



109 Maddox Ave • Amity, OR 97101 • Ph: (503) 835-3711

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOURISM COMMITTEE

AGENDA

A Meeting of the City of Amity, Tourism Committee will be held at 6:30 p.m., Tuesday January 16, 2024 , at the Amity City Hall, 109 Maddox, Amity, Oregon.

ROLL CALL: Chair Thompson, Mayor King, Barb Bond, Deborah Conrad, Erin Rainey, Rod Hickerson

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Minutes from 12-13-2023

CITIZEN COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:

OLD BUSINESS:

1. None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discuss where the Tourism Committee left off. Review Documents.
 - a. Exhibit A – Strategic Plan

ADJOURNMENT

AMITY TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes

A Meeting of the Amity Day Committee was held at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 13, 2023 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 109 Maddox Ave., Amity, Oregon.

Members Present

Alice Thompson, Rachel King, Barb Bond, Deb Conrad, Rod Hickerson, Erin Rainey

Members Absent

Staff Present

Nathan Frarck, City Administrator

Consent Agenda:

None

Citizen Comments/Questions:

Old Business:

None

New Business:

a. Introductions

Members of the committee introduced themselves, they are interested in opportunities to position Amity as a great place for others to visit and share in the community.

b. Discuss the duties of the Tourism Committee

City staff explained the duties associated with open public meetings and the requirements that all decisions are discussed and made in a publicly noticed meeting. Also, that minutes must be taken at least in a general sense and the recording of the meeting should be downloaded and kept by City staff.

c. Review where the Tourism Committee left off. Review Documents

The Committee reviewed some of the strategic plan, and asked about the visitamity website domain, versus what kinds of things could be included on the City's website for tourism. The Committee would love to see a concerted effort by the City to use the Amity Style guide and talked about potential projects related to using the new logo for highway or "welcome to Amity" signage.

Committee Member Barb Bond told the committee about a conversation that they had with a member of Visit McMinnville and various potential projects for the City to support that would improve tourism in the wider area. These included regional biking trails, potential spots for river access to the South Yamhill river, a bike repair station at various points around the County, including in the Amity City Park. The committee emphasized the importance of avoiding direct competition in the tourism industries, but instead trying to find something that makes Amity uniquely attractive.

d. **Set Goals and plan for moving forward.**

The next meeting will be held on January 16, 2024 at 6:30 pm. Committee members will review the Tourism strategic plan ahead of the next meeting to discuss further.

The motion to adjourn passed 6 - 0.

Approved by the Amity Tourism Committee

Attest:

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR TOURISM IN AMITY

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VISION, MISSION, VALUES

Vision

A better life for the residents of Amity and the surrounding areas through a strong, sustainable local economy.

Mission

We inspire travel that stimulates sustainable economic development in Amity that is consistent with the rural and historic character of the city. Through innovation and partnerships, we share stories, create experiences and promote businesses that attract visitors and deliver an appealing, memorable experience.

Values

Integrity. Collaboration. Inclusiveness. Innovation. Leadership. Frugality.

INTRODUCTION

Ordinance 648, adopted by the City Council of Amity on July 1, 2015, concluded (among other things):

“People are increasingly searching for authentic experiences in unique places. Amity could establish development policies to maximize capture of wine-related tourism in the local economy through restaurants, shops, and overnight accommodation.”.

In March, 2018, the City of Amity organized a Tourism Committee charged with:

- Development of a long-range strategic plan aimed at promoting tourism in the city through the use of a transient room tax.
- Recommendation to the Council on programs for use of the fee and annual budget appropriations for the tourism fund.
- Working with the City Administrator on implementation of tourism promotion programs and development of tourism-related facilities.

The membership of the initial Tourism Committee is as follows:

City Council	Rudy van Soolen
Amity DIG	Erin Rainey
Tourism Industry	Barbara Bond
Resident Member	Melissa Bradley
Resident Member	Christy Wilkins

Following discussions at two initial meetings (March 26 and March 5, 2018) the Tourism Committee invited a marketing/management consultant to help formulate plans for a Strategic Plan. Luanne M. Lawrence, owner of LML Marketing and Communications (<http://www.lmlmarcom.com/>), met with Committee members on 4/7/18 on a pro bono basis. The Tourism Committee appreciated her time and expertise, and many of the ideas in this Strategic Plan are traceable to ideas from LML Marketing and Communications. However, the Strategic

Plan is a product of work by the Tourism Committee and contributing members of the Community. LML Marketing is not liable or responsible for any errors or inadequacies.

<add more about development processes of the Strategic Plan later>

OPPORTUNITIES

What are our assets?

- Pastoral beauty of the surrounding environment
- Robust local wine industry. International reputation of the Eola-Amity Hills AVA.
- Entries to town that are beautiful: 233, Wheatland Ferry and Amity Road, Bellview-Hopewell Highway connecting to 5th Street
- Locally-owned businesses that (although more development is needed) create a “one of a kind” character as opposed to a mass-produced character
- Bicycle-friendly environment in and around the city
- Amity lies on a major transit route connecting Portland, Salem, Corvallis, Eugene and the Oregon Coast. Thousands of travelers are already driving through the city (we need to encourage them to stop, stay, and shop!)
- Other important local assets: the Baskett Slough National Wildlife Refuge, Linfield College, The Evergreen Air and Space Museum,
- Also see next section, “what is different and authentic about this place”
- *<add more? Edit or delete some of above?>*
-

What is different and authentic about this place?

- Daffodil festival
- Historical character
- The name of the city, Amity, connotes a friendly, welcoming place
- The Briggittine Monastery and their well-known fudge
- Alpaca farm on north end of town
- Regionally-famous pies from Blue Raeven
- “Reach the Beach”
- Local museums and events featuring wine and agriculture
- Pancake breakfast and Christmas tree lighting; strong collaboration of our volunteer fire department in local events
- *< add more? Edit or delete some of above?>*

Tourism in the Local Area

Although Amity does not have the resources to conduct a formal analysis of Tourism opportunities and trends specific to our city, we can glean a great deal of information from other local and regional organizations. We can also make important inferences from the few tourist-related businesses that currently exist in and near the city.

According to the web pages of the Willamette Valley Visitors Association (WVVA; citing a 2015 study by Dean Runyan), the direct visitor spending for the entire valley is estimated to be \$1.5 billion, of

which 72% from overnight visitors and the remaining 28% from day visitors. For the entire valley, lodging occupancy growth is increasing by 1.2% per year. 49% of the visitors are retired or not employed and well-educated. 67% travel without children under 18. The WVVA concludes that the area attracts soft-adventure seekers, people who enjoy outdoor activities but also appreciate the heritage and culinary offerings of the region. They also mention that collegiate activities and venues are extremely important to the economy of the region. In Amity's case, visitors to Linfield College could provide an important "spillover" to Amity.

Another study conducted by Full Glass Research ("The Economic Impacts of the Wine and Wine Grape Industries on the Oregon Economy", Feb. 2018) highlights the increasing impact of the wine industry to the state, including tourism. In just three years, between 2013 and 2016, wine-related tourism doubled in the state of Oregon, generating a whopping \$787 billion from tourism alone (Appendix 1). The report does not provide information about wine-related tourism on a local scale, but the data do show that the overall wine industry in Yamhill County accounted for approximately 25% of the total for the entire state (Appendix 2). It is safe to say that wine-related tourism in Yamhill County isn't close to 25% of the total wine-related tourism of the state (which would be a little under \$200 billion). Nevertheless, there is no denying that there is enormous potential for wine-related tourism in Amity, as the "gateway city" to the Eola-Amity Hills (EAH) wine region (the EAH is actually split between Yamhill and Polk Counties).

<add more about opportunities for agricultural, culinary and bicycle tourism from Travel Oregon and, if possible, elsewhere>

Opportunities for Partnerships

- Amity DIG
- Eola-Amity Hills AVA
- Travel Oregon, Travel Salem, and the Willamette Valley Visitors Association
- Amity's businesses
- Volks Marches ..(?)
- The new Hospitality Program at Linfield College (need to find out more) as well as the hospitality program at Chemeketa Community College.
- The Rural Studies Program at Oregon State University
- <more>

Opportunities for Small Grants

- Travel Oregon
- Business Oregon
- The USDA –
- The EPA –
- The Ford Family Foundation

CONSTRAINTS

- Budget! The Amity Tourism Committee operates solely on the basis of transient lodging taxes, which currently provide a budget of about \$5,000 per year.

- Hwy 99 runs right through the middle of town, limiting the development of a central core that feels “quaint” and is easily and safely walkable
- Lack of parking
- Many unsightly and unkempt buildings and yards detract from the visual appeal of the city
- Uncertainties about safety, especially at night, due in part to the local drug culture
- <more>

ANALYSIS

Tourism is growing very rapidly in Oregon, including the Willamette Valley. In our area, wine-related tourism offers particularly great opportunities, and the broader arena of agricultural tourism along with culinary tourism and bicycle tourism are very promising. Nature-seeking and history-oriented tourists are also likely to be attracted to our area.

However, most of the other small and medium-size cities in the Willamette Valley see similar opportunities, and many already have well-developed tourism strategies to capture a large share of these opportunities.

How can Amity compete? LML Consulting suggested looking to the experiences of Napa and Sonoma for insight. Both Napa and Sonoma are premium wine-growing regions, and they have similar tourism opportunities as we do here in the Willamette Valley. By the second half of the 20th Century, Napa had developed an exceptionally robust and internationally-recognized tourism industry. Rather than compete head-on (according to LML Consulting), Sonoma initially focused on creating a more “quirky”, “off the beaten path” image, relying on its authenticity and distinctiveness rather than its sameness to Napa. If Amity chooses to follow this model, a key starting point will be to identify a theme (or brand) for our own “quirky, authentic” identity, and to adhere to it consistently.

In addition to competing for a similar tourism audience as our neighboring communities, Amity also must deal with having extremely limited resources for tourism development. To be successful, it will be important to set modest, achievable goals, to develop and rely on strong partnerships, and to seek funding actively from outside sources.

Finally, it is important to note that Amity is a community of modest-income families who may not relate well, at least initially, to growth in tourism. A two-fold approach may help: 1. Targeting tourist audiences who seek an authentic experience in a small community, and 2. Involving the community as much as possible in decision-making. A consequence of the first approach is that tourism-related changes in infrastructure will also need to be compatible with quality of life in our small town. The second approach should help to generate “buy in”, and will also allow opportunities to educate townspeople about the benefits of tourism to the city’s coffers.

PLAN

Target audiences

- People who appreciate small, authentic communities coupled with great amenities.
- Agricultural/culinary tourists (local, national, international)
- Seattle/Tacoma/Portland/ residents who are looking for a great weekend experience

- Portland/Salem/Corvallis/Eugene small businesses who are looking for great place for a weekend retreat for managers and employees
- Wedding parties (and other celebrations: graduation, anniversaries ..)
- Focus in-state initially, expanding to regional, national and international as capacity and reputation grow.

Goals and Tactics

Goal I. Market the Amity Area as a tourist destination

Tactics:

- Create and market a distinct and appealing “brand identity” for Amity that capitalizes on assets: *< We need to consider alternatives and select a single “brand/tagline”. One option that has been discussed so far: “Farmers and Fermentation”. We need to examine alternatives and choose one>.*
- Seek grant funds to hire a web developer to create a website devoted to tourism in the Amity Area. Maintain the website using funds from advertising on the site.
- Leverage existing marketing efforts by Travel Oregon, Travel Salem, WVVA, EAHWA, WVWA, the prospective Yamhill DMO and others to market Amity’s story and appeal as a tourist destination.
- Create “wine country weekend getaway” packages through cooperation of local businesses that combine lodging, food, wine tasting etc. Market through social media and news outlets during the “off season” in NW Oregon cities.
- Work with area businesses to submit business listings in OTIS (Oregon Tourism Information System – maintained by Travel Oregon).
- Continue to work with Yamhill County (currently via representation on the Yamhill County Tourism Partnership) to create a Yamhill County Destination Management Organization (DMO).
- Create and market “Tourism Routes” along purposefully chosen entries
 - Create and distribute maps that rely on existing routes into the city
 - Commission interesting and quirky art along entries and within the city to reinforce and emphasize our persona

Goal II. Improve tourism infrastructure

Tactics:

- Actively seek grant support to develop sites, activities, marketing and aesthetics that will be attractive to tourists, including
 - walking and bicycle routes
 - enhancing local events, such as the Daffodil Festival
 - improving the community’s visual appeal, including paint, fixing potholes
 - Create walking/biking paths that connect downtown Amity with surrounding attractions (wineries, chocolate, art gallery, etc.) in appealing loops. Encourage development of B&B’s along these paths to create multi-day vacation experiences on a par with walking tours in Europe.
- Work with area businesses and the community to develop a “bike friendly” environment.
- Educate historic building owners regarding options for sensitive historic rehabilitation.

- [VERY LONG TERM] Work with O&C railroad, government, others to develop “tourist train” access through the west Willamette Valley, with a major stop in Amity
- Some of the needed improvements to tourism infrastructure (e.g., enhanced lodging and dining opportunities for tourists in the Amity area; enhance public safety; enhance visual appearance of downtown area and nearby residential areas ..) require improvements to the City’s business infrastructure. See below.

Goal III. Improve the business infrastructure in the City of Amity

- Improve the Development Code to more efficiently guide the development that is both supported by the community and most likely to drive tourism and economic growth.
- Enhance the Central Business District Zone to support efficient growth and provide an aesthetic design theme for the commercial center.
- Collaborate with and encourage the City Council and the City Manager and staff to expedite action on implementation recommendations in Ordinance 648 in ways that are complementary to an agreed-on “persona” for the city.
 - Creation of a specific and cohesive economic development strategy to strengthen, preserve, and revitalize the Central Business District.
 - Definition, development and promotion of Amity through a coordinated marketing strategy designed to attract businesses and visitors.
 - Improvement of the Development Code, amending the Amity Development Code to more efficiently guide the development that is both supported by the community and most likely to drive economic growth.
 - Full implementation of the Central Business District Zone to support efficient growth and provide an aesthetic design theme for the commercial center.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Short term (by 2020)

- A brand identity for Amity-area tourism is defined and agreed on by city government, local businesses and residents. Marketing materials and other developments are consistent with this theme.
- A website devoted to Amity-area tourism is created that includes links to websites and/or contact info of local businesses involved in tourism. [potentially a small additional source of revenue to offer businesses outside the city limits an opportunity to pay to be represented on this page??]. Metrics provided by Google Analytics show that traffic to this page increases by at least 10% per year, and that at least 30% of the visitors to the site proceed to click on contact information for a local business.
- At least 75% of Amity-area businesses that benefit from tourism will be listed on website .
- Funds from business advertising on website will be sufficient for maintenance and hosting within one year after project completion.
- Travel Oregon, Travel Salem, WVVA, WVVA and the EAHWA will provide links to the Amity Tourism Website. Google Analytics reveals that more than half the traffic results from referrals

from these sources. More than 20% of “non-bouncing” visitors will click through to an area business.

- Transient Room Tax receipts to the City of Amity will increase by at least 200%.
- At least one grant proposal per year is submitted to promote tourism and tourism infrastructure in Amity.

Long term (by 2025)

- Data from Google Analytics will show that traffic to website increases by 50% or more per year, with traffic expanding from regional to target markets in the U.S. (NW states and British Columbia) to international (especially France, Germany, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and Chile).
- Transient Room Tax receipts to the City of Amity will increase by at least 500%.
- More than \$50,000 will be distributed to local-area artists to create and install artwork in and around Amity consistent with the tourism brand, largely supported by new grants.
- At least ten new businesses will be established in Amity within five years of project completion.
- Goals of Ordinance 648 will be met

Appendix 1. Revenue generated by the wine industry in Oregon in 2016
(Full Glass Research)

Sector	Revenue	Wages	Jobs
Vineyards	\$189,592,021	30,384,000	1,053
Wineries	\$561,908,387	99,790,133	2,993
Tourism	786,827,053	215,855,209	7,625
Suppliers (indirect)	\$84,930,564	24,627,625	421
Wholesalers	\$76,793,648	\$2,296,816.95	47
Retail tier	\$106,752,500	\$20,016,150	902
Induced	\$98,164,018.15	\$28,242,799.45	626
Total 2016	\$1,904,968,191	\$421,212,733	13,667

Appendix 2. Wine revenue by county in Oregon

Counties	Wine-Related Revenue (\$)*	Related Wages (\$)*	Related Jobs*	Indirect & Induced Jobs	Property Taxes
BAKER	\$19,256,476	3,112,476	107	92	\$906,560
BENTON	\$88,289,493	12,297,324	675	286	\$2,560,493
CLACKAMAS	\$137,644,382	13,181,189	723	543	\$4,044,913
CLATSOP	\$17,619,024	3,231,187	140	108	\$718,707
COLUMBIA	\$3,946,860	684,410	31	26	\$162,874
COOS	\$10,958,222	1,952,274	86	66	\$320,664
CROOK	\$1,038,375	147,510	8	11	\$47,741
CURRY	\$1,931,488	274,384	17	21	\$107,133
DESCHUTES	\$51,767,931	9,172,981	376	283	\$1,914,838
DOUGLAS	\$107,337,623	21,875,092	786	327	\$2,468,818
GILLIAM	\$252,461	35,864	2	3	\$17,954
GRANT	\$1,528,111	321,118	13	6	\$67,189
HARNEY	\$161,856	22,993	2	2	\$9,023
HOOD RIVER	\$59,888,336	11,983,276	423	167	\$1,201,327
JACKSON	\$201,716,821	40,056,839	1,451	659	\$5,030,518
JEFFERSON	\$1,109,017	165,382	10	11	\$49,885
JOSEPHINE	\$48,123,121	9,707,332	356	162	\$1,028,935
KLAMATH	\$5,483,145	987,000	45	38	\$245,065
LAKE	\$26,435,931	4,976,144	151	3	\$16,141
LANE	\$75,943,264	14,159,440	600	449	\$2,588,775
LINCOLN	\$12,960,978	2,063,385	93	89	\$493,485
LINN	\$45,045,079	9,946,131	384	194	\$1,495,272
MALHEUR	\$2,550,194	480,942	23	18	\$87,820
MARION	\$167,723,512	33,454,969	1,236	603	\$4,509,879
MORROW	\$912,698	129,656	5	7	\$39,904
MULTNOMAH	\$470,682,529	91,035,126	3,441	1,982	\$11,884,060
POLK	\$180,982,148	38,184,923	1,356	490	\$3,686,634
SHERMAN	\$1,896,593	360,482	16	11	\$96,210
TILLAMOOK	\$10,213,706	1,965,533	77	43	\$313,193
UMATILLA	\$40,867,084	8,214,689	305	145	\$944,553
UNION	\$1,195,695	169,859	12	15	\$63,157
WALLOWA	\$599,997	85,235	5	6	\$26,521
WASCO	\$27,373,438	5,452,161	195	84	\$616,446
WASHINGTON	\$224,720,596	43,615,662	1,636	887	\$6,300,565
WHEELER	\$719,859	102,262	5	6	\$25,761
YAMHILL	\$687,116,905	132,267,139	4,497	2,261	\$15,187,663
% total in Yamhill	25.1%	25.6%	23.3%	22.3%	29.1%

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