



Grant Details

118486 - FY23 DMO Plan

122518 - FY23 Livingston DMO Marketing Plan

DOC Office of Tourism

Grant Title: FY23 Livingston DMO Marketing Plan

Grant Number: 23-51-052

Grant Status: Underway

Comments:

Applicant Organization: Livingston Business Improvement District

Grantee Contact: Kris King

Award Year: FY23

Program Area: DOC Office of Tourism

Amounts:

Contract Dates:	Contract Sent	Contract Received	Contract Executed
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Project Dates:	06/15/2022	07/01/2022	06/30/2023
	Proposal Date	Project Start	Project End

Grant Administrator: Barb Sanem

Contract Number: 23-51-052

Award Year: FY23

Contract Dates

Contract Sent	Contract Received	Contract Executed	Contract Legal
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Project Dates 07/01/2022

06/30/2023

Project Start	Project End
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Comments

Amendment Comments

DMO Plan Narrative

1. Describe Your Destination

Describe your destination (who you are, who you wish to attract and why they would come) addressing your strengths, opportunities, and potential challenges.

Livingston, Montana is an historic train town, the historic year round gateway to Yellowstone National Park, and a laidback home base for vibrant arts, epic recreation and an array of unexpectedly sophisticated dining, lodging, shopping and cultural experiences. Livingston is looking to attract travelers who appreciate the welcoming, small town vibe of a less populated Montana town, and who will recreate responsibly and relish Livingston as if it was their own.

The City of Livingston is more than the traditional gateway to Yellowstone National Park. It is a unique and desirable destination for international and national travelers, plus drive market visitors, with a wide range of interests that go beyond Yellowstone.

Livingston mixes casual small-town charm and world-class amenities with a twist of historic quirkiness and offers an impressive array of arts, culture, history, culinary, events, and recreation adventure amenities. We recently rebranded Livingston with the taglines “Rustic. Refined. Legendary.” and “Experience Epic.”

Livingston is the county seat of Park County and is situated in the middle of four stunning mountain ranges (Absaroka Beartooth Mountains, Crazy Mountains, Bangtail Mountains and the Bridger Mountains) and is nestled along the Yellowstone River - the longest, free-flowing river in the lower 48 states.

We are interested in attracting high-value, low impact visitors who appreciate all that Livingston has to offer, throughout all months of the year, but especially the cool weather season.

In addition to offering an incredible array of ways to “Stay. Play. Seize the Day”, we have preserved one of Montana’s most visually appealing and historic downtowns. Livingston is the original and year-round entrance into Yellowstone Park, offering year-round appeal, and is conveniently located 30 minutes from booming Bozeman and its international airport and less than two hours from Billings, Montana’s largest city.

Our town of approximately 8,000 residents has richly layered distinctive cultures: railroad and pioneer history; gateway to Yellowstone; fly fishing mecca; recreation hub; historically preserved downtown; rustic and luxury destination lodging and dining; popular filming location; more artists and writers per capita than anywhere in the state; thriving theatre, arts, culinary, and nightlife scenes for a town of its size; and serves a wide range of demographics from ranchers, to eco-conscious outdoor enthusiasts, to movie stars, renowned writers, artists and music icons.

Our Strengths

- Strong Collaborations, Communications, and Partnerships: Livingston CVB and the Livingston Tourism Business Improvement District, Downtown Business Improvement District, Yellowstone Country, City of Livingston, Park County, Montana Downtown Directors, Montana Tourism Matters, Montana Department of Transportation, Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development, Bozeman Trail Regional Group, Livingston’s Historic Preservation Commission, Urban Renewal District, Business Owners for Community Health, Park Local Development Corp., and a wide range of local organizations addressing everything from

passenger rail, public arts, Livingston Growth Policy, Parks and Trails, and Livingston's designation in the Montana Main Street Program, among others.

- Close Proximity to Year-Round National Park Entrance: Historic gateway to Yellowstone National Park 55 miles away to the year-round entrance that offers year-round recreation and visiting opportunities.
- Easily Accessible Location: Conveniently located at the intersection of Interstate Highway 90 and Highway 89 to Yellowstone National Park, 30 minutes east of booming Bozeman and its international airport and less than two hours west of Billings, Montana's largest city. Also between Paradise Valley to the south and Shields River Valley to the north.
- Destination Lodging, Retreats and Hot Springs: In addition to rustic, historic and family-friending lodging in Livingston, Park County is home to a wide range of unique short-term rentals, Sage Lodge, Chico Hot Springs, Mountain Sky Guest Ranch, Yellowstone Hot Springs, and numerous smaller dude ranches. These attract destination weddings, honeymooners, family reunions, corporate retreats and other group travelers.
- Historic Downtown: Preserved buildings and an Old West movie set aesthetic including many vintage neon signs and 'ghost signs' historic ads painted on brick buildings; attracting visitor photography and social media posts, and film scouts.
- Small Town Shopping: Downtown has no chain stores and a wealth of unique and boutique shops; handicrafts, records, books, art center and galleries, photography and ceramic studios, handmade chocolate shop, new-age boutiques, home goods, kitchen store, souvenirs, gifts, toys, antiques, resale and thrift stores, vintage fashion, outdoor gear and western wear. Visitors enjoy small-town, friendly service; often the owner of the business will wait on customers. Every stop is an opportunity to connect with locals.
- Exit 333 Infrastructure: The majority of national chain hotels and fast food are at this exit to Yellowstone National Park, but it also boasts: a large grocery store with pharmacy and sushi counter, a laundromat (with adjacent horse boarding), local meat shop and two ethnic eateries, gas stations, car wash, veterinarian, dog boarding, urgent care center, physical therapist, liquor store, smoke shop, casino, and bus stops for both free Livingston transport - Windrider is adding a Friday and Saturday evening shuttle from Exit 333 Hotels to Downtown in summer 2022 - and an events bus to Paradise Valley music venues.

Our Opportunities

- Still Small Town Feel and Easily Accessible: Although we've seen increased visitation, we're still less populated and less visited than other parts of Montana and ideal for those who want to experience casual small-town charm and world-class amenities.
- Cooler Season Recreation Hub: Hundreds of miles of trails for cross country and backcountry skiing. Hiking and biking are accessible much of the cool season. New in 2021, Livingston has an indoor ice skating rink, and skating on the Lagoon when cold enough. Bridger Bowl is 30 miles away, plus access to eight state parks and several dozen trailheads are all under an hour drive from Livingston.
- Warm Season Recreation Hub: On the banks of the Yellowstone River with blue-ribbon fishing, whitewater rafting, scenic floating, kayaking, tour boats, and paddleboarding. Hundreds of miles of trails for hiking at all skill levels, camping, rock climbing and mountain biking. Access fourteen fishing access sites, eight state parks, several dozen trailheads; all under an hour drive from Livingston. There is also a golf course, bowling alley, shooting range and many horseback riding dude ranches.

- Year-Round Recreation Infrastructure: Strong recreation amenity infrastructure with robust rental and guide services: rent bikes, snowshoes, cross country and backcountry skis, kayaks, rafts, and stand-up paddleboards and book guides for fly fishing, white water rafting, horseback riding, and hunting.
- Year-Round Foodie Paradise: Vegan, fine dining, ethnic foods, rustic steakhouses, sushi and seafood, vintage burger joints, traditional and breakfast cafés, European style bakeries, numerous quirky coffee shops, diverse bars, two breweries, a gourmet wine shop and a regional craft beer store. Come hungry, and thirsty!
- Year-Round Arts and Culture Hub: Home to two live theatres and art centers, three museums with history, train, and fishing exhibits, over a dozen art galleries, a vintage movie house, outdoor and indoor live music venues, and literary events at several of our five book stores.
- Year-Round Events: Catering to a wide range of interests and tastes; rodeos, parades, auto show, artwalks, music, beer and film festivals, fun runs, holiday festivals, and more.
- Breadth of Other High-Value, Low Impact Experiences
 - Agritourism: Access farm-to-table fare at restaurants, the farm-to-table hospital cafeteria, Farmer's Market, local food markets and caterers, local aquaponic growers, farms and ranches, and the Livingston Food Resource Center bakery and deli, which bakes bread for every food pantry in Montana.
 - Destination Weddings: offering a range of scenic wedding venues, caterers, lodging, photographers and videographers, and florists.
 - Film Location: Downtown Livingston's intact historic visage has attracted commercials, television and movies for decades, the new Yellowstone Film Ranch has extensive sets, Paradise Valley and various Park County vistas are scenic year-round, and Livingston is home to many set scouts, set designers, makeup artists, set photographers, actors, musicians and prop resources. Livingston was named the 2020 Film Friendly Community of the Year at the Montana Tourism Awards and hosted more films in 2021 than any other community in Montana.
 - Family-Friendly Amenities: Playgrounds, outdoor pool, skating rink, skateboard park, ceramic painting studio, youth activities at museums, free public transport, historic bus tours, golf course, winter indoor skating rink, dog parks, and trails and parks throughout town.

Our Challenges

- Sustainability Challenges: Livingston is experiencing increasing and unsustainable tourism, housing, workforce, small business, development and recreation pressures. Demands outpace current capacity and without a robust plan, our celebrated community character, historic architecture, and fragile recreational and environmental assets are all imperiled. To retain our irreplaceable historic assets and build a sustainable economy we are in a narrow time window to create a strategic foundational plan to forge an achievable and sustainable future.
- Seasonality of Tourism: Overcrowding in the warm season months (May through October) and less tourist traffic in the cooler season months (November through April) makes keeping businesses open and staff employed year-round a challenge.
- Housing and Affordability Issues: Increasing use of local housing as short-term rentals and the recent spike in home sales due to telecommuters has made affordable workforce housing the biggest challenge for Park

County's service and tourism industries. Short-term rentals also distort the occupancy and average daily room rates at traditional lodging properties, which also house construction crews, movie crews, and displaced residents.

- Perception of Only a Pass-Through Location: The perception that Livingston is a pass-through into Yellowstone National Park and not a destination in itself to explore.
- COVID-19 Related Impacts: Including public health wellness, business closure or limitations, staffing shortages and lack of J-1 visas, no lodging or camping vacancies, lack of rental cars, and overbooking overflow from Yellowstone National Park and surrounding communities.
- Wayfinding Signs: Livingston lacks comprehensive wayfinding signs at our three exits; our freeway tourism billboards are overdue for an update and are damaged; and in-town wayfinding signs are not visible, rudimentary, or non-existent.
- Popularity of Yellowstone Series: The popular Yellowstone series is fictionally set in Paradise Valley, increasing interest in the area by a more general audience who may have false expectations of what the area's experience may be based on what's been portrayed in the series.
- National and World Events: Including fluctuating gas prices, war, terrorism, infectious diseases, climate change (affecting water temps on our much loved and over-fished Yellowstone River) and natural disasters (floods and wildfires) all impact tourism.
- Negative Perceptions: Recent Montana State legislative initiatives have led to negative national press and perception of Montana as an undesirable destination due to legislation impacting trans youth, women, county health departments and public health, and expansion of open carry laws.
- Impacts to Infrastructure and Resources: Managing greater numbers of visitors and traffic flow negatively impacts County and City infrastructure. In 2019, another local option tax was introduced to the Montana Legislature, which would have allowed citizens to decide whether to impose a sales tax in Park County in order to pay for specific projects. The legislation would have given power to local voters, stressing it could be a way to lower local property taxes and raise more money from tourists who use local infrastructure but do not financially support it.
- Public Transportation Options: Lack of public transportation to and through YNP and increased tourist traffic to and from Yellowstone limit tourism and levy added burdens on local resources.
- The WIND and Its Impacts: The average wind speed as measured at the airport is 15.2 mph, more than 3 mph windier than Great Falls. Livingston's severe crosswinds frequently shut down Interstate 90, rerouting interstate traffic through town on Park Street, and semis and train cars have blown over.

2. Align with Montana Brand

Briefly describe how your destination aligns with the Montana Brand.

Livingston Exemplifies the Montana Brand

More spectacular unspoiled nature: Livingston's location among four mountain ranges, alongside the Yellowstone River and adjacent to Paradise Valley and the north entrance to Yellowstone Park as well as easy access to state parks, hundreds of miles of trails, fishing access sites, make it an ideal getaway for lovers of outdoor experiences.

Vibrant and charming small town: Livingston's famous downtown is among the most vibrant and charming in Montana. The preserved historic businesses with vintage neon and "ghost signs" on historic buildings make it an attraction to film crews, photographers, and visitors. Downtown is actively increasing the number of murals to enhance the experience of both visitors and locals. Our niche and boutique shops, restaurants, museum and arts destinations, breweries and bars offer a mix of traditional and contemporary products and experiences. Our popular Farmer's Market on the banks of the Yellowstone River includes live music, food and beer vendors in addition to local agriculture products, arts and crafts.

Breathtaking experiences by day, relaxing hospitality at night: In Livingston, we have multiple types of breathtaking experiences during the daytime hours - from inspiring museums to extensive recreational pursuits. Livingston has three museums featuring fly fishing, train and regional history and over a dozen local art galleries. We are home to more writers per capita than anywhere in the state with five book stores; two of which host year round literary events most weeks. Downtown art walks attract visitors throughout the warm season, and over a dozen art galleries are open year round. Bars host trivia, bingo, karaoke, open mic, and live music events weekly throughout the year. We also offer unique and boutique shopping with everything from handicrafts, to records, handmade chocolate, gifts, vintage fashion, antiques, western wear, and regional books.

Livingston is also homebase to fishing, river sports, hiking, hunting, rock climbing, skiing, horseback riding, and guided outdoor experiences. Visitors can also take a break to paint pottery with the kids, indulge in a spa treatment, or enjoy a local yoga class. Livingston has free public transport, historic bus tours, bikes for rent, a swimming pool, golf course, bowling alley, skate park, ice skating rink, and playgrounds, trails and parks throughout town.

At night, there are culinary options for every taste, live indoor and outdoor music venues, a vibrant theatre scene, movie theatre, hot springs to star watch from, two breweries, and casual or raucous bars as memorialized in the Jimmy Buffet song "Livingston Saturday Night." We also host evening music, movie, theatre, and holiday lights festivals.

3. What is the strategic role of your DMO?

Select all that apply: Destination Marketing, Destination Management, Destination Stewardship, Destination Development).

Destination Marketing, Destination Management, Destination Stewardship

Based on the strategic role you serve, provide the following information.

3a. Define your audience(s) (demographic, geographic, and psycho-graphic).

Destination Marketing Audience: High-Value, Low Impact Cooler Season Visitors

Given our destination marketing organization's goal of attracting high-value, low impact winter/cooler month visitors to the Livingston area, we are focused on "Experience Seekers," as outlined in the Montana Winter Brand, "Defining the Montana Winter Experience" and confirmed by Destination Analysts, "Montana Profile & Study of the Winter Enthusiast," 2018.

As Montana communities become busier, more populated, or are not thriving, Experience Seekers - whether they are out-of-state or in-state residents - long for an authentic experience where they will experience both nature plus access to modern and erudite amenities. Livingston is that rare place. Repeat and regional visitors are more likely to visit in shoulder seasons, return to favorite shops, eateries and hotels and form connections and relationships in the area, creating a more stable income stream for Livingston and Park County year-round.

Below are characteristics of the Experience Seekers, based on the Montana Winter Brand audience and the Montana Winter Enthusiast as outlined by Destination Analysts, ITRR data from 2017 through 2021 during Q1 and Q4, plus Livingston's attributes as a vibrant, small town destination for arts, culture, events, history, food and recreation.

DEMOGRAPHIC

- + Age: 25-75+
- + HHI: \$50K-\$100K or more
- + Couples
- + Bachelor's degree or higher
- + Has taken 2+ domestic vacations in the past 12 months and was active on these trips

GEOGRAPHIC

- + Out-of-State: Wyoming, Utah (Salt Lake City), Minnesota (Minneapolis), North Dakota (Bismarck), Colorado (Denver), Washington (Spokane, Seattle), Idaho (Boise)
- + In-State: Billings, Helena, Missoula, Great Falls

PSYCHOGRAPHICS

Our visitors may often seek one specific outdoor activity but their trip is about much more than one activity. They are unlikely to choose a place that doesn't have good recreational opportunities - skiing, hiking, etc. - but what will excite them about a place is what else they can experience - i.e., hot springs, arts, culture, good food. This should not be mistaken for them wanting to pack in a little of everything; they don't. For each trip they want to do a few big things and they want to experience them fully. They also don't want to be around crowds.

- + Seeks balance between action and reflection

- + Motivated by outdoor recreation—keep in mind outdoor recreation is only one of many activities they enjoy (e.g., wildlife viewing, history, culture, arts, events, food, hot springs)
- + Wants to do multiple activities and experience them fully
- + Feels a unique connection to the natural world that only the cooler season can bring
- + Seeks the authenticity of people and places
- + Doesn't want to be in booming (and more expensive) Bozeman but appreciates the convenience of it and its airport being nearby

Destination Management Audience: Warm Season Visitors

As a destination management organization, our goal is to work collaboratively with other Livingston area entities to educate warm season visitors to encourage high-value/low impact behavior. Although we aren't marketing Livingston as a destination to this audience, it is helpful to understand who they are as we determine how to best educate them. According to ITRR data from 2017 through 2021, and confirmed by our website and social media analytics, overnight, out-of-state visitors to Livingston during Q2 and Q3 have the following characteristics.

DEMOGRAPHIC

- + Age: 25-75+
- + HHI: \$50K-\$200K or more
- + Couples and families

GEOGRAPHIC

- + Out-of-State: Minnesota, Wyoming, Washington, Idaho, Colorado, Oregon, California, New York, Florida, Texas, Arizona, Illinois

PSYCHOGRAPHICS

- + Wanting to experience national parks with Visiting Yellowstone National Park with some also making it Glacier National Park
- + Interested in spending time doing outdoor-related activities including: day hiking, camping, fishing, watching wildlife, visiting farmer's markets, biking and visiting hot springs, plus hiring an outfitter

Destination Stewardship Audience: Livingston Area Organizations

In order for us to achieve our goal of establishing a sustainable economic development and regional resource stewardship strategy, the Livingston CVB is looking to collaborate with local organizations including, but not limited to the following:

Livingston Tourism Business Improvement District, Downtown Livingston Business Improvement District, Yellowstone Country, City of Livingston, Park County, Bozeman Trail Regional Group, Livingston's Historic Preservation Commission, Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority, Urban Renewal District, Yellowstone Gateway Museum, Livingston Depot Center, Livingston Gallery Association, Elk River Arts and Lectures, Park Local Development Corp, Park County Community Foundation, Park County Environmental Council, Wild Livelihoods Business Coalition, Take the Paradise Pledge, and a wide range of other local organizations that we interact with weekly.

Other supporters include: Montana Downtown Directors, Montana Tourism Matters, Montana Department of Transportation, Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development, and the Montana Tourism Advisory Council.

3b. What research supports your DMO strategy?

Looking at the data available from multiple sources, we have confirmed that our efforts would be best focused on not promoting the Livingston area during the warmer months and, instead, looking at a sustainable tourism approach that attracts high-value, low impact visitors. Sources and data used are included below. In addition to what's noted below, we review our website analytics from Wix.com, Google Analytics and analytics from our social media channels including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc.

Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development Research

<https://marketmt.com/Programs/Marketing/Tourism-Research/Contact>

Montana Tourism Data: Card Spend

<https://marketmt.com/Programs/Marketing/Tourism-Research/Tourism-Spending>

Explore Livingston Website Analytics

<https://www.explorelivingstonmt.com/>

Consumer Marketing Market Analysis

<https://marketmt.com/Programs/Marketing/The-Montana-Brand>

Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research (ITRR)

<https://itr.umn.edu/interactive-data/default.php>

Bed Tax Revenue

<https://marketmt.com/Programs/Industry-Services-and-Outreach/Lodging-Facility-Use-Tax>

Yellowstone National Park Visitation

http://www.tourismresearchmt.org/index.php?option=com_traveltrends&view=traveltrends&Itemid=108

Montana Department of Transportation: Airport Deboardings

http://www.tourismresearchmt.org/index.php?option=com_traveltrends&view=traveltrends&Itemid=106

BED TAX REVENUE: LIVINGSTON CVB

2021 478,128
2020 222,072
2019 270,790
2018 270,775
2017 297,629

Source: Montana Department of Commerce, Office of Tourism

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK VISITATION

2021 4,860,242
2020 3,806,306
2019 4,020,288
2018 4,115,000
2017 4,116,524

Source: National Park Service Public Use Statistics Office

AIRPORT DEBOARDINGS (BOZEMAN YELLOWSTONE AIRPORT)

2021 966,492
2020 443,466
2019 788,154
2018 671,367
2017 599,176

Source: Montana Department of Transportation

3c. What are your emerging markets?

Our destination marketing organization's primary target audience and emerging market is the Experience Seeker, the high-value, low-impact cooler season visitor, that we have outlined in 3a. This will be a new focus for us in FY23, based on our FY23 destination marketing goal.

Emerging geographical markets for the Experience Seeker, based on ITRR data and our website analytics, include: British Columbia; Alberta; and Saskatchewan, depending on COVID-19 restrictions.

Other emerging segments that we are interested in attracting to Livingston are noted below, all of which either complement or are subsets within the Experience Seeker:

- Arts and culture enthusiasts who appreciate arts packages pairing theatre, film festivals, music festivals, art walks, and book readings with restaurant and hotel stays. A subset of the arts audience is literary, history, and arts tourism with book store and art gallery visits, readings, self guided or in person history tours, bus tours, and information about Livingston's noted writers, with overlapping movie and music ties.
- Year-round outdoor enthusiasts (cross country, backcountry and downhill skiers, snowshoers, Yellowstone winter visitors, hikers, campers, climbers, bikers, ice skaters) with access to rental equipment and locals' adventure recommendations.
- Foodie and farm-to-table visitors who enjoy our restaurants, boutique health markets, farmer's markets and farm-to-table programs (school, hospital, food pantry, local ranchers, aquaponic and greenhouse producers).
- Eco-tourists focused on footprint reduction (including local public transport and bike rentals) and healthy food choices (some overlap with food conscious marketing).
- Two-wheel travelers including ebikers, mountain and road bicyclists who are attracted to the many trails in Park County, especially during the months of April and November. A bucket list experience is also the brief Yellowstone Park spring bicycling window to enjoy biking on roads without auto traffic.

One other future, emerging market to note is the potential of attracting regional and smaller conferences during the cooler season. Future construction of a lodging facility with a meeting room near the Fairfield is being planned and would support attracting this potential market.

4. Define and describe your overall goals.

A goal is an idea of the future or desired result that a person or group of people envisions, plans and commits to achieve.

Livingston CVB has three important goals in its third year, each related to each of its strategic roles.

- Destination Marketing: Attract high-value, low impact visitors to the Livingston area during the winter/cooler months to address our current seasonality challenges with overcrowding in the warm season months and lack of tourism in the cooler months.
- Destination Management: Educate warm season visitors to encourage them to embrace high-value/low impact behavior in support of our sustainable tourism challenges.
- Destination Stewardship: Establish a sustainable tourism strategic plan, working with other local organizations to help direct visitation that both strengthens the local economy and respects resident access to recreation and cultural assets.

4a. Describe proposed tactics and projects as related to overall goals and controlled by the organization in its financial statements.

Destination Marketing Goal: Attract high-value, low impact visitors to the Livingston area during the winter/cooler months to address our current seasonality challenges with overcrowding in the warm season months and lack of tourism in the cooler months.

Overall Objective: Increase year-over-year lodging tax collections and visitor spending in the cooler months for the Livingston CVB.

Proposed Tactics and Projects: Develop and execute a cool season marketing campaign, highlighting the mixture of small town experiences that includes arts, culture, events, history, food and recreation, reaching the Experience Seeker target audience through paid, owned and earned media tactics.

Paid media tactics to include: Digital advertising, social media and print/magazine advertising reaching target audiences; plus Yellowstone Public Radio and Montana Public Radio sponsorships, and TBD joint venture marketing opportunities.

Owned media tactics to include: Content, video, photography and winter itineraries shared on website, social media platforms and email marketing campaigns (to be determined).

Earned media tactics to include: Working with influencers, journalists and photographers to be included in their stories.

Destination Management Goal: Educate warm season visitors to encourage them to embrace high-value/low impact behavior in support of our sustainable tourism challenges.

Overall Objective: Create awareness of our “preserve and protect Livingston” (exact name TBD) campaign among visitors and locals and increase year-over-year website traffic and social engagement.

Proposed Tactics and Projects: Develop and execute a “preserve and protect Livingston” (exact name TBD) campaign, educating visitors and connecting with locals about Livingston’s unique but imperiled small town culture and environmental assets. Connect with our warm season visitors both before they arrive through our website and social media platforms and then while they are here through repurposed and strategically placed signage and eye-catching visuals throughout the community.

Paid media tactics to include: Billboards, banners, etc.

Owned media tactics to include: Content, video, photography and visuals shared on website, social media platforms and email marketing campaigns (to be determined).

Earned media tactics to include: Distributing 1,000 free bumper stickers. Working with influencers, journalists and photographers to be included in their stories.

Destination Stewardship Goal: Establish a sustainable tourism strategic plan, working with other local organizations.

Overall Objective: Obtain diverse participation and input to develop key takeaways for the sustainable tourism strategic plan.

Proposed Tactics and Projects: Take the steps needed to create a sustainable tourism strategic plan; including: form steering committee of stakeholders; review existing ITRR research and other community-wide data; distribute survey to understand and measure Livingston area hospitality and tourism related businesses’s thoughts on tourism; conduct listening sessions with community members to gather input; analyze and summarize findings into key takeaways; outline plan and share with stakeholders for review and adoption.

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Objectives/Metrics/Evaluation

Objectives	Measurable Metrics for Success	Report the Metric Achieved	Evaluation of Measurable Metrics for Success
<p>Destination Marketing Objective: Increase year-over-year lodging tax collections and visitor spending in the cooler months for the Livingston CVB.</p>	<p>Destination Marketing: Increase year-over-year lodging tax collections by 5% during Q4 2022 and Q1 2023 vs. Q4 2021 and Q1 2022 for the Livingston CVB.</p> <p>Destination Marketing: Increase year-over-year consumer visitor spending in Park County by 4% during Q4 2022 and Q1 2023 vs. Q4 2021 and Q1 2022.</p> <p>Destination Marketing: Increase number of domestic out-of-state and in-state devices to Park County by 5% between November 2022 through March 2023 (vs. November 21 through March 2022).</p> <p>Destination Marketing: Increase length of stay for trips to Park County by domestic out-of-state devices and in-state devices</p>	<p><i>Destination Marketing:</i> Q4 22 vs Q4 21 was down 25% and Q1 23 vs Q1 22 was down 5%.</p> <p><i>Destination Marketing:</i> Average visitor spending in Park County increased by more than 16% during Q4 2022 and Q1 2023 vs. Q4 2021 and Q1 2022, with each month seeing an increase.</p> <p><i>Destination Marketing:</i> Traffic into the park from Park County shows an overall year-over-year decrease between November 2022 through March 2023.</p> <p><i>Destination Marketing:</i> ITRR data reports that the length of stay for non-resident visitors increased from 5.6 nights during Q4 2021 and Q1 2022 to 9.4 nights during Q4 2022 and Q1 2023.</p>	<p>We did not achieve this metric of lodging tax collection increases. This is attributed to widespread assumptions that following the Yellowstone Floods, Yellowstone Park and our region were not accessible or damaged beyond enjoyment even after the Northern Entrance reopened.</p> <p>Visitor spending was quadruple our objective increase during this time frame, part of it can be attributed to inflation, but anecdotal evidence is that fellow Montanans visited and spent more in our region in support of our communities following the floods.</p> <p>Limited data was available at the time of the report's deadline from Zartico via the Department of Commerce, which is where we sourced this metric initially when writing the FY23 plan, to measure the number of devices. Alternative, but less specific, data is available by looking at traffic to the Northern Entrance of Yellowstone National Park.</p> <p>Limited data was available at the time of the report's deadline from Zartico via the Department of Commerce to measure the length of stay of devices. However, ITRR data reports that non-resident length of stay nearly doubled in the winter season.</p>

	by 5% between November 2022 through March 2023 (vs. November 21 through March 2022).		
Destination Management Objective: Create awareness of our “preserve and protect Livingston” (exact name TBD) campaign among visitors and locals and increase year-over-year website traffic and social engagement.	<p>Destination Management: Increase year-over-year traffic to Explore Livingston’s website and social media platforms by 5%.</p> <p>Destination Management: Install 20+ visuals (3 billboards using grandfathered in billboards from an outdated campaign, 18 banners and signs) and distribute 500+ free bumper stickers that remind people to “preserve and protect Livingston” (exact name TBD).</p>	<p>Traffic to our website was down 18% year over year. Social media engagement exceeded our objective of a 5% increase. Facebook reach was up 563% and visits up 561% year over year. Instagram reach was up 204% and visits up 98% year over year. This engagement is significant given that new followers on both social media platforms were only up about 28%.</p> <p>The Destination Management visuals were not implemented.</p>	<p>We began working on the campaign, initially “For the Love of Livingston,” but didn’t implement it due to pivoting to focus on Yellowstone Flood information and tourism recovery as we do not have the personnel to implement multiple simultaneous campaigns. Funds in the FY23 budget for this Destination Management campaign have been rolled over to implement in FY24.</p> <p>We did not reach our website traffic objective, likely a result of people not planning visits due to the Yellowstone Floods. (This theory is supported by current fiscal year data that shows our website traffic is up 334% year over year to date). We exceeded our social media reach objective significantly, likely due to the Pick Your Path to Paradise Yellowstone Flood recovery campaign.</p> <p>We did not meet the Destination Management visuals objective as this Destination Management plan had to pivot to instead focus on Yellowstone Flood information and visitation recovery, with a Pick Your Path to Paradise (P2P) “Play Today, Invest in Tomorrow” campaign. Livingston hotel occupancy was predicted to be down due to the Floods by about 50% in the high season but ended up being down only 25%.</p>
Destination Stewardship Objective: Obtain diverse participation and input to develop key takeaways for the sustainable tourism strategic plan.	Destination Stewardship: Secure input from 100+ community members via stakeholder engagement, survey and listening sessions to develop the key takeaways for the sustainable tourism strategic plan.	We distributed an initial (pre-flood) survey that garnered responses from 245 people, exceeding our goal of engagement from 100 community members. More details on the survey results in the Narrative section.	Immediately following our Destination Stewardship survey, the priority for Destination Stewardship pivoted to Yellowstone Flood information and post-flood economic and visitor recovery, which included dozens of emergency response, recovery, and sustainability strategy meetings with regional stakeholders and peers around the state. The partnership meetings have yielded wider data sets than we could have gathered on our own and will be accessed for ongoing strategic planning. The next stage of engagement and implementation for Destination Stewardship strategies was delayed until the current fiscal year.

DMO Budget

Allowable Methods	Amount	% of Budget	Amount	% of Budget
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	Budgeted	Allocated	Expended	Expended
Administration	\$9,854.00	20.0	\$7,284.00	73.94
Agency Services	\$6,069.00	12.32	\$5,000.00	82.39
Earned Media/Tourism Sales	\$450.00	0.91	\$504.00	112.0
Education/Outreach	\$1,000.00	2.03	\$389.00	38.9
Joint Venture	\$5,500.00	11.16	\$5,500.00	100.0
Marketing Resources	\$468.00	0.95	\$500.00	106.84
Paid Media	\$5,893.00	11.96	\$6,019.00	102.14
Marketing Personnel	\$15,041.00	30.52	\$4,500.00	29.92
Product Development	\$0.00	0	\$718.00	100.0
Website Development (Online, Website, Mobile)	\$5,000.00	10.15	\$7,480.00	149.6
	\$49,275.00	100.00	\$37,894.00	

Narrative Evaluation

1) Destination Marketing Objective: Increase year-over-year lodging tax collections and visitor spending in the cooler months for the Livingston DMO.

Year over year spending in Park County increased and length of stay for nonresident visitors nearly doubled. However, year over year winter visitation via the Northern Entrance to Yellowstone Park decreased and we did not meet our Destination Marketing goal to increase year-over-year lodging tax collections by 5% during Q4 2022 and Q1 2023 vs. Q4 2021 and Q1. This is attributed to widespread assumptions by visitors following the Yellowstone Floods that Yellowstone Park and our region were not accessible or were damaged beyond enjoyment even after the Northern Entrance reopened. This assumption was held not just by national and international travelers given the focus on images of housing falling into the river, but also by residents as nearby as Bozeman 30 miles away. To address these assumptions, we developed a marketing campaign, "Pick Your Path to Paradise" and "Pick Your Path to Winter Paradise" to educate our target audiences about all of the attractions in our region located just outside of the park and also announce when the Northern Entrance was re-opened and focus on winter visitation. We used a Flood Recovery Grant from Commerce for this Flood Recovery informational and inspirational campaign.

2) Destination Management Objective: Create awareness of our "preserve and protect Livingston" (exact name TBD) campaign among visitors and locals and increase year-over-year website traffic and social engagement.

Our inability to increase year-over-year traffic to Explore Livingston's website by 5% was likely a result of people not planning visits due to the Yellowstone Floods. (This theory is supported by current fiscal year data that shows our website traffic is up 334% year over year to date). In FY23 we added a number of new website assets including an interactive map, Field Guide and blogs, which also go to our LinkTree live seasonal links on Instagram. Our FY23 social media engagement was up significantly due to Flood awareness and recovery campaigns.

We began working on a Destination Management campaign, with a first draft as "For the Love of Livingston," in the first part of the fiscal year but community engagement and implementation were put on hold after the devastating Yellowstone floods of June 2022 because we do not have the personnel to implement multiple simultaneous campaigns. Funds in the FY23 budget for this Destination Management campaign have been rolled over to implement

in FY24. This Destination Management plan pivoted to focus on Yellowstone Flood information and visitation recovery, with a Pick Your Path to Paradise (P2P) “Play Today, Invest in Tomorrow” campaign. This campaign was in partnership with Gardiner to promote area visitation prior to the Northern Entrance of Yellowstone being open. The campaign included a shared Livingston, Paradise Valley, Gardiner website <https://www.path2paradisemt.com/> with itineraries, interactive map, and informational links. 500 posters were distributed throughout the area. Through radio ads and digital media, we targeted the statewide drive market with Montanans eager to help us recover from the Yellowstone Floods. Our Flood Recovery/Open for Business social media posts (172 Facebook posts, 161 Instagram, 214 Stories) on our social media channels for organic unpaid content included amplified reach with the John Mayer flood recovery concert series. Our paid Path to Paradise social media campaign with 21 ad sets in a series of nine themes had a Cost per Click (CPC) of .55, Click Through Rate (CTR) of 1.19. P2P ads generated a total of 195,804 impressions, 58,484 reach, and garnered 1,740 clicks.

Livingston hotel occupancy was predicted to be down about 50% in the high season but ended up being down only 25%, although this occupancy reduction did impact our budget. We continued our campaign through the FY23 Winter with a Pick Your Path to Winter Paradise when Yellowstone Park’s northern entrance reopened but visitation remained lower than previous years. The billboards, banners, and sign updates for this Objective are underway in the current fiscal year as “Livingston Like a Local.”

*3) **Destination Stewardship:** Obtain diverse participation and input to develop key takeaways for the sustainable tourism strategic plan.*

We distributed an initial pre-flood survey that garnered responses from 245 people, exceeding our goal of engagement from 100 community members. Then the priority for Destination Stewardship pivoted to Yellowstone Flood information and post-flood economic and visitor recovery, which included dozens of emergency response, recovery, and sustainability strategy meetings with regional stakeholders and peers around the state. The partnership meetings have yielded wider data sets than we could have gathered on our own and will be accessed for strategic planning. The next stage of engagement and implementation for Destination Stewardship strategies was delayed until the current fiscal year.

Stakeholder survey summary:

- 245 people started the survey, 88% are from Livingston
- 1/3 of the respondents are involved in the hospitality/tourism industry
- Majority agree that the overall benefits of tourism outweigh the negative impacts
- They also agree that area is becoming overcrowded due to summer visitors
- They appreciate the economic and quality of life benefits of tourism
- They are also concerned about impacts to traffic, affordable housing and more
- Respondents want visitors to be respectful; grateful; responsible and smart; low impact; and supportive
- They have a high level of interest in a sustainable tourism strategic management initiative and are willing to get involved

Key takeaways:

- Majority of respondents agree that:

- Overall benefits of tourism outweigh the negative impacts
- The area is becoming overcrowded because of more tourists
- The area is becoming overcrowded because of more summer visitors
- Respondents were nearly evenly split as to whether or not the area's overall quality of life will improve if tourism increases
- Attitudes about tourism differ from those from Yellowstone Country who completed ITRR's study; Livingston area respondents were:
 - Less likely to agree that the overall benefits of tourism outweigh the negative impacts
 - More likely to agree that the area is becoming overcrowded because of more tourists

Several key themes emerged from the open-ended responses to the question: What would you like to communicate to those visiting the Livingston area?

- Respondents want visitors to be:
 - Respectful (101): "Treat the place with the respect equal to the awe that brought you here." "Be patient. Be kind, Be a good neighbor."
 - Grateful (58): "Don't be in a hurry. Enjoy what we have to offer."
 - Responsible and Smart (41): "Just don't be an idiot and you'll be most welcome here." "Recreate responsibly."
 - Low Impact (26): "Love our little town and leave it better than you found it."
 - Supportive (22): "Buy from and support locally owned businesses." "Protect what you come to see."
 - Want Visitors not New Residents (14): "Visit but don't stay."

Interest in Sustainability:

- 150 people (64%) are interested in seeing sustainable tourism management initiatives used to help plan and manage for continued visitation
 - 61 people (26%) said "maybe"
- 171 people (82%) are interested in being involved in some capacity
- 36 people (51%) said their business would be willing to share information with tourists and visitors
- Several topics emerged from the open-ended responses to the question: Anything else you'd like to share related to tourism in Livingston?
 - Appreciation for efforts (25)
 - Concerns about affordable housing and short-term rentals (10)
 - Want to see tourism income used to relieve community impacts (7)
 - Need for the right kind of/respectful visitors (5)
 - Need for diversified economy (3)

This survey was completed just before the Yellowstone Floods. A post flood survey of resident sentiments about tourism and community values sent to a similar demographic was completed by the Park County Community

Foundation with their We Will initiative, here's the 2023 report. We were surprised that the results varied less than a few percentage points, despite our tourism economy being so hard hit by the floods. We look forward to coordinating all these greater data sets for community engagement and Destination Stewardship planning in an era of increasingly frequent annual crises that impact our destination.

Survey Link here.

We thank the Department of Commerce Brand MT and Tourism Advisory Council for their support, additional funding, leadership and vision during three exceptionally challenging and unpredictable years. Having streamlined and simpler reporting and the opportunity to adapt to changing circumstances, gives us greater capacity to focus on implementing our work while being more nimble, strategic and responsive to our community's unique needs, although similar to many Montana communities' challenges.

Reg/CVB Required Documents

Description	File Name	File Size
A copy of the motion approving the DMO plan passed by the current Board of Directors	CVB April 21_2022 Meeting Minutes.pdf	122 KB
A copy of the motion approving the DMO plan passed by the current Board of Directors	CVB April 21_2022 Meeting Minutes.pdf	122 KB
FY23 Certificate of Compliance	FY 23 Certificate of Compliance.pdf	1.9 MB
FY23 Certificate of Compliance	FY 23 Certificate of Compliance.pdf	1.9 MB
Current by-laws of the organization. The Livingston CVB operates under the Livingston Business Improvement District's by-laws.	LBID Amended ByLaws 2020.pdf	373 KB
Current by-laws of the organization. The Livingston CVB operates under the Livingston Business Improvement District's by-laws.	LBID Amended ByLaws 2020.pdf	373 KB
PDF of FY23 Plan Evaluation Reporting in webgrants, plus illustrative images, and a link to our Tourism Sentiment Survey.	Livingston FY23 Plan Report for TAC.pdf	905 KB

