



DSA WORK PLAN PROPOSAL FY2025-26

See Monterey is the leading driver of Monterey County’s tourism economy, directly influencing hundreds of thousands of person-trips each year and generating hundreds of millions of dollars in visitor spending. This spending, in turn, contributes millions in Tourism Occupancy and Sales Tax revenue, funding essential programs that enhance the quality of life for residents and communities.

In FY23-24, See Monterey’s initiatives influenced over 435,000 overnight trips, secured nearly 3,000 room nights for meetings and conferences—resulting in over \$3.5 million in spending—and delivered more than 142,000 web referrals to businesses in the unincorporated County, the majority of which are small, owner-operated enterprises.

The following Work Plan builds upon this success, driving continued economic impact and a thriving future for Monterey County

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.

See Monterey’s DSA Work Plan is strategically aligned with the four key goals outlined in the County’s DSA Guidelines. Below are a few key examples of how our initiatives directly support these priorities. More detail on the plan is included throughout the document.

| County of Monterey DSA Goals - SUMMARY | |
|---|---|
| 1. Economic Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support businesses by driving visitation and travel spending • Advise on new tourism development opportunities • Attract new industries through groups and meetings | 2. Work Force Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational workshops and programs for tourism businesses • Partner with Monterey County Hospitality Association • Implement programs that support education of future hospitality industry |
| 3. Marketing | 4. Collaborations & Partnerships |

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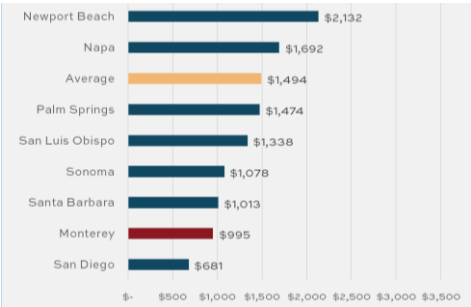
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow Market Share within drive markets and beyond into short and long-haul air markets • Promote responsible/sustainable travel • Increase intent to visit in leisure, group and international markets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued collaboration with agriculture, technology and other business sectors • Support and promotion of existing and new events • Crisis communications in partnership with County officials and implementation of travel recovery programs |
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STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Generate ideal visitation that enhances economic development and quality of place for residents.

1. Drive Demand for overnight stays - primarily lower occupancy months and midweek bookings.
2. Inspire and influence longer stays (One More Night!)
3. Spread tourism and its economic benefits throughout the entire County.
4. Support incremental, managed growth of the Visitor Spending and resulting Tourism Occupancy Tax (TOT), Sales Tax revenues, employment and community well-being.
5. Educate travelers how to be responsible and respectful when visiting.

The competition for each travel dollar is intense. Monterey County’s competitors range from smaller destinations such as Napa Valley, Sonoma County and San Luis Obispo for leisure visitors – to larger destinations such as San Diego, Palm Springs and San Francisco for valuable meetings and conferences. Each are fighting to gain market share, visitor spending, tax revenues and employment at the expense of Monterey County – many have a competitive advantage in terms of their sales and marketing budgets. This Workplan is a summary of how



DMO Annual Budget Per Room

See Monterey will continue to aggressively compete for travelers who will contribute to our destination’s economic vitality and quality of life.

Our approach includes:

- Annual Business Plan: Focuses on business development, marketing programs, and community relations to inspire responsible visitation and increase overnight stays countywide.
- Annual Report & Investment Reporting: Twice a year Investment Reports to the County that detail the ROI associated with the investment; plus, a published Annual Report recapping the entire program for all jurisdiction partners.
- Collaborative Marketing Approach: Success relies on a leveraged, cooperative strategy built into each initiative.

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- Board Leadership: Comprised of lodging, attraction, restaurant, and hospitality leaders, along with elected officials from across the County.
- Strong Partnerships: Working closely with local businesses and government to drive marketing, PR, group business development, and community relations for destination 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, such as:

| | |
|---|--|
| Monterey County Hospitality Association | Monterey County Vintners & Growers Assn. |
| Monterey County Business Council | Monterey County Farm Bureau |
| Monterey County Film Commission | Arts Council for Monterey County |
| Big Sur Byways Organization | Monterey Regional Airport |
| Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce | Visit Carmel |
| Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce | Pacific Grove Chamber of Commerce |
| Cal State University Monterey Bay | WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca |

Responsible & Sustainable Travel

As a top bucket-list destination, Monterey County attracts visitors worldwide, making education on safe, responsible travel essential for preserving its beauty. "The Right Path," our sustainable and responsible travel initiative engages residents, businesses, stakeholders and visitors, promoting best practices across all touchpoints. We also stay prepared to respond to regional challenges like wildfires, storms and road closures, ensuring the safety and well-being of both visitors and residents.

INVESTMENT BUDGET

Maximizing Impact Together

The estimated Jurisdiction Investment Partnership with See Monterey through the Development Set Aside (DSA) for FY24-25 is approximately \$1,913,494. This workplan is based on that amount and may be adjusted if the investment changes.

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 build 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.

MONTEREY COUNTY TOURISM 2030

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In September 2024, See Monterey published *Monterey County Tourism 2030 (MCT 2030)*, a strategic roadmap guiding economic vitality and Quality of Place improvements through the end of the decade. Recognizing that a thriving tourism economy enhances community well-being, MCT 2030 takes a holistic, long-term approach, considering not just tourism and hospitality but also key factors like transportation, housing, retail development, and air service—all essential to sustaining community success.

Quality of Place refers to the overall appeal, livability, and unique character of a destination, encompassing both tangible and intangible elements that enhance the experience for residents and visitors alike.

The full MCT 2030 plan can be accessed [here](#) and is the basis for what follows in this workplan.

PROGRAMS

Marketing Communications: \$900,802

See Monterey's Marketing Communications programs leverage integrated, brand-driven content strategies across advertising, public relations, and social media to inspire and influence overnight visitation among Leisure, Group, and International travelers.

Marketing Communications Strategic Priorities – *Grow Demand*

1. Market Growth & Development
 - a. Grow destination awareness, familiarity, preference and intent to book.
 - b. Maximize reach in drive and short haul direct fly markets.
 - c. Expand reach into long haul markets.
 - d. National and international PR pitching and media hosting year-round
 - e. Grow and evolve social channels to prioritize active engagement.
2. Brandtailing
 - a. Use a combination of branding and retail driven marketing tactics to both grow awareness and initiate immediate calls to action that drive business.
 - b. Drive expanded awareness through media and brand partnerships to extend the reach past traditional advertising.
3. Extend Visitor Stay & Spend
 - a. Focus on travelers who will stay longer, experience more and spend more.
 - b. Develop content and programs that push for "one more night" by giving people reasons to stay through exclusive deals, add-on days for event attendees and education via engaging content on all Monterey County has to offer.
4. Group Marketing Strategy
 - a. Engage in advertising and content programs focused on lead generation to support efforts of the Business Development team.
 - b. Explore alternative ways to reach meeting planners outside of traditional channels.

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- c. Combine group and luxury messaging to reach C-suite decision makers and grow corporate business.
5. International Strategy
 - a. Continue tiered market approach with most activities focused on U.K., Canada and Mexico
 - b. Direct-to-consumer advertising in Tier 1 international markets via co-ops and travel trade partnerships
 - c. Engage selectively in activities in opportunity markets like western Europe and Asia
6. Responsible Travel Strategy
 - a. Transformative overhaul of responsible travel program to “The Right Path” including branding, advertising, digital content and video content development
 - b. Year-round in-destination messaging to encourage visitors to travel responsibly.
 - c. Increased message amplification in high season
7. Crisis Communications Strategy
 - a. Ongoing review of crisis communications plans to ensure constant readiness when needs arise.
 - b. Implementation of Crisis Response Review Rubric to guide response based on size, location and impact of the issue on visitors and residents.
 - c. Lock-step communication with the County and other official response organizations to ensure coordination and consistent messaging.
8. Event Strategy
 - a. Increased event promotion to build up existing events to be more inclusive and destination wide.
 - b. Work to identify and attract new events in need periods and/or alternative locations to draw visitors into other areas of the County.

Group Business Development: \$675,669

See Monterey’s Group Business Development programs drive revenue by attracting meetings, conferences, and group business, benefiting hotels and related businesses. These events help fill rooms during need periods, creating increased rate compression that supports both host hotels and surrounding lodging properties.

Meetings/Conference travelers have 158% of the value/spend of leisure travelers.

- Monterey County Tourism Impact Study,
Tourism Economics 2023

Business Development Strategic Priorities

1. Identify new Travel Segments
 - a. Attend conferences in untapped market segment.
 - b. Explore destination-wide events.
 - c. Leverage partnerships to grow awareness in new market segments.
2. Evolve In-market Industry Events
 - a. Host new industry segment events.

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- b. FAMs that support new market segments and high value business segments.
- c. Produce high touch client activation at major events.
- 3. Enhance off-season Group Business
 - a. Target specialty group segments that meet during off peak time periods
 - b. Solicit compression causing group events.
 - c. Evolve group incentive targeting “need” periods.
- 4. Expand Industry Partnerships and Sponsorships
 - a. Expand on sponsorships with speaking opportunities to reach a wider audience.
 - b. Evolve group marketing campaign to grow awareness in further out markets.
 - c. Capitalize on targeted partnerships with key industry organizations to grow leads.
- 5. Amplify Sustainability and DEI programs
 - a. Promote sustainability aspects of our destination.
 - b. Highlight LGBT Clients and their experience in the destination.
- 6. Lengthen Group Stay Patterns
 - a. Educate clients on things to do to drive attendance and stay patterns.
 - b. Leverage destination attributes to create awareness.
- 7. Amplify Meeting Planner Offerings
 - a. Curate experiential site tour program “See/Stay/Book.”
 - b. Elevate “Flash Your Badge” program offering discounts to conference attendees.

Community Relations: \$67,632

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 Engagement
 - a. Community benefit campaign: educational materials and speaking platforms.
 - b. Develop strategic partnerships and continue to work with countywide agencies in discussion of hospitality-related topics such as traffic mitigation, employee housing, etc.
- 2. Membership Growth & Development
 - a. Expand membership through continuous business outreach.
 - b. Offer destination education and skills workshops.
- 3. Destination Services
 - a. Refresh visitor planning tools and resources.
 - b. Collaborate with our regional visitor centers.



General Administration: \$269,391

See Monterey is an accredited not-for-profit Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) that adheres to industry best practices in operations and financial management. This budget supports essential expenses required to sustain all departmental programs and staffing.

Operations, Human Resources, and Administration Strategic Priorities

1. Finance & Operations
 - a. Manage cloud-based accounting, expense reporting, and accounts payable systems with digital controls and approval workflows, ensuring transparency and efficiency in cash flow analysis and financial forecasting.
 - b. Maintain essential organizational insurances, equipment, and supplies to support team needs, including hybrid work arrangements.
2. Human Resources & Organizational Culture
 - a. Cultivate strategic partnerships that strengthen our workplace culture and provide critical internal function backups.
 - b. Oversee payroll, expense reimbursement, and performance management systems designed to optimize time and cost efficiency.
 - c. Advance talent acquisition and retention programs that foster professional growth and seamless transitions.
 - d. Foster an inclusive workplace where every team member feels valued, has equal opportunities to thrive, and is encouraged to contribute to the organization and the broader hospitality industry. Team members should feel confident as their authentic selves while upholding professional standards collaboratively established by the team.
3. Governance & Administration
 - a. Provide administrative leadership and support to the Board of Directors and eight (8) Committees, ensuring compliance with best practices, the Brown Act, and all relevant nonprofit governance regulations.
 - b. Administer and track diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives to demonstrate and reinforce the organization's ongoing commitment to these values.

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:

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

This work plan, including the performance measures and budget, are tentative based on budget approval by the County Board of Supervisors and adopted by the See Monterey Board of Directors on June 26, 2025.