

# Study on the Rural Tourism and Construction of Small Towns in Hubei Province

## ----Taking Tangchi Town, Yingcheng City as an Example

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**Abstract.** Based on the rapid development of rural tourism and increase of construction of small towns in our country, the promotion of rural tourism on the construction of small towns has become increasingly apparent. It is of vital significance to strive to develop the rural tourism and the construction of small towns in order to promote economic development, sustainable development of tourism and the new rural construction. This article firstly indicates the necessity of rural tourism and construction of small towns from the relationship between rural tourism and the construction of small towns, then by analyzing the current situation of the development of rural tourism and construction of small towns in Tangchi Town, dig deeply the existing problems and reasons for them, finally puts forward some countermeasures to promote the harmonious development of rural tourism and the construction of small town in Tangchi Town.

### The relationship between rural tourism and the construction of small towns

**The consistency of the goals.** The goals of the rural tourism development and the construction of small towns are both to create a harmonious society.

Harmonious society is a human-oriented society, and the fundamental aim of all activities is for the people's survival, enjoyment and development, and it is a society containing democracy and rule by law, fairness and justice, honesty and friendship, vitality, stability and order, harmony of human and nature.

Through the rural tourism development, it is helpful to narrow the gap between urban and rural, promote the development of rural economy and increase farmers' income; promote the civilization degree of rural areas and the improvement of cultural quality of the farmers; strengthen the interpersonal communication, improve the rural environment, make the harmonious development of human and nature. It is visible that the goal of rural tourism development is to build a harmonious society.

Small towns locate in specific communities between urban and rural, and are the important carrier of connection and balance of the gap between rural and urban. Due to the unbalanced development between rural and urban areas, there are many contradictions and problems. We can use the rural tourism to speed up the urbanization construction, improve the level of urbanization gradually, coordinate urban and rural development, and solve various problems. Only after solving the disharmony factors can we build a harmonious society.

**The rural tourism is an important carrier and method of the construction of small towns.** The development of rural tourism can promote and push the construction of local small towns, including through effectively promoting the local agricultural industrialization, promoting the development of relevant industries, such as agricultural and sideline products and handicraft products processing, transportation, real estate; accelerating the development of rural production and farmers' life, increasing the living standard of local residents; promoting and pushing the quality of farmers and local custom civilization, improving the quality of local residents and the degree of civilization; promoting and pushing environmental protection and sustainable development; promoting and pushing rural democratic management; promoting the development of service industry. For Example, it prompted some small towns to formulate rules and regulations such as folk law and health pledge; to build library and cultural chamber to strengthen cultural communication; to hold various training

and communication to increase knowledge; and many farmers became tourism practitioners, they could get increasing incomes through the odd jobs, handing hotels or restaurants, placing vendors, processing souvenir stalls, and they could also obtain dividend income through participation in rural tourism projects.

**The construction of small towns is the powerful guarantee for the sustainable development of rural tourism.** The construction of small towns provides a bridge of communication and exchange between urban and rural. Rural areas, in coordination with the small town, can build the rural tourism characteristics to attract a steady stream of visitors, which is the power of the sustainable development of rural tourism. Meanwhile, taking attracting urban residents to consume locally as a point of penetration through the development of rural tourism, the small towns can provide a powerful guarantee for the sustainable development of rural tourism through basic conditions such as the information transmission, convenient transportation, harmonious and beautiful environment.

### **The necessity of the rural tourism and construction of small towns**

**It helps to balance urban and rural development.** First, it narrows the gap between urban and rural. Through the channel of tourism, part of consumption money is transferred from the city to the countryside, increasing the rural economy and farmers' incomes. The increase of people's income in rural areas and small towns can promote the people's living standard, prompt the communication between the urban and rural areas, the transmission of culture and information, enhance the communication between urban and rural areas.

Second, it promotes the coordinated development of rural economy and society. Some rural areas raised fund to launch education and medical treatment after the development of rural tourism and construction of small towns; some other rural areas established social security system, and farmers that have reached certain conditions could get security payments, making farmers also enjoy medical treatment, education and social security like city people.

Third, it promotes the common development between urban and rural. The development of rural tourism and small town construction, through exchanges and communication between urban and rural, helps to increase investment and policy support for rural, promote various resources, capital and elements to agriculture, rural areas and farmers, to promote the all-round development of rural economy and society. At the same time, it helps to pull consumption, expand domestic demand, promoting sustainable and healthy development of urban economy.

**It helps to promote the adjustment of rural industrial structure.** Six elements of tourism-- "eat, live, travel, tour, shopping, entertainment" -- have higher requirements for communications, electric power, transportation, service, culture and other aspects of the tourism destination, and this can promote the development of business prosperity and the development of agricultural products processing, etc.

According to statistics, there are 24 industries directly related to tourism industry and 124 indirectly related industries. This fully shows that the relevance and guide of tourism industry is very strong, and developing rural tourism and construction of small towns can significantly boost domestic demand and promote consumption. So that the rural can develop all other industries besides agricultural industry, in order to promote the adjustment of rural industrial structure and to make industrial structure be more perfect.

**It helps to broaden the channels of increasing farmers' income.** According to the calculation, one rural tourism attraction with a reception of 100,000 persons can place directly and indirectly 300 farmers employed, increase directly and indirectly incomes for 1,000 families. Local farmers' income can be increased through a variety of ways, such as hotel, street vendor, production processing of local features products, etc. These activities greatly promoted and broadened the channels for the local farmers' incomes, making them not only get income from agricultural production, promoted the link of urban and rural spiritual civilization, accelerated the integration process of urban and rural. The main body attracted by the rural tourism and construction of small towns is the urban residents,

and they inject vigor for the rural consumption market, driving the development of the rural, also brought urban civilization and life behavior to the rural.

**It helps to absorb the surplus labor force.** The world tourism organization believes that each one more employment in the tourism industry can create 6 to 8 jobs for the society, as the multiplier effect is extremely great. By 2010, our country has achieved an annual increase of about 350,000 people employment in rural tourism and of 1.5 million people employment indirectly through the development of rural tourism. According to preliminary statistics, there are a certain scale of numerous leisure agriculture enterprises and township enterprises in Hubei province, and they brought about the increase in the number of employed workers directly and indirectly to a great degree. Rural tourism, therefore, can play an effective and important role in helping solve the problem of a large number of surplus labors in China, and is becoming the new breakthrough point to promote rural labor transfer in China.

### **The current situation of the development of rural tourism and construction of small towns in Tangchi Town**

As a major tourism town of Hubei, Tangchi town is a veritable tourist town because of its unique tourism resources---high temperature and high mineral hot springs. Tangchi town has rich human landscape such as TaoJiaHe ruins of ancient city wall, EZhong revolutionary martyr memorial hall, and TaoZhu old home and tourism attractions such as hot spring resort leisure center, folk custom park, fishing leisure center, full moon building, etc.. It is a famous scenic spot for the tourist vacation, entertainment, leisure, and bath spa. Tangchi hot springs, in particular, is a well-known 4A grade hot spring tourism scenic area, which is a tourism, leisure and vacation spot collecting hot spring bathing, leisure and health, ecology, red tourism, and a complete set of facilities to live, eat, entertain and purchase. The daily dynamic reserve of hot springs is up to 10,000 cubic meters and it can bring about more than 100 million economic benefits to Tangchi town yearly. Due to the development of hot spring tourism, related industries such as food and beverage, retail, entertainment, local products, and so on got great development. In addition, Tangchi town plans to invest 1.5 billion Yuan in six years to build the second phase and three phase of Tangchi spa. Beside the hot springs, other related industries also got great development, such as transportation, real estate, public transportation, and so on. With the boom of hot spring tourism, the construction of small towns in Tangchi town is improving day by day, not only in the aspects of road and bridge, but also in the aspect of the daily life of common people.

### **The problems existing in and reason analysis for the development of rural tourism and construction of small towns in Tangchi town**

**The product in rural tourism is single .** Most of the rural tourism utilize a single product to attract customers, and are hard to realize diversified development because of money or technology. So do the Tangchi Town. Although it has rich tourism resources, there are a lot of problems in the development and management and most of the tourism resources have not been developed, such as TaoJiaHe ruins of ancient city wall, EZhong revolutionary martyr memorial hall, and TaoZhu old home, which are tourism resources of very historical and cultural significance. In addition, the type of tourism is also very single, limited on the hot spring bathing, single and with no novelty. So, based on diversity, the Tangchi Town can make simultaneously development in a series of projects collecting shopping street, amusement park, hot spring place, cultural palace and special-feature Street.

As a backbone industry in the Tangchi Town, the rural tourism did not actually lead to the development of relevant industries and upstream and downstream industries. Although some of the aquacultures are related to hot springs, they did not make it bigger and stronger. In a region, there must be some representative industries as leaders to guide and drive synchronous development for the other industries. But the Tangchi Town which is famous for its tourism has not brought more benefits

to the upstream and downstream industries because of the rural tourism. The reasons of the single rural tourism product can be summarized as the following:

First of all, there aren't sufficient funds. The Tangchi Town doesn't have enough money to support the construction of the diversified projects, and the funds allocated by the higher authorities cannot be timely in place. Some softwares such as management and technology are not timely in place too. There isn't enough technical staff to carry out these projects, and also lack professional talents to maintain and manage these projects.

Second, the tourism product in Tangchi Town is single, the scale of tourism industry is small, and the level of tourism development need to be further improved. The Tangchi Town, as a famous tourism town in Hubei province, has not developed abundant tourism projects. Although it introduced Tangchi West Street later, relative to other tourism towns, it is still a bit simplex.

Third, it did not mobilize the masses. According to the survey, residents in Tangchi Town are mostly working on the simple agricultural production, and there are very few people participating in tourism related industries. On the contrary, workers employed in tourism industry are nonlocal personnel in the majority. Therefore, even though rural tourism has developed, it is of not much help for local small town construction and for the people's income promotion, so it is hard to get the support of the local people. As these projects cannot be carried out without the participation of the masses, so it is very important to arouse the enthusiasm of the masses.

Finally, the integration of town of the rural tourism and local cultural in the Tangchi Town is not enough. It has not exploited the upstream and downstream industries of the tourism, such as souvenirs manufacturing, local specialty production, shopping, entertainment, food and beverage, etc. Meanwhile, the Tangchi Town has not form a scale of related industries, such as hot springs aquaculture, hot springs grow of fruits and vegetables.

**The use of green tourism resources in the construction of small towns is low.** The influences of the use of environmental resources in the construction of small towns are on several aspects. As for the low utilization rate of the tourism resources in Tangchi Town, there are a number of reasons in the following: First, the environmental protection consciousness is not strong in the construction of small towns. Some leaders in the Tangchi Town have very weak environmental protection consciousness. They place too much emphasis on economic growth, take economic construction as the center and ignore the environmental cost of economic development, which make the sustainable development of the Tangchi Town face many hidden troubles. Second, the infrastructure construction of the ecological environment in Tangchi Town is not perfect. There is no sewage treatment system in the construction of Tangchi Town, and drainage pipe is not perfect, too. Once encountering a rain season or continuous heavy rain, the Town will face different degrees of pondings, wastewater cannot be ruled out, leading to serious environmental pollution. Third, the pollutants from the township enterprises in Tangchi town have not been processed reasonably. Although the number of township enterprises is not big, but quite a few of them are polluting enterprises. The value created by them is proportional to the pollution to the environment, the mode of production is extensive, the environmental protection facilities don't match or are not exist at all, all that have a great influence on the environment. Fourth, nearby rural and agricultural pollution in Tangchi town, such as pesticide pollution of agricultural products, "white pollution" arising from the plastic film mulching technology to produce, air pollution caused by burning straw, pollution of livestock production and aquaculture, is becoming more and more serious. Fifth, the human and natural landscapes in Tangchi town have been damaged. Sixth, the input mechanism of the ecological environment in Tangchi town is not sound. The above reasons contain not only the low utilization of the environmental resources, but also the negative impacts of the construction of rural tourism. Only after solving these problems, can the construction of small towns and rural tourism in Tangchi town co-exist harmoniously and promote each other.

**The rural tourism and the construction of small towns have not promote each other sufficiently.** Whether the construction of rural tourism in Tangchi town can well promote its construction of small towns, to a large extent, depends on whether the construction of small towns paves the way for the rural tourism. As mentioned in the above paragraph, the construction of small



towns will result in certain destruction to the ecological environment. Reasons why Tangchi hot springs can attract others are not only its own characteristics, but also the surrounding environment. Without a good green and healthy environment, I think consumers are not willing to come here even if it is distinctive.

Therefore, we need to make a good plan at the same time when making the construction of Tangchi small town, setting clear rules and regulations, publicizing and teaching environmental protection to the people, establishing perfect environmental protection facilities, to promote the development of rural tourism and attract more tourists. On the other hand, the development of rural tourism can constantly promote the construction of small towns, continuously perfect the upstream and downstream enterprises, and promote the development of the industry inside and outside.

### **The countermeasures to make harmonious development and promote each other between rural tourism and the construction of the small town in Tangchi Town**

**To develop rural tourism diversifiedly, and to expand the depth and breadth of farmers' participation.** To achieve diversification of rural tourism, first of all we must find practicable rural tourism projects. In addition to the previous happy farmhouse, cultural relics tour, we should also establish some unique projects, such as high mineral hot spring farming products category, characteristic street, hot spring park, hot springs sauna pavilion, etc., and we also must strengthen the investment promotion and capital introduction. They can be generally divided into the following parts:

First, it should find loans from the relevant banks and organizations, or invite the city tourism bureau to come out to raise funds. It's absolutely convincing enough that believe there are hot springs here in Tangchi as a big fixed asset. In addition, it should assign commissioners to stay to guard each domestic big market all the year round, carry on the investment promotion and capital introduction, offer certain policy, establish a business center in hot springs, forming a network business model development.

Second, it should recruit professional tourism management talents in each domestic big talent market, redevelop and dig deeply on the cultural tourism resources, create its own cultural resources for Tangchi Town, and carry through the later maintenance on them.

Third, at the same time of investment promotion and capital introduction, it should joint local companies, especially like the substantial enterprise as Tangchi hot spring, whether they are private enterprises or township enterprises, to compound a rope, encourage enterprises to develop various tourism related projects and give them policy support.

Fourth, at the same time of promoting the local special products - Tangchi hot springs, it should publicize some other scenic areas and attractions, not only to expand the publicity of each scenic spot, but also to make them the second industry beside hot spring in the future.

**To make rural tourism drive the upstream and downstream industries and form a stable industry chain structure.** How to use the existing resources in Tangchi Town to drive new development? On the basis of the original resources, it need to create a seamless connection between each enterprise and industry and establish industrial chain structure integrating tourist souvenirs manufacturing, local specialty production, entertainment and public transport dominated by Tangchi hot springs. The main methods are in the following:

First of all, it should mix tourism with the local culture. For example, it can develop more tourism projects in TaoJiaHe ruins of ancient city wall, EZhong revolutionary martyr memorial hall, and TaoZhu old home, connect the scenic spots, open the green channel and use direct vehicle to send them to visit other scenic spots free of charge.

In addition, it should develop the unique souvenirs containing topics such as goddess and fealty for Tangchi Town, either as present for tourists or gifts for selling, establish production bases of local specialties, use hot springs to develop natural mineral aquaculture, and open shopping street, amusement park, bar and so on.

Finally, it can use the local manufacturing enterprises to make items needed in the tourism industry, and then promote their sales through tourism. It can also develop some fixed manufacturing enterprises for the products needed in the tourism industry.

**To make reasonable use of small town construction to promote the development of environment and rural tourism.** In order to use the construction of small town in Tangchi Town to promote environmental protection and rural tourism, it should not only make a reasonable plan, but also establish a scientific concept of development, which demands that the environmental issues be brought into each step of the planning, constructing, managing of Tangchi Town; it should define the environmental capacity of Tangchi Town scientifically, combined with social and economic development planning, urban system planning and urban overall planning. In addition, the construction of ecological towns cost is not high, but the effects are long-term. So Tangchi Town should speed up the optimization and upgrading of industrial structure through the adjustment of economic structure, to improve the quality and efficiency of economic growth; it should also make good technology application, as advanced applicable technology is one of the important basic conditions of the protection and construction of the ecological environment in Tangchi Town; that how much should be input in the infrastructure is an important condition of the environmental protection and construction in the construction of Tangchi Town, is as well an the important task for the protection and construction of ecological environment. It should raise funds from various channels and accelerate the construction of pollution treatment facilities according to the principle of "unified planning and implementing step by step".

**To combine the rural tourism and the construction of small towns better and promote them each other.** On the land of Tangchi town, to do well in the construction of small town, it must depend on the help of rural tourism, which not only can bring a lot of money, technology and talents for the construction of small town, but also can apply the advanced technology in urban planning to urban construction. Today, small towns, as the three class of urban villages and towns, are difficult to have their own characteristics and ideas, but it isn't a problem for Tangchi Town, and a big part of the reason is it has the unique environmental resource--hot springs. Therefore, to construct a good small town, Tangchi Town should consider not only the basic urban planning, but also how to use the vast energy cell--the Tangchi hot springs, and only by taking it as a driving force, can Tangchi Town live up and the construction of small town here be likely to be successful. Therefore, in the construction of small towns, the planning is a must, and the planning must take the environmental protection as the center. The construction carried out on the basis of environmental protection is meaningful. The construction and layout of the environmental protection facilities can bring not only a good image for Tangchi town, but also more customers for Tangchi hot springs, and huge economic benefits for their ownership enterprises, promoting the development of rural tourism.

To sum up, in Tangchi Town, the relationship between the development of rural tourism and construction of small towns is like the relationship between the lips and teeth, not only promoting each other, but also influencing each other and developing jointly.

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