



Grant Details

80683 - FY20 Region/CVB Marketing Plan

86693 - FY20 Great Falls Montana Tourism Marketing Plan

DOC Office of Tourism

Grant Title: FY20 Great Falls Montana Tourism Marketing Plan
Grant Number: 20-51-015
Grant Status: Underway
Comments:
Applicant Organization: Great Falls CVB
Grantee Contact: Rebecca Engum
Award Year: 2019
Program Area: DOC Office of Tourism
Amounts:
Contract Dates:

	Contract Sent	Contract Received	Contract Executed
Project Dates:	06/13/2019 <small>Proposal Date</small>	07/01/2019 <small>Project Start</small>	06/30/2020 <small>Project End</small>

Grant Administrator: Barb Sanem
Contract Number: 20-51-015
Award Year: 2019

Contract Dates

<small>Contract Sent</small>	<small>Contract Received</small>	<small>Contract Executed</small>	<small>Contract Legal</small>
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Project Dates 07/01/2019
 06/30/2020

Project Start Project End

Comments

Amendment Comments

Community & Brand Support

Describe your destination (who you are, who you wish to attract and why would they come) addressing your strengths, opportunities, and potential challenges. How does your destination align with Montana's brand pillars?

VIBRANT AND CHARMING SMALL TOWN

Great Falls is the 3rd largest city in the Nation's 4th largest state. With 1 million residents in the State and just under 60,000 residents in the city, the open space appeals to residents and non-residents alike. Last year alone, 12 million people visited Montana, and 1 million spent a night in Great Falls. Designed for independent, outdoor adventurers and planners of meetings, Great Falls provides a true, authentic Montana experience.

Great Falls will have 2,292 rooms available any given night across 30 properties beginning in July 2019. Our inventory by property is broke down by room capacity with:

- 17% with less than 30 Rooms
- 57% with 31—99 Rooms
- 27% with 100+ Rooms

SPECTACULAR UNSPOILED NATURE

Great Falls is Montana's Basecamp for Art and Adventure. Our community sits on the banks of the Missouri River in the center of the State. Great Falls is a basecamp to the Rocky, Big Belt, Highwood, and Little Belt Mountain Ranges; each providing public access for a variety of outdoor recreation. It is also a basecamp to the Sun and Smith Rivers; Belt Creek, and Holter Lake; it is 2.5 hours south of the East entrance to Glacier National Park, and 3.5 hours north of the North Entrance to Yellowstone National Park. Great Falls' access to a variety of outdoor

adventures is complimented by a haven of rich arts, culture, and history in a vibrant, modern community where you can renew your spirit.

Great Falls is Montana's Museum Capital. Famed Cowboy artist and humanitarian, Charlie Russell made Great Falls, Montana his basecamp and the museum that bears his name has the largest collection of Russell's work, the complex has his studio and home, and The C.M. Russell Museum has been named Montana's Museum worth driving for. The Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center has North America's most extensive display of the Lewis & Clark expedition. First People's Buffalo Jump is North America's Largest and is a National Historic Landmark. The remaining museums in Great Falls celebrate our history, the life of Brother Van, modern artists, the railroad, the artwork of Sister Mary Trinitas Morin and Mother Raphael Schweda, the military missions at Malmstrom Air Force Base, and a hands-on Children's Museum.

BREATHTAKING EXPERIENCES BY DAY, RELAXING HOSPITALITY BY NIGHT

Great Falls becomes the Western Art Capital of the World for one week in March, in celebration of Charlie Russell's birthday. This signature event brings in over 750 artists at 15+ shows for a variety of auctions, direct purchase, quick finishes, demonstrations, lectures, music and more. There is 53 miles of trail along the River's Edge that is home to 24 works for art. Great Falls is Montana's Museum Capital, home to Montana's Best Coffee Shop, Montana's Best Burger, Montana's Best Irish Pub, and is Montana's Pizza Capital. Great Falls also boasts Montana's Best Tiki Drink, Montana's Only Live Mermaids, Montana largest specialty dry goods store, and Montana's State Fair. Our downtown has nationally recognized outdoor dining on pedlets, and a new suspendlet coming this summer!

Tourism is a critical driver of the Great Falls economy, accounting for 8% of the GDP. Businesses that make up the Tourism Industry account for 3,080 jobs and over \$72 million in payroll locally. Tourism Industry businesses account for over \$33 million in property taxes. Great Falls' tourism industry accounts for 9% of Montana's total overall tourism impact, and the State, the City and the Region's tourism economy is driven by outdoor recreation.

STRENGTHS

- Art | In the broadest sense of the term, Great Falls has art—from statutes and murals on the river's edge trail and downtown, to state parks and museums that capture our history and culture, to restaurants who source local food, to residents who create masterpieces on canvasses or using batik, and our entrepreneurs who create industry-changing products. Great Falls is creative, innovative, and full of art.
- River | The Missouri River connects Great Falls' history to the Plains Indians, Corp of Discovery, mining and electricity. Today it provides access to outdoor recreation, bird viewing, a path for scenic drives, and a backdrop for stunning photography.
- Basecamp | In about an hour or less from Great Falls, you can be in the Rocky Mountain Front and the greater Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex, Sluice Boxes State Park and the Little Belt Mountains, the Highwood Mountains, on Holter Lake, at Smith River, Sun River. And, just a little further in Glacier National Park.
- Malmstrom | 3,300 personnel, along with their families, are stationed in Great Falls' air force base. The base itself draws national contractor business, and the personnel's extended family come to visit.
- GTF | Our international airport is small and accessible, offering direct flights from Seattle, Denver, Las Vegas, Minneapolis, Phoenix, Salt Lake City, and seasonally to Chicago.

WEAKNESS

- Venues| Tried and true, our facility infrastructure is stable but suffers from deferred maintenance and lack of capital investment for industry demanding improvements.
- Impression| Immediate thoughts of Montana include mountains, roaming wildlife, and backpacking adventures, and Great Falls is a modern community on the Missouri River with an industrial history.
- Detractors | 34% of Great Falls residents hold a low-self image of and are negative about the community being a great place to visit.

OPPORTUNITIES

- I-15 Corridor | Great Falls is roughly halfway between Salt Lake City, Utah, and Edmonton, Alberta (via Highway 2 in Alberta, Canada). Through traffic provides a chance to convert travelers for experiences and events. 55% of travelers drive through Great Falls without spending a night.
- Air Service | United, Delta, Alaska, and Allegiant are great partners, however, there are opportunities to add carriers and direct flights.
- Events| Signature events give visitors a specific time to travel to Great Falls. We have room to add more.
- In-Market Experience | The Missouri River is amazing; however, we are missing the opportunity to make it, and other experiences, easier to access. Great Falls can benefit from easy access equipment rentals, tour guides, facilitated experiences, and review worthy interactions.

THREATS

- I-90/I-94 CORRIDOR | This Montana route has larger communities with larger population bases, sees higher traffic counts, and has had more success in event routing than I-15.
- Market Economy | Volatility in the local economy of our target market communities can directly impact travel decisions.
- Growth | The success of peer and benchmark communities related to increased retail experiences and capital investments in infrastructure have increased their tourism budgets to attract more visitors, causing Great Falls to lag behind.

Describe your destination.

Great Falls Montana Tourism is the Destination Management Organization [DMO] focused on promoting the city to overnight visitors. We will leverage the Montana Brand and use paid, owned, and earned media to orient overnight visitors to Great Falls' unique spectacular unspoiled nature and the only in Great Falls breathtaking experiences that can be had by day, with the ability to come back to the relaxing hospitality of our community to renew their spirit for the next day. By developing trip ideas, itineraries around specific events, we will facilitate extended

stays in Great Falls, a vibrant and charming small town full of art and modern amenities, prior to departing for adventures in more of Montana's spectacular, unspoiled nature.

From every direction, Montana's spectacular, unspoiled nature calls you closer – from two of America's most amazing national parks, a short drive in either direction, to the miles of trails along the Missouri River and beyond, it is all accessible beginning right in Great Falls. It beckons you to discover Montana's rugged and alluring outdoors freely with independence.

One of the greatest things about our community is we are welcoming, down-to-earth and proud of what we have. We are forward thinking and unapologetic about creating a future based on our potential. Great Falls is a place where you feel more independent, more liberated from conformity and convention. You are more free to pursue your passion, from outdoor recreation to embracing your inner artist.

It's a place where you can be in the middle of an evolving and vibrant downtown life near the riverfront and yet never far from getting away from it all. If you look at life as a wonderful, ever-changing adventure (as we do), we invite you to come to a place where you can live it abundantly, celebrate your independence every single day.

Great Falls provides a basecamp for a wide range of outdoor adventures and offers a haven of rich arts, culture, and history in a vibrant, modern community where an expansive, unspoiled, diverse landscape renews one's spirit!

Optional: Include attachments here

a. Define your target markets (demographic, geographic and psychographic).

LEISURE PROFILE | Our current overnight visitor to Great Falls is a couple who have been here before and drove here for vacation. They tend to be:

55-74 years old with \$50,000 - \$150,000 HHI

We will use geographic, demographic, and psychographic targeting to market to current customers and attract new customers. Our psychographic groups are:

- Historian | Enjoys Lewis & Clark, Charlie Russell and the Plains Indians and the mark they each left on Great Falls.
- Moderate Adventurer | Enjoys getting out into nature to hike, watch wildlife, fish, bike, and kayak, but come back into Great Falls in the evening to enjoy the local brewery, a live performance, and a comfortable bed.
- Weekender | Comes to Great Falls for a specific event. These include festivals, performances, weddings, and sporting events.
- Active Family | Enjoys museums, and the vast collection of them here, the outdoor recreation, and the history.
- Bleisure | Arrives before or stay after business related travel to engage in leisure experiences.

Each profile helps us craft our message and where and how to place our owned and paid media.

LOCATION | Great Falls will target the following geographic locations.

Seattle WA

Missoula MT

Denver CO

Billings MT

Chicago IL

Kalispell MT

Minneapolis MN

Lethbridge AB

Phoenix AZ

Calgary AB

Salt Lake City UT

Cheyenne WY

Bismarck ND

BUSINESS PROFILE | Great Falls Montana Tourism targets meeting planners with multi-day events for 250+ people in outdoor recreation, agriculture, arts, history, culture, or other areas of Great Falls' competitive advantage.

LOCATION | The target will be meeting planners looking for locations in the Western United States, focusing in on the Northwest Region, and the Rocky Mountain Region of the Northwest.

b. What are your emerging markets?

The psychographic profile of our emerging markets are the same, however, trend younger in demographics. We are focusing in on 35-44 years old with \$50,000—\$150,000 HHI. We will be targeting geographic locations of

Cheyenne WY

Bismarck ND

Seattle WA

Missoula MT

Denver CO

Billings MT

Chicago IL

Kalispell MT

Minneapolis MN

Lethbridge AB

Phoenix AZ

Calgary AB

Salt Lake City UT

Optional: Include attachments here.

c. What research supports your target marketing?

We have used extensive market and consumer behavior research from Institute of Tourism and Recreation Research, Expedia, Destination Analysts, trade publications, Smith Travel Research, and analytics from our website and marketing campaigns to ensure the delivery of a specifically crafted trip planning message during a critical stage of the consumer purchase process in targeted markets on specific platforms. Please find attached the research we used to develop the 2020 strategies for Great Falls Montana Tourism.

Based on our refreshed strategic plan, Great Falls Montana Tourism focuses on the following priorities: Grow Tourism | Develop the Destination | Advocate for Tourism. This year, our intended results will be:

5% Increase in Overnight Visitation

2% Increase in New Overnight Visitors

5% Increase in Average Length of Stay

10% Increase in Average Daily Spend

6 New Conventions

25% Increase in Instagram Audience

20% Increase in Facebook Audience

a. In what types of co-ops with MTOT would you like to participate?

Great Falls Montana Tourism would like to participate in video, photo, research, content and leveraged and joint media buying joint ventures.

Optional: Include attachment here. Research Appendix small.pdf

b. In what other types of co-ops would you like to participate? (Regions/CVBs, etc.)

Great Falls Montana Tourism would like to participate in video, photo, research, trade shows, content and leveraged and joint media buying joint ventures.

c. What types of co-ops have you done in the past? Were they successful - why or why not?

Great Falls Montana Tourism has greatly appreciated previous joint ventures with Central Montana on trade shows and leveraged media buying. We have participated with Glacier Country led Region/CVB Meeting Planner Events, and Great Falls International Airport for leveraged media buying and photos. We partnered on content pieces with the State of Montana through Interfuse and Roots Rated as well as joint media buying with Sojern and National Geographic. We have partnered with CM Russell Museum on a content article in Yellowstone Journal.

These joint ventures strategically leverage our limited budget and will continue to be staples in our leisure traveler strategy. They were successful. Great Falls Montana Tourism will take advantage of joint ventures that fit with our market, strategy and message focus.

Optional: Include attachments here.

Optional: Include attachments here. 2020 Plan.pdf

Optional: Include attachment here:

Marketing Segment, Method & Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Describe your method.	Provide supporting research/statistics.	How do you plan to measure success?	Provide a brief rationale for this method.	Estimated budget for method.	Marketing Method Evaluation	Add'l Attchmnt
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	<p>PAID MEDIA We will use Banik to develop a results focused paid media plan that will rely heavily on digital placement, supplemented by print placements during key travel decisions months. Investment will be more focused to influence travel during late spring, summer and early fall. The Tourism Team will coordinate with Banik on the placement of any Montana Department of Tourism and Business Development led Join Venture opportunities.</p> <p>COLLABORATIVE MARKETING Great Falls Montana Tourism will work with Banik to develop marketing opportunities for our members to</p>	<p>Historic performance of digital placement to drive traffic to our website. Historic mobile access of website. ITRR data shows search engines</p>	<p>Impressions, Clicks, engagement time, and unique visits to website.</p>	<p>Great Falls Montana Tourism will utilize branded paid, owned and earned media, a printed and online guide to Great Falls, trade shows, and the www.VisitGreatFallsMontana.org website to inspire, orient, and facilitate an overnight traveler to the experiences available in Great Falls. The digital landscape is increasingly cost effective in delivering our message to the targeted market that produces engagement.</p>	\$93,522.00		

		buy into that will promote their business and leverage the Basecamp Brand.						
Consumer	Joint Ventures	With content and video being the key elements in high engagement for our target markets, Great Falls Montana Tourism will continue to search out the generous opportunities provided by Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development, Central Montana, Great Falls International Airport, local organizations and other regions, States and Provinces that will match our market, strategy and message focus.	Historic Return on Investment of the results of the media placed.	Dependent upon the Joint Venture selected.	Great Falls Montana Tourism loves leveraging our partners to expand our buying power! This benefits our efforts locally without having to make as large of an expenditure from our budget.	\$5,000.00		
Consumer	Print Advertising	Great Falls Montana Tourism will invest in targeted print publications when it matches with our strategies. One publication, in particular, Yellowstone Park Journal, provides the opportunity for leveraged contact and email based leads interested in Great Falls. Historically, CM Russell Museum makes a placement in this publication which enables Great Falls Montana Tourism to increase the amount of content placed within the publication. The content and additional benefits that come from a print placement will continue to be the rationale for placing.	Historic performance to include the number of leads, shared content through digital platforms, and total distribution.	Inquiry counts, specific landing page counts, content leveraged through other media.	While most of our media placement is digital, strategically placed print is beneficial when it supports our messaging and marketing strategies.	\$15,000.00		
Consumer	Opportunity Marketing	Great Falls Montana Tourism will be responsive when a unique opportunity to promote Great Falls arises. The opportunity will need to produce strong return on investment and align with our strategies and goals.	Historic performance of opportunities.	Dependent on the opportunity selected.	Unique opportunities present themselves through the year. We plan to take advantage of those opportunities by allocating some funding towards them, however, utilizing our tourism business improvement district assessment funds for a majority of those opportunities.	\$1,000.00		

Consumer	Printed Material	We switched from an 86 page printed booklet three years ago, covering in detail every experience in Great Falls, to a condensed version, hitting the high points, and driving traffic to our website. We supplement the brochure with specific information tailored to each request and this has suited us well with the changed landscape of mobile use, and specific experineces. People continue to what to take something about the community in print form and we will continue to offer them a general piece that is efficient and effective to deliver the information.	Online inquiries, declined mail distribution, number of picked up pieces.	Distribution and download numbers	We will redesign our Highlight Brochure that we use as a general information piece and distributed through Certified Folder and use as collateral through trade shows and inquiries.	\$6,500.00		
Marketing Support	Administration	Paid human capital is an essential component to producing results for our tourism effort in Great Falls. We will continue to invest in professional paid staff.	NA	Projects are completed, Insurance is in place, 990 is filed, meetings are attended, budget is maintained.	Great Falls Montana Tourism will continue to employ staff. The staff will develop plans, oversee projects, submit reports, manage budget, and attend meetings.	\$32,130.00		
						\$153,152.00		

Marketing Method Evaluation Attachments

- Attachment 1
- Attachment 2
- Attachment 3
- Attachment 4
- Attachment 5
- Attachment 6
- Attachment 7
- Attachment 8
- Attachment 9
- Attachment 10

Marketing Method Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget	Non bed tax funded budget (optional)
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Consumer	Print Advertising	\$15,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	\$93,522.00	\$101,478.00
Consumer	Opportunity Marketing	\$1,000.00	\$130,000.00
Consumer	Travel Guide	\$6,500.00	\$8,000.00
Consumer	Joint Ventures	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
		\$121,022.00	\$239,478.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$32,130.00	\$300,276.00
		\$32,130.00	\$300,276.00
		\$153,152.00	\$539,754.00

Miscellaneous Attachments

Description	File Name	File Size
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Reg/CVB Required Documents

Description	File Name	File Size
Strategic Plan	2019 - 2024 Strategic Plan.pdf	53 KB
Great Falls Montana Tourism Marketing Plan	2020 Plan.pdf	3.3 MB
Accommodations Budget Pie Chart	Accomodations Budget Chart.pdf	52 KB
Required documents	RequireddocumentsFY20.pdf	1.9 MB

