



June 10, 2024

DSA WORK PLAN PROPOSAL FY2024-25

ORGANIZATION

Monterey County Destination Marketing Organization, Inc. dba SEE MONTEREY

VISION

A thriving tourism economy that enriches Monterey County's economic vitality and quality of life.

MISSION

To generate community prosperity for Monterey County through the responsible promotion and growth of the tourism economy.

PRIORITY

Generate ideal visitation that best fits Monterey County

- I. Overnight stays during lower occupancy months and midweek bookings.
- II. Inspire and influence longer stays (One More Night!); spread tourism throughout the county.
- III. Support incremental, managed growth of the Visitor Spending and resulting Tourism Occupancy Tax (TOT), Sales Tax revenues, employment and community well-being.
- IV. Educate travelers how to be responsible and respectful when visiting.

The competition for each travel dollar is intense. Monterey County's competitors like Napa Valley, Sonoma County and San Luis Obispo are fighting to gain market share, visitor spending, tax revenues and employment at the expense of Monterey County. This Workplan is a summary of how See Monterey will continue to aggressively compete for travelers who will contribute to our destination's economic vitality and quality of life.

We publish an annual business plan focused on business development, marketing programs and community relations that inspire responsible visitation and increase overnight stays throughout our County. A collaborative and leveraged approach to destination marketing is essential to the success of these programs and is built into the development of each initiative. Our Board of Directors is made up of lodging, attraction, restaurant and other hospitality business leaders and elected officials from across the County.

In collaboration with local businesses and in partnership with local county and city government, See Monterey is working harder than ever to implement the critical marketing, public relations, group business development, and community relations programming that is needed for our destination's success.

We also work closely with a broad group of partners throughout the County to ensure an integrated approach to information sharing, marketing collaboration and crisis management. These include:

Monterey County Hospitality Association
Monterey County Business Council

Monterey County Vintners & Growers Assn.
Monterey County Farm Bureau



Monterey County Film Commission
Big Sur Byways Organization
Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce
Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce
Cal State University Monterey Bay

Arts Council for Monterey County
Monterey Regional Airport
Visit Carmel
Pacific Grove Chamber of Commerce
WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca

See Monterey is deeply committed to promoting responsible and sustainable travel in Monterey County.

As a renowned bucket-list destination, we attract visitors from all corners of the globe who come to experience the beauty of the central coast. With this influx of visitors, there arises a crucial need for education on how to travel safely and responsibly, ensuring that both residents and guests can enjoy Monterey County's splendor for generations to come.

Our Sustainable and Responsible Travel initiatives are designed to engage not just residents and businesses, but also stakeholders, travel trade professionals, meeting planners, conference attendees, and leisure visitors. We focus on promoting best practices for experiencing all that Monterey County has to offer in a responsible and safe manner. This includes incorporating responsible travel messaging across all our customer engagement touchpoints.

Furthermore, we remain vigilant and prepared to pivot in response to emergencies that the region has historically faced, such as floods, wildfires, storms, and highway closures. Our commitment to responsible travel extends to ensuring the safety and well-being of everyone who visits and calls Monterey County home.

INVESTMENT BUDGET

Jurisdiction Investment Partnership with See Monterey through the Development Set Aside (DSA) has been estimated to be approximately **\$1,913,494**.

The County's investment will be leveraged with nine other jurisdictions' investments and the Monterey County Tourism Improvement District (MCTID) Assessments to:

- Implement programs necessary to sustain the hospitality industry's market share in a way that drives economic vitality and supports quality of life for our residents.
- Generate TOT and Sales Tax revenues that build general fund and discretionary income.
- Contributes to the growth of the hospitality industry – businesses and jobs.
- Ensure that our locally owned and operated businesses thrive.

PROGRAMS:

Marketing Communications \$900,802: See Monterey's Marketing Communications programs use integrated brand-based content marketing strategies that incorporate compelling advertising, public relations, and social media. This works to inspire and influence overnight visitation among Leisure, Group, and International travelers.

Marketing Communications Strategic Priorities:

1. **Bring "Find Your Way Here" (FYWH) Full Circle – launch branding into each market:**
 - a. Meetings & Conferences – "Inspiration Meets Here" group and meetings campaign at IMEX
 - b. Luxury Initiative – integrate FYWH into luxury marketing program
 - c. International – integrate FYWH into B2B and new B2C programs

2. **Grow Awareness & Consideration Online**
 - a. Launch new website with improved user experience that will move users more efficiently and effortlessly through the process leading to booking a trip
 - b. Incorporate Artificial Intelligence in ways that streamline the process and serve customized content
 - c. Grow and nurture engaged users through e-news and app
 - d. Online media partnerships to reach new audiences

3. **Extend Visitor Stay and Spend**
 - a. Focus on travelers who will stay longer, experience more and spend more
 - b. Develop content and programs that encourage visitors to stay one more night
 - c. Further promote Monterey Wine Country – new signage and wayfinding; bolster marketing partnership with MCVGA
 - d. Event Promotion – build up existing events to be more destination-wide; attract new events in need periods

4. **Maximize the Near, Grow the Far**
 - a. Draw travelers from further out/fly-in markets – while maintaining base visitation in core Drive Markets
 - b. Realign media channels and budgets by drive, fly and national markets
 - c. Direct-to-consumer advertising in international markets via co-ops and travel trade partnerships

5. **Always On, Everywhere**
 - a. National and international PR pitching and media hosting year-round
 - b. Grow and evolve social channels to prioritize active engagement

6. **Turn Challenges into Opportunities**
 - a. Develop Big Sur North and Big Sur South strategy
 - b. Develop ready made plans for opportunistic deployment to support soft spots in the market, bad weather (and good), etc.
 - c. Sustainable and Responsible Travel messaging

7. **Realign goals to parallel updated Long Term Strategic Roadmap and Visitor Profile Study**
 - a. Implement dashboard tool

Group Business Development \$675,669: See Monterey’s Group Business Development programs create revenue opportunities through groups, meetings and conferences for the benefit of our hotel community and other related businesses. Meetings and conferences are highly valued for their ability to attract business during ‘need’ periods where they fill rooms and create increased rate compression. This benefits the host hotel as well as other lodging properties in the area.

Business Development Strategic Priorities:

1. **Expand on Hosted In-market Industry Events**
 - a. Host industry association events
 - b. Targeted FAMs to support new flight and direct flight markets

- c. Conduct high level client activation at major events
- 2. **Champion “Need” Periods and New Business**
 - a. Target high value groups and meetings from existing and new feeder markets
 - b. Solicit compression causing group events
 - c. Group incentive targeting “need” periods
- 3. **Broaden our Partnerships and Sponsorships**
 - a. Target sponsorships with speaking opportunities to reach a wider audience
 - b. Activate new group marketing campaign to grow awareness
 - c. Engage in targeted partnerships with key industry organizations to grow awareness
- 4. **Build on Sustainability and DEI programs to Elevate our Brand – Find the Right Path**
 - a. Educate clients on the sustainability aspects of our destination
 - b. Highlight LGBT Clients and their experience in the destination
- 5. **Lengthen Group Stay patterns**
 - a. Educate clients on things to do to drive attendees and stay patterns
 - b. Leverage destination attributes
- 6. **Increase Customer Satisfaction**
 - a. Implement a paid site tour program, “See/Stay/Book”
 - b. “Flash Your Badge” Program offering discounts to conference attendees

Community Relations \$62,132: See Monterey’s Community Relations program aligns with the strategic direction to promote inclusion between residents, local government, small business and the hospitality and tourism sectors. Attracting visitors to stay in the destination overnight directly affects the economic impact throughout Monterey County.

Community Relations Strategic Priorities:

- 1. **Community Connectivity**
 - a. Community benefit campaign: educational materials and speaking platforms
 - b. Develop new and strengthen existing industry and strategic partnerships
 - c. Partner with Monterey Bay Economic Partnership and continue to work with countywide agencies in discussion of hospitality-related topics such as traffic mitigation, employee housing, etc.
- 2. **Hospitality Business Engagement**
 - a. Conduct “Travel Ready” member workshops
 - b. Member newsletter development and engagement
 - c. Continued Virtual Meet-a-Members, site visits and regional FAM trips
- 3. **Destination Services**
 - a. Refresh planning tools and resources
 - b. Further develop digital content that highlights our members and regional Visitor Centers



General Administration \$274,891: Expenses are required to support all departments' programs and staffing. See Monterey is an accredited not-for-profit Destination Marketing Organization that adheres to industry best practices throughout its operations and financial management.

Operations, Human Resources and Administration Strategic Priorities:

Finance and Operations:

1. Implementation of browser-based accounting, expense reporting and accounts payable systems with digital controls and approval processes, shorter payables processing time, cash flow analysis and financial forecasting.
2. Maintain organizational insurances, equipment and supplies that support the needs of the team and our hybrid work schedules.

Human Resources and Relations:

1. Develop and maintain strategic partnerships that support our culture and provide critical internal function backups.
2. Implement new payroll, expense reimbursement and performance management systems that create time efficiencies and cost savings.
3. Elevate talent acquisition and intentional retention programs and create the ideal environment that fosters growth transitions.
4. Ensure that all team members feel welcome and have an equal opportunity to connect, belong, and grow. Encourage team members to contribute to the organization and the hospitality industry, advance their skill sets and to be comfortable and confident as their authentic selves within the framework of professional guidelines that we have established as a team.

Governance Administration:

1. Provide administrative leadership and support to the Board of Directors and eight (8) Committees. Ensure accordance with best practices and in compliance with the Brown Act and other laws and guiding principles for non-profit organizations.
2. Administer and track diversity, equity and inclusion programs that demonstrate organizational commitments.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

See Monterey will continue to measure and report on success just as in previous years with organizational metrics including:

- Marketing Communications generating travel demand with an Intent to Visit Score Goal of 4.3
- Group Business lead generation at 620
- Group Booking Conversion at 25%

Key Performance Indicators include:

- Unique website visits
- Social media engagement
- Media Coverage
- Referrals to member businesses

This work plan, including the performance measures and budget, are tentative until adopted by the See Monterey Board of Directors on June 27, 2024.