



**Item:** Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) 2016/2017 Budget and Work Plan

**From:** Judy Burg, Fiscal Services Department

**Initiated By:** Tourism Business Improvement District Board of Directors

**Presented By:** Rebecca Engum, Great Falls Tourism Director

**Action Requested:** Set Public Hearing for July 19, 2016

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**Suggested Motion:**

1. Commissioner moves:

“I move that the City Commission (set/not set) the public hearing for the 2016/2017 Tourism Business Improvement District Budget and Work Plan for July 19, 2016.”

2. Mayor requests a second to the motion, Commission discussion, public comment, and calls for the vote.

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**Staff Recommendation:** The TBID recommends that the City Commission set the public hearing for the 2016/2017 TBID budget and work plan for July 19, 2016.

**Background:** The Tourism Business Improvement District was established by Resolution 9792 on December 2, 2008. Its overall purpose is to utilize tax dollars through the TBID assessment and direct those monies for the purpose of promoting tourism, conventions, trade shows, and travel to the City of Great Falls. If there are any material increases or decreases in the actual assessment from the approved budget, the TBID’s Board will either request a budget amendment from the City Commission or the Board will include the amount of revenue whether it is an increase or decrease in their Work Plan and Budget for the coming Fiscal Year.

According to State statute 7-12-1132 (3) MCA, the City Commission must hold a public hearing to hear any objections to the budget and work plan. Following the public hearing, the City Commission may approve the plan or request that amendments be made to it prior to levying an assessment on all properties within the district to defray the costs.

**Concurrences:** The TBID partners with several organizations to provide results and follow the overall purpose of the TBID. Fiscal Services staff is responsible for assessing and collecting the revenues.

**Fiscal Impact:** The TBID is projecting annual revenue for Fiscal Year 2016/2017 of approximately \$375,742 in tax assessment dollars.

The assessment will be according to the formula approved with the creation of the district:

- The applicable hotels shall be subject to an annual assessment of one dollar (\$1.00) per occupied room night as prescribed in Section 7-12-1133(2)(c), MCA

**Alternatives:** The City Commission could request the TBID Board for changes either to the Work Plan or the Budget.

**Attachments/Exhibits:** 2016/2017 Work Plan  
2016/2017 Budget  
Legal Notice



**Marketing Plan  
July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017**

**Tourism Offices**

100 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N, Lower Level Suite, Great Falls, Montana 59401

Cell +1 406-750-1198 | Office + 1 406-761-4436

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**Visitor Center**

15 Overlook Drive, Great Falls, Montana 59405

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Adopted by Great Falls Montana Convention and Visitors Bureau Board of Directors and Great Falls Montana Tourism Business Improvement District Board of Directors 5/3/2016.

## **Executive Summary**

Great Falls Montana has the best Montana has to offer! Strategically located between Yellowstone National Park and Glacier National Park, Great Falls had 861,685 nonresident visitors in calendar year 2015, down 4% over the previous calendar year as reported by Institute of Travel and Recreation Research (ITRR) at the University of Montana. From FY13 to FY15 (a full 3-year period), Great Falls collection is down 5%. FY 16 data is not yet complete.

### Historic Lodging Tax Collections

|                      |      |             |
|----------------------|------|-------------|
| 7/1/2012 - 6/30/2013 | FY13 | \$1,452,025 |
| 7/1/2013 - 6/30/2014 | FY14 | \$1,415,564 |
| 7/1/2014 - 6/30/2015 | FY15 | \$1,384,715 |

Source: Montana Department of Commerce Office of Tourism

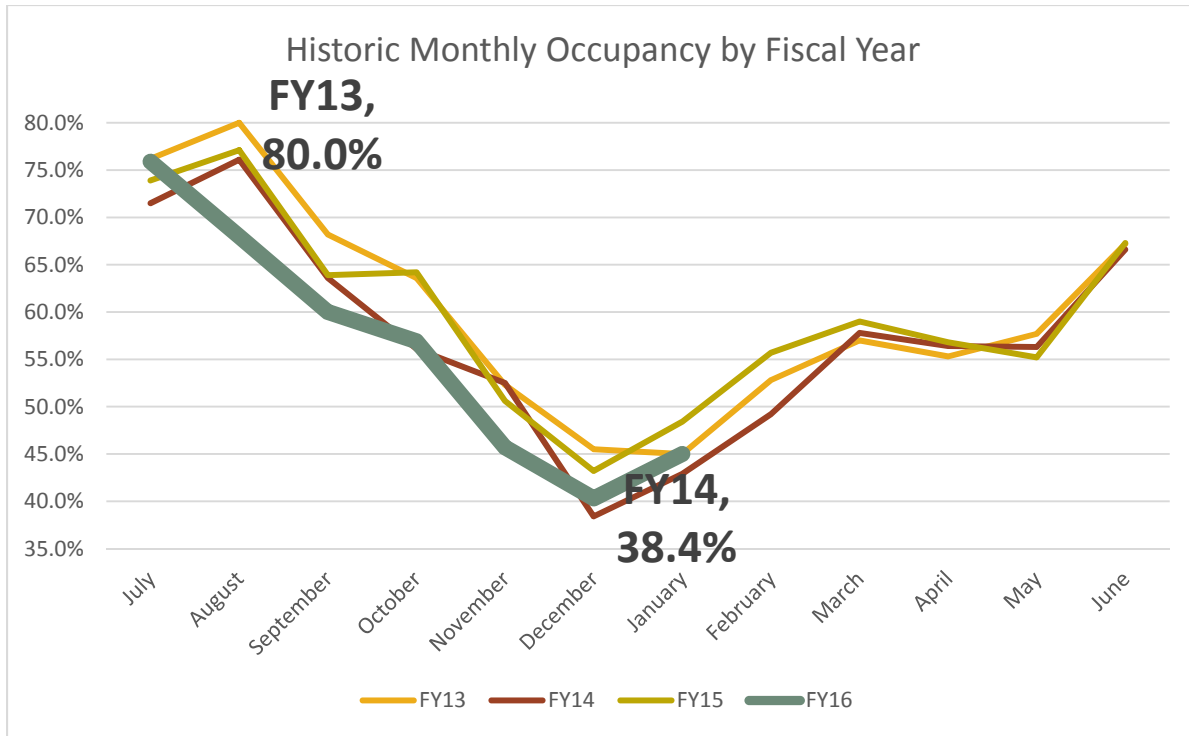
This drop is directly related to the decreased Canadian leisure traveler. The Canadian leisure traveler has reduced US travel because of the drop in the Canadian Dollar (CAD) to the United States Dollar (USD).

While a rugged independent spirit, outdoor recreation and wilderness, and breathtaking scenery are expected in Montana, Great Falls is quintessentially Montana.

Great Falls Montana Tourism is the newly combined effort that includes Great Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau, Great Falls Tourism Business Improvement District and the Great Falls Area Chamber of Commerce.

The vision of Great Falls Montana Tourism is to strengthen the Great Falls Montana economy by being the preferred choice for a genuine Montana experience. We will accomplish that vision through our mission to passionately promote Great Falls Montana as a preferred destination for travelers, tourists and conventions to visit, stay, experience, and return. Research shows the primary reason visitors are attracted to Great Falls is by friends and family, followed by the proximity to Glacier, Yellowstone, Waterton Lakes, and Canada. This is followed closely by the arts. When visitors are here with friends and family, they will most likely engage in the activities the resident enjoys. Residents are attracted to Great Falls by the outdoor recreation and access to mountains. The activity most engaged in by residents is hiking at 50%, followed by fishing at 13%.

We have a new road ahead of us. Great Falls Montana Tourism is developing a team and aligning resources to reverse a downward trend that persists in occupancy, visitation, and revenue.



Research indicates most visitors to Great Falls have been here before, but there are a few uninspired souls that haven't been to Great Falls yet. The top reason why someone hasn't yet visited is because they are unaware of things to do. We can fix that! Additionally, research shows that a non-visitor would visit if a friend or family member recommended it.

Great Falls Montana is poised to chart a new course. Located on the east slope of the Rocky Mountains between Glacier National Park and Yellowstone National Park, visitors and residents alike embrace the alluring landscape of panoramic views of the Rocky, Highwood and Belt Mountain Ranges, Missouri River valley, buttes, and grasslands that are pure high plains. This landscape proclaims that independent, free adventures are awaiting. Great Falls Montana history and culture captivates visitors as much as the landscape does. Charlie Russell created works of art that captured our rugged independence. Lewis and Clark spent weeks portaging our five falls and a 25,000 square foot interpretive center commemorates their tenacity. The largest bison cliff jump in North America, First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park and National Historic Landmark, provides genuine insight to our first people's independent spirit.

The strategic priorities of Great Falls Montana Tourism are:

- Demonstrate Operational Excellence
- Build Team Great Falls
- Grow Shoulder & Off-Peak Visitation

- Celebrate, Support & Create Assets
- Develop & Grow the Tourism Pipeline



### **Strengths**

Great Falls Montana offers all the best of Montana recreation: fishing, hunting, hiking, and more. Added to that is a rich history and arts community that caters to enthusiasts. Additionally, with 2,206 rooms and 31,800 square feet of hotel meeting space, Great Falls Montana is an ideal place for meetings and conventions. Over the past couple of years, our community has worked diligently to reduce airfares and add extra airline seats. This effort has been rewarded with additional flight destinations and the title of Montana's lowest average airfares for the last 3 years per Department of Transportation statistics.

The unique experiences only Great Falls Montana can provide are:

- North America's Largest Buffalo Jump and National Historic Landmark, First Peoples
- World's Shortest River, Roe
- Western Art Capital of the World, for one week in March
- 1 of the Top 5 Skate Parks in the Pacific Northwest, Riverside Railyard
- Montana's Best Irish Pub, as named by BuzzFeed, 1/15/2016
- Montana's Best Coffee Shop, as named by Business Insider, 8/6/2014
- Montana's Best Tiki Drink, as named by Delish, 8/10/2015

- Montana's Best Burger, as named by Food Network Magazine, 4/30/2009
- Montana's Pizza Capital, as named by MSN, 3/22/2015
- Montana's Museum worth traveling for, CM Russell, as named by FlipKey by TripAdvisor, 3/30/2016
- North America's most extensive display of the Lewis & Clark expedition at the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center
- Montana's only live mermaid show
- Montana's Museum Capital
- Montana's Veteran's Memorial
- Montana's Largest Specialty Dry Goods Store
- Montana's oldest reinforced concrete, open spandrel, multi-arch bridge
- Montana's only city with 5 falls, The Great Falls, Black Eagle Falls, Rainbow Falls, Crooked Falls, Colter Falls
- Montana's State Fair
- Montana's Pro Rodeo Circuit Finals
- Benton Lake Wildlife Refuge
- Electric City Water Park at Mitchell Pool
- River's Edge Trail on the Missouri River
- PRCA sanctioned Rodeo during Montana's State Fair
- 57 City of Great Falls Montana maintained parks

Additionally, Great Falls Montana can serve as the basecamp for short, close and amazing adventures to:

- Montana's First Ski Hill, Showdown
- Silver Crest Recreation area
- Bob Marshall Wilderness
- Sluice Boxes State Park
- Freezeout Lake
- Gibson Dam
- Missouri River
- Holter Lake
- Tiber Reservoir
- Lake Francis
- Teton Pass Ski Resort
- Great Divide Ski Resort
- Glacier National Park
- Yellowstone National Park
- Montana's Birthplace, Fort Benton
- Gates of the Mountains
- Blue Ribbon Missouri River Trout Fishing
- The Rocky Mountain Front
- White Cliffs of the wild and scenic Missouri River
- Upper Missouri River National Monument

- The biggest and oldest one-day PRCA rodeo in Montana, American Legion Rodeo in Augusta
- PRCA sanctioned rodeos in Belt, Augusta, Fort Benton, Chinook, Shelby, Cascade, Helena, Stanford and White Sulpher Springs

Great Falls Montana offers visitors an authentic Montana experience without the congestion that can be found in other destination locations.

### **Weaknesses**

Great Falls Montana is a little down on itself. This poses a weakness for Great Falls Montana Tourism as we know that 75% of the methods used for planning a trip to Great Falls come from word of mouth channels: personal/previous experiences, family and friends, and locals.

Great Falls Montana lacks facilities or capacity to host some events, groups, and conventions that have interest in coming to our community. Great Falls Montana partners and Great Falls Montana Tourism have begun working on planning options for rectifying this weakness.

### **Challenges**

The fluctuation of the Canadian dollar against the US dollar has a massive impact on Great Falls. When the exchange rate drops below 90%, the volume of the Canadian leisure traveler declines significantly.

Glacier National Park's East entrance is 2.5 hours from Great Falls Montana. Kalispell Montana is just over a 1/2 hour to the West entrance of Glacier National Park. Although it is feasible for Great Falls Montana to get visitors on their way to and from Glacier National Park, price and time become a deciding factor for visitors to choose Great Falls Montana as the starting destination for their Glacier National Park experience.

### **Opportunities**

The Great Falls International Airport Authority continually works to establish more direct flights into Great Falls Montana. With more direct flights, Great Falls Montana, becomes a destination easier to get to. With more airfield use, cost associated with Great Falls Montana air transportation will continue to decrease.

Ground Transportation will be getting a new component, Uber. It is undetermined what impact Uber will have in Great Falls Montana; however, it is an opportunity for our community.



## Markets

Great Falls Montana historically gets strong interest for information from people in:

- **9% California**
- 6% Texas
- 5% Illinois
- 5% Florida
- 4% Minnesota
- **4% Washington**

This is data gathered from historic requests for Visitor Guides.

Great Falls Montana Visitor Center stats show actual visitation from:

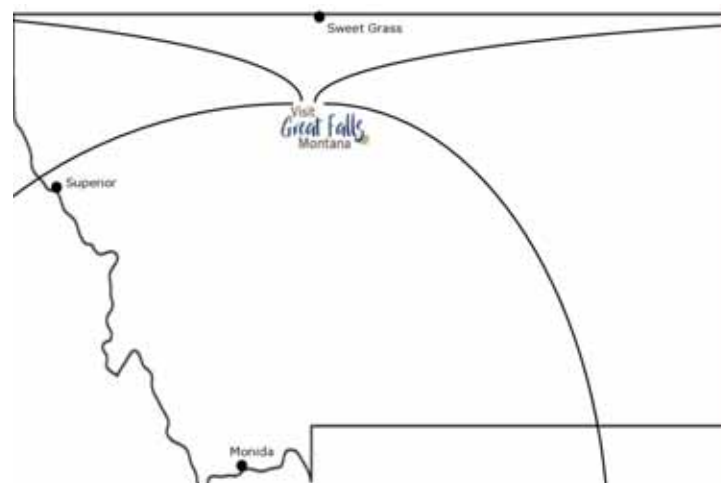
- **21% Alberta**
- 20% Montana
- **10% California**
- **8% Washington**

ITRR research indicates visitors who spend the night in Great Falls Montana come from:

- **19% Alberta**
- **11% Washington**
- **8% California**
- 6% Idaho
- 5% Texas

ITRR indicates visitors enter Montana in key locations to access Great Falls.

- 13% Monida
- 11% Sweet Grass
- 11% Superior
- 10% Great Falls International Airport



The above highlights the largest interest in Great Falls Montana, across all research and data sets. Great Falls Montana receives notable interest from the following shaded areas:



### **Targeted Markets: Leisure**

With a limited budget, Great Falls Montana Tourism will focus messaging on the following leisure markets and targeted demographics.

**Alberta:** Great Falls Montana gets strong visitation from Alberta. This market volume is directly tied to the USD to CAD exchange rate. Albertans tend to come to Great Falls for weekend getaways, engaging in shopping, dining, golfing, visiting attractions, and to utilize low cost airfare from Great Falls International Airport. When the CAD is closer in value to the USD, the volume increases. As the dollar improves, Great Falls Montana Tourism will see an increase in Canadian visitation.

**Washington:** With 11% of visitors entering from Superior, Montana we can reasonably assume these visitors are coming in from Washington and Idaho. Seattle and Spokane are strong markets to target. These visitors appreciate the breathtaking beauty and outdoor adventures without the congestion. Great Falls Montana Tourism will use primary messaging that focuses on those key aspects when visiting with them.

**California:** These visitors appreciate the breathtaking beauty and outdoor adventures without the congestion. Great Falls Montana Tourism will use primary messaging that focuses on those key aspects when visiting with them.

**Illinois:** These visitors appreciate the breathtaking beauty and outdoor adventures without the congestion. Great Falls Montana Tourism will use primary messaging that focuses on those key aspects when visiting with them.

Montana: Regional Markets we will look to engage with are along the Hi-Line, Billings, Missoula and Kalispell for the new outdoor adventures they can have while being supported by fabulous hospitality.

### **Demographics**

The sweet spot of the Great Falls Montana visitor demographic is 45 – 74 years of age traveling in a vehicle, alone or as a couple on vacation, with an annual household income of \$75,000 – \$200,000. According to ITRR, this is the largest demographic that visits Great Falls Montana currently.

Great Falls Montana is positioned to attract a younger demographic. In the 2015 Topline Report from the Outdoor Foundation, top activities for anyone 6 years old and older are:

- Running, jogging, trail running
- Bicycling – road, mountain, bmx
- Hiking
- Fishing – fresh, salt, Fly

Our digital strategies are designed to begin engaging this market.

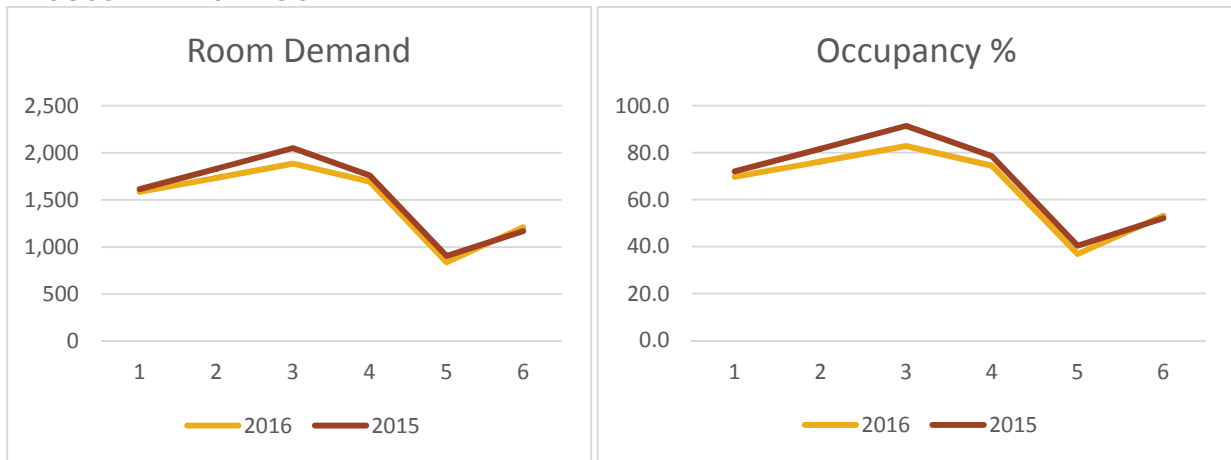
### **Targeted Markets: Conventions, Meetings and Groups**

Great Falls Montana will be working with 2,206 total hotel rooms, 31,800 square feet of hotel convention space for Fiscal Year 2017. The majority of the rooms are split between Upper Midscale (37% of rooms), and Economy (38% of rooms). Rounding out the inventory, we have 15% Midscale and 11% Upscale.

The newly assembled team will work with industry resources to determine the best market for us. The immediate work begins with determining what opportunities exist with local businesses, groups, and associations to secure large corporate meetings, retreats, conferences and gatherings that aren't already being held in Montana. This, coupled with Great Falls' central location, creates a competitive advantage to grow this segment.

## **Events**

### **Western Art Week**



The efforts we worked on in 2016 for Western Art Week show a decrease in demand and occupancy overall. Individual property surveys indicate some properties had increases, some properties did not. Website traffic was up over last year; however, this did not result in occupancy increases within Great Falls.

This event is a huge asset for Great Falls Montana and should continue to be supported. Great Falls Montana Tourism will continue to support the promotion of all the shows and all the events of Western Art Week by providing information about all the activities. We will work to enhance the website by adding a blog and leveraging facebook all year to showcase art and artists including messaging regarding all art, all prices. We will work to build the relationship with the readers of the blog and gain emotional attachments between the reader and the event. Great Falls Montana Tourism will work with show organizers to find additional ways to support the activities and events of the week and commit to updating the website with all show content, and developing brochures for the week's activities.

Great Falls Montana Tourism will work to find, enhance, or develop another event that will have the same impact as Western Art Week. We will keep our options open and when the best opportunity presents itself, we will move forward.

## **Brand**

Great Falls Montana is fortunate to be able to boast all three of Montana's Brand Pillars. Our beautiful location nestled next to the Missouri River with five scenic waterfalls and 57 miles of trail makes "spectacular unspoiled nature" within walking distance for a visitor. Giant Springs State Park, the most visited state park last year, is one of the largest fresh water springs in

the United States. Families and visitors enjoy unspoiled nature at its finest as they picnic, hike and recreate in the park adjacent to the River's Edge Trail.

Our downtown is charming with its tree-lined streets, its local retail merchants, and its emerging vibrant pubs and restaurants. We are a gateway to natural wonders found in the Bob Marshall Wilderness, the Rocky Mountain Front, the Missouri River Breaks and the Kings Hill Scenic Byway.

Breathtaking experiences by day on our trail and river give way to relaxing hospitality by night in one of our many lodging properties that invite a visitor to savor their stay with fine dining and a vibrant night life.

### **Inspiration, Orientation and Facilitation**

The State of Montana has done a great job capturing the attention of the geotraveler by promoting Montana's spectacular, unspoiled nature, its vibrant and charming small towns and breathtaking experience by day, and relaxing hospitality at night.

### **Inspire**

Great Falls Montana Tourism will continue to take the lead from the State. Great Falls' greatest asset and defining point of difference is the Missouri River and the falls, followed by outdoor activities. To inspire visitors, our story telling will focus on the Missouri River, the falls, and outdoor activities. Each message will be tailored according to market segmentation. The images below from Roland Taylor showcase Great Falls' greatest asset. Great Falls Montana Tourism will lead with our assets in our imagery in every message. We will focus on evoking strong emotion that is necessary to begin building the relationship with the potential visitor.



### **Orient**

Once the prospective visitor has connected with Great Falls Montana, Great Falls Montana Tourism will assist them in planning how to get to their destination. The Visitor Guide and Great Falls Montana Tourism website will aid in this by showcasing the ease of accessing Great Falls' central location through:

- Direct Flight Routes into Great Falls International Airport

- Routes to and from Great Falls to Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks
- Drive routes into Great Falls from every direction

### **Facilitate**

Now that the prospective visitor is connected to Great Falls emotionally and knows the best way for them to get here, we will begin highlighting all the opportunities for them to experience Great Falls Montana. Great Falls Montana Tourism will utilize many tools to share our family friendly small town atmosphere to include:

- Visitor Center
- Social Channels
- Tourism Partners
- Website

### **Strategies**

Great Falls Montana's identity is defined by the Missouri River, the falls, and a family friendly small town atmosphere. This fiscal year's marketing effort will be focused on content and digital media that convey our identity. As always, messaging will be market focused.

We will focus heavily on leveraging the planning tools used most by visitors to Great Falls:

- Internet
- Personal/previous experience
- Family and Friends
- Locals

### **Collateral**

Great Falls Montana Tourism needs to make a strong investment this year in building and rebuilding. This investment is focused on building a strong foundation from which to develop. Some of what we need we have and simply need to improve, others we are creating.

### **Great Friends League**

We have a community of promoters that demand to be tapped into. These promoters have interests and expertise in areas Great Falls Montana Tourism staff and boards do not. The great friends league looks to:

- Engage more of the community in the tourism message
- Promote our unique assets from the local perspective
- Develop even more evangelists
- Leverage our resources to generate Return on Investment
- Develop wide, diverse content to use for blogs and social channels

The future members of the Great Friends League can be utilized to keep Great Falls Montana Tourism staff informed and help deliver content, as you will see through many of the following strategies. This group of committed tourism members will meet often to ensure great ideas and great content are leveraged to generate more visitors to Great Falls Montana.

### **Visitor Guide**

A redesign of the Visitor Guide will reinforce our brand. The current Visitor Guide has great content; however, has holes where additional information can be provided and the size is great for carrying with you; however, problematic in finding and keeping stocked in racks that hold multiple brochures. The new vision for the Great Falls Visitor Guide can be seen through the following sample at: <http://www.visitutah.com/utah-travel-guide/>. Published as a flip book online as well as a perfect bound magazine will enable Great Falls to be in the line-up with other travel publication in displays, allow us to stock more in a single slot and provide for an opportunity to have larger imagery and messaging on the larger pages. FlipBook software will enable us to manage resources better by providing prospective visitors an online version of the publication.

### **Website**

Great Falls Montana Tourism currently has two websites – one for the Convention and Visitors Bureau, [www.GenuineMontana.com](http://www.GenuineMontana.com), a domain owned by the Great Falls International Airport Authority and used in conjunction with the convention and Visitors Bureau. This site is maintained by Airport Authority Staff, Great Falls Montana Tourism Staff and Josh Dardis of Dardis Intel. The one for the tourism business improvement district, [www.gfTourismBID.org](http://www.gfTourismBID.org), owned by Great Falls Montana Tourism and maintained by Great Falls Montana Tourism staff and Shortgrass Web Development.

We will combine the elements of both sites into one new site. The new site will add elements of other well done websites and features will include:

- Things to Do
- Meeting Planning Resources
- Places to Stay
- A Digital itinerary builder with sample itineraries
- Blogs
- Social Feed
- Newsletter Sign-up



## **Photography**

Still images are a vital cornerstone to inspiring visitors and evoking an emotional connection to Great Falls. This is always a continual investment and a perfect opportunity to leverage this investment by using contests and the Great Friends League to secure images that will feature:

- Missouri River
- River activities
- Falls
- Conventions
- Plains Landscape
- Hiking
- Fishing
- Birds
- Interior Shopping
- Dining
- Bicycling
- Motorcycles

## **Video**

The statistics are astounding when it comes to video. Video increases conversions by 46%, increases front-page google results 53 times and visitors to websites with video stay twice as long. This is where we can also leverage our resources and engage the Great Friends League and other community partners through contests, in obtaining video content. Video content that will showcase Great Falls, and highlight our unique assets, is essential. Videos that can be posted, and then shared by all, to the Great Falls Montana Tourism website, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram could feature:

- Introduction to Great Falls
- Conventions
- Live Music
- River's Edge Trail – biking, jogging
- Sluice Boxes – hiking, rafting
- Mitchell Pool
- Rock Climbing
- Skate Park



- Urban Art/Public Art
- The Great Falls
- Dining
- Shopping
- River activities – fishing, kayaking, rafting, paddle boarding

### **Trade Show Booth**

Great Falls Montana Tourism will create elements for a new booth that will inspire, orient, and facilitate the prospective visitor to Great Falls Montana. With our trade show booth, we will focus on:

- Unspoiled nature
- Vibrant and charming gateway to our natural wonders
- Breathtaking experiences
- Relaxing hospitality

### **Itineraries**

Great Falls Montana Tourism will develop sample itineraries to showcase all types of adventures. One of the most asked questions is what there is to do in Great Falls Montana. These itineraries will feature specific activities related to:

- Family Friendly Weekend
- Outdoor Adventure
- Shopping & Dining
- Arts & Culture
- Music & Rodeo

We will leverage the collective knowledge of the Great Friends League to ensure all of our amazing adventures are shared. These itineraries will be leveraged on Great Falls Montana Tourism’s website and social channels.

### **Promotion**

Great Falls Montana Tourism will continue to focus heavily on digital avenues for promotion to attract our targeted markets.

### **Leisure Traveler**

Great Falls Montana Tourism will dedicate the preponderance of its resources to attract Leisure Travelers to Great Falls Montana. We will also look to partner with Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development, and Central Montana Tourism Region on appropriate projects as they become available, with preference provided to familiarization tours and digital marketing opportunities. We will look to focus our media in:

- Native Advertising
- Video Banners

- Blogs
- Targeted Channels
- Influencers

The media plan will be developed with our new agency of record that we will secure in FY17. The media plan will be balanced with female and male focused distribution.

### **Instagram**

This is a new social channel we look to develop. Instagram is a social space dominated by the female consumer, with 53% of the users being women, and has 60x more engagement from users over Facebook. The example of how this channel can leverage the Great Friends League is the I Love Anchorage effort, <https://www.instagram.com/iloveanchorage/>. Great Falls Montana Tourism will leverage this platform to work with the decision makers to become inspired to travel to Great Falls Montana.

### **Facebook**

Great Falls Montana Tourism has a Facebook presence but it needs focus and attention for it to grow. With over 1 Billion users, the growing segment of Facebook is female 55+, which is a cornerstone to social strategies. We will utilize gamification strategies to encourage exploration in Great Falls and focus on original posts that tell stories, with the goal of getting “shared” to grow followers and to build the peer to peer recommendation that is more influential than advertising. Engagement will be obtained by using:

- Great Falls Montana bucket list style challenges
- Selfie Stations throughout town
- Great Falls Montana Pizza Capital Pizza Bracket
- Targeted hashtags
- Great Falls Montana Buffalo hunt

### **YouTube**

Great Falls Montana Tourism will develop a YouTube Channel to feature everything Great Falls. With a billion users, this platform allows Great Falls to utilize cross promotion strategies through all of our social channels to highlight the video investment.

### **Packages**

Great Falls Montana Tourism will work with our lodging properties to create marketable package that make it easier for travelers to come to Great Falls. Packages will focus on:

- Skiing
- Shopping

- Museums
- Rafting
- Fishing
- Performances

Great Falls Montana Tourism will work to leverage these packages through prizing on radio and social media for orientation of potential visitors.

### **Trade Shows**

Targeted trade shows allow Great Falls Montana Tourism to orient and facilitate new and previous visitors to Great Falls Montana. This marketing method is the most time consuming but provides a great return on investment when the target market is engaged. Great Falls Montana Tourism has seen most success with Canadian trade shows and will continue to attend:

- Calgary Outdoor Travel and Adventure Show – a male targeted show
- Calgary Women’s Show – a female targeted show

Great Falls Montana Tourism will look to attend shows in Seattle, Medicine Hat and Lethbridge additionally, and always search for opportunities that will match Great Falls Montana targeted markets, potentially Denver, Minneapolis, or Chicago.

### **Conventions, Groups & Meetings**

Great Falls Montana Tourism will make a strong investment in building relationships with industry professionals. We will invest in memberships, subscriptions and databases, namely EmpowerMINT through Destination Marketing Association International. As we develop this segment of our marketing efforts, we will look to learn more through networking and engaging in industry associations to make adjustments to this strategy as necessary.

There are limited opportunities within the State of Montana. We will work to build relationships with local businesses to find opportunities for corporate meetings, association trade shows, and conferences. Great Falls Montana Tourism’s opportunities increase when we look outside of Montana for additional relationships to build. This is where engaging in industry associations, such as Destination Marketing Association International, will enhance our efforts in this segment.

We will redesign Great Falls Montana Tourism's Meeting Planners guide, add a section about unique features only available in Great Falls that will enhance any convention, group, or meeting. Using newly purchased flipbook software, we will also include this guide in its entirety online. Great Falls Montana Tourism will also develop convention kits to be available for every convention in Great Falls to include stands to display visitor guides, bags when appropriate and materials specific to each group.

### **Messaging**

Each message delivered will be crafted to focus on the target market and the objective of the media being used. Below is a listing of messages that can work for Great Falls Montana.

#### **Primary Messages**

- Immerse yourself in outdoor adventures for every season. Hike, raft, paddle board, bike, cross country ski, snowshoe, ski, kayak, rock climb or fish within minutes and in solitude.
- Great Falls is home to cultural adventures with more museums per capita than any other city in the State. Charlie Russell created works of art that captured our rugged independence. Lewis and Clark spent weeks portaging our five falls and a 25,000 square foot interpretive center commemorates their tenacity.
- The largest bison cliff jump in North American, First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park and National Historic Landmark, provides genuine insight to our first people's independent spirit.
- Glacier National Park

#### **Secondary Messages**

- Shopping
- Dining
- Pizza Capital Bracket
- Buffalo Hunt
- State Fair
- Giant Springs
- General River Recreation
- Rich History
- Easily Accessible
- Friendly and welcoming
- Family oriented
- Montana's Front Range
- Authentic feel
- The Best of Montana

### **Visitor Center**

Great Falls Montana Tourism will focus on our Visitor Center by instituting training for our amazing volunteers. Some of our volunteers have been promoting Great Falls for over 20 years. With some training, our volunteers and staff can facilitate new Great Falls residents, current Great Falls residents and visitors of the things to see and do in Great Falls Montana. Ultimately, the goal of our Visitor Center investment is to get visitors to extend their stay or come back or both.

### **Newsletter**

Great Falls Montana Tourism will engage our prospective visitors and our previous visitors with a newsletter delivered directly to their email address. These newsletters will inspire and orient readers to Great Falls Montana.

### **Opportunities**

Great Falls Montana Tourism recognizes that the Great Falls Montana community is rich with opportunities for sports, leisure travel, conventions, meetings, groups, and events. We also recognize our amazing community partners may develop ideas that will benefit tourism. We will always seek to invest in opportunities that will have a strong return on investment for tourism in Great Falls Montana.

### **Goals**

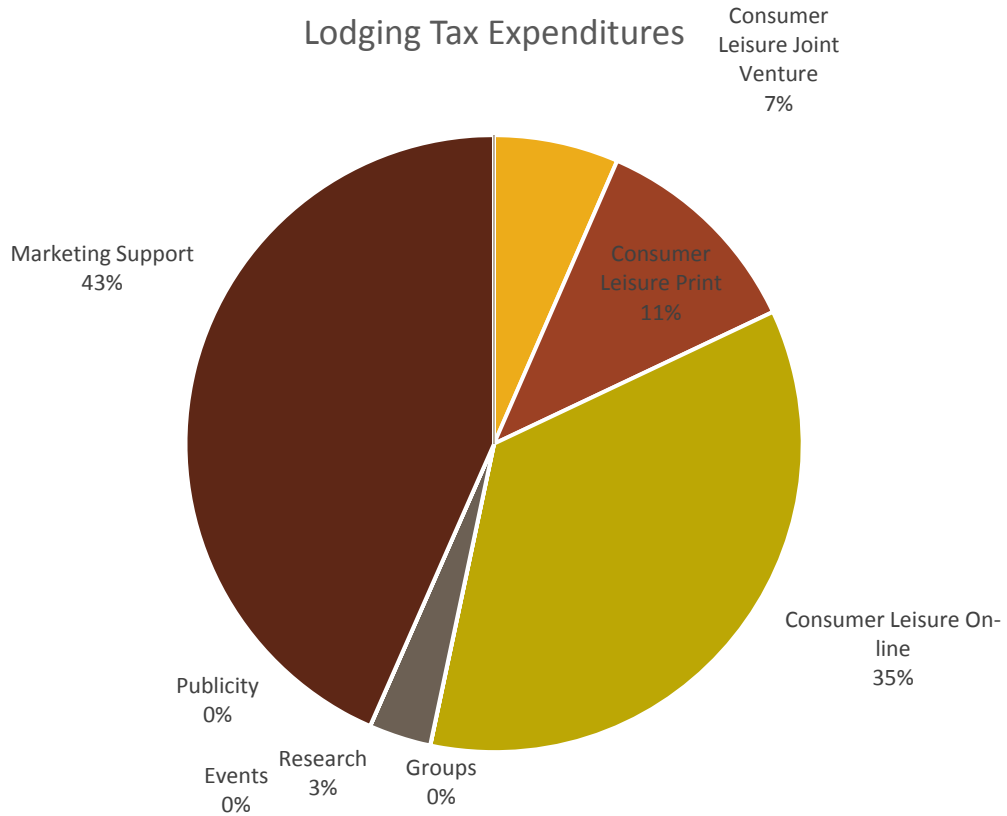
The primary goal for Great Falls Montana is to grow visitation to Great Falls Montana. The collective efforts of this marketing plan looks to:

- Increase occupancy at Great Falls Montana lodging properties by 1%
- Increase Facebook page likes by 5%
- Increase total unique visitors to website by 5%
- Establish 1,000 Instagram followers
- Increase Visitor Center use by 1%
- Secure commitments for 3 new conventions, groups or meetings.
- Generate 500 views of videos on Great Falls Montana YouTube Channel

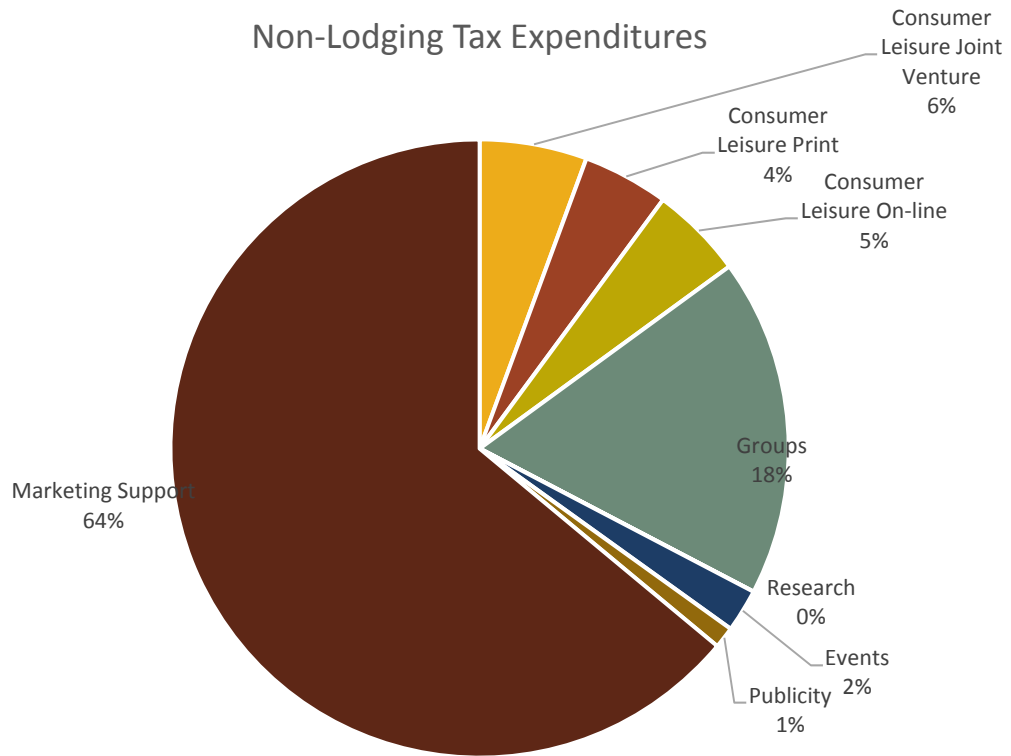
**Budget  
Summary**

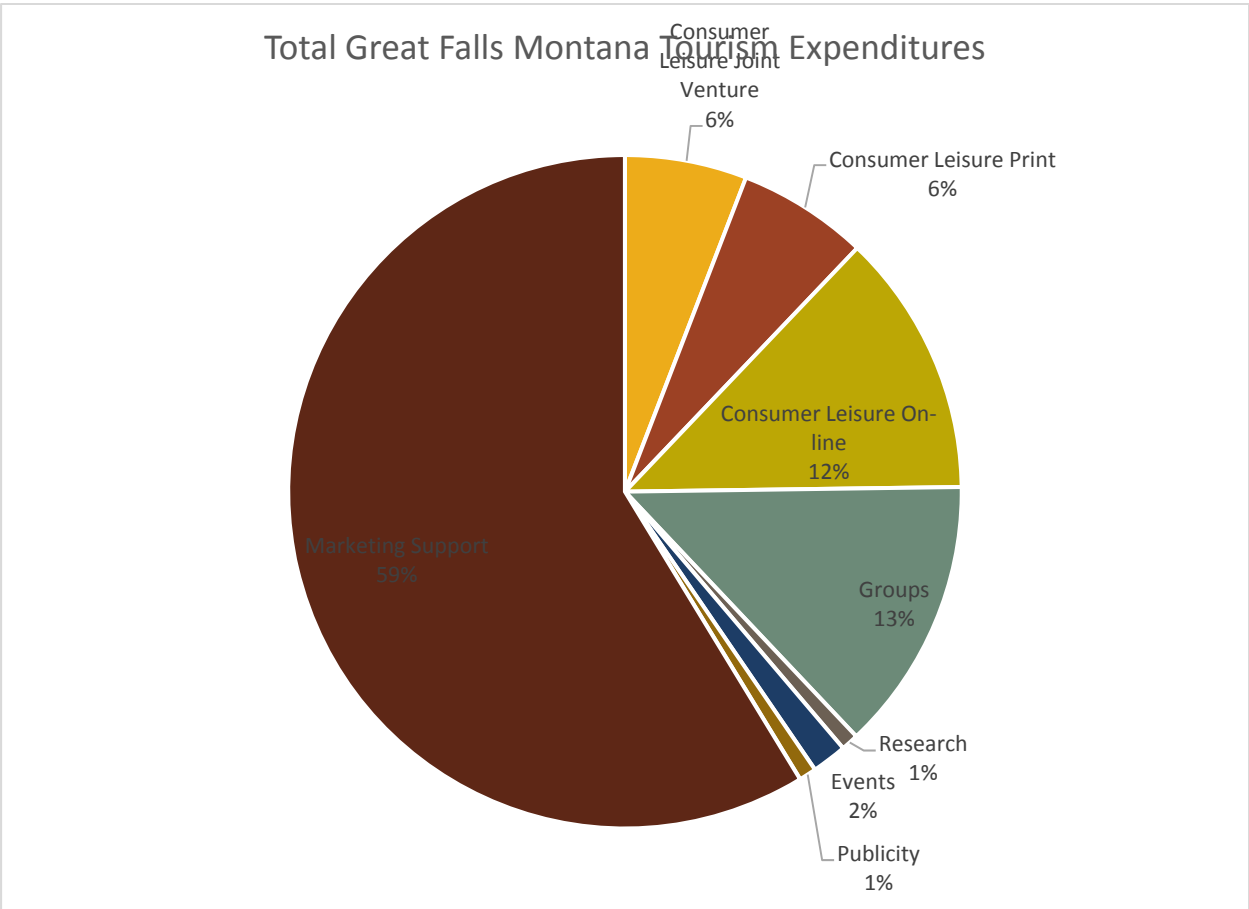
|                                      | Lodging<br>Tax   | Non-<br>Lodging<br>Tax | Total            |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Consumer Leisure Joint Venture       | \$10,000         | \$25,000               | <b>\$35,000</b>  |
| Consumer Leisure Print               | \$17,500         | \$20,000               | <b>\$37,500</b>  |
| Consumer Leisure On-line             | \$54,080         | \$21,642               | <b>\$75,722</b>  |
| Groups                               |                  | \$78,800               | <b>\$78,800</b>  |
| Research                             | \$5,000          |                        | <b>\$5,000</b>   |
| Events                               |                  | \$10,000               | <b>\$10,000</b>  |
| Publicity                            |                  | \$5,000                | <b>\$5,000</b>   |
| Marketing Support                    |                  |                        |                  |
| Staff                                | \$28,800         | \$158,019              | <b>\$186,819</b> |
| Visitor Center                       | \$12,320         | \$25,425               | <b>\$37,745</b>  |
| Administration & Overhead            |                  | \$60,486               | <b>\$60,486</b>  |
| Fulfillment                          | \$5,000          |                        |                  |
| TAC                                  | \$1,000          |                        | <b>\$1,000</b>   |
| Digital Asset Management/Acquisition | \$10,000         |                        | <b>\$10,000</b>  |
| FlipBook Software                    | \$1,500          |                        | <b>\$1,500</b>   |
| Opportunity                          | \$1,000          | \$40,870               | <b>\$41,870</b>  |
| New Creative                         | \$5,000          |                        | <b>\$5,000</b>   |
| Insurance                            | \$1,800          |                        | <b>\$1,800</b>   |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>\$153,000</b> | <b>\$445,242</b>       | <b>\$598,242</b> |

### Lodging Tax Expenditures



### Non-Lodging Tax Expenditures





A full detailed budget is also attached as Exhibit 1.



Exhibit 1

Great Falls Montana Tourism Budget  
July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017

|                           | CVB              | VIC             | TBID             | Total            |
|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Income</b>             |                  |                 |                  |                  |
| Bed Tax                   | \$153,000        |                 |                  | \$153,000        |
| Bed Tax from CVB          |                  | \$12,320        |                  | \$0              |
| TBID Assessment           |                  | \$13,061        | \$375,742        | \$388,803        |
| Membership                |                  |                 |                  | \$0              |
| Advertising               |                  | \$3,500         |                  | \$3,500          |
| Retail Sales              |                  | \$8,200         |                  | \$8,200          |
| GFDA                      |                  | \$5,000         |                  | \$5,000          |
| <b>Total Income</b>       | <u>\$153,000</u> | <u>\$42,081</u> | <u>\$375,742</u> | <u>\$558,503</u> |
| <b>Cost of Goods Sold</b> |                  |                 |                  |                  |
| Inventory                 |                  | \$4,000         |                  | \$4,000          |
| Credit Card Processing    |                  | \$336           |                  | \$336            |
| <b>Total COGS</b>         | <u>\$0</u>       | <u>\$4,336</u>  | <u>\$0</u>       | <u>\$4,336</u>   |
| <b>Gross Profit</b>       | <u>\$153,000</u> | <u>\$37,745</u> | <u>\$375,742</u> | <u>\$554,167</u> |
| <b>Expenses</b>           |                  |                 |                  |                  |
| Wages                     | \$28,800         | \$22,520        | \$109,280        | \$160,600        |
| Payroll Expenses          |                  | \$3,153         | \$38,739         | \$41,892         |
| Administration            |                  |                 |                  | \$0              |
| Rent                      |                  | \$1             | \$10,908         | \$10,909         |
| Chamber Management        |                  |                 | \$3,648          | \$3,648          |
| Memberships               |                  |                 | \$1,400          | \$1,400          |
| Subscriptions             | \$7,630          | \$250           | \$8,000          | \$15,880         |
| Phone                     |                  | \$1,600         | \$1,822          | \$3,422          |
| Utilities                 |                  | \$3,000         |                  | \$3,000          |
| Maintenance               |                  | \$3,886         | \$1,200          | \$5,086          |
| Accounting                |                  |                 | \$300            | \$300            |
| Supplies                  |                  | \$1,200         | \$4,720          | \$5,920          |
| Postage                   |                  | \$120           |                  | \$120            |
| Volunteer Expenses        |                  | \$1,750         |                  | \$1,750          |
| Insurance                 | \$1,800          |                 | \$1,828          | \$3,628          |
| Professional Fees         |                  | \$265           | \$16,585         | \$16,850         |
| Travel                    |                  |                 | \$5,000          | \$5,000          |
| Visitor Center            | \$12,320         |                 |                  |                  |
| New Creative Development  | \$5,000          |                 |                  | \$5,000          |
| ExpoPark                  |                  |                 | \$35,000         | \$35,000         |
| Professional Development  |                  |                 | \$10,000         | \$10,000         |
| Marketing                 |                  |                 |                  | \$0              |
| Photo and Video Library   | \$10,000         |                 |                  | \$10,000         |

|                                   |                  |                 |                  |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Visitor Guide                     | \$20,000         |                 | \$20,000         | \$40,000         |
| Joint Venture                     | \$10,000         |                 |                  | \$10,000         |
| Trade Show Booth                  |                  |                 | \$5,000          | \$5,000          |
| Leisure Traveler Media Plan       | \$42,950         |                 | \$11,642         | \$54,592         |
| Trade Shows                       |                  |                 | \$15,500         | \$15,500         |
| Prizing                           |                  |                 | \$5,000          | \$5,000          |
| Central Montana Travel Planner Ad | \$2,500          |                 |                  | \$2,500          |
| Website                           | \$10,000         |                 | \$10,000         | \$20,000         |
| Conventions and Meetings          |                  |                 | \$73,800         | \$73,800         |
| Convention Kits                   |                  |                 | \$5,000          | \$5,000          |
| Events                            |                  |                 |                  | \$0              |
| Western Art Week                  |                  |                 | \$10,000         | \$10,000         |
| TAC                               | \$1,000          |                 |                  | \$1,000          |
| Opportunity                       | \$1,000          |                 | \$40,870         | \$41,870         |
| Total Expenses                    | <u>\$153,000</u> | <u>\$37,745</u> | <u>\$445,242</u> | <u>\$623,667</u> |
| Net Profit                        | <u>\$0</u>       | <u>\$0</u>      | <u>-\$69,500</u> | <u>-\$69,500</u> |

## NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City Commission of the City of Great Falls will conduct a public hearing on July 19, 2016, at 7:00 o'clock p.m. in the Commission Chambers, Civic Center, 2 Park Drive South, for the purpose of considering the 2016/2017 Tourism Business Improvement District Budget and Work Plan. Any interested person may provide public comment at the public hearing or may provide written comment prior to or during said Commission meeting by addressing said comments to the City Clerk, City of Great Falls, P. O. Box 5021, Great Falls, MT 59403.

/s/ Lisa Kunz, City Clerk

Publication Date: July 8, 2016.