



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 8/18/2026

File #: 26-742

To: Board of Supervisors

From: County Administrative Office

Agenda Section: Consent

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Resolution to Establish Humboldt County Tourism Advisory Board

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt Resolution to establish the Humboldt County Tourism Advisory Board; and
2. Approve and adopt the Humboldt County Tourism Advisory Board Bylaws.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

This action supports the following areas of your Board's Strategic Plan:

Area of Focus: A Diverse, Equitable & Robust Economy

Strategic Plan Category: 2002 - Promote a robust tourism economy

DISCUSSION:

On June 10, 2024, your Board allocated funding for a marketing asset inventory analysis and the development of a countywide strategic marketing framework.

On Dec. 18, 2024, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued seeking qualified firms to conduct the inventory, access existing efforts and develop a comprehensive travel and tourism strategy. The RFP emphasized strong partner engagement and alignment with the county's tourism and economic development goals, including sustainable tourism, support for local businesses, unified branding, year-round visitation and inclusive community engagement. The RFP closed on Jan. 22, 2025, with six proposals received. Following evaluation and staff recommendation, your board approved a professional service agreement with JayRay Ads & PR on June 13, 2025.

On April 28, 2026, your Board received a presentation on the marketing asset inventory analysis and Countywide Travel and Tourism Marketing Strategy. After which your Board accepted and adopted the strategy and approved Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) allocations for inclusion in the fiscal year (FY) 2026-27 proposed budget, including Measure J.

The strategy directly advances the county's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) by establishing a framework for developing a unified brand and messaging, recommending governance structures such as a Tourism Advisory Board (TAB) and identifying best practices for destination marketing. Implementation is designed as a phased approach, with the strategy spanning five years. Additionally, the strategy advances your Board's Strategic Plan's intent to promote a robust tourism economy, through the establishment of a centralized Tourism Advisory Board.

Accordingly, staff recommends your Board adopt the attached Resolution to establish the Tourism Advisory Board and approve the Tourism Advisory Board bylaws. The bylaws before your Board were drafted with the support of the tourism advisory committee that guided and supported the marketing asset inventory analysis and the development of the strategy.

Once the Tourism Advisory Board is adopted and approved by your Board staff will solicit applications for membership. After applications are received and reviewed, staff will return to your board with a proposed roster for membership.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

TOT (1100-181)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Expenditures (1120275)	FY25-26	FY26-27 Projected*	FY27-28 Projected*
Budgeted Expenses	<u>\$52,960</u>	<u>193,757</u>	<u>TBD</u>
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	<u>\$52,960</u>	<u>193,757</u>	<u>TBD</u>

**Projected amounts are estimates and are subject to change.*

Funding Sources (1120275)	FY25-26	FY26-27 Projected*	FY27-28 Projected*
TOT	<u>\$52,960</u>	<u>193,757</u>	<u>TBD</u>
Total Funding Sources	<u>\$52,960</u>	<u>193,757</u>	<u>TBD</u>

**Projected amounts are estimates and are subject to change.*

Narrative Explanation of Financial Impact:

The total amount expended for the professional service agreement with JayRay Ads & PR to develop a marketing asset inventory analysis and Countywide Travel and Tourism Marketing strategy was \$52,960 in FY 2025-26. Your Board awarded \$416,179 in TOT and Measure J funding to Economic Development for FY 2026-27, of which \$193,757 has been allocated for implementation of the adopted Travel and Tourism Marketing strategy. As previously reported, the remaining FY 2026-27 allocation will be utilized to maintain the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau (HCVB) assets and maintain marketing efforts in the interim. All costs for solicitation of the applications for Tourism Advisory Board membership for FY 2026-27 are included in the budgeted TOT allocation in Economic Development budget unit 1120275.

Should your Board approve the TAB bylaws as written, there will be costs associated with Economic Development's administration of the TAB and its secretarial functions. With the adoption of the marketing strategy, your Board recognized the need for ongoing funding for Economic Development to support the marketing efforts including supporting and staffing the TAB. This was included in the FY 2026-27 budget through TOT funding and will be requested to be maintained in future annual budget cycles.

STAFFING IMPACT:**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impact:**

There are no new position allocations requested at this time. However, establishment and ongoing administration of the TAB will increase Economic Development staff workload. Responsibilities are anticipated to include serving as the TAB secretary, coordinating meetings and agendas, providing administrative and technical support, monitoring activities and deliverables, gathering and compiling reports and information, maintaining records and supporting implementation of TAB recommendations and the countywide Travel and Tourism Marketing Strategy.

This additional workload will occur while Economic Development continues, during the current fiscal year, to maintain the assets and administrative functions previously managed by the Humboldt County Visitors Bureau (HCVB), oversee nine Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) partner contracts, support the Humboldt Lodging Alliance Tourism Business Improvement District, and manage revenue-generating initiatives in partnership with the Department of Aviation, formerly Project SOAR.

The full staffing impact cannot be determined until the TAB is operational. Economic Development will track staff time associated with TAB administration to determine the ongoing staffing needs and associated costs. Staff will return to your Board with the FY 2027-28 budget cycle with recommendations of any staffing or funding adjustments necessary to provide ongoing support to the

TAB and other marketing strategy implementation initiatives.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

N/A

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Your Board may choose not to approve the Resolution establishing the Tourism Advisory Board and the bylaws. However, this is not recommended, as the establishment of the Tourism Advisory Board advances the county's 2025 - 2030 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), as well as supports the Board's Strategic plan, and creates a framework consisting of transparency, equity and measurable outcomes.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution to establish the Tourism Advisory Board
2. Tourism Advisory Board Bylaws

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Meeting of: June 10, 2024; April 22, 2025; June 13, 2025; April 28, 2026

File No.: 24-969, 24-979; 25-502; 25-134; 26-244