

OAKRIDGE AREA 15-YEAR COMMUNITY TOURISM VISION

Twenty-some participants of the Rural Tourism Studio in Oakridge comprised of local business owners, event organizers, economic development professionals, trail advocates and public officials generated the following:

(1) The Oakridge area is clean and inviting. As a result, residents have a refreshed sense of community pride and visitors stop and stay more frequently.

(2) Oakridge is a mountain biking destination and known throughout North America as the “Mountain Biking Capital of the Northwest”. The community and surrounding area is a “pedal driven economy” offering a range of opportunities to target niche cycling markets and ability levels.

(3) Places for community connections are prevalent throughout the Oakridge area increasing the quality of life for locals and providing visitors with places to enjoy the local culture.

(4) The Oakridge area is known as a sustainable travel destination with businesses and organizations dedicated to meeting environmental, social and economic objectives simultaneously.

(5) Tourism is an integral and growing part of the Oakridge area economy offering local, living-wage jobs. As a result of strong business-to-business relations, tourism helps to strengthen the local economy.

(6) The quality of life in Oakridge is high with ample social services available. A healthy, happy community adds to the positive local experience attracting new businesses and visitors.

STRATEGIES FOR PRIORITY ELEMENTS OF THE VISION (#1-3)

(1) The Oakridge area is clean and inviting. As a result, residents have a refreshed sense of community pride and visitors stop and stay more frequently.

Group Strategy Brainstorm:

- Form committee
- Let people know about Junk Amnesty Day
- Identify problem areas. Legalities of who we can talk to. Contact local landowners (who has info?)
- What codes need enforcement?
 - Solution
 - Find funds

Recommend Critical Next Steps:

1. Form a city clean up committee
2. Identify problems, solutions, and legalities
3. Put into action (use kids, groups, work parties)

[NOTE: AN ACTION TEAM WAS FORMED IN THE FINAL WORKSHOP, BUT NOTHING EXISTS IN THE NOTES DOCUMENTING NEXT STEPS! ELIZABETH BARKLEY WAS LEAD FOR THIS ACTION TEAM. WE NEED TO FILL IN THIS GAP!]

(2) Oakridge is a mountain biking destination and known throughout North America as the “Mountain Biking Capital of the Northwest”. The community and surrounding area is a “pedal driven economy” offering a range of opportunities to target niche cycling markets and ability levels.

Group Strategy Brainstorm from Community Tourism Planning Workshop #1:

- How do we get the naysayers?
- How do we get the research data to show economic impact locally of bike tourism?
- Coupons cashed in by bikers to local merchants (paper trail)
- How do we breakdown (gently) the local barriers between locals and bike tourists?
- How do we continue the funding process to continue the investments that are started?

Recommend Critical Next Steps from Workshop #1:

1. Involve the community in a positive way in mountain biking events
2. Use the media, newspapers, TV, press releases to reach locals and tell the bigger local story of bike tourism, culture and economic impacts

Top Strategies from Bicycle Tourism Development Workshop:

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMING
<u>Facilities:</u> Work with ODOT about changes advised in the Visitor Readiness Report.	Chamber of Commerce, City of Oakridge, City Planner, Forest Service	Now
<u>Facilities:</u> Identify the gateway trailhead signage needed & design the signs.	IMBA, GOATS rep	2010
<u>Marketing & communications:</u> Create welcoming signs for cyclists at either end of the city. Add mountain bikes to existing city signs.	Gordon Zimmerman	Now
<u>Marketing & communications:</u> Develop information for other tourist activities that cyclists can participate in. Identify, group by theme/target market, distribute information to those target markets.	Chamber w/ UBRA	By April 2010
<u>Goods & services:</u> Develop the bike tourism concierge/ambassador concept.	Catrina will convene the first meeting	Jan 2010
<u>Goods & services:</u> Compile knowledge base and create a pamphlet. Connect with local businesses to distribute information and educate them on the needs of bike tourists.	Catrina & Peggy	Start in January, distribute by spring

BIKE TOURISM ACTION TEAM "Bicycle Cool Kids"

Strategy/Project: Signage & wayfinding

Goal: Create unique information signage that communicates way finding info quickly, easily and clearly to get the right riders on the right trails.

TEAM Members:

1. Benjamin Beaver;
Role: Convener
2. IMBA/Ride center partners;
Role: Funding/guidance
3. GOATS;
Role: Local knowledge
4. USFS/CITY/ODOT/Etc;
Role: Public land managers

Next Steps:

- Meet as ride center group, ASAP
- Sign design standards, by spring
- Sign production, by summer
- Sign install, by late summer
- Next Meeting, TBA

BIKE TOURISM ACTION TEAM BUDGET
“Bicycle Cool Kids”

Income	Cash	In-Kind	Total
IMBA Appropriations through Transportation SEP	24,010		
Total Income	24,010		
Expenses	Cash	In-Kind	Total
Kiosks 1000 x 5	5,000		
Kiosk map 250 x 11	2,750		
Post and hardware	2,600		
Wayfinding signs			
Plan and sign	10,800		
Design map	1,350		
Brochure (part)	500		
Install	2,000		
Total Expenses	24,010		

(3) Places for community connections are prevalent throughout the Oakridge area increasing the quality of life locally and providing visitors with places to enjoy the local.

Group Strategy Brainstorm from Community Tourism Planning Workshop #1:

- Redo WAC for energy efficiency and program delivery
 - New roof
 - Double pane windows
 - Façade improvements
 - Floor coverings
- Refurbish North Shore Drive between Westfir and Lowell for bike route and alternate vehicle route for Highway 58
- Complete Access Management Plan for Highway 58 in Oakridge
- City-wide Wi-Fi
- Build new Senior Center
- Build new Library

Recommend Critical Next Steps from Workshop #1:

1. Complete the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application for library
 2. Fund Access Management Plan
- Fundraising for WAC redo (Possibilities for funding: CDBG, Ford Family Foundation, Union Pacific Foundation or Meyer Memorial Trust)

(4) The Oakridge area is known as a sustainable travel destination with businesses and organizations dedicated to meeting environmental, social and economic objectives simultaneously.

Geotourism strategies from the Geotourism Workshop #3:

Tourism in Oakridge helps sustain and enhance its geographical character including its environment, heritage, aesthetics, culture, and the well-being of its residents.

Community Guide for visitors	2 most important	0 most catalytic
Increase vehicular & pedestrian main street curb appeal	0 most important	6 most catalytic
Beautification – enforce codes	1 most important	1 most catalytic
Identify/interpret historic sites	0 dots	0 dots
Interpretive signage around town	0 most important	9 most catalytic
Develop guided tour opportunities	0 dots	0 dots
Create tourism management committee that could work on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pedicap tours (historic tour) - Storyboards, and more - Adopting international sign codes & wayfinding - Keep progressing with Hwy 58 improvement - Create new events - Expand niche cyclists – BMX bikers, freeriders, unicyclists, single-speeders 	6 most important	4 most catalytic
Foster community ownership/Buy into tourism initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Volunteerism - Educating the public - Through our educational system - Try to find key theme for community to buy into (need a shorter theme for community to say) 	3 most important	3 most catalytic
Travel philanthropy Fund	0 most important	1 most catalytic

GEOTOURISM ACTION TEAM “Story Diggers”

Strategy/Project: Collect local stories of sites and events from old-timers into a digestible format for visitors. To start with, stories could be used in the visitors guide and to inform interpretive signage.

Goals: Uncover Oakridge area’s rich history and collect 25 stories

TEAM Members:

1. Oakridge-Westfir Chamber/Joy Kingsbury
Role: Convener
2. Natalie Inouye, TLC
Role:
3. Jacqui Lamont
Role: Host could donate space to meeting after biz hours
4. Jenifer Hood
Role:

Next Steps:

- A. Jenifer will identify other committee members and invite them
- B. Convening committee –identify convener by Jenifer with contact Rayetta???
- C. Map out information/story gathering process inclusive of timeline
- D. Integrate info/stories immediate into various applications (visitors guide, interpretive signage, iPod tour).

Next Meeting: Feb. 15, 2010. Conveners: The Chamber and Jenifer

- Who else should be there?
- Laurel MacMillan, RDI (OPB Story Project - ?)
- UBRA Representatives
- Rayetta Clark (City Council)
- Kay Collins
- Dan Rehwalt (writes books about Oakridge area)
- Del Spencer—curator at museum
- Larry Roberts—owns paper,

Potential actions for committee:

- Developing signage plans (color, symbol strategy)
- Identifying historic sites around Greater Oakridge Area interpreting them
- Capturing stories of Elders
- Historic mural sign board to cover broken window in uptown. Could interpret store’s original use.
- Visitors Guide to the community heritage and cultural integrated with tourist attractions. Add other geotourism locations.
- Complementary materials to the NGS map
- Give people a place to stop in town—with mural, signage info on other places to visit, pedestrian level signage.

GEOTOURSIM ACTION TEAM BUDGET "Story Diggers"

Project Description: Collect local stories of sites and events from old-timers into a digestible format for visitors. To start with, stories could be used in the visitors guide and to inform interpretive signage.

Income	Cash	In-Kind	Total
Museum might give copies		250	
City might give copies		250	
UBRA Contribution	2,000		
City Contribution	2,000	2000	
Citizen Involvement	5,000		
Travel Oregon	4,000		
<i>(historic preservation grant)</i>	<i>2,500</i>		
<i>(humanities grant)</i>	<i>2,500</i>		
<i>(Cultural grants)</i>	<i>2,500</i>		
Total Income	13,000	2,500	
Expenses	Cash	In-Kind	Total
Printing copying archives	250	?	
Mailing	500		
Printing of signage	5,000		
Posts/plywood for signs	300	? city	
Concrete	300	? city	
Tape recorder/recording device	100	?city	
Memory cards	100		
Paint/sign painter	5,250	?city	
Permits/ Signs installation	100	?city	
Replacement costs	1,000	?city	
Total Expenses	12,900		

(5) Tourism is an integral and growing part of the Oakridge area economy offering local, living-wage jobs. As a result of strong business-to-business relations, tourism helps to strengthen the local economy.

CONCIERGE / TOURISM AMBASSADORS ACTION TEAM

Strategy/Project: To implement the Ambassadors local training through developing local tourism knowledge.

Goals: Train 50% of front line staff at local businesses that are in direct contact with visitors. Provide generous recognition!!

TEAM Members:

1. Oakridge-Westfir Concierge Committee
Role: Support/active committee member/s
2. Cities of Oakridge and Westfir
Role: Support
3. USDA Forest Service—Sheri Cameron
Role: Support/Active Committee members
4. Catrina, Kay, Lynda, Renie, Peggy,
Role: Convener/active committee members
5. Travel Lane Co
Role: Support/ Committee members

Next Steps:

- A. Acquire buy-in from team members by February
- B. Finalize program by March
- C. How are we going to measure our progress/success? Ongoing.

Next Meeting: Early February, convened by - ?

CONCIERGE / TOURISM AMBASSADORS ACTION TEAM BUDGET

Project Description: Implement the ambassadors training through developing local tourism knowledge.

Income	Cash	In-Kind	Total
Ad Sales	5,000		
Chamber Funds	2,000		
Total Income	7,000		
Expenses	Cash	In-Kind	Total
Food		50	
Facility	100		
Public Relations	100		
Marketing	100		
Tours	500		
O-W Area Visitor Guide	2,500		
Total Expenses	3,300		