



ANNUAL STRATEGY

JULY 1, 2025 – JUNE 30, 2026
Objectives, Tactics, Goals & Budget

Adopted: 4-17-2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Great Falls Montana Tourism is the destination management organization (DMO) for Great Falls, Montana. As an independent organization, its strategies are directed by the Boards of Directors. In FY24, through the benefit of ARPA funding from the City of Great Falls, Great Falls Montana Tourism led the effort to develop a Travel Industry Growth Plan for Great Falls, Montana and a Strategic Plan for Great Falls Montana Tourism. Those two documents helped shape this, and future, plans for Great Falls Montana Tourism.

All of our efforts are focused to meet our mission: Strengthen Great Falls and its economy by promoting the uniqueness of the community and its attractions to visitors and residents. The efforts to meet our mission ultimately fulfill our vision that: Great Falls is the only authentic Montana destination united under one brand, centered around a vibrant diverse economy and world-class cultural amenities

In 2023, Great Falls welcomed 1.8 million overnight guests, a 38% increase over 2022, according to Institute of Tourism and Recreation Research. Market room demand dropped 6% over 2022 to 485,156, according to Smith Travel Research. These two divergent trends could be explained by the 8% drop in the use of hotel/motel and the 12% increase in use of private campgrounds.

Great Falls, Montana has 2,300 lodging rooms available across 30 lodging properties. Construction has started on one additional river's edge property that will add 110 rooms. And announced projects on the east end of Great Falls that will bring two new lodging properties and a project led by the Little Shell Tribe will develop a resort on the north end of Great Falls on Mount Royal. There are 2 convention spaces: Montana ExpoPark and Mansfield Center. Additional stand-alone meeting space, as well as hotel-based meeting space, is available through Great Falls. The community has direct flights from Seattle on Alaska, Salt Lake City and Minneapolis on Delta, Denver and seasonally Chicago on United, Las Vegas and Phoenix on Allegiant.

As we work to grow the travel industry for Great Falls, Montana, we've identified the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats about our community.

In the last resident brand barometer study 34% of residents would not recommend visiting Great Falls and 26% are passive, neither recommending or not recommending. This becomes very important as a metric as 76% of visitors to Great Falls have been here before. It is essential for our travel industry economy that residents are excited about where they live and to share that excitement with visitors.

STRENGTHS

Art

In the broadest sense of the term, Great Falls has art—from statues 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.

Seasonal Outdoor Recreation

Great Falls offers travelers a mixture of landscapes in which to recreate. Our community is in the river valley, where the Sun River meets the Missouri River. It is surrounded by the Little Belt, Highwood, Big Belt, and Rocky Mountains. Comparative to mountain communities, Great Falls' seasons are a bit longer and more defined, with spring activities beginning ahead of other areas in Montana, and the same for winter.

Historic

Great Falls sits on the homelands of the Northern Plains Tribal Nations, is currently home to the Little Shell Tribe, and Great Falls Montana Tourism offers its respect for the history, culture and wisdom that preceded our community's creation. Part of the tribal history is told at North America's largest buffalo jump and historic landmark, First Peoples Buffalo Jump. Another part of that history is told in conjunction with Lewis and Clark Expedition at North America's most extensive collection of the Corps of Discovery at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center. Another piece of the story is told alongside Charlie Russell and the C.M. Russell Museum Complex.

Affordable

Great Falls' average daily rate in 2024 was \$122.79, a modest 2.5% increase over last year, and still ranging 20% (or more) below its Montana peers.

Uncrowded

The wait lines at trail heads, ski lifts, and restaurants remain non-existent or short and museums, events, trails, and lodging facilities have capacity for more.

Available

Great Falls, Montana has capacity in lodging facilities year-round. Very few of our days are at 80% occupancy or above.

WEAKNESS

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. Additionally, high ADR's in other parts of Montana have pushed travelers to assume all of Montana has high lodging prices and limited availability. This leads many travelers to opt to camp instead of staying in local properties.

Detractors

Great Falls residents hold a low-self image of and are negative about the community being a great place to visit.

Workforce

Great Falls has more jobs available than people to secure, housing for the jobs to sleep at, and day care to keep people working. The lack of people causes businesses to adjust hours of operation and the way customers are served, which impacts availability for traveler engagement.

OPPORTUNITIES

Air Service

United, Delta, Alaska, and Allegiant are great partners, however, there are opportunities to add carriers and direct flights.

In-Market Experience

We are missing the ability to provide easier access to outdoor recreation and to further the culturally historic stories of Great Falls. Great Falls can benefit from easy access equipment rentals, tour guides, facilitated experiences, and review worthy interactions.

Contract Labor

Great Falls will see more workers coming into the market to help with the Sentinel missile upgrade at Malmstrom Air Force Base, growth of medical services in Great Falls, and new housing developments. In 2023, 42% of overnight stays were connected to business or skilled workers. These workers could be return leisure travelers.

THREATS

National Economy

Changes under National leadership connected to trade policies and funding for Federal agencies could impact visitation and disposable income available for travel. Canadian travel accounts for 15% of Great Falls' overall visitation, top activities by visitors include public lands managed by the Forest Service, National Park Service, and access to the public lands can be hindered by fires and containment efforts could be impacted by cuts to red card personnel.

Funding Redirection

Montana Lodging Facility Use and Sales Tax Funding continues to be a focus to support other priorities within the State and be diverted away from supporting urban communities, like Great Falls.

Heritage Events

Great Falls has been fortunate to host long-standing signature events, some established over 40 years. As mature events, there is a potential for the end of their lifecycle or for interest to decline, reducing or eliminating overnight visitor attendance.

MARKETS

Geographic Target Markets

Great Falls Montana Tourism's leisure marketing will be focused on the following drive markets:

- Montana, primarily Billings, Kalispell, Missoula, & the Hi-line
- Alberta, primarily Lethbridge, Calgary

And the following fly markets:

- Chicago
- Los Angeles
- Dallas

Psychographic Targets

Within the geographic targets, we will target groups that are active by day as they are most likely to be active in the evening. The targets would be:

- DINKs
- Active Outdoor Enthusiasts
- Solo Traveler

CREATIVE AND CAMPAIGN

Great Falls Montana has used a double exposure creative in its campaigns since 2020. We will be staying the course with this creative and the unpolished approach to it that was implemented two years ago. We will expand the use of QR codes into videos and printed pieces where possible to make access to more info for planning easier for end users.

Great Falls Montana Tourism will continue to focus on a This and That campaign effort, that leans into portraying Great Falls for what it truly is and being who we really are and what we really offer,

boldly! The campaigns will integrate accessible and affordable tones with images and copy selection. The strategy is to find a classy way to say Great Falls is cheap and easy.

The campaigns will portray all sides of Great Falls from outdoor adventure to art, from fine dining to your go-to burger, from craft cocktails to draft beer, from do it all to do nothing. It will be about having your cake and eating it too with options on things to do, places to stay, dining, drinks, in a focused way.

This strategy plays into the fact that in today's society we are faced with information overload. When so much info is coming our way, we don't retain it all and we can't recall it all. Most people can't recall a full laundry list of things, but are more likely to recall options when given just 2 or 3.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1 GENERATE OVERNIGHT STAYS AT GREAT FALLS LODGING PROPERTIES WITH MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

1.1 Paid Media

Great Falls Montana Tourism will work with Banik to implement a paid media strategy that will focus on placements that generate the best return on investment. Placements will take into account:

- Joint Venture Opportunities with Destination Montana and Central Montana Tourism
- Off-Peak promotion campaigns
- Placements that leverage video
- Placements that leverage storytelling
- Placements that provide tracking of in-market visitation
- Leverage National Park travel

As appropriate, we will allocate a small budget amount for placement of paid media in Great Falls for resident education of the unique assets available within our community.

We will be looking at ways to enhance our Montana People of Great Falls effort launched in 2019. We want to find ways to incorporate our resident influencers and businesses owners as part of our promotion efforts.

1.2 Owned Media

a. Social

Great Falls Montana Tourism will be the leader in producing original content about Great Falls through Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.

FACEBOOK

On Facebook, we will use:

- "Glimpse of Great Falls" video segments
- "Did you Know/Check this Out" image segments
- "This is New" posts
- partner-developed and supplied "Show Me" video segments
- "Foodography" posts that highlight Great Falls' foodie scene
- "Big Sky View" drone video segments
- "Buy Your Friendship" giveaway posts
- new content announcement posts
- "Inside the Basecamp" visitor experience posts
- Leave No Trace posts

User-generated images and videos will also be leveraged on Instagram and Facebook to create a more expansive representation of what Great Falls has to offer and show beautiful imagery. We will continue our “Share Your Adventure” effort by providing physical cards to hand out to guests, inviting them to share photos and videos in Great Falls. As appropriate, Great Falls Montana Tourism will share content from other pages of positive news highlighting the Great Falls’ community, current non-political events, and exciting opportunities with the primary objective to make Great Falls, Montana the destination for a leisure traveler.

Great Falls Montana Tourism will also manage its Facebook channel by:

- Inviting people who engage with our content and ads to Follow our page.
- Responding to comments and messages, both positive and negative, as appropriate.
- Engaging with pages of stakeholders, members, and resident champions, as appropriate.

Great Falls Montana Tourism will engage in goodwill community efforts by giving away tickets for shows and experiences to Great Falls residents, as well as utilizing giveaways to attract visitors and overnight stays.

INSTAGRAM

On Instagram, Great Falls Montana Tourism produced images and videos of diverse landscapes, seasonal experiences, events, businesses, and things to do in and around an approximate 60-mile radius from Great Falls will be posted on the grid, reels, and highlights. As appropriate, this tactic will also supplement the growth of our photo library by securing the rights and the original high-resolution images to use in other media efforts. Feed posts will include:

- Current brand-toned captions.
- Great Falls, Montana as the tagged location, with the specific location added in the comments.
- The hashtags: #VisitGreatFalls #GreatFallsMontana #GreatFallsMT #GreatFalls #Montana.
- Additional trending experience, season, and image-specific hashtags to leverage larger feeds.
- “Great Falls Moodboard” inspirational seasonal posts

Great Falls Montana Tourism will create short-form videos highlighting activities, events, special features, unique experiences, Leave No Trace Principles and beautiful views to be used on reels and in stories. This tactic includes producing and posting an Instagram-specific “What’s Up Wednesday” video.

Great Falls Montana Tourism will utilize “link in bio” and direct messaging to connect users with information and resources on our website. Brand-toned graphics will be created and posted in stories by Great Falls Montana Tourism as appropriate to highlight events, dates to note, and relevant information. Tagged content, current events, blog post links, podcast episode links, and other relevant content that highlight outdoor adventure and activities in Great Falls will be shared in our stories or featured in a reel, as appropriate. Great Falls Montana Tourism will continue to manage this channel by:

- Responding to comments and messages, both positive and negative, as appropriate.
- Finding and following hashtags and creators relevant for our purpose.
- Engaging with pages of stakeholders, members, resident champions, and visitors, as appropriate.

YOUTUBE

With YouTube, Great Falls Montana Tourism will use this platform to continue “Great Stories of Great Falls” series. This series consists of longer-form videos produced by Great Falls Montana Tourism that continue our tone of an authentic, not filtered, and at times sassy, look at the people, history, places, and events of Great Falls. Consider this very short video version of content that would be created for the podcast. Production may include additional video support from a third party. The objective of each story is to build an emotional connection with the viewer, provide a larger background for a subject area of our community and connect the story to a specific reason for travel to our community. Topics for this series could include:

- The Freshest Beer in the World
- Great Falls’ Bootlegging Past
- River’s Edge Trail System

Great Falls Montana Tourism will monitor the impact Feisty Women of Montana 1.0 is having in relation to the YouTube channel, and it’s further impact through film festival submissions to determine if this effort will have a second installment.

We will also work with partners appropriately with these stories to deepen the experience with potential exhibits at museums, or kick-off experiences.

Great Falls Montana Tourism will also develop “Trip Tease” itinerary videos to inspire potential visitors and simplify the planning process by showcasing tailored experiences and unique attractions. Some examples of these videos include:

- 72 Hours in Great Falls
- Art Lovers Itinerary
- Adventure Seekers Agenda
- Family Friendly Fun

The “What’s Up Wednesday” video segment will be posted weekly, highlighting what can be done in the coming weekend and in two weeks in Great Falls. Short-form videos will be produced and published furthering the “Montana People of Great Falls” effort, providing business profile videos to connect the viewers to the people of Great Falls that make it a special place to visit.

Furthering our people connection, we will record and produce “Artist Interviews” showcasing conversations with artists, performers, and entertainers about their experience in Great Falls.

Our YouTube channels will also feature “Experience Great Falls” videos produced by Great Falls Montana Tourism highlighting and explaining experiences in and around Great Falls including event previews and recaps (past examples of this include Grim Tales of Great Falls), what to expect videos (past example includes The Grouse House Experience), and how to videos (past examples include Where Are the Falls). Great Falls Montana Tourism will continue to manage this channel by:

- Responding to comments and messages, both positive and negative, as appropriate.
- Organizing content into Playlists, as appropriate.
- Optimizing descriptions and title to improve searchability and discovery

During Western Art Week, Great Falls Montana Tourism will work with show organizers to feature artists and their works on the Western Art Week Facebook page. The Western Art

Week schedule will be shared on the Western Art Week Facebook page, the Visit Great Falls Facebook page, and the Visit Great Falls Instagram page.

Overall, we will also be looking at ways to enhance our Montana People of Great Falls effort launched in 2019 through social and beyond YouTube. We want to find ways to incorporate our resident influencers and businesses owners as part of our promotional efforts and enhance our other efforts with recommendations from locals.

b. “We’re No Dam Experts” Podcast

Great Falls Montana Tourism will continue to create, produce, and publish a weekly episode on a topic about Great Falls, Montana. The podcast section of the website will be revamped to allow each episode to be supported with a landing page so that specific episode links are possible throughout the site. Each episode will be published on our YouTube channel. Each episode will also be shared, when appropriate, on our Facebook and Instagram, with corresponding images or videos about the episode topic. Great Falls Montana Tourism will enhance podcast production and audience engagement by:

- Adding a visual element with recorded video podcasts, including camera and lighting setups in the current studio.
- Optimizing podcast titles, descriptions, and episode notes to improve discoverability on podcast and search platforms.

c. LocalHood

This tactic is a Crowdriff platform that is available in partnership with Montana Department of Commerce’s Tourism effort. Great Falls Montana Tourism will leverage this tactic to publish itinerary ideas and tips of things leisure travelers can do. As appropriate, this content will be downloaded and shared to Great Falls Montana Tourism’s Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts.

d. “Adventure Awaits” Email

A monthly email will be developed using current brand tone and imagery then delivered to our database of around 90,000 to encourage travel to Great Falls using Constant Contact. Additional special editions will be delivered to targeted interests as the need arises. All Adventure Awaits emails will be shared with a Facebook post.

e. Blogs

Great Falls Montana Tourism will leverage this website feature to highlight the what’s and how’s of things to do in Great Falls. Types of blog content include “Where to Fish”, “Hidden Gems Along the River’s Edge Trail”, “Must Eat Brunches”, “Best Biking Trails”. Blogs will be more evergreen and developed and published by both Great Falls Montana Tourism and resident experts throughout the year.

f. Build Out Scenic Drive Content

Sixty-Eight percent of visitors to Great Falls enjoy scenic driving. We have highlighted scenic drives in the Basecamp Magazine, however, we need to build out the digital presence on the website. This will look to be done in partnership.

g. The Eventory

Great Falls Montana Tourism will develop an inventory listing of events that will be distributed through Constant Contact to a subscriber list every Monday at 7 am. This effort will be done first to aid travelers with itinerary fillers while in Great Falls. Next for businesses to know and plan around, what may cause increase in foot traffic to or around their businesses. Lastly, this

effort is designed to help other event planners know what events are occurring when they want to have an event so that can either be aware of a partnership opportunity or that another event could cannibalize attendance. The Eventory will be added weekly to a landing page on www.VisitGreatFallsMontana.org that can be accessed from the events page.

1.3 Earned Media

a. KMON 560 AM Segment

Great Falls Montana Tourism staff will appear every two weeks on KMON 560 AM to share Great Things in Great Falls. This will be events that are great little getaways for folks in the listening area that covers Great Falls north into Lethbridge and over to Medicine Hat.

b. Non-Stop Local ABC Segment

Great Falls Montana Tourism staff will appear weekly on Non-Stop Local to share Great Things in Great Falls. These segments will feature upcoming events, unique Great Falls attractions, fun facts about Great Falls and ways to experience Great Falls. This is a Saturday segment that airs across the state on Wake Up Montana.

c. Develop Media Kit

Great Falls Montana Tourism will develop a digital media kit, with a few hardcopies, to provide information and resources to media members, content creators, and influencers. The digital media kit will include:

- Explanation of the Great Falls Montana Tourism organization through our mission, branding, objectives, and funding sources.
- Destination information such as attractions, unique selling points, signature events, history, visitor information and economic trends
- Downloadable Visit Great Falls logo
- Access to photo and video assets
- Press releases
- Social media links
- Contact information

1.4 Public Relations

Great Falls Montana Tourism is working in partnership with Great Falls Development Alliance and has secured the services of DVA to create a public relations strategy to benefit Great Falls, Montana. Once this plan is presented and approved, it will be implemented.

1.5 Film and Television Production

Great Falls Montana Tourism will enhance its collaboration and relationship with the Montana Film Office and serve as a liaison between production crews and local people, businesses, and attractions for film production in Great Falls. The primary goal is to showcase Great Falls as an attractive and unique film destination by providing first-class customer service and access to the community. We will build a film section on the website with:

- Film Location Guide highlighting key spots, historical landmarks, diverse landscapes, architectural options, and unique attractions, supported by photos and video
- Local Resources such as vendors, catering, crew options, and more
- Support Services details practical support and on-scene assistance to production companies and crew

1.6 Resident Sentiment Campaign

a. Welcome to Great Falls Receptions

Great Falls Montana Tourism will work with partners to consider establishing receptions to welcome new residents, newly stationed military personnel, and new students to Great Falls. During these receptions, we will have community representatives share the opportunities to engage within the community in areas of interest of the attendee.

b. Resident Influencers

Great Falls Montana Tourism will continue its effort to recruit resident influencers and pay for content to be posted on the influencer's social media profiles.

c. Great Falls Photo Contest Calendar

Great Falls Montana Tourism will work with partners to establish a photo contest where residents submit photos of the area and the winning photos will receive an award and be featured in a Great Falls calendar that can be sold.

d. Siege Great Falls Experience List

Great Falls Montana Tourism will work to establish a list of Great Falls Experiences for residents and non-residents to experience utilizing technology to track what has been done. Prizes will be awarded at set percentage completion levels with a grand prize awarded during Pledge Great Falls for those who complete the whole list.

e. License Great Falls Brand

Great Falls Montana Tourism will develop a licensing agreement for those who wish to make Great Falls branded products.

f. Great Falls Coloring Book Page Contest

Great Falls Montana Tourism will work with partners to establish a contest for artists to create coloring book pages of Great Falls icons and winning pages will be provided a prize and be included in a produced coloring book that will be offered for sale.

1.7 Provide Strategically Aligned Sponsorships

Great Falls Montana Tourism will provide sponsorships to projects that align with event impact matrix that is supported by Placer.ai data and occupancy low spots. Sponsorship benefits should be focused on continually marketing Great Falls.

1.8 Guest Services

Great Falls Montana Tourism will greet walk-in guests with a primary focus to answer their questions. Our secondary focus is to engage them with storytelling to get them into Great Falls experiencing our community. The purpose of our efforts here are to get people to stay overnight in a Great Falls Lodging Property, if they aren't already. If they are already staying, maybe we can get them to extend their stay. It may not be possible to get them to change their plans, so we try to get them to plan a return trip to Great Falls. As part of this effort, we will manage inventory of most referenced materials from their individual sources, ensuring adequate stock at all times.

1.9 Prize Donation

Great Falls Montana Tourism will continue to donate Great Falls product and experience baskets along with lodging rebates to target market fundraising events.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

GENERATE OVERNIGHT STAYS AT GREAT FALLS LODGING PROPERTIES WITH GROUPS

2.1 Produce New Future Signature Tourism Events

Great Falls Montana Tourism will establish new events that will bring overnight visitors to Great Falls and grow into long-term events for our community. We will identify partners, find sponsors, secure vendors, and market the events. The new events include:

- Rhythm & Rumble. A tribute to the history of the Ozark Club in October 2025
- Winter Lights and Decorations Event from November 28 to December 21, 2025
- Film Festival in February 2026

and could include:

- Great Northern Festival – focused on Canadian snowbirds return in April 2026

2.2 Event Creation Training Resources

Great Falls Montana Tourism will develop an event creation and marketing resource center to guide organizers creating new events on the basics of establishing events that can leverage the traveler market.

2.3 Leveraged Event Coordination

Great Falls Montana Tourism will look for events that can be marketed by leveraging multiple events together or enhanced by working with partners to create additional events to collaborate with, that will entice travelers for a weekend getaway.

2.4 Enhance Established Events

a. Western Art Week

Great Falls Montana Tourism will data mine the websites and Facebook pages of the shows that participate in Western Art Week and add the data to www.WesternArtWeek.com, then drive traffic to the site using paid media and Western Art Week and Visit Great Falls owned media channels. We will communicate with each of the show organizers asking how we can partner and support them in bringing more people to their show and move forward as appropriate in relation to our objectives and mission.

b. Mimosa Showdown

Great Falls Montana Tourism will partner with Downtown Great Falls to produce the Mimosa Showdown. We will take the lead with paid media and licensing of the intellectual property to be used by retailers to create branded Mimosa Showdown products.

c. Cascade 66

Great Falls Montana Tourism will place paid media to help increase out of town registration for the road ride. We will work to bring ideas to enhance the event to make it more appealing for people to want to attend.

d. ArtsFest Montana

Great Falls Montana Tourism will work with Downtown Great Falls to enhance the ArtsFest Montana with the objective of making it a signature Montana event. Downtown has done a fantastic job establishing Great Walls, the mural creation portion of the event, however, Great Falls Montana Tourism wants to help downtown enhance the Artists Reception, activities connected to the murals, and additional experiences that could be had throughout the week the murals are being created.

e. Multicultural Fair

Great Falls Montana Tourism has had conversations with the founder of the Multicultural Fair and they have expressed the potential for the event to expand into a multiday heritage festival. We will work with them on the possibility of expanding the event in an effort to make it a multi-day event.

2.5 Develop the Pipeline for Group Tours, Meetings, and Sports a Networking and Research

This tactic is about leveraging others for the benefit of Great Falls. Great Falls Montana Tourism will:

- Network with leaders at Rotary, Great Falls Sports Foundation, Chamber, and other professional functions to find industry associations, passion projects, reunions, and sporting events residents are connected to and ask for referrals to bring the opportunity to Great Falls.
- Work with local venues to develop a comprehensive calendar of projects.
- Prospect through LinkedIn to connect with meeting planners and build relationships with them to find opportunities they need destinations for.
- Search public event calendars at venues in communities like Great Falls for groups they have secured and solicit group to consider Great Falls.
- Respond to Request for Proposals by providing:
 - partner supplied room rates & availability or agreed upon percentage discount on standard rates on future bookings.
 - information on applicable resources, such as catering, live music, networking events, transportation, and family itineraries.
 - industry specific options for keynote addresses or on-site tours.
 - details on unique attendee experience opportunities to increase attendee interest.
 - connections to community and industry leaders, local service providers, and community engagement opportunities.
 - testimonies from previous groups secured through surveys of completed events.
- Complete a listing of Great Falls sports venues into Sports IQ to get a community score. Dependent on that score, Great Falls will invest in a sports database to leverage our Sports IQ assets to recruit interest in more non-traditional and unique sports, such as Disc Golf, Running, Biking, and Swimming.
- Enhance the website with details on sports assets to support sports conversations.



b. Targeted Event Attendance

Great Falls Montana Tourism will continue to partner with our peers in Montana to grow the group market. Great Falls has seen its greatest success in the meeting space from Networking and Research, so this year, we are doubling down on that effort and forgoing meeting events. Great Falls Montana Tourism will consider any opportunity that matches our strengths and plans to attend:

- American Bus Association (ABA) Marketplace
- TEAMS '25, if the initial Sports IQ ranking indicates market potential.

c. Bring it to the Basecamp

Great Falls Montana Tourism will leverage industry trends and develop an email with relevant content and distribute to its planner/organizer database, using Constant Contact. Additionally, staff will present to civic organizations the value of meetings and groups and ask for referrals of group opportunities.

2.6 Convert Leads for Group Tours, Meetings, and Sports

a. Familiarization Tours

Great Falls Montana Tourism will provide an in-person familiarization tour for planners of group events. These tours will provide organizers with the opportunity to see Great Falls, its venues, and experience in person to better picture what an event in our community could look like.

b. Leverage Incentives

Great Falls Montana Tourism will utilize Board approved incentives to gain favor with organizers to talk to us or land businesses in Great Falls.

2.7 Service Secured Group Tours, Meetings, and Sports

a. Attendance Building

Great Falls Montana Tourism will provide assets for meeting/convention organizers to talk about Great Falls before the event to get people excited about the location, and/or distribute communications about Great Falls to potential attendees. Such efforts include:

- Welcome Email to attendees
- Social Media assets for organizers to post from online resource page
- Great Falls Photos for promotion of event
- Pre-Post Experience Resources

Additionally, as appropriate, Great Falls Montana Tourism staff will attend the previous year's event to promote Great Falls to attendees.

b. Thank

Great Falls Montana Tourism will thank all groups for being in Great Falls. We will also solicit feedback and ask for a testimony to use for future efforts. The feedback will solicit additional projects that could be in Great Falls and referrals for organizers who would benefit from being in Great Falls.

2.8 Support Local Businesses Bringing in Contract Labor

Great Falls Montana Tourism will work with local businesses who bring in additional short-term labor to get them a customized insider pass that will provide text access to visitor guide and based on engagement, provide recommendation for specific interests. We will work with local businesses who want to provide special deals for this market and make that available.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3
ADVOCATE FOR THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY

3.1 Create Annual Report

Great Falls Montana Tourism will develop an annual report with the results of the past year for public distribution.

3.2 Pledge Great Falls Week / Back Great Falls

Great Falls Montana Tourism will work with partners to create an annual Great Falls celebration event. This event would award Great Falls residents who do incredible things for Great Falls with

an ICON Award, award Great Falls Champions receiving highest trainings credentials, and kick off pledge Great Falls week.

3.3 Engage with Great Falls' Travel Industry

a. 1:1 Sessions

Great Falls Montana Tourism will meet one on one with every lodging and venue property twice a year to learn about the property's mix of business, what marketing they are doing, and where we can supplement their efforts.

b. Sales Roundtables

Great Falls Montana Tourism will host two roundtable discussions with the sales teams from local meeting venues. These roundtables will be a chance to discuss trending topics within the industry and ask what Great Falls Montana Tourism can do to help grow groups in Great Falls. These will be held around August and February in preparation for specific efforts.

b. Invite Them Back

Great Falls Montana Tourism will provide lodging properties with resources to invite their guests back to Great Falls.

c. Get it in Great Falls

Great Falls Montana Tourism will search the MINT+ database for meetings of 10-75 attendees and send those leads to Great Falls lodging and venue properties monthly for them to work.

d. Quarterly Update Sessions

Great Falls Montana Tourism will host four opportunities to update the industry on what has been done, what is coming up, and answer any questions. There will be two sessions in person and two online. One of the in-person sessions will focus on the annual report and upcoming year strategy input.

3.4 Outreach

a. Legislative Advocacy

Great Falls Montana Tourism will work in partnership with other local organizations and leverage the Board of Directors to advocate to:

- Oppose any attempts to reduce or reallocate funds generated through current Tourism Business Improvement District laws.
- Oppose any attempts to change the lodging facility use tax that would negatively impact its ability to be used for tourism promotion and tourism infrastructure.
- Oppose efforts that reduce Great Falls' competitiveness to attract overnight visitors.

b. Civic Presentations

Great Falls Montana Tourism will increase awareness of the Travel Industry in Great Falls through civic presentations.

3.5 Event Impact Media Releases

Great Falls Montana Tourism staff will develop media releases regarding the impact of events utilizing Placer.ai, Economic Impact Calculator and available research on the local Great Falls economy.

3.6 Secure New Direct Air Service

Great Falls Montana Tourism will follow the lead of Great Falls International Airport and assist as needed in efforts to secure new direct air service for GTF.

3.7 Ambassador Training

Great Falls Montana Tourism will leverage the work Central Montana Tourism is doing to develop a front-line training program and enhance it with a Great Falls deep dive that will be supported by in-market engagement opportunities. Graduates of the training will be honored during the Pledge Great Falls effort in 3.2.

3.8 Leverage City's Public Access Channel

Great Falls Montana Tourism will begin a conversation with Great Falls City leadership about the potential to leverage the City's public access channel with Great Falls Montana Tourism videos and event calendar.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

4.1 Professional Development

Great Falls Montana Tourism staff will be provided with opportunities for continued education within the industry and their area of professional purpose. Staff will take advantage of webinars from Destinations International, One West Tourism Alliance, Rotary, and other industry partners. Trainings and conferences Great Falls Montana Tourism will consider attending:

- Destinations International Annual Convention
- One West Tourism Alliance CEO
- One West Tourism Alliance Tech Summit
- Destinations International Marketing and Communications Summit
- Destinations International Sales & Services Summit
- Social West

4.2 Organization Management

a. Basecamp Brief for Stakeholders

Great Falls Montana Tourism will deliver quarterly updates to stakeholders regarding progress towards goals.

b. Tourism Tuesday

Great Falls Montana Tourism will create and deliver weekly Tourism Tuesday emails for interested parties and Board of Directors that highlight the team's results and pertinent items that affect Tourism, from the previous week. Great Falls Montana Tourism will maintain a weekly and monthly paid media performance dashboard, a weekly owned media dashboard, and a monthly goal dashboard supported by data of visitation, lodging tax collection, and TBID assessment collection.

c. Customer Relationship Management

Great Falls Montana Tourism will track all activity for inquiries, leads, projects, and partners through iDSS customer relationship management system.

d. Staff & Volunteer Management

Great Falls Montana Tourism will maintain a year-round staff of an Executive Director, Sales Director, Content Director, Event Developer, and Guest Services Manager. This team will implement this plan. To ensure effective and efficient use of staff time, we will conduct weekly meetings to prioritize the week, discuss hurdles, and strategize implementation efforts regarding each tactic.

e. Financial Management

Great Falls Montana Tourism will follow financial management policies in managing the organization's funds. Staff will oversee:

- annual audit of assessment and tax funds.
- coordinate 990 preparations for Great Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- submit annual reports for both Great Falls Tourism Business Improvement District and Great Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- deliver quarterly financial reports for Great Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- complete annual marketing evaluation report for Great Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau.

f. Board of Directors Management

The Board of Directors and Executive Committees will meet monthly to monitor financials, review progress towards goals, discuss pressing issues, review strategy, and adopt changes in strategic efforts. Great Falls Montana Tourism will provide Director orientation and opportunities for new Directors to be mentored by more seasoned Directors. Updates to policies and procedures will be reviewed and add new governance as needed.

g. Build Out Great Falls Montana Tourism and Resource Page

Enhance the organization transparency with Board of Directors listing, annual plan, media plan, links to dashboard, research reports, studies, STR Reports, and other resources. If feasible, Great Falls Montana Tourism will consider utilize the website for access to board meeting materials.

GOALS

1. Grow Facebook followers 10%.
2. Grow Instagram followers 10%.
3. Grow YouTube audience 20%.
4. Grow LinkedIn followers 10%.
5. Average 40,000 organic weekly social media impressions
6. Produce 3 Great Stories of Great Falls
7. Secure 5 guest blog posts
8. Obtain 4 earned media stories
9. Grow market room demand by 3% YoY
10. Grow market room demand by 2% of the shoulder season months of January, February, April, May, November, December YoY
11. Grow targeted sales leads 20%
12. Grow Bring it to the Basecamp 1:1 Meetings 50%
13. Secure 4 new groups to Great Falls
14. Aid partners in securing 2 new groups to Great Falls
15. Secure 4 brand partners
16. Generate \$5,000 in partner marketing

Great Falls Montana Tourism Budget

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

Adopted 4-17-2025

	CVB	CVB	General	TBID	Total	Nat Avg
Income						
1 Bed Tax	\$242,608	\$14,593	\$0	\$0	\$257,201	
2 TBID Assessment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$757,675	\$757,675	
3 Reserves	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
4 Grant	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
5 Advertising	\$0	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000	
Total Income	<u>\$242,608</u>	<u>\$14,593</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>	<u>\$757,675</u>	<u>\$1,019,876</u>	
Expenses						
6 Personnel	\$44,522	\$2,919	\$0	\$270,400	\$317,840	31% 42%
Administration						
7 Rent	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,760	\$8,760	
8 Utilities	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,850	\$7,850	
9 Memberships	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$14,325	\$14,325	
10 Subscriptions	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$42,745	\$42,745	
11 Maintenance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,500	\$6,500	
12 Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,625	\$8,625	
13 Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,500	\$2,500	
14 Stakeholder Events	\$0	\$0	\$850	\$850	\$1,700	
15 Postage	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,295	\$1,295	
16 Insurance	\$1,500	\$0	\$0	\$2,200	\$3,700	
17 Professional Fees	\$2,500	\$0	\$0	\$18,450	\$20,950	
18 Professional Development	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$18,000	\$18,000	
Total Admin	<u>\$4,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$850</u>	<u>\$132,100</u>	<u>\$136,950</u>	13% 11%
Leisure Traveler Marketing						
19a Media Placement	\$119,000	\$11,674	\$0	\$137,700	\$268,374	
19b Joint Venture	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,000	
19c Management & Production	\$47,485	\$0	\$0	\$46,400	\$93,885	
20 Groups	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$30,000	\$30,000	
21 Influencers	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,000	\$8,000	
22 Destination Development	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,000	\$10,000	
23 Public Relations	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$25,000	\$25,000	
24 Print Resources	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,000	\$8,000	
25 Opportunity	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$15,000	\$15,500	
26 Photo & Video Library	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$12,656	\$12,656	
27 Visitor Guide	\$22,101	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$22,101	
28 Advocacy	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,000	\$3,000	
29 Website	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$26,500	\$26,500	
30 Events	\$0	\$0	\$3,500	\$32,919	\$36,419	
31 Reserves	\$0	\$0	\$650	\$0	\$650	
Total Program	<u>\$194,086</u>	<u>\$11,674</u>	<u>\$4,150</u>	<u>\$355,175</u>	<u>\$565,085</u>	55% 47%
Total Expenses	<u>\$242,608</u>	<u>\$14,593</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>	<u>\$757,675</u>	<u>\$1,019,876</u>	
Net Profit	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	