

# **Tourism Walla Walla Board Planning Retreat Draft plan and session notes**

**April 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> 2008**

**Facilitated by**



**Rural Development Initiatives**

## TOURISM WALLA WALLA

### Board Development and Strategic Planning Agenda

April 16<sup>th</sup> 1:00 to 5:00 pm – Port of Walla Walla Offices - 310 A street

April 17<sup>th</sup> 9:00 to 4:00 pm – Walla Walla Airport Conference Room

All times are approximate; we may modify times and agenda based on needs and interests as we progress

Time	Activity
Wednesday 1-1:30 pm	Welcome, Introductions; Agenda Review and Retreat Outcomes
Wednesday 1:30-4 pm	<b>Meyers Briggs Type Indicator.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learning your type preferences and how to work with others</li> </ul>
4-5 pm	<b>Board Assessment and Team Building</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Share assessment results</li> <li>▪ Explore options to improve functioning as team</li> </ul>
<b>THURSDAY</b>	
9:00-9:15	<b>Welcome Back, Introduce Laurel MacMillan from RDI</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agenda and outcomes for the day</li> <li>▪ Any insights from day 1</li> </ul>
9:15-10:30 (75 min)	<b>Presentation on Principles of Sustainable Tourism</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Benefiting from the visitor industry</li> <li>▪ Sustaining your efforts</li> </ul> <b>Rural Tourism Discussion—How Does it relate to Tourism Walla Walla?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of Tourism Impacts on Walla Walla</li> <li>• What role does Tourism Walla Wall play in impacts?</li> </ul>
10:30-10:45 (15 min)	<b>Short Break for Coffee</b>
10:45-11:15 (45 min)	<b>Mission and Vision Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mission -- does it need to be adjusted</li> <li>• Vision-- does it need to be adjusted</li> </ul>
11:15-12:00 (45 min)	<b>Action Planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create Goals and strategies</li> <li>• Action planning agenda</li> </ul>
12-1 pm (1 hour)	<b>LUNCH!</b>
1-2:45 pm (105 minujtes)	<b>Complete Action Planning</b>
2:45-3 pm (15 min)	<b>Stretch Break</b>
3 pm-3:45 (45 min)	<b>Board Roles and Responsibilities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forming committees for implementation</li> <li>• Discus basic board responsibilities.</li> <li>• Develop or modify job descriptions</li> </ul>
3:45-4:00 (15 min)	<b>Debrief and Wrap up, Next steps</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection</li> <li>• What went well, what could be better</li> <li>• Next Steps</li> </ul>

## Group Norms

Group norms are the norms or “rules” that a group agrees to regarding how they interact with each other. The following group norms were agreed to at the training. The board is encouraged to revisit these, build on and enhance them and use them for future meetings.

- ❑ Take care of personal needs
- ❑ Be respectful
- ❑ Start on time
- ❑ Bring up to speed if needed for a vote (for those that arrive late)
- ❑ Notify Michael at the T.W.W. office if late or can’t make it

## Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator

All board members completed either an online or paper version of the Meyers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). This tool is helpful for individuals to learn their preferences: where they get their energy, how they deal with information, how they make decisions and their lifestyle approach. MBTI is helpful for improving team interaction and communication. Here are the results of the assessment.

<b>ISTJ</b>  Rick	<b>ISFJ</b>	<b>INFJ</b>  Skip	<b>INTJ</b>  Pat
<b>ISTP</b>	<b>ISFP</b>	<b>INFP</b>  Mike	<b>INTP</b>  James Michele
<b>ESTP</b>	<b>ESFP</b>	<b>ENFP</b>  Dave Michael	<b>ENTP</b>  Mark Chris Corey
<b>ESTJ</b>  Kyle Tim Jay	<b>ESFJ</b>	<b>ENFJ</b>	<b>ENTJ</b>  Kay Shane

## Tourism in the Walla Walla Area

Board members participated in a presentation and discussion about the principles of sustainable tourism. Following is the chart from the group discussion listing the positive and negative impacts of tourism in the Walla Walla valley.

Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts
Downtown Rev.	Affordable housing – Supply going down
Investment	Pay scales
Food!	Demand for city services
Culture and Arts	No middle class
Workforce	Young adults – Amenities/jobs
Liability	Some population unhappy about tourism
Awareness of community and assets	
Pride	
Housing (more guest homes)	
Young adults	
Staying	
Biz start ups	
Retail sales (tax)	
Diversity in community (eco development)	

### Mission, Vision and a Strategic Action Plan for the next three years

Following the discussion on sustainable tourism and how tourism impacts Walla Walla, the board discussed how they see their role in promoting tourism and if they have responsibility for any “negative” impacts of tourism. The board was in agreement that their focus is to continue to increase the number of visitors to the area year round and build on the shoulder seasons. The board decided not to focus on any of the negative impacts as a board at this time, however many members are addressing issues individually or in their own organizations. As such, it was agreed that the current mission is still relevant.

#### **Mission:**

**The mission of Tourism Walla Walla is to market and develop the Walla Walla Valley as a year round visitor destination for the economic benefit of the community**

The board revisited the vision from 2006 and decided to revise it. The result is a present oriented concise description of the outcomes of Tourism Walla Walla implementing their mission and strategic plan.

#### **Vision Statement:**

**Tourism has created value for our customers and our community. The experience of our visitors and those who serve them is positive. Our community benefits from the creation of jobs, economic vitality and the broader perspective provided by our visitors. We deliver a high quality guest experience as we share our unique culture and heritage. Tourism has preserved and enhanced the quality of life for our community.**

The board reviewed the accomplishments from the 2006 Strategic plan and decided to revise and update the five objectives, add a sixth objective and develop new strategies for each objective. Following are the six objectives A through F and their underlying strategies.

## **Objectives and Strategies**

A. Establish initiatives that identify and encourage year round special event development and promotion that maximizes the opportunity to strengthen the shoulder and off season.

1. Initiate new packaging efforts and distribute via the web and other media.
2. Update inventory of existing events by season.
3. Evaluate existing inventory of festivals and events, as well as determine what new and/or expanded events represent the greatest potential for growth.
4. Publish and maintain a coordinated annual convention and events calendar.
5. Pursue new marketing efforts on conference recreation, sporting, agriculture, economy, heritage, culture, food, wine, art, and music opportunities.
6. Promote local opportunities so visitors decide to “Stay Another Day”

B. Establish initiatives that enhance the Walla Walla experience while protecting that which makes the destination real and authentic.

1. Initiate community-wide discussion regarding necessary improvements in the “way finding system.”
2. Evaluate the feasibility of alternative visitor information distribution systems.
3. Implement formal customer service and training program.
4. Pursue initiatives that assist in strengthening alliances between the arts, wine industry, Downtown Walla Walla (DTWW), city, county, port, and other tourism efforts.
5. Adopt an advocacy role and lead community focus on all destination management issues.
6. Help develop restaurant and music associations, B and B, and other stakeholder associations.
7. Develop and promote that which is “Real and Authentic”

C. Evaluate and adjust marketing direction.

1. Explore cooperative marketing opportunities and revenue generating possibilities.
2. Review brand image and possibly revise.
3. Target midweek stays and off-season stays.
4. Target extra day stay.
5. Expand programs for day visitors.
6. Improve tracking and market research.
7. Analyze Black Box and put into location.

D. Build community awareness and public relations programs that seek to generate broad community support as well as understanding of the economic importance of the visitor industry to the community.

1. Improve the communication to the community through articles, education, etc.
2. Create atmosphere that Tourism is for visitors and residents.
3. Industry newsletter with quarterly report and updates.
4. Guest articles in U.B.
5. Develop and monitor return on investments (ROI) calculations that substantiate TWW's productivity on behalf of the region.
6. Maintain and strengthen city relations.
  - Develop and present board testimonials about benefits of the visitor industry
  - Measure and monitor community support for tourism

E. Identify, develop, propose, and secure new funding resources.

1. Establish a board task force to identify and evaluate funding sources.
2. Develop budget income goals.
3. Identify value-added rev. sources – i.e. branding initiative
4. Research and identify web-related revenue.
  - Web store
  - Click-throughs?
5. Participation in Tourism Walla Walla
  - i. Membership
  - ii. Fee for service
  - iii. Fee added service
  - iv. Value added service
  - v. Dues playing

F. Identify and assist the development of new visitor opportunities.

1. Resource for Tourism OPPS
  - i. Educational
  - ii. Forums/Workshops
  - iii. Provide data (Market trends)
  - iv. Convener and conductor
2. We don't create products
  - i. Historical trend analysis



	agree						
5. The Board committee structure is useful in helping to make full Board meetings more efficient.	1	8	0	1	1	2.36	11
6. The Board committee structure is useful in helping to make full Board meetings more meaningful by focusing discussion.	1	8	1	1	0	2.18	11
7. The background information provided gives sufficient preparation for decision-making at the Board meeting.	1	5	4	0	1	2.55	11
8. The agendas give enough time to analyze options and work through decisions.	2	5	3	0	1	2.36	11
9. The Board is good at problem solving together.	2	5	2	0	2	2.55	11
Comments:							2
1. Annual retreats are a good use of time.						Answered question	11
2. Agenda's need to be sent out a day or so ahead of meeting would help.						skipped question	0
Q3. C. Focusing on what is most important							
Answer Options	1 = strongly agree	2 = agree	3 = disagree	4 = strongly disagree	5 = do not know	Rating Average	Response Count
10. I have a good understanding of the most important goals and tasks facing this Board.	2	7	2	0	0	2	11
11. The meetings focus the most time on the things that matter most.	1	5	3	0	2	2.73	11
12. The Board tracks the implementation and impact of its decisions.	1	6	1	0	3	2.82	11

13. The organization has clear measures of success.	3	5	1	0	2	2.36	11
14. The organization is measuring what matters most.	3	5	1	0	2	2.36	11
15. The Board evaluates its meetings on a regular basis.	0	1	5	0	5	3.82	11
16. The organization is adding value around the issues it cares about.	1	6	0	0	4	3	11
Comments:							1
1. At times it seems we are spreading our staff resource to thin						answered question	11
						skipped question	0
Q4. D. Building external support for the organization							
Answer Options	1 = strongly agree	2 = agree	3 = disagree	4 = strongly disagree	5 = do not know	Rating Average	Response Count
17. Board members as individuals actively advocate for the priority issues of the organization.	2	4	1	0	4	3	11
18. Board members as individuals actively promote the work of the organization.	1	7	1	0	2	2.55	11
19. The Board as a whole has an organized plan that it implements for raising the visibility of the issues that matter to it, and the work of the organization in addressing these issues.	1	4	2	0	4	3.18	11
Comments							1
1. Annual meeting and articles in Business Monthly are great tools for spreading the word about what is happening in the local tourism industry. Perhaps a few more articles in the UB to educate the general public on tourism issues						Answered question	11

and the impact of ourism on the economy of our region.							
						skipped question	0
Q5. E. Basic roles and responsibilities							
Answer Options	1 = strongly agree	2 = agree	3 = disagree	4 = strongly disagree	5 = do not know	Rating Average	Response Count
20. I understand the role I should play as a member of this Board.	3	7	0	0	0	1.7	10
21. I understand the mission and role of this Board.	4	7	0	0	0	1.64	11
22. I am pleased with the contribution that I personally am able to make to the Board.	3	5	1	0	2	2.36	11
23. The relationships and mix of skills that exist among Board members are effectively tapped as an asset to the organization's performance.	3	3	3	1	1	2.45	11
24. The relationship between the Board and staff is strong.	4	5	0	0	2	2.18	11
Comments:							1
1. Continue to have a good mixture of folks who are community minded on the board. Do not make the board too big, it will lose ability to make decisions.						Answered question	11
						skipped question	0

RDI staff discussed the results of the survey with the board and highlighted the following areas where the board can work to improve their performance. Included below are suggestions for how to proceed:

**3. There are good mechanisms for getting the perspective of all relevant stakeholders before the Board.** RDI suggests that the board do a stakeholder analysis and then engage those stakeholders in giving input to the board.

**7. The background information provided gives sufficient preparation for decision-making at the Board meeting.** It was agreed to have staff get packets to the board at least two days before the meeting. Board members will give feedback to staff about the need for additional information as necessary and will delay decisions until sufficient background material has been provided to the board.

**8. The agendas give enough time to analyze options and work through decisions.** The board will periodically evaluate meetings and determine if the agendas are allowing time to work through issues.

**11. The meetings focus the most time on the things that matter most.** RDI suggests that the board chair get regular input on whether or not agendas are focusing board effort where it is most needed. This can happen through the regular meeting evaluation process.

**15. The Board evaluates its meetings on a regular basis.** The board has agreed to regularly evaluate their meetings.

**19. The Board as a whole has an organized plan that it implements for raising the visibility of the issues that matter to it, and the work of the organization in addressing these issues.** The new strategic plan will fill this need and the board needs to revisit the plan and adapt it periodically to address the current issues that matter most to the board

**23. The relationships and mix of skills that exist among Board members are effectively tapped as an asset to the organization's performance.** The board needs to assess the skills and assets of board members to better utilize board skills in implementing the new strategic plan.

## **Board Committees**

The board agreed to establish the following committees. The committees' first task is to meet and review their section of the strategic plan. At that meeting the members will prioritize the strategies and develop a detailed action plan for the top couple of strategies using the action planning format shared by RDI staff at the board retreat. The committees will report at the next board meeting their priorities and suggested actions. The board will then agree or modify the plans. Regular updates on successes and challenges will be shared at board meetings. The board may decide to ask committees for short written updates prior to board meetings so members will be prepared to discuss and ask questions. Here are the committees and their responsibilities.

1. Community awareness and outreach (D)
  - Jay
  - Skip
  - Mike
2. Events and Promotion (A, A1, A5, C3, C4, C5)
  - Michele
  - Kay
  - James

- Kyle
3. Funding and Sustainability (E)
    - Dave
    - Kyle
    - Tim
  4. Marketing, Branding, and Public Relations
    - Pat
    - Jay
    - Mark

### **Executive Committee**

1. Governance issues for committees
2. Board roles and responsibilities
3. Job Descriptions
4. Board assessment

Since we did not have time to address board job descriptions and roles and responsibilities, the Executive Committee has agreed to review the material shared by RDI and draft board job descriptions to share with the board at a future meeting. The executive committee also agreed to develop a governance plan for committees to define their responsibilities and how the committees interact with the board as a whole.

Following are the comments by the board about what worked well and what we might do differently at the next retreat.

What Worked	What to do Different
MBTI changed interaction, reminds you of difference	Less time on MBTI warm-up, team building, and getting to know each other. More time on meat and potatoes
Need some time to warm-up	Get info in advance
Methow Valley	Group norms at beginning
Planning process	Sustainable tourism needs more how-to-do-it, how it translates into better product. Needed data to verify. How can we make it happen?
Board committees	