

Visit Mendocino County

Marketing Plan:
July 2023 – June 2024

Submitted to Mendocino County Tourism Commission & County of Mendocino

May 02, 2023

Executive Summary:

Mendocino County Tourism Commission (MCTC) is entering its eighth year as the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) of record for the County of Mendocino. We've seen the official governmental end to the COVID-19 pandemic and all restrictions have been lifted. The past three years have seen spectacular visitor-ship and consumer introduction to Mendocino County. While we are seeing a plateau in our record numbers. Our brand remains strong in the marketplace and the awareness of Mendocino County as a world-class road trip destination has reached new heights. Our website and social channels are still seeing record numbers. This upcoming fiscal year (FY) we will capture our real-time brand awareness scores in our key feeder markets of: Greater San Francisco Bay Area, CA's Central Valley (Chico to Stockton), Los Angeles and Southern Oregon.

The upcoming FY will continue to bring growth and development for Visit Mendocino County (VMC). The team has fully developed the next generation of VMC branding and the newest version of its website www.visitmendocino.com all scheduled to launch in Summer 2023. This "grown up" brand is designed to spotlight the regions natural assets and beauty along with the mavericks and makers that make Mendocino County one of California's premiere road-trip destinations.

Last year the team focused on a deep data dive with the goal of truly understanding our target demographics and their travel trends, wants, and needs this partnered with a community focused sentiment study gives the organization the information needed to move FY 23/24 marketing initiatives forward at a more strategic level, with clearer optics from both the visitor and resident perspectives.

VMC will continue to breathe life into the annual umbrella festivals: Harvest Festival Mendocino, Seafood & Sips Mendocino, and the Beer Trail. The team will also continue a new initiative of granting funds to support start-up and restart festivals that are aimed at increasing overnight visitors to the county during the shoulder season(s).

The organization will continue to extend and invitation to make the trek, stay a while and enjoy our unique welcoming hospitality.

Respectfully,



Travis Scott

Strategic Plan:

This Marketing Plan adheres to the initiatives set forth in the three-year strategic plan that was adopted at the organization's May 2021 Board of Directors (BoD) meeting and was put into action at the start of the 2021-2022 fiscal year (FY). The purpose of the plan is to align with the core strategies of the organization. (The Strategic Plan is attached to this Marketing Plan as Appendix 1.)

Vision:

A diversified and thriving economy supported by our community, offering enriching experiences for our guests.

Mission:

Visit Mendocino County stewards and amplifies the total Mendocino County experience.

Values:

- Transparency: We foster trust through openness and integrity
- Accountability: We are outcome-oriented and professional
- Partnership: We create alignment through inclusive and meaningful relationships
- Community: We contribute to the fabric of Mendocino County
- Innovation: Our creativity reflects the uniqueness of our cultures and landscapes

Position:

In order to support our stakeholders, generate economic activity for county residents through tourism, and inspire our visitors, Visit Mendocino County:

- Consistently markets the Mendocino County experience to key regional and domestic markets
- Creates, develops, and manages brand awareness for the county
- Connects people and organizations to opportunities
- Provides tourism resources and information to in-county partners
- Optimizes return on investment through responsible fiscal management

Action Plans:

Marketing & Advertising

- Launch a campaign utilizing the new brand and website to promote the value of VMC in driving positive results to local businesses

- Leverage the results from the Travel Analytics Group (TAG) Perspective Survey to enhance VMC’s portfolio of stakeholder offerings and resources
- Utilize our new brand identity to resonate with specific target segments to further our competitive edge
- Utilize the new mobile-friendly website to enhance user experience, boost website traffic, and improve the conversion rate to partners and stakeholders

Visit Mendocino County will improve its current awareness and advertising initiatives in coordination with Agency Xi, the Web Development and Social Media contractor. To draw travelers at key times, VMC will continue to place a high priority on brand awareness, with a particular focus on promoting festivals and activities in the shoulder season.

Brand Management:

For the 2023/2024 Fiscal year, VMC staff will:

- Manage the new Visit Mendocino County brand
- Explore new brand opportunities, partnerships, and communication pillars
- Provide guidance to VMC partners and stakeholders on how to utilize the new brand style guide effectively

Research:

VMC staff will manage research & trend forecasting and partner with VMC committees and BoD to determine research needs through:

- Primary: focus groups and intercepts
- Secondary: secure cost-effective secondary market research
- Creative testing
- Manage brand awareness study

Creative Development:

VMC staff will develop creative collateral that reflects the brand for:

- Website
- Online and offline advertising
- Retargeting campaigns
- Social media campaigns
- Print opportunities
- Consumer media opportunities

The VMC staff under the direction of the Marketing & Festival Committee(s) will produce new creative assets for the countywide festivals that are consistent with the new brand and provide

accompanying website landing pages. VMC will focus on developing creative campaigns that continue to raise awareness for Mendocino County as a world-class destination.

Build Awareness:

VMC will raise awareness by:

- Exploring new approaches to engage and connect with potential visitors
- Creating and enhancing shareable assets (videos, photos, podcasts, television commercials, radio commercials, others to be determined)
- Assist partners and stakeholders with community event marketing
- Development and management of new promotions (e.g., Beer Trail and giveaways)
- Manage all media planning, buying, and reporting
- Manage demographic-based online demand
- Launch new and updated retargeting campaigns

Website Maintenance & Upgrades:

Agency Xi and VMC staff will maintain the optimum working order of the new VisitMendocino.com website

- Launch new visitmendocino.com website (Summer 2023)
- Continue to expand on new website framework as new technologies and best practices become available
- Ongoing support as needed, typically resolved within 24-48 hours of request, except for weekends and holidays
- Maintain the working order of the Bookdirect.net booking link on the visitmendocino.com website and continue to integrate new partners to the booking link
- Perform regular usability audits for mobile and desktop browsing
- Refine usage metrics for Google Analytics tracking
- Periodic software updates and backup and security consulting as needed
- Agency Xi will continue to offer VMC staff training on website best practices and operations

Marketing Goal: Raise visitor awareness of Mendocino County and strengthen tourism's contribution to the County's vitality.

Total marketing investment: \$651,500.08

Public Relations:

- Increase tourism revenue through the development and implementation of the annual public relations plan

- Increase website traffic
- Increase shoulder season visitation rate
- Boost community support of the tourism industry
- Boost brand awareness

The PR team works to expand VMC's branding, and media messaging using communication pillars to identify and secure media coverage for Mendocino County. As of writing, fiscal year 2022/2023 again showed milestones for VMC's PR team, achieving nearly 761 third-party placements with an ad equivalency of \$382+ million dollars by working with media visitors and giving them the inspiration to create new stories to share with readers through a variety of different topics spanning the breadth of tourism assets available in Mendocino County.

Mendocino County by nature is a prime destination for road-trip visitors. The team will continue to keep the Mendocino County voice amplified in key markets to keep our destination top-of-mind for the road-tripper. For the 2023/2024 FY, the PR team will work on and deliver the items outlined below.

Program Objectives:

Drive overnight visitation throughout Mendocino County via the following objectives:

- Promotion of a sustainable, clarified image/brand as a premier California destination
- Stimulate demand to increase tourism revenue during critical shoulder seasons
- Initiate awareness among key market niches and lifestyle/passion segments to buoy off-season revenue and ADR (Average Daily Rate)
- Cultivate collaborative industry relationships to ensure successful, cost-effective and equitable coverage of Mendocino County stakeholders and stretch VMC's budget

Strategies:

- Influence the influencers to drive media coverage via multiple venues and channels (traditional/emerging)
- Ignite media interest via proactive campaigns focused on print, television, social media and key influencers
- Leverage and create "news" value as a driver of tourism, ultimately adding to the economy
- Convert consumers who are predisposed to California getaways by differentiating Mendocino County through a focus on distinct benefits and unique assets
- Strengthen industry partnerships with Visit California, California Travel Association, North Coast Tourism Council, San Francisco Travel, BrandUSA, etc., via cooperative programming

Targets:

Demographics:

- Primary: Millennial, Gen-Z, Gen-X
- Secondary: Baby Boomers/Time Affluent Market
- HHI: \$120k+

Geographic:

- Primary: State of California (nearly 80% of U.S. market)
- Secondary: U.S., key fly/drive markets: Colorado, Oregon, Arizona, Nevada
- Tertiary: International/Western Canada

Core Program:

Leverage ongoing trends and news value to drive awareness of Visit Mendocino County through a series of timely, hard-hitting, media-appropriate materials targeted to key industry niches. A Communications Platform will be created to follow consumer marketing pillars, tied to an annual timeline.

Activities include:

- Development of 2023/2024 Communications Platform
- Proactive media relations campaign tied to timely themes, events, debuts, seasons, trends
- Goal: 11 releases

Media Missions/In-Market Editorial Appointments

Maximize external communications via editorial missions in key media-rich markets. Where possible, tie in with Visit California to offset costs. Suggested markets:

- Los Angeles
- Denver
- Goal: 1

Media Familiarization/Social Influencer Program

Pitch and secure in-market media visits to generate editorial coverage and further brand messaging/positioning within key lifestyle and passion segments.

Activities include:

- Conduct individual media outreach based on agreed-upon communication pillars
- Vet and manage all media and social influencer/blogger requests
- Work with VMC to create media itineraries
- Confirm, fact check and finalize placements; ongoing follow-up, tracking
- Goal: 18

Content Creation

- Draft consumer-facing web copy mirroring release output for VMC website
- Goal: 11

Trade Shows

Attend targeted media trade shows to boost visibility and secure future editorial visits. Coordinate participation with VMC staff.

- Visit California/San Francisco (April.)
- Society of American Travel Writers Conference (Sept.)
- Visit California Media Bootcamp/TBD (Nov.)
- IMM/New York (Jan.)
- Visit California/Los Angeles (Sept.)
- IPW/California (May)
- Goal: 2

Community & Stakeholder Relations

Maintain VMC's credibility in the local media landscape; augment internal program to assist in positioning as the leader in tourism marketing.

- Assist VMC in maintaining visibility; broaden stakeholder support
- Draft and distribute stakeholder public relations highlights on a monthly basis
- Attend and present at annual stakeholder meeting

Digital Footprint & Social Media

Augment in-house social media campaign to extend VMC'S digital footprint

- Dovetail social media marketing promotions with publicity support; coordinate efforts with in-house staff
- Expand and enhance social media and key influencer database & outreach

Crisis Communications

Work with VMC to coordinate outreach efforts to consumer-facing and stakeholders during crisis periods (fire, pandemic, earthquake, social unrest, tourist incident, drought conditions, etc.)

- Deliver crisis counseling, coordinate tourism partner efforts, draft/disseminate key messaging, releases, updates as required, conduct media outreach under separate agreed-upon budget

PR Toolkit

- Retain vendors and subscriptions on behalf of VMC:
 - Burrelles Media Tracking Service (VMC contract)
 - Vocus Cision Media Database (KOLI contract)
 - Constant Contact Distribution Service (KOLI contract)
 - Society of American Travel Writers' Membership (KOLI membership)

Programming

- Provide ongoing counsel and insight on market developments and opportunities
- Execute annual Public Relations Workplan and Timeline
- Draft and distribute bi-monthly Public Relations Reports
- Draft and distribute bi-monthly Media Impact Reports
- Conduct monthly VMC PR conference calls
- Attend client, VMC Board and marketing committee meetings as needed
- Participate in quarterly site checks surrounding new hotel properties and attractions
- Draft and distribute Fiscal Report, draft and distribute PR Workplan

Key Performance Indicators:

- Realize \$12 million in advertising equivalency
- Secure 550 qualified media placements
- Reach an estimated 300 million potential visitors/circulation

Total PR Investment: \$181,700.10

Website & Social Media:

- Increase website traffic
- Increase VMC communication and engagement rate
- Refresh VMC's brand identity to align with target segments

The visitmendocino.com website continues to be our calling card and is continually calibrated for best appeal. Ambient home page videos are switched out monthly along with an ever-changing array of "MendoMoments" inviting website visitors to stay a while and explore the county.

With the website being our calling card and technology rapidly advancing, VMC staff in collaboration with Agency Xi have created a new website launching in the summer of 2023. This website will be optimized for mobile navigation and will include new plugins that will enhance the visitor experience and offer new analytics based on the latest industry standards.

VMC will continue to develop and deploy digital campaigns that build on the successes of past campaigns. Our goal is to drive more traffic to the VMC website and increase outbound referrals to stakeholder and partner websites. The implementation of the lodging booking link on the website has allowed the organization to report direct ROI and B2B conversion. This booking link will continue to be a key element of the new website.

Social media continues to grow as a motivator for travel, spanning all demographics. People look to their friends and family for recommendations on travel destinations - increasingly more often than traditional media and advertising. Our social presence seeks not only to directly engage new potential visitors and remind previous visitors of the destination, but also excite our core visitors to share and spread the word about Mendocino County. To that end, VMC will engage with key content producers via Instagram and Facebook to generate dynamic visual content, with the aim of increasing overall reach. Social media engagement is the measure of the public shares, likes and comments for VMC's social media efforts. Engagement has historically been a common metric for evaluating social media performance and it is measured on Facebook by shares, likes and followers, and in Instagram by likes, followers, and hashtags and mentions.

Agency Xi and VMC will continue the creation of a series of 15 and 30-second videos to run on social media platforms that will highlight iconic Mendocino County experiences. Metrics have shown that audiences engage with experiential videos at a higher rate than with passive video shoots. Agency Xi will also assist VMC in getting "Verified Badges" on Instagram and Facebook.

Social Media Goals:

- Work with local photographers and videographers to boost organic traffic to our social media portfolio
- Integrate a call to action in social media posts
- Continue to increase engagement on all social media channels year-over-year (YOY)
- Increase VMC's social media presence by launching and growing a TikTok account

Website Goals:

- Launch new website (Summer 2023)
- Monitor, measure, and analyze website traffic in order to drive visitation
- Increase website engagement and decrease bounce rate by 10%

Total Website Development Investment: \$55,200.00

Sales:

- Increase website traffic
- Increase VMC communication and engagement rate
- Refresh VMC's brand identity to align with target segments

Sales is an important piece of the VMC promotional efforts puzzle. Much of our sales is inspirational, reminding potential visitors how close geographically we are to our main markets of the SF Bay Area and the Chico to Stockton/Central Valley region; informing them how easily they can get here and getting them excited about what they can do once they arrive. Our messaging has shown to be key in recovery post-pandemic. Our key sales activities annually are based on the research generated by Visit California, which also adds economic feasibility to participate in VCA's already arranged sales efforts.

We are in a competitive region. Our neighbors in Napa and Sonoma outspend us in marketing dollars by at least a 4:1 ratio. We need to differentiate ourselves by showcasing our assets and variety of cost options. This is a continuous process since many tourists focus on the last thing they saw or heard, and we have to be in the travel decision narrative. Going into the 2023/2024 marketing year, we continue to believe our geography has greatly bolstered our efforts as travelers continue to seek outdoor experiences and "room to roam".

We continue to rely on research from Visit CA and Visa Vue to define and refine our sales efforts. We also use anecdotal evidence from our hotel partners, regional partners and various tour operators to adjust our sales activities to match the ever-changing market.

For FY 2023/2024 the integrated sales approach will focus on the following:

- **Consumer trade shows (all efforts are based on trade show availability)**
Meeting people face-to-face at consumer trade exhibitions is the most efficient approach to engage with thousands of potential customers. By distributing branded totes and marketing materials like the Explorer's Guide and Players Guide, we advertise the entire county. We also give advice and respond to inquiries. By presenting larger regional displays at tradeshow in our target markets, we have developed a strong connection with the North Coast Tourism Council (CA's North of Ordinary Region). Giveaways are a major draw for tradeshow attendees, and they are promoted on prominently displayed posters at the booth. Additionally, we changed our booth so that visitors can sign up for emails electronically. This significantly cuts down on the amount of staff time needed to handle the data.

Following the tradeshow, we send an email to individuals who have submitted an email address, welcoming them to our list and encouraging them to experience the most recent MendoMoment. VMC will attend the SF/Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show in Santa Clara, Travel and Adventure Show in Los Angeles, and Bark in the Park, a pet-

friendly event in San Jose. VMC will also attend the Denver Travel and Adventure show via North Coast Tourism Council (NCTC).

- **Continue development of regional partnerships**

Anecdotally, visitors come to the county as part of a regional trip. VMC, therefore, partners and coordinates with convention and visitor bureaus such as San Francisco Travel, Visit Oakland, Visit Sacramento and DMOs in Lake, Humboldt, Del Norte, Sonoma, San Mateo, Marin, Yolo and Napa counties. We also have positive working relationships with Tahoe, Shasta and Monterey counties, who directly compete with us as tourist destinations from our target markets. We work together on promoting the entire Northern CA region through multi-jurisdiction trips and itineraries.

- **Provide FAM (familiarization) tours for tour operators/receptives**

We make a concerted effort to influence travel professionals by bringing them to Mendocino County in the belief that a visit will prompt them to recommend a county visit to clients. FAM participants can be either domestic or international, and many are recruited and vetted by Visit California. FAM participants can create packages and promotions that include the county.

- **Manage the North Coast Tourism Council (NCTC)**

Mendocino County benefits from its administration and marketing efforts for the NCTC, one of eight rural regions designated by Visit CA to influence CA travel beyond the gateway cities. The NCTC budget is funded by participating counties with a \$60,000 Visit CA match. VMC's ED is the Administrator and Treasurer for this regional group, thus increasing Mendocino County's impact and visibility. Mendocino County is consequently able to have a presence at important venues and domestic trade events without impacting the VMC budget. Events include IPW, Go West, RTO (receptive trade organization) and the Visit CA Outlook Forum. Regional itineraries are created, with, for example, El Dorado and Shasta counties. NCTC also has a vibrant web and social media presence that highlights Mendocino County.

- **Attend industry events that focus on group sales**

Visit Mendocino County is expanding into this market with a new wedding/small group program. The focus will be to attract a new segment of visitors to the region, who are interested in hosting weddings or small group events such as corporate meetings, family reunions, or intimate gatherings.

- **Contracts between tour and group operators and hotels**

The desired result of both domestic and international sales efforts is signed contracts between tour operators and local hotels. We assist by obtaining appropriate leads. Once a contract is established, there is a greater chance of consistent and growing business.

Sales Goals:

- Consumer Shows - Attend two consumer trade shows at various geographic locations and obtain 1,000 new names for consumer database
- FAMs - Participate in two Visit CA sponsored FAMs
- Group Sales – Attend at least one event and obtain five new groups to County (when appropriate)
- Hotel Contracts – Facilitate the signing of five new contracts
- Sales Missions – Attend one sales mission in partnership with Visit CA

Total sales investment: \$54,650.00

Partnerships:

- Increase Mendocino County sales tax receipts over three years
- Increase County investment in tourism products and infrastructure
- Boost community’s support of the tourism industry

While VMC’s primary goal is to increase county visitation, a secondary task is to support visitors once they are here. Increased visitor satisfaction will result in repeat visits and encouragement to extend their stays.

We support the various chambers and visitor centers in the county by making sure they have collateral such as wine maps, mini-guides, visitor guides, event guides, and tear-off maps. VMC also financially assists the Redwood Coast Visitor Center in Gualala.

Goals for the 2023/2024 fiscal year are:

- VMC will continue to distribute the Explorer’s Guide and update it to reflect the new brand
- Continue distribution of tear-off maps for North Coast, South Coast, Willits and Ukiah and will update based on the new brand guidelines
- Distribute the newly designed Redwood Highway Map created and funded by the NCTC
- Increase the reach of VMC’s branding by distributing VMC branded bags
- Continue with the gateway sign project
- Distribute Visit 128 brochures as part of a four-county promotion of Hwy 128

Total visitor services investment: \$50,800.04

Visitor Services:

- Increase shoulder season visitation rates
- Increase participation rate in VMC programs

Unique and interesting festivals and events are a key component for the traveler's potential choice of Mendocino County over other destinations. While tourism to the county is robust during certain times of year, there are months it is not. To remedy this, VMC currently sponsors two umbrella festivals per year: Seafood & Sips Mendocino in January/February (formerly known as Crab FEAST) and Harvest Festival Mendocino in November. The organization launched a Spring "Beer Trail" campaign in April 2021/2022 FY and have updated it annually. Building on existing events, rather than developing a totally new concept, will provide an opportunity to boost partner/stakeholder participation.

FY 2023/2024 goals are:

- Expand on a successful re-creation of Harvest Festival Mendocino and Seafood & Sips Mendocino to reflect the broader theme conceived in 2022/2023
- Record partner & stakeholder participation in our internal database; update and add contacts and businesses
- Encourage event organizers to work with other "visit" organizations, Chambers of Commerce, Destination Hopland and winery & vineyard promotional organizations to revamp existing events and create new ones that will attract overnight visitation
- Continue to revise stakeholder surveys to extract relevant information such as room nights, consumer spending and relevancy of Festival events

Festival and events expenses are part of the Visitor Services budget.

Partnerships:

- Create a campaign to promote the value of VMC in driving positive results to local businesses
- Perform a needs assessment of our stakeholders and partners
- Enhance VMC's portfolio of stakeholder offerings and resources
- Continue the evaluation and VMC investment in event promotion with an emphasis on shoulder seasons

The Strategic Plan references ways that VMC can work with its partners in businesses throughout the county as to the benefits of the tourism industry and its effects on the local economy. With a larger focus placed on partnerships, partner communication and offerings under the Strategic Plan, the VMC team will continue to keep its finger on the pulse of new tourism-related businesses in the county by personal visits, phone calls and emails, and surveying partner websites, etc.. We will also work on the development of new partner resources and expand our array of available offerings.

Goals for 2023/2024 are:

- Create a campaign to promote the value of VMC in driving positive results to local businesses
- Perform a needs assessment of our stakeholders and partners
- Work with partners to develop, promote and strengthen beneficial tourism activities and events
- Continue Hospitality Outreach Program (HOP) visits to properties/stakeholders and updates to VMC's internal database
- Promote the VMC Partners at Work Facebook page
- Creation of partner brochure and Tourism Matters Card to further education on the value and mission of VMC
- Attend Chambers of Commerce meetings, city promotional meetings, and events to gain and share ideas, and to show community support
- Partner with other business sectors in Mendocino County to investigate how VMC can play an active role in the development of our communities in their entirety
- Advocate for the development of pro-business county regulations
- Advocate for county investment and development of sustainable tourism infrastructure
- Host quarterly Meet & Greets throughout the county

Total partnership investment: \$95,511.79

Personnel, Operations & Administration:

- Ongoing staff training on website usage and best practices for stakeholder and consumer communications, database usage, office procedures
- Ongoing team and board development
- Review new and up-to-date technologies specifically designed for destination marketing
- Attendance at key travel industry conferences to provide access to industry trends and successful examples of best practices, furthering internal knowledge benefiting the VMC program of work
- Maintain accreditation from the Destination Marketing Accreditation Program, offered by Destination Marketing Association International
- Create and distribute quarterly and annual reports
- Create and distribute VMC's annual Marketing Plan
- Executive Director to work with BID Advisory Board on annual BID report for the County of Mendocino Board of Supervisors' approval
- Keep the MendocinoTourism.org website updated with Board and Committee agendas, packets and minutes
- Attend Board and BID Advisory meetings
- Attend County of Mendocino Board of Supervisors' meetings as warranted
- Continue forward movement in conversion from the 1989 to the 1994 BID law and corresponding assessment changes

Total personnel, operations, and administrative investment: \$512,564.85

DRAFT

Proposed Budget for FY 2023/2024 Annual Budget including BID Assessments, Mendocino County Matching Funds and Miscellaneous Income

INCOME	
MCTC BID Assessment	\$1,326,759.00
County of Mendocino Matching Funds	\$ 265,351.80
County Administrative Fee	(\$ 39,802.77)
Event Brochure Ads	\$0.00
Interest	\$0.00
Total	\$1,552,308.03
EXPENSES	
Advertising/Media	\$651,500.08
Marketing/Public Relations	\$181,700.10
Website Maintenance & Development	\$55,200.00
Leisure & Group Sales	\$54,650.00
Partnerships	\$95,511.79
Visitor Services	\$50,800.00
Administrative Expenses	\$130,729.89
Personnel	\$483,482.43
Total	\$1,703,574.29
Portion From Unrestricted Reserve	-\$151,266.26
BOTTOM LINE	-\$151,266.26

DRAFT

Staffing:

- **Executive Director:** Travis Scott
- **Marketing & Sales Manager:** Ramon Jimenez
- **Partner Relations & Communications Manager:** Jamie Peters-Connolly
- **Development Manager:** Jennifer Seward
- **Marketing & Communications Coordinator:** Mckenzie McLain
- **Festival Coordinator:** Janis MacDonald
- **Executive Support Specialist:** Kathy Janes
- **Public Relations:** Koleen Hamblin, KOLI Communications
- **Social Media & Website:** Brendan McGuigan, Agency Xi
- **Accounting:** Shannon Wells, The Office of Maureen Luis

Executive Board of Directors:

- **Chair:** Scott Connolly; Medium Lodging Operator, Coastal
- **Vice Chair:** Brett Schlesinger; Food & Beverage
- **Treasurer:** Kasie Gray; Regional Promotional, Inland
- **Secretary:** Cab Boettcher; Large Lodging Operator, Coastal

Directors:

- Makenzie Blaylock; Winery/Winegrower
- Elizabeth Cameron; Arts Organization/Attractions
- Raakesh Patel; Large Lodging Operator, Inland
- Katrina Kessen; At Large, Inland

- Tawny MacMillan, Regional Promotional, Coastal
- Open Seat; At Large – Large Lodging Operator
- Open Seat; Small Lodging Operator

DRAFT

Appendices:

Visit Mendocino County

2021–2023 Strategic Plan



Vision	Mission	Position	Values	Reputation
A diversified and thriving economy supported by our community, offering enriching experiences for our guests.	Visit Mendocino County stewards and amplifies the total Mendocino County experience	In order to support our stakeholders, generate economic activity for county residents through tourism, and inspire our visitors, Visit Mendocino County: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Markets the Mendocino County experience to key regional and domestic markets Creates, develops, and manages brand awareness for the county. Connects people and organizations to opportunities. Provides tourism resources and information to in-county partners. Optimizes return on investment through responsible fiscal management 	<p>Transparency: We foster trust through openness and integrity.</p> <p>Accountability: We are outcome-oriented and professional.</p> <p>Partnership: We create alignment through inclusive and meaningful relationships.</p> <p>Community: We contribute to the fabric of Mendocino County.</p> <p>Innovation: Our creativity reflects the uniqueness of our cultures and landscapes.</p>	<p>Leader: We motivate and facilitate the tourism community.</p> <p>Accessible: We welcome—and are responsive to—input from community members and stakeholders</p> <p>Collaborative: We actively seek engagement and collaboration with our stakeholders and partners.</p> <p>Bold: We deliver on smart, effective, and forward-thinking ideas.</p>
Imperatives	Objectives	Initiatives		
Optimize and demonstrate our impact through relationships and collaborations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase Participation Rate in VMC Programs Increase VMC Communication Engagement Rate Boost Community's Support of the Tourism Industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a campaign to promote the value of VMC in driving positive results to local businesses Perform a needs assessment of our stakeholders and partners Enhance VMC's portfolio of stakeholder offerings and resources 		
Raise visitor awareness of Mendocino County and strengthen tourism's contribution to County vitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase Website Traffic Grow the BID Fund 5% Over 3 Years Increase Shoulder Season Visitation Rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate and diversify visitor target market segments and competitive set Refresh our brand identity to align with target segments and competitive advantage Create process and framework for the evaluation and investment in event promotion with an emphasis on shoulder seasons 		
Steward and Advocate for the Mendocino County Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase County Investment in Tourism Products and Infrastructure Increase Mendocino County Sales Tax Receipts Over 3 Years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for the development of pro-business county regulations Advocate for County investment and development of sustainable tourism infrastructure Align destination development activities to Visit California's Stewardship Objectives 		

Visit Mendocino County

2021–2023 Strategic Plan



Part of Visit Mendocino's strategic plan calls for the alignment of VMC's destination development and stewardship activities to Visit California's Destination Stewardship and Sustainable Travel Plan. The five objectives outlined in this plan, listed below, focus on residents, visitors and industry partners via marketing, research, communication, education, public affairs, coalition building and destination management:

1	EXPAND Sustainable Practices Throughout the Mendocino County Tourism Industry
2	ENCOURAGE Responsible Tourism
3	DEVELOP Approaches to Shape Visitation Patterns
4	INFUSE the Mendocino County Brand with Stewardship Ethics
5	AMPLIFY the Sense of Pride Mendocino County Residents Have in Their County

Glossary:

This glossary is included to explain the terms used in this plan and in other reports and documents issued by Visit Mendocino County. While staff and contractors are familiar with the terminology, some of the terms need a brief explanation.

Advertising Equivalency	This dollar figure represents the amount of money it would take to purchase the equivalent in advertising space in a print publication or digital equivalent. The VMC PR team uses a 1:1 ratio unlike many PR firms who use a multiplier to boost numbers.
Media Placement	A story (print or digital) about an aspect of Mendocino County that arises from PR efforts.
Media Mission	A trip by the PR team to a particular market, e.g., Vancouver BC, to meet local journalists and writers and inspire visitation to, and coverage of, Mendocino County.
Releases	This can either refer to a press release or a "hot sheet," which is distributed to the press and highlights new and upcoming businesses and openings in the county.
FAM	Familiarization tour or trip. Media FAMs involve members of the media who are vetted by the PR team prior to a visit. Sales FAMs apply to tour group operators who are visiting the county with the aim of including Mendocino in tour packages.
Gen-Z	Generation Z (aka Gen Z), refers to the generation that was born between 1997-2012, following Millennials.
Millennials	The segment of the population born between the early-to-mid 1990s to early 2000s. Also known as Generation Y, they are the children of baby boomers and older Gen Xers.
Gen-X	The population segment born between the early-to-mid 1960s and ending birth years ranging from the late 1970s to early 1980s. Children of the Baby Boomers.
Baby Boomers	Those born between the early-to-mid 1940s up to about 1964.
Google Analytics	A reporting tool provided by Google that can be used to analyze traffic, ad words, digital marketing campaigns, demographics, etc. for VisitMendocino.com.
Receptives	In effect, "middle men" between tour operators and hotel/lodging owners, chiefly in overseas markets. Receptives obtain contracts with hotels for booking arrangements and offer these to tour operators looking to satisfy tourist demand.
Search Engine Marketing	A marketing tactic using paid advertising services so that interested clients and customers can reach a business quicker and easier while searching online.