

HUMBOLDT COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU

FUNDING OBJECTIVES & BUDGET NARRATIVE

Tourism spending is an almost half-billion dollar annual industry. In 2019,¹ \$483.8M spending netted the County \$41.8M in tax revenue.

- The County currently supports the Bureau from 18% of annual TOT funds.
- HCVB receives 60% of this total, amounting to an estimated \$200K per annum. Since being defunded by the City of Eureka in 2019 by \$360K, the current County contribution barely covers administrative costs and will result in the Bureau’s inability to fulfill its marketing objectives and will negatively impact tourism recovery post-COVID.
- In comparison to other Northern California DMO’s, Humboldt’s marketing budget is significantly smaller, yet brings-in comparable tax revenues². With adequate funding and a smart marketing strategy, Humboldt County can become the regional tourism leader and increase tax revenues across the board.

To build upon the County’s previous investment and ensure a robust future for tourism, it is imperative that HCVB be fully funded to competitively engage in the full spectrum of available PR and marketing programs and services. In order to fulfill the many and diverse roles of a successful Destination Marketing & Management Organization (DMMO), HCVB is requesting increased support from the County of Humboldt.

Proposal 1: HCVB requests that the County supports the work of this essential industry by increasing annual funding by \$550K per annum (Level One) to be paid biannually.

Level One Budget of \$692.5K is 1.65 % of \$41.8M in tax revenue.

HCVB will be in a position to run an effective DMMO to successfully promote and support all regions of the County and their unique assets with regional and seasonal campaigns.

Level One \$692,500.00

Admin	Personnel	130,000	ED, Office Manager, benefits, workers comp, insurances, fees
	Operations	52,500	Rent, utilities, equipment, software etc.
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<u>182,500</u>	
<u>Marketing / PR</u>			
Personnel	Marketing Dir. Digital	60,000	F/T: Website maintenance & updates, social media
Original Content	Regional Campaigns	50,000	Development & Production unique videos, blogs, etc.
By Project	Contract Services	120,000	Matador: original video, blogs, podcast, consulting
	Geo Tracking	25,000	Detailed visitor tracking, analytics and data reporting
Online	Website	75,000	New Design, new content, assets, one-year hosting
Online	Digital Media	65,000	Google ad words etc., SEO
PR	Media / FAM	10,000	Media / influencer engagement and hosting
Trade/Consumer	Trade Shows	10,000	Virtual / in person
	Outreach / Sales	30,000	P/T. ad sales, leisure & group sales, industry trade shows
Print	Map & Guide/Info	54,000	Design, Photos, printing (250,000), distribution, fulfillment
Other	Partnerships	11,000	North Coast Tourism Council
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<u>510,000</u>	

¹ industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/economic-impact?sort=county®ion=Humboldt

² For details see Marketing Strategy 2021-2024, pages 3 & 4

Proposal 2: For HCVB to be competitive with other rural county budgets, requests that the County by increasing annual funding by \$680 K per annum (Level Two) to be paid biannually.

Level Two Budget of \$880K is 2.1% of \$41.8M in tax revenue.

As seen in the following budget, HCVB will be in a position to run a highly effective and competitive DMMO to successfully promote and support all regions of the County and their unique assets.

Level Two \$880,000.00

Admin	Personnel	140,000	ED, Office Manager, benefits, workers comp, insurances, fees
	Operations	54,000	Rent, utilities, equipment, software etc.
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>194,000</i>	
<u>Marketing / PR</u>			
Personnel	Marketing & Media Dir	70,000	F/T: Website hosting & updates, social media
Original Content	Regional Campaigns	80,000	Development & Production unique videos, blogs, etc.
By Project	Contract Services	150,000	Matador: original video, blogs, podcast, consulting
	Geo Tracking	35,000	Detailed visitor tracking, analytics and data reporting
Online	Website	75,000	New Design, new content, assets, one-year hosting
Online	Digital Media	120,000	Google ad words etc., SEO
PR	Media / FAM	15,000	Media / influencer engagement and hosting
Trade/Consumer	Trade Shows	20,000	Virtual / in person
	Outreach / Sales	40,000	F/T. ad sales, leisure & group sales, industry trade shows
Print	Map & Guide/Info	54,000	Design, Photos, printing (250,000), distribution, fulfillment
Other	Partnerships	22,000	NCTC, CA Adventure District
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>686,000</i>	

- The County also provides funding from TOT revenue to support the five “Gateway” communities,³ an average annual total of \$168,532. However, not having marketing expertise, they do not effectively use the funds to promote Humboldt as a destination to out of county visitors.

The attached document, *2021-2024 Marketing Strategy* includes *Investing in the Future of Tourism in the Post COVID-19 Economy* (27pps) details the marketing strategy and regional comparisons to support this request.

³ Willow Creek Chamber of Commerce, Orick Chamber, Arcata Chamber, Southern Humboldt Chamber, Southern Humboldt Business & Visitors Bureau.

HCVB'S TOURISM RESOURCES & SERVICES

HCVB's marketing and PR role is to provide big picture strategic vision to ensure that ALL regions throughout Humboldt County thrive in today's increasingly competitive tourism landscape.

Earning national media coverage for the entire region has always been an essential service and will continue to be as important as ever, but the Bureau's true strength lies as facilitator and expeditor. Currently, HCVB is transitioning from the traditional "PR firm" model of the past, to a modern, digitally-savvy DMMO.

In order to support our stakeholders, generate economic activity for county residents through tourism, and inspire our visitors, Humboldt County Visitors Bureau will:

- Consistently promote and market the entire county and its assets with original regional and seasonal digital campaigns.
- Create, develop, and manage brand awareness for the county outside of the area.
- Connect people and organizations to opportunities.
- Provide information to in-county partners, and tourism resources to the industry.

1 B2C - Consumer Focused

Digital / Social Media

- Website: www.visitredwoods.com (Over 90K monthly visits, 1M+ annually)
- Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter
- Respond to information requests / weddings from website, email & phone inquiries.

Print Collateral

- Map & Guide: 250,000 (*distributed throughout CA and Southern Oregon. Mailed on request, digital copy on website.*)
- Yellow Adventure Pads: (*50 sheets per pad: distributed throughout County*)

Events

- Travel & Adventure Shows – Denver, Bay Area, Los Angeles, Portland: State Fair, Sacramento

Media

- Maintain outreach to an ever-growing network of national and international media/reporters.
- Propose and submit original stories, write content, organize visits, develop itineraries.
- Identify, engage and host influencers and bloggers/vloggers
- Host Fam Trips, journalists,

2: B2B - Travel /Tourism Industry & Trade Relations / Events

- Outreach to industry to promote and engage groups, tours, meetings, conferences, etc.
- RTO Summit West (*International / Asia/ Europe focus: Personal meetings with retail reps*)
- Go West, (*concentration on the 14 Western states and attracts interested tour buyers*)
- IPW (*Most important international travel event, personal appointments*)
- Travel International Outlook Forum

Tourism Partnerships

- Statewide / National: Go USA; Visit California; VCA Rural Counties Tourism Committee:
- North Coast Tourism Council; California Adventure District; Bay Area Travel Writers; CalTravel Cannabis Tourism Committee; UpStateCA / Shasta/Cascade Tourism Council; and more

5 MOST IMPORTANT TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES THAT HUMBOLDT CANNOT MISS.

Through 2021/2022:

1. Humboldt and rural counties are key destinations for visitors during and after COVID-19. As international travel recovery will lag, the ‘drive’ market with in-state travelers from cities within a 500-mile driving distance for shorter stays, the RV market, and out of state for a longer stay time.
2. To be the one centralized marketing organization that supports and promotes all area tourism assets, both B2B and B2C⁴.
3. Tell new stories in new voices to new audiences. Promote healthy, eco/conscious lifestyles, food, rich culture and history.
4. 2021/2022 vacation planning: (B2C) Develop and push new original content to future travelers during the winter months.
5. Work with community groups and economic development to promote “visit here – live here” messaging.

HCVB 2018-19 Income \$695,345

	Membership Dues	36,000	
	Membership advertising	35,000	
	City of Eureka	370,000	
	City of Ferndale	1,500	Meetings, communications etc.
	County of Humboldt	187,845	
	HLA admin Fees	65,000	

HCVB 2018-19 Expenses \$724,750

Admin	Personnel	320,000	5 staff, benefits, workers comp, insurances, fees
	Operations	63,500	Rent, utilities, equipment, software etc.
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<u>383,500</u>	
Marketing / PR			
	Membership	11,400	Meetings, communications etc.
	Original Content	1,500	Video production
	Research/Contingency	17,000	
Online	Website	33,500	Access & Hosting
Online	Digital Media	150,000	Google ad words etc., SEO
PR	Media / FAM	17,400	Media / influencer engagement and hosting
Trade/Consumer	Trade Shows	23,000	In person
	Outreach / Sales	5,950	Ad sales, leisure & group sales, industry trade shows
Print	Advertising	11,000	Magazines
	Map & Guide/Info	59,500	Design, Photos, printing (250,000), distribution, fulfillment
Other	Partnerships	11,000	North Coast Tourism Council
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<u>341,250</u>	

⁴ B2B – business to business – travel trade and industry partners.

B2C – business to consumer – digital and social media, website, brochures etc.