

# South Rim - Tusayan Multimodal Transportation Action Plan

The entrance to the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park is one of the busiest single entrances to a park in the world. Total visitation to the park has increased sharply by 1.8 million over the last 5 years, culminating in a record 6.35 million visitors in 2018.

In recognition of the challenge posed by the resulting congestion in and around Tusayan and the south entrance to the park, a collaborative group made up of Grand Canyon-South Rim Chamber of Commerce, Grand Canyon National Park, Kaibab National Forest, Town of Tusayan and Paul Revere Transportation formed in 2017. Along with community partners, they sought to better understand the current situation, assess driving factors and explore possible solutions.



## Project Purpose

Enhance the quality, extent, and use of multimodal transportation options between Tusayan and the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park to benefit visitors, residents, service providers, community members, and park resources.

## Outcomes

The **South Rim – Tusayan Multimodal Transportation Action Plan** contains a series of tangible actions for implementation over the next 5 years.

The strategy contained in the plan includes

45 prioritized actions presented under four themes. Some represent current efforts that have proven effective and are recommended for continuation. Others have already been launched during the preparation of the plan, while a substantial number require concerted action by one or more parties. Nearly all of the recommendations sit on the foundation of existing, approved plans.



## KEY OBSERVATIONS

The project team worked with local businesses, transportation authorities and park and forest staff to identify trends affecting congestion.

- **Rising Visitation.** Total visitation to Grand Canyon National Park is up sharply. This follows a period of robust, but relatively predictable, visitation from 1993 to 2013.
- **Steady South Rim Popularity.** The South Rim via Tusayan is welcoming a steady share of overall park visitors, accounting for nearly 80% of the total.
- **The Time of Year Formerly Known as the "Off-Season".** Visitors are arriving in greater numbers outside the traditional summer season. This is especially pronounced during the winter holidays. November visitation in 2018 increased by nearly 90% compared to November 2013.
- **More Frequent Backups.** Traffic headed to the rim is straining Highway 64 due to long vehicle queues and backups at the park entrance station. These waits average over 20 minutes and occur about 30 days each year.



- **Tusayan Shuttle Ridership has Room to Grow.** The shuttle system is a critical part of managing visitors at the South Rim, but a relatively small portion of trips into the south entrance - less than 4%- are made on the Tusayan Route.
- **Investment Beyond Grand Canyon Village.** Recreational and cultural destinations outside the highest use areas are improving including a new Tusayan community trail system, rededicated Desert View Intertribal Cultural Heritage Site, and a renovated Ten X campground.

**For more information:** Laura Chastain, Grand Canyon - South Rim Chamber of Commerce [laura.chastain@grandcanyoncvb.org](mailto:laura.chastain@grandcanyoncvb.org); Pamela Edwards, Grand Canyon National Park [Pamela\\_Edwards@nps.gov](mailto:Pamela_Edwards@nps.gov); Eric Duthie - Town of Tusayan [tusayantownmanager@gmail.com](mailto:tusayantownmanager@gmail.com).

This project received support from the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program.

**The South Rim-Tusayan Multimodal Action Plan recommendations fall under four primary themes:**

### **INFRASTRUCTURE, SAFETY AND OPERATIONS**

Provide a safe, attractive, and convenient shuttle service from Tusayan to the South Rim that makes a compelling case for visitors to leave their vehicle behind.

### **PROMOTION AND VISITOR SERVICES**

Use programs such as the Tusayan Ambassadors to reach visitors at every phase of their journey—from months before their trip to their arrival in Tusayan—to improve their understanding of travel options and help them make the most of their visit.



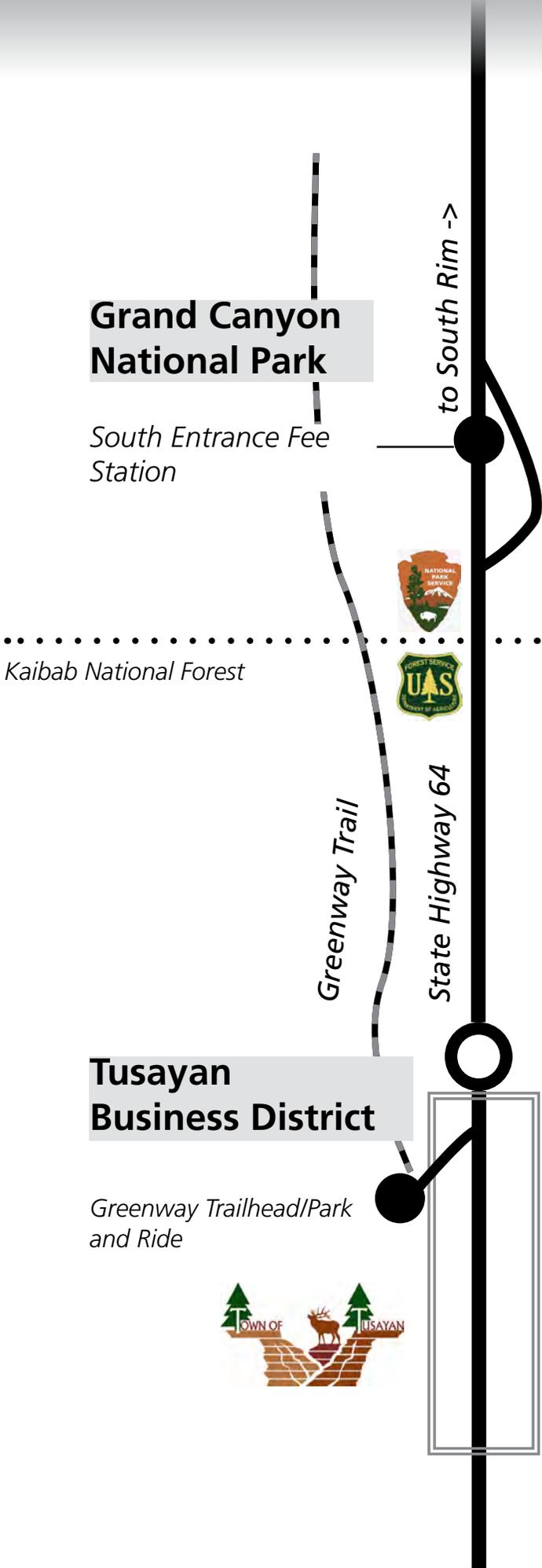
### **VISITOR EXPERIENCE ON TWO WHEELS**

Provide services and information that make bicycling a viable and enjoyable way to visit Grand Canyon National Park by further integrating Tusayan with the South Rim's Greenway and bicycle transportation system.

### **A REGIONAL APPROACH**

Recognize the South Rim and Tusayan as part of a regional system of attractions by encouraging visitor access through Cameron and Desert View as well as enjoyment of the Kaibab National Forest's diverse offerings.





## Key strategies by location

See the South Rim - Tusayan Multimodal Transportation Action Plan for the full list of 45 recommended actions

### Within the Park

**Increase Park/Community Coordination and Targeting in Marketing Efforts**

### Park-Community Connections

**Improve the Greenway Trail**

**Extend Tusayan Shuttle Schedule (Mar 1 to Nov 30)**

**Monitor Frequency and Intensity of Backups**

### In Tusayan

**Improve Pedestrian Safety**

**Support Visitor Way-finding via the New Tusayan Ambassadors Program**

**Encourage a New Bike Rental Service**

**Enhance Kaibab National Forest Recreation**

### Prior to Visitor Arrival

**Leverage Digital Products - Videos, Webcams and Trip Planning**

**Encourage Increased Use of Entry via Cameron/Desert View**