



ElCaT
STRATEGIC PLAN
October 2021 - October 2026



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE - NATIONAL TRAILS INTERMOUNTAIN REGION

EL CAMINO REAL DE LOS TEJAS NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL ASSOCIATION

Strategic Plan 2021 – 2026 _ ANNUAL WORK PLANNING DOCUMENT _ REVIEW ANNUALLY

In Partnership with
The National Park Service – National Trails Intermountain Region

MISSION: El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association seeks to protect the historic integrity of the trail, to educate and engage the public about its significance, and to promote resource development, interpretation, and tourism along its path.

VISION:

- For the trail:

El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT is a nationally recognized and protected cultural resource connecting nations, cultures and places through time.

- For the association:

ELCAT is a champion for the trail and achieves its work through the strength of its volunteers, partners, and staff.

VALUES:

- Collaboration

- To preserve and protect shared resources
- To leverage expertise of partners, sharing best practices
- To provide access to federal, state, and local governmental resources

- Communication

- Inform partners and users about trail resources and opportunities
- Listen to diverse constituents
- Stay on message

- Trust and Respect for

- Authentication of Trail Resources
- Governance processes
- Partners
- Landowner's property rights and autonomy over property
- Voluntary landowner participation in trail and association activities

GOALS/STRATEGIES/ACTIVITIES:

STRATEGY	ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME FOR COMPLETION	PROJECT LEAD	What physical/human/financial resources do you need to accomplish this activity?	STATUS (update quarterly)	Comments
Goal 1: Build capacity to further enhance the organization's sustainability						
Strategy 1: Identify diverse funding priorities and pursue appropriate funding pathways	Activity 1: Develop and implement a coordinated plan for requesting memberships/sponsorships from members and volunteers, statewide and local businesses, and other stakeholders	January 2022	Development Cttee & Exec. Dir.			
	Activity 2: Pursue grants for project-specific needs	Ongoing/Per project	Dev. Cttee, EICaT Cttees as relevant to their charge, Board Members, Exec. Dir., Volunteers			Utilize Grant Foundation spreadsheet for potential funders.
	Activity 3: Every two years beginning 2023 a banquet or other event in Austin to invite legislators and their constituents (our membership)	January 2023	Development Cttee, To be hired Development Staffer	To engage elected officials and agency representatives on an annual basis to get them involved in trail protection and development. Seek additional funding support from State and Federal officials in the administration of the trail. Outline process. Seek funders for contracting with professional organizer. Conduct event during 2023 Texas Legislative Session		
	Activity 4: Organize an annual run or cycling event	January 2023	Development Cttee, To be hired Development Staffer	To engage community members and officials to take part in an activity on the trail such as a marathon or 5K or a cycling event. Could be held in conjunction with annual banquet. Outline process. Seek funders for contracting with professional organizer. Conduct event during 2023 Texas Legislative Session		
	Activity 5: Conduct outreach with state officials to obtain state-level funding support for the organization	January 2023	Development Committee, Community Relations Committee			

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	Activity 6: Conduct outreach with federal officials for increased federal funding for trail and association	Annually beginning January 2023	Development Committee, Executive Director, To be hired Development person, Board and Volunteers			
Strategy 2: Improve organizational structure for more effective operation	Activity 1: Hire Development person	October 2022	Executive Director, Development Committee			For community relations, making legislative and corporate connections, organizing public fundraising events
	Activity 2: Engage paid, part-time administrative employee	October 2021	President, Exec. Director			20 hrs. per week @ \$15.50 per hour for general administrative duties within EICaT office
	Activity 3: Provide leadership training/team building for board members	As needed	Executive Committee			
	Activity 4: Develop Exec Dir evaluation; execute annually	January 2022	Governance; Executive Committee			
	Activity 5: Endowment fund	January 2022	Development Committee, Lucinda Freeman(Consult with bank trust source(s)" to administer and advise on endowment: e.g., board connection to bank in Victoria. On website we need to have a checking account payment option and a drop-down option for endowment donations.

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Goal 2: Elevate the identity of El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT as a recognizable, significant historical asset for users and stakeholders						
Strategy 1: Develop communications plan that includes branding and messaging for specific audiences, including potential funders	Activity 1: Research similar organizations to build ideas to develop a cohesive plan	January 2024 with initial efforts beginning Fall 2021 with volunteer initiative	Exec. Dir. & Comm. Rel. Cttee			
Strategy 2: Expand educational and outreach opportunities for targeted audiences	Activity 1: Expand speaking opportunities by training selected board members, members/volunteers, and agency officials to present programs	Completion of all elements by January 2024	Exec. Dir. & Comm. Rel. Cttee			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create common program materials – talking points, PowerPoint, etc. 	Completed Fall 2019				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Train board members and members/volunteers to present programs 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Co-brand activities with agency partners for education and outreach 					
	Activity 2: Create regular activities for public to engage in in order to promote the trail and association "to be hired" development person	Ongoing beginning 2022	Community Relations; Development Director / Committee, Executive Director		Work with committees, MTCs and volunteers to outline potential activities for public engagement on a regular and annual basis	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regular community-specific activities such as hikes, presentations, cleanups, and other events / initiatives may be led / organized by MTC chapters, individual volunteers, and others 		MTC Chapters, Individual volunteers, and others			

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	Actively solicit community-based opportunities to present programs and other visual and performing arts activities (e.g. murals and performances via CHC/historical societies, outdoor organizations, museums, artists, and other partners, etc.)		MTC Chapters, Individual volunteers, and others			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trailwide public fundraising event – brewery, winery, or restaurant fundraising initiative 	Ongoing beginning 2022				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly birding events across trail 	Ongoing beginning 2022				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with naturalists 	Ongoing beginning 2022				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage public in America 250 	Ongoing beginning 2023			Culminate in 2026	
	Activity 3: Develop and prioritize opportunities for visitor access to publicly and privately-held trail sites	April 2019	Comm. Rel. Cttee			
Strategy 3: Create a structured, volunteer-driven, collaborative community approach to enrich and sustain local trail experiences	Activity 1: Engage professional community development expertise via NPS – Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance initiatives	January 2024	Exec. Dir. & Comm. Rel. Cttee			
	Activity 2: Promote Model Trail Community development	Ongoing beginning January 2022	Community Relations Cttee, Development Cttee, Executive Director, Board members and volunteers		Engage the volunteer public to initiate trail projects and developments at local levels. Increase membership base and capacity of EICaT.	
	Activity 3: Build robust Volunteer effort	Ongoing with enhanced emphasis in 2022 and 2023.	Community Relations Cttee, Executive Director, Board		Develop volunteer effort via MTC chapter, board, and otherwise	

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			members and volunteers			
	Activity 4: Work with local communities and NPS to sign official routes of the trail	Ongoing	Exec. Dir., MTCs, and Comm. Rel. Cttee			
	Activity 5: Honorary association members	January 2023	Governance Cttee			Expansion of Honorary member definition in bylaws to include donors and others.
Strategy 4: Expand engagement through enhanced use of social media and regular email communications						
	Activity 1: Create YouTube page for educating the public and interested parties (e.g. Chapters, historical commissions, conservation orgs, funders, educational orgs, etc.) Activity 2: Quarterly newsletter. Include parts of it for social media.	January 2022	Development; Community Relations, Executive Director			
Goal 3: Facilitate the identification and protection of authentic sites and segments						
Strategy 1: Acquire and/or engage other means of protection of properties	Activity 1: Identify and prioritize sites/segments and include on a private database	June 2025	Resource Prot. Cttee & Executive Dir.			
	Activity 2: Identify threatened resources	Beginning Fall 2021 and ongoing	Resource Prot. Cttee, Executive Director			
	Activity 3: Evaluate the potential acquisition and/or creation of buffer zones/easements for selected threatened sites/segments	June 2026	Resource Prot. Cttee, Executive Director			

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	Activity 4: Determine need / requirements for becoming a Land Trust	Completion by June 2026 with certification and training done if approved by Board	Resource Protection, Community Relations, Executive Director			
	Activity 5: Prioritize trail sites for protection & public access (acquisition / easements / etc) via a private GIS database	June 2025	Resource Protection; Community Relations, Executive Director			Work with volunteers and partners to identify trail sites for protection and development for public access
Strategy 2: Develop a trail protection program to help landowners become good stewards	Activity 1: Develop volunteer stewardship program for resource protection, awareness, and monitoring site conditions	January 2026	Resource Prot. Cttee & Comm. Rel. Cttee.			
	Activity 2: Engage multiple landowners to assist in implementation of stewardship program	October 2026	Resource Prot. Cttee Comm. Rel. Cttee., Executive Director			
	Activity 3: Encourage participation in NPS Certification Program, THC Marker Program, and Louisiana Marker Program	Ongoing with increased activity beginning October 2022	Resource Prot. Cttee, Comm. Rel. Cttee, Executive Director			
	Activity 4: Independent of Land Trust decision, develop a plan and a process for trail acquisition	June 2025	Resource Protection; Community Relations, Executive Director			Work with NPS, agency partners, PNTS volunteers, and others to develop a plan / process for acquisition