

2022 MAYORAL ELECTION



What approach do you think the town government should take with regard to the steady increase in tourists coming to Dubois?

As Mayor, I will ensure that the Governing Body continues to support and provide revenue to maintain and improve the street, sewer, and water infrastructures. This will ensure that businesses can continue to make visitors to the area have a pleasant and enjoyable experience. Businesses and non-profits can market Dubois with confidence.



Pat Neveaux

Visitors to Dubois are excited about our parks and recreation. We will continue to maintain these public areas which will showcase Dubois as a destination town while keeping our unique and beautiful character.

The U.S. Department of Commerce has committed millions of dollars to Reservations for marketing. Dubois will continue to partner with the tribal councils of the Wind River Reservations. The tribal councils can include in their marketing that Dubois is part of the Centennial Scenic Byway.

Having lived here for 25 years, I have experienced two attitudes towards tourism in Dubois. Some see the industry as a part of economic development. Others meet tourism with skepticism. Years ago, there was a tourism committee made up of volunteers from the Dubois area. Under my leadership, it will be a priority to re-establish this committee. We will work with the Dubois Chamber of Commerce, Destination Dubois, and DRIVE members to find the balance for our town.

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The short answer: We should take a more proactive approach. For details, read on!

Not long ago, logging was our goto industry in Dubois. Since then, tourism has become our primary industry. From obvious services, like restaurants and hotels, to antler sales, outfitters, and art galleries, most businesses leverage our location for their income.

Some communities across the state are able to rely on mineral royalties for part of their revenue. I believe, for Dubois, tourism is our natural resource and can be leveraged more effectively for the things our town requires - services, infrastructure, etc. Our town has an aging population, and an aging infrastructure, which requires funding. We're not going to be able to rely on the state and county for that funding. It's time to focus on strengthening our town from the ground up.

For example, last year, we generated more than \$175K in Lodging Tax revenue. We got back about \$82K of that in the form of TAD grants that the town administers. The remainder (\$92K) is given to the Wind River Visitors Council to advertise and promote all of Fremont County, including the Wind River Reservation. I believe we should: A) Be leading Fremont County in Lodging Tax revenue (and have ideas for how to get us there); and, B) Keep that money in Dubois, so 100% of it can be put to use locally.

There are many other opportunities for us to do tourism better, and that doesn't necessarily mean more people coming to Dubois. Currently, the tourism we have (and the people already passing through, are not being maximized. The idea is to provide better, more efficient ways to enable people to spend money in our local economy.

We can alleviate a lot of frustration for tourists and increase retention by adding better wayfinding for travelers including consistent, informative signage. Public restrooms, for example, are not easily identifiable, especially at night. Wayfinding can also help tourists discover amenities like our museums and visitor center, etc.

We can bring together like-minded organizations (Destination Dubois, Chamber of Commerce, Town Government, Outdoor Rec, Dubois Drive, DVI, and others) and start pushing on the same boulder collectively. Pulling the expertise and ambitions of the leaders together can help us execute big initiatives more quickly.

Ultimately, we should do better with the opportunity in front of us and look for ways to flatten out the seasonality of tourism here so that businesses, and the people they employ, can rely on a steady paycheck. With more prosperity comes higher pay and the ability to afford housing locally.

Unfortunately, the housing shortage cannot be fixed by just building houses (which as a town government, we can't do anyway). The solution lies in increasing our local economy. A healthy, thriving Dubois will attract housing developers who will build based on the opportunity they see here. It's a long game, not a quick fix. Right now, there's just not enough positive momentum to incentivise that kind of infrastructure. (Dan Stark's latest project is the exception, but the circumstances are very unique).

My experience in these areas runs deep. To learn more about that, visit my Facebook Page: Kintzler for Dubois Mayor. You can also find the same content posted on my website: kintzler.com.



Jason Kintzler