

The Town Tourism Committee recently held a strategic planning retreat to review progress of goals set in 2009 and determine goals for the next 3 years.

The TTC began by reviewing and reaffirming the mission statement established in 2009:

The mission of the Town Tourism Committee is to raise awareness of Pagosa Springs as a vacation destination and improve visitor experience. The result is a solid, growing tourism industry that generates economic prosperity for the residents of Pagosa Springs.

The TTC also reviewed some of the goals and achievements set during the strategic planning retreat in February 2009:

- *Implement a Central Reservation System*

The TTC worked with Gateway Reservations, of Durango, Colorado from the spring of 2009 until the spring 2012. In June 2012, the TTC launched a new solution, Book Direct by Jack Rabbit Systems, in partnership with the Lodging Association. Currently, the Reservation System has 24 properties & 3 activities represented. Over 11,500 direct referrals have been sent to lodging properties since launch, via heavy promotion on website, social media and mobile.

- *Top 3 page ranking on major search engines:*

To help reach this goal, www.visitpagosasprings.com was redesigned and relaunched in 2010. The site appears in the top 3 on page 1 with most tourism-related search terms for Pagosa. Additionally, the website is performing very well. In 2012, www.visitpagosasprings.com received 1,537,813 page views, with 132,626 unique visitors, an average of 4:26 minutes spent on website per visit, 7.82 pages viewed per site visit and a bounce rate of only 19.64%.

- *Implement Wayfinding plan of the Town*

In a partnership with the Town, the TTC began implementing the signage plan in 2009. Results to date include: two Vehicular Directional Signs (@ Hot Springs and @ Pagosa Blvd); pedestrian directional sign at river overlook, enhanced river overlook, new banners throughout downtown, upgraded 13 trails / information signs. In 2013, the group plans to install enhanced entrance signs and develop a permanent structure at the River Overlook.

- *Increase the quality and quantity of our special events*

The TTC has worked closely with event organizers to promote and fund area events. Funding from TTC has allowed event organizers to focus on finding their niche audience, while the TTC promotes event to our general tourism audience.

- *Enhance the experience of visitors*

The TTC has helped the community accomplish this goal, in part, through efforts of the Wayfinding & Signage Subcommittee, improved marketing and online visitor information, continued event promotion and development, outdoor Tourism Ambassador Program and providing ongoing funds for Fish Stocking efforts. The TTC is extremely appreciative of groups like Skaters for Concrete Coalition and the Pagosa Disc Golf Association for their ongoing efforts to bring additional recreational activities to the community.

Finally, after review and discussion, the TTC defined its goals for the next 3 years as the following:

- TTC (Overall)
 - Increase lodging tax collections by 15 to 20%, with an overall 50% annual occupancy rate for the community (since 2009, lodging tax collections in Town have increased 30%)
 - Work to have 2 mile stretch of San Juan River through downtown designated catch and release
 - Be the catalyst to increase parking in downtown
- Events:
 - Utilize Lewis Street as event venue and add needed infrastructure (electrical, parking, etc)
 - Develop robust and more complete Annual Event Calendar
 - Recruit outside event organizers to host events in Pagosa
 - Work with Property Owners for additional locations for events in Uptown (PLPOA, golf course)
- Fulfillment:
 - Move towards electronic delivery of visitor information
 - Develop plan to incorporate technology for delivery of visitor information throughout town (kiosks, hotel lobby, etc)
- Marketing:
 - Increase direct referrals to lodging partners through central reservation system
 - Double page views on website
 - Increase facebook fan base (to at least 10,000 fans) while maintaining strong page interaction (10-20% of fan base)
 - www.visitpagosasprings.com placed in top 2 on page 1 of organic search results
 - Increase Social Media Presence
- Visitor Center
 - Create dynamic visitor center
 - Develop plan for new visitor center (building)
- Wayfinding & Signage
 - Continue to implement Signage Plan
 - Work with other groups to create a unified vision to beautify Pagosa Springs

The Town Tourism Committee is an advisory committee to the Town Council and is comprised of 11 volunteer board members and 1 paid staff member. The TTC's bylaws, overview of subcommittees and much more information can be found online at www.townofpagosasprings.com. Visitor information can be found at www.visitpagosasprings.com.

If you have any questions, ideas, concerns or you are interested in getting involved, please give Jennifer Green, TTC Director, a call at 970-903-9728 or email us at sales@visitpagosasprings.com.