



Setting The Direction

Dear Friend of Golden Spike National Historic Site,

I am writing to announce the start of a comprehensive planning effort for Golden Spike National Historic Site. The result will be a new General Management Plan to guide how we develop, manage, and interpret the cultural and natural resources of the national historic site and to provide for visitors over the next 15 to 20 years.

Previous planning documents for Golden Spike are outdated and do not adequately address the many complex issues currently requiring management decisions. As a long term vision for the management of the national historic site, the General Management Plan will provide guidance and set the direction for subsequent, more narrowly focused planning efforts. However, the plan will not include specific facility designs, resolve all park issues, or guarantee funding for the actions proposed in the approved plan.

We invite your participation in this effort to develop a General Management Plan for Golden Spike National Historic Site. It is important for the planning team to learn from you early in the process so that we can address your ideas and concerns. A variety of ways for sharing your thoughts are available:

- Return the enclosed comment card.
- Mail your written comments to
Golden Spike National Historic Site
P.O. Box 897
Brigham City, Utah 84302-0897
- Comment via the PEPC (Planning, Environment, and Public Comment) website at: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/gosp>
- Attend any of our public meetings, locations, dates, and times to be announced.

Throughout the approximately 3-4 year planning effort we will arrange public meetings at key stages of the planning process, publish newsletters to keep you informed, and provide numerous opportunities for members of the public to review and comment on the ideas and solutions that evolve. Please join us in this important endeavor as we define how to preserve and manage Golden Spike National Historic Site.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Leslie J. Crossland

Leslie Crossland
Superintendent



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WHAT IS A GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN?

Park planning is a decision-making process, and general management planning is the broadest level of decision-making for national parks. General management plans, which are required for all units in the national park system, are intended to guide the park’s management direction for the next 15-20 years.

Previous planning documents for Golden Spike National Historic Site are outdated and do not adequately address the many complex issues currently requiring management decisions.

The General Management Plan for Golden Spike is being developed by the park staff and planning professionals of the National Park Service (NPS). Participation by the full park staff, park partners and neighbors, other agencies, and the public will be crucial to the planning effort’s success.

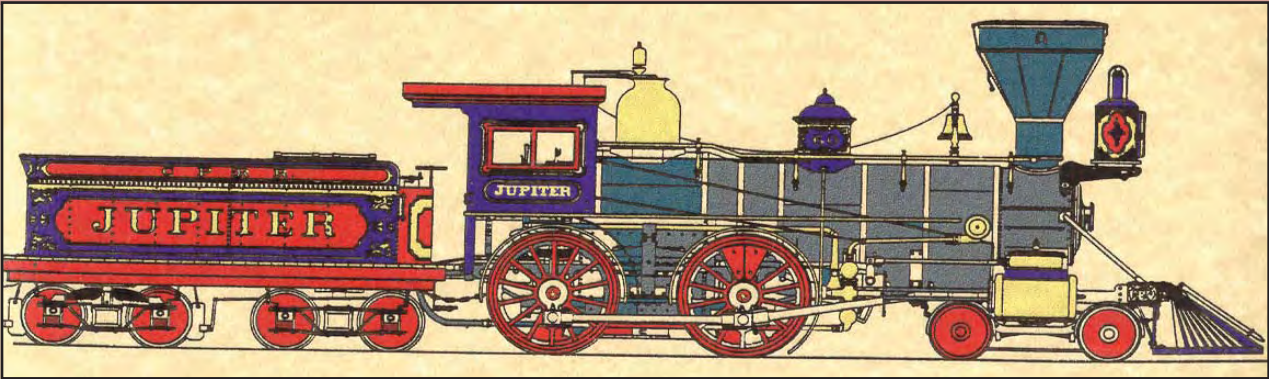
The General Management Plan will define the fundamental management direction for this unit of the national park system. It will focus on why the park was established and what needs to be done to protect significant park resources while allowing for visitor enjoyment of those resources. The national historic site will be considered holistically in its full ecological and cultural context and as a part of the surrounding region.

Several possible visions for the park’s future (called management alternatives) will be developed and analyzed before a preferred direction is selected. Evaluating a set of alternatives enables the planning team to compare the advantages and disadvantages of the various courses of action.

As a long-term vision for the management of the park, the General Management Plan for Golden Spike will provide “big picture” guidance and set the direction for more program-specific planning efforts. The plan will not include specific facility designs, resolve all park issues, or guarantee funding for the actions proposed in the approved plan.

- Why do we write general management plans?
- To create a vision and clear direction for the future of the national historic site
 - To establish preservation priorities for allocating resources
 - To set and achieve goals for national historic site management
 - To foster cooperative partnerships
 - To comply with public law and NPS policies

Long-term planning in the national park system is intended to answer the question: *What range of resource conditions and visitor experiences should be provided, and where?*



PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF GOLDEN SPIKE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Purpose

A purpose statement is a concise statement explaining why Congress established a unit of the national park system. The statement must be grounded in a thorough analysis of the establishing legislation and legislative history, including studies prior to authorization. Such statements help to guide management decisions.

“Golden Spike National Historic Site is the national memorial commemorating the completion of the first trans-continental railroad across the United States.”

Significance

Significance statements express why the park unit’s resources and values are important enough to warrant national designation. Statements of significance describe why the national historic site is important within a global, national, regional, and system-wide context and are directly linked to the purpose of the park unit. These statements are substantiated by data or consensus, and reflect the most current scientific or scholarly inquiry and cultural perceptions. Significance statements may change over time as new resources are discovered or a park’s resources are better understood.

- Four significance statements were developed for Golden Spike:
1. Golden Spike NHS is the location where the nation’s first transcontinental railroad was completed.
 2. The vast, open landscape of Golden Spike NHS and surrounding area still reflects the dramatic atmosphere of the historic period.
 3. Golden Spike NHS is the only site set aside in perpetuity where physical evidence of the technology and methods involved in construction, completion, and maintenance of the transcontinental railroad remains
 4. The concentration of remaining historic features, the level of historic integrity, and the diversity of structure types are preserved nowhere else along the transcontinental railroad.

Interpretive Themes

The following interpretive themes are based on the purpose and significance of Golden Spike National Historic Site. The themes connect the national historic site’s fundamental resources and values to relevant ideas, meanings, concepts, contexts, and

beliefs. These themes support the desired interpretive outcome which is to increase visitor understanding and appreciation of the significance of national historic site resources and encourage stewardship of these resources.

Theme A. The United States’ desire to achieve manifest destiny by way of construction of the transcontinental railroad culminated at the last spike site on May 10, 1869 through tenacity, diligence, ingenuity, and grit.

Theme B. Completion of the transcontinental railroad instantaneously brought the nation together following the Civil War, facilitated settlement of the west, and accelerated the movement of resources, people, and information from coast to coast—changing the way America viewed itself as a nation.

Theme C. The completion of the transcontinental railroad dramatically altered social, cultural, and economic patterns resulting in opportunities and new-found wealth for some, and social isolation and poverty for others.

Theme D. An industrious and culturally diverse work force used existing knowledge or developed new technologies in an endeavor to complete the country’s first transcontinental railroad, overcoming difficult challenges and harsh realities.

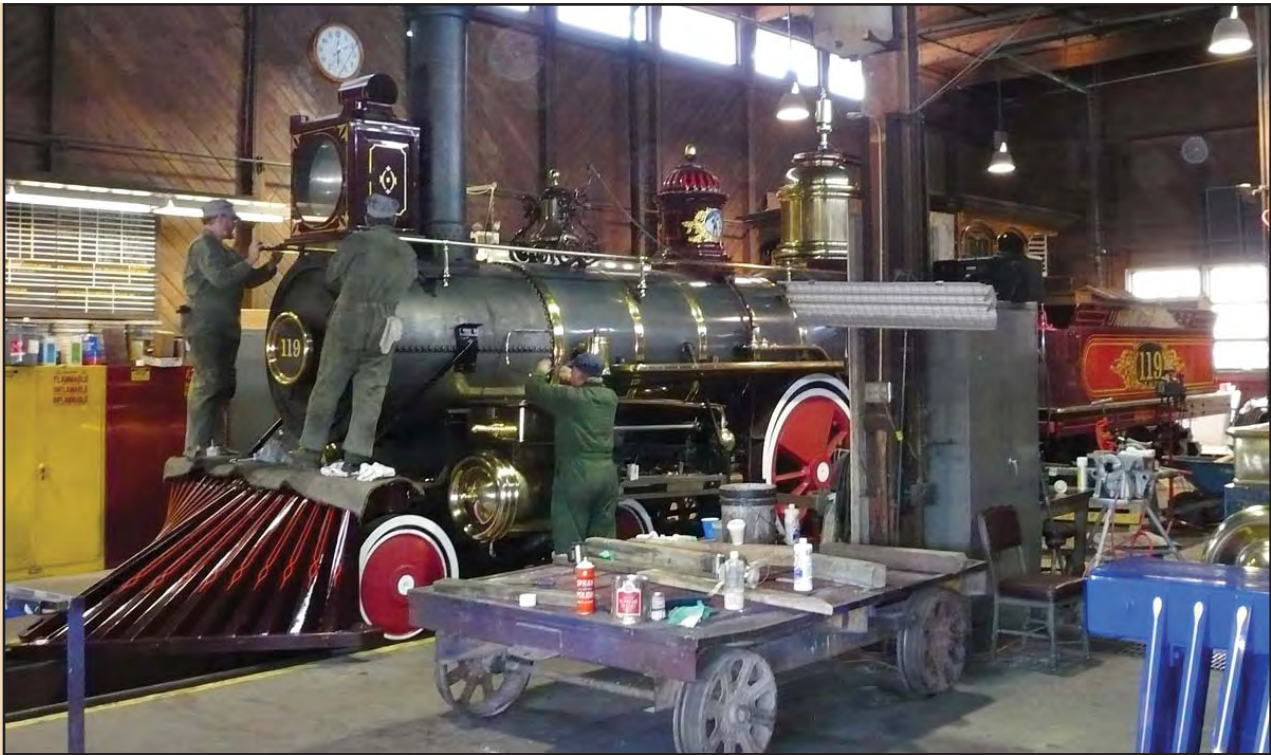


PLANNING TIMEFRAME

The general management planning process for Golden Spike National Historic Site is expected to take 3-4 years to complete. A summary of the process and anticipated timeframe are presented below. The public will have opportunities to share ideas and comments throughout the process.

Next Steps

After we receive your comments, the planning team will begin to identify alternative future visions for Golden Spike. These broad descriptions of desired resource conditions and visitor experiences will form the basis for the development of alternative management strategies that address issues generated by the public and the planning team. The team will also develop management prescriptions that can be applied in various zones around the national historic site to achieve the desired future conditions for those places.



HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE?

The planning team welcomes your thoughts, ideas, and concerns now and throughout the planning process. Your responses to this initial scoping effort will be most helpful if received by February 16, 2008. You may

- return the enclosed comment card or mail your written comments to: Golden Spike National Historic Site P.O. Box897 Brigham City, Utah 84302-0897
- Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website at planning.nps.gov/GOSP

We also encourage you to think about your vision for Golden Spike, as well as any concerns or issues that should be addressed in this long-term plan, and bring them with you to one of our upcoming public meetings.



SCHEDULE

STEP	TIMEFRAME	PLANNING ACTIVITY	HOW TO BE INVOLVED
1	Spring 2008	Project Initiation: The planning team assembles, defines the project scope, customizes the planning process, affirms the purpose, significance, interpretive themes and fundamental resources and values	
2	Winter 2008- Winter 2009	Planning team collects and analyzes relevant data and incorporates public comment received on this newsletter	1. Read newsletter 2. Send your ideas, concerns, comments 3. Attend public meetings
3	Winter 2009- Spring 2009	Develop and evaluate preliminary alternatives using park staff and public input, the team explores what the park's future should look like and proposes a range of reasonable alternatives	1. Read preliminary alternatives newsletter 2. Send your ideas, concerns, comments
4	Spring 2009- Spring 2010	Revise preliminary alternatives, continue data collection, begin to compile draft general management plan	
5	Summer 2010- Spring 2011	Internal National Park Service/Department of the Interior review of the draft plan	
6	Summer 2011	A Draft General Management Plan /Environmental Impact Statement is published. The plan describes the alternatives and impacts of implementing each. Based on the impacts and public input, a preferred alternative is identified in the document.	1. Review the plan 2. Send your comments 3. Attend public meetings
7	Fall 2011- Spring 2012	Based on review by the NPS and the public, the team revises the General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement and distributes a Final Plan. The plan is approved formally in a published Record of Decision.	1. Read the final plan, including NPS responses to substantive public comments and official letters.
8	Summer 2012	After the Record of Decision is issued, and as funding allows, the plan may be implemented.	1. Work with the park to implement the plan.

Thank you for your interest in Golden Spike National Historic Site!

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