

CHAPTER 6 TOURISM AND THE VISITOR ECONOMY



VISION

Limon’s location at the intersection of Interstate 70, and Highways 24, 40, 71, and 287, provides steady traveler traffic with an estimated 80,000 overnight visitors to Limon in 2014. Yet many lodging guests spend the night in their hotel room and fail to venture into downtown Limon to explore. Strategic marketing and investments that increase the number of visitors who go downtown will benefit Limon’s economy by bringing outside money into the town and increasing revenues for local businesses and the town. Successful growth will require coordinated efforts among tourist businesses, the Town of Limon, Limon Chamber of Commerce, Lincoln County Tourism Board and Lincoln County Economic Development Corporation. This plan element is centered around this goal:

Goal ED.3 - Entice interchange visitors and lodging guests to explore Limon.

GOAL ED.3 - ENTICE INTERCHANGE VISITORS AND LODGING GUESTS TO EXPLORE LIMON.

Background Information

Limon has 12 hotels/motels, two RV parks and the Limon KOA which offers cabin rentals, RV and ground camping, providing lodging options for all types of travelers. They also have 16 restaurants offering a variety of dining options and a recently upgraded grocery store. The town has a number of recreation and heritage assets for visitors including Tamarack Golf Course, Railroad Park, the Limon Pool, Lincoln Theatre, Lincoln Lanes, and the Limon Heritage Museum & Railroad Depot.

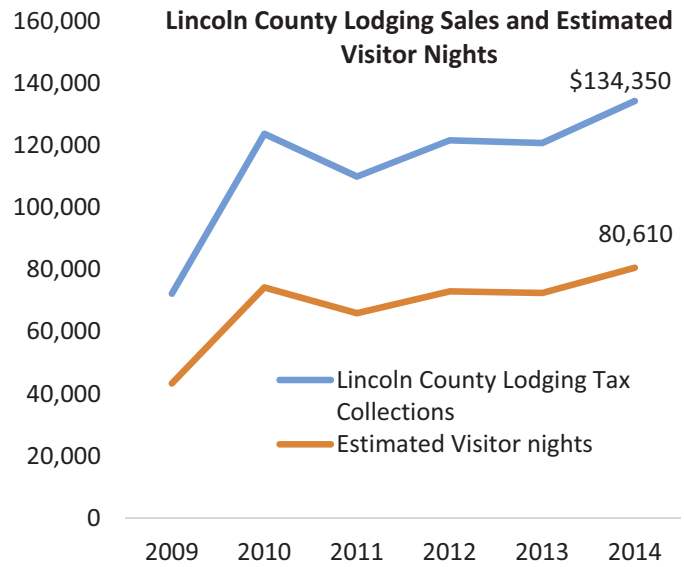
Limon has two interchanges with Interstate 70, one on the east side of town and one on the west side. There are 11,000 Average Annual Daily Trips (AADT) on Interstate 70 in Limon according the Colorado Department of Transportation. There are 3,200 more daily trips on Highway 24 near the west I-70 interchange than on Highway 24 than near the east I-70 interchange indicating that more people are entering and exiting Limon at the west interchange.

Highway	Average Annual Daily Trips 2014
Hwy 24 Near East Interchange	4,400
Hwy 24 Near West Interchange	7,600
Hwy 24 South	2,500
71 South	2,700
71 North	1,500 - 1,900
I 70 West	11,000
Main Street Downtown	7,000

The west interchange is well designed for visitors and pass through traffic. Businesses are visible from the interstate and easily accessible. There are hotels, gas stations and restaurants clustered just off the west interchange. The east interchange is not as orderly or user friendly as the west interchange. Businesses off the east interchange are not clearly visible from the interstate and the area has less visual appeal than the west interchange.



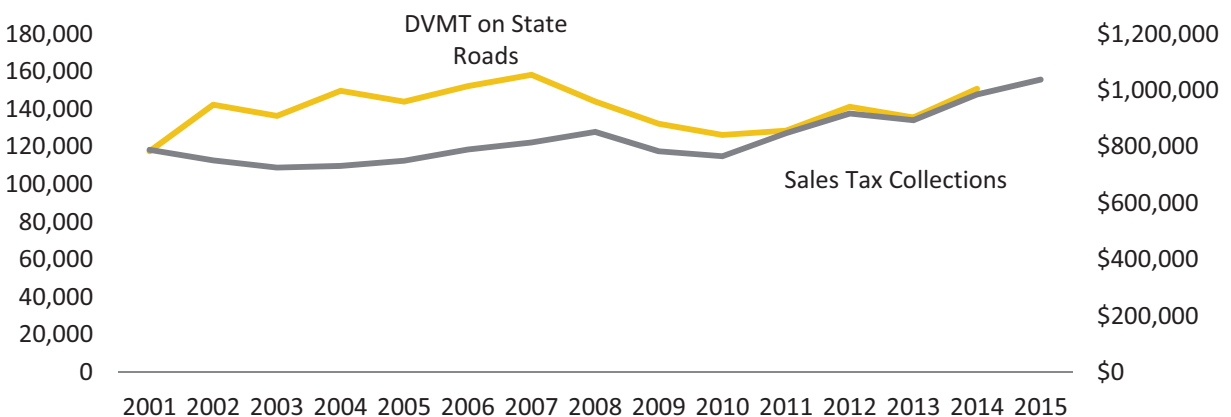
There are a number of attractions for both visitors and pass through traffic in the downtown area including lodging, restaurants, the grocery store, the movie theater and local retail stores, but downtown is not getting the visitors it could. Main Street near downtown has 7,000 AADT. This seems like a lot but in reality many of the trips are from locals not visitors. Visitors to the interchanges have no visual clues to inform them of what downtown has to offer nor how to get downtown. Most visitors to the interchanges get back on the I-70 and the highways and never realize that there is a historic downtown in Limon and other recreational amenities and heritage attractions.



By using Lincoln County lodging tax collections data from 2014 analysts calculated an estimated 80,000 overnight visitors in Limon in 2014. Lodging tax revenues have increased since 2009 showing an increase in overnight visitors to Limon.

Sales tax collections in Lincoln County and the traffic on major highways appear to be directly related and tend to rise and fall together. If the town increases its efforts to get highway traffic to stop and visit Limon, then local businesses and the Town of Limon will see increased revenues as well.

Lincoln County DVMT and Sales Tax Collections - Colorado Department of Transportation and Revenue



With 14 accommodation and 16 dining options and a number of recreation and entertainment assets for visitors to Limon there is an opportunity for the Town of Limon to coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce and local business owners to market the



restaurants, recreation opportunities, and local retail businesses to overnight visitors. During the Visitor Economy Workshop local restaurant and accommodations business owners and managers were supportive of working together to better promote Downtown Limon. Workshop attendees identified providing accommodation businesses with tear-out maps of Limon with attractions and businesses labelled, and offering incentives for personal referrals as two affordable ways to encourage overnight visitors to explore downtown.

Accommodations in Limon	Dining Options in Limon	Visitor Recreation and Entertainment Assets
Midwest Country Inn Quality Inn and Suites Limon Motel Super 8 Motel Tyme Square Inn & Suites Limon Mobile Home & RV Park 1 st Inn Gold Comfort Inn Econolodge Holiday Inn & Suites Express K&S Motel and RV Park Coyote East Limon KOA Safari Motel	Arby's Country Pride Denny's Flying J –Take Out Pizza Golden China IHop @ Flying J Travel Plaza Jenny's Mexican Restaurant Limon Stop and Shop (Deli and Grocery Store) Loaf N Jug –Takeout Pizza McDonalds Oscar's Bar & Grill Pizza Hut Ruby's Subway Southside Wendy's	Lincoln Theatre Lincoln Lanes Limon Heritage Museum & Railroad Depot Tamarack Golf Course Limon Municipal Pool Railroad Park Skate Park Ballfields South Limon Park Gun Club Kissel Fishing Pond Wetlands Pedestrian Trail

STRATEGIES

Strategy A - Establish a consistent streetscape with visual clues that encourage motorists to leave the interstate and lead motorists and pedestrians from the west and east I-70 interchange commercial areas to downtown including: consistent plantings and pedestrian walkways/pathways, consistent lighting, banners, directional signage and other visual clues to direct and entice more people to Limon's town core.

Strategy B - Improve gateway signage at the west and east interchanges and develop tourist-oriented and way-finding directional signage towards downtown Limon, historic sites, parks, recreation facilities, open space and cultural resources.

Strategy C - Work with the Chamber of Commerce, and other local organizations, to organize materials and talking points for lodging front desk managers and restaurant clerks to inform visitors about Downtown Limon and the historic sites, parks and recreation facilities, open space and cultural resources offered in Limon.



Strategy D – Work with local economic development organizations to create a targeted tourism marketing plan to entice visitors staying at interchange area hotels to explore Downtown Limon and its historic sites, parks and recreation facilities, open space, trail connections and cultural resources.

Strategy E – Develop a strategic marketing plan and implement it through web and print materials, and coordinated outreach by taking the following steps:

1. Identify target markets
2. Develop a brand and message that speak to the target market
3. Create and compile marketing materials, including web and print materials
4. Develop an outreach plan

