

# TOURISM

Prior to COVID-19 tourism generated over \$400 million dollars a year in economic impact to our Valley and provided over 5,000 jobs in our county. Since 2013, the Chamber has been charged with elevating our Valley's tourism brand and the overall visitor experience. During this time, the Chamber emphasized the creation of an inclusive approach to tourism industry development by focusing on brand redevelopment, regional partnerships, toolkit development, public relations, local education/outreach, and crisis communication. Success has come from the support of many partners including government agencies, tourism industry leaders, business leader, neighbor communities and private citizens. Until the COVID-19 outbreak in March 2020, the Chamber, with their knowledge, guidance, and investment had been able to increase hotel occupancy year over year, average daily rate year over year, and revenue per room

rate year over year; and, perhaps more importantly, elevate the perception of the industry's value to our local, regional, and state economy.

Regionally tourism is our 4th largest industry segment and while our economy is not tourism dependent, it is enhanced with the additional revenues collected. Local tourism drivers including Ohme Gardens, Town Toyota Center, the Convention Center and other attractions and events such as the Fourth of July Celebration, local fairs and concerts that have been cancelled have experienced financial losses that not only impact their own businesses but impact the local economy significantly. Jobs lost in hotels and restaurants alone amounted to over 1224 people and continues to climb.

## Guiding Principles

- » The Chamber supports uniting tourism leaders and the community around strategies that address the changing climate of regional tourism.
- » The Chamber supports a wholistic lodging portfolio for travelers that effectively addresses the opportunities and challenges that come from emerging accommodation options (e.g. additional hotels, VRBOs, and AirBnBs).
- » The Chamber supports activities that elevate shoulder season activities, respond to traveler trends, and properly prepare for the evolving use of technology in travel.
- » The Chamber supports meaningful growth in the tourism industry that compliments the quality of life in our valley and earns our community the reputation of being a respected, sought after, and influential tourism partner.
- » The Chamber supports a values-based tourism approach that stewards the physical and natural assets of the region for generations to come.