

Santa Fe County Open Space, Trails and Parks

Annual Work Plan

2026

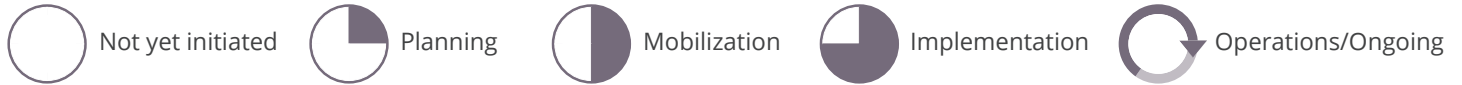


SANTA FE COUNTY
OPEN SPACE
TRAILS AND PARKS



2026 Work Plan

This work plan outlines the 2026 projects and priorities for the Open Space, Trails and Parks program. The work plan is organized by sections consistent with the Open Space, Trails and Parks Strategic Management Plan. Each project has an indicator icon to show progress. Highlighted projects are priorities of the County Open Lands, Trails and Parks Advisory Committee (COLTPAC) for 2026.



Resource Management

- Continue drafting and updating property management plans with a focus on the **Ortiz Mountains, San Pedro and Bobcat Crossing Ranch Open Spaces**
- Compile a database of baseline environmental surveys and monitoring
- Complete Phase I of the forest resiliency project at **Ortiz Mountains Open Space**
- Continue remediating erosional features on open space properties with volunteers
- Continue implementing species-related management plans (e.g. pollinator, beaver, invasive species)
- Continue preventative maintenance measures on open spaces, trails and parks
- Continue partnering with wildlife rehabilitation organizations to facilitate wildlife releases on open space properties
- Continue partnering with SiteWatch, a program of the NM Historic Preservation Division, to monitor culturally significant sites on open space properties
- Continue partnering with the Santa Fe Conservation Trust and other volunteer trail groups to maintain the County's singletrack trail network
- Continue patrolling trails and open spaces to monitor for cultural and natural resource protection, trail maintenance needs, and visitor assistance

Educational Programming and Stewardship

- Explore creative opportunities to boost public access to interpretation with limited interpretive staff, for example by developing audio and/or virtual tours for popular trails
- Facilitate the 2026 Northern New Mexico Master Naturalist course in partnership with the Randall Davey Audubon Center & Sanctuary and Santa Fe Botanical Garden
- Hire and provide on-the-job training to at least one interpretive intern

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- Continue developing and implementing interpretive programming for open space and trail properties with a focus on guided hikes in the **Ortiz Mountains Open Space**, natural and cultural history at **Arroyo Hondo Open Space**, and connecting the public to open spaces and trails through art-based programming
- Continue increasing public awareness and communication about the Open Space, Trails and Parks program by creating and disseminating digital and print resources such as brochures and maps
- Continue partnering with volunteers and youth organizations to assist with the stewardship of open space properties, including growing the involvement of volunteers in interpretation and visitor services
- Continue designing and installing interpretive exhibits and signage with a focus on the **Rail Trail**, **El Camino Real Trail**, **Arroyo Hondo Open Space**, and general trail etiquette, and continue implementing the Signage Plan
- Continue patrolling public trails and providing “roving” interpretation and educational opportunities for trail users

Project Development and Implementation

- Complete the construction of the **Arroyo Hondo Trail** from the Turquoise Trail subdivision to Richards Ave. Begin the design of the next section of trail from NM 14 to the NM 599 Rail Runner Station
- Begin the construction of the **Avenida Azul Trail** from Avenida Vista Grande to Encantado Loop in Eldorado
- Begin the design of the **Highway 14 Scenic Byway Trail** along NM 14 from the Adult Detention Facility to the Arroyo Hondo Trail at NM 14
- Complete the design and begin construction of the porous road at **Los Potreros Open Space** to enhance wetland connectivity while improving access for neighboring landowners and acequia maintenance
- Complete the design of the **Madrid Walk** project in partnership with community members and stakeholders to establish a pedestrian safety corridor
- Complete the design and begin the construction of the floodplain restoration project at **Rio en Medio Open Space**
- Identify a near-term solution for a new trailhead access point for **Rio en Medio Trail**, in partnership with community members and stakeholders
- Continue collaborating with the NM Outdoor Recreation Division to plan for the alignment of the **Rio Grande Trail** through Santa Fe County

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- Begin the design of Phase III of **Romero Park**, which will include new turf fields, tennis courts and pickleball courts
- Begin the master plan for the development of trails and other recreational amenities at **San Pedro Open Space**
- Complete the construction of the **Santa Fe Rail Trail** from Spur Ranch Road to US 285, including a new trailhead off US 285. Begin the design of the Rail Trail across US 285 to County Road 33 in Lamy.
- Complete the construction of the **Santa Fe River Trail** from Siler Road to San Ysidro Crossing, including a new trailhead off Siler Road. Begin the design of the next section of trail from Caja del Oro Grant Road to Cottonwood Drive.
- Begin the design of the trail system at **Thornton Ranch Open Space** in coordination with tribal partners
- Begin the construction of the **Turquoise Trail extension** from Rancho Viejo Blvd and NM 14 to the NM 599 Rail Runner Station

Planning and Program Development

- Seek funding for and begin updating the strategic plan for the Open Space, Trails and Parks program, including elements such as funding, program structure, staffing levels, level of service, and program priorities such as strategic acquisitions, trail connectivity, trail access and habitat corridors
- Explore the creation of a “Friends Group” to assist with fundraising and stewardship
- Seek funding for and begin developing a long-range interpretive plan for the Open Space Ranger program to enhance opportunities for public access and engagement with open spaces, trails and parks
- Scale up the volunteer program to engage more community members in a wider variety of stewardship activities
- Integrate the transfer of development rights (TDR) program, as appropriate, into continued efforts to preserve open space properties based on the findings of the 2025 TDR market study
- Complete the staffing plan for the Open Space, Trails and Parks program as the program continues to grow
- Modernize the rules and regulations of County open spaces, trails and parks
- Finalize a policy for the disposition and change of use of open space, trail and park properties