

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Creating a Destination Tourism Branding and Business Development Strategy for Baker County, Oregon

Submit Proposals to: **Andrew Bryan**

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Proposal Deadline: **July 31, 2009**

Introduction

The Baker County Economic Development Team is seeking a qualified consulting firm to assist the County in developing a branding and business development strategy for Destination Tourism. The purpose of the plan will be to capitalize on our existing assets, new products and unique attributes associated with our new tourism-based economic development strategy called "*Base Camp Baker.*" The selected firm should have experience in solid market research (both qualitative and quantitative); strategic planning; and community identity/branding, including graphics/logo development and graphic standards, developing collateral and web-based materials, and providing recommendations for implementation, measuring and tracking results.

Base Camp Baker

Mission Statement: To encourage and promote tourism and recreation in Baker County through marketing and development of new and existing tourism assets.

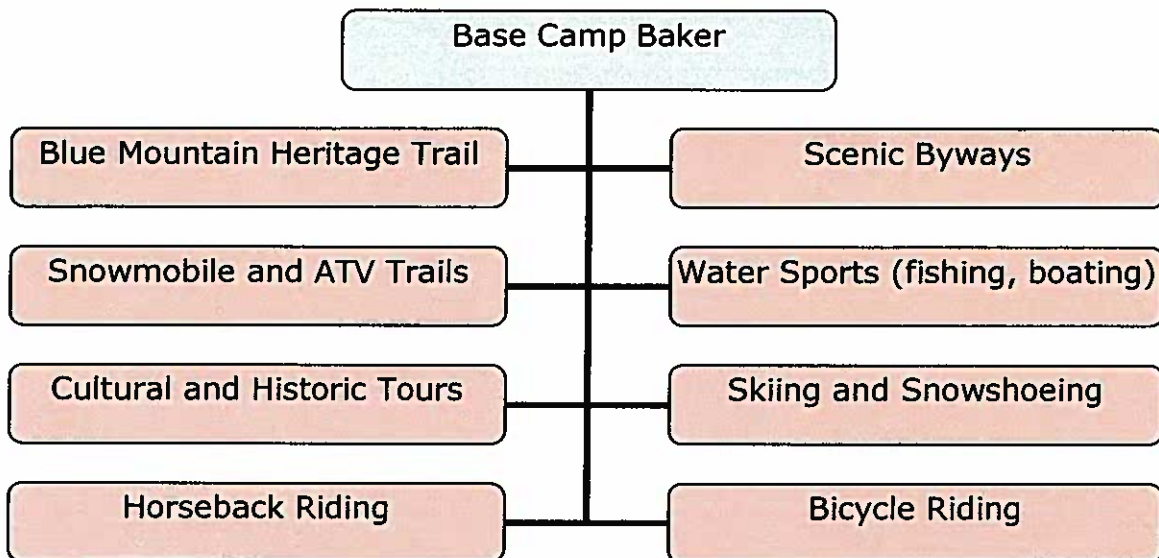
Project Description. Base Camp Baker is an integrated economic development strategy designed to do the following:

- ❖ Provide a unified approach to tourism and recreational development;
- ❖ Provide a one-stop point of contact for visitors seeking tourism and recreational information;
- ❖ Provide a brand for all tourism and recreational marketing in Baker County; and
- ❖ Provide an opportunity for entrepreneurs to capitalize on the increase in visitors to the community by creating or expanding business.

Tourism is the second largest industry in Oregon. While Baker County has taken advantage of this fact, we have recently seen declines in visitor numbers. This means that we have additional visitor capacity. Additionally, we have identified destination tourism as an economic development priority for expansion.

Tourism is an industry that benefits the entire county, if developed properly. Base Camp Baker is the means by which we will achieve countywide impact. By creating different tools based upon various interests, we will generate a unique approach to increasing usage of our current assets. Though some development of additional assets may occur, we already have an excellent network of existing tourism products to offer (see chart below). Base Camp

Baker takes these products and packages them, giving visitors easier access to the opportunities in our area.



Base Camp Baker will also provide a consolidated marketing effort for these products. Rather than “hit or miss” campaigns that lack a consistent message, Base Camp Baker will establish Baker County as the place in Oregon for recreation, no matter what one is seeking.

Finally, Base Camp Baker will also provide assistance to those entrepreneurs hoping to tap into the newly energized tourism industry. Our economic development team will map the assets we have and identify areas of weakness. Assistance will be given to those entrepreneurs or existing businesses looking to fill the gaps.

Base Camp Baker is more than just a tourism marketing idea – it’s a replicable economic development strategy designed to create jobs. In 1987, Baker County began developing tourism as a part of our economy because of the decline of the natural resource industry. Thanks to this diversification, we’ve seen significant improvement in our unemployment rate (25% to 9%). However, there is still much to be done. Our unemployment rate is still high. Our per capita income is low. School enrollment is declining. Expansion of the tourism industry is just one piece of the puzzle needed to reverse these trends, but one that will have a major impact on our economic health.

Community Overview

Baker County encompasses an area of approximately 3,000 square miles in Eastern Oregon. The county seat, Baker City, has an estimated population

of 10,140. The remaining satellite communities in the county include Haines, Sumpter, Huntington, Richland, Halfway, and Unity. The county's total population is estimated to be 16,500.

For over a century, the area has been heavily dependent on agriculture, timber, and mining. Lumber mill closures in the nineteen-eighties necessitated a need to diversify our economy. This has evolved to include tourism and traded-sector industries relative to wood products, plastics, and metals.

Scope of Work

It is anticipated that the successful firms will provide some or all of the following services and support to the Baker Economic Development Team:

Research

- Evaluate available research related to visitor and resident perceptions of the area.
- Analyze competing destinations' images.
- Develop a brand position platform.
- Develop a comprehensive profile of our current and potential markets.
- Facilitate surveys of key constituents.
- Review funding methods being used or potentially available to finance a long-term branding campaign.
- Identify and fully understand the key elements of Baker County's story and identity.
- Work with a number of community partners to fully understand their existing brands and promotional efforts.
- Identify other key stakeholders who may need to be involved in this process.

Deliverables

- Recommended ways to articulate the brand, including but not limited to defining markets and promotional avenues as well as advising on strategies to better promote and create brand awareness.
- Implementation plans for brand identity applications and brand identity maintenance plan.
- Recommended strategies to engage the media in more positive coverage of tourism and economic development related programs, activities and services.

- Recommended methods for funding and sustaining a long-term branding campaign for tourism and economic development.

IV Submittals

Consultants are requested to submit three copies of a proposal that addresses the Scope of Work outlined above. Consultants may also propose additional services to the Scope of Work that would significantly improve the study. All proposals need to include a concise description of the work to be performed and a time line including a completion date not to exceed January 31, 2009.

To be considered, a proposal should respond to each item in the Scope of Work, with a separate budget for each item. In addition, the proposal should include the following sections and information:

1. **Cover Letter.** State consultant's ability to complete the project given current workload and guarantee terms of the proposal.
2. **Project Team and Qualifications.** Describe the principle firm, its qualifications and experience. List all subcontractors to be used with their qualifications and proposed work assignments. Include experience in working successfully with similar organizations.
3. **References.** Provide at least three references from similar projects. Each reference listed should include the organization, contact name, telephone number, e-mail address, description of work and outcome of the work performed. Provide references from three relevant projects.
4. **Approach.** Provide a statement of understanding, an outline of work plan, and the consultant's approach to the project, including major milestones and detailed schedule that shows work being completed within nine months of contract award.
5. **Budget.** Provide a not-to-exceed cost proposal for all work described under Scope of Work, broken down by project element.
6. **Contact Person.** Provide the name, postal address, e-mail address, telephone and fax number of the lead person authorized to enter into contractual agreement and answer questions related to the proposal.

Firm selection will be based on the quality of the response to this RFP, understanding of the issues, consultant team make-up and specialties represented therein, overall problem solving abilities, creative approach to

tourism and economic development, market analysis, ability to meet deadlines, price and overall experience and track record. The Baker County EDC reserves the right to decline all proposals.

Baker County operates under an EEO policy and complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.