

### **3.3. Present a seamless and border-less visitor experience in all visitor information**

This Strategic Action strengthens Montana's tourism product development and marketing efforts.

#### **Recommended Tactics**

##### **TAC, MTOT**

- » Examine the rules and regulations governing Regions and CVBs. Make modifications as necessary and appropriate to facilitate closer coordination.
- » Actively support cross-region cooperative efforts by the tourism community to facilitate itineraries along natural travel paths.

##### **MTOT, Regions, CVBs, Communities, Tribes**

- » Evaluate visitor information and trip planning tools for seamlessness from the visitor's perspective, particularly between adjoining Regions and along primary travel corridors.
- » Within visitor information, ensure that each town is placed in the context of nearby towns, attractions, activities, and transportation (see Strategic Action 3.1), including those across Regional boundaries.
- » Ensure that information for each town always incorporates holistically those assets and amenities that lie outside the city limits, for example dining, accommodations, activities, or services.

#### **Indicators of Success**

- » Visitor information is seamless and has user-friendly functionality across Regions for trip planning.
- » Regions and CVBs undertake effective cooperative efforts across Regional boundaries.
- » Visitor information for towns is inclusive of outlying tourism assets.

#### **Background & Rationale**

Providing visitor information in a seamless and cohesive way is particularly challenging because the visitor experience is a composite product that often crosses city, county, and regional boundaries. Meeting visitor information needs without creating artificial barriers in the mind of the visitor is essential for converting potential visitors and facilitating trip planning.

In addition, research has shown that tourism websites that are enjoyable predispose the visitor to a positive perception of the destination itself and build expectations of a positive travel experience, while websites that cause frustration predispose visitors to negative perceptions of the destination and the visitor experience. Visitor information sites, therefore, must not only make comprehensive information available, but must do so in a user friendly way.

The administrative boundaries of city limits or tourism Regions are irrelevant to the non-resident visitor. To the extent that the traveler cannot obtain visitor information or plan an itinerary across these boundaries, the attractiveness of Montana as a destination (and its competitiveness) will be reduced.

From the perspective of a Region, CVB, or Chamber of Commerce, however, the administrative boundaries create very real and tangible constraints through rules, regulations, and budgetary constraints. A strong commitment to reducing the negative effects of these boundaries for the visitor must be accompanied by (i) realistic expectations and (ii) a strong commitment to aligning administrative processes to support (or not impede) that goal.