



YAMHILL VALLEY
← Oregon's Stamping Ground →
WELCOME TO WINE COUNTRY

October 22, 2015

Travel Yamhill Valley
PO Box 774
McMinnville, OR 97128

Dear Yamhill County Board of Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for economic development funding to lay the groundwork for a more robust and coordinated tourism promotion effort in Yamhill County.

Travel Yamhill Valley is the official destination marketing organization (DMO) for Yamhill Valley. We promote Yamhill Valley as a tourism destination, and provide information in response to requests from individual travelers, group business, travel media, and tour operators. Travel Yamhill Valley works closely in an official relationship with both Travel Oregon and the Willamette Valley Visitors Association, leveraging our resources with those at the regional and statewide level.

Tourism is a powerful economic driver in Oregon. Statewide, visitors directly spent \$10.3-Billion in Oregon in 2014, a 4.3% increase over 2013. This spending created 101,000 direct jobs, and another 52,500 jobs indirectly. In Yamhill Valley, visitors spent \$115-million in 2014, creating 1545 jobs. However, while the rest of the state enjoyed a healthy increase in visitor spending and job creation, Yamhill County's numbers stayed flat. One could surmise that this is because promotional efforts are not funded here as they are throughout the rest of the state.

Currently Travel Yamhill Valley is funded solely my membership dues. We are the only DMO in the state that does not receive any lodging tax dollars or Tourism Improvement District income. Travel Yamhill Valley's budget last year was \$18,000. This compares to \$942,471 for Travel Salem (Marion & Polk counties) and \$3,300,000 for Washington County Visitors Association.

We are seeking \$60,000 to hire a professional services contractor to work with the industry, communities, and our board to develop a sustainable funding model for coordinated tourism promotion of Yamhill Valley. In addition, these funds would be used to enhance print and digital promotions to create an immediate increase in visitor interest.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Veronica Hinkes
Past Chair, Travel Yamhill Valley

Accepted by Yamhill County
Board of Commissioners on

11-5-15 by Board Order
15-452



YAMHILL VALLEY
← Oregon's Stampin' Ground →
WELCOME TO WINE COUNTRY

Travel Yamhill Valley work plan 2015-16 for use of Yamhill County grant:

Goals

1. Achieve sustainable funding of at least \$150,000 per year. The definition of sustainable means not having to go through a yearly approval process or depend on voluntary opt in.
2. Continue to market via the internet and social media to maintain current levels of engagement.
3. Aggressively pursue other short term funding sources including membership, grants, etc.

Process

The primary focus for the next calendar year is goal #1. To achieve that goal Travel Yamhill Valley will:

1. Hire/contract with a resource to execute our plan using the monies provided from the county.
2. Identify all opportunities for sustainable funding.
3. Validate or eliminate each option for viability.
4. Pursue each validated opportunity for maximum potential and establish those that reach our goal of annual sustainable funding of \$150,000.

Deliverables

We believe this process should be addressed aggressively and that actions 1, 2, and 3 should be accomplished over the first 4 months of the fiscal year (October through February) and be secured in the next 8 months.

The board also agreed that if Goal #1 is not accomplished this year, the board would vote to disband the organization.

Economic Development Funding Request: Travel Yamhill Valley

Amount Requested: \$60,000

Project Information:

Funds will be used to:

- 1) Hire a part-time professional services contractor for Travel Yamhill Valley (TYV). Key duties of the ED will be:
 - Manage day to day operations of TYV
 - Develop and implement a plan for sustainable funding for TYV
 - Identify appropriate short and long-term funding mechanism(s)
 - Organize industry meetings to garner input and support
 - Work with elected officials on any necessary local ordinances
 - Coordinate TYV board engagement
 - Work with municipalities in Yamhill County to develop a plan for their financial participation
 - Apply for any potential grants identified
 - Represent TYV at the regional and state level
 - Manage contractors supplying marketing services
- 2) Bolster tourism promotional efforts for Yamhill County, especially where there are opportunities for leveraging existing regional and statewide marketing programs.
 - Develop and print a Yamhill Valley visitor guide, place in Welcome Centers around state
 - Explore publishing partnerships
 - Re-join Travel Portland and place guides in downtown Portland visitors center
 - Expand online marketing presence

Deliverables:

- Sustainable long-term funding for Travel Yamhill Valley is in place.
- A Yamhill County visitor guide has been printed and placed in strategic locations around the state as well as being available for fulfillment of requests from potential visitors.
- Travel Yamhill Valley's online promotions have expanded, resulting in a website/social media traffic increase of at least 10%.

Economic benefit:

Both the 2008 Yamhill County Tourism/Ag-Tourism Profile and more recent economic impact reports have shown that Yamhill County is not capturing its share of in-bound tourism to Oregon. While the rest of the state's visitor spending numbers have grown steadily for the past several years, Yamhill County's have stayed flat.

This is most likely attributable to the fact that Travel Yamhill Valley is the only destination marketing organization in Oregon that is not supported by sustainable funds from lodging taxes, economic development departments or chambers of commerce. Because of a lack of funding, Yamhill County is falling woefully behind in active promotion of its area and is missing out on opportunities to reach potential visitors who will bring outside dollars into the economy and support local businesses and jobs.

This grant will put TYV on a path to sustainable funding, and will put Yamhill County on a course to more effectively attract visitors and their spending.

According to Dean Runyan and Associates, every \$65,980 in direct visitor spending generates one FTE job in Yamhill County. Travel Oregon reports that for every \$1 it spends in promotional campaigns, \$237 of visitor spending, and \$11 in state and local tax revenue are generated.

Using these numbers, we can estimate that for every \$50,000 that Travel Yamhill Valley could put directly into tourism marketing, \$11,850,000 in visitor spending could be generated, and 179 additional jobs could be created, and \$550,000 in state and local revenues could be created.

In addition, visitor spending supports local businesses and is often the critical difference that keeps businesses alive. Retail business owners in communities with healthy tourism economies report 30%-50% of their income comes from visitor spending.

Visitors also develop affinities for local products. Research shows that 60% of travelers bought Oregon products after returning home, with more than 30% purchasing Oregon products several times once they returned home to share with their friends and family. Wine, beer and food products topped the list. (Source: Travel Oregon). For an agriculturally rich area like Yamhill County, this visitor purchasing presents enormous opportunities for local businesses to expand sales.

Travel Yamhill Valley background:

Travel Yamhill Valley was established in 2001 and is the official state-recognized destination marketing organization (DMO) for Yamhill County. As such, it has established position and relationships in the Oregon system of tourism promotion. Travel Yamhill Valley is a member of the regional destination marketing organization, Willamette Valley Visitors Association (WVVA). There are also lines of communication with Travel Oregon, both directly and through Willamette Valley Visitors Association. This state model allows DMOs to leverage resources and to participate in the main promotions conducted by the state.

In addition, Travel Yamhill Valley receives and responds to leads from Travel Oregon and WVVA to work with media, tour operators and other travel influencers to generate earned media coverage and encourage inclusion of Yamhill County in domestic and international tour catalogs.

B.O. 15-452