

Strategic Plan

Destination MT

July 2023

Destination MT

Mission - To preserve and promote the genuine character of Montana while partnering to achieve a sustainable economic future for all

Vision - Residents and visitors enjoying Montana at its best

Values – Collaboration, Integrity, Accountability, Sustainability, Objectivity, Excellence and innovation, Resiliency, Love for Montana

Goal 1: Rural Tourism Development

Objective:

- Provide structure for partnerships to work together to stabilize economies through diversification.

Strategies:

1. Use resiliency plans as a tool to prioritize this work
2. Increase tourism to existing (film included) assets
3. Identify pilot communities and reservations to develop infrastructure for future tourism and business growth including:
 - a. services (restaurants & lodging)
 - b. water/sewer infrastructure
 - c. transportation options (air travel, train, car rental, bus)
 - d. recreation assets
 - i. trails
 - ii. campgrounds
4. Support unstable economies with emergency response funds for fires, floods and other natural/uncontrollable events.
5. Foster internal and external relationships through engagement with Tourism Regions and DMOs (includes travel)
6. Support asset identification, tourism readiness, and development

Goal 1: General Workplan

Task	Description	Lead
Main Street Integration	Integrate Main St as a qualifier for community readiness for Pilot Community Program. Focus on engaging communities within next tier of readiness to join Main St program.	OOT
Resiliency Grants	Integrate \$1.5 million in federal dollars available into funding of Pilot Community Program for FY24 to invest in overlapping priorities.	OOT
Emergency Grants	Develop a program to support emergency services needs due to impact of tourism including but limited to training and equipment costs.	OOT
Economic Impact Event Grants	A limited funding opportunity for a maximum of \$25,000 for event-based activities to create economic impact in rural communities, tribal communities, and for communities in the shoulder-seasons of the year. Tiers off level of funding. Intent is for event to become resilient/self-sustaining (example \$25K year 1; \$12,500 year 2, etc.)	OOT
Agritourism Grants	Agricultural Events (up to \$15,000): Support a new (less than 5 years in existence) agricultural event that highlights a Montana agricultural product and results in an economic impact to the tourism region of the state. Grants would be reduced annually to promote sustainability of the event.	OOT
Pilot Community Investment Program	Apply criteria to identify up to 7 communities (1 per tourism region; 1 tribal entity eligible) to align destination and community development through investment in place-based expansion of tourism assets and products that diversify and stabilize local economies	OOT

Goal 2:
**Dispersal of
Visitors to
Rural Areas**

Objective:

- Get people out of most populated areas for visitation and relocation

Strategies:

1. In-state movement
2. Film
3. Tribal
4. Out of state marketing

Goal 2: General Workplan

Task	Description	Lead
Optimize partnerships	Diversify partnerships, especially in pilot communities. Strengthen and integrate relationship with MT Indigenous Tourism Alliance.	OOT
Rural Film Development	Target support for rural story lines. Scout and prioritize rural film locations. Weight scoring for rural film grant applications.	MFO
Rural Marketing	Focus marketing strategies (in-state, out of state, tribal and international) on rural areas.	Marketing
Tourism Asset Analysis	Through resiliency plan and supplemental means, identify asset gaps and strengths.	Marketing/OOT
Made in Montana	Leverage product familiarity and popularity to drive awareness of visitation to rural locations. Integrate and coordinate media buys with larger marketing campaign.	Made in Montana
Optimize marketing support services to the benefit of rural Montana	Select and train vendors who have expertise and reach to best benefit rural areas and strategies, including: content gathering/storage/sharing (WebDam); Contact Center; Agency of Record and marketing services contractors; subscriptions and marketing tools, Research and branding; Web development and administration; publications.	Marketing
Optimize planning timelines and approvals internally and with DMOs	Coordinate timing of DMO and state marketing planning so that we are leveraging themes and cobranding toward common goals. Will require marketing planning 12 months in advance. Additionally, work with TAC to adjust timing of DMO plan review and approvals to align with DOC and end of fiscal year timelines for contract renewals.	Destination MT Leadership

Goal 3: **Create
and Enhance
Rural
Awareness/
Promotion**

Objective:

- Get people to know and stop

Strategies:

1. Made-in-Montana promotions
2. Film development and features
3. Tribal tourism development and promotion

Goal 3: General Workplan

Task	Description	Lead
Wayfinding grant	Per statute, funding is designated for wayfinding grants. Awards for wayfinding projects will need to be tied to grants associated with Main Street program or another community plan.	OOT and Community MT
Rural Content Development	Identify and initiate cooperative and efficient means to rapidly procure content to promote rural Montana. This includes content needed to build out web presence for rural MT (visitmt.com, etc.)	Marketing
Rural Marketing	Supplement/support strategies within Goal 2; rural specific publications.	Marketing
Transportation Awareness Plan	Create awareness of existing transportation options to and around rural MT. Additionally, develop improved transportation options, in coordination with pilot community program.	Marketing and OOT
Regional Development/Technical Assistance Conference(s)	Host series of regional conferences to educate and engage diverse stakeholders on rural tourism development.	OOT

Goal 4: **Create a sustainable media manufacturing industry in Montana**

Objective:

- Create sustainability in film industry year-round.

Strategies:

1. Big Sky Film Grants
2. More in-state workforce with focus on rural and tribal
3. More high dollar projects
4. Promote and certify MEDIA Tax credit.
5. Promote Montana as a year-round location.
6. Legitimize Montana's level of professionalism in the industry.

Goal 4: General Workplan		
Task	Description	Lead
Workforce Development	Development of Native Americans and veterans (SB 14). Support workforce pipeline/apprentice programs	MFO
Outreach, partnerships and sponsorships	Outreach on MEDIA tax credit; Film Festival sponsorships; participate with partner organizations (Director's Guild, AFCI, etc); advocacy encouraging rural filmmaker applications to the grant program	MFO
Scout and promote for rural productions	Target seasonal and rural storylines/commercials; promote value of landscape (ads, out of state festivals)	MFO
Relaunch of Big Sky Film Grant	Grant Application bonus for rural locations; Grant Application and award geography tracking	MFO

Goal 5: Make Brand MT programs more efficient

Objective:

- Promote responsible management of public funds and processes.

Strategies:

1. Streamline operations
2. Improve internal communications to be able to foster more collaboration within the division
3. Understanding the strengths of staff and direct those talents to meet the overall division goals while also seeking to minimize areas of weakness.
4. Provide accurate and timely information
5. Transparency
6. Improve budget procedures and how staff interacts with budget

Goal 5: General Workplan

Task	Description	Lead
Standard Operating Procedures	Programs lead on developing operating procedures (i.e checklists) to ensure all contracts, letters, all other documents representing the agency, and internal accounting documents are in final format, with no errors and in correct templates, to lessen the work and time that is needed for approvals. Additionally, supervisors will work with staff to develop SOPs for each position and/or program. Restructure and align positions with goals, strengths, and functions as needed.	Destination MT leadership
Budgeting and metrics management	Fully utilize all budgets as approved by each program and collate the identified metrics for that usage. Manage and correct any budgeting issues on a minimum monthly basis.	Destination MT leadership
Tracking and transparency	Adopt project management and budgeting tool for marketing (possibly for OOT as well). Single metric tracking tool (i.e. Salesforce) used uniformly across all programs and updated monthly at minimum.	Destination MT leadership
Cross integration and team growth	Provide accurate and timely information internally via: Weekly Office of Tourism Meetings to discuss updates and strategy; Bi-weekly joint meetings with OTT and Marketing to collaborate. Provide structure for cross planning and execution between the Office of Tourism and Marketing. Provide needed staff training.	Destination MT leadership
Customer Service and communication	Provide accurate and timely information externally via: Monthly TAC and Commerce leadership meetings; Monthly Brand MT meetings for updates; Friday Flash; Tourism Partner Call – 6 times per year; Made in Montana monthly e-blast. Connect citizens and visitors with the subject matter experts that can most effectively respond to the inquiry.	Destination MT leadership