



The Economics of IRONMAN

The IRONMAN 70.3 World Championship will bring \$20-25 million in direct economic impact to the residents, businesses and communities of Washington County. This is new money. Freshly imported from other places and introduced here for the benefit of the people who live here.



The World Championship is the result of more than 12 years of effort and commitment from our communities. It celebrates the conquering human spirit. It honors the characteristics of determination and resilience that are so prevalent in our heritage, and it rewards the optimistic outlook of our people with a major infusion in the economy.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE REVENUE FROM VISITORS? WHERE DOES THAT \$20 MILLION END UP?

- 1) **Tax Relief:** Much of the tax revenue from visitor spending goes directly back into the pocketbooks of our residents. You may not see an actual stimulus check, but the revenue from visitors is used to lower the personal taxes residents would normally pay by more than \$1,200 per household each year! Think about it. Hosting events like the IRONMAN 70.3 World Championship generates an economic stimulus for every taxpayer that lives here. Without the revenue from visitors, every household would have to pay an additional \$1,200 in taxes each year to have the services we now enjoy.
- 2) **Infrastructure:** More than 50% of the tax revenue paid by visitors is reinvested into recreational and entertainment assets that improve the quality of life for residents. Walking paths, mountain bike trails, parks, theaters, and other facilities have been built using tax revenue that comes from visitors. Local residents get to enjoy these amenities without having to pay to build them.
- 3) **Business Development:** The bulk of visitor spending goes directly into the revenue stream of local businesses. Without tourism, residents wouldn't have nearly the variety of restaurants, shops and recreational facilities that we now enjoy. The World Championship is the largest, most globally recognized event to come to this area, but it's just one event. A recent study shows that overall, visitors bring \$600 million in direct spending here each year. Business revenue creates jobs and produces labor income that is also reinvested into the economy. Each time those dollars are spent, the positive economic cycle grows stronger.

IT WASN'T ALWAYS THIS WAY

It's really amazing to think how far this area has come in such a short amount of time. Historically, the area didn't have a tourism component. It was tough making a go of it here and for many years, it was strictly a land of survival. Orval Hafen, one of the prominent leaders in the mid 1900s,



described it perfectly: *"Ever since this country was settled, people have been occupied almost exclusively with wresting a living from the soil and getting a toehold economically,"* he said.

It was difficult carving out an existence here. All of the energy and effort were focused on just getting by.

But Hafen saw a different future. *"[This area] seems destined to undergo quite a change,"* he said. *"Instead of the isolated little farms and cattle ranches, we may be in the midst of a recreational center, which will entirely change our attitudes, our outlook, our associations, our opportunities ..."*

Hafen could see what the infusion of visitor spending would do for the area and he made it his mission to develop a tourism economy. When people criticized his ambition to build a golf course he explained it wasn't for the locals: *"Our reasons for building a golf course are mostly to attract people from outside to come here and spend their money."*

Hafen seemed to understand one of the core principles of success. The concept that vitality and opportunity come much more freely when we celebrate and share the good things we have with others. When we focus on bringing value to other people's lives, good things happen.

The IRONMAN 70.3 World Championship is a celebration of the good things we have in common. Hard work, endurance, determination, supporting each other, and reaching out to do good. It is also a testament to how far we've come. Until the locals started inviting people to experience what they have here, the area would remain a land of survival. But once they understood the positive economic cycle that tourism generates and started to celebrate the recreational assets we have, the dynamics changed. Today it is so much more than a land of survival; it is a land of opportunity that people are literally racing to be part of.

WHY IT WORKS?

By infusing new dollars from outside of the area, tourism sparks and then fuels the success of the economy.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF TOURISM

- Direct Spending by visitors - \$600 million
- Jobs Created – 8,900 (now 9,221)
- Labor Income - \$220 million for county residents
- State Income Tax - \$11 million
- Sales Tax - \$25 million
- Total Output for Businesses - \$732 million
- Value Added Business Output - \$379 million

(Washington County Economic Study released in 2020)



IRONMAN 70.3 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ECONOMIC IMPACT

5,000-6,000	Athletes
15,000	Friends & Family
21,000	Visitors
5.5	Average Nights Stayed
\$25 million	Economic Impact

About Greater Zion

Located in the southwest corner of Utah, Greater Zion is a destination that offers more than 2,400 square miles of adventure and inspiration. Zion National Park, the fourth most visited National Park in the United States, is the premier attraction, but Zion is only the beginning. Four state parks and a multitude of year-round recreational lands set the stage for a burgeoning mountain biking scene, some of the best off-highway vehicle riding in the country, scenic and challenging play at 13 top-rated golf courses, world-class cultural performances at Tuacahn Center for the Arts and so much more. The vibrant communities of St. George, Springdale, Hurricane, Ivins and towns in between offer a wide range of lodging options, dining experiences and access to outdoor pursuits through local outfitters and tour companies. Home to the 2021 IRONMAN 70.3 World Championships, Greater Zion also is a world-class destination for sporting events, conferences and meetings. The Greater Zion Convention and Tourism Office is a transient-room-tax-funded entity of Washington County, Utah. For more information, please visit GreaterZion.com.