellence
- There is an abundance of geological related interpretive signage

Site specific interpretive observations

- Clear Creek Riverwalk – needs both interpretive and navigational information (distance, names)
- Beverly Heights Park is an underutilized site; The Pillars are obvious as a gateway to the Lariat Trail and Byway but interpretive signage in the park cannot be seen from the road
- Mother Cabrini Shrine – navigational signage to the site is good , but there are no directions to the walking path; interpretation doesn't explain the significance of the site
- Hogback Geological Point of Interest – parking lots only, no traveler information
- Historic Downtown Evergreen Mural – historic interpretive wall, not a mural; not on the map, hard to find

Inconsistencies in attraction identification: signs, printed materials such as maps and brochures, and mobile devices

- The byways brochure lacks good narrative information on the attractions and needs to clarify what experiences are available for travelers
- Both teams questioned the functionality of the brochure for navigation; they felt it was more of a marketing piece than a navigational tool
- The map design was questioned by both teams as “too cartoonish” and they also noted that the lack of detail on the map got in the way of using it for navigation
- Good connectivity with cell service and GPS
- Mobile apps worked very well (Places app)
- Good match between young travelers and available material on mobile apps
- NREL and Miller Coors offer tours but do not have visitor centers – travelers should not be directed to sites that are not open to the public
- Downtown Morrison Kiosk and Mural is called Two Creeks Plaza, Historic Town of Morrison on the brochure



Red Rocks Signage



Evergreen Interpretive Wall

Recommendations and Action Plan

An analysis of this formal assessment exercise combined with the input of local officials, transportation, and tourism specialists resulted in recommendations that can improve the ease of navigation for visitors and better capitalize on the potential for increasing travel-related revenues for the communities along the byway.

The document recommends the following:

- A. Capitalize on the excellent connectivity for cell phones, Internet and GPS. Focus direction of new traveler aids on electronic applications including mobile apps and e-books. The byway should continue to develop traditional print materials and resources to support different methods of wayfinding. Consider a tear-off map for the byway as an inexpensive wayfinding tool.
- B. Prioritize navigational signs (Columbine/Lariat Loop logo signs) in order to focus on getting travelers from I-70 and US 6 to the byway. An inventory should be conducted to determine if additional byway signs are needed for traveler reassurance on the byway route.
- C. Continue development of the Buffalo Herd Overlook along I-70, which is clearly a major attraction for travelers. The Byway needs to continue working with the City of Denver to develop a safe and information rich pull off. Also consider developing Beverly Heights Park as a major orientation site to the byway with appropriate navigational and expanded interpretive signage.
- D. Cross check nomenclature as discrepancies created considerable confusion for travelers, i.e. Clear Creek History Park vs. History Center; Evergreen Interpretive Wall/Mural/Interpretive kiosk; Beverly Heights Park vs. Pillars Park. Also cross check attraction names between Google Maps, printed maps, and brochures to ensure consistency.
- E. Install signage to alert drivers to segments of heavy usage by bicyclists and motorcyclists. Inventory and determine if additional "Share the Road" signs are needed along the byway.

Partnerships and Financial Resources

Projects to be developed in partnership with the Colorado Department of Transportation

- Prioritize navigational signs on I-70
- Conduct an inventory of byway signs to determine if any additional signs are needed
- Install "Share the Road" as needed in key segments of the byway where problems may arise
- Add mileage from I-70 and US 6 to key attractions on signs where possible

Projects to be developed in partnership with City and County of Denver

- Continue to work towards development of the Buffalo Herd Overlook

Projects to be developed in partnership with Jefferson County

- Conduct an inventory of byway signs to determine if any additional signs are needed

- Install “Share the Road” as needed in key segments of the byway where problems may arise
- Cross check nomenclature on signage and publications to ensure consistency
- Develop Beverly Heights Park as a major orientation site on the north end of the byway
- Add mileage from I-70 and US 6 to key attractions on signs where possible

Projects to be undertaken in partnership with byway communities

- Develop wayfinding signage within each town

Projects to be undertaken by the byway organization

- Redevelop the byway brochure
- Cross check nomenclature on publications and websites to ensure consistency
- Develop mobile apps and e-books
- Develop a tear-off map that can be used for navigational purposes

The recommendations included in this document represent only the first steps in the process of developing a more effective system of wayshowing. Recommendations concerning directional signage and interpretive signage can be acted upon in the short term by bringing together relevant stakeholders and CDOT officials. Representatives from the Lariat Loop Committee can play a valuable role in working with relevant stakeholders and CDOT officials. Recommendations concerning orientation and interpretive kiosks, clustered signage, and training programs will require additional effort to secure funding and achieve consensus on placement.

The next step in this process will involve working with city and county officials and representatives from the byway to determine final site locations and establish site priorities for interpretive kiosks. Lariat Loop representatives may also wish to meet with local officials to determine the possibilities for clustered signage highlighting local attractions and amenities.

APPENDIX

This section includes the list of sites identified by the Lariat Loop Byway Committee as key heritage, recreational, and cultural attractions that are meaningful for travelers along the Lariat Loop National Scenic Byway. Also included are the notes and observations from the Wayfinding Assessment Teams during their tour on the Lariat Loop on January 31, 2013.

Assessment Team #1

Sites to be located:

Clear Creek History Park
Miller Coors Visitor Center
Colorado Railroad Museum
Beverly Heights Park interpretive signs
NREL Visitor Center
Mother Cabrini Shrine
Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave
Lookout Mountain Nature Center
Boettcher Mansion
Buffalo Herd Overlook
Humphrey Memorial Park & Museum
Hiwan Homestead Museum
Historic Downtown Evergreen Mural
Red Rocks Trading Post/Welcome Center
Red Rocks Park & Amphitheater Visitor Center
Dinosaur Ridge
Historic Downtown Morrison Kiosk and Mural
Morrison Natural History Museum
The Fort

FRONT SEAT OBSERVATIONS

Clear Creek History Park – other side of creek; across from museum/Golden History Center – no signage identifying park

Miller Coors Visitor Center – no visitor center signage at “tours parking” corner; main entrance sign does not mention visitor center

Colorado Railroad Museum – left visitor center; need sign before Coors

Beverly Heights Park interpretive signs – could not see sign from approach

NREL Visitor Center – no visible signage along route; not in Loop brochure

Humphrey Memorial Park & Museum – no signage

Hiwan Homestead Museum – sign too close to left turn

Historic Downtown Evergreen Mural – historic wall, not mural; not on map

Dinosaur Ridge – seen from afar

Historic Downtown Morrison Kiosk and Mural – no signage, no map identification

Morrison Natural History Museum – need a little signage after town

BACK SEAT OBSERVATIONS

Observer #1

1. Clear Creek History Park
 - Used directions from Google Maps from Sheraton Desk
 - Blue & white sign for 10th Ave was difficult to read so we thought it was 19th
 - Street sign for 19th (off US 6 approaching Golden from SE) could be a few hundred feet sooner
 - Found Golden History Center, and at bottom of sign said “park” but pulling into parking lot we saw no sign for Clear Creek History Park
 - Saw Billy Drew Bridge - Cute old buildings on other side of bridge
 - Need a sign in parking lot and/or on bridge to direct folks to museum and/or history park
 - Found parking for CCHP on 11th west of Washington; Google Maps sent us to Golden History Museum – not open until 11am so could not ask
2. Miller Coors Visitor Center
 - Used signs in town and helpful man at Golden Visitor Center where we got maps and directions
 - Asked two employees – were first directed to parking lot for brewery tours
 - Went back to main entrance but never saw a sign to Visitor Center
 - One small green sign for tours, visitors after we parked and walked toward the kettle
 - There is not enough parking by kettle so they want you to take a tour and park in the tour parking lot and take the bus
 - Need to change the information online to say Tours not Visitor Center
3. Colorado Railroad Museum
 - Used Google Maps on cell phone to find
 - Suggest sign on W 44th Ave, eastbound after Coors to indicate RR Museum and then sign right opposite entrance to RR Museum parking lot
4. Beverly Heights Park interpretive signs
 - Google Maps took us to Beverly Heights Park but we didn’t see any signs
 - Also used hand drawn map from Bill at Golden Visitor Center
 - Started up Lariat Loop and turned around – then we saw the Beverly Heights Park sign on the way down
 - If this brown & yellow sign was moved closer to the road, drivers would see it on the way up as well
 - We don’t know if the interpretive signs were there or not
5. NREL Visitor Center
 - Used directions from Bill at Golden Visitor Center
 - Suggest a sign on S. Golden Road southbound after two roundabouts
 - Saw green & white sign “Research Road” so we figured that was the way
 - NREL sign should say National Renewable Energy Laboratory then Visitor Center, or tours on a small sign below that
6. Mother Cabrini Shrine
 - Nice sign on WB I-70 for Shrine
 - Green & white sign as you are exiting the ramp but front seat team didn’t see
 - Suggest sign on the sign that has labeled Park n’ Ride lots that directs you to Mother Cabrini
 - Hard to cross all lanes to turn left on to Mt. Vernon Road

- Nice blue/white sign when we turned onto Frontage Rd.
 - Good brown/white sign
 - Need signs to warn drivers of curves in road, speed limit; huge drop offs with steep slopes and no guardrail; very expensive to install guardrail the entire distance for steel 2:1 and 1:1 slopes so install curve and speed signs
 - Didn't see the sign to walk out to the statue (maybe you can't anymore?)
7. Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave
 - Used Lariat Loop brochure map
 - Saw Brown/White sign in median
 - Could use another sign to remind drivers to share the road with bikes
 - Suggest sign at bottom saying curvy road
 - Well signed in parking lot – great views
 8. Lookout Mountain Nature Center
 - Used Lariat Loop Map
 - Good sign at entrance
 9. Boettcher Mansion
 - Good sign telling ahead; good sign at entrance
 - Good brown/white sign on Lookout Mtn. Road coming from I-70 side also
 10. Buffalo Herd Overlook
 - Didn't see sign for overlook
 11. Humphrey Memorial Park & Museum
 - Used Lariat Loop Map
 - Saw scenic byway/Lariat Loop sign on SH74 just after road to Echo Lake
 12. Hiwan Homestead Museum
 - Brown/white sign on SH74 with directional arrow left – but it was right where you need to turn
 - Suggest sign north of where driver needs to turn left saying "Turn ahead 1000' for Hiwan Museum"
 - Saw second sign on SH74 heading out of Evergreen down the canyon
 13. Historic Downtown Evergreen Mural
 - We think this is just the building side next to Century Link that says "Welcome to Evergreen"
 - Map on wall downtown showed "History Wall" but we walked to it and didn't find it
 - Asked two people – no answers

Need interpretive signs at pullouts along Bear Creek; we saw some cool, tall rock-stone retaining walls next to the creek – wanted to know what they were; Also saw several Lariat Loop Byway signs throughout the canyon

14. Red Rocks Trading Post/Welcome Center
 - Suggest removing "Welcome Center" from signs because it is now just a trading post
 - Need better signs at road intersections
 - Sign should be before intersection when turning
15. Red Rocks Park & Amphitheater Visitor Center
 - Nice signs in parking lot – good snow removal
 - Good to have bicycle pavement markings on road

- We were not sure out to get out of Red Rocks Park to get down to Bear Creek Canyon Road above Morrison
16. Dinosaur Ridge
 - Saw it from Mt. Vernon Road and from Red Rocks Road
 - Saw Brown/white signs from C470 to Dinosaur Ridge
 17. Historic Downtown Morrison Kiosk and Mural
 - You don't see the mural coming eastbound out of the canyon
 - If you are coming from the east, you see the mural and the kiosk
 18. Morrison Natural History Museum
 - Saw sign on SH74 for the museum - Turned on that road
 - Suggest sign right after you turn on that road
 19. The Fort

Observer #2

1. Clear Creek History Park
 - Started with Google map from hotel but that led us to the wrong end of the park; confusion at 10th Ave – turned right into courthouse; saw byways sign but was still confused; Planning on getting map of Lariat Loop at Welcome Center; museum sign does not say which museum – signage on US 6 is good for other attractions on list; arrived at Golden History Center – slight confusion about entrance to history park; had to go into history center for directions but didn't open until 11:00.
2. Miller Coors Visitor Center
 - Went to Welcome Center first to get maps; got lost coming back to Coors – missed signage and passed it; Arrived at destination because we passed it on the way in – going by visibility of building not signage; can't find entrance – went to main entrance for directions; got directions from worker in parking lot but sent us back to the second spot we went to; no information on tour signs for visitor center; Sending us back to first main entrance – identified the "kettle" but have to go back; no signage on 12th noting visitor center; no signage leading you in; only get here by tour bus.
3. Colorado Railroad Museum
 - Heading to museum using directions from visitor center; no signage between Golden Visitor Center and museum; saw signage headed on the road before the turn – using Google map in iPhone to get to next location as well as visitor center maps – connectivity is good so far; signage at 10th and Fort on our way to RR museum
4. Beverly Heights Park interpretive signs
 - Visitor Center doesn't know this park; we gave street directions and he claimed it was hard to give directions to this; Visitor Center and Google Maps directions are different – driver chose Google Map; Found Mt. Parks Pillars – no idea park was below; signage only visible if coming down 19th. Paper maps and visitor center couldn't help; no significant site.
5. NREL Visitor Center
 - No NREL signage coming in on 19th – following Visitor Center directions not Google Maps; No signage on S. Golden Road – no indicators of significance or idea that public tours are available.

6. Mother Cabrini Shrine
 - Going off driver's instinct on Moss St to Colfax; now using Google Maps. Highway 40 no signage yet getting back on US6W to I70W – go too far; Using Google Maps and byway printed map; need good road map; phone and visitor center maps are confusing; no signage getting off I70 – across three lanes of traffic quickly to make turn; this would be missed; don't know if you can visit stone house; need sign explaining building; unless you go into church, no idea of significance; no obvious directions to walking path.
7. Buffalo Bill Museum and Grave
 - Using scenic map from Welcome Center to get to site; Lariat Loop map is being used; confused at turn from Mother Cabrini – pullout and reconfirm – another byway sign before Kimball Ave. Great signage coming back into Golden – but lack of signage as you climb. Good signage at Buffalo Bill - great kiosks and information; obvious significance.
8. Lookout Mountain Nature Center
 - Easy connection with signage; great kiosks
9. Boettcher Mansion
 - Easy connection with signage – outdoor kiosks tell significance; leaving signage is excellent; using scenic map – slight confusion out of the parking lot – left or right?
10. Buffalo Herd Overlook
 - Navigating by knowledge and map; also using byway signs; not sure if we went to the right overlook; did they see signs? Only one in car claims to have seen it from I70. No Lariat Loop signs in a while.
11. Humphrey Memorial Park & Museum
 - Lack of byway signage after I70 – have no idea if you are on the Loop. Still using Lariat Loop map and signage; no signage for entrance to museum; missed this one – Highway 74 lack of signage – see brown signs for Hiwan Homestead but not this one.
12. Hiwan Homestead Museum
 - Sign directly across from the turn – Hiwan House ½ mile – confusing; no signage before the turn to prepare driver; ½ mile must have meant ½ mile to homestead after the turn.
13. Historic Downtown Evergreen Mural
 - Not sure if we found it – marked on building next to Century Link; no one in town knew and the map in town lead us in the wrong direction; interpretive signs for Bear Creek Road – plenty of pulloff opportunity
14. Red Rocks Trading Post/Welcome Center
 - Good signage from Bear Creek Canyon Road; good signage in park to start – then lacking the farther into the park you go.
15. Red Rocks Park & Amphitheater Visitor Center
 - Confusing name with Welcome Center also; signage is past necessary turns – once inside parking lot, great signage
16. Dinosaur Ridge
 - Saw from drive back from Cabrini Shrine; green – no significance; great signage from I70 – a little confusing at bridge.
17. Historic Downtown Morrison Kiosk and Mural
 - No signage if coming in from west – can't see it.
18. Morrison Natural History Museum
 - Good signage into town then nothing; good signage in front of building and brightly colored doors.

19. The Fort

- No navigation needed as travelers familiar with restaurant.

Assessment Team #2

Sites to be located:

Hogback Geological Point of Interest
Heritage Square
Apex Park
Triceratops Trail
Clear Creek River Walk
Beaver Brook Trail
Genessee Mountain Park
Bergen Mountain Park
Dog Park at Elk Meadow Park
Dedisse Mountain Park
Evergreen Lake House
O'Fallon Park
Lair O'Bear Park
Bear Creek Trail – Morrison
Red Rocks Trail
Mathews Winters Park
Prairie Dog Colony at Dinosaur Ridge
The Fort

FRONT SEAT OBSERVATIONS

Hogback Geological Point of Interest – parking lot, no visitor center information

Heritage Square – easy to find

Apex Park – website shows trailhead at Heritage Square

Triceratops Trail – no signs on 40/93 – hard to figure out parking and where the trail starts

Clear Creek River Walk – name confusing as not showing on searches

Beaver Brook Trail – searches not helpful

Genessee Mountain Park – no signs, Google helpful

Bergen Mountain Park – sign off the loop

Dedisse Mountain Park – easy to spot off highway

BACK SEAT OBSERVATIONS

Observer #1

"We really wanted an ice-cream stop"

1) Hogback Geological "Point of Interest"

- Front seat was not sure if this should be an actual point to look out, a trail, or a visitor center. The mobile device (Google places?) had a visitor center located here.
- Drove past exit, then the next exit. (No Scenic Byway sign off of each exit, or when reentering).
- GPS taking them from one parking lot to another, Hogback, Mammoth, Stegosaurus.

- The word Hogback was at the top of the brown sign, which they did not see from the windshield, because we were right in front of the sign in the car. (Scenic Byway sign heading North)
 - They looked for a visitor center since mobile device said there was one and wanted to ask for directions. They headed up the road towards Red Rocks and got to the box office where they said it was closed and turned around.
 - Later, looked at a map and realized the welcome center was further up the road (Red Rocks).
- 2) Heritage Square
- They knew this site because they have been there for the Alpine Slide. We did not get out of the car.
- 3) Apex Park
- Found on the mobile device. There were conflicts between different sites about the address. Located it in lot below Heritage Square.
 - There was a Jefferson County Open Space Kiosk with a banner hung on a wood fence that stated Apex Park. Looked like a trail head.
- 4) Triceratops Trail
- Missed the first turn, where Scenic Byway stated to turn left. (Scenic Byway sign, left turn arrow)
 - The GPS recalculated and had them turn left at the next left, however there was a no left turn sign.
 - Knew it was at 6th & Heritage, but didn't know what side. We went left first, then turned back around and crossed 6th. Triceratops Trail, right arrow.
 - Not sure what lot to pull into. Pulled into dirt lot. Signs state parking by permit only. Brick building in back corner.
 - Driver decided to go to next paved lot, and this was a pay lot. Drove around that building. Headed back to the dirt lot, then drove around the brick building and found the trail behind a dumpster.
 - Where would someone park? Kiosk showed trail system. (Scenic Byway sign on 6th & Heritage, Scenic Byway sign on 19th & 6th eastside)
- 5) Clear Creek River Walk
- US 6th then turned right on Hwy 58, headed to Washington & 10th.
 - Name is confusing because Lions Park came up. Stopped by visitor center for Golden Map.
 - First stop in the visitor center, Tim went inside and got basic information. Heidi went in there another time and asked specifically about certain locations and the older gentleman told her the trails he recommended instead.
 - Lunch - Bridge Water Grill (Buffalo Burger with slaw) - Driver looked up next stop on mobile device while in restaurant.
- 6) Beaver Brook Trail
- Headed up Lookout Mountain. (Scenic Byway sign) Pulled off at a trail head parking lot. Interpretive sign stated Beaver Brook Trail from windshield. (Banner on fence - savetheloop.org)
- 7) Genesee Mountain Park
- Headed back to Genesee/I-70 and entered heading I-70 West. Used Google navigation not signs. Stated to exit Chief Hosa, turn right and drive down the dirt road to the parking area. Skier with dog.
- 8) Bergen Mountain Park
- From Chief Hosa, headed West on I-70, passed Evergreen exit (no SB Sign). They stated the Lariat Loop map not useful for not stating the on/off exit #,

- Turned around at Floyd Hill exit, came back, past exit again (no SB sign). Exited Chief Hosa and looped back to Evergreen Parkway, because process of elimination, that must be the direction they need to go without signs or Google.
 - Went through a Starbucks drive through. From other street, Scenic Byway sign facing those coming onto Evergreen from another direction. Sign stated Bergen Park 2 miles.
- 9) Dog Park at Elk Meadow Park
- Driver turned off at first sign for Elk Meadow. He got out and looked at a kiosk. Got back on road and went to next road that stated Elk Meadow. Found the dog park.
 - (HINT: Courtney mentioned a Spa in the area that is a great retreat. I will ask so maybe it can be added to Tagwhat.)
- 10) Dedisse Mountain Park
- Prominent sign off the road and located on the map. Drove by.
- 11) Evergreen Lake House
- Missed first turn, took next right (no right sign, but noticed tire marks of others missing the first turn).
 - Assumed the lake on the house was it. Stopped dropped, dropped off trash. Restrooms, ice skating.
- 12) O'Fallon Park
- Found by following Scenic Byway sign
- 13) Lair O'Bear Park
- Found easily; Drivers stated this is a good park.
- 14) Bear Creek Trail
- Did not find this trail
 - At Red Rocks stopped in Trading Post and got more information about local trails. Including the Red Rocks Trail.
- 15) Red Rocks Trail
- Drove through the park and saw the Red Rocks trail and sign for the trail.
- 16, 17,
- Skipped - After the first stop of going round and round, they were in a hurry the whole day.
 - We didn't get out and look at items on any of the Kiosk. Only at Triceratops Trail.
- 18) The Fort
- Google the location and headed down the road.

Observer #2

1. Hogback Geological Point of Interest
 - We could not clearly see what the POI was supposed to be. An overlook? Type of rock formation?
 - Appeared to be general parking for other purposes. Not parking to hike/view.
 - Google maps do not locate this POI accurately.
 - No visible signage to say you are at the POI. No visible written description of POI.
 - Only signage said you were at the Hogback Parking Area
 - Marketing note: As a traveler, I would not seek out this location unless there was a more compelling reason to. This would be something I found on accident (i.e. parking for other reasons and finding the POI as a secondary result.

2. Heritage Square
 - Great signage, easy to find, Google Maps directs you clearly there.
 - Side note on Google: when you search “Heritage Square” it pulls up 2 listings first:
 - #1 Music Hall
 - #2 Amusement Park
 - I would assume most people would be looking for the amusement park and may be confused by the Music Hall reference. Interesting that Music Hall pulls up first.
 - Family friendly. Good parking. Clearly see activity possibilities for a family outing.
3. Apex Park
 - You can actually access the park from both the upper and lower HS parking lot. It threw off the drivers to have to seek out the ‘lower parking lot’.
 - Not sure one would seek out this trail/park as a primary destination. Possibly a secondary destination similar to the Hogback POI.
 - Easy parking and trail access. Good hike for younger kids (appeared relatively flat).
4. Triceratops Trail
 - Yikes! Nearly impossible to find. Sketchy location (behind a brick building and dumpster to find trail head). A single hiker might be nervous or feel unsafe parking and walking from this location.
 - Not found easily via Google.
 - Parking problems:
 - All metered or reserved parking. No visible parking for trailhead.
 - Poor directions once you turned off of the main street. Needs better signage in the parking lot to get you to parking and trailhead.
 - Benefits of this trail: Paved. Some people may prefer this and it might be worth highlighting that in literature.
 - Looked like a nicely maintained trail but I would not have chosen the trailhead to be in that particular location.
5. Clear Creek River Walk
 - Where to park? Visitor’s center? Other location more suitable?
 - Needed to visit the Visitor’s center in order to find access to this walk.
 - Not easily found via Google.
 - Great walk for families/kids. Goes through town which is great because you can highlight shopping and restaurants along the way.
6. Beaver Brook Trail
 - Trail name was not easily visible from the road. Only saw “Windy Saddle Park” on a small turned sign.
 - The drivers only stopped because they said “this looks like it could be some sort of trailhead parking lot”. If not for that ‘intuition’ to stop, we would have missed the trailhead.
 - Parking was easily visible from the road. However, with the winding road access, it would be nice to have more notice.

- Possibly a more moderate/difficult hike? But with great views. Maybe not for small children at first glance. Just a first impression.

7. Genesee Mountain Park

- No problem with directions from Chief Hosa exit. Parking was easy to find, however there was no 'official' notice that this was the parking area for this park. Would be nice to know for sure you are parking in the appropriate spot.
- Park was surrounded by a few other buildings/houses. However, I'm sure upon further inspection there would be nice trails and overlooks because of the location.
- You can't tell much about the park from the road. I would not know what to expect from this park if just driving by.

8. Bergen Mountain Park

- Very easy to miss the signage into the park. Looks like there are 2 entrances. But very short notice when on Evergreen Pkwy.
- Open park which highlights picnic areas and BBQ pits.
- Easy to see the primary 'uses' of the park from the parking lot.
- Would be nice to know ahead of time to plan a BBQ or lunch at this location!
- Google found this location fairly easily.

9. Dog Park at Elk Meadow Park

- Make sure the title of the park matches what the advertised name is: Elk Meadow Park was listed as "Elk Meadow Open Space". Could potentially be confusing for first timers.
- Better signage from the first entrance to the Elk Meadow area would be helpful to find the dog park. If drivers did not see the smaller 'Lariat loop' map, they would not have found the dog area.
- Noticed safety issue: people with loose dogs were crossing Stagecoach to reach the second parking lot. Would be beneficial to have either a 'slow' area or speed bump possibly in that area with the loose dogs around.

**As with many of the information kiosks at these trailheads, I noticed a 'Warning' message first and a "Welcome" message second. There are indeed many things to be cautious of on trails, but it would be great if the "Welcome" were a bit more prominent. This would make these locations look a bit friendlier.

10. Dedisse Mountain Park

- Right off the parkway.
- Easily visible.
- Easy Parking
- Nice to see the location on the smaller Lariat Loop map.
- Did not notice much about this park: good or bad. I would hate to say any of these parks or trailheads were easily 'forgettable', but this one might come close just because nothing really struck me as unique upon our brief visual inspection.

11. Evergreen Lake House

- Although we did indeed make it to the lake house, the drivers were not certain of its destination. Possibly more signage from the road with consistent messaging would help eliminate this problem.
- Not sure of the 'purposes' of the Lake House? Reception area? Rent ice skates in the winter?
- Evergreen Lake is a visually stunning lake with clear opportunities for recreation in general. Nicely maintained paths. Easy parking.

12. O'Fallon Park

- Yet another good picnic spot. Easy to see benefits of the park as a meeting/gathering/picnic area.
- Would be nice to see more description about the park. History? Natural foliage/animals to look for?
- Good signage, good parking. Easy to find.

13. Lair O'Bear Park

- Once again, very easy to find since it was visible from the loop.
- Like this location because you could see many of the trails from the road. Very visually appealing. I might stop at this location even if not originally seeking it out.
- This park makes you 'feel' like you are truly in the mountains because of the steep hills, plentiful trees, etc. Great starting point for out of towners.

14. Bear Creek Trail

- Could not find this trail via map/Google.
- Asked as RR Trading post and they were able to give directions, but we were out of time.

15. Red Rocks Trail

- Needed verbal directions to find.
- Only a very small brown sign indicating the trail and we could not easily find the 'trailhead'.
- Red Rocks is, in general, a very visually appealing place to visit and my only suggestion would be that if this trail were a true POI on the Lariat Loop, make it crystal clear where to start/end and park for easy access to this trail.

16. Mathews Winters Park

- Only saw signage briefly at the beginning of our tour. Did not have time for further inspection at the end.

17. Prairie Dog Colony

- Did not visit. Ran out of time.

18. The Fort

- Easy to find. Visually appealing. Unique building.
- Possibly more signage on the road so you do not need to make such a quick decision for the parking lot.
- It is clear once you visit the fort that it holds a lot of history in Colorado. Great location, food, and hospitality.