

I. Basic Project Information

1. **Name/Title of Proposed Project:** Crazy Horse Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan and Tourism Development at Opportunity Park

2. **Applicant:** Oglala Sioux Tribe (OST)

3. **Name and Contact Information:**

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Cooperating or Partner Funding Entities: The Tribe's Credit and Finance Program (OSTCFP) will serve as the applicant and primary contact throughout the project. The Department of Transportation (OSTDOT), Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO), Tribal Elders, Economic and Business Development Committee, Finance Committee, and Tribal Council will monitor and provide input and direction.

4. **Impacted Byway:** Crazy Horse Scenic Byway (CHSB)

5. **Designation Type:** Indian Tribe Scenic Byway

6. **Primary Project Type:** Development of a Corridor Management Plan

7. **Additional Project Types:** Planning for an improvement to a scenic byway that will enhance access and development and provision of tourist information to the public

8. **Project Abstract:** FHWA National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP) grant funding will be used to establish tourism on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation by development and implementation of a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) and completing all necessary planning and preconstruction activities for tourism amenities at Opportunity Park (OP), CHSB's headquarters. The development of a CMP, meeting the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) 14-points, will assist in maintaining the scenic, historical, recreational, and cultural value of the CHSB. To successfully implement the CMP, planning and preconstruction activities will provide shovel-ready construction plans for a Tribal Tourism Department building and a Visitor Center building with public facilities, interpretive signing, tribal artisan areas supporting tourism growth and employment opportunities for Tribal members, exterior playground and picnic area, and access roads and utilities.

Project Description: The OST proposes to develop a CMP for the CHSB within the Reservation area, with the future goal of partnering with SD Department of Transportation (SDDOT) to

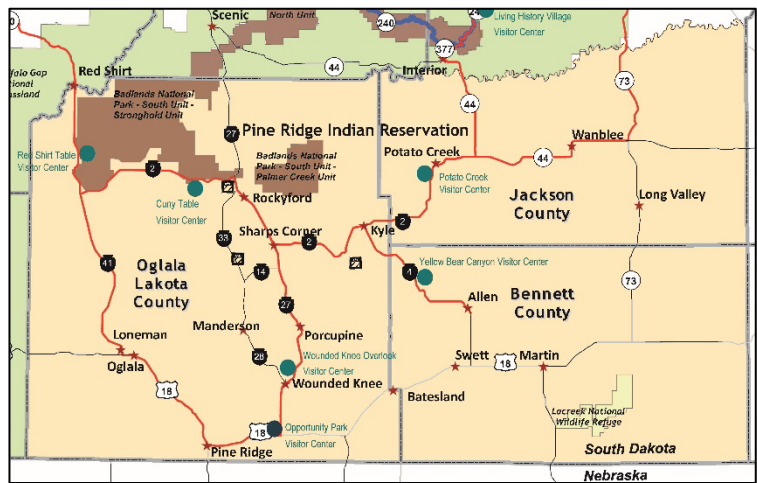
further develop the CMP along SDDOT highways outside of the Reservation. In December 2019, the Tribe passed a resolution tribally designating the route as the CHSB and in May 2020 a proposal was submitted to SDDOT for state designation. With the state designation pending approval, the Tribe recognizes the opportunity for collaboration on the promotion efforts to enhance and expand tourism in this area. The Tribe is confident the attributes of the proposed byway are noteworthy for visitors and is committed to the efforts of managing the responsibilities for preserving and promoting the byway and its intrinsic qualities for generations to come. The Tribe has led research on tourism, amenities, partnerships, and a tour route through the home of Oglala Lakota for over twelve years. In 2019, George Washington University International Institute for Tourism Studies brought together the nine tribal nations of SD to form the SD Native Tourism Alliance (SDNTA) and completed the draft Native American Tourism Development & Management Plan SD of which the CHSB CMP will complement.¹

OP is located along CHSB at the intersection of US 18 and BIA 27 and approximately 7 miles south of the Wounded Knee Massacre and Cemetery National Historic landmark. In 2022 a feasibility study of OP was completed which identified the first choice for development of a visitor center with restrooms, followed by a museum. The community survey further indicated the need for a visitor center as it was the second most popular selection out of 32 items. When this idea was discussed at the SDNTA Quarterly Convening in May 2022, a Native tourism specialist elaborated on the importance of a visitor center and OP as the heart of visitor activities, a way to garner new economic opportunities and personal engagements through the CHSB. To move forward with tourism growth and economic development, the Tribe proposes to complete planning and preconstruction activities to construct a Tribal Tourism Department building and a Visitor Center building with indoor and outdoor amenities including public rest facilities, educational conference rooms, a playground and picnic area, interpretive signing, and tribal artisan working and retail spaces. The project will include all necessary building and site development architectural and engineering design for access roads, parking areas, and essential utilities. Interpretive signing will be developed and collaborated with the Tribal Historic Preservation Office, Natural Resources, and Tribal elders.

Applicant Information: OST has a long history of planning, designing, and delivering successful capital projects. This includes using Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) funds to advance initiatives. In the past five years OST has expended an average of \$7 million annually on transportation planning, construction, and maintenance. They have experience with grant reporting and annual reporting to the FHWA TTP Port Reporting. They have consistently proven to be a good steward of Federal funding and is well-versed in the reporting requirements associated with federal grants. OST has successfully administered TIGER, TTPSF, and other federal and state grant awards. The OSTCFP will serve as the applicant and primary contact throughout the project. The OSTDOT, THPO, Tribal Elders, Economic and Business

Development Committee, Finance Committee, and Tribal Council will monitor and provide input and direction.

Project Location: The Project is located on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in rural southwestern SD in and qualifies for Rural Designation. The Reservation encompasses over 2 million acres (3,469 square miles) in Oglala Lakota County, the southern half of Jackson County, and Bennett County in southwest South Dakota. The Project is in an Area of Persistent Poverty, Historically Disadvantaged, and Transportation Disadvantaged Community. Additionally, The Pine Ridge Indian Reservation has been designated a Promise Zone. The CHSB stretches 300 miles from Kadoka, SD to Crazy Horse Memorial near Custer, SD, however the CMP would be within the Reservation totaling 218 miles, including 55 miles of BIA 2, 19 miles of BIA 4, 35.7 miles of BIA 27, 36.7 miles of BIA 41, 31.8 miles of SD 44, 13.6 miles of SD 73, and 26.2 miles of US 18. OP is located along the CHSB at the northwest quadrant of the intersection of US18 and BIA 27 in southeastern Oglala Lakota County approximately 9 miles east of Pine Ridge Village at Latitude 43.049398°, Longitude -102.378570°.



II. Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of all Project Funding

The OST respectfully request \$842,140 of NSBP Grant funding and a twenty-one percent investment of \$223,860 using TTP funds. The 2025-2029 Tribal Transportation Improvement Program (TTIP) includes this project on the illustrative list ready to be amended and obligated should NSBP Grant funding be awarded. Cost to complete a CMP for the CHSB and Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) documents ready for construction of the tourism amenities at OP is \$1,066,000. **In the event NSBP is unable to fund the entire project, OST would be grateful for an allocation of \$336,000 to cover the CMP.** A detailed project budget can be found in the Merit Criteria section.

Funding Source	Amount	Percent (%)
National Scenic Byway Grant	\$ 842,140	79
TTP Funding (Other Federal)	\$ 223,860	21
Total Project Cost	\$ 1,066,000	100

The Project budget is current and has been calculated based on known variables. The budget contains adequate contingency to address any potential overruns, but if actual planning costs

exceed the NSBP grant funding, the OST will further dedicate TTP formula funding to cover the cost overruns. The Project is an investment in a rural area of persistent poverty, and a historically disadvantaged community that will have beneficial local, regional, and national impacts.

OSTDOT oversees the Tribal transportation system including all BIA roads, utilizing annual federal TTP funding received through the FHWA. The Tribe has a direct funding agreement with the FHWA for administration, planning, construction, and maintenance activities for all transportation facilities within the Reservation which allows for TTP funding to be utilized for scenic byway facilities.

The OSTDOT invested \$40,000 in TTP funds to prepare a detailed proposal to the SDDOT for state byway designation. The OSTCFP received two grants totaling \$124,250 from the Native American Business Institute for a feasibility study of OP and market study of CHSB. These documents can be found on the [Project website](#). OST has extremely limited funding but recognizes the need for the CMP and tourism amenities at Opportunity Park. OST will provide a match amount of twenty-one percent using TTP funds.

III. Merit Criteria

a. The proposed project will achieve Safety, Reinvest in the American Family, and Workforce Development, Job Quality, and Wealth Creation

Safety: There are countless scenic views along CHSB yet there is not adequate space for vehicles to pull-off and park at a safe distance. From 2013-2021, there were 8 pedestrians killed and 11 pedestrians injured along the CHSB.² The CMP will include a general review of the road's safety record to locate hazards, identify areas needing improvements, and plan for accommodating all-sizes of vehicles, as well as safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The Average Daily Traffic (ADT) is 8,052 (US 18) with a posted speed limit of 65 mph and 1,973 (BIA 27) with a stop condition at the intersection. The development at OP will provide ample parking and areas for pedestrians away from the busy intersection of US 18 and BIA 27.

Reinvesting in the American Family: The CMP will protect the scenery of the CHSB and OP will create the headquarters and largest visitor center for the CHSB. OP's conceptual planning includes a full build-out of Tourism Visitor Center, OST Department of Tourism, park with picnic tables and sidewalks with stopping points for each of the 9 tribal districts to demonstrate culturally significant interpretive signage, camp sites, business incubators, food markets, and a truck stop.

The development of a CMP and OP will create the foundation for a robust Native American Tourism industry on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Tribal families have historically lived well below the poverty line, a result of not having enough employment and business

opportunities on the Reservation. The per capita income for residents of the Reservation is only \$13,047 and the median household income \$34,567 with 50.2% of the tribal population below the poverty line, more than double the rate in the United States at 12.5%. This makes the Oglala Sioux Tribe one of the poorest Tribes in the Nation. In addition to the many Tribal members that the Tribal Tourism Department would hire and the boost to the local economy, Tribal artisans would be able to sell their products to tourists on the Reservation. Studies conducted by Dr. Kathleen Pickering and the First Peoples Fund indicated that approximately 30% of all Native American people are practicing or potential artists. The studies estimated that 51% of Native American households rely on home-based enterprises for cash income and 79% of which consist of some form of traditional arts³. Despite these strengths, Lakota artisans and entrepreneurs have inequitable access to regional and tourist-based markets. Likewise, tourists have minimal access to authentic Native American made goods and services straight from the producer or provider. The CHSB and OP will act as business incubators for many of the Lakota artisans.

The CMP and OP would create an accessible, enriching Native American Tourism experience for the American family visitors. Visitor interest in Native American tourism is increasing and families visiting the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation would experience culture and history in a scenic location. The CMP will include local public involvement to visually assess the CHSB, set marketing goals and strategies, and develop land-use plans. The CMP will allow the OST to manage, protect and continue to seek funding to improve roads and develop tourism amenities along the CHSB. The Tribal Tourism Department, Visitor Center, and accompanying amenities of the OP will mitigate current and future inequitable impacts to communities and their people, build and maintain equitable transportation systems, and promote affordable and accessible options that foster opportunity across urban, suburban, and rural areas.

Workforce Development, Job Quality, and Wealth Creation: The CMP will provide the goals, strategies, and guidance for tourism growth, establish how to implement the CMP, and market and publicize the CHSB. A 2014 – 2018 study of businesses on the Reservation indicated that tourism and hospitality, restaurant and food services, and arts and crafts production were the third, fourth, and fifth most prevalent business types respectively.⁴ Furthermore, the SDNTA's Strategic Plan reported on a recent study to gauge the level of interest travelers had for Tribal tourism activities and cultural experiences. 441 respondents from 46 states and 26 international sites participated with 86% indicating they considered a Tribal experience as part of future vacation plans.⁵

With the planning and design of the amenities, this project will help grow the local economy by providing a place for visitors to stop and spend money instead of just passing through. According to the SD Dept of Tourism's Monthly Dashboard, from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023, Oglala Lakota County tourism revenue from the twelve-month period was \$220,300, the second lowest revenue in the Black Hills and Badlands Region and stark contrast to neighbor

Pennington County at \$1,128,587,400. The high cultural interest and volume of traffic at this location would provide a unique opportunity to showcase Tribal tourism, provide opportunities for tribal business, and offer modern and cultural educational amenities in an easily accessed and centralized location. Thus, a visitor area, inspired by, designed in accordance with, and marketed to reflect Lakota culture, is a needed resource that will fill a gap for several hundreds of miles along the CHSB.

As identified on the Every Day Counts, EDC-7 Innovations (2023-2024), Strategic Workforce Development, the Oglala Sioux Tribe has an established Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance (TERO). Under the ordinance, a TERO fee of 4-percent will be paid throughout the project to support the TERO Office's employment training program.

b. Community/Traveler Benefits and Protection of Intrinsic Qualities of Byway

For many communities along the CHSB, OP will provide opportunities for collection of revenue from tourists who had otherwise been forced to pass through and spend money in other communities for their goods and services. There would be further promotions towards artist markets, intergenerational learning and engagement, workforce and job creation, food sovereignty opportunities, and preserving the culture and history of the reservation. The location would not only provide more accessible amenities for visitors during and after its full development but also act as an informative and interactive center for preserving the cultural history of the land. A CMP will guide the Tribe along the best path for promoting the CHSB and ensure there is a long-term strategic plan to protect the scenic, historical, recreational, and cultural integrity to the roadway and adjacent areas. Shovel-ready plans for construction of the Tourism Department building and Visitor Center will be the first step in implementing the CMP and realizing the benefits of safety, accessibility, and wealth creation.

c. Project Schedule: Following is a list of planned milestones for the Project. A detailed project schedule with budget can be found in the Detailed Project Budget. The project is ready to begin as soon as a NSBP grant agreement is finalized and would be completed within 3 years.

Planned Project Milestones*	
Corridor Management Plan	
CHSB Mapping with Intrinsic Qualities	Completed in the Proposal to SDDOT
Assessment of the CHSB Intrinsic Qualities	Completed in the Proposal to SDDOT
Kickoff Meetings with OST Partners	October 2026 – December 2026
Baseline Conditions and Mapping	January 2027 – December 2027
OST Partners, Stakeholders, and Public Feedback/Meetings	January 2028 – June 2028
Finalize Report and Mapping	July 2028 – December 2028
Opportunity Park Planning and Preconstruction Tourism Department and Visitor Center	
Environmental Resource Surveys	Completed
Topographic and Cadastral Surveys	October 2026 – March 2027
Building Sketches Tourism Dept and Visitor Center	April 2027 – September 2027

Public and Stakeholder Meetings	October 2027 – June 2028
Preliminary Architectural and Engineering Design	October 2027 – September 2028
OST Initial Review	October 2028 – December 2028
NEPA	October 2028 – December 2028
Final Architectural and Engineering Design	January 2029 – June 2029
OST Final Review	July 2029 – August 2029
PS&E Approval	September 2029

* Schedule will be adjusted according to NSBP grant agreement date.

d. Detailed Project Budget:

Project Budget Breakdown	
Corridor Management Plan	Amount
CHSB Mapping with Intrinsic Qualities	Completed
Assessment of the CHSB Intrinsic Qualities	Completed
October 2026 – December 2026	
Kickoff Meetings with OST Partners	\$30,000
January 2027 – December 2027	
Baseline Conditions, Mapping, and Draft Report	\$160,500
January 2028 – June 2028	
OST Partners, Stakeholders, and Public Feedback/Meetings	\$50,000
July 2028 – December 2028	
Finalize CMP Report and Mapping	\$96,000
Corridor Management Plan Subtotal =	\$336,000
Opportunity Park Planning and Preconstruction Tourism Amenities	Amount
Environmental Surveys	Completed
October 2026 – March 2027	
Topographic and Cadastral Surveys	\$35,000
April 2027 – September 2027	
Tourism Department and Visitor Center Building Sketches	\$50,000
Preliminary Site Plan	\$10,000
October 2027 – June 2028	
Public and Stakeholder Meetings	\$25,000
October 2027 – September 2028	
Preliminary Architectural Building Design	\$80,000
Preliminary Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing Building Design (Includes heating, ventilation, and air conditioning, lighting and power, and plumbing design)	\$45,000
Preliminary Site Civil Engineering Design (Includes access road, parking area, fencing, sidewalks, sanitary sewer, water, and storm water design)	\$50,000
Preliminary Site Electrical Engineering Design (Includes solar or wind power design and site lighting design)	\$50,000
Preliminary Landscape Architecture Design (Includes native planting plans, picnic and play areas)	\$15,000

Preliminary Interpretive Signing Design and Coordination with District Representatives and Elders	\$35,000
Preliminary Determination of Utility Impacts	\$5,000
October 2028 – December 2028	
OST Initial Review	
NEPA - Categorical Exclusion Checklist for Submittal to FHWA	\$5,000
January 2029 – June 2029	
Final Architectural Building Design	\$135,000
Final Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing, and Structural Building Design (Includes heating, ventilation, and air conditioning, lighting and power, plumbing, and structural design)	\$70,000
Final Site Civil Engineering Design (Includes access road, parking area, fencing, sidewalks, sanitary sewer, water, and storm water design)	\$40,000
Final Site Electrical Engineering Design (Includes solar or wind power design and site lighting design)	\$30,000
Final Landscape Architecture Design (Includes native planting plans, picnic and play areas)	\$40,000
Final Determination of Utility Impacts	\$5,000
July 2029 – August 2029	
OST Final Review	
September 2029	
Plans, Specifications, and Estimate (PS&E) Certification	\$5,000
Planning and Preconstruction Budget Subtotal =	\$730,000
Total Project Cost – CMP and Tourism Amenities Planning =	\$1,066,000
NSBP Grant Request = \$842,140 at 79% and TTP Match Funding Commitment = \$223,860 at 21%	

IV. Project Readiness and Environmental Risk

a. Technical Feasibility

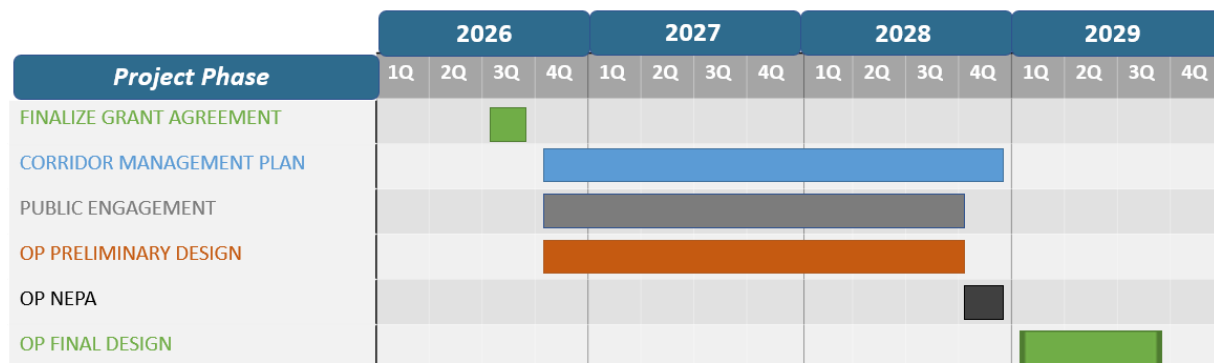
The project is technically feasible. The Tribe owns the land in fee status and environmental resource surveys have been completed for OP. The Tourism Department and Visitor Center buildings, parking lots and access road are planned for a location which minimizes environmental impacts and has convenient access to BIA 27 and utilities. Significant work to map the CHSB and its intrinsic properties has been completed by OSTDOT. The Project is committed to comply with all Title VI/Civil Rights requirements. The detailed scope of work is outlined in the detailed project budget.

b. Project Schedule

OST has long identified the need for the Project. It is anticipated that should planning grant funding be awarded, planning activities can be completed within 36 months from the funding

obligation. Following the completion of final design plans and specifications, construction is projected to take place in several phases due to the cost and size of the project.

Project Schedule



c. Required Approvals

i. Environmental Permits and Reviews

Based on completed environmental resource surveys at OP, it has already been determined that impact to wetlands will be minimal and mitigated, and a US Army Corps of Engineers 404 Nationwide Permit will be required. No cultural resources were found, and the project will require concurrence with the OST Tribal Historic Preservation Office. It is anticipated a Categorical Exclusion checklist will be required and will be submitted to the FHWA TTP Environmental Coordinator for review and approval. Right-of-way of the access road and parking lots will be granted by the Oglala Sioux Tribe who is the landowner and documents will be submitted to Oglala Lakota County register of deeds for recording. The access roads and parking lots will be added to the National Tribal Transportation Facilities Inventory. State environmental approvals are not required. No environmental permits or approvals will be required for the CMP.

ii. State and Local Approvals

The CHSB is identified in the OST Long Range Transportation Plan and Tribal approval of the project is in the form of the TTIP. A feasibility study has been completed for OP and a market study has been completed for tourism development along the CHSB. Tribal agencies, such as OSTDOT, OSTCFP, Tribal Transit, Tribal Tourism, THPO, Tribal Biologist, and Natural Resources will be consulted during the development of the CMP. A proposal for state designation of the CHSB was submitted to SDDOT in May 2020, however approval of state designation is not needed for the CMP within the Reservation. Coordination with the SDDOT throughout the CMP development will be conducted for the state-owned CHSB roads within the Reservation. No state legislative approvals are needed for the Project. The Oglala Sioux Tribal Council will be the final approver of the CMP.

FOR OP, the OSTDOT will provide engineering plan review documents and final PS&E to FHWA. The OP access road will connect to BIA 27 and an approach is approved by OSTDOT, who has jurisdiction over BIA roads. There will not be a connection to US 18 with this project therefore, no approach permit from SDDOT will be needed.

iii. Federal Transportation Requirements Affecting State and Local Planning

The Oglala Sioux Tribe is a direct-funded FHWA agreement Tribe and adheres to all FHWA TTP requirements including required updates to the 5-year TTIP. The 2025-2029 TTIP includes this Project on the illustrative list which can be amended and obligated when funding is awarded.

iv. Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

The Project is considered low-risk. The Project is currently being managed by OSTCFP staff who will lead planning and preconstruction and liaison with the consultant engineer.

V. Statutorily Required Project Selections and FHWA Priority Selection Considerations

The Project addresses the following Statutorily Required Project Selections and FHWA Priority Selection Considerations:

Intended to Foster the Development of a Corridor Management Plan: OST will develop a corridor management plan of the Crazy Horse Scenic Byway.

Obligation Deadline: Because the project is for planning and preconstruction activities, the OST would be able to obligate a grant agreement by either September 1, 2026 (for FY2023 funds) or September 1, 2027 (for FY204 funds), whichever works best for the NSBP.

Development of an Indian Tribe Scenic Byway: The Project is associated with an Indian Tribe Scenic Byway.

Advances Two or More of the NSBP Goals: As referenced in the Merit section, the proposed project will achieve Safety, Reinvesting in the American Family, and Workforce Development, Job Quality, and Wealth Creation.

Cost Share: OSTDOT will provide a match amount above the required twenty percent using TTP funds.

References

¹ <https://sdnativetourismalliance.org/>, <https://sdnativetourismalliance.org/native-american-tourism-development-management-plan-south-dakota-2020-2025/>

² 2021 Tribal Transportation Safety Plan pg.6, Report can be found at <https://inputcentral.com/ostnsbp>

³ <https://www.firstpeoplesfund.org/market-study>

⁴ Pine Ridge Area Chamber of Commerce Report of Workforce and Business Development 2018 can be found at: <https://inputcentral.com/ostnsbp>

⁵ International Institute of Tourism Studies. (2020) Native American Tourism Development & Management Plan: South Dakota 2020-2025. The George Washington University, Washington D.C. pg. 66-67.