



Oregon Coastal Zone Management Association

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FINAL REPORT OF BRANDING WORKSHOP

“The Oregon Coast: The Next Great Silicon Valley Address” “The Oregon Coast: Now in High Definition”

On May 29, 2009 in Newport, OCZMA held a “Branding Workshop” to explore the potential of marketing or branding the Oregon Coast as an ideal place for “lifestyle entrepreneurs” or “knowledge workers.” It’s an amazing opportunity made possible by the Internet.

The workshop was a tremendous success. A number of knowledgeable people from up and down the Oregon Coast attended. It was a great blend of folks—people skilled in tourism promotion and business development professionals.

The Oregon Business Development Department (OBDD), through the Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC), University of Oregon, and, the Lincoln County Economic Development Alliance (LCEDA) helped fund the workshop. That enabled us to bring two leading branding experts to the workshop—Kathy Long Holland and John Irwin.

The workshop began with brief presentations about “branding”—what branding is, what makes a successful branding program. We learned about the success the Gorge Technology Alliance (GTA) is having attracting and nurturing “lifestyle entrepreneurs” to the Columbia River Gorge.

Todd Davidson from Travel Oregon gave a passionate speech about *the* next chapter in tourism promotion. Todd explained how we *can and must* leverage the synergies of tourism promotion and business development. Because, after all, “Today’s tourist is tomorrow’s entrepreneur.”

Most of the workshop was spent brainstorming. No punches were pulled. Because the dialogue was outstanding I prepared a near verbatim transcript. Enclosed is an Executive Summary with “Key Findings” and “Next Steps” hitting the highlights.

But, if you care about economic development and/or tourism, *please*, consider reading the entire transcript. Share it with others in your community. You’ll be glad you did.

At the end of the workshop there was a clear consensus to move forward—on a branding/marketing program to attract a modest number of talented people to the Oregon Coast.

The program under development *won’t* re-invent the wheel. We want to build upon *existing* local tourism and business development efforts. We should be able to leverage new resources and reinforce *your* local promotional and branding programs.

We need your feedback. Please let us know what you think.

And, we are looking for a few coastal communities that would work with us to spearhead a pilot project in the Silicon Valley. Once people signal an interest in coming here, we need people at the local level from outside the region ready to work with those folks.

Let's be ambitious. Let's try to have a pilot project up and running in the San Francisco Bay Area by the fall of 2010!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Onno Husing', with a stylized, sweeping flourish at the end.

Onno Husing, Director
OREGON COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION