

RESEARCH ON THE CONSTRUCTION THOUGHTS AND COUNTERMEASURES OF TOURISM SCENIC BYWAY IN CHINA

Xing YANG

Transport Planning and Research Institute, Ministry of Transport, Beijing, China

happyx@126.com

ABSTRACT

With the emergence and development of mass tourism, self-drive journey and global tourism strategies, as the main fulcrum supporting the quick development of tourism highway and tourism scenic byway have attracted attention from the whole country. And the construction of tourism highway has been carried out in many places. Under the background of “transportation and tourism are integrated; the benefits of development are shared”, such problems are emphasized by constructors in many places as how to adapt to the developing requirements in new period and new situation, how to play the basic role better in global tourism, how to achieve the function of promoting and improving development of industries along the line and of scenic spots and poverty alleviation, how to meet increasing relative needs of travelers and how to realize the sustainable development.

KEYWORDS

Tourism highway, Tourism scenic byway, Self-drive journey, Developing thoughts, Developing measures

1. THE APPEAL AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE TIME

With the advent of mass tourism and development of modern tourism industry, the tourism market has increased dramatically. According to the data from national tourism administration, the number of China’s tourists was up to 4.56 billion and equivalent to 3.3 times per 1.36 billion population to go for a travel in 2016. The number of domestic tourists was up to 4.44 billion, accounting for 97.4% of the total number. In 2016, the total national tourism consumption was 4.66 trillion yuan, which means that every one of our country spent 3,406 yuan on tourism. Tourism transportation is one of the three pillars of tourism and the upsurge of tourism industry is closely connected with tourism transportation. Without modern transportation, there will not be modern tourism. On March 2nd of 2017, some advices on promoting integration of transportation and tourism was jointly issued by Ministry of Transport, National Tourism Administration, National Railway Administration, China Civil Aviation Administration, China Railway Corporation and China Development Bank. It fully indicates the basic supporting and strategic role of transportation in the development of tourism and comes up with relative measures and suggestions on the joint development of transportation and tourism, laying the foundation for transportation to serve the global tourism better.

The construction of expressway network and the implementation of toll free for passenger cars on holidays make self-driving cars become the important travelling means. As one of the means of transportation in the destinations of global tourism, highway accounts for more than 70%, which is the key link of tourism transportation in the time of mass tourism and global tourism. The high-quality, dynamic and personalized travelling needs have raised higher requirements for construction and service quality of tourism highway. All the signs show that tourism transportation, especially tourism highway has become the best tong of performing supply-side potential, improving tourism industry level and promoting the transformation development of transportation industry in the economic transformation period of China. In the stage where transportation develops quickly and expressway occupies the first place, establishing state-level tourism highway with Chinese brand and characteristics and creating new name cards for highway tourism become the new tong of pushing global tourism in the new period.

2. THE EVOLUTION OF TOURISM HIGHWAY

Compared with highway, tourism highway is a relatively new concept. It is the product of modern tourism and modern highway, which has only a history of half century (calculated from 1960s when modern tourism industry emerged) and whose history in China is shorter. In recent years, many scholars have explored the conception of tourism highway. A number of domestic cases analyses understand and clarify it from the perspective of transportation function and see it as transport corridor serving tourism resources. For a long time, two kinds of conception of tourism highway have been accepted: generalized and narrow conception. The former refers to the highway with double functions of transport and landscape appreciation and it can lead to scenic areas and connect scenic spots, which meets tourists' aesthetic needs and provides them service infrastructure meeting their physical and psychological needs. As to the narrow conception, it can be divided into tourism trunk highway and tourism scenic highway. The former can connect many scenic spots and it is with natural and human landscape. It can be transformed from state-level and provincial trunk highway. The latter refers to the highway in or out of scenic spots and mainly serves tourists. Its characteristic of landscape is obvious.

Since 2003, under the guidance of new ideas of highway design being typical of "six insistences and six establishing", a lot of tourism highways being typical of Chuanjiu Road, Sixiao Road and Hubei Shenyi Road appeared. Their constructions are mainly major projects, emphasizing the integration and coordination of highway and natural environment and stressing "naturalness, environmental protection, safety and comfortability". Since the 12nd Five Year Plan, with quick development of tourism industry and personalized and dynamic growth of people's needs, tourism highway is endowed with new characteristics and connotation. New constructing thoughts and patterns can promote the development of transport industry and tourism industry.

3. CONCEPTION DISCRIMINATION

Since 2016, several files were issued by NDRC and national tourism administration and the conception of tourism scenic byway was repeatedly mentioned. The connection and difference between tourism scenic byway and tourism highway are worth being explored.

3.1 Tourism scenic byway

Scenic byway is a special landscape road with values of transport, landscape, resting, history, culture, nature and cultural relics. As the birthplace, major practical place and researching place, America has highly emphasized the construction of scenic byway since 1980s. As some acts of scenic byway and plans of national scenic byway were issued successively, the normative, scaled and quick development of American scenic byway was effectively promoted. According to regulations and norms of American scenic byway plan, America selected 32 All American Roads and 133 Federal Scenic Byways in 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002 and 2005 and established American National Scenic Byway comprised by All American Road, Federal Scenic Byway and Interstate Scenic Byway.

The conception of scenic byway is both generalized and narrow. From the generalized point of view, it has both transport and landscape appreciation function, while from the narrow point of view, it mainly refers to landscape roads with aesthetic, natural, cultural, historical and archaeological values and can be preserved, repaired, protected and improved. All American Road, Federal Scenic Byway and Interstate Scenic Byway are evaluated from the six aspects.

Many lessons and experience can be learned from the development of American scenic byway. The first is strategy of “gallery” and “growing axis”. The country should highly stress comprehensive development of roads’ function in transport, landscape, culture and protection. Byways are developed as galleries and are integrated with radiation areas along the line. Then the “growing axis” promoting regional economic development is formed. The second is strategy of “increasing polar”. A series of economic centers and tourism towns are developed through the construction of scenic byway. Besides, tourism industry economic belt and destinations are gradually formed with scenic byway as “growing axis”. The third is to set up rich products pedigree of tourism scenic byway. The change of products development is only the narrow idea of developing roads. It is better to construct wide and rich pedigree whose major products are about scenic byway and tourism trails in order to meet needs of market and promote social and economic development.

3.2 Difference and connection between tourism scenic byway and tourism highway

It can be concluded that tourism highway is to meet tourism transport needs and to connect scenic spots for the constructors. But tourism scenic byway mainly relies on characteristics (including landscape, ecology, rest, archaeology and so on) of resources along the line. After being evaluated by some corresponding norms, the special byway is formed. The two are with

different starting points and perspectives, but the goals and orientations are the same. It can be said that the current tourism highway in China is the rudiment of tourism scenic byway while the tourism scenic byway is the tourism highway with high quality. Besides, it is the overall developing direction and goal of China's future tourism highway.

4. THE DEVELOPING THOUGHTS AND MEASURES OF TOURISM HIGHWAY

At present, many places are constructing highways enthusiastically. For example, Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei will create "boundless grassland tourism byway surrounding Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei". Hebei wants to create "national no. 1 scenic byway", "boundless Taihang", "romantic Bohai", "Jingcheng royal byway" and "Jing Si Bai Du" five branding scenic byways. Zhejiang Province is building "beautiful highway"; Hubei Province and Anhui Province are to construct Dabieshan state-level and cross-province scenic byway; Guizhou Province is to create such tourism highways as Chishui river valley, Wujiang gallery, Libo emerald scenic byway; Hainan Province is to build roundabout tourism highway; Inner Mongolia is to construct 500-mile Tongliao-Ke'erqincultural and scenic byway and Ning will build eastern tourism scenic byway. The author does some research on how to adapt to the new requirements in new time and new situation for China's tourism highway and transform into tourism scenic byway.

4.1 The constructing thought of tourism highway in new period

In the future, China's tourism highway construction will insist "one center", "four combinations" and "five transformations".

"One center": supporting and serving quick development of global tourism

"Four combinations": the combination of tourism highway construction and development with new developing situation of economic society, with new requirements of industrial development, with new routes of developing tourism resources and with travelers' increasing new needs.

"Five transformations": the construction of future tourism highway will be transformed from just meeting transport function to considering the resources' characteristics along the line, from single function to multifunction, from single system to comprehensive system, from "automobiles first" to "cooperation of automobiles and roads; people first" and from "tourism highway" to "highway tourism".

The transformation from just meeting transport function to considering the resources' characteristics along the line: the future tourism highway will not only consider connecting existent scenic areas and scenic spots, meeting tourists' needs of quickly entering scenic areas, but also considering the resources' characteristics along the line, formulating corresponding evaluation criteria of tourism scenic byway, realizing resources' evaluation-oriented tourism scenic byway instead of aiming at connecting scenic areas and scenic spots.

The transformation from single function to multifunction: with the advent of self-driving cars, global tourism and green transportation time, the integrated development of transport, tourism, poverty alleviation and industry becomes inevitable. The tourism highway should break the previous limited thought that roads are roads and realize the functional transformation. The tourism highway should be planned in the larger linear space of galleries. The roads and scenic areas, scenic spots, potential tourism resources, special villages and towns as well as relative industries are created and developed together, forming a tourism highway net system combining transport, tourism, industry and poverty alleviation. The tourism highway will be the bond connecting scenic areas, scenic spots, special villages and cultural relics. At the same time, it will be an important tong of optimizing national land space layout and realizing the overall development of roads, landscape, tourism and industry.

The transformation from single system to comprehensive system: in the past, travelers usually adopt self-driving way in the whole journey and have a rest in partial points. The future development of tourism transport will mainly focus on tourism highway and cooperate with water sightseeing, low-altitude flight and tourism trail transport. A three-dimensional and comprehensive tourism transport system in which exchange of transport means are seamless will be formed. Second, a comprehensive and systematic construction with self-driving system, slow-driving system (including bikeway and walkway), rest and service infrastructure system, traveling signals and signs system, smart travelling system and safety and emergency rescue system.

The transformation from “automobiles first” to “cooperation of automobiles and roads; people first”: the evolution of tourism highway has changed the thought that highway construction just serves trucks. The perspective is transferred to people who use the roads, especially wide needs of travelers. Therefore, the future tourism highway construction will focus on “people first” and “quality of travelling service”. An improved rest and service infrastructure system will be formed by enriching and improving service facilities along the line.

The transformation from “tourism highway” to “highway tourism”: the construction of tourism scenic byway stresses that the highway should be built as a tourism product, such as American No. 66 highway, which makes tourism highway a linear travelling destination and forms rich travelling products along the line. Therefore, the development of China’s future tourism highway should aim at creating highway tourism products and forming wide and rich tourism products in order to direct the development of the tourism highway. On the basis, a tourism pattern oriented by highway transport is needed to be explored. The development and protection of tourism resources are instructed and improved through the construction of tourism construction.

4.2 The constructing measures of the future tourism highway

In recent ten years, China’s tourism highway develops dramatically. At present, it has become the hot spot and focus of highway builders in many places. At the same time, it becomes the

most active market in local infrastructural construction. Various tourism highways are planned and implemented, but meanwhile more and more problems needed to be notices also appear in the process. To promote healthy and sustainable development of tourism highway, the following measures are put forward.

4.2.1 Do top-level design and system construction and strengthen overall planning

It has been a trend to integrate transport and tourism. It is a must to establish corresponding organization and cooperation agency led by Ministry of Transport which cooperates with National Tourism Administration, Ministry of Environmental Protection, Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, Forestry Bureau and Cultural Relics Bureau to set up the management and coordination agency of tourism transport which is in charge of the building and management of tourism transport. Besides, a committee of experts covering various fields should be set up by referring to American evaluation criteria for scenic highway and combining China's concrete situations. The identification and evaluation criteria should be formulated quickly and the demonstration project of national scenic byway should be quickly promoted.

4.2.2 Determining the constructing pattern and criteria for tourism highway as soon as possible

In the future, China's tourism highway will be built and created to meet the requirements of tourism scenic byway. On the basis of state-level transport net, environmental protection of eco-resources and planning of special villages and towns, cars camping and green roads system should be strengthened. By improving rest and transport service facilities and developing galleries alongside the tourism highway, the coordinated development of "transport + tourism + industry + ecology..." protection of special towns and villages will be realized. In the process of promoting the development of tourism highway, local actual situations should be considered to study and formulate constructing thoughts, criteria and patterns of different types of tourism highways.

4.2.3 Improving the types and functions of service facilities step by step.

At present, there is no universal criteria for types, scales and contents of service facilities and they are in the process of exploration and practice. The author thinks that service facilities of future tourism highway can be divided into three types: courier station of cars, viewing recreation area and harbor parking area. The harbor parking area should consider the site conditions to meet needs of temporary parking, buses' entering and short-time viewing. The viewing recreation area with large space should have functions of viewing, rest, stopping, photographing and going to toilet. The courier station of cars is combined with surrounding scenic areas and spots, or with special villages and towns. It can not only provide such services as accommodation, catering, recreation, shopping, emergency rescue and auto repairing. What's more, it can promote development of local towns and tourism industry, actually realizing the

radiating effects which promotes work in all areas by drawing upon the experience gained on key points.

4.2.4 Building a standard system for tourism highway.

It has been a long time since the construction of China's tourism highway, but there is still many shortcomings in the integration of transport facilities and tourism facilities, such as the effective cohesive problem of transport signs, tourism signals and scenic byway signals. Besides, the tourism highway has large space for improvement in informalization, smart building and wise travelling service. In the future, the construction of tourism highway should build a system with traffic signs, the system of special signs and cultural analysis system. At the same time, it should refer to road grades, scenic areas classification and so on to formulate a graded instructing system of traffic signs. What's more, China's tourism highway mainly relies on current national and provincial mainlines and rural highways. Its informalization and smart service facilities are still defective, so it should set up a smart tourism service system including full coverage of WIFI, APP of mobile phones by combining subsequent construction of tourism highway to build an improved system collecting and posting travelling data.

4.2.5 Implementing the green thoughts and sustainable development ideas.

The green highway is the overall direction of the future highway. Therefore, a green thought is a must in the process of developing tourism highway. Thoughts of resources saving, cyclic utilization and ecological and environmental protection should be insisted. For example, Libo emerald scenic byway in Guizhou fully uses existent service facilities alongside the highway to rebuild or co-build highways. It doesn't require fully new building but make full use of existent roads facilities. The resources saving is realized through rebuilding side ditches, planning road marks and determining road rights. Besides, the design and choice of building in cars' courier station are made according to the building philosophy of green service areas, thus achieving energy conservation, low carbon and materials' cyclic utilization.

4.2.6 Establishing a unified organization and management institution.

In the process of constructing the tourism highway, similar difficulties occur, including such fields as departments of transport and tourism, construction of cities and towns, industrial development, ecological environmental protection, forestry development, smart travelling and so on. That which roles should be played by which departments is a real problem. In the future, the construction of China's tourism highway should build an organizational structure led by local government, departments of transport and tourism. The planning, coordination and pushing of many jobs are in the charge of local government, while concrete jobs are implemented by departments of transport and tourism, thus forming joint forces which propel the implementation of tourism byway.

4.2.7 Explore dynamic financing channels.

The biggest difficulty the construction of tourism highway faces is difficult capital raising and single financing channel. First, preferential policies of the countries and integration of transport and tourism should be fully used to strive for low-interest loans from China Development Bank. Second, it is a good idea to set up special funds for Ministry of Transport and National Tourism Administration to support the construction of tourism highway. Third, it is beneficial to fully arouse the enthusiasm of local government and increase financial input and financial support. Forth, it is also a way to establish investing groups of tourism transport to be in charge of financing and development of projects. A project company being in charge of project investment, financing and development can be set up by social capital and governmental financing platform. Such approaches as land development rights, advertising usufruct, development rights transfer of scenic areas, operation rights of tourism service facilities can be used to attract social capital and push the construction of tourism highway with the PPP pattern.

5.CONCLUSION

In a word, the progress of the time endows tourism highway with unprecedented opportunities. At the same time, the golden time of rapid development also comes. Under the background of the integration of transport and tourism, China's tourism highway is sure to be strong tong of optimizing space of national land, promoting regional development, pushing development of towns and realizing win-win integration. The tourism scenic byway will develop gradually in China.