

# CITY of LA GRANDE

## City Council Work Session

Monday, May 2, 2022  
6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers  
La Grande City Hall  
1000 Adams Avenue  
La Grande, Oregon

You can view the Work Session on Facebook Live at the following link:  
[www.facebook.com/CityofLaGrande](http://www.facebook.com/CityofLaGrande)

## AGENDA

*The purpose of a Work Session is to provide an opportunity to informally discuss topics of common concern and interest and to exchange ideas with Staff, not to make decisions or to direct Staff toward a specific action or conclusion beyond identifying additional information the Council would like to have presented at a later date. As no decisions are made, there will be no voting at the Work Session. The City Manager or members of the Staff may confirm any additional information required as part of any future discussions regarding the presented topic(s). If a Work Session topic subsequently requires official action, it will become an action (voting) item on a following Regular Session Agenda. In accordance with the Oregon Public Meetings Law, Council Work Sessions are open to the public; however, in order to make efficient use of time, public comments and questions generally are not entertained during the discussion segment of the Work Session. Time will not be designated for public comments at the conclusion of the discussion. Members of the public are routinely provided with an opportunity to address the Mayor and Council during the Public Comments portion of each Regular Session Agenda.*

1. CALL to ORDER 6:00 p.m.  
~ Stephen E. Clements, Mayor
2. ANNUAL REPORT ON TOURISM PROMOTION AND BUDGET PROPOSAL  
~ Scott Newman, Union County Chamber of Commerce Director
  - a. Summary of written report on Marketing and Promotion Program (Program of Work)
  - b. Tourism Budget Proposal
3. ADJOURN 7:00 p.m.

---

Stacey M. Stockhoff  
Assistant to the City Manager

*Persons requiring special accommodations who wish to participate in the Work Session are encouraged to make arrangements prior to the meeting by calling 541-962-1309. The City of La Grande does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities*



## **UNION COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

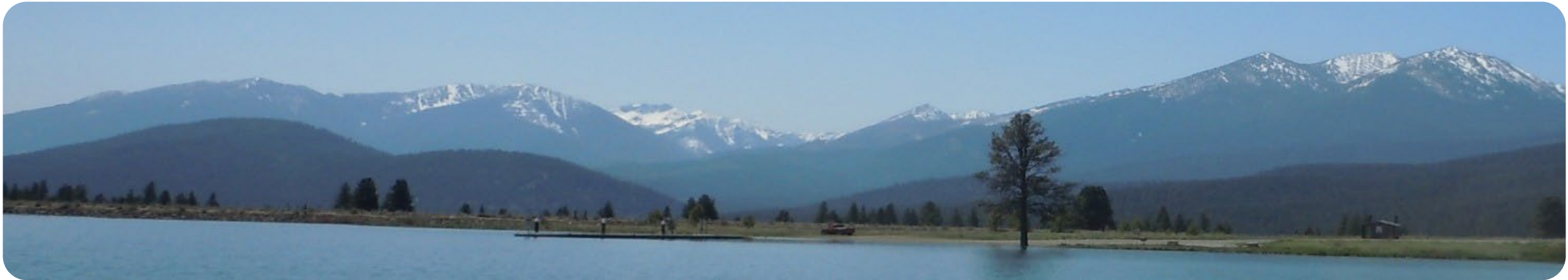
Local Destination Marketing Organization (DMO)

207 Depot St.

La Grande, OR 97850

541.963.8588

[www.visitunioncounty.org](http://www.visitunioncounty.org)



Source: [www.union-county.org](http://www.union-county.org)

# **FY 2023 PROGRAM OF WORK PRESENTATION**

# PROGRAM OF WORK - CITY OF LA GRANDE & UNION COUNTY- FY 2023

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

FORWARD	3
INTRODUCTION	4
KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS	5
RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)	6
2022 AND BEYOND	7
UNION COUNTY, A DESTINATION WORTH DEVELOPING	8
THE NUMBERS	9
FULFILLMENT	10
WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT	11
ADVERTISING	12
PRINT ADVERTISING	13
SPECIAL PROJECTS	14
VISIT WIDGET	15
MEMBERSHIP	16-17
OTHER ACTIVITIES	18-19
STRATEGIES GOING FORWARD	20
APPENDIX I	21
APPENDIX II	22
APPENDIX III	23
ROLE OF THE CHAMBER	24
JOINT MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT	25-26
BUDGET	

### ADMINISTRATION/STAFF SUPPORT

ROBERT STROPE - LA GRANDE CITY MANAGER  
SCOTT NEWMAN - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UNION COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

### 2022 UCTPAC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

DONNA BEVERAGE - UNION COUNTY COMMISSIONER APPOINTEE  
VACANT - LARGE LODGING APPOINTEE  
NICOLE HOWARD - CITY OF LA GRANDE COUNCILOR APPOINTEE  
SEAN LERNER - RETAIL/RESTAURANT APPOINTEE  
MIKE RYSAVY - SMALL LODGING APPOINTEE  
CHELSEA JUDY - BUSINESS/ATTRACTION APPOINTEE  
SUZANNAH MOORE-HEMANN - UNION COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE APPOINTEE



## FOREWARD

I have the unique opportunity to serve as the Executive Director of the Union County Chamber of Commerce. Recently arriving from Southern Wisconsin, I hope to bring new and fresh ideas to the Chamber of Commerce. The Wisconsin economy is primarily based off three core industries: manufacturing, agriculture, and tourism. Millions of visitors come to Wisconsin each year and enjoy everything the state has to offer. I have visited almost every section of the State of Wisconsin and truly enjoyed everything that Wisconsin has to offer, of course not the winters. My family and I now begin our new adventure(s) here in Eastern Oregon and are looking to work, relax and enjoy everything Eastern Oregon has to offer.

Since accepting this position in mid-January, I have met many new people and seen many new places. Union County offers beauty and livability that few other places in the United States can offer. The people of the Grande Ronde Valley are some of the most inviting and friendly people I have ever met. These two reasons are what ultimately lead my family to Eastern Oregon and specifically Union County.

As we finally begin the climb out of the pandemic Union County is poised to again be a destination for travelers and tourists alike. Tourists are ready to get out and explore now that it appears we are on the backside of the pandemic. Eastern Oregon offers many unique opportunities for the true adventurer to the young family wanting to come and camp. Hiking, biking, horseback riding, festivals, rodeos, motor sports, skiing and even a very active Ag-Tour segment offer something for everyone. Attracting a broad base of visitors should be the goal Union County's Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Department aspires to.

Setting of the budgets, goals, and underlying vision laid out in this document reflects a monumental commitment from all active Chamber employees and our Board of Directors to the love of our county, pride in our livelihoods, and dedication to the future. Achievement of the goals requires doing the work. Each budget cycle brings new challenges and changes that need to be addressed to keep pace and attract tourist dollars. This season tourists will face the challenges of higher prices and residual shortages resulting from a global pandemic. Research is predicting people may be traveling shorter distances and continue to changing the definition of tourism.

I want to thank everyone for the work they do each day. I cannot express how much I am looking forward to our continued successes together. The travel and tourism industry in Union County is not only a tool for economic development and job creation; it produces a positive impact on the quality of life for our residents.

Union County is well-poised to deliver exceptional travel experiences year-round. In a post-pandemic world, Union County has the wide-open spaces to warmly – and safely – welcome travelers. Increasing tourism increases commerce which enhances our economy and supports our ability to 'do us' in the best way we know how. Union County proud is a reality every day when we welcome others.

Warmest regards,

*Scott Newman*

Executive Director  
Union County Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Information Center





## INTRODUCTION

It is a unique honor and privilege to have the opportunity to represent and promote the City of La Grande and all of Union County via a strong, impactful, and ongoing tourism promotion campaign. As such, the Union County Chamber of Commerce, herein referred to as the “Chamber,” is deeply committed to producing a high-quality, carefully curated Program of Work to guide its continued efforts to attract and increase the number of visitors to this area each year. As the Union County Chamber of Commerce and the Local Destination Marketing Organization (LDMO), our goal is to promote positive economic impact and increased tourism to the City of La Grande and Union County (see Page 19 for organizational structure of LDMO in relation to Travel Oregon and other tourism-related entities). Specifically, the Chamber aims to improve tourism in La Grande and Union County by increasing the length, frequency, and quality of visits, develop point(s)-of-interest destinations, all contributing to a positive economic impact. Continual improvements in the Chamber’s marketing strategies and the development of an investment opportunities “menu” for our partners are examples of the improvements the Chamber is initiating to extend its reach, impact and continued vitality.

The effects of the pandemic, shortages and current high fuel prices are all factors predicted to impact travel in the coming years. The Chamber’s FY23 Program of Work is the road map to ensuring marketing efforts produce a high return in the form of positive economic impact throughout Union County. Capitalizing on the marketing research project and the Chamber’s revised guides has produced cohesive messaging and a solid branding campaign. The brand of Union County OR will be recognizable throughout our state and beyond. Using traditional marketing programs such as printed brochures and printed adventure or guide magazines can only be a part of our strategy. New marketing methods present the opportunity to reach new audiences which become new visitors who in turn bring new commerce to Union County. During FY23, the Chamber is including internet-based advertising via the Chamber’s website, social media platforms, digital apps and widgets. Separately and together, each is an integral part of the Chamber’s overall marketing strategy.

For the upcoming year, the Chamber will drastically increase brochure and guide distribution efforts and increased length of shelf, increase social media reach through targeted and structured advertising, continual content updates to the website, increased utilization of the listings available through OTIS (Oregon Travel Information System) and the introduction of a “Plan Your Trip” widget in the upcoming months. The Chamber’s incorporation of newer technology increases ease of access and use for potential visitors and tourists to use laptops, tablets, and smart phones to plan routes, park visits, trail exploration, all while navigating stops for the essentials: food, fuel and lodging. The Chamber’s investment also adds value for our visitors through educational opportunities like sharing historical significance, trivial facts, or local lore. Capitalizing on technology tested and used by both large (Jacksonville, Florida) and small (Little Falls, MN) DMO’s minimizes the risk to the Chamber of incorporating this new technology into our marketing plans. The Chamber’s ability to showcase all aspects of what Union County has to offer year-round supports its commitment to continual improvement to realizing longer stays and more dollars spent. Utilizing a mix of traditional marketing and new technologies, makes the exploration of La Grande and all of Union County as easy as possible, thereby achieving an increase in TRT revenues.

As reported by Travel Oregon, overnight lodging stays in La Grande, Union County, and beyond realized a greater than 30% drop in stays in 2021. 2022 is seeing increases across most segments of travel from business to pleasure. Knowledge of and ease of planning to enjoy outdoor recreation, festivals, golf, and leisure travel will continue to bring tourists to Eastern Oregon, the Chamber is committed to showing travelers what is available through as many different mediums as possible.

**Come, play, and stay; repeat.**

While the work ahead is not easy and the investments needed to make an impact are greater than ever, using this Program of Work as our guide the Chamber will keep efforts focused and within budgetary constraints.

Union County is ready to welcome visitors to explore the wonders Eastern Oregon and Union County offers.

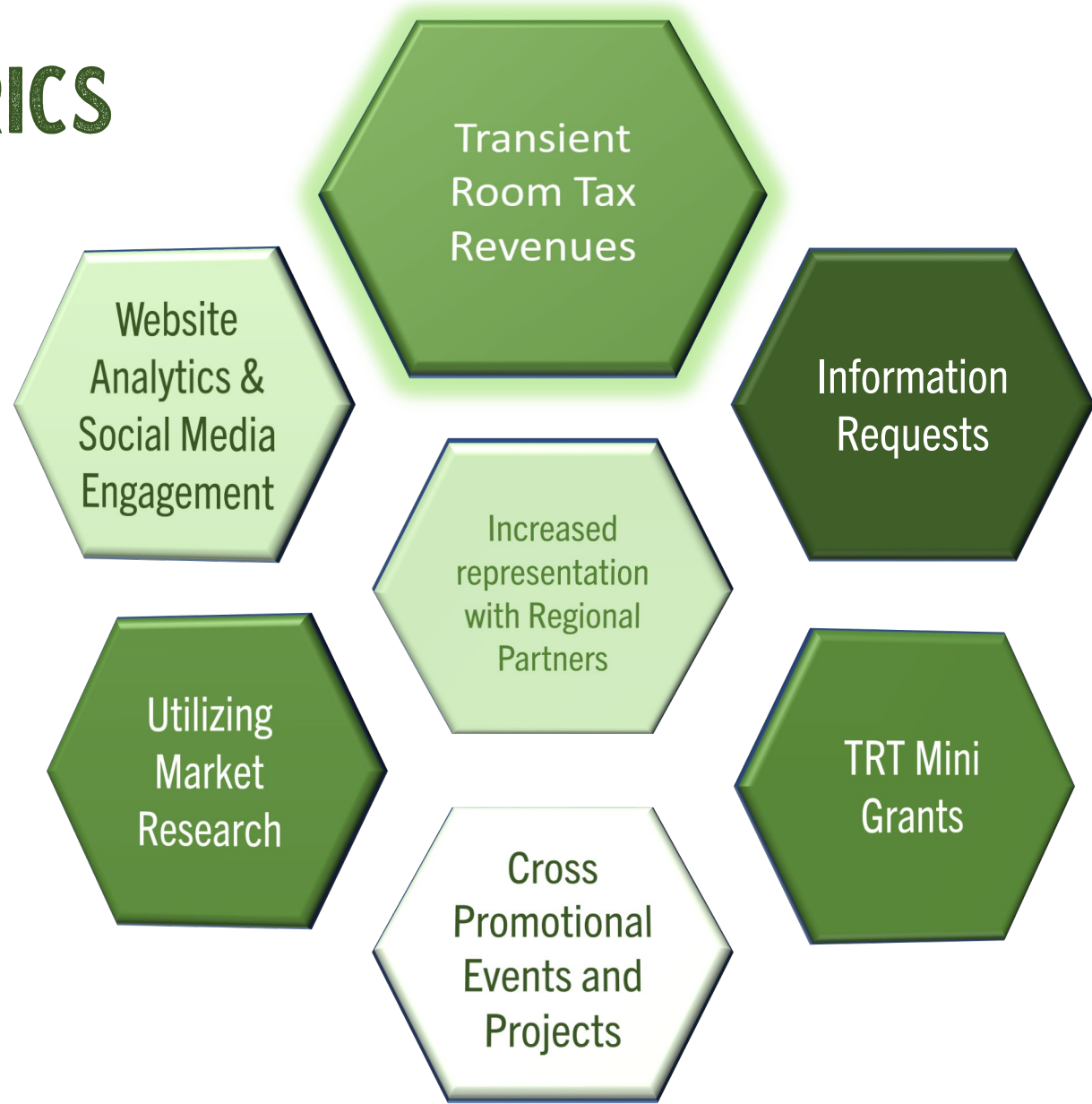
Thank you for your continued commitment, investment, and partnership with the Union County Chamber of Commerce.



# KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS

The FY23 key performance metrics are defined and periodically reviewed in concert with the Union County Tourism Promotion Advisory Committee. Data collected on each metric further guides efforts focused on a diverse composition of promotional strategies to maximize engagement and impact on visitor experiences. La Grande and Union County offer a wide range of visitor experiences: outdoor recreational options including hiking, camping, and backpacking and a growing arts and cultural following all rich in agri-tourism and full of thriving small businesses. The data collected serves as a benchmark for program success and continual growth.

The ultimate performance metric is  
“more heads in beds.”



# RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Continuing to implement strategies derived from market research, metrics from Google and adjusting as needed to ensure improvement in ROI. Utilizing all information available, allows the Chamber of Commerce to make wise decisions and create higher ROI opportunities with every dollar spent.

# ROI

- Improved utilization of existing structures: improving the website with updated assets and easier navigation tools, continual updating of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) terms, the addition of digital brochures for easier viewing and savings on fulfillment costs. The introduction of a functioning community calendar to increase planned and lengthen stays. Continued maintenance ensures digital visitors access the most up-to-date information is available.
- Training reduces labor investment and increased outcomes: OTIS (Oregon Travel Information System) training for Chamber staff aids information integration into websites and increasing visibility of Union County asset listings on [www.TravelOregon.com](http://www.TravelOregon.com). *This information, if updated and maintained properly allows for information to be included in travel stories and other travel related marketing on [www.TravelOregon.com](http://www.TravelOregon.com) and other regional websites.*
- Shared investments and cooperative strategies reduce liability while increasing awareness: Secured @NortheasternOregon handle on social media platforms and conducted early-launch conversations with Wallowa and Baker Counties for a regional presence via shared cooperative strategies on social media.
- Increased desire to experience a pinnacle of OR: “Travel Oregon Sponsored Story” on [www.TravelOregon.com](http://www.TravelOregon.com) to be posted in June 2022 highlights different aspects of Union County including some of our Ag-Tourism partners on the Grande Ronde Farm Trail.
- Targeted posts for maximum return: Continue to utilize social media platforms to inform, intrigue and invite locals via Facebook, those planning an outing, a trip or an experience via Instagram and [www.visitunioncounty.org](http://www.visitunioncounty.org), and member businesses and other professional through LinkedIn.
- Maximization of program impact: Structurization of the TRT Mini Grant and Cooperative Advertising Opportunities Grant programs to better define qualification terms thereby maximizing program impact. Funding will be increased from \$7500 to \$25,000 to expand program drive more tourism to La Grande and Union County.



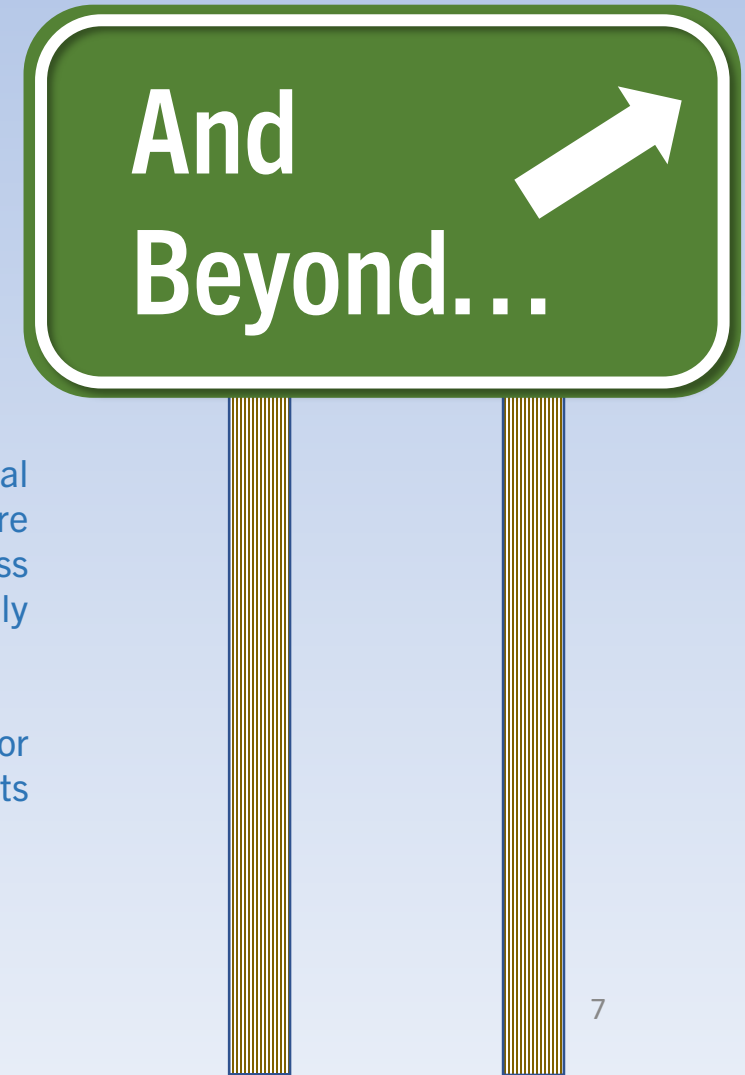
# 2022 AND BEYOND...

Utilizing the results of the 2020 Worthy Marketing study, the Chamber continues to develop both comprehensive short-term and long-term strategies to ensure targeted spending of marketing dollars to create ever higher rates of ROI. While not every dollar spent creates a perfect investment, using sound data and information reduces inefficient spending.

Practical and effective use of the updated style guide for Union County Tourism based on the information provided in the marketing research (see Appendix I) helps create consistency in overall messaging, look and feel. Creation of a brand experience fosters initial curiosity and improves retention of previous visitors. The Chamber's concerted effort in using a consistent ad style across print, social, website, and digital marketing creates a well-rounded, broad based marketing strategy to ensure investments produce desired goals.

Building a greater understanding of the positive impact tourism plays in Union County increases local merchants' investment in the visitor experience. In 2019, almost \$38 million in direct travel dollars were spent in Union County alone. The impact of travel restrictions in 2020 reduced travel commerce to less than \$25 million\*. Current trends are showing an uptick for 2022 back to 2012 levels or approximately \$31 million.

Establishing clear paths with broad goals and tangible performance metrics during FY23 directs growth for increased travel to this region. Targeted marketing informs locals, tourists, and merchants of what sets Union County apart from our neighbors and will attract both new and returning visitors.





# UNION COUNTY IS A DESTINATION WORTH EXPLORING...

**Union County offers a broad range of tourist activities across four vivid seasons.**

Union County rich with a mountainous landscape, patchworks of valley farmlands and forest scenery call to visitors of all interests and abilities. Union County offers a diverse array of world class outdoor recreation activities for residents and visitors alike. Hiking, biking, horseback riding, fishing, camping, golf, and bird watching offer warm weather activities. Nordic skiing, downhill skiing, snow shoeing, and snowmobile trail rides highlight a long list of snowy adventures in Union County. Union County's diverse, historic, cultural, and artistic activities appeal to another type of thrill seeker. Events and festivals, with capacities for a larger draw of residents and visitors are returning as a major driver of tourist dollars available to Union County businesses. La Grande, Union, North Powder, Cove, Imbler, Island City, Elgin and Summerville all offer unique experiences, hidden treasures, historic buildings, "ancient" cemeteries, cultural offerings and small-town charm each ready to welcome travelers from near and far. The Chamber, with the increased strength and collaboration of public, private, and regional sector partnerships, will continue to grow in experience, education, and sophistication of its tourism promotion efforts.

## HELL'S CANYON SCENIC BY-WAY (HSBC)

Who knew the road to collaboration went through hell? Hell's Canyon that is. A grant through the *Travel Oregon Destination Development* provides funding for the collaboration of Union, Baker, and Wallowa counties to encourage tourism in the respective counties and to better collaborate on promoting HCSB. The Chamber will continue this partnership and find ways to actively promote HCSB.



## MT EMILY RECREATION AREA (MERA)

Mt Emily Recreation Area offers a wide range of outdoor tourist activities. A grant for EOVA was granted for the creation of an updated MERA Mtn Biking, Hiking and Trail Running Guide. This guide is now in print and will be part of our print advertising distribution. 6500 of the guides will be distributed as part of our (5110) Fulfillment strategy.



## AND NOW FOR THE NUMBERS

### TRANSIENT ROOM TAX RATES & LODGING OCCUPANCY RATES

Due to the COVID pandemic, in FY 2019/2020, the City of La Grande reported collecting \$353,114, down from \$371,392 in FY 2018-2019. During this same period, Union County collected \$195,470, totaling \$548,584.

In 2020/2021, the City of La Grande collected \$325,137; however, an additional \$56,324 was received after June 30<sup>th</sup>, bringing the total for FY 2020/2021 to \$381,462. Union County's \$165,428 brings the grand total to \$546,890.

*Through the first ten months of FY 2021/2022, the City has collected \$370,681 reflecting a steady increase since the initial decline during the 2020 lockdown.*

Transient Room Tax Comparison				
	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019	FY 2019-2020	FY 2020-2021
City of LaGrande	\$364,490	\$371,392	\$353,114	\$381,462
Union County	\$191,836	\$195,470	\$195,470	\$165,428
Totals	\$556,326	\$566,862	\$548,584	\$546,890

In conjunction with the Oregon Tourism Commission, dba Travel Oregon, and the Smith Travel Research reports the latest occupancy rates for Union County dropped from 57.1% in 2019 to 41.5% in 2020.

Additionally, the Smith Travel Research (STR) Reports in February 2021 reflect an 18% reduction in occupancy based on year-over-year change and nearly 56% decrease in direct travel spending losses in Oregon for calendar year 2020.

Calendar year reports for Union County are in the appendix in addition to visitor volume rates by county.



(5110) Fulfillment

INCREASING THE ADVENTURE GUIDE RUN AND DISTRIBUTION BY 30% TO INCREASE OVERALL REACH. 2 ADDITIONAL BROCHURES WILL BE ADDED TO THE DISTRIBUTION LIST FOR FY 2023.

FY2020 year budgeted \$3,000, in FY2021/2022 funding increased to \$3,500. FY2023 is increasing to \$7500. Print run of the Adventure Guides is increasing 30% to 15,000. Distribution of the Adventure Guide is also increasing by 30% with the addition of 2 brochures for FY 2023. The **Grande Ronde Farm Trail** brochure (6500 brochures) and the updated **MERA** brochure (6500 brochures) will be distributed for 3 consecutive months at select distribution points (using Certified Folder) to maximize our ROI and ensure these assets are being distributed. Recently, Union, Baker, and Wallowa Counties have entered a much stronger relationship due to a *Travel Oregon Destination Development* grant. This opportunity allows the three counties to come together to develop short- and long-range priorities and projects. The Chamber will continue to actively participate in this more regionalized program. The Chamber’s target demographic travels more exclusively for touring and outdoors activities, focuses on fulfillment packages including information on landmarks and historic sites, State and National Parks. The Chamber’s targeted tourist appreciates different outdoor activities and has the potential to increase frequency and length of visits due to informed awareness created through strategic marketing.

Requests for information on La Grande and Union County is common as tourists are showing increasing interest in visiting the region. Additionally, the Chamber is seeing a surge in visitors/tourists looking for an all-inclusive relocation guide to give them additional information on Union County. Part of our 1–3-year strategic plan includes a completely redesigned and updated relocation guide and separate tourism guide for FY2024. Work begins on the 2024 updated guides in May/June. The Chamber is actively fulfilling local business requests to become additional distribution points for the Adventure Guide as well as other local and regional travel information. Since January, most local hotels, AirBnB, and other businesses are proudly distributing the Adventure Guide.

- FY 20/21 Actual: \$125
- FY 21/22 Budget: \$3,500
- FY 21/22 YTD (Thru March 2022): \$1,011
- FY 22/23 Budget Request: \$7,500

FULFILLMENT REQUESTS

The Union County Chamber of Commerce receives requests for visitor information via email, telephone, in-person, and website inquiries. The most current records reflect walk-in and telephone requests from July 2021 through March 2022. Data from website inquiries was not included due to limited traffic and travel opportunities during the pandemic. There will be better traffic statistics once travel resumes a normal activity level.

Visitor Requests Comparison				
	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22 (Thru March 2022)
Walk-In	3,566	2,417	244	783
Telephone	1,915	1,661	441	706
Maps Distributed	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Magazines Distributed	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000



The Union County Chamber of Commerce contracts fulfillment through Certified Folder\* via yearly fulfillment contracts. Certified Folder delivers our materials throughout Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Northern California. Adding additional distribution points and bumping the amount of Adventure Guides printed, hopefully to capture the increase in travel this year. Continuing the ongoing goal to have 100% fulfillment and distribution of materials. A small reserve at the Chamber office for local fulfillment and website requests will be maintained.

*\*The Certified Folder contract is for a calendar year and invoices are typically received in June and are not reflected during the time of Program of Work preparation (see Appendix II for additional information on Certified Folder fulfillment).*



## (5116) Website Maintenance & Development

### **USING THE INCREASE IN THE FY2023 BUDGET TO BOLSTER CONTINUED WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT AND GROW ORGANIC TRAFFIC NUMBERS.**

The Chamber of Commerce launched a revised travel/chamber dual website in 2021. The website was developed to be a more travel-centric medium that used updated media assets and designed to better sell Union County as a tourist destination. While the current updated website has increased overall web traffic, the analytics are far from where they need to be. A contract for \$500 was awarded to complete the Search Engine Optimization (SEO) for the site. *This project was listed in the FY2022 Program of Work that is now completed.* Having this completed helps organic search traffic from Google, Bing, DuckDuckGo, Yahoo and other search engines. Organic traffic is not paid for or influenced by advertisers yet is considered a “targeted” search. This traffic is driven by customer intent and provides highly qualified leads. Currently the website derives 52.2% direct traffic, 34.4% organic search, a combined 11.4% from the City of La Grande website and Hot Lake Lodge ([www.hotlakelodge.com](http://www.hotlakelodge.com)) referral links, and a 2% from social media\*. The analytics show there is much work to still be completed. Low organic search percentages (>75%) show that visitors are not finding our website, therefore, missing these highly qualified leads. Higher organic search numbers increase brand awareness and provide a higher level of customer trust.

FY 20/21 Actual:	\$1,869
FY 21/22 Budget:	\$5,000
FY 21/22 YTD (Thru March 2022):	\$1,905
FY 22/23 Budget Request:	\$5,000

## **ADDITIONAL CONTENT DEVELOPMENT...**

Google analytics show our website performs below average for those on a mobile device – currently 39.13% of our web traffic comes from a mobile device – of those 83.2% are new users. The first impression to almost 40% of our website traffic is below average.\*

**Fix - Continue to develop and optimize SEO on our website for a better mobile experience that keeps users exploring and visiting additional pages on our website.**

Increase organic search numbers. Organic search needs to be <75% to show we are attracting new visitors to our website.\*

**Fix – Updating and revising (on a regular cycle) the SEO search terms. Building better brand awareness and customer trust. Organic search can also be increased with better page content that mirror SEO terms used.**

Increase website attractiveness to better engage visitors to click additional pages and increase average duration which is at 2.07 minutes currently.\*

**Fix – Work with web developers via bid to improve the current site to peak interest. Redesigning the site to add additional media assets (pictures and videos) with a more story board centric approach keeping people engaged and increasing the average duration people remain on the website.**

Developing an “Events Calendar” that reflects activities throughout Union County – using a “grading list” to determine what events and types of events get listed on this calendar – Fairs, festivals, concerts, parades, fireworks, etc.

**Fix – Events, things-to-do, where-to-go, where-to-eat, etc. are all major reasons tourists visit our website. Maintaining the community events calendar keeps people participating in Union County commerce.**

Keeping the website up to date and ensuring listed information on events, attractions and businesses is as accurate as possible.

**Fix – Perform quarterly audits to ensure the site is as up-to-date as possible.**

Continue development to make the site seasonal to reflect current searched activities – Skiing in winter, hiking in summer, etc.

**Fix – Develop a calendar to adjust/update the look of the website to better reflect seasonal activities.**

\*Google Analytics for [www.visitunioncounty.org](http://www.visitunioncounty.org) between March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 and April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022

**(5124) Cooperative Advertising**

**THE UNION COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IS EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES WITH PARTNERS WHO WISH TO DEMONSTRATE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON TOURISM IN UNION COUNTY THROUGH ADDITIONAL COOPERATIVE GRANT AWARDS AND INCREASED “FAM” TOURS AND INFLUENCERS.**

The Chamber of Commerce will continue partnering with organizations who assist and contribute to promote tourism in La Grande and Union County; however, these programs have been restructured to significantly demonstrate a positive impact on tourism. The new Cooperative Advertising Grant program shifts its purpose with the goal of increasing La Grande and Union County’s presence in the digital sphere by leveraging travel writers, familiarization tours (“FAM” tours), and other ‘influencers’ to the area. When approached by travel writers, tour operators, and other similar entities, lodging partners, asset operators, restaurants, retailers, etc., are often asked for complimentary services or goods (i.e., a comped room or meal) in exchange for writing articles or featuring locations on their social channels (blogs, articles, social media, etc.). The purpose of this new grant aims to mitigate some of the expenses of comped goods/services in exchange for having access to the content for future purposes. These grants, up to \$200 to cover comped expenses, give priority to multi-entity applications (i.e., lodging partner, one or two restaurants, and one or two asset operators, such as equipment rentals, tickets to a show or operations, etc.). This positions the Chamber to have demonstrated an increased online presence. Grant applications must demonstrate a high degree of legitimacy of the leveraged travel writer, as well as demonstrate alignment with the Chamber’s target demographic, based on the marketing.

FY 20/21 Actual:	\$1,000
FY 21/22 Budget:	\$3,500
FY 21/22 YTD:	\$2,372
FY 22/23 Budget Request:	\$7,500

**(5128) Radio Advertising**

The Chamber is maintaining the \$1000 budget projection for continued radio advertising. Radio advertising is more localized and targeted for local residents or tourists already in the area. The Chamber could look to expand its reach for events but would require a larger study to find profitable opportunities.

FY 20/21 Actual:	\$1,000
FY 21/22 Budget:	\$1,000
FY 21/22 YTD:	\$1,000
FY 22/23 Budget Request:	\$1,000

**(5130) Online Advertising**

**INCREASING SOCIAL MEDIA AD FREQUENCY AND SEASONALITY TO CREATE POSTS THAT INVITE ADDITIONAL SEARCHES ON THE CHAMBER’S WEBSITE. INCREASING THE SOCIAL MEDIA FOOTPRINT WITH ADDITIONAL FOLLOWERS AND CONSISTENT CONTENT IS A TOP PRIORITY. TARGETED SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS FOCUSED ON THE FIVE MAJOR TOURIST DRAW LOCATIONS ENSURE ROI.**

The Chamber looks to increase our online presence and online advertising. The Chamber maintains many social media sites including Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. In order to increase its social media footprint and followers, the Chamber of Commerce puts out a requests for proposals to develop and run a narrow scope, wide ranging social media advertising campaign, this geo location-based strategy focuses on major tourist draw locations: Portland, Seattle, Salem, Eugene, Yakima, Boise, etc. Strategic details including seasonality, frequency and distribution will be further developed as the process moves forward. Part two of this strategy is to increase the number of followers and the Chamber’s reach while increasing its ROI for every dollar spent. As the initial strategy is implemented, the testing other markets to continually showcase La Grande and Union County as a true tourist destination will commence. The strategy is tourism centric and highlights different as well as seasonal activities. For example, website banner ads on [www.TravelOregon.com](http://www.TravelOregon.com) and [www.stateofwatourism.com](http://www.stateofwatourism.com) offer opportunities for growth. Additional funding on this line item to ensure Union County is top of mind as a place to visit and stay. The Union County Chamber of Commerce “Your Story Everywhere” (YSE) on TravelOregon offers exposure to a larger audience on targeted travel destinations within Union County. Our first “Your Story Everywhere” will run in June/July 2022. Predicted reach is over 110,000 e-subscribers. Increased ROI is also achieved as any content created for this story is available for use on our website.

FY 20/21 Actual:	\$1,859
FY 21/22 Budget:	\$10,000
FY21/22 YTD:	\$3,300*
FY 22/23 Budget Request:	\$15,000

\* Contract signed with TravelOregon for a Your Story Everywhere (YSE). Story is currently in creative and should be live June/July of 2022



**(5132) Print Advertising**

**ADJUSTING LEVELS OF PRINT ADVERTISING TO MAXIMIZE SPEND ON PUBLICATIONS THAT ARE EFFECTIVE FOR TARGET AUDIENCES. THIS BUDGET NUMBER HAS BEEN ADJUSTED TO INCREASE THE AD SPEND FOR FY2023 AND MAXIMIZE ROI.**

The Chamber of Commerce will continue to invest in all types of advertising mediums from online media to continuing our long tradition of advertising in more traditional advertising mediums – such as local and regional travel magazines. This budget number is being adjusted to increase the ad spend over the actual spend in FY22. Taking advantage of the desire for summertime travel in 2022 and winter 2022/2023, the Chamber will prepare a consistent set of advertisements which may be sent out to advertising partners. This ad mix will update 2-3 times per year to help with seasonality and presenting a fresh look, allowing for rotation of the ads to be used multiple times before the need to update design work. This maximizes ROI and allows for the advantage of “last-minute” ad fills which are generally at very reduced rates to fill ad space – “getting a better bang for our buck”. The Chamber will continue its partnership with Eastern Oregon Visitors Association and the Travel Oregon Visitors Guide which provide a more regional/state approach to print advertising by reaching a broader audience. In addition, boosting presence in Statehood Media’s 1859/1899 magazines provides additional statewide/regional coverage in Oregon and Washington. 1859/1899 publications receive wide distribution in hotels and in travel centers in both these states. Additional printing resources will include *Northwest Travel & Life Magazine*, *EOVA Visitors Guide\**, *Travel Oregon Visitors Guide*, *The Entertainer*, *Outdoors NW*, *Oregon Golf*, as well as the Union County Visitors Guide and NE Oregon’s Magazine (both at no cost to the Union County Chamber). Each media source has a different target audience, and continues to focus our ads maximizing our ROI. The Chamber will maintain high levels of print advertising as this is still an effective method of selling Union County and is a very effective planning medium for potential visitors.



**(5132) Print Advertising**

FY 20/21 Actual:	\$3,989
FY 21/22 Budget:	\$10,000
FY 21/22 YTD:	\$3,318
FY 22/23 Budget Request:	\$7,500

\* Eastern Oregon Visitors Guide distributes 100,000 copies over 11 counties, the Travel Portland Regional Program, and additional distribution in Idaho.

**(5133) Advertising NE Oregon**

**PROMOTION OF ASSETS: KEEPING EVENTS IN UNION COUNTY IN FRONT OF TOURISTS IS A TOP PRIORITY.**

Key attractions bringing tourism to La Grande and Union County include the Mt. Emily Recreation Area (MERA), two amazing golf courses, one winning the prestigious 2021 Oregon Golf Association Facility of the Year; Eastern Oregon Film Festival (EOFF), Eastern Oregon Beer Festival (EOBF), Eagle Cap Excursion Train, NE Oregon Arts Trail, a world class hot spring resort, and many more. Exploring the possibility of partnering with key organizations for further promotion of MERA and the Hell’s Canyon Scenic By-Way (HCSB), including developing printed content to distribute out to visitors' centers throughout the state. Past uses of this budget item includes a one third share for a travel writer project in conjunction with Baker County for mountain biking promotion at MERA and Anthony Lakes. We have maintained the budget for this specific line item (\$2,500) in FY21/22 to further support the marketing plan by focusing on specifically highlighting tourism assets.



- FY 20/21 Actual: \$0
- FY 21/22 Budget: \$2,500
- FY 21/22 YTD: \$0
- **FY 22/23 Budget Request: \$2,500**

**(5700) Special Projects**

**THIS BUDGET LINE INCREASE PAYS FOR A ONE-TIME SET-UP FEE FOR THE VISIT WIDGET APP. UTILIZING FUNDS FROM THIS BUDGET LINE TO GAIN MEDIA ASSETS THROUGH CONTRACTS FOR PHOTOS AND VIDEO THROUGHOUT UNION COUNTY INCLUDING SITES, EVENTS, ATTRACTIONS AND FESTIVALS.**

Some examples of how this budget line has been used over the past three years were contracting with Worthy Marketing to conduct a marketing audit and analysis to answer questions regarding key demographics and how to best promote messaging to reach these audiences. Additionally, applying and using a project-specific grant awarded by the *Eastern Oregon Visitors Association (EOVA)*. The Chamber contracted again with Worthy Marketing and Distill Creative Studio to create a professional brand/style guide, including elements of updated logos, social media avatars, a basic website layout, and key design elements for print and digital ads. Additionally, this budget line could be used for professional contracting to develop content for Travel Oregon’s OTIS, the website, and additional development of advertising messaging.

In FY 2023 there are plans to use \$3000 from this budget line for pay for the one-time set up fees for the Visit Widget website app (See page 15).

A serious gap for proper and timely promotion is a comprehensive catalogue of professional photos and video content throughout Union County. This is to include seasonally specific imagery, photos capturing events and activities, as well as a combination of streetscapes and wilderness highlights. This important undertaking for future projects is to include contracting with a local photographer(s)/videographers to develop this catalogue of media assets consistent with our style guide and owned by the Chamber, for use in print and digital promotional marketing.

This media catalogue campaign would be based on marketing research and highlighting activities ranked most appealing to the target demographic audience. Additionally, photos and videos could be staged and serve as an opportunity for a diversity and inclusion project, for increased representation of women and minorities in outdoor recreation including events to appeal to a broader demographic than has been typical throughout the Eastern Oregon region.



- FY 20/21 Actual: \$15,950
- FY 21/22 Budget: \$10,000
- FY 21/22 YTD: \$3,500
- FY 22/23 Budget Request: \$25,000**







## What is it?

Visit Widget is an advanced, cross-device application that creates an engaging and intuitive way for visitors to research, plan, and experience their visit to your city. Ideal for CVB (Convention and Visitor Bureau), DMO (Destination Marketing Organization), and tourism boards, our platform focuses on giving your visitors an intuitive and engaging way to experience your destination.

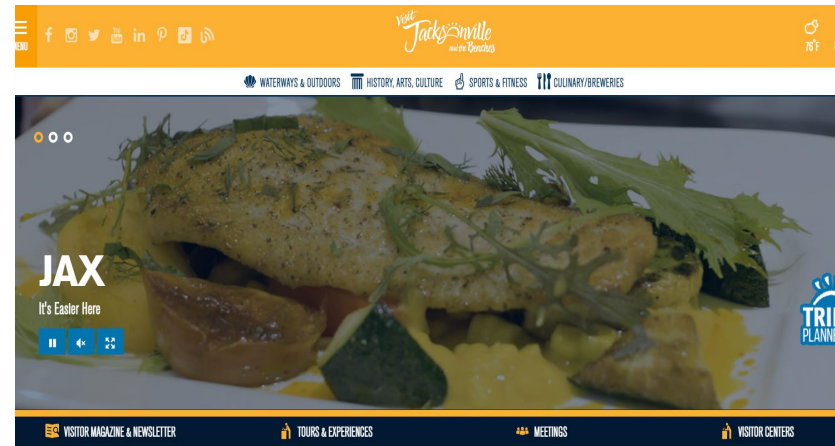
Web, mobile, and optional kiosk interfaces provide multiple touch-points for your visitors to plan their trip.



**ADDING THE “VISIT WIDGET” APP TO THE WEBSITE WILL ENCOURAGE LONG DURATION “FACT-FINDING” WEBSITE VISITS AND TRIP PLANNING. AFTER INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE “VISIT WIDGET” APP THE “VISITOR” WILL HAVE THE ABILITY TO DESIGN SELF-GUIDED TOURS AND TRIPS. ATTRACTIONS, RESTAURANTS, AND LODGING LOCATIONS CAN ALSO BE ADDED INTO THE TOURS AND WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE MAPS.**

Planning and implementation of the Visit Widget app to our current website will begin immediately. This app sits over the top of the current site. *Visit Widget does not change any aspect of the current website.* Planning, media preparation, and implementation should take 3-4 months. Businesses and attractions will be asked for write-ups and current information including address, photos, phone number, hours of operation, website address, and social media information. Keeping this information accurate is critical to giving our visitors an experience. Examples of other DMO’s that use this widget include Jacksonville, FL ([www.visitjacksonville.com](http://www.visitjacksonville.com)) and even very small communities like Little Falls, MN, pop 9,140 ([www.littlefallsmn.com](http://www.littlefallsmn.com)).

There is a one-time cost of \$3000 to set up the maps and businesses, develop the customized phone/tablet app and get the custom “Plan Your Visit” link set up. See below for explanation of how the Visit Widget app will get implemented.\*



*\*\$3000 from the Special Projects Budget (5700) line will pay for the one-time development and set up fees for the website app. The set-up fees cover the development of the online Visit Widget application and implementations. Also included in this fee is the initial development and information upload on the apps map and the development of our “branded” smart phone app.*

*The yearly maintenance fee of \$4800 to be split between the Tourism Website Maintenance and Development (5116) budget line and the Chamber of Commerce Website Maintenance Development Budget lines.*



## Membership

Active membership and representation on a variety of tourism-focused organizations and boards across the State of Oregon is critical to ensure successful inclusion of La Grande and Union County in tourism promotion projects throughout Oregon and beyond. The more actively the Chamber engages with different organizations, the more readily it can access new and upcoming projects. Membership is most effective when full participation in these organizations is pursued. Continuing these active relationships is a part of the overall marketing strategy.



### (5145.02) Oregon Destination Association - \$300

The Oregon Destination Association (ODA, formerly Oregon Destination Marketing Organization, ODMO) is a statewide network of convention, visitor bureaus and chamber of commerce directors who share a common interest in the vision and vitality of Oregon's travel industry. ODA members are the direct link between tourism-related business services, and other important entities such as the Oregon Tourism Commission, dba Travel Oregon. As such, ODA is the leading voice of the tourism industry in Oregon.



### (5145.03) Hells Canyon Scenic Byway (HCSB) Membership - \$2,000

The HCSB membership is significant as La Grande is a gateway to this scenic adventure and tourist destination. HCSB is featured by *Travel Oregon*, *America's Byways*, *Oregon Scenic Byways*, and the *Eastern Oregon Visitors Association Visitors Guide*, making this partnership an incredible opportunity to build relationships for cross promotion. To clarify this labeling: the "HCSB Membership" is not technically a membership; rather, it is a cooperative agreement, paid to EOVA for administration, matched by regional partners (Baker and Wallowa Counties) to pursue tri-county projects which are identified and agreed upon by the three neighboring counties.

In January/February 2020, the three counties pursued a social media campaign to promote "Winter on the Byway", yielding 773,400+ impressions, 697,300+ accounts reached, 397,000+ views, and nearly 24,000 likes, comments, and interactions. While this specific campaign may not be directly pursued in the future, this provides a good example of the three counties coming together to promote tourism to the Northeast Oregon region. Additionally, Union, Baker, and Wallowa Counties have agreed a redesign of current printed materials and online presence of the HCSB needs updating and will be evaluated prior to the upcoming 'busy season.'

### (5145.04) Oregon Tour and Travel Alliance - \$225

The Oregon Tour and Travel Alliance (OTTA) is an independent nonprofit membership organization working in partnership with Travel Oregon to increase packaged travel to Oregon. OTTA is a professional association comprised of companies from across the state partnering together to ensure members are highly visible at annual conventions, marketplaces, and trade shows.





**(5145.06) Oregon Festivals & Events Association – \$500**

Promotional assistance is provided to more than 1,200 Oregon events through the OFEA's annual Oregon Events Calendar magazine. Free copies are distributed to more than 90,000 readers through visitor bureaus, chambers of commerce and other public outlets. Event listings from the calendar are also posted on Travel Oregon's website. Membership to this organization is an extremely useful tool, if properly prioritized, as member organizations are responsible for inputting events into OFEA's database for promotion and use.



**(5145.14) Miscellaneous Memberships - \$1,000**

If a new opportunity arises to join, support, and partner with other organizations which make sense and further aid us in our quest to increase tourism to Union County, there is a reserve in the budget for this. Though underutilized, this budget line has been increased for greater leveraging, if the need arises. Based on typical membership costs into the aforementioned organizations, \$200 has little capability to engage in membership opportunities. The budget for this line item is increased to \$1,000 for greater flexibility.

**(5145.08) Eastern Oregon Visitor Association (EOVA) - \$2,000**

As a member of EOVA and a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO), the Union County Chamber of Commerce works cooperatively with ten other counties in Eastern Oregon, enabling the Chamber to build vigorous regional relationships and robust promotions. This "Sustaining Level" membership fee increased from \$1,500 to \$2,000 in FY 2020; however, maintaining at the Sustaining Level allows the Union County Chamber Executive Director to serve as a DMO voting member on the Board of Directors, which allows for increased representation and inclusion in regional projects and promotions.



## Other Activities

### Email/Constant Contact

The Chamber emails a list of weekly events, announcements, resources, and business promotions happening in Union County. After an active database update/cleaning the Chamber currently has nearly 450 current, unduplicated, active subscribers. The community has expressed interest in these informative emails which highlight current La Grande / Union County information and happenings. The “open rate” of Chamber emails is up over 3% (April 2022 vs March 2022).

Based on marketing research, the Chamber intends to pursue the implementation of travel and trip itinerary ideas for inquiries received via the website and social media. In order to receive a visitor guide via website fulfillment requests, visitors must input not only a mailing address, but also a legitimate email address. This enables the Chamber of Commerce to build a travel-focused email list for targeted e-newsletters with compelling itineraries and travel-centric imagery, based on similar highlights as the website for greater audience engagement.

### Visitors Information Center

The Union County Chamber of Commerce continues to maintain a clean and attractive Visitor Information Center (Bureau) and Chamber office offering a warm and inviting atmosphere for visitors. Other local Chambers /Visitor centers like Walla Walla, WA and Joseph, OR have implemented small visitors’ kiosks like those shown in the examples below. Increasing service to visitors with a secondary location kiosk, possibly closer to Highway 82, with easy access for those towing trailers, boats, and other large vehicles will be further studied and explored as an option. Commissioning a “visitor kiosk trailer” build that can be placed during the peak travel season might be an option. Additional studies will need to be done to see if this is an option.

Examples →

### Website Maintenance

[www.visitunioncounty.org](http://www.visitunioncounty.org) will continue development to increase its organic search results and offer a better experience that inspires travel to Union County and showcases our local businesses. General maintenance and seasonal updates are necessary to maximize these experiences. Integrating the Visit Widget app and its included “branded” smart phone app will play a monumental role in tourists planning trips to Union County and help visitors navigate to where they ultimately wish to go – offering a more tailored experience. Showcasing local attractions and businesses helps to foster additional over night stays. While the website and Visit Widget app are designed for tourism, “locals” will also utilize these tools to find attractions in Union County. With costs of fuel continuing to rise families will look to a more “regional” or a “tank of gas away” type of vacation and [www.visitunioncounty.org](http://www.visitunioncounty.org) will offer the information tourists are looking for.

Offering travel/trip itinerary ideas on the website aids visitors in maximizing their time and helps them better find what they are looking for. Offering places to eat and sleep also become part of the itinerary. Using local resources to find those “hidden gems” in smaller communities will be an important part of planning these itineraries.





### Oregon Tourism Information System (OTIS)

The Oregon Tourism Information System is a central hub where information is uploaded from local DMOs and then gets shared cross platform with other travel sites regionally and statewide through [www.TravelOregon.com](http://www.TravelOregon.com). As the Local DMO, the Chamber is solely responsible for adding and maintaining all Union County listings and ensuring all listings are complete, accurate, and updated. This work project will begin later in May/June 2022 once our training is completed from Travel Oregon. This will be an ongoing project.

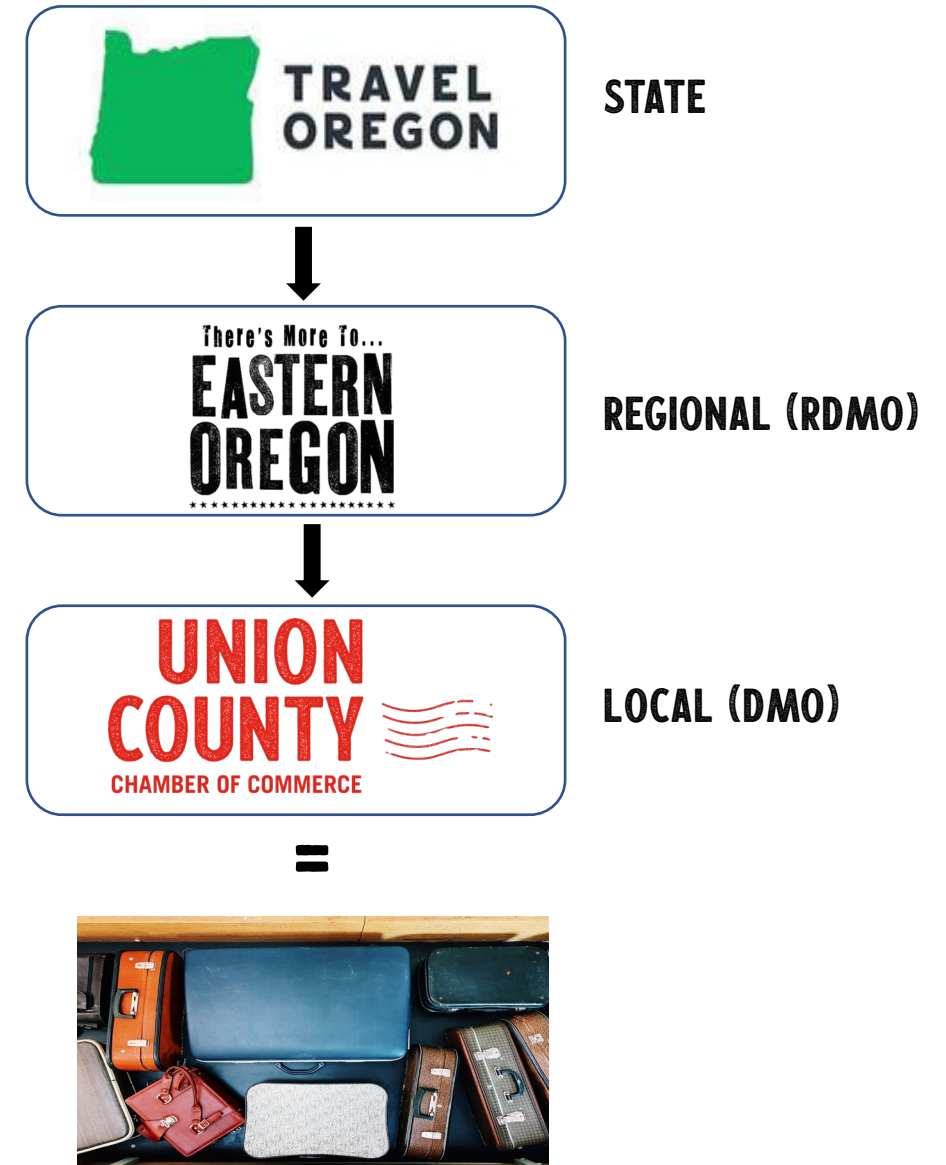
### Event Submissions

The Chamber regularly submits event dates to media outlets including local, regional, and state websites and publications. Event submissions are often accepted as part of our membership or paid advertising (i.e., GO Magazine and Oregon Festivals & Events).

### Tradeshows

A past undertaking of the Chamber has been attendance and presence in trade shows including Go West Summit (next summit is scheduled for February 27 – March 2 in Anchorage Alaska). There are additional tradeshows and tourism marketing events that the Chamber will determine if the ROI fits within our budgets. Engaging audiences of future travelers as well as travel/tour operators selling international tourism, ensures Union County is included as a destination for packaged future travel opportunities. Increasing focus and engagement will be part of the long-term strategy. Additional market research and analysis needs to be completed before any strategic decisions can be made.

## WHERE DOES THE UNION COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FIT IN STATE-WIDE TOURISM MARKETING?



# STRATEGIES GOING FORWARD...

The Chamber continually develops and analyzes a comprehensive strategic plan to incorporate building strategic partnerships, development of new attractions, installations of cohesive wayfinding signage, business support grant funding, and beyond. The marketing plan is the first step towards developing a broader scaled plan for truly driving visitations to La Grande and Union County.



Short-term 1-12 months



- Begin OTIS entry project (May-June)
- Build a community calendar to show upcoming events on the website
- Begin work on redesigning the Visitor/Adventure Guide (for 2023 distribution)
- Implement Visit Widget app on the web site (projected implementation August/September 2022)
- Continued expansion of media assets (photos and video) to showing outdoor activities, Agri-tourism, festivals and other events
- Develop a social media strategy using targeted tourism-based advertisements on social media platforms in our core tourism markets

Mid-term 12-36 months



- Work with current attractions and events to develop a more cohesive strategy to attract more visitors to Union County
- Continue to expand the reach of the Visitor Adventure guide into new untapped regions – using marketing research as the guide
- Continue website development and expansion using additional media assets, SEO analytics, and consistent theming throughout the site
- Expand Visit Widget by developing programmed tourism routes for tourist to follow – routes for specific activities (biking, hiking, golf, shopping, adventure, etc.)

Long-term 36+ months



- Continue to partner with key stakeholders for Commercial Airport Development
- Work to develop better county-wide signing to key attractions and historic districts
- Work to develop new strategies on highway signage outside of Union County pointing to Union County as a destination

# Appendix I

In FY2020-2021, the Chamber contracted with Worthy Marketing Consulting undergoing an extensive marketing research and audit project to identify target marketing audiences, highest-ranked assets to promote, and the most effective methods of marketing to ensure reach to these markets. Included below are highlights of information from this research project.

According to Longwoods 2017 Eastern Region Visitor Report, the majority of our travelers are:

**25-44 years old**  
**Married / Not families**  
**Travel as a group of 2-3,**  
 esp. with spouse

They are coming from:

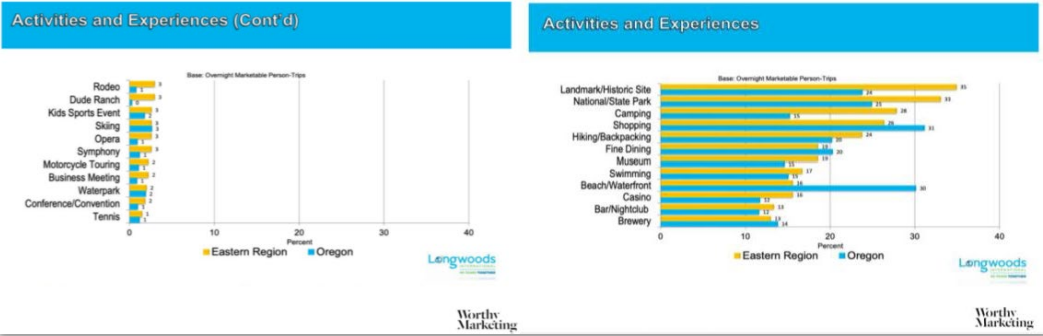
**Portland, OR**  
**Yakima, WA**  
**Seattle-Tacoma, WA**  
**Eugene, OR**  
**Boise, ID**

They are coming for:

**Touring & Outdoors**

And the following activities:

**Landmark/Historic Site**  
**National/State Park**  
**Camping**  
**Shopping**  
**Hiking/Backpacking**



**Develop a 3-tier strategy**

**Travel Oregon presence**

Add and update destination content on their website, uplevel Union County events and attractions to be featured on Eastern Oregon regional page, two featured "Your Story, Everywhere" newsletters to Travel Oregon subscribers

**Website & Social Media**

**Establish Union County positioning**

This informs imagery selection for all marketing efforts and how we write about the Union County and Northeastern Oregon experience

**Minimize Print Advertising**

**Shift from print to digital newsletters**

Our younger audience finds inspiration more often in digital outreach, such as "Your Story, Everywhere" via Travel Oregon

**Outreach to OR & WA outdoor enthusiasts**

Create @NortheasternOregon social media presence and target top-performing posts to this audience, one "Your Story, Everywhere" newsletters should be focused on outdoor recreation in Union County

**Integrate OTIS**

As we update and evolve Union County offerings and determine its positioning, this tool is a one-stop-shop for updating our web content & Travel Oregon pages

**Focus on social media**

Instead of one ad trying to cover many topics, let social media content promote proven destination selling points and be targeted to our audience

**Stay visible to surrounding communities**

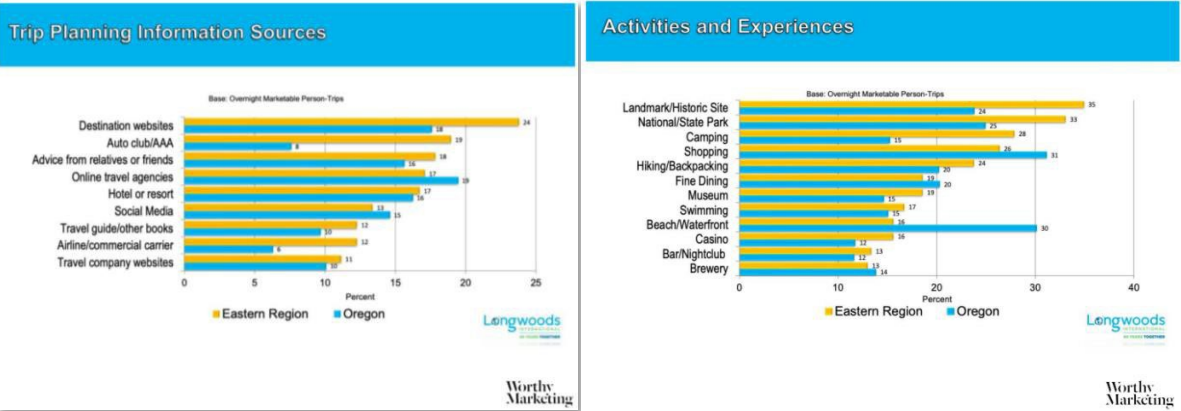
Use event content, outdoor recreation, unique lodging and dining attractions via social media to target visitation and spend from the surrounding area

**Claim @NortheasternOregon**

Use this handle to inspire visitation to Union County and share content creation costs with Baker & Willows counties

**Add digital drivers**

Once there is new content on VisitUnionCounty.org, explore digital ad campaign, SEO, and SEM as ways to funnel visitors to your website and stories



Will most likely travel:

**July-September**  
**April-June**

Trip planning sources:

**Destination websites**  
**Word-of-mouth**  
**Social media**

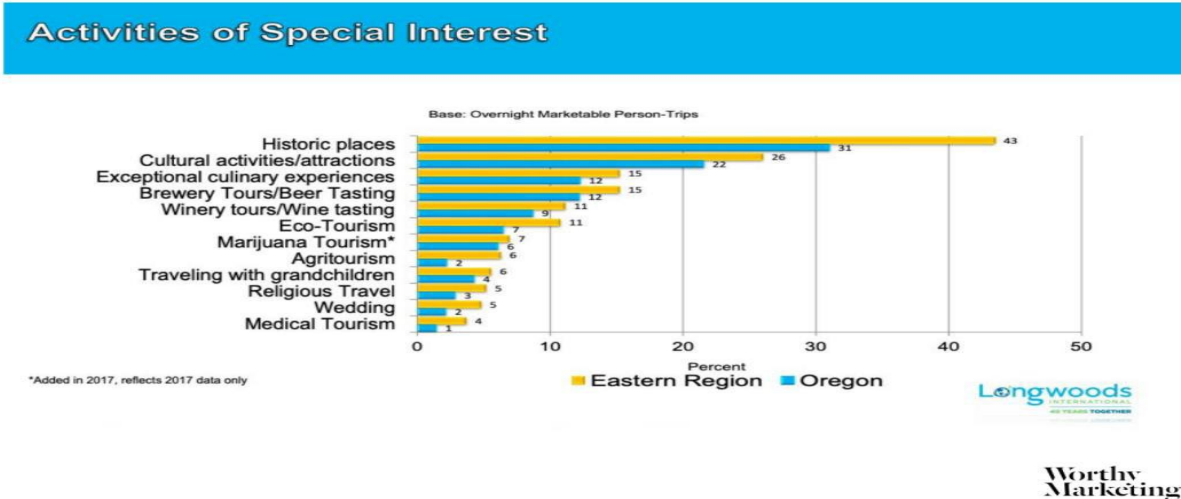
Near-Term Tactics  
 3-15 months

**Update VisitUnionCounty.org**

**Navigation** needs to address residents and travelers on the website.

At this time, there is not enough traffic to the website to merit a standalone tourism website.

Additionally, most travelers do not search for destinations by county. Our job is to supply good information for those who do find us.





## Appendix II

The Chamber contracts with *Certified Folder* to distribute the annual Union County Visitors Guide magazine and maps throughout Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and parts of Northern California. Certified does offer future expansion into additional markets as need arises.

**CERTIFIED**  
FOLDER DISPLAY  
SERVICE, INC.

**PROVIDING HELPFUL  
VISITOR INFORMATION**

**On the Road**  
➤ 21,000 brochure display racks throughout North America  
Hotels, motels, car rental offices, visitor centers, airports, restaurants,  
military bases, corporations, industrial plants, sporting goods  
stores, chambers of commerce, campgrounds, RV parks, state  
and national parks

**On the Internet**  
➤ VisitorTips.com – an international travel resource website  
Accommodations, attractions, activities, dining, entertainment,  
shopping, tours, transportation, and visitor service

**Programs**

- Visitor Marketing
- Winter/Summer Sports
- WA State Ferry/BC Ferries
- Brochure Design/Print
- Corporate/Industrial
- California Welcome Center
- Internet Marketing
- Custom Publishing & Advertising

**Professional Brochure Distribution  
since 1899!**

**800.799.7373**  
**www.certifiedfolder.com**

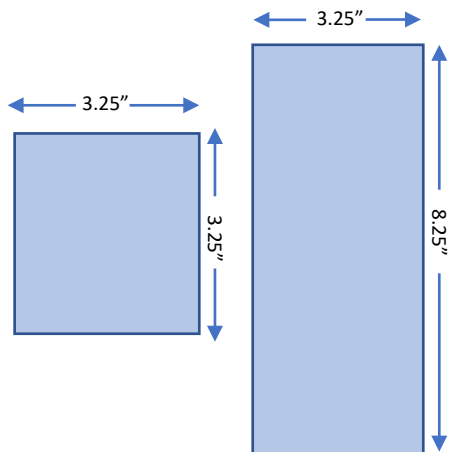
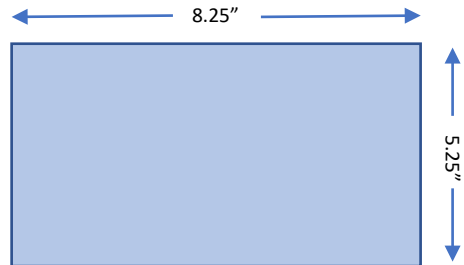
Design/Marketing



## Appendix III

Ad design samples that could be used throughout the year.

Having ads designed in multiple sizes and formats allows for quick implementation when opportunities arise - as magazines are looking to fill their space.



**TRAVEL THE SEASONS**

**VISITUNIONCOUNTY.ORG**  
**541.963.8588**

**Travel the Seasons. Passport to Endless Adventures.**  
**A Lifetime of Memories.**

**VISITUNIONCOUNTY.ORG - 541.963.8588 -**

**TRAVEL THE SEASONS**

**VISITUNIONCOUNTY.ORG - 541.963.8588**



## ROLE OF THE UNION COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE....

The Union County Chamber of Commerce continues to play a vital community role and acts to promote tourism and advance Union County businesses.

- Maintain an updated and vibrant website that attracts visitors
- Promotion of tourism, tourist related activities and attractions
- Offering networking and educational opportunities for members
- Assist in the distribution of Transient Tax Grants for local businesses
- Designing and distributing updated visitor and relocation directories
- Understanding and fostering local business community and it's needs
- Offering promotional and educational opportunities to local businesses
- Continually striving to attract new and helping existing businesses expand
- Maintaining a clean visitor and information center with qualified staff helping guests

### *Did you know...*

- 63% of consumers are more likely to buy products or services from a member business
- 51% in consumer awareness of member business over competitors
- 44% of consumers are more likely to think favorably of a business if that business is a chamber of commerce member
- 12% of consumers view chamber of commerce members as trustworthy and those products or services are better than competitors

Source: [www.americanbusinessmag.com/2012/05/why-join-your-local-chamber-of-commerce/](http://www.americanbusinessmag.com/2012/05/why-join-your-local-chamber-of-commerce/)



# JOINT MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

UNION COUNTY; CITY OF LA GRANDE; UNION COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
JOINT MEMORANDUM of AGREEMENT

This Memorandum of Agreement (hereinafter referred to as MOA), entered into this \_\_\_\_ Day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020, by and between the City Council of the City of La Grande, an Oregon municipal corporation (hereinafter referred to as CITY), the Union County Board of Commissioners, (hereinafter referred to as COUNTY), and the Union County Chamber of Commerce, (hereinafter referred to as CHAMBER), for the purpose of agreeing on overall tourism activities and promotion efforts benefiting Union County and the City of La Grande:

WITNESSETH

Whereas, COUNTY and CITY desire to jointly fund tourism promotion for the City of La Grande and Union County; and,

Whereas, CHAMBER, a nonprofit organization under IRS Section 501(c) 6, is charged with promoting tourism for Union County and the City of La Grande; and,

Whereas, it is the mutual desire of the Parties to jointly pursue increased tourism activity in Union County and the City of La Grande; and,

Whereas, the Parties further desire to establish through this MOA specific goals and expectations in regard to the promotion and marketing of Union County and the City of La Grande.

NOW, THEREFORE, based on the mutual covenants set forth in this MOA, the Parties agree to the following terms and conditions:

Section 1. Term, Duration, and Termination.

This MOA shall be in effect from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023, with funding for the fiscal year beginning each July 1, to be determined during the budget hearing processes of COUNTY and CITY. Any Party, with or without cause, upon written notification presented to all other Parties on or before April 1, of any fiscal year, may terminate this agreement effective at 5:00 P.M. on June 30 of that same fiscal year.

Section 2. Duties and Responsibilities.

A. Union County Chamber of Commerce (CHAMBER) shall:

1. Perform Tourism Promotion Services as described in this MOA and the approved annual Program of Work FYE 2021. Said services shall include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Operating a visitors' center at least Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. year-round and during major events including but not limited to the following events:
    1. EOU Week of Welcome
    2. EOU Homecoming
    3. EOU Graduation
    4. Eastern Oregon Beer Festival
    5. Union County Farm Crawl
  - ii. Producing and distributing promotional brochures and other printed information.

Tourism Promotion Services MOA

- iii. Maintaining at least one alternate offsite location in downtown La Grande for the placement of promotional brochures and other printed materials which is open on Saturdays and posting signage at the visitors' center to direct visitors to the alternate location(s) (currently Red Cross Drug Store and Blue Mountain Outfitters).
- iv. Operating a web site that promotes La Grande and Union County.
- v. Developing and implementing an annual Program of Work for the marketing and promotion of La Grande and Union County in consultation with the Union County Tourism Promotion Advisory Committee (UCTPAC). Such consultation shall include a formal recommendation from the UCTPAC regarding the program. The program shall provide promotional efforts for Chamber and non-Chamber members alike. Said program for each fiscal year beginning shall be submitted to the CITY and COUNTY not later than April 30 for review and approval.
- vi. Presenting to the CITY on or before April 30 and COUNTY on or before the first County Commissioners meeting in May of each year an operating budget in conjunction with the marketing and promotion program submission.
- vii. Providing measureable results for the investment made in tourism marketing and promotion. The following agreed upon measurements shall be used as a primary tool for determining funding for the duration of this agreement.
  - 1. Transient Room Tax Revenues.
  - 2. Cooperative Ad participation—dollars invested and partner participation.
  - 3. Website hits.
  - 4. Requests for information that require responses—mailed packets, e-mailed packets.
  - 5. Retail Sales. (a sub-group will work on a sample group to gather data from)
  - 6. Blue Mountain Conference events that include overnight stays to the extent the information is provided by the Oregon Military Department.
- viii. Serving as a liaison between the tourism stakeholders such as: Union County Board of Commissioners; the City of La Grande; local, regional, and state-level tourism organizations; lodging providers/operators in La Grande and throughout Union County; local tourism-related businesses such as restaurants, gas stations, and retail; local and regional economic development organization, La Grande Main Street Downtown. Working with the Oregon Military Department when appropriate to help attract and host larger events at the Blue Mountain Conference Center.
- ix. Implementing appropriate tourism elements of the currently adopted economic development plans of Union County and City of La Grande.
- x. Appoint one voting member and one alternate member of the UCTPAC. The voting member and alternate shall be members of the Union County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, normally the President or Vice President of the Chamber Board.

B. The City of La Grande (CITY) shall:

- 1. Appoint three voting members of the UCTPAC, including one City Councilor. The City may assign a second Councilor as an alternate voting member.
- 2. Assign the City Manager or his designee to provide staff support to UCTPAC.
- 3. Provide to CHAMBER funding for tourism promotion an amount to be determined by the Budget Committee and City Council during the normal budget adoption process.

C. Union County Board of Commissioners (County) shall:

- 1. Appoint three voting members of the UCTPAC, including one County Commissioner. The County may assign a second Commissioner as an alternate voting member.
- 2. Provide to CHAMBER funding for tourism promotion an amount to be determined by the Budget Committee and Board of County Commissioners during the normal budget adoption process.

Section 4. Amendments and Assignments. Amendments to this Joint MOA must be mutually agreed upon by and between the Parties to this MOA and in a writing executed with the same formalities of this MOA. This MOA is binding on the heirs, successors and assigns of the Parties hereto and may only be assigned by any party by first obtaining the written consent of the other Party or Parties.

Section 5. Special Circumstances. The Chamber agrees to provide notice to the City and County within five (5) days of the Chamber being made aware of any allegations of fraud, financial misconduct, theft, embezzlement and/or any other claims of misuse of funds by its employees, agents and assigns that could lead to criminal charges involving the funds provided by the City and/or County under this Agreement. Notice shall be provided to the City Manager and County Administrator. The City and County agree to keep any information received from the Chamber confidential during the pendency of any law enforcement investigation.

UNION COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mollie Hulse  
Mollie Hulse  
Chamber President

CITY of LA GRANDE

Stephen E. Clements  
Stephen E. Clements  
Mayor

UNION COUNTY

Paul Anderes  
Paul Anderes  
Chair

ATTEST:

Kayla M. Rock  
Kayla M. Rock  
City Recorder

	Tourism Proposal County/City	Requested Budget FY 22-23	FY 21-22 Projected Year End	FY 21-22 Year to Date March 31 2022	FY 21-22 Adopted Budget	FY 20-21	FY 20-21 Actual	FY 20-21 Adopted Budget
	<b>Income</b>							
4101	Cash on hand (previous year carry over)	\$ 162,114	\$ 142,597	\$ 142,597	\$ 189,296	\$ 135,932	\$ 142,485	
4102	Interest Income					\$ 0		
4106	TRT La Grande	\$ 82,654	\$ 74,037	\$ 74,037	\$ 83,554	\$ 83,554	\$ 83,554	
4108	TRT Union County	\$ 58,000	\$ 42,075	\$ 42,075	\$ 55,000	\$ 14,025	\$ 55,000	
4200	Visitors Guide					\$ -	\$ -	
4210	Misc. Income					\$ 5,000		
4200	Visitors Guide - Other	\$ 1,000	\$ 3,500	\$ 360	\$ 4,000		\$ 4,500	
4200	<b>Total Visitors Guide</b>	<b>\$ 1,000</b>	<b>\$ 3,500</b>	<b>\$ 360</b>	<b>\$ 4,000</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 4,500</b>	
4209	Royalty Income					\$ -	\$ -	
4999	Unclassified Income							
	<b>TOTAL INCOME:</b>	<b>\$ 141,654</b>	<b>\$ 119,612</b>	<b>\$ 116,472</b>	<b>\$ 142,554</b>	<b>\$ 238,512</b>	<b>\$ 285,539</b>	
	<b>Expenses</b>							
5100	<b>TOURISM MARKETING PROGRAM</b>							
5110	Fullfillment	\$ 7,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,011	\$ 3,500	\$ 125	\$ 3,000	
5114	Marketing Firm			\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
5116	Website Maintenance & Dev.	\$ 5,000	\$ 2,405	\$ 1,904	\$ 5,000	\$ 1,869	\$ 5,000	
5124	Cooperative Advertising	\$ 7,500	\$ 2,373	\$ 2,372	\$ 3,500	\$ 1,000	\$ 6,500	
5128	Radio Advertising	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000	
5130	Online Advertising	\$ 15,000	\$ 2,500		\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ 15,000	
5132	Print Advertising Total	\$ 7,500	\$ 8,400	\$ 3,318	\$ 10,000	\$ 3,989	\$ 10,000	
5132.02	Magazine Mailing				\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500	
5133	Advertising- NE Oregon	\$ 2,500			\$ 2,500	\$ -	\$ 5,000	
5134	Print Collateral					\$ -	\$ -	
5145	<b>Memberships:</b>							
5145.02	Oregon Destination Marketing Org (ODA)	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	
5145.03	HCSB Membership	\$ 2,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000	
5145.04	Oregon Tour and Travel Alliance (OTTA)	\$ 225	\$ 225	\$ 225	\$ 225	\$ 225	\$ 225	
5145.06	Oregon Festivals and Events Assoc (OFEA)	\$ 500			\$ 500	\$ -	\$ 500	
5145.08	EOVA Membership	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	
5145.14	Misc Memberships	\$ 1,000	\$ 75	\$ 75	\$ 1,000	\$ -	\$ 200	
	<b>Membership Subtotal:</b>	<b>\$ 6,025</b>	<b>\$ 5,600</b>	<b>\$ 5,600</b>	<b>\$ 6,025</b>	<b>\$ 2,525</b>	<b>\$ 8,225</b>	
	<b>TOURISM MARKETING PROGRAM SUBTOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 52,025</b>	<b>\$ 23,778</b>	<b>\$ 15,205</b>	<b>\$ 41,525</b>	<b>\$ 9,507</b>	<b>\$ 54,225</b>	
5601	Employee Benefits	\$ 6,000	\$ 5,180	\$ 4,317	\$ 5,500	\$ 4,437	\$ 5,070	
5602	Exec Director	\$ 39,000	\$ 36,700	\$ 30,542	\$ 38,500	\$ 16,262	\$ 36,050	
5605	Administrative Assistant	\$ 12,500	\$ 6,700	\$ 5,559	\$ 8,500	\$ 1,917	\$ 8,000	
5606	Marketing Assistant		\$ 20	\$ 19	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,500	
5607	Misc. Staff Expense				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
5608	Payroll Taxes	\$ 5,700	\$ 4,400	\$ 3,601	\$ 5,000	\$ 1,715	\$ 5,100	
5609	Health Insurance	\$ 3,600			\$ 4,500	\$ -	\$ -	
5650.08	Staff Meals	\$ 200	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
5650.1	Staff Training	\$ 200	\$ -		\$ 200	\$ -	\$ 280	
5600	Administrative - Other		\$ -		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	<b>ADMINISTRATVE SUBTOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 67,200</b>	<b>\$ 53,000</b>	<b>\$ 44,039</b>	<b>\$ 62,200</b>	<b>\$ 24,331</b>	<b>\$ 65,000</b>	
5610	Operations		\$ -					
5614	Subscriptions	\$ 200	\$ 68	\$ 68	\$ 200	\$ -	\$ 120	
5616	Rent	\$ 4,800	\$ 4,100	\$ 3,375	\$ 4,500	\$ 3,000	\$ 4,500	
5618	Misc. Expense	\$ 50				\$ 35		
5620	Postage			\$ 26	\$ 50	\$ 247	\$ 50	
5622	Copies & Supplies				\$ -	\$ 178	\$ 1,000	
5624	Accounting & Bookkeeping	\$ 3,000	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,331	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,416	\$ 2,500	
5626	Telephone	\$ 350	\$ 560	\$ 464	\$ 750	\$ 604	\$ 840	
5628	Insuarnce	\$ 2,200	\$ 1,340	\$ 1,114	\$ 400	\$ 962	\$ 400	
5632	Bank Card 5632				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
5634	Facility Maintenance / Supplies	\$ 300	\$ 250	\$ 200	\$ 300	\$ 163	\$ 300	
5636	General Supplies / Office	\$ 1,250	\$ 1,100	\$ 916	\$ 1,250	\$ 581	\$ 1,000	
5638	Equipment Maint. & Repair	\$ 150	\$ 20	\$ 20	\$ 150	\$ -	\$ 150	
5640	Electricity	\$ 600	\$ 450	\$ 370	\$ 720	\$ 343	\$ 720	
5644	Internet	\$ 350	\$ 100		\$ 480	\$ -	\$ 480	
5610	Operating Expenses - Other	\$ 1,500	\$ 30	\$ 30	\$ 1,500	\$ 83	\$ 1,690	
	<b>OPERATIONS SUBTOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 14,750</b>	<b>\$ 10,818</b>	<b>\$ 8,914</b>	<b>\$ 12,800</b>	<b>\$ 8,613</b>	<b>\$ 13,750</b>	
5612	Conferences/Travel/Professional Dev.	\$ 3,000	\$ -		\$ 3,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000	
5700	Special Project Expenses (Identified Each Fiscal Year)	\$ 25,000	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 15,950	\$ 10,000	
	<b>RARE - Special One-Year Project</b>		\$ -		\$ 23,500			
5706	Mini Tourism Grants TRT Grants	\$ 25,000	\$ 7,500		\$ 7,500	\$ 305	\$ 7,000	
5706.01	TRT Discretionary Funds	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500		\$ 1,500	\$ -	\$ 3,000	
5900	Contingency	\$ 10,000	\$ -		\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ 5,000	
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$ 198,475</b>	<b>\$ 100,096</b>	<b>\$ 71,658</b>	<b>\$ 187,025</b>	<b>\$ 58,705</b>	<b>\$ 159,975</b>	
	Net Income / (Loss)	\$ (56,821)	\$ 19,517	\$ 44,814	\$ (44,471)	\$ 179,806	\$ 125,564	
	Beginning Cash on Hand (Actual and Budgeted)	\$ 162,114	\$ 142,597	\$ 142,597	\$ 189,296			
	Ending Cash on Hand	\$ 105,293	\$ 162,114	\$ 187,412	\$ 144,825			