

2010

City of Rawlins–Tourism Assessment



Industry Services Program
Wyoming Office of Tourism
October 19 2010

Wyoming Office of Tourism (WOT), a state agency, is the marketing division charged with bringing visitors to Wyoming. By actively promoting Wyoming as a vacation destination to both the domestic and international markets, WOT contributes significantly to Wyoming's economic fiber by building a strong tourism industry. The Film, Arts & Entertainment program markets Wyoming locations to production companies and promotes Wyoming's cultural amenities to further increase economic development and statewide tourism.

Our Mission:

To promote and facilitate increased travel to and within the state of Wyoming by fueling market demand which drives a healthy tourism economy, contributing to business sustainability and strengthening the industry's job and income.

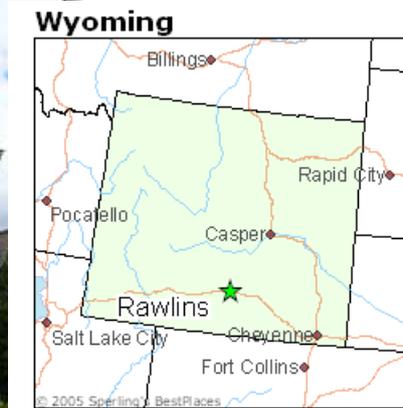
Our Goals:

1. Increase the number of resident and non-resident travelers to our state
2. Increase travel-related sales and employment in Wyoming
3. Generate increased sales tax revenue from travel-related sectors



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wyoming Office of Tourism (WOT) Division in conjunction with the Wyoming Rural Development Council (WRDC) has developed a Certified Tourism Community (CTC) program to assist communities statewide in developing visitor friendly destinations. This program is designed to be the next step of the WRDC's community assessment process for communities that have identified tourism as an economic development priority. The first step to certification as a tourism community is to conduct a tourism assessment. The tourism assessment process mirrors the community assessment process and provides recommendations to communities in growing and sustaining their travel and tourism industry.

The City of Rawlins was selected to be the "pilot" community to conduct the first-ever tourism assessment as a result of a request for proposal released by WOT. WOT worked with the local planning team to coordinate, schedule and conduct the tourism assessment. The assessment was conducted August 2-4, 2010. The initial assessment team was made up of the task force members WOT assembled to develop the CTC Program. The assessment team was made up of individuals representing WOT, Wyoming Business Council, Wyoming Arts Council, and the Small Business Development Center. The tourism assessment team participated in a familiarization tour, conducted discovery sessions, facilitated group exercises, and provided a summary of findings at a town hall meeting.

This report summarized the major themes heard at the discovery sessions, recommendations for growing and sustaining your travel and tourism industry, and provides the basis for development of a short-term tourism plan.

TOURISM ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Tourism Assessment Team holds a mirror up to rural communities so they can gauge their tourism potential. Rural communities invite WOT Tourism Assessment Teams into their community for a one to three day objective assessment. The Tourism Assessment Team Members gather information during the familiarization tour, facilitate discovery sessions and group exercises, and compile survey responses. During the discovery sessions, individuals from all sectors of the community have an opportunity to share with the Tourism Assessment Team Members their vision, challenges and concerns as it relates to tourism in their community. It will also help determine the appropriate level of tourism for the community. On the last night of the process, the Tourism Assessment Team Members hold a Town Meeting with the community, in which they share a recap of the discovery sessions and facilitate group exercises. Approximately one month after the Tourism Assessment Team visit, the Tourism Assessment Report is given to the local assessment team. The report is then distributed to all the participants who have attended the discovery sessions and town hall meetings. The report contains observations from the community familiarization tour, community support and challenges of tourism, responses from the visioning exercise, and the Tourism Assessment Team Member's recommendations. The community gains valuable insight, resources and recommendations from the Tourism Assessment Team Report. This provides them with a springboard in pursuing an appropriate level of tourism for their community so that it a viable sector of the economy.

CURRENT EFFORTS

The Community of Rawlins currently relies on the Carbon County Visitors Council (CCVC) to promote and market the city to visitors. The CCVC uses the county-wide lodging tax receipts to conduct consumer advertising, maintain a website-<http://www.wyomingcarboncounty.com/>, produce a visitor's guide, send out fulfillment packets, and to participate in regional consumer shows. The benefit is that it allows for leveraging resources and regional marketing. It is then up to the City of Rawlins to ensure they are meeting the expectations of visitors as a result of the marketing efforts in addition to meeting their needs when they arrive by providing visitor services, promoting all the "things to see and do", and access to retail shopping and dining experiences.

There is not a uniform effort on the part of the city or clear understanding of which organization or economic development group is the lead entity for tourism marketing, development, and providing visitor services on behalf of the city. There seems to be several entities addressing tourism initiatives which is great, however, it is not a concerted effort. There are several organizations trying to fill the "gap" so to speak. This includes Rawlins Main Street Program, Chamber of Commerce, Carbon County Economic Development, and and Recreation Services. The Rawlins Main Street Program has developed a downtown guide that highlights the various businesses, restaurants, and attractions in addition to a self-guided walking mural tour. In addition, the Main Street Gallery seems to have taken on the role to provide visitor services. The chamber of commerce has a brochure rack of all its member businesses and CCVC materials, organizes events throughout the year and sends out relocation packets. The City Recreation Services department actively works to promote its facilities, parks, shooting range and golf course, which is struggling with usage.

Rawlins was named the third best city for hunting and fishing in 2009 by Outdoor Life magazine, but there is no active effort to engage this market or encourage them to stay longer when they are here. There are no itineraries, recreation packages, limited guide services, devel-

oped interpretation for trails, and limited specialty stores to further entice this market. The golf course, shooting range, and recreation center would be great elements in developing a packaged product but they are underutilized. This particular segment could also be further developed as it relates to the female hunters and anglers. Retail shopping, dining, or "how to" experiences would appeal to this market segment.

Driving in on I-80 East and West one observes that the business billboards are run down and falling apart, giving a bad impression from miles out. This down/depressed impression of Rawlins' businesses, tourist amenities, services and experiences is difficult to overcome, but not impossible. Rawlins leadership needs to encourage the upgrade or removal of these signs. An excellent example of a billboard that works is for Anong's which prompted a first visit and introduction to Rawlins for one of our WOT assessment team members. Green River has a billboard as the visitor enters Rawlins. Currently, Rawlins' common traveler stop off spots provide nothing to promote a longer stay in Rawlins – as your frontline employees are not living up to their potential to be Rawlins hosts. A positive encounter in these spots can convince travelers to become tourists on a return trip.

It is apparent that Rawlins has recently upgraded the corral gateway area, the city entryways and historic downtown and these improvements need to continue. In spite of a decrease in city funding for maintenance, the visitor's experience in the parks, museums, and walkways does not appear to be detrimentally impacted. Several hotels appear to be better suited to serve the workforce guest rather than the tourist. Those hotels that do cater to visitors need to make an effort to serve the needs of the visitors.



For example, when the assessment team checked into their rooms, the Best Western did not provide a visitor guide, city map, or other amenities at check in or in the rooms.

The people of Rawlins are interesting, articulate and realistic. Rawlins has great tourism-related opportunities that, if developed, will enhance the visitor experience, but more importantly enhance the citizen's experience. The presentation by WOT staff that tourism is 'what is here/available in Rawlins' and is made up of 'people & experiences' was continually supported by the tour and discovery sessions. One must keep in mind that tourism is not a separate industry, but a partnership with and between businesses to increase experiences and income.

Most residents have realistic expectations in regards to tourism...they realize that the city of Rawlins is not a primary destination. They see Rawlins as a stop-over or pass-through on I-80. They are true to who they are as a community and don't want to be something they are not. They would like to capitalize on what they have to offer and capture the pass through visitor for a couple of hours and turn those visitors into overnight stays. The city and county has a lot of outdoor recreation, fishing and hunting opportunities and annual events to offer visitors. This includes the "Old Pen" and the popular "Music in the Park" series. There are numerous outdoor recreation sites

Rawlins...

- Is ready for expanding tourism
 - Expressed realistic expectations (not a destination but a stopping point)
 - Has interesting, unique assets
- ...its challenges are not insurmountable.

DISCOVERY SESSIONS

The assessment team conducted nine discovery sessions. The discovery sessions took place at the Carbon County Higher Education Center with the exception of the Senior Citizens which took place at their center. The discovery session involved various sectors of the community including land use agencies, city/county law enforcement and emergency services, city/county and other economic development groups, business/retailers association, hospitali-

ty & tourism sector, cultural groups, youth, civic clubs, and senior citizens. The assessment team posed several questions to attendees followed by an asset mapping activity which will be addressed in the product development section of this report.

The question, "What Does Tourism Mean to You?" was posed to attendees at the start of the discovery sessions to initiate discussion about travel and tourism after introductions were made. It provided a sense of how residents "defined" tourism. In general, the residents of Rawlins have a broader understanding

of travel and tourism industry which is commendable. Tourism is much more than just marketing ... it touches all aspects of a community. Tourism impacts businesses, government services, natural environment, infrastructure, and the residents. As such, planning for tourism is essential so that it is beneficial, sustainable, and not detrimental to the environment, culture, and community.

Resident Attitude Survey

Prior to the tourism assessment, the local planning team was assigned the task of conducting a Resident Attitude Survey to gauge how residents feel about the travel and tourism industry. Overall, the residents of Rawlins are supportive of tourism in their community. Specific concerns about tourism include higher prices for goods and services, environmental impacts, crowded recreation areas and facilities closely followed by higher taxes. Specific goals for tourism development include employment opportunities, a more viable and active local economy, and improvement in overall appearance of community. The survey will provide further guidance to the City of Rawlins in developing a sustainable tourism industry. Survey results are included in the appendix of this report.



Tourism means (as defined by residents):

- **Getting visitors to stay longer and spend money at local businesses**
- **Contributes to the quality of life and opens the door to other economic development**
- **Generates revenue and taxes**
- **Sharing what is available and promoting those things**
- **Being accessible to the visitor and providing good customer service**
- **Pride and making community more visually attractive**

Discovery sessions showed support with acceptance of future difficulties and challenges. Participants gave realistic objectives and, though all were positive about increasing tourism for Rawlins, agreed that no one wants Rawlins to become a tourist trap/overrun by tourists. This shows the community likes what Rawlins offers to its citizens and wants the current atmosphere to be maintained. The most insightful comment came from Rawlins' youth who stated they 'want (Rawlins) to be an oasis, not a pit stop' and that tourism shows citizens that Rawlins 'has something no one else has' which builds pride in one's community. The seniors provided that most earnest view of why Rawlins is a special place, "when it is nice here, it is nicer than anywhere! And, 'It smells good!' Some of the suggestions are things Rawlins/Carbon Co. already offers (museum passport program) which demonstrates that local publicity is lacking for existing services and experiences.

The question, "Why is Tourism Right for our Community?" was posed at the discovery session again to the gauge community support of/for the travel and tourism industry. The major themes that evolved are listed below in no particular order.

- Generates Revenue and contributes to tax base
- Tourism Enhancements = Community Enhancements
- Tourism stabilizes economy = no more boom & bust cycles
- Great stop on I-80 – halfway point
- Untapped Natural Resources/tourism potential

The question, "What are the Issues and Challenges for Tourism in our Community?" was posed to attendees to help identify areas that need to be addressed to achieve a thriving tourism industry. The major themes that evolved are listed below in no particular order. These challenges are addressed in further detail in the next section along with recommendations to address them.

- Workforce – training and willingness to work
- Branding/Image
- Lack of Civic Pride (Apathy/Attitude)
- Lack of collaboration/partnership
- Lack of Visitor Services (Point of Sale) & Retail Operations (not conducive for traveling public)

CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Workforce – training and willingness to work: Each discovery session simply discussed the fact that increased tourism in Rawlins would result in increased revenue. However in discussing tourism as a viable option for the community, it was noted that there are a few barriers to overcome before the community will be in a position to fully capitalize on future tourism revenue. Those barriers include lack of available workforce, lack of volunteers, and overall apathy in the community.

The lack of workforce could be an impediment to furthering development Rawlins tourism infrastructure. Community members expressed the fact that workers can earn higher wages in the energy sector than in working in a tourism or retail job. Additionally, some of the retail owners are aging and would like to retire and there is no one to fill their shoes. Locals also shared their concerns that existing workforce lacks the customer service and tourism-friendly mentality. It was a common theme that most of the area residents thought that there was a shortage of restaurants in Rawlins, but noted that even if they did exist, they may not find people to staff it.

The lack of volunteers is another community-wide concern. Tourism related or not, communities seem to always have a need for new and more volunteers. Some volunteers are overextended and may not be willing to continue their duties while other people are more interested in their own lives and may not have the extra time to spare.

Recommendations for addressing workforce:

There are many facets to this issue and both are longer term, culture oriented changes. There is not a quick fix and this problem is not only felt in Rawlins but, in varying degrees, on a national level. A few thoughts: work with the local high schools/ vocational programs to encourage participation in "entry level" jobs, at entry level pay. This includes restaurants, hotels, visitor attractions, retail, etc. These types of jobs, often provide good training for time management, customer service, and varying aspects of operating a business. In addition, most of these jobs offer flexible hours and can be tailored to a school/athlete schedule.

The current stigma that "these jobs are "beneath" a 16 year old" needs to be altered. At the same time work with local employers to help them build the jobs into something that offers more autonomy, perhaps, or cross training, so that value is built into these opportunities. Help employers create a culture that takes away the concept that this type of work is a 'gap' job to be left as soon as possible. Most of the tourism jobs do not require higher-level skills and can serve as a starter job for the youth. How amiable are the existing businesses to working with teenagers? Are the existing employers equipped to train a student to work part time in their businesses? If not, what hurdles do they have to overcome and how can the city, economic development agencies, or chamber assist?



Is there a way to work with the colleges or High Ed to develop a localized training for customer service? Business could tout that they have a certain amount of employees trained. Perhaps there is a way to incentivize the participation in such a program through cheaper membership dues to local organizations or these businesses could be given free tickets to the attractions to give out to favored customers.

Customer service can be taught but in reality it is the day-to-day experiences that formulate a habit of treating people appropriately, regardless of the situation. Again, not an easy solution. A start may

be to have group- training for several businesses with their employees. Give them a tour of Rawlins, share experiences those in the workplace have had with customers and how they were handled. If employees have the tools to provide good service they may be more likely to offer it - again, a two pronged approach, help the business owner learn how to orient and train the employee, and help the employee see the benefits of good customer service and treating all customers as he or she might wish to be treated. This might be an expense for a business but perhaps could be funded by Wyoming Workforce Services or other entities.

There are some specialized trainings available as well as some grant funds available. Department of Workforce Services has workforce training grants available. Leslie Kedelty (307.777.2839) with Wyoming Office of Tourism can discuss the existing hospitality trainings they offer. Julie Kozlowski (307.777.2821) with the Wyoming Business Council's Community Development Block Grant Program can discuss the training grants and planning grants available to help. Mary Randolph (307.777.6430) with Wyoming Rural Development can discuss the possible trainings that she can assist with as well as the Main Street technical assistance funds that could be made available to hosting such a tourism and customer service training.

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With the limited available workforce, Rawlins need to focus on progressing slow and sustainably. There seems to be many locals wishing that there were more restaurants in the area, but if there isn't a workforce, then perhaps focusing on that growth will not be effective at this time. I would suggest contacting Mike Lambert at the Market Research Center with UW to help determine Rawlins' capacity for additional restaurants at this time. Mike Lambert can be reached at 307.766.2688.

Tourism in a community like Rawlins could use a volunteer base to help with downtown functions, the museum, festivals, fundraising for larger projects like a visitor's center, and more. Recognizing that finding volunteers and volunteer leadership is difficult, this is exactly what Rawlins needs. AmeriCorps is somewhat an under-utilized asset in this state and Rawlins should look into their programs. Rawlins and/or Carbon County could create a regional plan for tourism volunteers and apply to be an AmeriCorps sponsor. This way volunteers can come and work for 11-month increments. These volunteers could assist with rallying up other volunteers to help the tourism progression, marketing and promotion, project management, grant writing, and other tourism initiatives. There are strict rules that an AmeriCorps sponsor must adhere to, but could be an asset to the area. Furthermore, people from around the nation sign up to volunteer in AmeriCorps and who wouldn't want to locate for a year in beautiful Carbon County? For more information on ServeWyoming, contact Rachel Chadderon, the Executive Director at 307.234.3428.

Wyoming Workforce Services can be an excellent resource to develop training needs and assist with funding. Wyoming Entrepreneur Small Business Development Centers can also help develop employer training and assist with organizational development needs.



Branding/Image

Is Rawlins/Carbon County an energy area? Recreation area? Geologic area? There is no current identity. The answer is yes and while there are differing ideas about what the identity of Rawlins/Carbon County should be, the key is going through the branding exercise, developing a brand and sticking with it. There will always be differences of opinion about what your area is...even after the brand identity is developed.

After listening to various community members, it is apparent the largest obstacle to creating a viable tourism brand for Rawlins/Carbon County is the apathy of the residents. They seem relegated to accept the boom and bust cycle which is indicative of the state as a whole. An attitude change is necessary to make this happen. Buy-in from key businesses and community leaders are crucial to facilitating change. Someone to champion this effort is absolutely necessary.

Recommendations for addressing Branding/Image:

Why is this important? Because if you don't know who/what you are, how do you know what/where/how/when to market or advertise your product? If you don't know who you are, how is a tourist supposed to identify with you and become an advocate for your area?

Creating and developing a brand is the most basic of activities in the marketing/advertising world... yet one of the most misunderstood. A brand is not a logo. A brand is the thought people have when they hear the name of your destination. One of the most important aspects of a brand is authenticity... don't be something you're not.

1. Use Carbon County Lodging Tax Board ad agency to fullest potential – Barnhart Communications lead the state office of tourism through a complete branding exercise, they can do the same for Carbon County/Rawlins. The brand should be developed on a county-wide basis to provide a more complete picture for the tourist and to take advantage of all tourism-related assets. Barnhart has the template to make this exercise worthwhile for each community within the county and each community can take this brand and run with it.

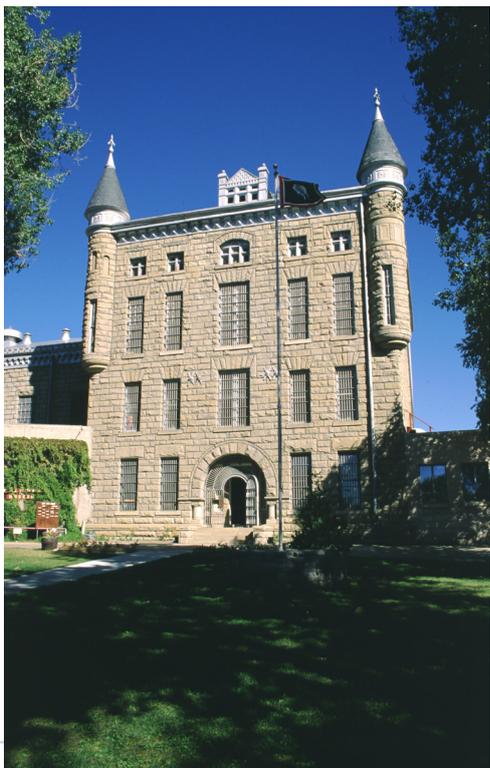
2. Build on current efforts - Need to build on the effort put into the Certified Tourism Community Assessment – don't lose the momentum. This was no small effort and the group responsible for bringing this effort together should continue to meet regularly and develop the relationships and strategies for taking Rawlins' tourism efforts forward.

3. Partnerships – This effort can't be done without having all partners at the table (i.e. Lodging Tax Board, City, County, Chamber, BLM, USFS, etc.). Rock Springs is a perfect example of how these partnerships can work. Take a tourism leadership group to Rock Springs and spend the day with them to better understand how these partnerships work and what is necessary from each partner's perspective to keep them interested.

Tap local experts – Pat Robbins is very familiar with the partnerships in the Rock Springs/Green River area. Use her knowledge in this area.

4. Research – The Wyoming Office of Tourism has a research co-op program. We pay half the cost of multiple research products which have already been identified as valuable to local tourism entities. Access this information in the Co-op Media Kit. You can find the kit on the WOT industry site.

5. Branding Exercise – (This should be run by an independent, third party company to eliminate bias and create objective results.)



Based on the process Barnhart used with the state of Wyoming, there are a few basic steps to creating a brand. These steps will vary from location to location, but the premise is still the same.

1) Set Goals – You must decide what it is you want to accomplish with your branding effort; whether that is increased bookings at Rawlins hotels; increase awareness, conversion and inquiry from key markets; or as plain as increase economic impact of tourism to your area year over year; or all of the above... You must decide.

2) Create a Consumer Database – This may already exist with the Carbon County Lodging Tax Board. If not, begin creating this database by recording all of the consumer inquiries you can...requests for tourism packets, sign-ups for e-newsletters, sign-ins at visitor centers, etc. Any way you can collect this data, collect it.

3) Research (Gain Consumer Insights) – You are too close to the product you are selling... too emotionally attached. These insights should be gained from your consumer database so you understand how they see your community. This allows you to build a brand from their point of view. You are ultimately marketing to them, and people like them, to build your tourism effort. These insights are gained through research and the people in the research pool should be your consumers in your database.

4) What do you want to know? Below are a few of the items you need to know when considering creating a brand identity.

a. Brand Attributes

1. Find out what they experience on a Rawlins/Carbon County vacation.

b. Differentiators

1. Find out what is unique about your area compared to the competition.

c. Desired Outcomes

1. Find out, what are the outcomes of a vacation to your area.

5) Identify Key Markets – An extremely important byproduct of this process is an understanding of key geographic and demographic markets that consume your tourism product. Don't lose sight of these pieces of information as they will help direct marketing decisions for the future.

Lack of Civic Pride (Apathy/Attitude)

The lack of civic pride and apathy among residents was a constant issue brought up during discovery sessions. It was also brought up in the city's community assessment. Residents feel there is a public stigma or perception associated with and being from Rawlins. The city is seen as a "prison town" to being a "rough neck" town. Furthermore, the city is not visually aesthetic whether you enter city limits or driving along Interstate-80. The town is not appealing therefore there is no incentive for beautification efforts. If the community is not proud of who they are then how can you exude "pride" to the traveling public or to other communities in the state?

Recommendations for Civic Pride:

There has to be an internal shift in attitude. "Pronghorn Pride" is a great mantra to facilitate change. Community pride is a learned behavior just as much as it is a learned behavior to be ashamed of your community. The city of Rawlins should take the lead and set the example by investing in beautification efforts. Once residents see there is an active and ongoing effort by the public sector, then it may motivate city residents to do the same.

Wyoming Office of Tourism has grant funds that can be allocated for "gateway or entryway" signs. The funds can be used for design, materials, labor and landscaping. To learn more about the program, you can contact Leslie Kedelty at 307.777.2839

or go to the website www.wyomingbusiness.org/tourism.

National Tourism Week is an annual event held in Mid-May and is an opportune time to demonstrate "Pronghorn Pride" and to thank visitors for choosing Rawlins as a place to stop and visit. WOT offers an electronic toolkit for destinations to plan local events and activities to commemorate the week.

The toolkit is available for download each April from

the website above. Rawlins also needs to think of themselves as a "host" community if they want a thriving tourism industry. They need to exude hospitality as word of mouth advertising can either make you or break you.

The city should host a "clean-up day" if not already doing so. The city could also recognize "most beautiful neighborhood" or "best landscaped home" or "best landscaped business" during its annual clean-up day. This would allow residents not only to clean public areas, but also their property if the city hires a contractor to haul scrap metal, steel etc. If the local schools need to do fundraisers, residents could donate their recycles such as glass, aluminum, etc., to area schools who could then turn in for cash. A landscaping business would be a great project for a high school business or vocational educational class. The class can then contract with the city during the summer months. Area businesses and organizations can adopt medians or certain parts of the city to do landscaping. Local master gardeners could be recruited to assist in this effort. Area oil and gas companies could also sponsor this effort and/or donate supplies. The Carbon County Higher Education Center could provide basic landscaping courses for residents. They could also feature a master gardener. Planters can be placed in the downtown during the summer months if not doing so already.

The Main Street Program is also actively addressing store fronts in the downtown, but the City should also actively work with economic development groups to actively look at creative financing options to extend to area businesses outside of the downtown area for their store fronts. The city could also develop and provide suggested architectural design standards, concepts or elements

for startup businesses to consider when locating their business in Rawlins as a way to reinforce their



brand/image and mantra of “Pronghorn Pride.” The city should display the “Pronghorn Pride” message throughout the city whether it is billboards, working with area businesses, the school district, etc. to reinforce the message. Adults need to set the example for the younger residents.



Lastly, embrace your “prison town” image! Promote Rawlins as a prison town. It’s a great marketing hook for creating experiences for visitors.

Highlight the ethics of judicial system, Peace Officer Museum in addition to the current Penitentiary and the Old Penn. Visitors are curious, Rawlins should be proud. Local programming idea, through the local educational center, hold an ethical discussion of treatment of bodies – engage humanities scholars for history and ethic with Big Nose George as the center piece! Develop a skit, dramatic interpretation, or a musical to bring the concept to life. What about the friends and relatives who have a family member currently incarcerated? Are there discounts and/or special promotions that can be offered to this particular market segment? They most likely have traveled from elsewhere and have time on their hands to explore the city.

Lack of Collaboration/Partnership

The city has numerous entities and organizations working on tourism efforts, but it is a piece milled effort. It is not a uniform or collaborative effort. For any large endeavor, collaborations and partnerships prove critical to success. Collaborations require common interests and goals, shared desires and stated outcomes, and constant communication. A strong leader (individual or organization) must be consistent, vigilant and have maintenance of the collaboration as a priority. Tourism is a collaborative industry needing businesses, service industries, cultural agencies and residents. The disappointing turnout for the business, cultural group, and ethnic community discovery sessions of the assessment is evidence that more work is needed to bring stakeholders together. The assessment process is a tool for building partnerships, and Rawlins should con-

tinue its outreach into these sectors to build a sound tourism industry. Not building and nurturing these partnerships will create disillusionment among certain stakeholders and will impede the development of a strong tourist industry. The Business Discovery session noted that “good management attracts good employees,” which is a wonderful mantra for the tourism industry in which “good services and attitude attracts good tourists.”

Recommendations for Collaboration/Partnership:

The local committee organized to plan and carry-out the tourism assessment should continue to meet on a regular basis to coordinate tourism marketing efforts, to develop visitor services and training opportunities, and to address the recommendations in this report on behalf of the city. It would be great to invite a business owner, an artist, and a youth to be part of this team. It would add diversity and build cohesiveness in the community as all sectors of the community are represented. Lastly, it provides an opportunity to learn about the tourism efforts of each stakeholder.

Competing interests exist within the expansion of tourism experiences with three separate, yet similar, building projects: the new county museum, a visitors’ information center and the Pronghorn Pride interpretive center. These three entities need to convene and coordinate their priorities and timelines. Too few resources (financial and human) exist to manage three major projects, yet each will benefit the other if managed together. The city should bring in a facilitator to have the three interests and their supporters/boards meet and agree on how to proceed. The options are as varied as opportunities – move all three into a single structure or merge two into one, or remain separate. Each has a different mission and will serve Rawlins citizens and tourists in different ways and it may be that remaining separate will be the best decision, but all options should be reviewed and evaluated to make sure local resources are allocated in a way that serves Rawlins best.

Lack of Visitor Services (Point of Sale) & Retail Operations (not conducive for traveling public)

There are limited services provided to visitors when they arrive to town. There is no central, well identi-

fied location to obtain information. There is a lack of trained, knowledgeable front-line employees who can promote the city's attractions and experiences. Hence there is "no point of sale" and no expenditure of dollars.

One issue that was raised a few times in the listening sessions was the lack of retail and restaurants open on weekends, a prime tourist timeframe, as well as for local residents who wish to shop or eat out locally. In addition to hours of operation, customer service was a problem as well. Customer service has been addressed briefly above.

Rawlins is stuck in the "chicken or the egg" concept. Business owners don't want to stay open on weekend because they say there is no business; residents and tourists say they don't stop in Rawlins because nothing is open. At some point, for long term success, the businesses may have to be willing to pay the extra dollars to be open a few hours each weekend before foot traffic picks up and helps cover those costs. It might also be of value to create an



inventory, or retail leakage report, to evaluate what types of businesses are missing from the Rawlins area. What type of retail would be appreciated? What type of retail will draw in tourists, or provide a reason for them to stop? Along with that comes how to market the types of services and food establishments in the area.

It is understood that the city can't "make" a business owner stay open for 1/2 day Saturday if they refuse, but a planned campaign and data that shows the success of other communities of similar size

(perhaps Lander, Cody, Powell, etc.) and outdoor lifestyle that have weekend hours for residents and tourists may sway attitudes and operating hours.

Wyoming Entrepreneur Market Research Center can develop a market report that outlines where there might be leakages in the Rawlins area and what types of retail is needed. Wyoming Entrepreneur Small Business Development Center and Wyoming Office of Tourism can assist with developing a marketing plan for the community - both external (tourists) and internal - in regard to retail services and food establishments and their hours of operation.

There a question that consistently was asked by the locals in the discovery sessions, "How can Rawlins capitalize on all of the tourists, visitors, and people travelling through the community?" It was stated that because of Rawlins' proximity to 1-80 that it was an ideal place for people to spend the night prior to heading to Yellowstone. Also, it's a great place to stop for lunch and gas as people travel along I-80 to other destinations. There was much discussion that if there was a visitors center and interpretive center, that people would be willing to get out of their cars and stop for a while to learn and be intrigued enough to stay a little longer in Rawlins. The closeness to the Handcart Center was mentioned as well and how can the community tap into that asset. The underlining theme to this topic of discussion is how Rawlins can get people to stay in town and spend money.

Recommendations for Visitor Services and Retail Operations

There needs to be a common message that everyone in Rawlins buys into with regards to tourism. The gas station attendant and fast food clerk should both be able to answer the question; "what is there to do in town?" Information should be readily available at all of the gas stations and restaurants off of I-80. The city needs to partner with these businesses and encourage them to support the local tourism efforts. It is important to have trained and knowledgeable frontline employees so they can promote those "things to see and do", facilitate a longer

Hike it. Hunt it. Fish it. Float it. Golf it. Relive it. Soak it. Share it. EXIT...to Wyoming's Carbon County! What stories will YOU tell?

Rawlins (EXITS 211-215)
Sinclair (EXIT 221)
Medicine Bow (36mi)
Hanna (20mi)
Elk Mountain (EXIT 255)

EXIT 187
Baggs (52mi)
Dixon (57mi)
Savery (61mi)

EXIT 235
Walcott Jct.
Saratoga (20mi)
Riverside (38mi)
Encampment (40mi)

Click each town to visit their webpage

Tune to 1610 AM for the latest County information

length or stay, and more importantly drive expenditures to area businesses.

The city in partnership with the chamber and the Carbon County Visitors Council should coordinate a pre-season FAM tour of the city in which they can invite frontline employees to experience the attractions, dining venues, and facilities first hand so they can convey the experience to the visitor. They can also use this opportunity to provide customer service training. WOT also provides a certification program for frontline employees to be recognized as travel professionals. The Destination Marketing Specialist (DMS) program is designed to test frontline employees on their knowledge of the state. There is no cost to participate in the program and can be offered on site. Individuals can be certified and recognized at three different levels. Kristin Phipps is the coordinator of this program and can be reached at (307) 777-2887 or kristin.phipps@visitwyo.gov. WOT also provides grant funding for directional (and interpretive) signs for a designated visitor information center. The city needs to decide if this is the responsibility of the chamber. More information about these programs can be found online at www.wyomingbusiness.org/tourism. A one-page of top 10 things to see and do in the city can be distributed to area hotels, restaurants, convenience stores, and area businesses. Rawlins ambassadors could greet visitors to the downtown area during the summer months and answer their questions. This may be a great way to recruit senior citizens, teachers, or high school students.

There is a lot of discussion in the community about a new facility to house the Carbon County museum, building a new visitor's center, and another building for an interpretive center. A new museum, visitor's center, and interpretive center would be a tremendous asset to Rawlins' tourism development, however, why can't they all coexist in one conveniently located spot off of I-80? If everyone combined efforts for development and funding of these projects, it would be less costly and cheaper to maintain and staff. One thing that Rawlins definitely needs for their tourism development is a one-stop-shop for tourism information. Funding for this project is and has been difficult to acquire, but if all fundrais-

ing is combined and partnerships are made, then it should be easier to get the donations and support. With regards to grant funding for this project, Jackie Neely (307.777.2806) or jackie.neely@wybusiness.org

at the Wyoming Business Council may do a grant search for you. Perhaps she will be able to identify some possible leads. Molly Davies (307.777.2811) or molly.davies@wybusiness.org at the Wyoming Business Council can discuss the merits of a Business Ready Community-

Community Enhancement grant for this project.

How can Rawlins capitalize on all of the travelers coming through the community? Businesses could easily offer picnic lunches, desserts, and beverages for sale in the parks for the travelers via food carts. Rawlins could host some biker-friendly events during the time of Sturgis to tap into some of the 500,000+ riders that travel through the town. The economic development groups and/or chamber should have discussions with different retailers who sell biker apparel and gear to see if they'd be willing either locate in Rawlins or temporarily locate in a designated spot in town (perhaps a park or open lot in the downtown) during Sturgis.

In addition, Rawlins needs to have a more traveler-friendly mentality when it comes to store hours. The downtown is a great asset to the community, but are the businesses open past 5:00 p.m. so tourists and travelers can shop and spend money? This is a common problem in many communities. Businesses should set their schedule according to when potential customers will be available. Are businesses counting on local dollars and only promoting themselves locally or do they want to open themselves up to tourism business? If that's the case, they need to set their business schedule according to when people are available to shop.

From the tour of Rawlins and talking with different people, Rawlins is great at putting on special events and festivals. These are wonderful opportunities to invite local businesses to join as well as advertise local attractions. These events need to be promoted at the local restaurants and hotels so travelers have the opportunity to enjoy them as well.



List of meetings for tourists – AA, weight watchers, church meetings, senior services, open classes at the rec. center, etc. – leave in hotel rooms and at gas stations – will demonstrate that the Rawlins community is welcoming to visitors. The city also needs a way finding plan to direct visitors to attractions and services (similar to Information and Hospital). The parks and walkway were not easy to locate. Visitors will appreciate if these are made convenient to them. Visitors will stay longer in Rawlins if they know where to find area attractions, points of interests and services.

Other General Recommendations:

Place Rawlins billboards in Lander, Casper, Muddy Gap, Laramie, Fort Collins, Cheyenne, Rock Springs and Wilson, CO to encourage stop over visits to museums and restaurants, encourage dining and site seeing. Rawlins is a good rest stop on the way to destinations (Yellowstone, Salt Lake, Denver, etc.) and a good distance from Lander, Laramie, Denver, & Rock Springs to stop and take a break. Take what you offer citizens and promote to visitors. Expand what you offer citizens and bring in more visitors. Create what you offer to visitors and promote to citizens. All benefit from building tourism.

Little of what is referred to as intangible cultural heritage was mentioned during this assessment. Defined as “the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. For the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.” Rawlins has much to offer the cultural tourism seeking intangible culture and experiences. Stories and experiences shared by Rawlins community members can be promoted to attract the cultural heritage tourist.

A variety of resources are available. The following website provides great information on cultural heritage tourism: <http://www.culturalheritagetourism.org/resources.htm>. Funding is available through the Wyoming Arts Council, the Wyoming Cultural Trust and the Wyoming Humanities Council to assist with assessments and product development.

Rawlins is seen as a railroad town and should take advantage of the upcoming Union Pacific sesquicentennial. Below is an excerpt from the Tracks Across Wyoming proposal:



Transcontinental Railroad Sesquicentennial
July 1, 2012, marks the sesquicentennial of the signing

of the Pacific Railroad Act in 1862. This Act authorized government loans and land grants to aid the construction of a railroad to connect Council Bluffs, Iowa, and Sacramento, California, with the nation’s first transcontinental railroad. It also authorized an existing railroad, the Central Pacific, to build eastward and an as-yet-to-be-created railroad, the Union Pacific, to build westward so as to meet somewhere in the middle to complete this great endeavor. The Act further mandated that the project was to be finished within fifteen years.

The project was in fact completed just seven years later when the Central Pacific’s Jupiter and the Union Pacific’s 119 touched couplers at Promontory Summit, Utah, on May 10, 1869. In the process, the new territory of Wyoming was created from Dakota Territory and part of Utah and Idaho Territories. This was unique:

“In one particular our situation as a territory is entirely new and somewhat anomalous for pioneers. For the first time in the history of our country, the organization of a territorial government was rendered necessary by the building of a railroad. Heretofore the railroad has been the follower instead of the pioneer of civilization.” Governor John A. Campbell, inaugural address to the first Wyoming legislature, 1869.

It is likely that the sesquicentennial of the building of the transcontinental railroad will be widely

celebrated, perhaps using the bicentennial of Lewis and Clark Expedition as a model. Further, it is likely that the National Park Service will play a major role in this and that grant monies will be made available. Hopefully, Wyoming will be a major player in these celebrations and be able to obtain the funding it deserves. It is not too early to begin gearing up for these activities.

In addition, the closure of I-80 during the winter months is also a potential opportunity to develop “snowed-in” packages in which local hotels can put together a family-oriented experience from passes to the recreation center, movie tickets, bowling passes, pizza, etc. A similar package could be developed for couples with a romantic twist and/or for active seniors by tying in activities to the local senior center. Hoteliers may also want to offer baskets of hot chocolate, hot soup, microwave popcorn, a movie, etc. to guests upon check-in. It is an opportunity to showcase Rawlins hospitality during a stressful time which visitors will remember and further enhance your city’s image.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

During the town hall meeting, attendees were asked to participate in a product development exercise in which they were asked to “dream big” by listing their ideas of what they would like to offer visitors of things to see and do. Approach in experience of visitor - there were six categories of Natural or Scenic Attractions, Cultural or Historic Attractions, Recreational Activities, Special Events, and Other. As a result, a list of ideas were captured via a flip chart, see Appendix for full list. Attendees were then asked to pick their top three choices. Once the top three choices were identified, attendees were then asked to choose which projects they felt realistically could be accomplished with a 1-year, 3-year and 5-year time-frame. As a result a list of priority projects have been developed by the residents of Rawlins. Some of these projects can be combined so they are not competing for the same resources. Along with the recommendations on pages 7-16, these projects serve as the components for the development of a short-term tourism plan. Resources and assistance for these projects are available through the state agencies the WOT tourism assessment team members represent.



1-year projects:

1. More trails and picnic facilities at the Old Penitentiary (can be combined with #2 below)
2. Interpretation along current walking path through city
3. Kite Festival (annual event)
4. Geology Tours (guided and self-guided)
5. Dog Park
6. ATV-Trail Events
7. Water Park

3-year projects

1. Interpretive signage/trail development for Rawlins Peak (the same as #4 and can be combined with #2 below)
2. Interpretive trail to Rawlins Springs
3. Celestial viewing (interpretive program)
4. Rawlins uplift- trails and interpretive work- UW School of Geology
5. Interpretive Center a.k.a. Pronghorn Pride



5-year projects

1. Increased marketing (specifically advertising) for cross country and continental divide bikers
2. New County museum *can be combined with Interpretive Center
3. Fishing events (derby)
4. Mineral Tours (guided and/or self-guided. Can be combined with #4 under 1-year projects)
5. Fossil Dig (guided and/or self-guided)
6. Drive-In Theatre
7. Water park

Asset Mapping

How many times have we heard, “there is nothing to see and do” in my community? Attendees at the Discovery Session were asked to share all of the things to see and do in the community. Most residents defined their community beyond city boundaries and included the county. The responses were recorded and put on a large scale map of the city and posted at the town hall meeting. Most time, residents of a community don’t realize all of the wonderful things they have to offer visitors or they are taken for granted, or not typically thought of as of interest to visitors. This exercise was to demonstrate visually all of the sites, attractions, etc. available in the community. As a result, we found 125 “things to see and do” in your community. In the words of one participant, we beat the “99 Things to See and Do in Yellowstone!”

Planning Calendar

Annual Events are an integral part of the visitor experience as they entice our visitors to stay longer and it enhances their experience to the area. With the assistance of the Carbon County Visitors Council, we were able to identify the annual events that occur in the city and in the county. These events were listed on a 12-month calendar (see appendix). The calendar was posted at the town hall so that attendees could visually see what time of year events occurred, what time of year they were concentrated in, and when there were down times. As a result, the city of Rawlins had most events concentrated during the summer months and very few events in the fall and winter. There were no events in March and April and this could be due to the extreme or unpredictable weather. County events were concentrated during the summer with some winter events in the early part of the year. The calendar can be useful in planning for future events so they are not competing with one another, or to fill in “gaps” or determine when the community would like some “down-time”.

Rawlins

- Events June through August
- 1-2 Events September through December
- No Events: March/April

County

- Events: January & February; June through August

CONCLUSION

Rawlins has great potential to develop a vibrant travel and tourism sector as it is supported by its community at-large and because there are realistic expectations. The city doesn't want to be something they are not. Any tourism efforts should be planned appropriately and community driven. The challenges identified by city residents are not insurmountable and can be overcome through creative partnerships and collaboration among the various stakeholders. The projects identified for future development can only enhance Rawlins biggest assets of outdoor recreation and cultural heritage. Addressing each challenge and the completion of one project at a time should be celebrated and stir up "Pronghorn Pride." The analogy to the town of "Radiator Springs" in the movie "Cars" is very fitting for the City of Rawlins. Through hard work, the city of Rawlins can also be the oasis of I-80. Good Luck. Thank you for your hospitality.

APPENDICES

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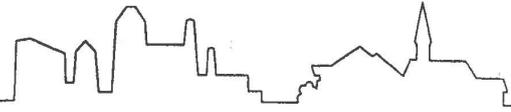
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WORKSHEETS

The worksheets below were used by the assessment team to get a better idea of the tourism products and services available in the community in addition to the public infrastructure. The worksheet also reflects those one, three and five year projects identified by the community.

Worksheet 6.1: Inventory of Attractions



A. Inventory of Natural or Scenic Attractions

ATTRACTION CATEGORY	Attraction Exists (✓ or -)	Potential Attractions (Time Frame to Develop)			DESCRIPTION (Notes/Problems)
		1yr	3yrs	5yrs	
Beaches					COUNTY
Bird-watching sites					COUNTY
Botanical gardens					
Canyons and gorges					COUNTY
Caves	✓				COUNTY
Cliffs	✓				COUNTY
Climate					COUNTY
Deserts					COUNTY
Fall foliage					COUNTY
Farms, ranches, dude ranches					COUNTY
Fishing streams and lakes					COUNTY
Forests					COUNTY
Geologic formations	✓				COUNTY
Geysers					
Headwaters					
Hiking trails	✓				COUNTY
Hot springs					COUNTY
Islands					
Lakes					COUNTY
Mineral springs					COUNTY
Monuments (natural)					COUNTY
Mountains					COUNTY
Natural bridges					
Nature trails	✓				COUNTY
Oceans					
Orchards and vineyards					
Parks (national, state, local)	✓				COUNTY
Picnic areas	✓				COUNTY
Remoteness					COUNTY
Rivers					COUNTY
Sand dunes					COUNTY
Scenic views	✓				COUNTY
Ski slopes					COUNTY
Star gazing	✓				COUNTY
Swamps/wetlands	✓				COUNTY
Valleys					COUNTY
Volcanoes					
Waterfalls					
Whitewater					COUNTY
Wilderness					COUNTY
Wildlife (natural settings, sanctuaries, zoos)					
Other:					

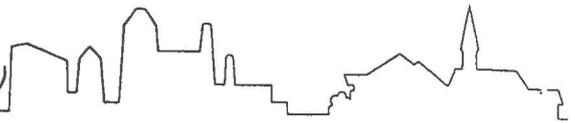
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Worksheet 6.1: Inventory of Attractions (Page 2 of 5)

B. Inventory of Cultural or Historic Attractions

Attraction Category	Attraction Exists (✓ or -)	Potential Attractions (Time Frame to Develop)			Description (Notes/Problems)
		1 yr	3 yrs	5 yrs	
Antique and craft shops	✓				C
Archaeological sites	✓				C
Art galleries	✓				C
Battlefields					
Burial grounds	✓				C
Ceremonial dances					
Churches	✓				C
Conservatories					
Costumed events					C
Covered bridges					
Early settlements			✓		C POTENTIAL - MILITARY SUPPLY POST
Ethnic celebrations					
Ethnic restaurants/grocers	✓				C
Exhibits	✓				C
Famous historical buildings	✓				C
Famous people	✓				C
Folk art collections					
Ghost towns					C
Historic building tours	✓				C
Historic railroads	✓				
Historical reenactments		✓			C
Indian culture					
Indian reservations					
Landmarks	✓				C
Lumber camps					C
Mansions	✓				C
Memorials	✓				C
Mines		✓			C
Missions					
Monuments					
Museums	✓				C
Native folklore	✓				C
Newsworthy places	✓				C
Old forts					C
Pioneer churches					
Pioneer homes					C
Ruins					C
Special "nationality" days					
Theaters (stage, film)	✓				C
Trains			✓		C
Unique lifestyles					C
Victorian buildings	✓				C
Other:					

Worksheet 6.1: Inventory of Attractions (Page 3 of 5)



C. Inventory of Recreational Activities

ATTRACTION CATEGORY	Attraction Exists (✓ or #)	Potential Attractions (Time Frame to Develop)			DESCRIPTION (Notes/Problems)
		1 yr	3 yrs	5 yrs	
Amusement or theme parks					
Archery	✓				
Ballooning					
Beachcombing					
Bingo	✓				
Bird watching					C
Boating					C
Bowling	✓				
Camping	✓				C
Canoeing	✓				C - PROGRAMS
Fishing					C
Fossil hunting	✓				C
Gambling/casinos					
Golf	✓				P
Hang gliding					
Health and beauty spas	✓				C
Hiking	✓				C
Horseback riding	✓				C
Hot springs and mud baths					C
House boating					
Hunting	✓				C
Ice skating			✓		
Kayaking					C
Kite flying	✓				P
Local food specialties	✓				P
Mountain biking	✓				P
Mountain climbing					P
Pack horse or llama trips					P
Picnicking	✓				P
Professional sports events	✓	✓			P
Racing and regattas	✓				P
River tubing					P
Rock hunting	✓				P
Sailing					P
Scuba diving					P
Shopping	✓				
Skiing (downhill)					
Skiing (cross country)	✓				C
Spelunking					
Swimming	✓				C
Tennis	✓				C
Trap or skeet shooting	✓				C
Video arcades	✓				
Water skiing					C
White-water rafting					P
Other: R/C CLUBS					
PISTOL/RIFLE					INDOOR/OUTDOOR
QED CATCHING	✓				C
PROP NUTS	✓				
R/C CLUBS			✓		
CYCLING	✓				C

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Worksheet 6.1: Inventory of Attractions (Page 4 of 5)

D. Inventory of Special Events

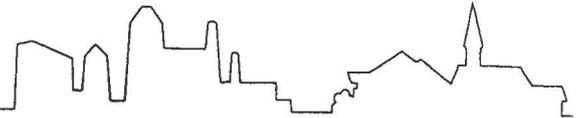
ATTRACTION CATEGORY	Attraction Exists (✓ or #)	Potential Attractions (Time Frame to Develop)			DESCRIPTION (Notes/Problems)
		1 yr	3 yrs	5 yrs	
Agricultural fairs	✓				C
Air shows					
Animal shows	✓				C
Antique/collectible shows					
Art shows	✓				C
Artisan studio tours			✓		
Auto shows	✓				C
Ball games/tournaments	✓				C
Barbecues	✓				C
Barn dances					C
Card tournaments	✓				C
Comedy contests	✓				COMEDY NIGHT
Craft shows	✓				C
Drama productions	✓				C
Farm tours					
Fishing derbies					C
Flower shows or festivals					C
Food festivals	✓				
Harvest celebrations					
Hayrides		✓			
Hobby shows					
Holiday celebrations (e.g., Christmas, Kwanzaa, Hanuka)	✓				C
Home tours	✓				
July 4th celebrations					C
Labor Day celebrations					
Living history festivals					C
Music festivals		✓			C
Pageants					C
Parades	✓				C
Photo contests					C
Queen coronations	✓				C
Races (e.g., auto, motorcycle, boat, bicycle, horse)	✓				
Rodeos	✓				C
Seasonal events	✓				C
Specialty food-tasting events	✓				C
Threshing bees					
Tractor pulls					C
Triathlons/marathons					
Winery tours/tasting rooms					
Other: FUN RUN	✓				
FAREMIKS MICT	✓				C
MIP	✓				
BLACK TIE EVENTS	✓				
MOVIES IN THE FAIR	✓				



E. Inventory of Other Attractions

Attraction Category	Attraction Exists (Y/N)	Potential Attractions (Time Frame to Develop)			Description (Notes/Problems)
		1yr	3yrs	5yrs	
Arenas	✓				
Bakeries	✓				
Ball parks	✓				
Bridges (artificial)					
Children's park/playgrounds	✓				
Dams and power stations					C
Ferryboats					
Fish hatcheries					C
Food-processing plant tours					
Friends/Family to visit	✓				C
Government buildings	✓				C
Handcraft/craft shows	✓				C
Harbors					
Industrial plant tours	✓				C
Large city attractions					
Libraries/special collections	✓				C
Local "oddities"	✓				C
Lumber camps					C
Military installations					C
Most remote spot					C
Most winding road					
Murals	✓				
Nightclubs	✓				
Observation towers					C
Planetarium or telescope					
Roadside parks					C
Roadside produce stands	✓				
Settings for movies	✓				
Shopping centers					
Showboats					
Souvenir and curio shops	✓				C
Statuary	✓				C - PRONG HORNS
Swimming pools	✓				C
The biggest "something"					C
The first of its kind	✓				C
The only one of its kind					GALLONS / FILAMENT / SHOES TOMAS BOLSON LIGHT FILAMENT
The smallest "something"					
Theaters	✓				C
Universities and colleges	✓				
Unusual buildings					
Unusual restaurants or bars	✓				
Windmills	✓				C
Other:					

Worksheet 6.9: Prioritizing Development of Private Sector Services



A. Review your assessment of existing private sector services. List the top-ranked visitor services that represent particular strengths in your community, and any significantly weak areas in need of development. List them in order of priority according to the significance of their strength or weakness in terms of affecting community tourism development.

Visitor Services We Have	Visitor Services We Need to Improve
CHAMBER	PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN
CCVC	ROCHELLE RANCH
MUSEUM	SIGNAGE
OLD PEN	GEOLOGICAL SITE / UPLIFT
HOTELS / REST	GEO-CACHING
DDA / MAIN ST.	
EXPLORE CC	
RV / PARKS	
ROCHELLE RANCH	
TRAVEL / TRUCK STOPS	
CONTINENTAL DIVIDE PARKS	

B. Do any patterns or themes emerge regarding existing visitor services in your area?

PEN - RAILROAD - HUNTING / FISHING -
OUTDOOR LIVING -

Do existing visitor services support or detract from existing attractions?

SOMEWHAT INDIFFERENT - POTENTIAL W/ RAINBOW TR. TON

Can any of these services (e.g., resorts, shopping malls) serve as attractions on their own to draw visitors?

OLD PEN - HUNTING VISON - GEOLOGICAL UPLIFT - GEO-CACHING

Are physical facilities of existing services sufficient to handle increased business from tourists?

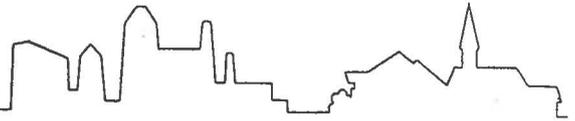
NO!

What visitor services are weak in your community?

HOTELS, CONVENTION CENTER, OUTDOOR WATER FACILITY / PUBLIC RESTROOMS
VISITOR CENTER ALONG HWY.

Over ☺

Worksheet 6.11: Public Services Inventory



A. Inventory of Public Services Infrastructure

PUBLIC SERVICE	Exists (✓ or #)	Service Could Exist (Time Frame to Develop)			DESCRIPTION (Notes/Problems)	AGENCY RESPONSIBLE
		1 yr	3 yrs	5 yrs		

Access

Local/county roads	✓					
State highways/roads	✓					
Major U.S. highways	✓					
Commercial airport						
Train/railway services	✓					
Public bus service	✓					
Other mass transit						
Boat/ferry service						
Other:						

Infrastructure

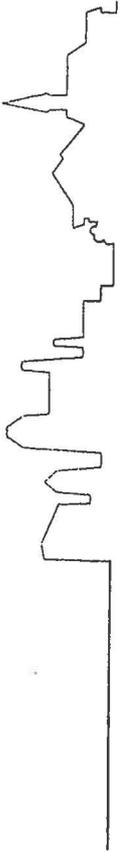
Electric power	✓					
Gas service	✓					
Water supply	✓					
Sewer/waste disposal	✓					
Storm drainage	✓					
Telephone services	✓					
Police protection	✓					
Fire protection	✓					
Ambulance service	✓					
Medical facilities/hospital	✓					
Other:						

Other Public Services

Comprehensive plan		✓				
Emergency road service						LOGISTICS ISSUES
Snow removal	✓					
Bicycle lanes						BIKE PATH
Public parking						PRIVATELY OWN
Other:						

Over ☞

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Worksheet 6.12: Evaluation of Public Services

A. Infrastructure

PUBLIC SERVICE	Assessment Criteria Rate (1-4)			IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED	PRIORITY RANK
	Access/ Quality Condition	Quality/ Condition	Staffing/ Facilities		
Local/County Roads					
State Highways/Roads					
Major U.S. Highways					
Commercial Airport					
Train/Railway Services					
Bus Service					
Other Mass Transit					
Boat/Ferry Service					
Electric Power					
Gas Service					
Water Supply					
Sewer/Waste Disposal					
Storm Drainage					
Telephone Services					
Police Protection					
Fire Protection			4		
Ambulance Service			3		
Medical Facilities/Hospital					
Emergency Road Service					
Snow Removal					
Bicycle Lanes					
Public Parking					
Other: <u>CELL COVERAGE</u>					
<u>ADDITIONAL</u>					

Access/Quantity
 4=Excellent
 3=Good
 2=Fair
 1=Poor /None

Quality/Condition
 4=Excellent
 3=Good
 2=Fair
 1=Poor/None

Staffing/Facilities
 4=Superior
 3=Good
 2=Fair
 1=Needs Improvement

Resident Attitude Survey Results

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Rawlins was selected as the pilot community to conduct a tourism assessment by the Wyoming Travel and Tourism (WTT) Division. The tourism assessment is part of a new program initiative called the Certified Tourism Community. The program was developed in conjunction with the Wyoming Rural Development Council to assist communities in developing visitor friendly destinations. The first step to certification is to conduct a tourism assessment. Prior to the tourism assessment, there were several tasks to be completed which included conducting a Resident Attitude Survey. It is important to gauge whether or not the community supports a local travel and tourism industry. Thriving tourism industries are built through local commitment, initiative and follow-through.

METHODOLOGY

The local assessment team, comprised of key stakeholders, was tasked with the distribution and collection of the survey. The two-page survey was developed by the University of Minnesota and provided by WTT. The survey was included in the monthly utility bill and sent to residents. A total of 271 surveys were returned to WTT to compile the data and report the findings. After reviewing the surveys, 175 surveys were deemed as qualified surveys. A Likert scale was used for Part I to analyze the data in which strongly agree was assigned the value of five and strongly disagree was assigned the value of one. An average (mean) and frequency (mode) were also determined for each question. Part II and III asked respondents to pick their top three answers and rank them from one to three. For analysis, the answer that was ranked number one was assigned the highest value of three. The answer that was ranked number three was assigned the lowest value of one.

FINDINGS

Overall, the residents of Rawlins are supportive of tourism in their community. They understand the economic benefits associated with a thriving tourism industry, but also realize there are negative impacts as well. Most residents feel there should be a plan to manage and grow tourism. It should be flexible and not restrictive, and promote the area's cultural heritage. Tourism would also enhance the quality of life, encourage outside investment, and increase community pride. Specific concerns about tourism include higher prices for goods and services, environmental impacts, crowded recreation areas and facilities closely followed by higher taxes. Specific goals for tourism development include employment opportunities, a more vital and active local economy, and improvement in overall appearance of community. The data provides direction and guidance to the city of Rawlins in regards to tourism development.

Part I: General Opinions of Tourism

Q1. Tourism has increased the quality of life in this area

Most residents (43%) agree that tourism adds to the quality of life compared to the number of residents who disagree (38%). Residents that had no-opinion accounted for 18% of the total response rate. The most frequent answer was "agree" which accounted for 34% of the responses.

Q2. Tourism provides the kinds of jobs our area needs

Most residents (45%) agree that tourism provides jobs to the area with almost the same amount of residents who disagree (40%). About 14% of residents had no opinion at 14%. The most frequent answer was "agree" which accounted for 34% of the responses.

Q3. Tourism development unfairly increases real estate values.

Most residents (54%) felt that tourism does not unfairly increase real estate values compared to the residents who did agree (24%) and those who did not have an opinion (22%). The most frequent answer was “disagree” which accounted for 44% of the responses.

Q4. Tourism helps balance the economy in our area

The majority of residents (62%) feel that tourism diversifies the local economy with a small minority who disagree (21%) or have no-opinion (16%). The most frequent answer was “agree” which accounted for 52% of the responses.

Q5. Tourism has increased the number of crime problems in this area

Most residents (58%) disagree that tourism has contributed to the increase in crime to the area with 16% of residents who felt tourism increased crime. About 25% of residents had no-opinion. The most frequent answer was “disagree” which accounted for 49% of the responses.

Q6. Most of the businesses involved in tourism are small

The majority of residents (62%) agree that small business is mostly involved in tourism with 24% who disagreed. About 13% of residents did not have an opinion. The most frequent answer was “agree” which accounted for 52% of the responses.

Q7. Tourism contributes to local tax revenues, lowering our tax bill

A majority of residents, 59%, felt that tourism generates local tax revenues thereby lowering taxes with 25% of residents who disagree. About 15% of residents had no opinion. The most frequent answer was “agree” which accounted for 45% of the responses.

Q8. Tourist attractions/facilities improve the community's appearance

The majority of residents, 68%, feel that tourist attractions/facilities improve the appearance of the community while 14% had no-opinion and 17% of residents disagreed. The most frequent answer was “agree” which accounted for 47% of the responses.

Q9. Tourism only helps businesses that sell directly to tourists.

About 26% of residents agree that tourism only helps those businesses that sell directly to visitors compared to 66% of residents who disagree. About 9% of residents had no-opinion. The most frequent answer was “disagree” which accounted for 57% of the responses.

Q10. Other community services receive less attention because of tourism

About 16% of residents agreed that other community services receive less attention due to tourism while 29% of residents had no-opinion and 54% of residents disagree. The most frequent answer was “disagree” which accounted for 45% of the responses.

Q11. Tourism makes it more expensive to live here

About 20% of residents felt that tourism contributes to the high cost of living while 18% of residents had no-opinion. The majority of residents (61%) disagree. The most frequent answer was “disagree” which accounted for 50% of the responses.

Q12. We should encourage more tourists to come to our area

The majority of residents (77%) felt that tourists should be encouraged to come to the area as compared to those who (12%) who disagree. About 9% of residents had no-opinion. The most frequent answer was “agree” which accounted for 44% of the responses.

Q13. Visitors and residents have a hospitable attitude toward each other

About two-thirds of residents (67%) feel there is a shared hospitality between visitors and residents with 17% of residents who disagree. About 14% of residents had no opinion. The most frequent answer was “agree” which accounted for 57% of the responses.

Q14. Enough is being done to protect our environment.

Just less than half of the residents (48%) felt that enough was being done to protect their environment with slightly more than half of the residents (58%) disagreed. About 14% of residents had no-opinion. The most frequent answer was “disagree” accounting for 35% of the responses.

Q15. This community should control and restrict tourism development

About 19% of the residents agree that tourism development should be controlled and restricted compared to about two-thirds of the residents who disagree (68%). About 12% of residents had no opinion. The most frequent answer was “disagree” accounting for 49% of the responses.

Q16. Tourism increases litter in our community.

About one-third (33%) of residents agreed that tourism increases litter while 21% of residents had no opinion. The majority of residents (44%) disagreed. The most frequent answer was “disagree” accounting for 35% of the responses.

Q17. Tourism provides services/activities we wouldn't otherwise have.

About half of the residents (50%) felt tourism provides services/activities they normally would not have had compared to residents (28%) who disagreed. About twenty percent of residents have no-opinion. The most frequent answer was “agree” which accounted for 40% of the responses.

Q18. Tourism makes the area more crowded.

About 21% of residents felt that tourism led to overcrowding with more than half of residents (58%) disagreeing and 20% of residents had no-opinion. The most frequent answer was “disagree” accounting for 48% of the responses.

Q19. Tourism increases civic pride.

More than half of the residents (58%) felt that tourism increases civic pride compared to residents who disagreed (28%). About 13% of residents had no-opinion. The most frequent answer was “disagree” accounting for 45% of the responses.

Q20. Tourists should pay more than locals to visit area parks/attractions.

Less than one-third (31%) of residents felt that tourists should pay more to visit area parks/attractions. Over half of residents (56%) disagreed and about 12% of residents had no-opinion. The most frequent answer was “disagree” accounting for 39% of the responses.

Q21. We should promote our history and culture to attract more tourists.

The majority of residents (82%) felt their history and culture should be promoted to attract more tourists. About 8% of residents disagreed with almost an equal amount of residents (9%) having no-opinion. The most frequent answer was “agree” which accounted for 46% of the responses.

Q22. Tourism has reduced the quality of outdoor recreation opportunities due to overuse/crowding.

About 22% of residents felt the quality of outdoor recreation opportunities have been reduced due to overuse /crowding compared to 62% of residents who disagreed. About 14% of residents did not have an opinion. The most frequent answer was “disagree” accounting for 52% of the responses.

Q23. I feel I have input in the community's plan for tourism growth.

About 24% of residents felt they had input in planning for tourism growth. Almost an equal amount of residents disagree (39%) or had no opinion (36%). The most frequent answer was “no-opinion” which accounted for 36% of the responses.

Q24. Environmental impacts resulting from tourism are relatively minor.

Over half of residents feel environmental impacts from tourism are minimal with 29% of residents disagreeing. About 16% of residents had no-opinion. The most frequent answer was “agree” accounting for 50% of the responses.

Q25. The overall benefits of tourism outweigh the negative impacts.

Over two-thirds of residents (70%) felt the overall benefits of tourism outweigh the negative. About 17% of residents disagree and 12% had no-opinion. The most frequent answer was “agree” accounting for 52% of the responses.

Q26. Tourism encourages investment in our local economy.

The majority of residents felt that tourism encourages investment into the local economy compared to the 11% of resident who did not. About 10% of residents had no-opinion. The most frequent answer was “agree” accounting for 61% of the responses.

Q27. The community should develop a plan to manage tourism growth

The majority of residents (74%) agree the community should develop a plan to manage tourism growth compared to the 12% who did not and 13% of residents who had no-opinion. The most frequent answer was “agree” accounting for 50% of the responses.

Q28. A good way to manage growth is through land use zoning.

Almost half of residents (45%) felt land use zoning was a good way to manage growth compared to 18% of residents who disagreed. Over a third of residents (36%) had no opinion. The most frequent answer was “no-opinion” which accounted for 36% of the responses.

Q29. My household standard of living is higher because of money tourists spend here.

Small minority of residents (15%) agree the stand of living is higher because of visitor expenditures compared to the 61% of residents who disagreed. About 22% of residents had no-opinion. The most frequent answer was “disagree” which accounted for 40% of the responses.

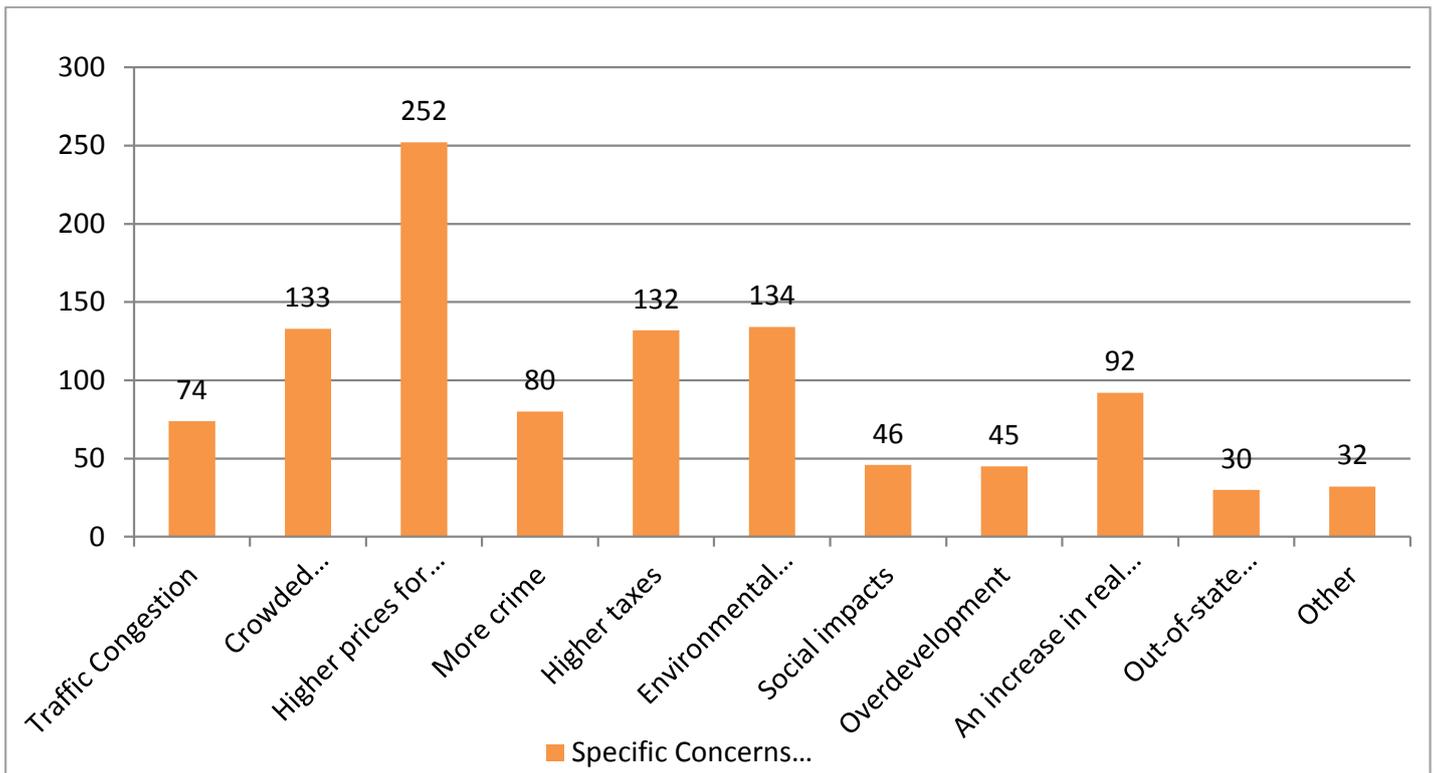
Q30. Tourism would help our community grow in the "right" direction.

Over half of the residents (58%) agree that tourism would help the community grow in the right direction. About 17% of residents disagree and 24% of residents had no-opinion. The most frequent answer was "agree" accounting for 43% of the responses.

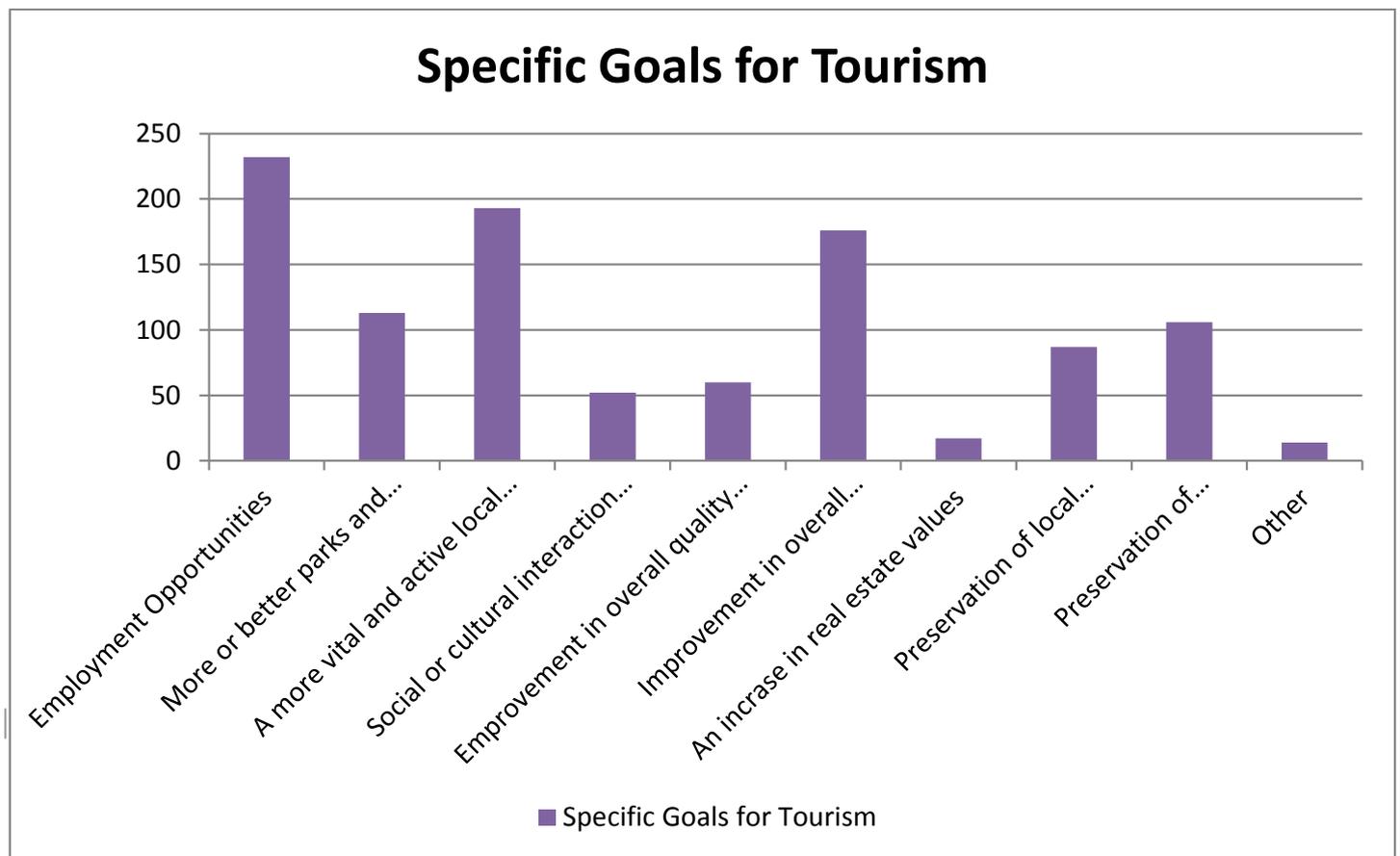
	MODE (Frequency)	TOTALS					
Question		Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	No Opinion (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	
Tourism has increased the quality of life in this area	4	15	61	32	49	18	175
Tourism provides the kinds of jobs our area needs	4	18	61	26	45	25	175
Tourism development unfairly increases real estate values.	2	12	30	39	77	17	175
Tourism helps balance the economy in our area	4	17	92	28	26	12	175
Tourism has increased the number of crime problems in this area	2	6	22	44	86	17	175
Most of the businesses involved in tourism are small	4	19	91	23	32	10	175
Tourism contributes to local tax revenues, lowering our tax bill	4	24	80	27	36	8	175
Tourist attractions/facilities improve the community's appearance	4	36	83	25	22	9	175
Tourism only helps businesses that sell directly to tourists.	2	9	33	16	100	17	175
Other community services receive less attention because of tourism	2	6	23	51	80	15	175
Tourism makes it more expensive to live here	2	8	27	33	89	18	175
We should encourage more tourists to come to our area	4	59	77	17	15	7	175
Visitors and residents have a hospitable attitude toward each other	4	17	101	26	22	9	175
Enough is being done to protect our environment.	2	11	37	25	62	40	175
This community should control and restrict tourism development	2	8	26	22	86	33	175

Tourism increases litter in our community.	2	16	43	38	62	16	175
Tourism provides services/activities we wouldn't otherwise have.	4	19	70	36	36	14	175
Tourism makes the area more crowded.	2	4	33	35	84	19	175
Tourism increases civic pride.	4	23	79	24	37	12	175
Tourists should pay more than locals to visit area parks/attractions.	2	17	38	21	69	30	175
We should promote our history and culture to attract more tourists.	4	62	82	17	11	3	175
Tourism has reduced the quality of outdoor recreation opportunities due to overuse/crowding.	2	13	27	25	91	19	175
I feel I have input in the community's plan for tourism growth.	3	8	34	64	42	27	175
Environmental impacts resulting from tourism are relatively minor.	4	8	88	28	37	14	175
The overall benefits of tourism outweigh the negative impacts.	4	32	92	21	20	10	175
Tourism encourages investment in our local economy.	4	28	107	19	14	6	174
The community should develop a plan to manage tourism growth	4	43	88	23	15	6	175
A good way to manage growth is through land use zoning.	3	19	61	63	17	15	175
My household standard of living is higher because of money tourists spend here.	2	3	24	40	70	38	175
Tourism would help our community grow in the "right" direction.	4	27	76	42	18	12	175

Part II: Specific Concerns about Tourism



Part III: Specific Goals for Tourism



CONCLUSION

The residents of Rawlins are supportive of a travel and tourism industry in their community. There is an opportunity for the City of Rawlins to develop a community driven tourism plan and strategy that will allow residents to continue to provide input. City officials can use this study to address resident concerns in their planning process and to ensure any effort related to tourism development addresses the goals residents have identified. A successful and thriving tourism industry is the result of support at all levels of both the public and private sector and community at large.

SUMMARY OF DISCOVERY SESSIONS

WHAT DOES TOURISM MEAN TO ME?

- Increase tax dollars, bring people off I-80 – 20K vehicles a day
- Demand on services,
- Transient population
- Provides funding for those services
- People, experience, economic development
- One part of economic development. Have other individuals meet and stay
- Jobs and training
- Does Carbon Co want to draw or do locals like it without tourists? A few have made a decision to have extra jobs and money from tourism. Need draw to pull people off freeway. Community at large may not be interested in it.
- Mother nature gives some tourism when I-80 closes
- 100 tourists day means 200 jobs. Major industry
- Experience – places to go see and do things.
- Revenue generation. Some see it as a bad thing – influx of people and overcrowding certain areas. This was a theme from surveys – don't want to overpopulate secluded areas and scenic drives.
- Potential to tap into the economic opportunity.
- All these things.
- People visiting a community who will not stay long term
- Attracting visitors and longer term folks
- Sharing what is available
- Money
- More business, more revenue, more people can find jobs
- What you do to bring visitors to your community
- Economic development
- Making use of natural resources
- Marketing, approach to projecting assets, “bait” you throw out,
- Showcasing highlights of community
- Money
- Some businesses survive and some don't
- Increased revenue
- Employment opportunities
- Clean industry, already in place – make grow
- Passing story on to visitors
- 2% lodging tax
- Visitors, sportsmen, tourists, and recreation
- Passing through looking for something to do
- Staying a second night
- Bring area to life
- Chance to brag about your town
- Lack of work force – motivated, used to higher wages due to oil & gas
- Add quality of life that are brought in – opportunity to bring in new events/attractions and community

- Makes a community more attractive, invites visitors, spend \$\$
- Fun
- Several levels, different ways to make it happen, day trippers, events, destination or pass through, enhances the community
- Attractions and revenue
- Make the city cleaner, more businesses, more things to do
- Attractions, things to draw people in
- Having something no one else has (unique), maximize enjoyment while visitors are here
- Pride in community
- Bringing money from outside community that we wouldn't have unless we make the effort to bring them in
- Show local flavor, claim to fame and exploit it
- People traveling outside their norm for more than 24 hours to take in what they can't see at home
- Giving people an unexpected surprise
- Offering something that allows people to enjoy community, respite
- Rejuvenating experience

IS TOURISM RIGHT FOR OUR COMMUNITY?

- Broad category – destination – no but as interim, elements are there – close to I-80, to Yellowstone, Flaming Gorge, can define those elements. Western Co tourism grew into industrial tourism with lots of money spent on marketing. What is Rawlins – fueling stop for travelling public = take advantage of those
- Outdoors – hunting; fishing; biking; adobe high plains desert; climbing; ATV; snow mobiles
- #3 outdoor recreational community in nation. Recreation, yes! Capitalize.
- 29th toughest golf course. Need to increase use. Remote location
- On I-80 and 287; capture those and base recreational activities
- Fishing and hunting primarily – strong signature
- Does Rawlins have infrastructure for hosting visitors.
- Training – need to develop taking care of customer – Disney model – resort communities pursue this – front-line folks – are they customer oriented? Does break down at this level.
- Hotels, camps, KOA
- Businesses book up motels for energy.
- Few fast food places.
- Rec Center
- Walking trail around town – perimeter trail system. Get settled in , can access those
- Restaurants needed
- Lots of help wanted signs. Lacks competition which could decrease quality for those positions.
- RV travelers want to get out, walk, golf, etc. Can add this
- Sanford's closed and Wendy's closed – labor issue, couldn't keep staff.
- Training in restaurants, increase people available to serve customers and businesses.
- Corporate hotels have training internally. Mom & Pop could use hospitality training.
- Can make good money outside service arena because of energy economy – pulls good people away from services. Second income/worker opportunities.

- We're not a destination community. Came to open restaurants and transitioned into law. Hasn't become destination, stop off, energy town; need to develop postcard community that people return to, once they come through.
- Yes, balance between trap and sustainability, away from up & down, need a stable base, what is that key to sustainability, want to offer something to draw people off I-80
- Hard to be attractive when laying people off, cutting services, not providing quantity activities for the 10K who live here. How to draw in 3K a night
- Central location – how to get people here, spend money and want to return to stay longer
- Rawlins has been in this situation since 1880s – based on railroad, uranium, coal; - need secondary industry because of the demand of I-80. Want to moderate the effects of the industry and increase secondary industries. Tourism is tertiary – supplemental – need a second line employer.
- Yes – have scenic, historic, participation (hunting/fishing/recreation/golfing), a huge opportunity for area.
- Provides jobs and service otherwise wouldn't have. Restaurants, shops, all draw from tourism.
- More activity on weekends in Saratoga than Rawlins. Geared for tourism there. Rawlins is closed on Sunday. If want visitor, need to provide services every day for that visitor. Year round, every day. Need to be open and welcome.
- Wyoming isn't providing services statewide. Need to do a better job advertising Wyoming's areas. All.
- 50 mile long lakes, Snow Range, need to make people aware, need to advertise at state level. Need more money to do the job. State, Carbon Co, local.
- Should for economic development. Don't want to do it halfway.
- Seldom come to Rawlins on weekend – closed.
- History – museums, scenic attractions of outside/surrounding areas.
- One aspect of wellbeing. If feel good, will promote. What is sustainable? Can take more advantage of what exists. Attitude of community has been slow to promote tourism
- Yes! Natural resource of the county. Tapped into all the other resources. Tourism has also been boom and bust. Shows in the numbers, grants, investments, builds shops, grows along the way. Coal is short term money maker, Tourism is sustainable.
- Tourism, yes! Unique, full components, packets fully, business owners need buy in. Assessment will help bring components together.
- Lots of great facts about Rawlins – rust color paint for bridges – need to get that out.
- Lincoln Highway brought people in. Now with I-80 can still bring people through.
- Old Pen is asset and could use further development – living history – give people experiences – need volunteers – costumes, guards, prisoners. Grow events in what we already have.
- Pronghorn pride – include nature center, have people experience the nature here – migration patterns, sage brush – some people don't know about it.
- Great drives – Seminole, Encampment. Develop a hub & spoke tour
- Convention Center for groups/meetings and package for associations
- #3 for recreational opportunity.
- Rooms in Rawlins – but not the weekend services – how to convince local businesses that it exists. Told it is here, make it viable.
- Support services must increase.
- Tourism is right for everyone, but are you right for it? Hotel/motel service the people working here but now need to fill rooms when not workers are there.

- Brace but not embrace. Don't like that attitude. Don't close the gates and shut down. Use/abuse the closure. 'Come on' in and use our services.
- Brings in econ development
- Good qualities to share
- Brings in revenue
- Survival with influx of people
- More work
- Vital to economy
- Potential that we have yet to discover
- Business and community development
- Unlimited potential
- Get people to work
- Refine what we have – yes
- yes, quality of life
- Find the niche
- Rich history
- Many natural resources to share
- Bring in revenue make Rawlins more aesthetically appealing
- Tax revenues
- Stability
- Revenue
- Economy, creates jobs
- Lifeblood of business – hospitality
- Need for sustainable economy
- Yes, but not a tourist destination
- RV'ers do stay to take part in activities within 30-40 miles, Rawlins as hub
- Denver and Jackson can't compete with Rawlins
- Opportunities to extend length of stay
- Chance to brag about your town
- I-80, good opportunity to draw people off the interstate, \$\$
- We have good things for people to use and we need to show off what we have
- Lots of historical and natural resources
- Economic impact, sustainability, but must have pride in community to show off what we have
- Find a way to get people to stay
- Better our quality of life
- Great people, tourists need to experience our people
- In the middle (geography), lots of events we can use to invite visitors to stay
- Lots of entities that have individual missions/goals, need better collaboration to make this happen
- Potential for visitors to become new residents, bring a new business, economic development
- Environmental conditions – wind, high desert, sagebrush, dust, sand – can't change these, has an impact
- Good for the community because when we enhance the community for visitors, we enhance it for residents as well
- Brings community together

- Vital to this community, interstate of millions of dollars driving past every day, new money to circulate through community
- If we can get tourists to feel good about community, it will make residents feel good about the community, increases value when businesses invest
- Tourists help us see ourselves through different set of eyes
- Helps our residents become more involved, it will make the entire community better
- Community Pride

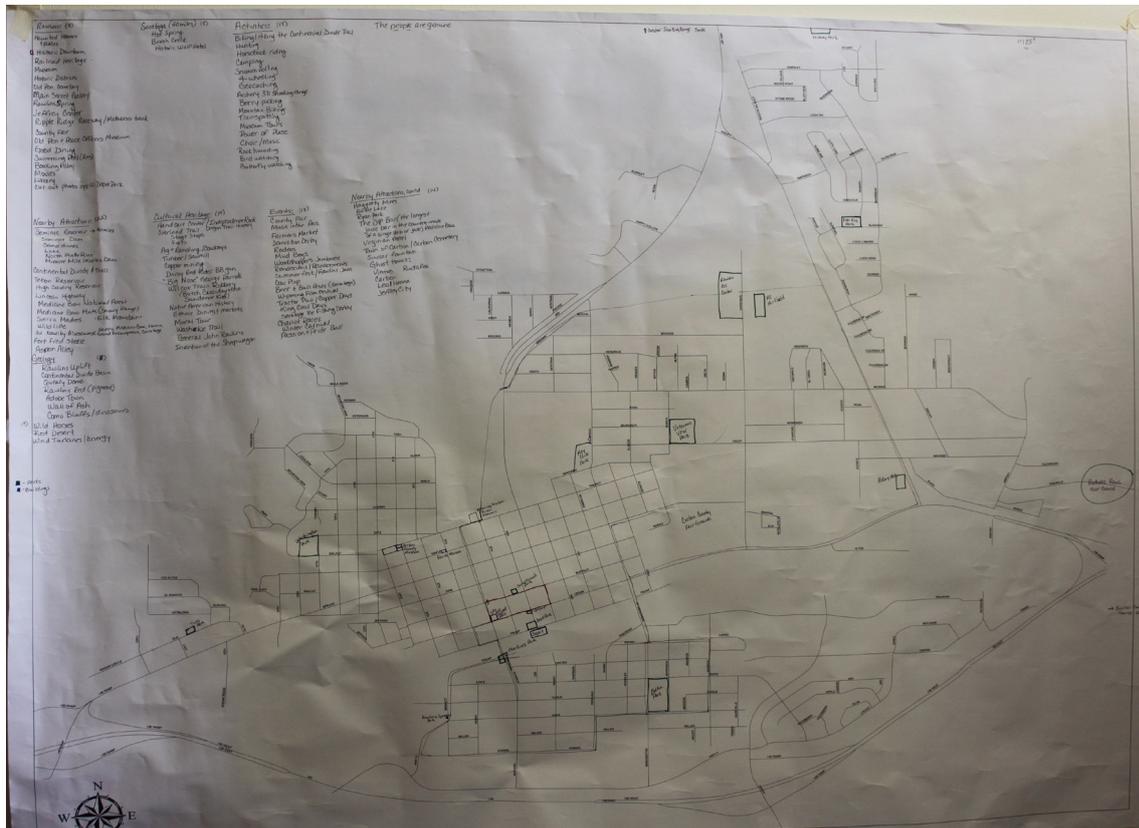
WHAT ARE THE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FOR TOURISM IN OUR COMMUNITY?

- Carbon Co has a lot to offer. Rawlins alone (downtown & Penn) not a complete snap shot. Look broadly. Mining processes, uranium mine, see the equipment. Develop mine
- Way finding system – signs, directions, looking into this currently.
- If not interested in Old Pen, this is a halfway point in travel – looking for place to spend the night.
- Longer stays are hunters, research, dinosaurs, etc. Is this tourism.
- Assets: outdoor recreation is niche
- Industrial tourism: West Co – intensity, marketing to bring in tourist, not matter what.
- Rawlins – coal diggers, wind farms, people will stop with visitors center to learn about it.
- Inherent conflicts with current industries – oil, gas & mine isn't pretty, tourists might want to go somewhere else. Heavy industry vs. tourist niche. Traditional tourism is cute, pretty, lots of upkeep. Energy is priority.
- Proximity is bringing tourists
- Public restrooms: maintenance issue.
- Anchor retail – more area and regional draw and more at home purchase and develop tourism related industries.
- Corrals – seen as negative – show western lifestyle – can turn around the negative view 50 lots – agricultural zone in town by I-80. Was there before I-80. Western right to maintain animals within community. Can that be enhanced? Individually owned. City water, not sewer.
- Visitor center (Pronghorn Pride idea) to interpret area
- Positive & negative – brings different people into the community. Difficult at hospital and distant to their homes and nonpayment of hospital
- People end up here without money – one their way and get stuck. Few resources to help those in need. Bus ticket to Rock Springs and move them along the way.
- Arrive by happenstance – give a positive impact when they do come. Business, medical care, has a positive influence to their visit.
- Past efforts have been to 'sell Rawlins' – handcart visitors come through 250K – use parks and restrooms, don't spend money. Build camp to stay here. 500K comes through for Sturgis. Lusk takes advantage – can Rawlins? Don't focus on Rawlins as destination but capture others going to an event.
- To get people to stop – has to be compelling – related to the reason for travel (motorcycle for Sturgis).
- Weather - I-80 closures – taxes services – emergency. Hotels and food industries. Few places to dine out. 2-3 days impacts grocery stores and fuel. Price gouging – has negative impact – over paid for poor hotel room, people won't return. It is a mess – how to create this into an opportunity? Is Rawlins a stable enough community to support influx? Not right now.
- Shrimp in the water system – 30 years ago.

- National news – emergencies – semi's stranded – well-handled but that wasn't reported. The wreck but not the response. Casts negative light. How to create the positive spin? Want to cast a good impression.
- How to become more than a pit stop without closing the highway!
- Create an environment to draw people – aren't doing that.
- Marketing – Casper with golf course – Stay and Place package – don't have
- Issue of help – can't find staff to be open. Aging owners. Short season – Businesses are tired AND want to be out on the weekend enjoying the recreation. Workforce issue is huge.
- Treasure seclusion, deer in town, wildlife, easy parking, little traffic in town. Impatient with tourists. Don't want the influx.
- Attitude – reservation – need to embrace visitors. Can't bring someone in to do it for use. Not encouraged locally.
- Wages. Youth want \$14/hr. Had better paying jobs in the past. Need to restructure workforce.
- Don't want to look like Jackson.
- Like not having crowds. Creates inpatients. Only drawing in modest number of visitors – not 2.3M/year. Need to put a little bit of effort to make this increase happen comfortably.
- Isn't a 'why not' we need it in all over our communities for wellbeing.
- Apathy towards tourism. Little knowledge and no plan. 180 degree turn around from generation ago. Bust happened and caused fear from losing so much financially and emotionally. Getting people involved is difficult. Some people may not care. Don't get out of the house and then complain about having nothing to do.
- Time to move on and move over.
- Locals with apathy are the face of the community. Tourists see that apathy. Need training to create 'showtime' for locals to provide a positive face for the community.
- Letter to the editor on 8/3 – traffic stop complaint.
- Younger people don't understand importance of tourism (20-35) – aren't as involved with outdoors – ATVs not collecting. Motorsports not jade/jewelry. Outdoor experiences are cool –
- Who is on the highway and cater to those interests. Harley stores.
- Need some self-help sessions to change self-image. If you want to do something, leave to do/buy it.
- Tourism revolves around making money without putting effort forward – summer jobs, etc. But in Rawlins need to find information about the community – need to provide something interesting to do. Need a point of contact. Review lodging tax use – need to use to invite tourists in. Most traveling on weekends, but don't offer place to stop and do on weekend. Lack of visitor services. Signs – restrooms, parking, map of County with activities and amenities. Need money, have revenue stream through lodging tax, but not directed to bringing people off highway and into area – stop them for a day or longer stay. No statewide lodging tax – what could be done with 1% lodging tax at state level to promote in state? Point of sale (Jackson example).
- Separate groups with separate agendas – Pronghorn, museum, visitor center. Not cooperating for one larger project. Place to do all three instead of own thing. Territorial. No overall view.
- Instant gratification, fast food, 30 second blurbs... Hand written signs portray lack of interest, back roads, Mayberry.
- Need to provide information in new technologies – GPS not maps. Rawlins still has rotary phones – needs to upgrade or be left behind. Technology infrastructure.
- Lack of information
- Community "going about" tourism in an uninformed way

- Attitude of community
- Overcrowding
- Lack of execution
- Customer service
- Lack of open hours in evening/weekend
- Clean it up
- Lack of information about where things are
- Creates issues for private sector – staffing, inventory, access, etc.
- Attitude of people
- Lack of understanding of positive impact of tourism
- Impact to environment
- Stores closed on weekends, lack of access outside traditional business hours
- Seasonal staffing – jobs year round
- Competitive with other communities in the view of tourism as an industry in Rawlins
- Weather
- Structure – such as computer availability
- People leave Rawlins on the weekend
- Minimal downtown activity on weekends
- Bad attitude, don't like outsiders
- Town can't agree on draw to town in relation to keeping businesses open
- Lack of identity
- Marketing, image issues
- Lack of pride
- Workforce –lack of
- Lack of work force – motivated, used to higher wages due to oil & gas
- Add quality of life that are brought in – opportunity to bring in new events/attractions and community
- Taken to a certain level, it turns the town into a hospitality town, everyone becomes a PR agent
- Rawlins has a bad rep, not pretty, attitude of people, poor sportsmanship at school level, not welcoming
- Drug problems, interstate
- No one wants to come here, if we aren't working together within the community how do we develop the pride to want to show off
- Emphasis on hospitality takes away from other opportunities
- Stigma, rep of Rawlins needs a facelift
- Don't want to be a tourist trap
- Need to make Rawlins a desirable place for residents, if they want to be here, it will show and others will too
- Rawlins looks ugly from I-80, Glenn Addition, negative stigma
- Residents have a lot to do with wanting people to come, residents are ambassadors and may be giving the wrong message to residents of other communities through their words/actions
- Movie "Cars" reference equivalent to Radiator Springs
- Need more to do
- Need better retail environment
- Law enforcement issues, gunning for people who are not from here

- Environmental conditions – wind, high desert, sagebrush, dust, sand – can’t change these, has an impact
- Takes some effort to get people to do the “paid” jobs, much less the volunteer jobs - Apathy
- People can get burned out quickly if we don’t expand the number of volunteers, etc.
- Not a ton of options for retail, downtown shops, unique Rawlins/Wyoming boutique shops
- Workforce, we have the people, but they are not trained in the hospitality industry or willing to do the jobs
- Branding, who are we? Why would people come here? Are we just a prison town? Railroad town? no identity
- Apathy runs deep here, need to focus more on positives
- You get one chance to make a first impression, need to take advantage of it
- Maintaining and serving the expectations, public restrooms, parks... public services, \$\$



Cultural Heritage (17)

- Hand Cart Center/Independence Rock
- Oregon Trail History
- Overland Trail
 - Stage Stops
 - Forts
- Ag & Ranching/Cowboys
- Timber/Sawmill
- Copper Mining
- Daisy Red Rider BB gun
- Big Nose George Parrott
- Wilcox Train Robbery
 - (Butch Cassidy & the Sundance Kid)
- Native American History
- Ethnic Dining & Markets
- Mural Tour
- Washakie Trail
- General John Rawlins
- Invention of the Sheep Wagon

Events (17):

- County Fair
- Music in the Park
- Farmer's Market
- Demolition Derby
- Rodeos
- Mud Bogs
- Woodchopper's Jamboree

Rendezvous/Reenactments

- Summer fest/Rawlins Jam
- Cow Plop
- Beer & Balls Fests (Saratoga)
- Wyoming Film Festival
- Tractor Pull/Copper Days
- King Coal Days
- Saratoga Ice Fishing Derby
- Chariot Races
- Winter Carnival
- Passion & Pride Ball

Nearby Attractions (12):

- Haggerty Mines
- Battle Lake
- Ryan Park
- The Dip Bar (the longest jade bar in the country-made of a singular slab of jade)
- Medicine Bow
- Virginian Hotel
- Town of Carbon/Carbon Cemetery
- Sinclair Fountain
- Ghost Towns:
 - Vinton
 - Carbon
 - Leo/Hanna
 - Jeffrey City
 - Rudafea

Rawlins (41):

Haunted Houses & Places
Historic Downtown
Railroad Heritage
Museum
Historic Districts
Old Pen Cemetery
Main Street Gallery
Rawlins Spring
Jeffrey Center
Ripple Ridge Raceway/Motor cross Track
County Fair
Old Pen & Peace Officers Museum
Good Dining
Swimming Pool (RHS)
Bowling Alley
Movies
Library
Cut-out Photo Opportunities @ Depot Park
City Parks
 Tully Park
 Washington Park
 Soroptomist Park
 Martinez Park
 Rawlins Spring Park
 Key Club Park
 Veteran's VFW Park
 Rotary Park
 Rob Ray Park
 Bolton Park
 Hickey Park
Carbon County Museum
Wyoming Frontier Prison
Ferris Mansion
City Hall/Old Post Office
Depot/Depot Park
Downtown
Carbon County Fairgrounds
RC Airfield
Rawlins Recreation Center
Outdoor Shooting Range
Rochelle Ranch Golf Course

Nearby Attractions (23):

Sinclair Golf Course
Seminoe Reservoir – 40 miles
 Seminoe Dam
 Sand Dunes
 Lake
 North Platte River
 Miracle Mile/Kortes Dam
Continental Divide & Trail
Teton Reservoir
High Savory Reservoir
Lincoln Highway
Medicine Bow National Forest
Medicine Bow Mtns. (Snowy Range)
Sierra Madres
Elk Mountain
Wildlife
All County Museums
 Savery
 Medicine Bow
 Hanna
 Grand Encampment
 Saratoga

Geology (8):

Rawlins Uplift
Continental Divide Basin
Quealy Dome
Rawlins Red (pigment)
Adobe Town
Wall of Ash
Como Bluffs (dinosaurs)

Wild Horses
Red Desert
Wind Turbines/Energy
The People are Genuine

Saratoga (40 miles)(3:)

Hot Spring
Brush Creek
Historic Wolf Hotel

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY (FLIP CHARTS)

		Priority Projects	Project Time Frame
Natural/Scenic Attractions			
Rawlins Uplift -Trails & Interpretive	21	1	3 year
Geocaching "Tour" (brochure thing w/free CCHEC t-shirt)	2		
Mineral Tours	7	3	5 year
Indoor Green Space	4		
Wild horse (& wildlife) guided tours and educational presentations	4		
more interpretation for hot springs in Saratoga	1		
more development for ATV tours/packages	5		
rock hounding tours	4		
Denkai Sanctuary (ecotourism highlighting mtn. biking, hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing w/pets & how to utilize animals/nature inorganic living-gardening, farming, range mgt.)	1		
Photography Tours	1		
Geology tours	10	2	1 year
Recreational Activates			
Snowmobile Trails	0		
Cross Country Ski Trails	3		
Roller Skating	1		
Ice Skating/Hockey (develop and promote)	4		
Stay and Play for golf and shooting packages	2		
Regional Tournaments for golf and shooting	2		
bicycle rental business	0		
wild horse tours	2		
continental divide bike tours/guide	1		
ATV-trails and events	6	3	1 year
horse arena (build and promote)	4		
old pen-more trails and picnic facilities	7	2	1 year
Casper Ghosts baseball	2		
volleyball courts	1		
old pen baseball	2		
archery club	1		
paintball course (develop & promote)	4		
laser tag	1		
interpretive trail and signage to Rawlins peak	15	1	3 year

(recreational activities continued)

expansion of marketing of current rec events	3		
Denkai Sanctuary	2		
better set up and marketing for cross country bikers	6	3	5 year
snowshoe trails	1		

Other Attractions

conference center	5		
multifunctional family fun center (bumper cars)	4		
visitor information kiosks at each exit off I-80	5		
expand race track (car)	0		
dog park (walking area)	7	2	1 year
gardens	0		
Sephora	0		
Wal-Mart	1		
visitor's center	3		
dining guide and Old Pen brochures	1		
ropes course	2		
interpretive center (wind, geology, pronghorn, Indian heritage)	6	3	3 year
fossil dig	6	3	5 year
100% community Wi-Fi (coverage-stop here, check your email)	4		
Dam Tours	4		
Curb appeal	4		
Drive In theater	9	1	5 year
water park	6	3	1/5 year

Special Events

Hunters "widow" day	1		
Fishing events	9	3	5 year
weekend cultural celebration in the fall	8		
celestial viewing	13	1	3 year
dog events (agility trials, sheepdog trials, fly ball, hunting field trials, dog expo w/demonstrations of these search	6		
eating contest	1		
massive kite festival	10	2	1 year

Cultural/Historic Attractions

new building for county museum	11	1	5 year
interpretive trail to Rawlins springs	9	2	3 year
historic building tour (self- guided)	6		
indoor performance venue	2		
walking path (interpretation for wildlife, flora, fauna)	9	2	1 year
pronghorn pride interpretive center	6		
dinosaur digs	8		
historic ghost town tours (self-guided and guided)	8		
cemetery tour- county (self-guided)	4		
Native American cultural presentations, tours to Wind River	4		