

The Poetry & Politics of Place

# Civic Tourism, Community Development & The Creative Economy

Driving Michigan's  
Economic Engine

December 7, 2006  
Lansing, Michigan

Dan Shilling  
dan@sharlot.org  
www.civictourism.org



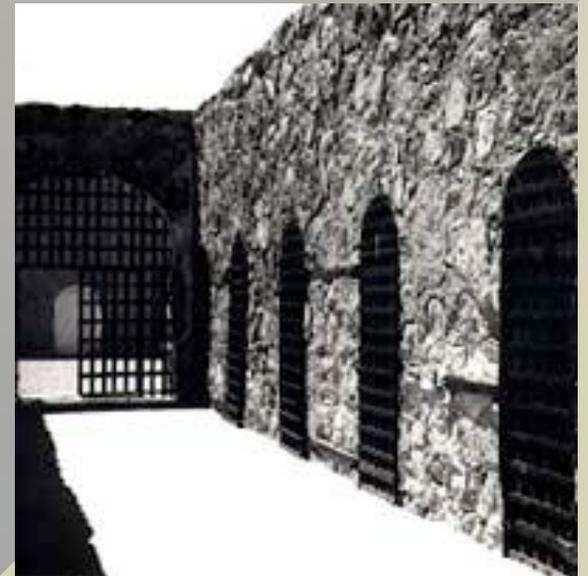
*“The embrace of tourism triggers a contest for the soul of a place.”* Hal Rothman

*Extension of... Supplement to... Tool for...*

# Alternative Tourism

- Adventure Tourism
- Agritourism
- Cultural Tourism
- Ecotourism *1983*
- Ethnic Tourism
- Literary Tourism
- Green Tourism
- Heritage Tourism
- Dark Tourism
- Geotourism
- Urban Tourism
- Volunteer Tourism
- Farm Tourism
- Life-Seeing Tourism

Yuma Territorial Prison: Prisons, cemeteries, concentration camps, battlefields, and other sites identified with human suffering and death are sometimes classified as “Dark Tourism.”



*Extension of... Supplement to... Tool for...*

# Alternative Tourism

- A
- A
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- E
- E

## **“POETRY OF PLACE”**

**Product: Natures, Cultures, Buildings**

## **“POLITICS OF PLACE”**

**Process: How? Who? Why?**

**“A society to match our scenery.”**

*process*

*product*

Wallace Stegner

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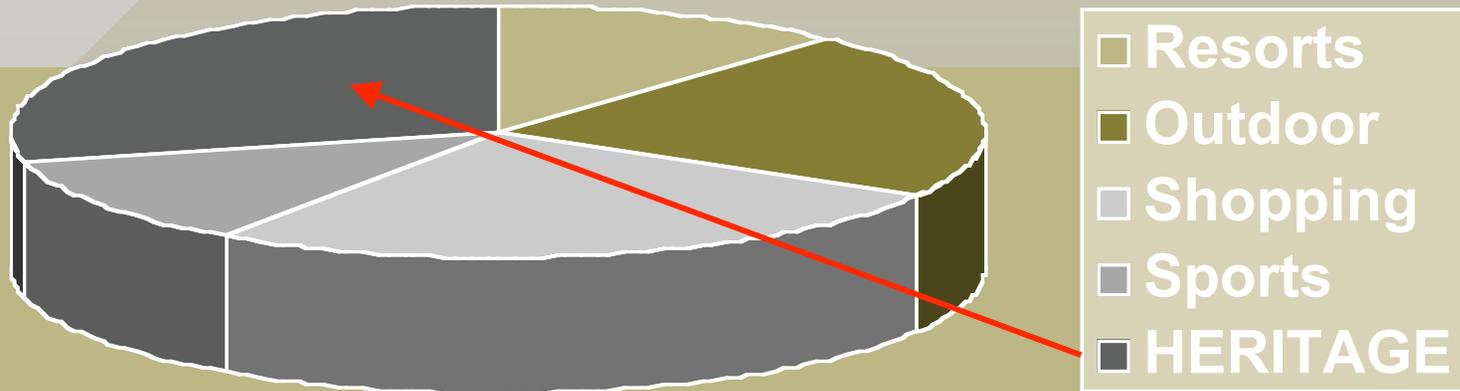
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Why Should We Care?

# Cultural Heritage One of the Fastest Growing Segments



- WTO estimates 37% of travelers fall into “Heritage” category, growing by 15% each year.
- Packaging your town, exploiting your history, selling your environment, commodifying your culture – in the process sometimes changing the “story.”

*“Destination communities must not be sanguine about the effects of tourism.”* Fred Bosselman

# CreativeClass.org

HOME OF THE RICHARD FLORIDA CREATIVITY GROUP



**Newsweek**



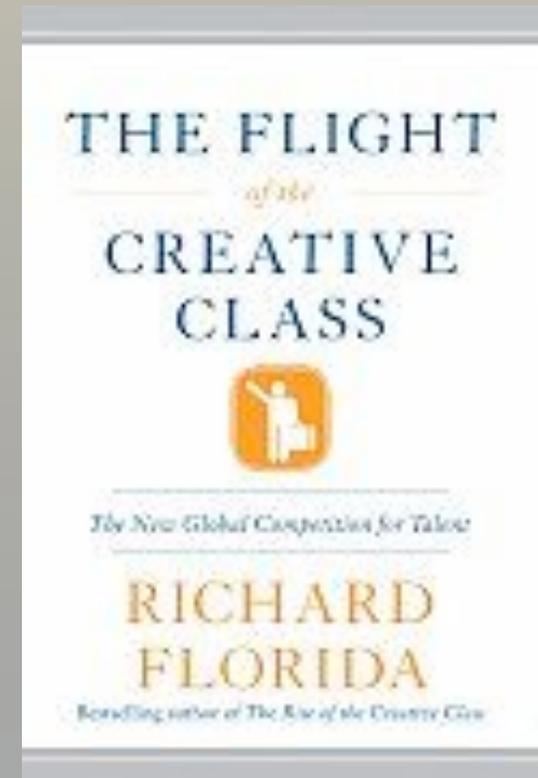
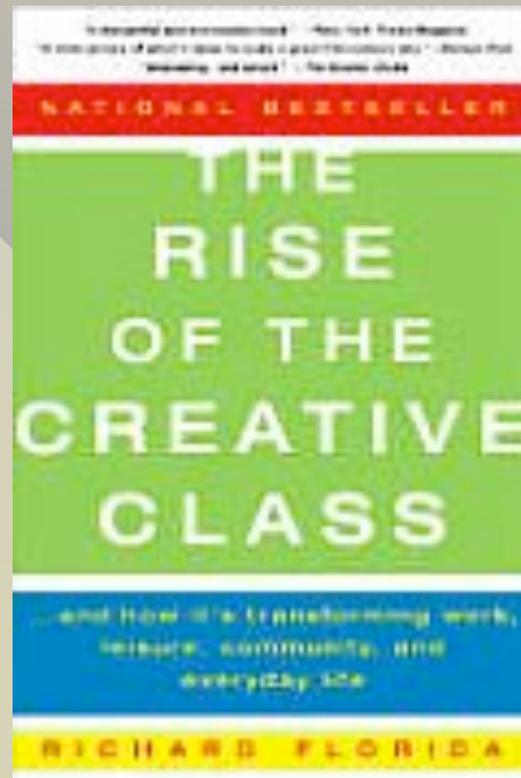
## the **new megalopolis**

Our focus on countries is wrong. Growth and innovation come from **new urban corridors.**

 **Read on.**

the  
**creativity** exchange

The official **blog** of the Richard Florida Creativity Group



# Where's That Win-Win?

## Terms Hijacked

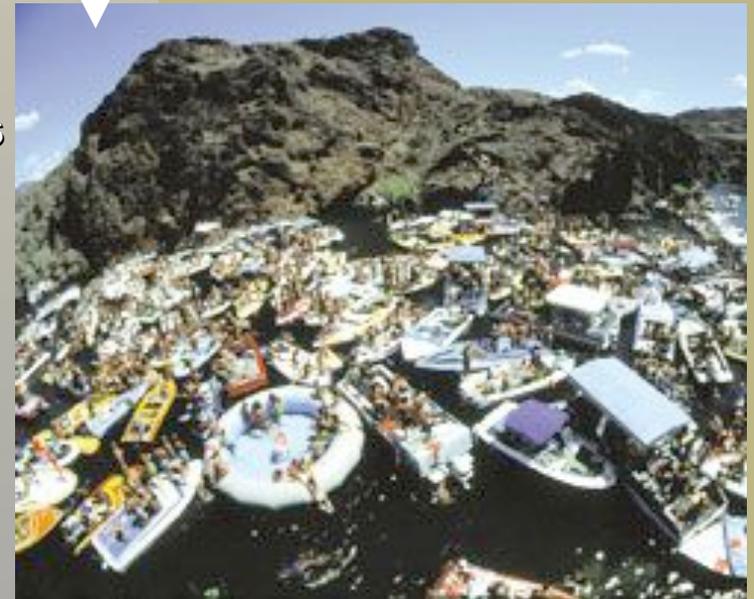
- “Eco” that destroys resources  
(*Greenwashing*)
- “Heritage” that reinforces stereotypes  
(*Human Zoos*)
- “Preservation” that creates cartoon streets  
(*Boutique Towns: “Façadomy”*)

## Misplaced Priorities

- “more” at the expense of “better”
- “use” at the expense of “preservation”
- “superficial” at the expense of “authentic”

## Show Me the Money!

- “marketing” at the expense of “product”
- “surface” at the expense of “substance”



Who labels, monitors,  
and accredits the use of  
“eco” and other terms?

Who is the industry  
responsible to?

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Tourism: Aligned with GDP-driven growth industry, not place.  
(What department houses your tourism office?)



Growth Can Overwhelm

- visitor experience
- tourism product
  - community
  - economy

(“uneconomic development”)

# Each With Its Own

# Purposes and Methods

◆ **Business**  
Business  
Corporate  
Success: More  
Facilitates Ex  
Marketing. . . . .  
Vocabulary: "Entertainment" . . . . .

**Industry**  
Industry  
Product Development  
Vocabulary: "Place"  
More Quantity  
Experience

***“The tourism industry is a business,  
and as far as the industry is  
concerned, culture is not.”***

**Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett**

Rather than trying to reach **“compromise”** can we respect each sector’s values and operate along parallel, not competing, tracks toward the same end?

# Each With Its Own Purposes, Values & Methods

## ◆ Tourism Industry

Business / Private . . . . .  
 Commercial Goal . . . . .  
 Customer-centered (use) . . . . .  
 Funded by Exchange . . . . .  
 Mass Market . . . . .  
 Fast, Assembly Line . . . . .  
 Standardization . . . . .  
 Corporate, Distant Management . . . . .  
 Success: More, More, More! . . . . .  
 Facilitates Experience . . . . .  
 Marketing. . . . .  
 Vocabulary: "Destination" . . . . .

## ◆ Place Community

Usually Nonprofit / Public  
 Educational Goal, "Sacred"  
 Product-centered (conserve)  
 Largely Donations, Grants  
 Individualistic  
 Slower, Reflection  
 Differentiation  
 Local Oversight  
 Success: Quality Before Quantity  
 Provides Experience  
 Product Development  
 Vocabulary: "Place"

Rather than trying to reach **"compromise"** can we respect each sector's values and operate along parallel, not competing, tracks toward the same end?

Each

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## BRIDGING DIFFERENCE

“Many NGOs recognize that they cannot ignore the market if they want to find and deliver solutions to complex environmental and social problems.

These organizations may believe that the private sector and the market cause many of those very same problems, but a number of them realize that for that very reason these institutions are part of the solution.”

*Walking the Talk: The Business Case for Sustainable Development*

Development  
Vocabulary: “Place”

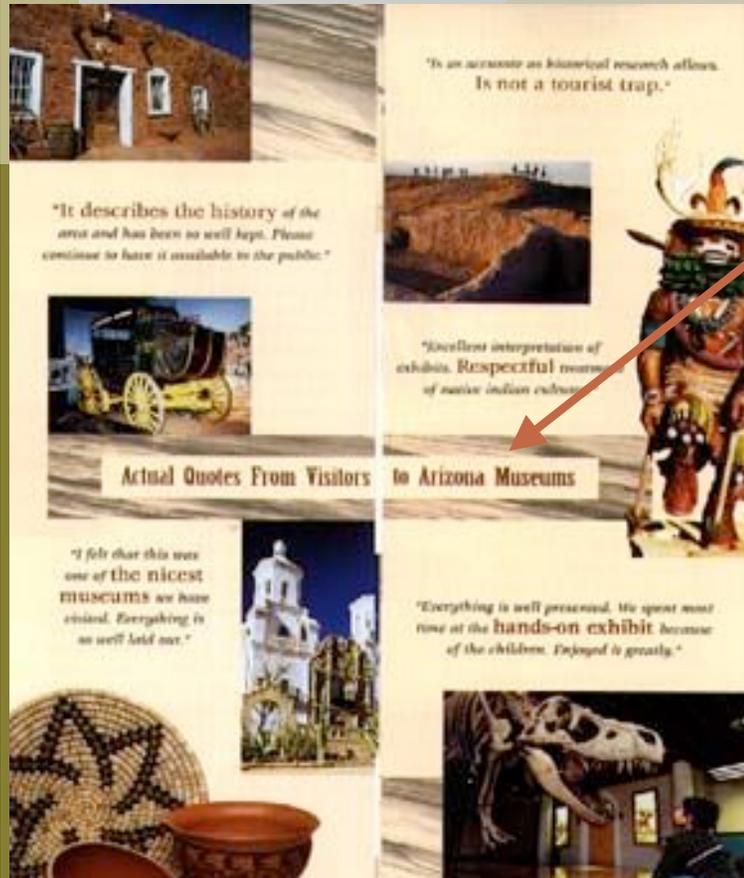
S

ity

Quantity

Rather than trying to “promise” can we respect each sector’s values and operate along parallel, not competing, tracks toward the same end?

# Partnership Tactics



Museum Association of  
Arizona hotel brochure

- Serve on Boards
- Museums: Join the Chamber  
Tourism: Become a “Friend”
- Attend Conferences
- Provide Information, Artifacts
- Joint Projects: Try a Mixer
- Heritage Trainings for Tourism  
Staff
- Assist with Lobbying

**A TELL-TALE SIGN:** When you arrive in a community, ask the cabbie, hotel clerk, & waiter where the museums are.

*“Cultural tourism can survive only if its asset base is managed in a sustainable manner, and sustainability can be achieved only if tourism and cultural heritage management work in partnership.”*  
McKercher & du Cross

# FRAGMENTATION!

## ◆ Tourism Industry

- Travel Agents, Websites
- Tour Operators, Guides
- Planes, Trains, Buses (Big Oil)
- **Hotels, Motels, B&Bs**
- Marketing, PR Firms
- Travel Magazines, Media
- RVs, Cruises, Car Rental
- Gift Shops, Restaurants
- CVB, Chamber, DMO, State
- National / International Assns.
- Oh, yes: Attractions

## ◆ Place Community

- **Museums** (local / state / federal)
- Land & Parks (local / state / federal)
- Archaeological Sites, “Ruins”
- Events (festivals, fairs, folk arts)
- Churches, Missions, Temples
- Monuments, Shrines, Historic Markers
- Historic Homes, Famous Buildings
- Historic Districts (city / private)
- Eco Attractions (passive / active)
- Farms, Ranches
- Themed Places: Williamsburg, etc.

LARGE & SMALL, PRIVATE & PUBLIC, NO SINGLE VOICE  
Good partnership projects but ... episodic, partial, project-oriented.  
Funding and support programs scattered, inflexible, threatened.

## Civic Tourism: Four Principles

# Tourism as a *Means* to Community Development, Not an *End* in Itself



*“Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow mindedness.”*

Mark Twain

1. Integrate the Story
2. Invest in the Product
3. Reframe the Purpose
4. Connect to the Public



Example: Prescott's Sharlot Hall Museum

# 1. Integrate the Story



*1877 Bashford House: Moved  
to Museum Grounds in 1974*

1. Lends artifacts/photographs
  - restaurants, hotels, shops
  - other cultural institutions
2. Partnered on historic signage throughout Prescott
3. Helps position the entire town as a heritage destination
  - generates support for museum
4. Museum features exhibits about the natural environment
  - part of Prescott's "story"
  - part of "place-making"
5. Serves many organizations

**Museums, Land-use Agencies, Historic Preservation Groups, Heritage Sites  
BE AT THE TABLE.**

1. Integrate the Story

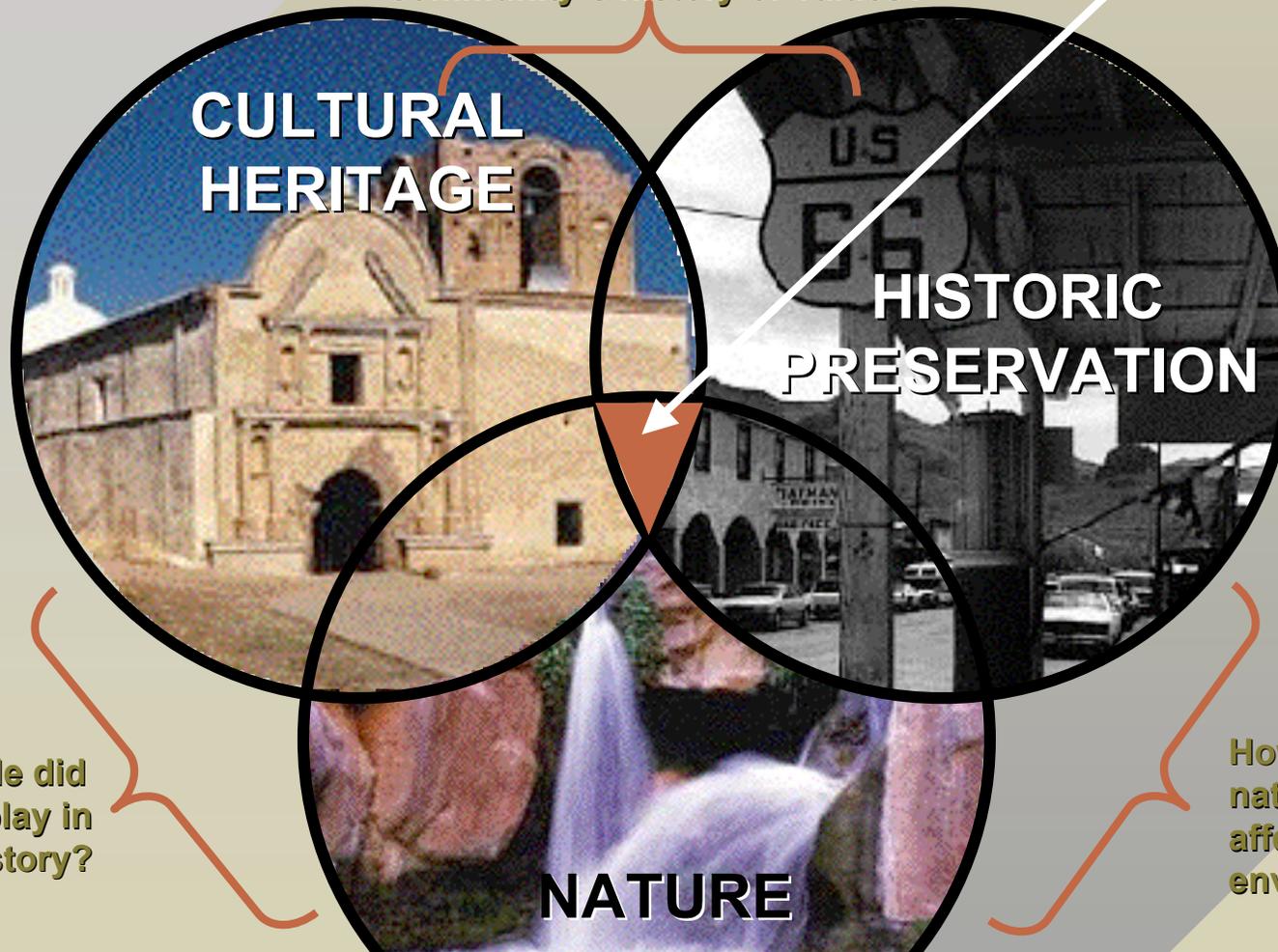
# Place: The Story of Cultural, Natural, Built Environments



*The Creative Economy / Idea Economy: “Place is becoming the central organizing unit of our economy and society.” Richard Florida*

# Integrated Stories = “Place”

What does the streetscape reveal about a community’s history or values?



*“The evolution of our built environment, and the ways in which we modify and interact with the natural environment, are themselves a manifestation of our society values.”* Tim Beatley & Kristy Manning

**H**eritage attractions of the future will be **mediators of experience**, encouraging postmodern tourists to construct their own sense of history and place, and to create their individual journeys of self-discovery.

— Szilivia Gyimióthy & Nick Johns

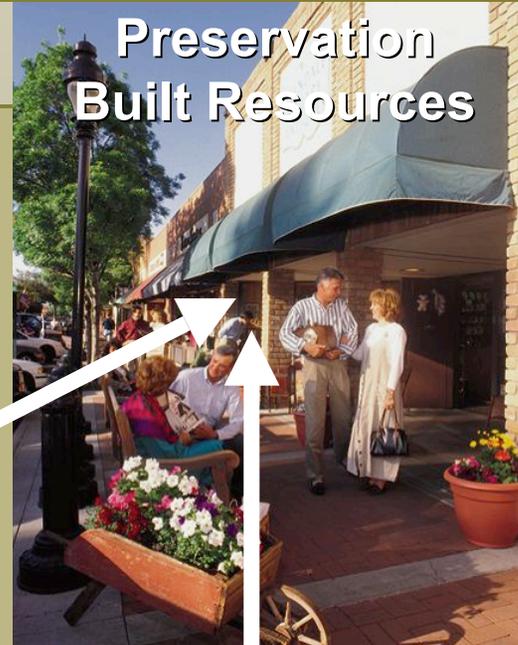
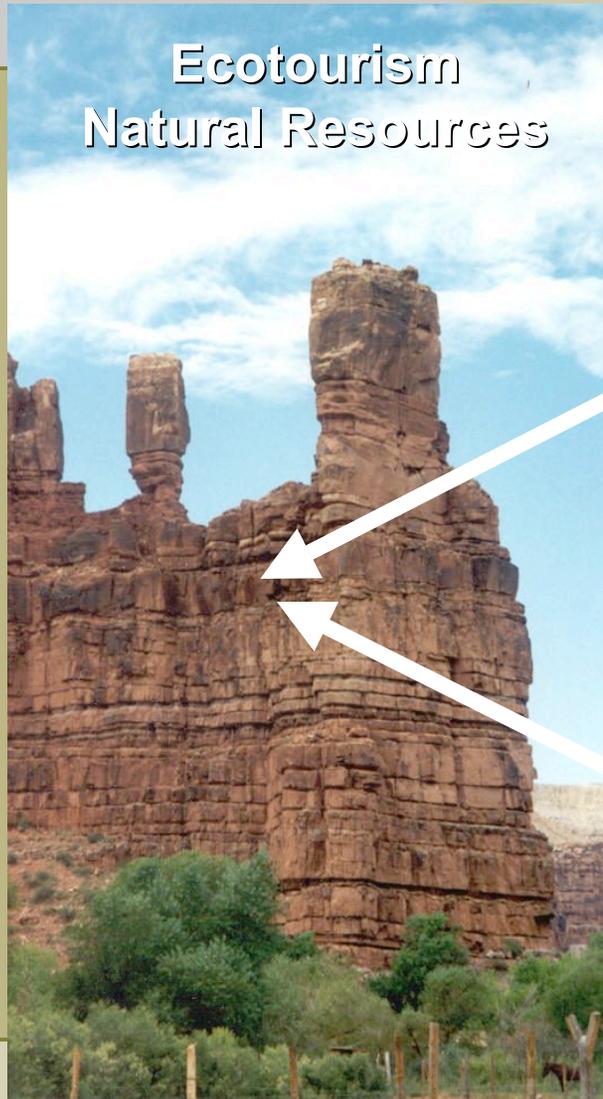


**Montezuma Castle National Monument.** What *really* happened here? We don't know the full story. That's part of the allure, part of the "experience of place":

- What would I have done if . . . ?
- How did they . . . ?
- Will the same thing happen to us?
- Beyond information, it's **imagination**.

*"The best interpretation engages the visitor both intellectually and emotionally, and is personal, relevant, and meaningful."* Sam Ham & Betty Weiler

# “Experience” not “Projects”



## PLACE

Toward an integrated experience of the same place-based “Story” “Brand” “Identity”

The landmark 1987 “Brundtland Report” (*Our Common Future*) on sustainable development urged: “overcome sectoral fragmentation.”

# “Experience” not “Projects”

Ecotourism  
Natural Resources

Preservation  
Built Resources

# PLACE

**“Think like a mountain.”** Aldo Leopold

**“Think like Aldo Leopold thinking about your community.”** Me

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identity”

Fort Verde  
State Historic Park

The landmark 1987 “Brundtland Report” (*Our Common Future*) on sustainable development urged: “overcome sectoral fragmentation.”

# Best Practice

## In Detail



When **La Ruta de Sonora**, an ecotourism organization representing destinations in southwestern Arizona and northwestern Sonora, Mexico, decided to create a product to attract visitors, the organization had significant challenges. Distances were long, cultures disparate, and experiences ran the gamut from near wilderness to the nightlife in Puerto Peñasco.

The group decided to divide the landscape into three major itineraries. **The Desert Experience** focuses on Organ Pipe National Monument and the Pinacates Biosphere Reserve. **The Colorado River Delta (or Sea) Experience** includes a trip to La Cienega, the Santa Clara Field Station, and Yuma's desalination plant. **The Heritage Tour** takes guests to a petroglyph field in Mexico and through several missions built by Father Kino.

Every itinerary offers unique experiences that introduce visitors to the people of the region ("life seeing" tourism). La Ruta shows its guests how the natural environment, cultures, and historic built structures add up to a "sense of place."

**"Place" creates *meaning* and connects to visitors in a personal, emotional, even spiritual, way. ("Volunteer Tourism": Habitat for Humanity)**

Example: Connecticut Heritage Development Fund

## 2. Invest in the Product



www.ctheritage.org

Connecticut's Heritage Gateway

A Program of The Connecticut Humanities Council

Visit CT Culture

Home

### Grants for heritage tourism product development

- technical assistance
- planning
- Implementation
- monitoring and reports (economic impact studies)
- staff and operations
- professional development

### Mandates partnerships between culture and tourism

- heritage sector
- chamber, CVB, city department
- business community

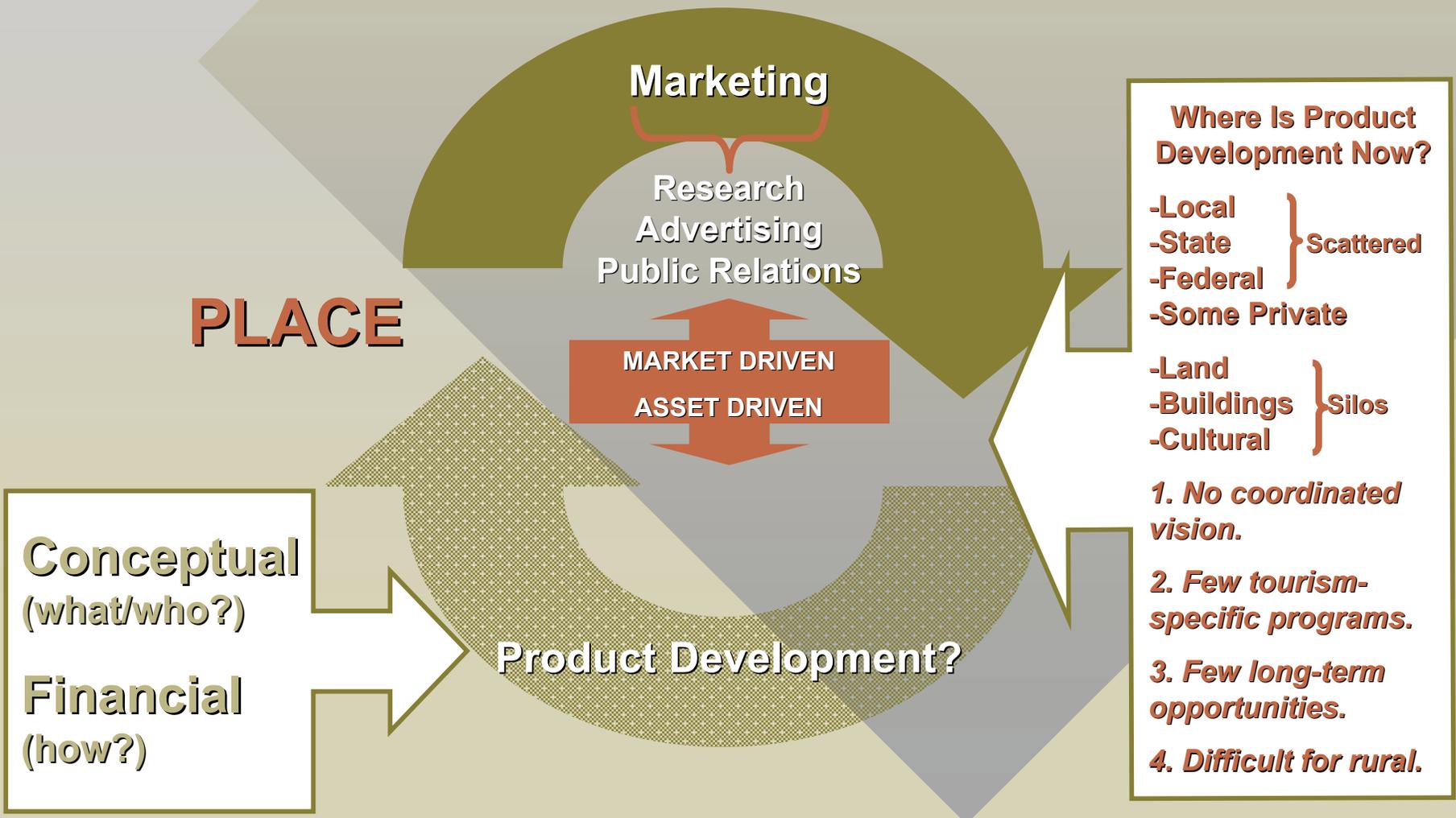
*Questions: Who distributes money? Who awards grants?*

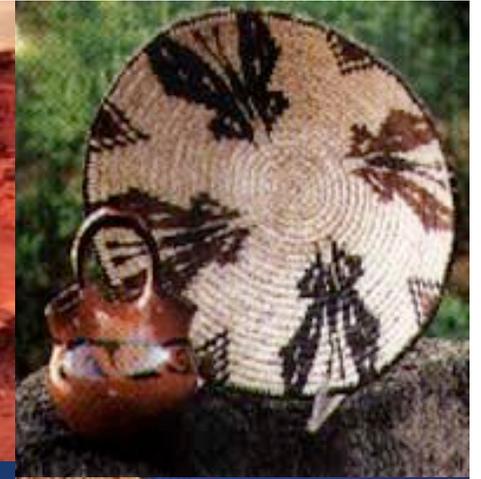
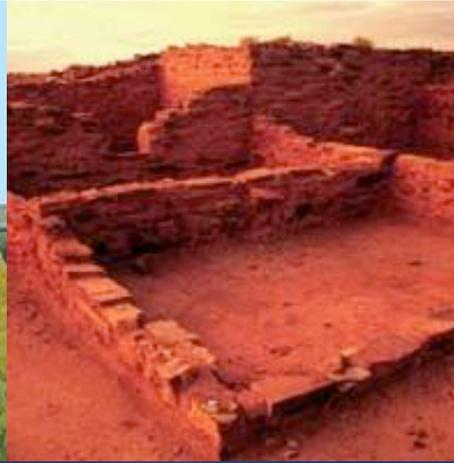
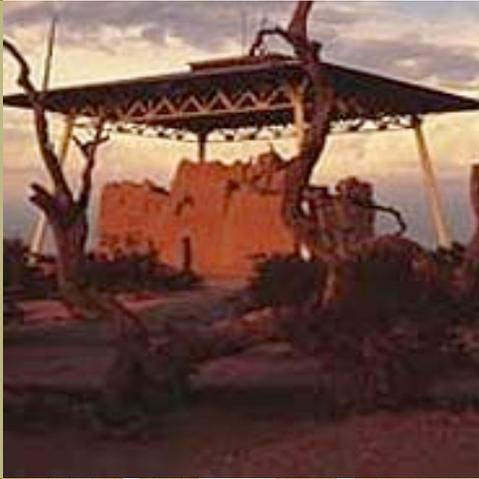


2. Invest in the Product

# COMPLETE THE CYCLE

## The Missing Link: Product Development



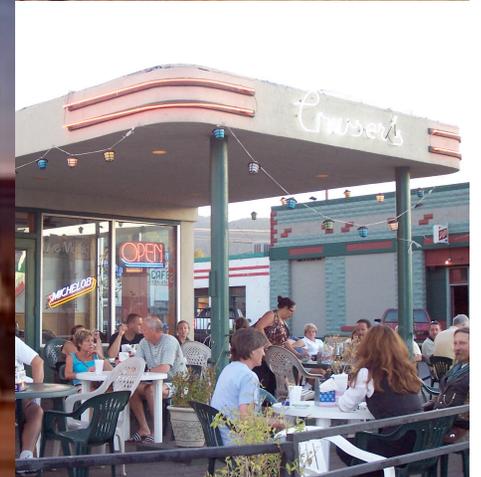
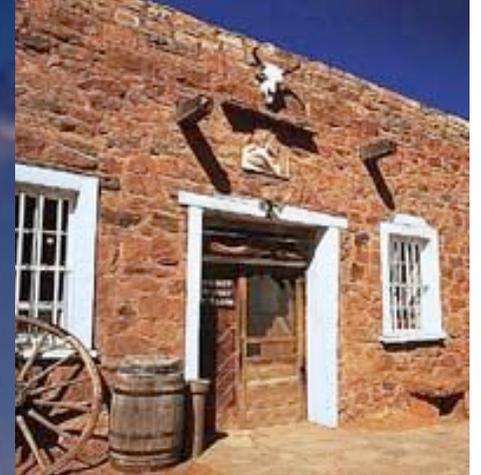


***“Your task is not to plan but to reveal.”***

Benton MacKaye

**Reveal The Stories  
That Inspire Pride**

Unique  
Sustaining  
Diverse



# Research & Development for Place

## Invest in Product

### Conceptual

*Place-making is tough work*

- *competing agendas*
- *multiple interpretations*
- *quantity & quality*
- *carrying capacity*
  - *exploitation*
  - *authenticity*

### Financial

*Challenge for nonprofit niches*

- *no direct tourism funds*
- *fragmented programs*
  - *episodic, uncertain*
  - *political, regional*



# Research & Development for Place

Invest in  
Produ

## Concept

Place-making  
tough work

- competing agencies
- multiple interpretations
- quantity & quality
- carrying capacity
  - exploitation
  - authenticity

## Finance

Challenge  
nonprofit model

- no direct tourism
- fragmented projects
  - episodic, uncertain
  - political, regional

## \* FOOTNOTE

A model for sustainable tourism accreditation and monitoring:

The “New Key to Costa Rica” by Anne Becher and Jane Segleau is an impartial assessment of nature tour destinations, providing guidelines and industry benchmarks for evaluating attractions and lodgings.

## 2. Invest in the Product



### Monitoring Program

- Phillip Island Nature Park (Australia)
- Product development committee: Establishes design and benchmarks
- Partnership between Park, tourism industry, researchers, public

**Questions:** *How to agree on benchmarks? Who monitors?*



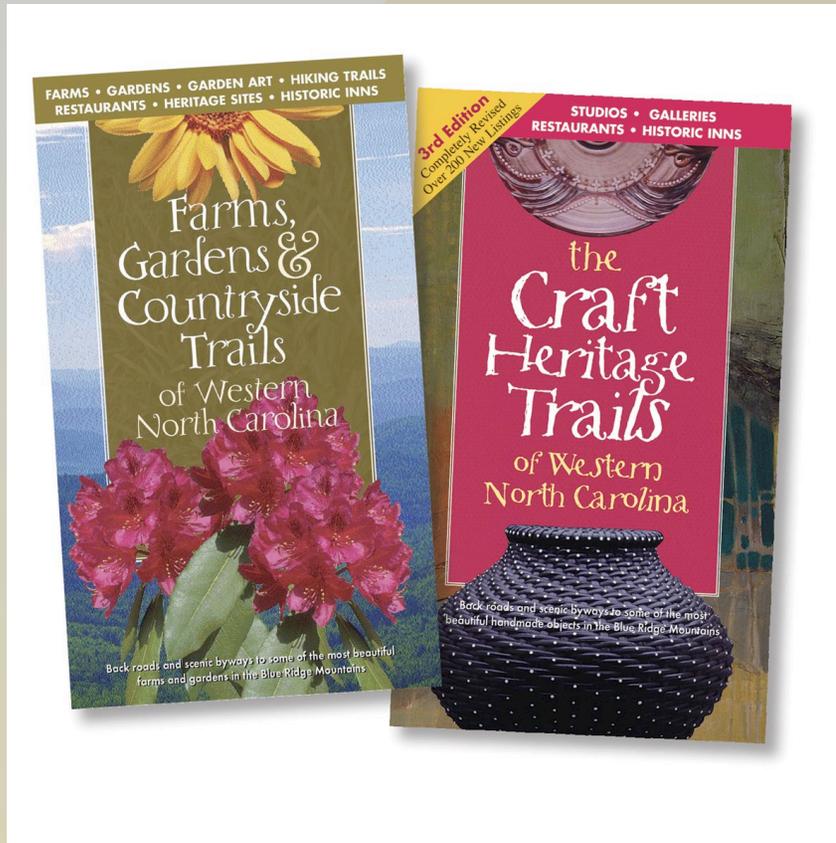
### Educational Program

- Green Globe
- Awards, recognition, accreditation
- Tourism-community educational events

**Questions:** *“Greenwashing” or authentic? Who sets criteria?*

Example: Heritage Trails

## 3. Reframe the Purpose



Heritage trails, such as **HandMade in America** in North Carolina, introduce visitors to the culture, history, and natural environment – using tourism as a *means* to help sustain and enhance the “sense of place.”

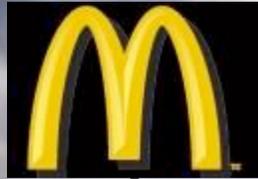
**HandMade in America**

[www.handmadeinamerica.org](http://www.handmadeinamerica.org)

### 3. Reframe the Purpose

Does “

Does



## Out of Place

Historical

Natural

Built

The M

*“The GDP is simply a gross measurement of market activity, of money changing hands. It makes no distinction whatsoever between the desirable and the undesirable, or cost and gain.” Jonathan Rowe*

More Fr

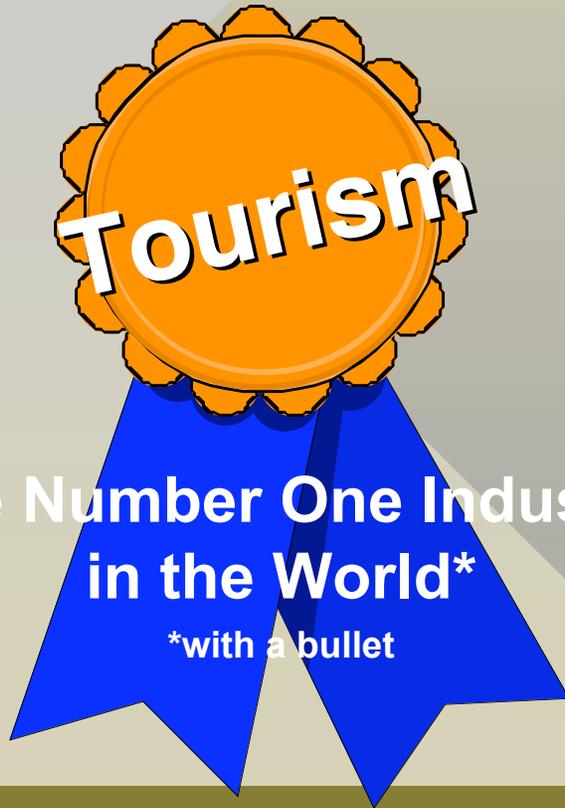
✓ Plan

✓ Comm

culturalize commerce?

### 3. Reframe the Purpose

# Does “Place” Serve Tourism OR Does Tourism Serve “Place”?



#### More Frame Flips

- ✓ *Planning for tourists or residents?*
- ✓ *Commercialize culture or culturalize commerce?*

## Flip the Frame

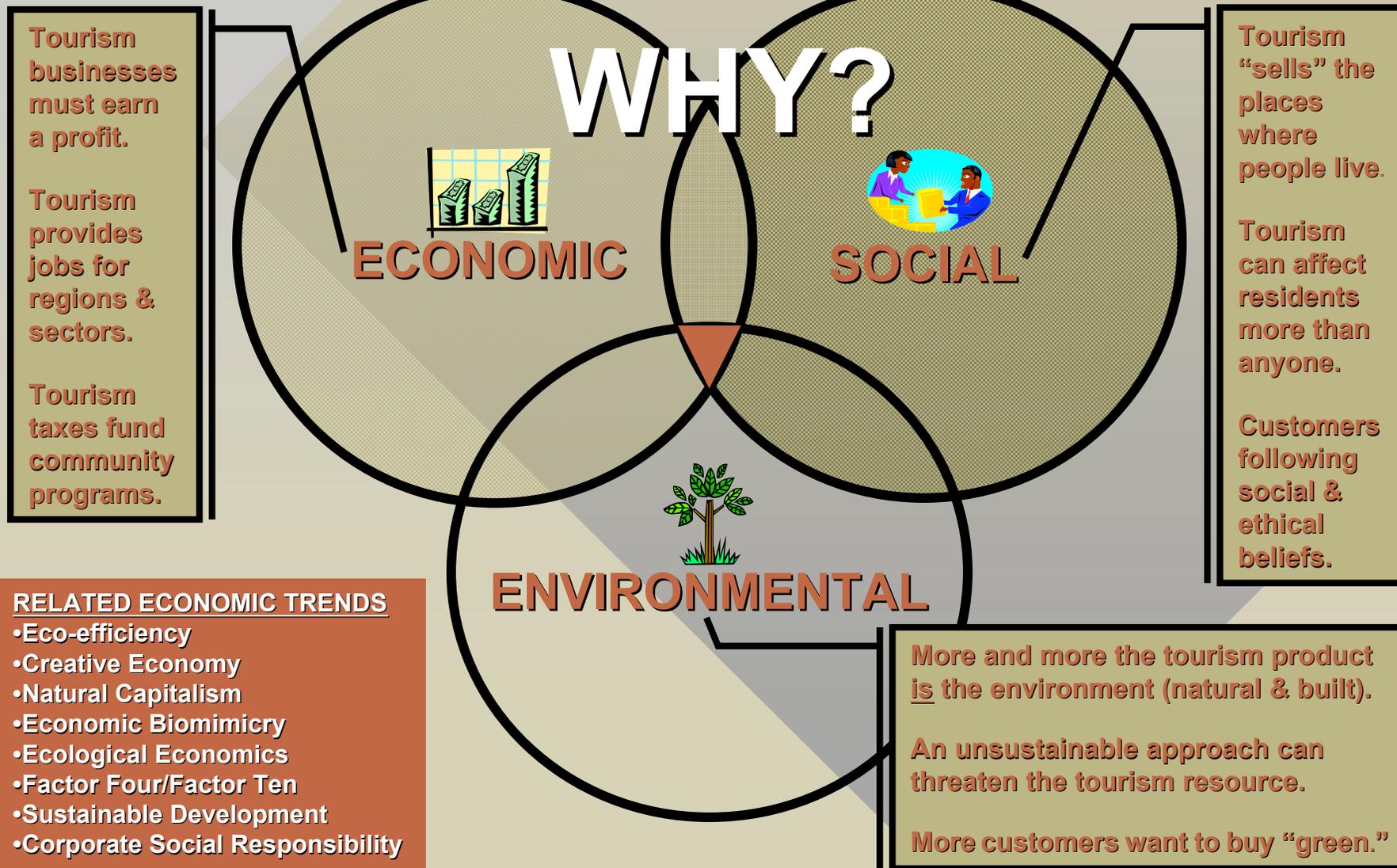
Use tourism as a “tool” to  
**enhance** your economy

*and*

**preserve** your history,  
**protect** your natural  
environment, **save** your  
built heritage, and **serve**  
& **engage** your residents.

*More Than Any Other Industry*

# Tourism Benefits from a Healthy Triple Bottom Line



More Than Any Other Industry

# Tourism Triple

Tourism  
businesses  
must earn  
a profit.

Tourism  
provides  
jobs for  
regions &  
sectors.

Tourism  
taxes fund  
community  
programs.

## MYTH: "Strict environmental policies hurt the economy."

REALITY: Environmental protection is not only good for  
residents but *helps build* a healthier economy.

| <u>TOP STATES</u>    | Gold Rank | Green Rank |
|----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Vermont              | 3         | 1          |
| Hawaii               | 1         | 4          |
| New Hampshire        | 6         | 2          |
| <u>BOTTOM STATES</u> |           |            |
| Mississippi          | 49        | 43         |
| West Virginia        | 48        | 45         |
| Louisiana            | 50        | 50         |

### RELATED ECONOMIC

- Eco-efficient
- Creative Eco
- Natural Cap
- Economic E
- Ecological E
- Factor Four
- Sustainable Developm
- Corporate Social Responsibility

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ethical  
beliefs.

tourism product  
the environment (natural & built).

An unsustainable approach can  
threaten the tourism resource.

More customers want to buy "green."

Reframe: A Different “Social Construction” for Tourism

# Part of the Solution, Not the Problem

*“Reframing is changing the way the public sees the world.” George Lakoff*

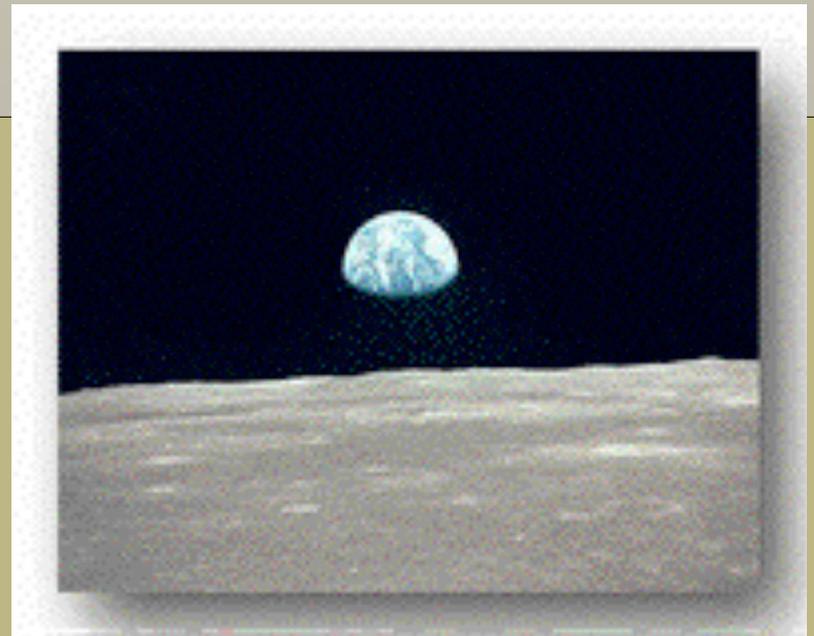
## CIVIC TOURISM

### A “CIVIC” PRODUCT

Tourism as an enabler of healthy place-making.

### A “CIVIC” PROCESS

Tourism as an activity that might foster civil society.



*A different perspective can often serve as a catalyst for changing the way we perceive, value, and act.*

### 3. Reframe the Purpose: Best Practice

# Hands of Harvest, Montana



Duncan Furniture



Blackfeet Nation Moccasins



Wheat Weaving



Fiber Arts

## Cultural

Using tourism to commemorate history, promote understanding and instill pride.

## Natural

Using tourism to protect the environment.

## Built

Using tourism to preserve pieces of the past.

## Economic

Using tourism to sustain the lifestyles of practitioners.

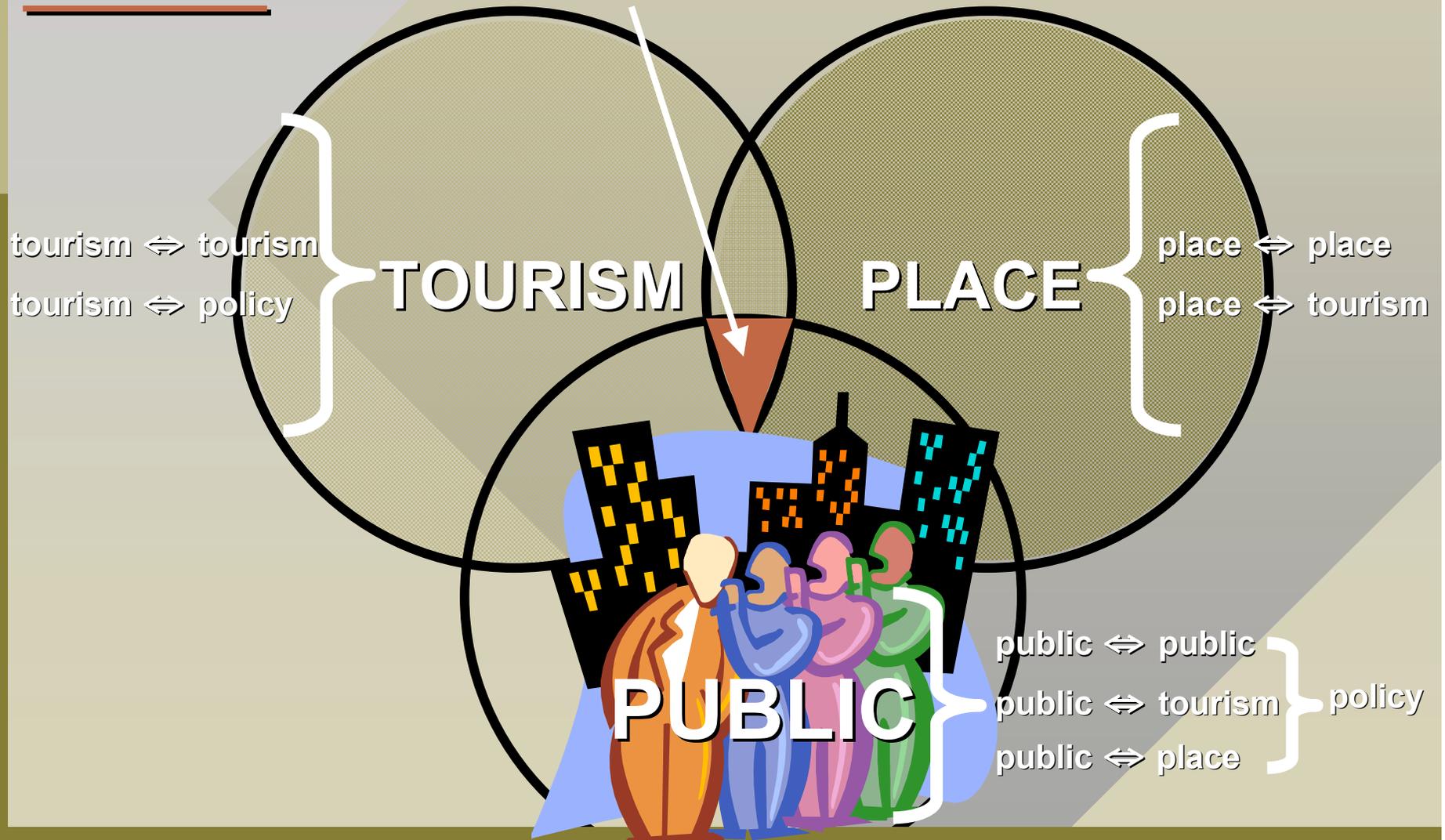
## Society

Using tourism to bring citizens together.

*Ask: In what way does the tourism activity add to or detract from the above?*

4. Connect to the Public

# HOW: A “Civic” Process



*“Local involvement and control contributes to successful tourism development.” Erve Chambers*

*So, what's different about*

# **Civic Tourism?**

***“Engage the Community”***

*Geotourism*

*Community Tourism*

*WTTC: Blueprint for New Tourism*

*National Park Service Gateway Communities*

*Protected Landscapes*

*WTO: Agenda 21*

So, what's different about

# Civic Tourism?

*“Communities should be allowed to decide for themselves how far tourism is a potentially positive development option.”* Melanie Smith

*“Tourism development issues should be handled with the participation of concerned citizens.”* Rio Earth Summit

*“Consultation between the tourism industry and local communities ... is essential if they are to work together.”* Tourism Concern

*“No tourism product should be developed or marketed without the involvement and support of the local residents.”* David Edgell

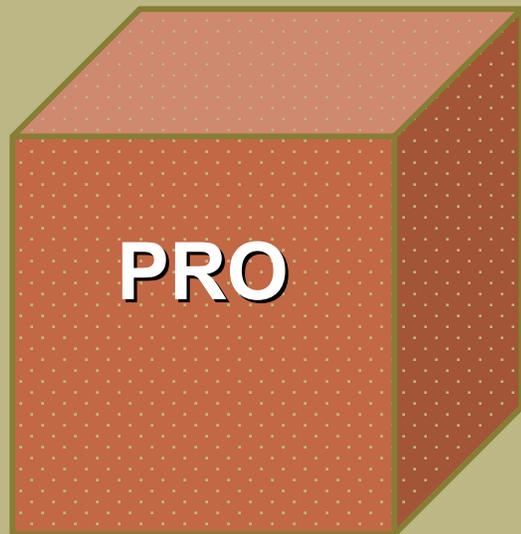
*“Participation by the local community is key to the long-term viability of tourism.”* Commission for Environmental Cooperation, Canada

*“Involve the community in the cultural tourism development process.”*  
Partners in Tourism

*“Ideally, alternative tourism regulations are established and monitored by the local community.”* David Weaver

Focus on the Process

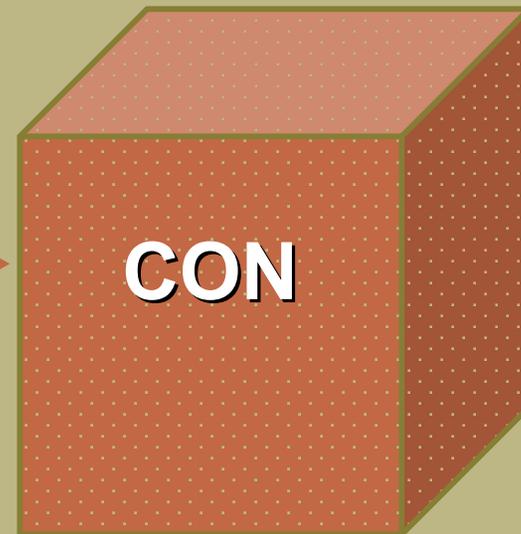
# Imagine Outside the Boxes



“economic impact”  
“more jobs”  
“taxes that underwrite social services”  
“better restaurants”



Slogans  
Winning

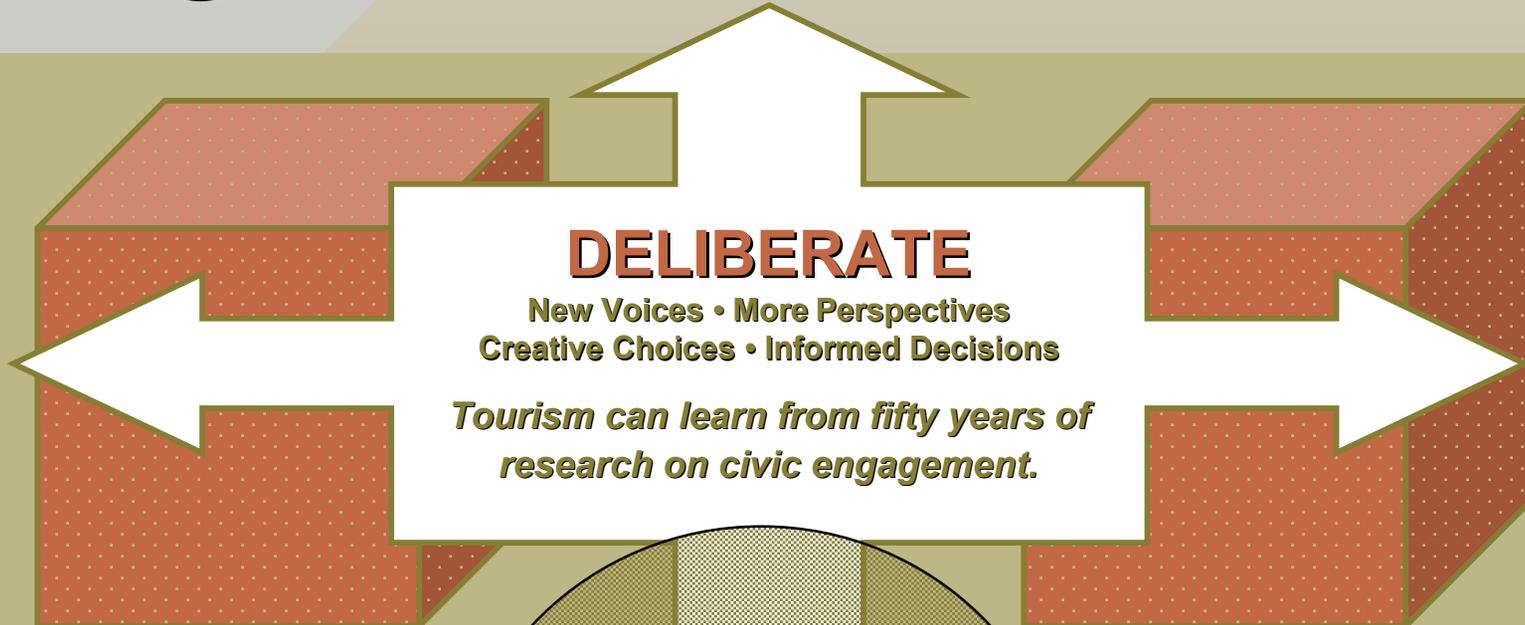


Love-Hate  
Pro-Con  
Distrust  
Barriers  
.  
Not good  
for the  
community  
or the  
tourism  
industry.

“ruined my town - not the way it used to be”  
“traffic, congestion, crime”  
“T-shirt shops and tacky attractions”  
“more for visitors than us”

Focus on the Process

# Imagine Outside the Boxes



## DELIBERATE

New Voices • More Perspectives  
Creative Choices • Informed Decisions

*Tourism can learn from fifty years of  
research on civic engagement.*

### Example: Forest Stewardship Council

Partnerships between residents,  
environmentalists & Big Timber:

=

Sustainability of forests.  
Stability of the economy.  
Civic participation.

“economic impact”

“more jobs”

“taxes that underwrite  
social services”

“better restaurants”

“ruined my town - not the  
way it used to be”

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“T-shirt shops and tacky  
attractions”

“more for visitors than us”

## Maximize vs Optimize

# Distinguish Between More & Better

## In the Box

Just adding “more”  
Sometimes inappropriate  
Quantitative  
Incomplete, Disconnected  
Solitary, Secretive



## Out of the Box

Enhancing what's there  
Organic, Specific to place  
Qualitative  
Comprehensive, Holistic  
Inclusive, Transparent



*“The main mistake made by pro-tourist planners is that they see tourism only in traditional economic terms as a new kind of industry.”* Dean MacCannell

# Distinguish Between *either/or* and *both/and*



Can it? Yes. Does it have to? No.

*That's* the point. Communities have a choice.

Tourism isn't going away. It's not "if" but "how."

## **FREE EDITORIAL**

There's a Catch-22 to the "No Growth" opposition to tourism: If advocates succeed at creating livable places, *people (tourists) are going to want to visit!* Rather than the age-old antagonistic frame, these groups can get out in front and help to create a vision for tourism that benefits residents as much as tourists.

Visions must lead to results, means must promise ends

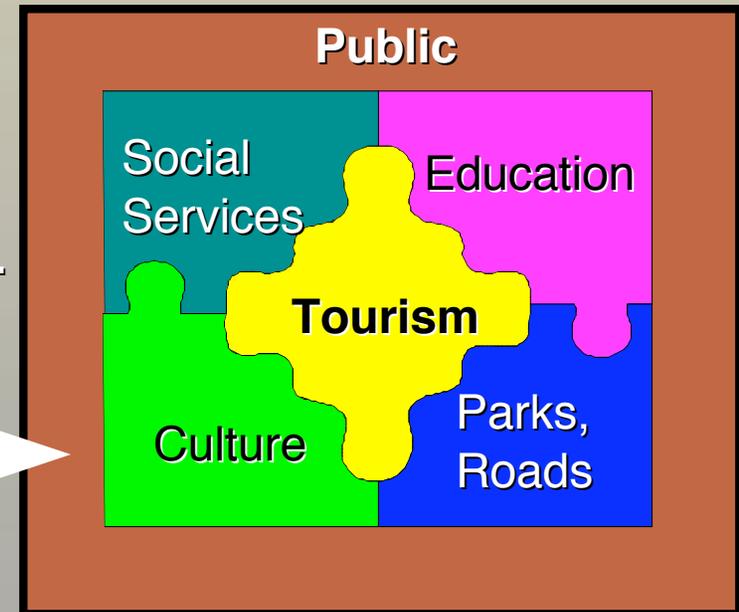
# Deliberation » Partnerships » Action!

- **Deliberation**

- Not debate; seek common ground; agree on ends; study civic research.
- Consider all points of view, all values.

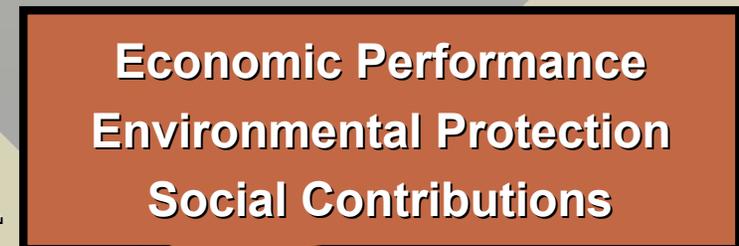
- **Partnerships**

- Invite all stakeholders. →
- Meet often and regularly.
- Be transparent, be accountable.



- **Action**

- Committee: Reframe purpose.
- Create funding mechanism.
- Design label & accreditation systems.
- Provide “Triple Bottom Line” reports.



## Hopeful Developments: A Young “Industry”

# Positioned to Meet the Challenge

Managed appropriately,  
tourism can be *the*  
leading force for  
transforming our cities  
and towns.

Prosperous · Sustainable  
Dynamic · Distinctive

*“It is reasonable to contend that every place on the world’s surface can now be considered a tourist destination.”*

David Weaver

- **Explosion of Mass Tourism**
  - 1950: 25 million international arrivals
  - 2004: 750 million arrivals (1 billion by 2010)
- **Chamber, CVB, Tourism Depts**
- **Tools: Internet, TV, Books**
- **Demographics & Worldviews**
  - Boomers Seeking “Experience,” “Otherness”
  - Education, Income, Free Time
  - Globalization, Culturalization of Commerce
- **Research, University Courses**
  - No longer a boutique industry
  - Sociological, Environmental, Cultural Studies
- **New Development Theories**
  - The Creative Economy, Natural Capitalism
  - Asset Maps, CSR, Sustainability, Eco-efficiency
  - New Urbanism, Regionalism, Holistic Planning

## Example: Reframe for the Future

# New Urbanism & Heritage Tourism



Towns that are **historic, diverse, authentic, dense, and pedestrian-friendly** have an advantage when it comes to attracting high-value heritage visitors Ex: Savannah, Charleston.

*“Heritage is a way of producing ‘hereness.’”*

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett

## 1. Integrate the Story

- What *is* your story? (identity, brand)
- Beyond single buildings (diverse, in context)
- Nature, museums, arts, business, planners (festivals, ramadas, artifacts, tours)

## 2. Invest in the Product

- Dedicated funding (determine: advocacy, funding stream, decision makers)
- Purchase, planning, preservation, renovation, interpretation, education
- Build capacity, conceptualize, monitor (accredit, label, awards program)

## 3. Reframe the Purpose

- Privilege “Triple Bottom Line” thinking
- Frame tourism as *community* development
- Incorporate & exploit research on urbanism

## 4. Connect to the Public

- Forums, surveys, heritage trainings
- Reports, media, officials (“leaders”)
- “Place” Committee (standards, benchmarks)

# Civic Tourism: The Poetry & Politics of Place **Project Overview**

## **Four Prescott Summits**

March-June 2005

## **Eleven Town Halls**

October 2005-January 2006

Wickenburg, Flagstaff, Bisbee, Cave  
Creek, Winslow, Sedona, Camp Verde,  
Lake Havasu City, Yuma, Fountain  
Hills, Phoenix

## **National Conference**

March 16-18, 2006 • Prescott

35 presenters, 230 delegates from 35  
states, Canada, and Mexico

*“We can speak of a real  
community as a ‘community of  
memory,’ one that does not  
forget its past.”* Robert Bellah



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*“The work of belonging to a place is never finished.”*  
Scott Russell Sanders



**[www.civictourism.org](http://www.civictourism.org)**  
(website & blog)