

**WORK SESSION MINUTES**

**March 22, 2017**

12:55 p.m.

Commissioners' Office Conference Room

PRESENT: Commissioners Stan Primozich, Mary Starrett and Richard L. "Rick" Olson.

STAFF: Laura Tschabold, Christian Boenisch, and Mikalie Frei.

Guests: Gerald Kubiak, Wayne Bailey, Sheryl Kelsh, and Veronica Hinkes, TYV and Nicole Montesano, News Register.

TOPIC: Travel Yamhill Valley.

Commissioner Primozich called the meeting to order at 12:55 p.m.

Gerald Kubiak gave an update regarding the Sustainable Funding Project that Travel Yamhill Valley has been working on this last year. He stated that Travel Yamhill Valley is the only tourism agency that is county wide. Mr. Kubiak said that part of the county grant received by Travel Yamhill Valley in late 2015 was used to continue and strengthen marketing efforts and to aggressively pursue short term funding from grants and membership. He discussed their marketing and fundraising efforts for 2016-17 (see exhibit A). Mr. Kubiak presented Travel Yamhill Valley's final report for their Sustainable Funding Project (see exhibit B). The report included background to the economic impact of tourism in Oregon, jobs and employment, state tourism development infrastructure, and visitor spending.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 1:56 p.m.

Crystal Cox  
Secretary

Accepted by Yamhill County  
Board of Commissioners on  
4-6-17 by Board Order  
# 17-112

*[Handwritten signatures]*  
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**Sustainable Funding Project  
Final Report  
March 22, 2017**

Prepared by Gerald Kubiak  
Public Affairs & Project Management Consulting

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1. Executive Summary ..... 3

2. Introduction ..... 4

3. Background ..... 5

3. Findings and Conclusions ..... 8

4. Evaluation of Funding Possibilities ..... 9

5. Appendix ..... 16

- A. List of Stakeholder Interviews
- B. TYV Plan for Use of Additional Funding
- C. Suggestions for Future Action
- D. Citations

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Travel Yamhill Valley's Challenge:** Based on demonstrated results elsewhere in Oregon, there is reason to believe tourism spending in Yamhill County would significantly increase if more was invested in marketing the area. A strong, adequately funded countywide Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) has proven the most effective vehicle to do so. Travel Yamhill Valley (TYV) currently funds its operations through annual membership dues. This funding source is not adequate going forward. Current TYV revenues support only an extremely limited work program.

**Sharp Contrasts:** While tourism receipts in Yamhill County exceeded \$100 million in 2015, the county lags behind others in the region. Every other county in the region invests more in tourism promotion. Tourism efforts in Yamhill County are fragmented, under-funded and short on capacity. There are five different entities doing tourism promotion in Yamhill County, each with separate, limited budgets.

**Sustainable Funding Project:** With the support of an economic development grant from Yamhill County, TYV has worked through this Sustainable Funding Project to identify mechanisms for sustained annual operating revenue of at least \$150,000. This funding level would represent a start to bringing tourism promotion in Yamhill County in line with other counties around the region.

Work on the project has taken three forms: Analysis of DMO budget characteristics in Oregon and nationally; Research through trade and academic articles, and interviews with key partner organizations; and Engagement of stakeholders via one-on-one and small group discussions.

### **Findings:**

- Tourism stakeholders and other community leaders generally do see value in tourism marketing being done on a countywide basis.
- A strong majority of tourism stakeholders engaged through this project support the idea of generating more funds to enable increased countywide tourism marketing.
- Based on research, Transient Lodging Taxes strongly predominate nationally as the leading source of DMO funding. Smaller and mid-size DMOs get about 90 percent of their funding from TLTs or Tourism Improvement Districts.
- A wide range of potential revenue mechanisms was studied. Several, including Advertising and Sponsorships, were eliminated from our study as clearly not feasible. Three revenue possibilities were identified as warranting evaluation:
  - Special Event

- County Contractor for Economic Development and DMO Services
- Fees for Services

- In response to stakeholder-initiated input, a Tourism Improvement District (TID) was added as a fourth revenue mechanism for evaluation. TIDs have emerged as an industry standard with demonstrated success in other locations. While a TID would mean political challenges and require some advocacy, this is among the most stable and predictable of funding methods and meets the test of sustainability.

**Conclusion:** The Special Event and Fees for Services mechanisms are supplemental rather than primary, come with significant implementation challenges and do not meet the definition of sustainable funding. The County Contractor model appears to be feasible, but is a new, untested model in Oregon. A mechanism such as a Tourism Improvement District would be capable of generating the targeted funding in a sustainable manner.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

**Addressing the challenge of funding a countywide DMO:** There is reason to believe the economic impact of tourism in Yamhill County would significantly increase if more was invested in developing and marketing what the area has to offer. Based on results nationally and around Oregon, a strong, adequately funded countywide Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) seems the most effective vehicle to do so.

Travel Yamhill Valley (TYV) is state-sanctioned and is the only DMO in Yamhill County working on a countywide basis. It is a private, non-profit, 501(c)6 organization. TYV is currently funded by annual membership dues. TYV has about 70 members, including wineries, hotels, bed & breakfasts, restaurants and attractions.

The current budget for TYV tourism promotion activities is about \$18,000 per year. This enables operation of a Web site and limited participation in cooperative marketing efforts with Travel Oregon or Willamette Valley Visitors Association, but not much else. For various reasons, the current funding source for Travel Yamhill Valley – membership dues – is not adequate:

- Membership numbers fluctuate and the revenue from dues does not come close to providing the resource base needed to adequately promote the destination.
- Stakeholder interviews done as part of this project demonstrated rising levels of fatigue with paid memberships.

- There is a movement nationally away from membership dues as a business model for DMOs, in large part because this model is seen as limiting their ability to “tell the complete story (Oates, skift.com).”

**Sustainable Funding Project:** With a clear understanding that its current funding level is inadequate and current revenue source outmoded, Travel Yamhill Valley undertook this Sustainable Funding Project. With the support of an economic development grant from Yamhill County, TYV is working through this project to achieve sustained annual funding of at least \$150,000 for tourism marketing, promotion and development. This funding level would represent a start to bringing tourism promotion in Yamhill County in line with other counties around the region.

**Work on this project has been done along three lines:**

- National and state scan: Analysis was done on the budget characteristics of DMOs in Oregon and nationally. Within Oregon, data provided by Travel Oregon and Oregon Destination Marketing Organizations (ODMO) was reviewed. At a national level, a review of reports and discussions with staff of Destination Marketing Association International yielded valuable insights.
- Research: Pertinent trade and academic articles were studied, and interviews conducted with staff at key partner organizations such as Travel Oregon and Willamette Valley Visitors Association.
- Stakeholder engagement: More than 40 one-on-one and small group discussions were held between December 2015 and December 2016 with wineries/AVAs, lodging operators, local DMOs, mayors/city managers, tour operators, restaurants, community groups and others. The discussions centered around the perceived impact of tourism, what impact countywide marketing is seen as having and possible ways to increase funding for that marketing.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

**Economic Impact of Tourism in Oregon:** Tourism is identified by the Oregon Business Plan as one of the state’s leading industry “clusters.” Visitor spending in Oregon has grown from \$6.5 billion in 2003 to \$10.8 billion by 2015 (Dean Runyan Associates 6).

- Tourists produce “multiplier” impacts on the U.S. economy. In addition to the goods and services that are purchased directly by tourists, the inputs used to produce these goods and services are also purchased through travel business operators: indirect travel output. Furthermore, as a result of spending in the areas by the employees of tourism businesses and their suppliers, additional sales are generated: induced output (ustravel.org).

- Total direct visitor spending in Yamhill County was \$104 million in 2015, up from \$56 million in 2005. Based on state-level data, indirect and induced spending adds about 80 percent of the “direct” total. So for Yamhill County, that means about \$187 million in spending impact. Other analysis shows indirect and induced spending as about even with direct, so the overall impact would be about double the direct impact.

**Jobs and Employment:** More than 101,000 Oregonians are employed in the tourism sector, which has been one of the state’s leading areas of job growth since the recession.

In Yamhill County, tourism directly supported 1,600 jobs in 2015, up from 1,000 in 2005 (Travel Oregon, Runyan). A total of \$31 million in wages was paid in 2015, up from \$15 million in 2005. Based on state-level data, indirect and induced jobs add about 50% of the “direct” total. So for Yamhill County that means about 2,400 total jobs are driven by tourism.

- Only five of the 20 major industries employ more people nationwide than tourism, and the tourism industry includes a wide range of jobs, from executive to entry level; skills, from customer service to engineering; and sectors, including hospitality, entertainment and transportation (patimes.org, Jennings).
- Tourism jobs represent all levels of employment, from important entry-level service jobs to high-paying executive positions. Traveler spending indirectly supports jobs in many other industries, as well, from financial services to printing (Exploreminnesota.com).
- Tourism jobs include highly skilled, highly paid technical, managerial and professional positions; entrepreneurial opportunities; and employment for lesser skilled and young workers. (Ktia.com).

**State tourism development infrastructure is vibrant:** Well funded with revenues from a statewide one percent transient lodging tax (TLT), Oregon’s tourism development infrastructure is strong. (The state lodging tax rate will temporarily increase from 1 percent to 1.8 percent in July 2016, then in July 2020 the rate will permanently settle in at 1.5 percent.) At about \$17 million, Oregon’s annual state expenditures on tourism promotion ranks 25<sup>th</sup> among the states (Oregonlive.com, Richard). Based on the projected new revenues Travel Oregon’s budget for tourism promotion should grow by \$10 or \$15 million, so the main engine driving tourism in Oregon will be getting significantly stronger.

An effective public–private partnership drives tourism development via Travel Oregon and other channels. Travel Oregon markets and promotes Oregon as a visitor destination and supports regional and local efforts to build tourism

products and attract visitors. Local tourism development is led by DMOs. The focus of a DMO is to grow the local economy by attracting visitors who spend on lodging, meals, goods and services during their stay.

**Visitor spending in Yamhill County is lower than in other counties around the region:** Every other county in the region ranks above Yamhill County in terms of spending by visitors.

2015 Visitor Spending Around the Region, by County:

Lane County	\$633.1 million
Washington County	\$569.2 million
Clackamas County	\$482.9 million
Marion County	\$336.5 million
Polk County	\$159.4 million
Linn County	\$120.1 million
Yamhill County	\$104.2 million

(Dean Runyan Associates, 61-210)

**Local tourism development efforts are fragmented and limited in**

**impact:** Compared to other Oregon counties, tourism promotion in Yamhill County is fragmented, under-funded and short on capacity. Listed below are tourism budgets for comparable locales in our region and elsewhere. Each has a single agency serving as DMO, which increases cohesiveness, capacity and spending power.

2014-15 Budgets for Tourism Promotion:

Clackamas County	\$3.8 million
Washington County	\$3.0 million
Lane County	\$2.1 million
Marion & Polk Counties/Salem	\$940,000
Linn County/Albany	\$440,000
Roseburg	\$412,000
Walla Walla	\$1.4 million

(Oregon Destination Marketing Organization, 1-2)

In contrast, there are five different entities – Visit McMinnville, the Chehalem Valley Chamber, Dundee, Carlton and Travel Yamhill Valley – doing tourism promotion in Yamhill County.

Together, their budgets tally about \$630,000 per year. But their efforts are not coordinated. They're fragmented and funded from individual pots, meaning each of the entities has limited capacity to significantly reach the potential market.

2014-15 Budgets for Tourism Promotion in Yamhill County:

Visit McMinnville	\$401,000
Chehalem Valley Chamber	\$144,000
Visit Carlton	\$33,000

Travel Dundee	\$32,000
Travel Yamhill Valley	\$18,000

**ROI from Tourism Promotion:** Studies show tourism promotion budgets correlate strongly with increasing the economic impacts of tourism.

- Analysis conducted for Travel Oregon found that for every dollar spent on marketing, visitor spending grew by \$166.
- A 2010 study by the University of Minnesota Extension assessed how tourism marketing impacts visitor spending. The study looked at about ten states, and found that for each marketing dollar spent, visitor spending grew by an average of \$122 (University of Minnesota Extension 13).
- Additional analysis by Travel Oregon concluded that for every dollar invested in its advertising campaigns, \$11 in state and local tax revenue is generated.

### 3. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Findings and conclusions are presented in this section.

**A. Tourism stakeholders and other community leaders generally do see value in tourism marketing being done on a countywide basis.**

Based on the various discussions initiated as part of this project, there is a clear consensus view around Yamhill County that countywide marketing is valuable and is a strategic activity worthy of investment. This widespread perspective is captured in the following quote from one of the stakeholder discussions conducted for this project: *“More spending power is needed to boost tourism promotion. Bigger is better.”* –Ken & Celia Austin, Rain Dance Marketplace, Newberg.

**B. Among those tourism stakeholders and other community leaders engaged in the course of this project, a strong majority support the idea of generating more funds to enable increased countywide tourism marketing.**

There is a general recognition that the status quo is inadequate and that a larger budget for countywide tourism marketing would significantly increase opportunities for tourism-driven economic development.

**C. “Sustainable” funding for DMOs is more a matter of degrees than an “either/or” proposition.**

Discussions with staff at Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI), a leading advocacy and capacity-building organization for DMOs, uncovered the reality that the level of stability in DMO funding is better thought of as a continuum than as a “yes” or “no” proposition. In this sense, the most sustainable source is a public source such as a TLT. In the middle of the scale are arrangements like a long-term contract or a solid DMO business model with diversified revenue streams. At

the low end would be sources such as advertising revenues or sponsorships, which are inherently short- or medium-term in nature and subject to change based on external conditions.

**D. Transient Lodging Taxes strongly predominate nationally as the leading source of DMO funding.** Smaller (less than \$1 million annual budgets) and mid-sized (annual budgets of \$1–5 million) DMOs derive about 90 percent of their funding from either Transient Lodging Taxes (TLT) or Tourism Improvement Districts (TID). Transient Lodging Tax revenues are received by more than three-quarters of all DMOs, with the average TLT rate about 13 percent. Tourism Improvement Districts (discussed later in this report) are growing as a funding source, with about 14 percent of DMOs receiving these types of funds (Destination Marketing Association International 3).

**E. Possible funding mechanisms like Special Events or Fees for Services are supplemental in nature rather than primary, and come with significant implementation challenges.** Given TYV's volunteer board and lack of staff, these types of mechanisms are not feasible. The effectiveness of these mechanisms is premised on having a stable, well-funded entity with staff capacity. The funds they can generate are limited and are best suited to augmenting an existing budget for execution of special projects or promotional campaigns.

**F. Two other types of funding mechanisms are more viable as primary, adequate revenue sources: County Contractor and Tourism Improvement District.** The County Contractor model appears to be feasible, but is a new, untested model in Oregon. A TID would be capable of generating the targeted funding in a sustainable manner, but would mean political challenges and require some advocacy.

#### **4. EVALUATION OF FUNDING POSSIBILITIES**

Offered here is an overview and evaluation of possible funding mechanisms for meeting TYV's target. Each of the funding possibilities is assessed in terms of projected revenue, pro/con, feasibility (scale of 1-5, with 5 the most feasible) and other considerations.

##### **Possibility A) Special Event**

**Description:** A common fundraising mechanism in the non-profit realm. The non-profit organizes and executes some form of celebration, festival or sports competition structured to generate a net profit for the organizer. Revenue generated by the event is designed to exceed costs for planning and executing the event. It seems that for most organizations, their event is one of two or three total revenue sources.

**Revenue Projection:** Special events executed by comparable non-profit organizations in the region generate anywhere from several thousand dollars

to over \$100,000. Net revenue on events tends to grow over time. The outcomes of a first-year event typically look quite different from those in year five.

**Pro:** This could be generally self-directed and less dependent on the good will or assistance of other entities. TYV would have the reins.

**Con:** Event saturation is a challenge and it seems there is pressure to do something unique. Positioning the TYV mission as deserving of charitable support is another challenge. TYV does not have the capacity to create and produce an event, so would have to contract with an outside event management provider. A DMAI staff contact says they see special events as generating lodging taxes but not necessarily netting much cash for the organizers. Many events are started, then taper off, so follow through and maintaining momentum are key challenges.

**Considerations:**

- Cost projections are in the range of \$20,000 for the assessment, planning and execution required for an outside firm to create and produce an event. And in addition to that, TYV would need a point person to do at least a portion of the pre-event work. There is typically a 12-month ramp up to get an event planned and executed.
- It may be possible to link with or piggyback on an existing event such as the Bounty of Yamhill County. The concept of Oregon Special Olympics relocating The Bite of Oregon to Yamhill County has been discussed, so there may be opportunity in that.
- Private donations or contributions could be a part of this approach.

**Event elements that generate dollars:**

- Sponsorship – a business or family underwrites expenses in exchange for exposure
- Ticket purchases by attendees
- Auction or raffle

**Feasibility Rating: 2**

**Possibility B) County Contractor for Economic Development & DMO Services**

**Description:** This model gets at both addressing what some see as a gap in conventional economic development work by Yamhill County and seizing a cutting edge approach recognizing that economic development and tourism overlap, and mutually reinforce one another. It would entail evolving what a DMO is and does.

As DMAI puts it, “There is now a clear business case to support better collaboration between DMOs and EDOs (economic development organizations).” A recent DMAI-sponsored study produced a report called

*Destination Promotion: An Engine of Economic Development*, which touts the practical and strategic value of this shift. The following are listed as collaborative work activities for economic development agencies and DMOs:

- Conduct joint marketing missions
- Influence the business traveler
- Collaborate on tourism-related investment
- Strategic conference pursuit
- Align your brands

In application here, this model would take the form of TYV becoming a county contractor. TYV would add economic development capacity while bolstering its DMO capabilities, then work to both spur business expansion and grow tourism around Yamhill County. This arrangement would bring synergy, increased capacity and new energy to these priority areas. The county contract would cover both staffing and marketing costs. Functions for TYV could include the following:

#### Economic Development

- Point of contact for business relocation and start-up
- One-stop shop for permits, siting, etc.
- Downtown redevelopment

#### Tourism Promotion

- Marketing of the county as an overnight destination:
  - Develop print and digital travel-inspiring marketing collateral.
  - Develop and support "Fam" tours and media requests
  - Enhance and expand off-season campaign
  - Coordinate with Travel Portland's off-season promotions
  - Strategically placed advertising in regional, national and international outlets
  - Coordinate with existing efforts by Travel Oregon and local DMOs

#### **Revenue Projection:**

Rather than consider it as revenue, it might be better thought of as "resources being committed" by Yamhill County. This takes the form of a medium- or long-term contract with performance standards and accountability mechanisms.

**Pro:** Aligns TYV funding goal with other existing efforts and raises the possibility of support from the cities.

**Con:** Requires a significant advocacy and administrative effort, and means venturing into uncharted territory. Even under scenario A, the long-term stability and reliability of this model comes with questions.

### **Considerations:**

- A review of several other Oregon counties of comparable population suggests that there are approaches in place elsewhere that have similarities with this option.
  - Linn County uses a portion of its state lottery funding to help support the work of the Business Development Center. This private non-profit assists with industrial site development, operation of an enterprise zone and coordination with existing businesses looking to expand.
  - Douglas County applies state lottery funds in a similar way. The county funds an Industrial Development Fund, which works to ready sites for development, runs a business loans program and coordinates with the community college on workforce development priorities.
  - Umatilla County uses part of the state lottery funds to cover 20 percent of the salary for a staff person that performs economic development functions along with other duties. Work includes industrial site preparation and mapping, managing a Web site and coordinating stakeholders and an ongoing strategic planning process.
- A recent study by Longwoods International (a leading purveyor of travel and tourism research) assessed the effectiveness of this approach in six states. People were asked "Do you think that the state of Wisconsin is a great place to start a business?" They were then asked to view tourism ads, and respond to the initial query again. In each case, after seeing one of the tourism ads, the views of that state as a great place to live, retire, invest or start a career consistently increased (skift.com, Oates).
- A fundamental consideration here is whether the county would be willing to invest ongoing funding for this model.

### **Feasibility Rating: 3**

#### **Possibility C) Fees-for-Services**

**Description:** Businesses, groups, local DMOs and others around Yamhill County seem to need and recognize value in the sorts of things only a robust *countywide* DMO can do. Under this model, TYV would set and sell a menu of tourism promotion services. Businesses, local DMOs and others would pay fees to TYV in exchange for these services. This responds to demand with an entrepreneurial approach.

#### Possible Menu of Services:

- Marketing – Ad buys, especially international
- Web content and SEO (search engine optimization)
- Cooperative efforts

- Passport clearinghouse
- Media contact/PR (earned media)
- Corporate retreat concierge

**Revenue Projection:** \$10,000–\$30,000 per year

**Pro:** This approach opens an avenue for local DMOs to be more directly involved with TYV’s work, and could lead to expanded partnerships in other areas.

**Con:** Going this route means blazing a new trail and it seems likely the ramp-up would be slow. This seems like a supplemental approach at best, as TYV has had paid promotional opportunities on its Web site before and did not make much on them. A challenge lies in establishing the bridge funding required to ramp up.

**Considerations:**

- Some other DMOs have utilized a similar model, with mixed results. While there was demand for particular offerings and funds flowed in some new directions, the net revenue impact was limited – existing members commonly just shifted their membership dues budget over to buying services.
- Corporate Retreat Concierge: Demand seems to be there for things like bundled packages of lodging, food and wine, and activities. Business groups want to structure overnight retreats and are interested in things like farm-to-table. They want smaller venues with more character, and easier access to hiking, biking and other activities.

**Feasibility Rating: 1**

**Possibility D) Tourism Improvement District**

**Description:** A tourism business improvement district (TID) is a mechanism to generate funds for marketing efforts designed to increase occupancy and room rates for lodging businesses. Funds raised through a small assessment on lodging stays are used to provide services desired by and directly benefiting the businesses in the district.

A TID is self-assessed, unlike TLTs. Inns, hotels, motels, VRBOs, campgrounds, etc. are assessed on lodging stays. The TID’s operations and strategies are guided by the businesses funding the TID. TID activities can include print and Web advertising, visitor center operations and sales lead generation.

Portland has the only TID in Oregon. The city collects the assessments, then forwards the funds to Travel Portland, which has a special program area to execute the TID work plan.

**Revenue Projection:** \$145,000 per year

Projected Annual TID Revenues

Lodging Rooms	Room Nights	Average Rate	Total Room Charges	TID Rate	Annual TID Revenue
95	182	\$140	\$2,420,600	6%	\$145,236

\* Assumes TID applies in unincorporated area and in cities without a TLT

**Pro:** The innkeepers engaged through this project are supportive of a TID in concept. TIDs have emerged as an industry standard and there has been demonstrated success in other locations. This is among the most stable and predictable funding methods.

**Con:** This approach carries sizeable political challenges and would require a lot of advocacy, education and coordination.

**Considerations**

- A key variable is specifics on what the TID would apply to. Stakeholder discussions commonly raised questions on whether and how the applicability of a TID could be broadened to apply to areas like wineries or restaurants. While worth exploring, there are numerous practical and political challenges inherent to this sort of extension, making it a difficult proposition. Studying this further could be a longer term goal.
- Stakeholders were engaged on the question of whether a TID should be applied on a mandatory or voluntary basis. Input pretty strongly indicated that a mandatory approach is preferred to best ensure fairness and broad participation.

**Steps to Forming a Tourism Improvement District**

- Form a Steering Committee
- Assemble a Database
- Develop a Business Plan
- Owner Approval Process
- Government Approval Process

**Feasibility Rating: 4**

**What about other mechanisms like Corporate Sponsorships or Advertising?**

Of the 10 percent of DMO budgets derived from other sources, advertising revenue is the most common, followed by membership dues and partnership

revenues. These types of revenue streams tend to apply to larger DMOs. For example, the Los Angeles Visitors Bureau recently had a corporate sponsorship arrangement with Qantas Airlines to collaborate in driving visitation from Australia and Asia.

In contrast, small and mid-sized DMOs, by virtue of their usual location in less populated and less economically diverse areas, lack the profile, proximity or web traffic required for a mechanism such as ad sales to generate significant revenue. As for paid memberships, while almost 40 percent of DMOs have dues-paying members, this revenue source is most common for larger DMOs, which average about 500 members. These types of mechanisms are limited in what they can generate in a setting like Yamhill County, inherently short- or medium-term in nature and not sustainable as they're subject to change based on external conditions.

## **5. APPENDIX**

### **A. Stakeholder Interviews**

In the course of this project, interviews and discussions were conducted with the following individuals and groups:

Jayne Mercer, Yamhill County, 12/15/15

Scott West, Travel Oregon, 12/22/15

Mayor Ila Skyberg, Willamina, 1/6/16

April Wooden, Willamina Museum

Jenny Winemore, Downtown Willamina Business Improvement District

Frank Sheridan, Sheridan city manager, 1/11/16

Terri Williams, Portland Revenue Bureau, 1/11/16

Jackie Lang, Waste Management, 1/12/16

Jeb Bladine, McMinnville News-Register, 2/4/16

Deb Weekley, CONNECTIVEENERGY LLC, 2/5/16

Val Anctil and Ivory McLaughlin, Carlton Tourism Committee, 2/9/16

Cathy Martin, Argyle Winery / Dundee Hills AVA, 2/9/16

David Adelsheim, Adelsheim Vineyard, 2/9/16

Nathan Knottingham, McMinnville Chamber of Commerce, 2/11/16

Matt Alvitre, DeVine by Heli, Phone discussion 2/16/16

Allen Rout, The Painted Lady, 2/11/16

Mitchell Gehring, DMAI, 2/18/16

Jeff Peterson, Oregon Select Wine Tours, 2/19/16

Michael Brown, Sokol Blosser Winery, 2/19/16

Christopher Czarnecki, Joel Palmer House, 2/19/16

Yamhill County Commissioners, 2/22/16

Commissioner Primozich

Commissioner Starrett

Commissioner Springer

Scott Pingel, Dayton City Manager, 3/16/16

Jeff Knapp, Visit McMinnville, 3/16/16

Lauren Fuhrman-Burch, Oregon Winegrowers Association Eola-Amity Hills  
AVA, 3/17/16

Holly Nehls, Konect Aviation, 3/17/16

Mayor Paula Terp, Yamhill, 3/18/16

Preston Polasek, Lafayette city manager, 3/30/16

Becca Barnhart, Willamette Valley Visitors Association, Phone discussion  
4/7/16

Pierre Zreik, The Allison Inn & Spa, 4/7/16,

Paul Long, Long Brewing, 4/7/16,

Innkeeper Meetings, 4/4/16, 4/12/16, 4/18/16

Amity DIG Community Meeting, 4/19/16

Kelly Haverkate, Dayton Community Development Association, 4/21/16

Dundee Tourism Committee, 4/25/16

Candace Haines, McMinnville city manager, 12/12/16

### **B. Travel Yamhill Valley Plan for Additional Funding**

Presented here is the working plan for an expanded work program that TYV would undertake with a larger budget:

- Develop print and digital travel-inspiring marketing collateral.  
Distribute through:
  - Travel Portland Visitor Information Center (600,000 visitors/year)
  - Travel Oregon Welcome Centers
  - Local visitor centers throughout the county
- Craft and curate unique Yamhill Valley itineraries for digital platforms.
- Develop and support "Fam" tours and media requests to showcase our valley to travel writers, tour operators, event planners, Portland Visitor Center staff and Portland hotel concierges.

- Enhance and expand off-season campaign, coordinate with Travel Portland's off-season promotions.
- Strategically placed advertising in regional, national and international outlets, leveraged with Travel Oregon positioning and themes.
- Enhance our social media presence, and coordinate that with Travel Portland and Travel Oregon.
- Implement tourism-focused customer service training for front-line staff.
- Coordinate with existing efforts by Travel Oregon and local DMOs around Yamhill County.

### **C. Suggestions for Future Action**

As a product of the discussions and research conducted in this project, a number of actions were identified by which TYV can strengthen itself and the tourism industry as an economic driver once sustainable funding has been secured. They are offered here as a resource for TYV strategizing and work planning down the road.

- Identify champions, cultivate partners and sponsors. Each of the funding options would be advanced and strengthened through enhanced efforts by TYV to establish tourism champions and key partners around the county.
- Be the catalyst for better collaboration and more coordination among the DMOs in Yamhill County. There is a clear need for a countywide entity to lead better strategic alignment among the DMOs working to promote tourism in Yamhill County.
- Continue to educate the community and better articulate needs and potential benefits. There is still work to do in demonstrating the essential value and unique capabilities of a countywide DMO.
- Invest in organizational development. An effort to pursue one of these funding options would be bolstered by taking some internal steps to strengthen the TYV organization. A more stable, more representative and higher-functioning board would contribute to and reinforce sustainability.

## **D. Citations**

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