

# **Grant County Tourism Workshop 1: Outcomes**

## **Introduction**

On August 27, 2012, members of the tourism industry in Grant County participated in a workshop aimed at developing a shared vision for tourism in Grant County. Participants engaged in a series of exercises designed to generate ideas within a 'safe' environment for public discourse. The outcomes of those exercises are as follows.

## **Tourism Inventory: Current Activities**

Participants were asked to list the tourism activities that they are currently engaged in. The results were reviewed as part of a small group discussion and organized into the following themes.

- Resources
- Budgeting
- Marketing
- Networking
- Programming

The following duplication of activities was noted: website, printed, networking, calendar of events, and marketing.

## **Tourism Inventory: Resources Needed**

When asked, "What resources do you need to execute those activities?" the following themes were identified.

- Funding
- Volunteers /People
- Marketing (coordinated)
- Organization

The small group identified "Communication" as an essential link for these to succeed.

## **What Makes Grant County Unique?**

When asked, "What makes Grant County unique to tourists?" the following themes were identified.

- History
- Things to see and do (cultural, educational, school)
- Natural resources

## **General Discussion**

After the small group activity, a general discussion identified the following priorities:

- Coordinate marketing
- Central website, central entity, designated tourism leader
- Coordinator work together
- Tourism activities are effectively funded without turf (?) issues
- Marketing/paid coordinator support tourism verbally and financially

## Opportunities for Collaboration

Participants were asked to identify and prioritize opportunities for collaboration within each of the previous set of questions. Opportunities that were noted as a priority are highlighted in **bold** print. Results of that exercise are listed below:

*Question 1: Looking at the activities that we are all currently engaged in, what opportunities are there for collaboration?*

- Community involvement with the tourism Council
- Continued meetings
- **Coordinated marketing/website marketing**
- Exchange info from Community to community to prevent duplication.
- Exchange of ideas, methods and resources
- Budgeting together
- Getting volunteers to help out at each other's events.
- One central clearing house for marketing and website
- Phone meetings
- Tourism Council

*Question 2: Looking at the resources needed to execute those activities, what opportunities are there for collaboration?*

- **One central website, one entity be designated as county's "tourism" leader**
- Develop a library (collection point) for resource material.
- Tourism Council, Economic Development Meetings
- Presenting as a group to Budget Committees
- County coordinator or paid staff to facilitate working together.
- WI Dept. Of Tourism – Extranet and co. coordinator
- Simple grant system
- Consolidate efforts
- Marketing Coordinator
- Future planning/calendar/website/Money

*Question 3: What unique assets in Grant County are not being expressed through current tourism/marketing efforts?*

- The River/Trails from it
- Scenic beauty, agricultural history
- **Collection point not being used at this time**
- Local events in communities. Need more details of events.
- **The communities that do not take advantage of invitations to share at exiting groups are not letting their community assets known.**
- Elderhostel or similar
- Local Hidden Asset
- Work together
- Promote events at events

*Question 4: What is your vision for successful tourism in Grant County?*

- More collaboration of effort in marketing and programming opportunity with 30th Anniversary of Great River Road.

- Have a complete library of photos and history and schedule of events to prevent conflict of public participation.
- Active participation and/or sharing of information by every community and organization.
- Everyone benefits!!
- **Tourism activities are effectively marketed without “Turf issues” to efforts driven expertly over funding or money.**
- Funding
- Positive Open Minds
- Directory of County Resources
- Paid Marketing Coordinator
- Bring Outsiders in
- Coordinated calendar

*Question 5: What can Grant County do to assist local organizations in the pursuit of a shared vision for tourism?*

- Help with Ads
- **One coordinated Marketing Organization**
- Support Tourism efforts financially and verbally.
- Agencies and groups communicate and work together.
- Introduce them to anyone or groups that promote tourism.
- County should give general oversight and vision of what they want on a year-to-year basis and provide funds if available.
- Helping with marketing.
- Organize a club to help oversee all activities.
- **Clearing house for tourism efforts, paid clerical staff vs. volunteers/paid coordinator vs. volunteer.**

### **Summary**

A reoccurring theme of communication and coordination appears to be a general outcome of the workshop. Participants agreed to meet again to continue the discussion. Next steps will include:

- Agree to a shared vision for tourism in Grant County.
- Clarifying the strategic issue of communication and coordination.
- Outlining a strategy for addressing the strategic issue.
- Designated roles and responsibilities for implementation.