JACKSON HOLE SUSTAINABLE DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN SNAPSHOT

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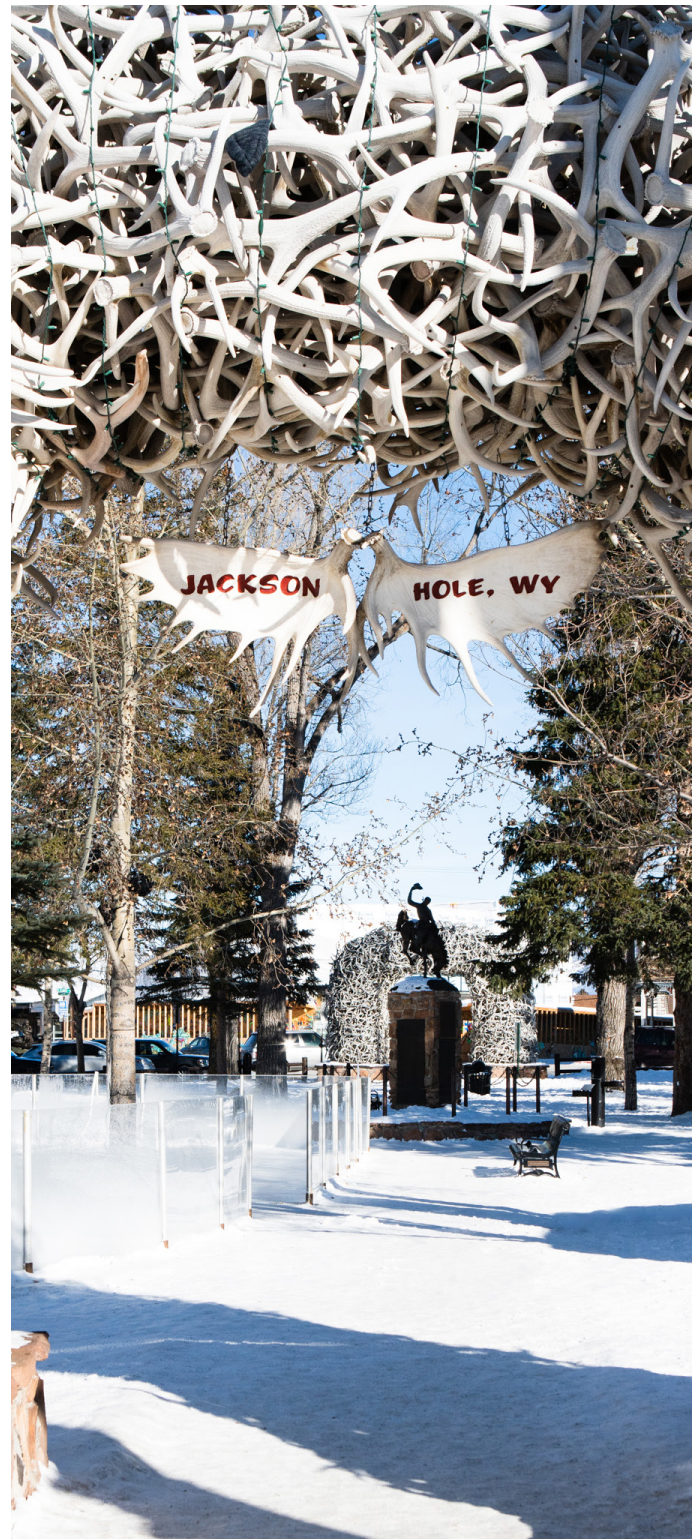
INTRODUCTION

Travel and tourism is responsible for more than 50% of Jackson Hole's economic activity. It is an economic force. How will Jackson Hole ensure that the power of travel and tourism contributes to the health and well-being of our community and our environment without degrading it?

That was the central question the Jackson Hole Travel & Tourism Board (JHTTB) sought to answer through the Sustainable Destination Management Plan (SDMP) process.

The timing of the SDMP process was fortuitous, as the events of summer of 2021 made clear what the future would bring without a proactive, inclusive strategy to manage visitation to the greatest benefit of our economy, our residents, and our surrounding environment.

In all-too-real terms, the community felt the impacts that unmitigated visitation can inflict on the human and natural resources that are the pillars of Jackson Hole's destination economy, with second-order effects diminishing the visitor experience and, ultimately, the quality of life for the community at large.

The timing of the SDMP combined with the obvious acute need for a strategy was the impetus behind the unprecedented interest in and participation from the Jackson Hole community. Led by George Washington University and Confluence Sustainability, and supported locally by the JHTTB and an 18-member steering committee representing a diverse array of community stakeholder groups, our community embarked on a year-long project that included 8 focus groups with more than 150 tourism leaders, 12 working sessions with 50 community stakeholders, and 4,777 resident respondents to a tourism sentiment survey, the largest resident survey in Teton County's history.

The 75-page SDMP should be approached and viewed as a comprehensive strategic analysis of the opportunity we have before us and as a future-facing framework to achieve the balance and prosperity the Jackson Hole community seeks. It is a road map with clear directions, milestones, actions, assignments, and success metrics designed to guide the continued evolution and health of Teton County's largest economic engine.

The following 11-page summary captures the key elements of the plan for easy accessibility and understanding. This framework allows us, as a community, to build out and act on goals, strategies, and metrics to better anticipate and respond to the dynamic nature of the tourism industry, capturing the greatest benefits for our businesses, our community, and our environment.

The JHTTB is proud to present the Sustainable Destination Management Plan, and we are grateful for the efforts and contributions of the Jackson Hole community. We thank George Washington University, Confluence Sustainability, the steering committee members, our partners, and the many individuals in our community who lent their time, their resources, and their thoughts to this process.

WHAT TO EXPECT

The SDMP is a five-year road map guiding Teton County toward a sustainable future. For Teton County, sustainability means balancing the aspirations and needs of community members, businesses, and visitors with the protection of the public lands that are core to the county's heritage, culture, and economy. The purpose of the SDMP is to ensure that tourism is a positive force for people, nature, and the economy. The SDMP is the result of a year-long participatory planning process spearheaded by the JHTTB and guided by an 18-member steering committee.

To achieve true sustainability, all three sectors—environmental, economic, and social—must live in harmony with each other.

Natural Environment

Vibrant Communities

Economic Vitality
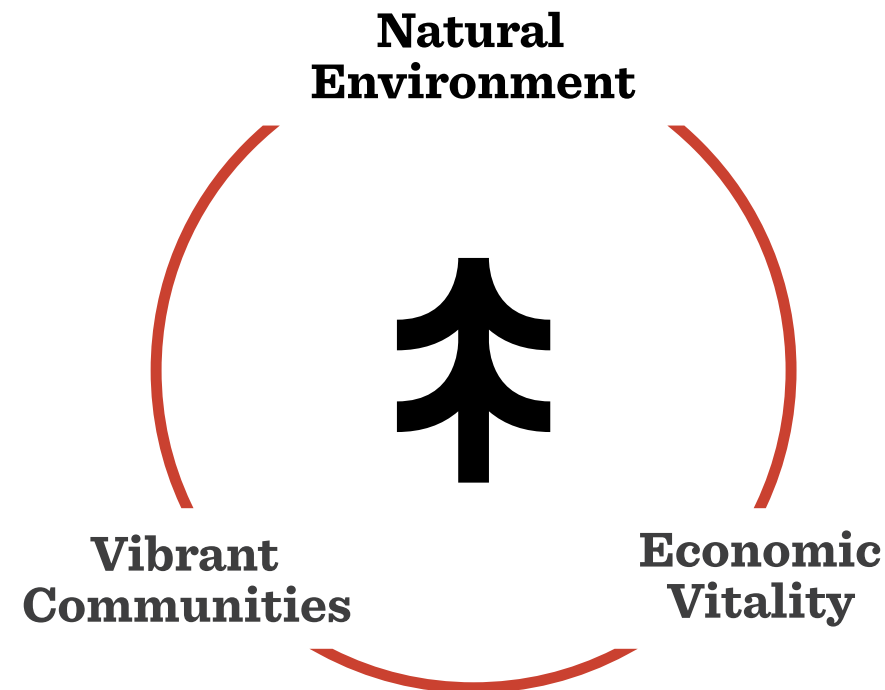
The SDMP is a 75-page framework divided into five sections: Introduction, Current Situation, Strategy, Action Plan, and Governance and Implementation Plan.

The Introduction lays the groundwork for an understanding the purpose of the plan, the process and methodology that was practiced, and the levels and types of community involvement that took place. It outlines the data collection methods and how a baseline was established. This baseline was an important part of the process because, although many assumptions could have been made about tourism in Teton County, these situational analysis reports and surveys validated and deepened our understanding.

The Current Situation provides an overview of tourism in Teton County. You can read the full Situation Analysis Report by visiting **visitjacksonhole.com/sdmp** to better understand the foundation that the SDMP was built on.

The Strategy paints a picture of the collective vision, values, and guiding principles that shaped the SDMP. These principles were developed based on feedback from community members during the community engagement sessions. These are your words. This is your voice.

The Action Plan is the meat of the SDMP. Here are the specific goals and implementation frameworks that have been identified for Jackson Hole. Within each of the eight goals are initiatives, objectives, priority actions, and a suggested timeline. This is our road map for how to get from where we are to where we want to be.

The Governance and Implementation Plan is where the rubber meets the road. It provides recommendations for how to turn this vision into reality.

You can read the full SDMP plus all supporting documents and reports at **visitjacksonhole.com/sdmp**.

PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

The SDMP kicked off in fall of 2021 with the establishment of an 18-member steering committee consisting of representatives from key community stakeholder groups. The committee was tasked with guiding the plan development process.

The Situation Analysis Report consolidated data, information, and insights from a wide range of sources and key stakeholder groups, including local and state governments, public land managers, elected officials, the business community, residents, immigrant communities, and the civic sector. It serves as the most comprehensive baseline assessment of tourism in Teton County to date, and is the foundation for this plan.

A Resident Sentiment Towards Tourism Survey was deployed in spring 2022 and provided a snapshot in time of our community's feelings on tourism. A total of 4,777 residents completed the survey, which provided a baseline to compare future resident sentiment. This level of response is similar to voter turnout on election day in November 2022 (4,944). Eleven percent of these respondents (525) own a local business. Of respondents who work in Teton County, 40% (1,911) indicated that they work in the tourism industry.

To view the full Situation Analysis Report and Resident Sentiment Towards Tourism Survey report, visit **visitjacksonhole.com/sdmp**.
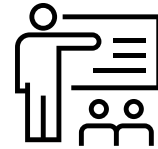
SDMP PROGRESS TIMELINE
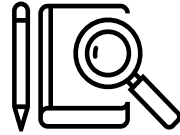
Winter 2021

## PHASE 1: INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

Launch Steering Committee
Develop Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Communications Strategy
Create Resident Tourism Sentiment Survey
Review Comprehensive Analysis of Existing Destination Data, Including Prior Visitor Input
Draft Situation Analysis Report

Spring 2022

PHASE 2: ON-SITE ASSESSMENT

Launch Resident Tourism Sentiment Survey
Lead Community Meetings for Process Introduction and Initial Feedback Collection
Host 1:1 Interviews and Focus Groups With Elected Officials, Land Managers, Business and Civic Leaders
Validate Situation Analysis Report
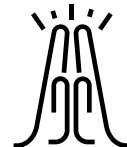
Summer 2022

PHASE 3: PARTICIPATORY VISIONING AND PLANNING

Lead In-Person Community Visioning and Planning Workshops
Host Stakeholder Focus Groups
Share Workshop Outcomes Report
Develop SDMP Initiatives With Stakeholder Groups
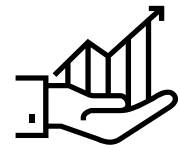
Fall–Winter 2022

PHASE 4: PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION

Draft SDMP
Publication of the Resident Survey Research
Present Key Stakeholder Findings
Share Final SDMP and Other Research Outcomes
Confirm Research and Implementation Toolkit

Winter–Spring 2023

PHASE 5: PLAN LAUNCH

Launch the SDMP to Shape the Future of Tourism

VISION AND PILLARS

The community identified five pillars as the most significant in terms of building and maintaining a happy community and healthy economy. As the community begins adopting the framework and implementing the goals outlined, we may discover additional KPIs, partners, or outcomes that should be added. The SDMP is a living document that we can continue to add to and amend as Jackson Hole evolves. Engagement and feedback were key to the SDMP's design and will continue to drive future goals.

Community Vision

Teton County, Wyoming, is a leader in balancing the needs and aspirations of community members, businesses, and visitors by actively integrating the viability of the tourism economy with the regeneration of the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem and enhancement of quality of life.

01 Our Natural Environment

02 Quality of the Economy and Work

03 Quality of Life

04 Quality of Visitor Experience

05 Foundations of Success

01 OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Outcome 1

The wildlife, waters, wildlands, and ecological processes integral to what makes the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem globally significant are protected and continue to thrive. Climate change risk factors are monitored and reduced. Waste reduction, water quality, and other key environmental indicators and commitments are fully resourced.

Key Performance Indicators

- Establishment of a formal carbon-neutrality goal in Teton County and carbon emission reduction targets aligned with the Town of Jackson and neighboring public land agencies.

- Measurement scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions for the tourism industry and reduction in carbon emissions to meet short-term targets and carbon-neutrality goals.

- A working group within the Teton Climate Action Partnership consisting of tourism-climate stakeholders that meets regularly and secures funds for tourism-climate projects.

- Teton County zero-waste diversion goal by 2030.

- Preservation and enhancement of surface water and groundwater quality.

- Collaboration among all public, private, and civic stakeholders across jurisdictional boundaries to advance the shared goal of preserving and restoring the habitats, species, and ecological processes of the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem.

02 QUALITY OF THE ECONOMY AND WORK

Outcome 2

Responsible and sustainable growth management in tourism results in long-term prosperity for tourism and other local industries. Tourism businesses support a stable, diverse, and thriving workforce.

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of businesses that participate in sustainability/triple-bottom-line programs and pursue third-party certification.

- Percentage of tourism businesses experiencing service interruptions and other operational disruptions year over year.

- Employment statistics for the tourism industry.

- Employee retention rates.

- Employee turnover rates.

- Average wages for key occupations in the tourism industry.

- Number of sustainable workforce programs that support the needs of the tourism workforce.

03 QUALITY OF LIFE

Outcome 3

More mobility hubs, transit options, and pathways have led to reduced single occupancy vehicle traffic and congestion. Quality year-round jobs are readily available. Affordable and attainable workforce housing is available within Teton County to reduce commuting. Equitable access to health and human services. Harmony has increased among historically adversarial groups.

Key Performance Indicators

- Improvement in community sentiment toward tourism per resident and tourism stakeholder surveys.

- Improvement in community stakeholders with the balance of resident needs and visitor expectations.

- Minimum of 65% of workforce is able to live in Teton County.

- Per capita reduction in vehicle miles traveled in Jackson Hole: 525 million by 2024, ≤560 million by 2035.

- Increased START transit ridership: >1.8 million by 2024, ≥3.6 million by 2035.

- Increased active transportation mode share (e.g., bikes and boots): ≥18% by 2024, ≥20% by 2035.

04 QUALITY OF VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Outcome 4

Education campaigns encourage residents to lead by example and visitors to be more responsible and respectful. Destination management, collaboration, seasonal visitor dispersal, and product diversification ease strains and resulted in a warmer welcome for diverse visitors.

Key Performance Indicators

- Development and implementation of a collaborative visitor management strategy (focused beyond public lands).

- Mitigation of negative visitor impacts on local quality of life, quality of work, and quality of environment.

- Highly positive visitor satisfaction trends and addressing of persistent issues related to cost of destination and value for money.

- Seamless mobility and management of visitor flows through all jurisdictions of Teton County.

05 FOUNDATIONS OF SUCCESS

Outcome 5

A permanent tourism governance structure facilitates ongoing collaboration among greater Teton area stakeholders across all communities and lands, and it continuously relies on data to monitor tourism's effects as well as publicly reports findings. Confidence and trust in participatory planning makes it possible to integrate all community voices and contributions in the collaborative management of tourism and stewardship of all Teton County lands.

Key Performance Indicators

- Increased volume of educational communication impressions that reach the community (residents and tourism stakeholders).

- Certification as a globally recognized sustainable destination.

- Improved coordination and collaboration across all jurisdictions (public lands, Jackson, Teton County) and all communities (private sector, public sector, civic sector, and the wider community).

- Regular communication by the destination management structures communicate regularly with the private sector, public sector, civic sector, and the wider community to manage change and expectations about destination management outcomes.

- High level of buy-in for the SDMP from the private sector, public sector, civic sector, and the wider community.

SDMP COMMUNITY VALUES

These values were shaped by the Jackson Hole community and validated by your peers during community workshops throughout 2022. They are integral to the plan and its implementation, and are embedded in all elements of the SDMP.

01

Environmental and Economic Stewardship

We recognize that our economic future depends on the protection of our natural environment—wildlife, waters, wildlands, and ecological processes—and believe that environmental and economic sustainability go hand-in-hand.

02

Managed Growth

We understand that seasonal visitation management is a key to sustainability and quality of life of our communities.

03

Quality of Life for All

We know that for Teton County to be sustainable, it must address community infrastructure, housing, and transportation challenges.

05

Education and Engagement

We know that communication of our history, challenges, values, and goals is critical to shaping visitor and resident attitudes and behaviors.

04

Accessibility and Inclusion

We welcome everyone who shares our respect and admiration for Teton County.

06

Collaboration and Harmony

We understand that sustainability begins with community agreement on a plan for the future.
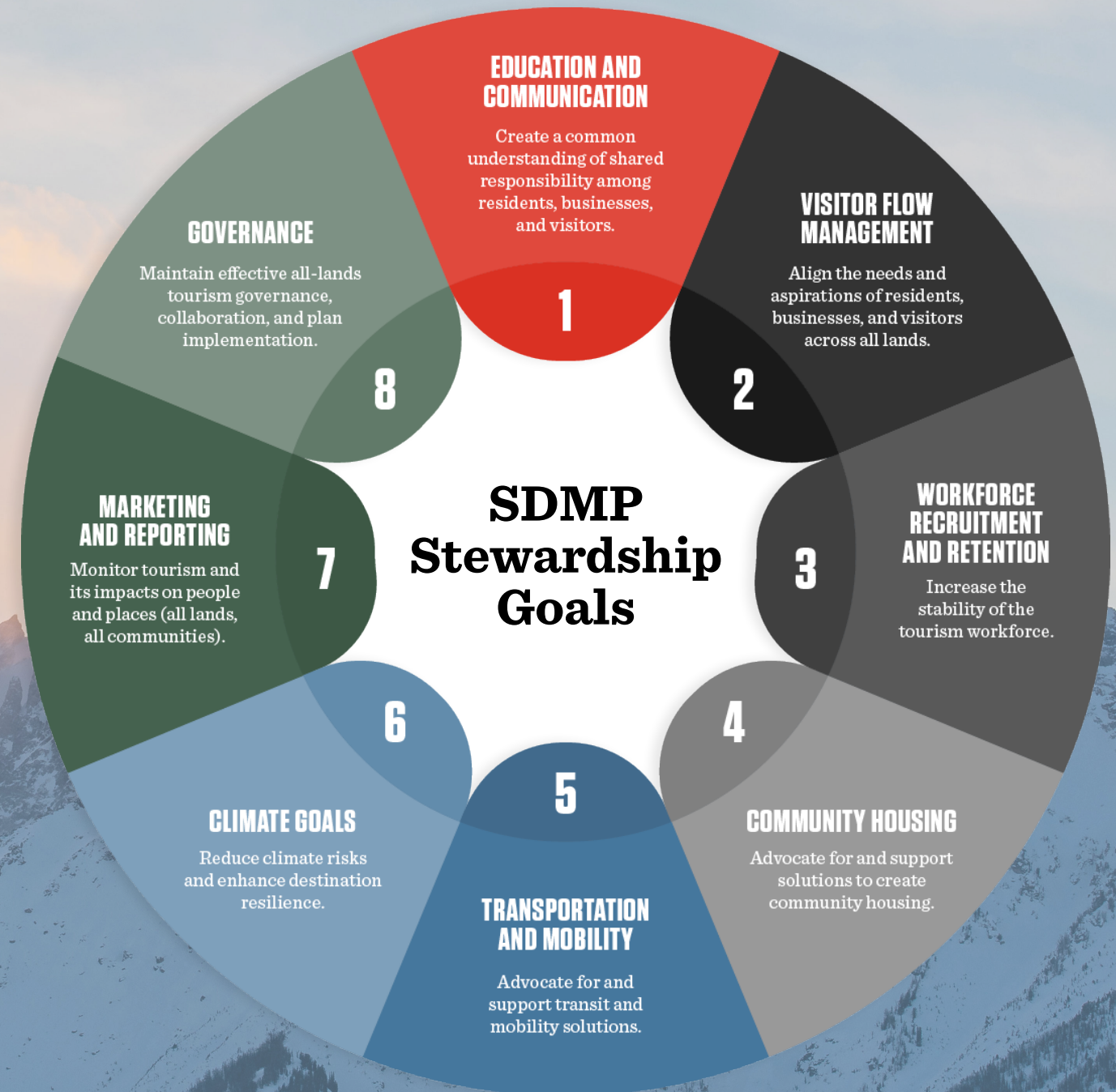
STEWARDSHIP GOALS

The SDMP is a community plan, and its successful implementation requires involvement and leadership by all stakeholder groups—the public sector (town, county, state), businesses, public land managers, the civic sector, and community members.

Together, Teton County stakeholders have the opportunity to rethink how the visitor economy works and to deliver social, cultural, economic, and environmental benefits through tourism while providing exceptional visitor experiences.

The SDMP framework includes a five-year implementation schedule for strategic initiatives and a more detailed work plan of priority actions. Collective action is the backbone of the SDMP, and a phased approach to implementation is outlined beginning on page 60 of the plan.

SDMP Stewardship Goals

1 — EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION
Create a common understanding of shared responsibility among residents, businesses, and visitors.

2 — VISITOR FLOW MANAGEMENT
Align the needs and aspirations of residents, businesses, and visitors across all lands.

3 — WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION
Increase the stability of the tourism workforce.

4 — COMMUNITY HOUSING
Advocate for and support solutions to create community housing.

5 — TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY
Advocate for and support transit and mobility solutions.

6 — CLIMATE GOALS
Reduce climate risks and enhance destination resilience.

7 — MARKETING AND REPORTING
Monitor tourism and its impacts on people and places (all lands, all communities).

8 — GOVERNANCE
Maintain effective all-lands tourism governance, collaboration, and plan implementation.

SUPPORTING INITIATIVES

1: Education and Communication

Create a common understanding of shared responsibility among residents, businesses, and visitors.

- Maintain community programs in tourism.
- Expand existing programs that promote sustainable operating practices.
- Devise a visitor education strategy that influences responsive behavior at the destination.

2: Visitor Flow Management

Align the needs and aspirations of residents, businesses, and visitors across all lands.

- Establish a visitor management action team.
- Establish community-defined acceptable thresholds for change.
- Develop a collaborative visitor management strategy to manage spaces and mitigate impact across all lands.

3: Workforce Recruitment and Retention

Increase the stability of the tourism workforce.

- Build a robust and diverse tourism workforce pipeline.
- Improve recruitment and retention of the workforce.
- Prioritize workforce development.

4: Community Housing

Advocate for and support solutions to create community housing.

- Advocate for funds to develop workforce housing.
- Advocate for and expand incentives and resources to allocate land and repurpose infrastructure for housing.
- Incentivize employers to provide seasonal and year-round housing.

5: Transportation and Mobility

Advocate for and support transit and mobility solutions.

- Support expansion of affordable public transit around mobility hubs.
- Support development of transit planning applications (mobility app) and broader integration with advanced trip planning.
- Support evaluation and potential resourcing of public transit to the airport, Grand Teton National Park, and key attractions.

6: Climate Goals

Reduce climate risks and enhance destination resilience.

- Demonstrate Teton County's leadership in reducing tourism's carbon footprint.
- Establish science-based reduction targets for the tourism economy aligned with net-zero climate goals.
- Educate visitors and residents about carbon emissions and create actionable opportunities to collectively reduce their carbon footprint.
- Guide, support, and incentivize tourism businesses to reduce their carbon footprint.

7: Marketing and Reporting

Monitor tourism and its impacts on people and places (all lands, all communities).

- Establish an accessible and regularly updated destination data bank.
- Publish an annual indicator report.

8: Governance

Maintain effective all-lands tourism governance, collaboration, and plan implementation.

- Establish an interim destination stewardship council to guide SDMP implementation in the near term.
- Establish a permanent governance structure for destination management and SDMP implementation.
- Raise awareness and understanding of the plan among all key stakeholder groups.

IMPLEMENTATION AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

The core purpose of the SDMP is to recognize and realize the full value of tourism by ensuring that tourism is a positive force for people, nature, and the economy. The ultimate aim is to create lasting, net-positive impacts. It is designed as a framework that will evolve over time to provide strategies and measure success to guide tourism management and its impacts on our community.

However, the stewardship of all lands requires an all-hands approach. Page 61 of the SDMP outlines 18 implementation priorities alongside the key implementation organization for year 1. Appendix A, beginning on page 64, presents year 2 and year 3 priority actions.

The JHTTB is committed to utilizing the SDMP as a strategic framework from which to guide the actions and decision-making surrounding tourism marketing and management into the future. A destination stewardship council will be formed by the end of Q1 2023 to continue the momentum behind SDMP implementation.

The JHTTB may be in a position to fund projects, events, or initiatives that fall within the Wyoming Statutes, which determine what can and cannot be funded through the lodging tax. However, full implementation and full funding of initiatives will require cross-sectional and collaborative approaches and leadership spearheaded by many of the partners suggested in the framework of the SDMP.

The JHTTB believes that Teton County, WY can balance the needs and aspirations of its community members, businesses, and visitors while both protecting and celebrating its natural and cultural riches.

FOR MORE DETAILS

View the full SDMP at visitjacksonhole.com/sdmp.

DISCOVER MORE »