

A VISION FOR TOURISM IN WALLOWA COUNTY

How does this economic sector look in 15 years?

- Visitors have an authentic experience (x3)
- Locals maintain culture and heritage by sharing their stories
- Direction of tourism is controlled by local people (x2)
- Businesses are locally owned & local people shop there
- All economic sectors can engage with and benefit from the tourism economy (example: a land owner sublets a barn to rent to visitors - Points of transportation from place to place – meeting regular residence)
- Four towns in Wallowa County are vibrant (retail spaces filled and bustling!) and unique (each town has their own distinct offerings and tells their own story)
- Scenic byway connects all of the vibrant towns
- Tourism is robust providing job opportunities year round – spring, summer, fall and winter
- Strengthen agricultural, cultural and environmental history of the area. Presentation / interpretation of that is strong.
- Public/mass transportation exists into and around the county – specifically trains
- Infrastructure for tourism exists and supports the type of tourism desired by residents
 - pull outs for scenic vistas/interpretation kiosks
 - public restrooms
 - expanded airport
 - well-maintained roads
 - bike trails / bike lanes
 - walking paths
 - skiing/snowshoeing trails/paths
 - historic buildings preserved
- Develop more lodging opportunities

- Adopt an authentic theme(s) - ? or not...
- By each community telling their own story we develop an authentic tourism experience (not just Joseph & Wallowa Lake)
- Vibrant downtown Enterprise
- Downtown retail space is filled and residents are employed year-round

ITERIM GOALS

It will be very important to have open meetings that include all of the different demographics in this. It won't be owned by one entrepreneur or group. Needs to be a common vision for the community to plan together for the future. Avoid divisiveness.

Who should be involved? Build off of the energy and momentum of the people involved with a positive attitude.

Start with clusters of businesses that have synergies to start action and create momentum. Do what you can do well and bring people along. Don't spend all of your energy on people who don't want to be part of the conversation.

Businesses could get together for collaborative marketing rather than each doing their individual marketing. Coordination across the county for marketing.

Creating a clearinghouse for information. Capitalize on some of the cooperation that may already exist in neighboring areas.

Find ways to make benefits of the tourism industry apparent to those who don't participate in it every day.

Not everyone goes to meetings! Other ways to get the word out.

Developing year-round tourism

4 Goals:

1. Communicate with community about tourism development – its value and the direction, involve everyone
2. Work with natural clusters of businesses to find synergies and go with it – develop pilot projects
3. Collaborative marketing – eliminate inefficiencies
4. Develop off-season tourism