

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA**

SERVICE AREA: CULTURE/RECREATION

DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM: TOURIST DEVELOPMENT

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: Okaloosa Tourist Development is responsible for a unified marketing strategy and visitor service program that promotes awareness of the Emerald Coast as a tourist destination to increase overall visitation and lodging facility occupancy in the southern Okaloosa County areas of Destin, Fort Walton Beach, Okaloosa Island, Mary Esther, and Cinco Bayou.

REVENUE: Tourist Development is funded by the Tourist Development Trust Fund, specifically the 2nd and 5th cents of the Tourist Development Tax on short term rentals.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS LAST YEAR:

- Hosted Familiarization Tour with a focus on destination fishing.
- Reintroduced the Annual Tourism Summit with nearly 150 community stakeholders in attendance.
- Updated the Emerald Coast leisure website (www.emeraldcoastfl.com) with a new global navigation header and full screen layout
- Produced a new destination sales profile collateral piece.
- Produced the 2014 Annual Report
- Generated a community buy-in piece; #emeraldcoasting window cling.
- Launched a destination road show to Birmingham and Montgomery, Alabama. Two cities; three days; six events.
- Hosted Mom Blogger Familiarization Tour
- Revamped the Emerald Coast Convention Center social media platforms with monthly content production.
- Produced quarterly consumer e-newsletter
- Building visitor retention through community partnerships – Florida Public Relations Association, Destin Chamber of Commerce, Greater FWB Chamber of Commerce, Emerald Coast Chapter of the America Advertising Federation
- Received several advertising awards:
 - Reader’s Choice Award for Best Meeting Place in the South, Emerald Coast Convention Center
 - Trip Advisor named the Emerald Coast one of the “Top Ten Destinations on the Rise”
 - Shorty Award entrant for Tourism
- Attended 21 trade shows across the Southeast as well as emerging markets including New York and Memphis. These efforts reached meeting planners, tour group operators, travel industry professionals and consumer attendees through direct contact, collateral distribution, one-on-one appointments, direct mail and media marketing.
- Secured Florida Harley Davidson (HOG) Rally for the 4th time to the Emerald Coast. The event garnered 2,745 room nights and brought in over 1,350 out of town attendees.
- Hosted Your Military Reunion Connection (YMRC) Marketplace with over 30 Military Reunion Planners and more than 10 Exhibitors. This event brought 4 Military Reunions to the Emerald Coast which will take place over the next two years.
- Hosted DeNure Tours out of Canada for a grand total of 1,740 room nights which generated \$72,500.00 in sales for the Resort during the winter months. This is the fourth year in a row that DeNure Tours has brought tours to the Emerald Coast.
- Secured more than 250 RFPs for meetings and reunions and more than 300 RFP’s from Wedding coordinators/planners for Okaloosa County bed taxing district.

- Hosted a 2015 Meeting Planner FAM tour for Collinson Media representing Athletic, SMERF, Corporate, Association and Religious Markets.
- Offered and secured 17 co-op opportunities with lodging partners in an effort to promote, market and sell the Leisure, Wedding and Meetings markets.

PROGRAM GOAL: Conduct proactive and productive sales, marketing, advertising, public relations, communications, and social networking initiatives to enhance economic growth for the area through increased visitation and tourism.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

1. Increase the monthly bed tax collections revenue and monthly lodging occupancy percentages each month over previous years.
2. Regain market share.
3. Increase sales leads and actual bookings by aggressively soliciting and marketing the SMERF (Social, Military, Educational, Religious, and Fraternal), Motor Coach, Family Reunion, Association, International and Government organizations.
4. Promote and market Okaloosa County as a premier location for production and entertainment companies to shoot or film their projects.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Performance Measures		Actual FY13/14	Estimated FY14/15	Adopted FY15/16
Output	Booked Groups	213	298	325
	Number of Trade Shows Attended by Sales Staff	20	25	26
	Number Sales Missions and FAMS	7	8	9
Effectiveness	Annual Tourist Development Tax Revenues	\$14.8M	\$13.4M	\$15.0M
	Social Media Fans/Followers – Facebook*	453,000	443,000	500,000
	Social Media Fans/Followers – Twitter	4,900	6,300	7,000
	Social Media Fans/Followers – Pinterest	470	1,000	1,100
	Social Media Fans/Followers – Instagram	232	1,500	1,650
Reserves	Operations (target = 35%)	N/A	35%	35%
	Promotional Activities (target = 25%)	N/A	261%	130%

*FY14/15 less than FY13/14 because Facebook algorithm changed causing all inactive user accounts to be terminated

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
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SERVICE AREA: CULTURE/RECREATION

DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM: TOURIST DEVELOPMENT - BEACHES & PARKS

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: Maintenance, restoration, and improvements of beaches and beach facilities; maintenance and improvements of waterfront parks within the taxing district; and support for an artificial reef program and ecotourism opportunities.

REVENUE: Beaches and parks maintenance and improvements are funded by the Tourist Development Trust Fund, specifically the 1st cent of the Tourist Development Tax on short term rentals, as well as by a special assessment of certain properties.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS LAST YEAR:

- Continued environmental permitting for Veterans Park Baywalk project.
- Staff member elected to the Florida Shore and Beach Preservation Association Executive Board
- Continued Phase II, upland environmental permitting for Veterans Park.
- Partnered with Eglin AFB on the “Concrete to Reefs” initiative
- Continued design and permitting of artificial reefs.
- Developed construction documents for Beach Freeways 4, 5, & 6.
- Secured FDEP permits for six, near shore snorkel reef sites.
- Assisted City of Destin through Federal lobbying efforts for Norriego Pt
- Began construction of six public dune walkovers on Okaloosa Island.
- Awarded Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation grant for the construction of artificial reefs.
- Began permitting for Fishing Buoy Network
- Submitted application for Restore Act funding for construction of snorkel/dive reefs

PROGRAM GOAL:

Protect Okaloosa County and City of Destin beaches through regular cleaning and raking, periodic beach restoration, and sea turtle monitoring. Enhance these assets through improvements in the form of waterfront parks, public access, artificial reefs and other tourist related projects. Seek long-term beach restoration and Federal funding through the Federal Shore Protection Program.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

1. Provide clean, well-maintained, and quality beaches and waterfront parks that offer facilities, amenities, landscaping, and improvements that enhance the environmental experience for visitors.
2. Protect nesting sea turtles.
3. Secure Congressional/US Army Corp of Engineers funding for Feasibility Study phase of the Federal Hurricane & Storm Damage Reduction Project
4. Expand and enhance artificial reef and ecotourism programs.

The following projects are planned for FY 2016:

- Continue to pursue a regional partnership in the development of a regional, Federal Shore Protection project
- Continue improvements at beach access points 4, 5, and 6.

- Complete construction of six dune walkovers between R-2 and R-10 on Okaloosa Island.
- Construct multiple artificial reefs to support the fishing and diving industry
- Continue and complete work on grant-funded turtle friendly lighting retrofit project
- Develop coastal resource management plan
- Survey and prepare report for area beaches.
- Continue permitting efforts towards construction of a Fishing Buoy Network
- Construct 2 near shore snorkeling reefs.
- Finalize permitting of Baywalk living shorelines project and upland improvements to Veterans Park.
- Continue to assist City of Destin in securing long term funding for maintenance dredging of East Pass Federal Navigation Project.
- Continue and expand the “concrete to reefs” program in partnership with Eglin AFB Continue construction of National Resource Damage Assessment funded artificial reefs

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Performance Measures		Actual FY13/14	Estimated FY14/15	Adopted FY15/16
Effectiveness	Capital Improvements – Beaches	\$16K	\$1.06M	\$500K
	Capital Improvements – Parks	\$340K	\$777K	\$115K
	Capital Improvements – Reefs	\$21K	\$225K	\$152K
	Grant Funding Obtained for Improvements	\$109,350	\$200,000	\$150,000
Reserves	Operations (target = 35%)	N/A	35%	35%
	Beach Restoration (target = \$14.0M)	N/A	\$2.4M	\$9.1M
	East Pass Dredging (target = \$2.0M)	N/A	\$2.0M	\$2.0M

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
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SERVICE AREA: CULTURE/RECREATION

DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM: TOURIST DEVELOPMENT - CONVENTION CENTER

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: The Emerald Coast Convention Center (ECCC) provides economic impact to the tourism and general businesses of Okaloosa County. The convention center's mission is to provide a professional service team, exquisite food service, and a spotlessly clean and safe environment for meetings, conventions, trade shows, public entertainment and all types of special event activities.

REVENUE: The Convention Center is funded by the Tourist Development Trust Fund, specifically the 3rd and 4th cents of the Tourist Development Tax on short term rentals, as well as by revenues generated by functions held at the convention center.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS LAST YEAR:

- Conducted and serviced 157 functions at the ECCC, generating an estimated economic impact of \$15M to the County.
- Generated a documented 22,008 and estimated (unreported) 28,000 guest room nights at county hotels and condos
- Hosted an estimated 78,000 guests for the year
- The staff has completed training to obtain certified meeting planner certificates for 4 event and sales based employees

PROGRAM GOAL: Provide a clean, safe, and well-maintained conference and convention facility for visitors, local clients, and guests to create economic impact and opportunities for local functions. Provide necessary performance data to the Tourist Development Director, Tourist Development Council, and Board of County Commissioners.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

1. Ensure that all functions of the ECCC comply with county policies and procedures.
2. Improve sales for all revenue streams available to the center.
3. Provide all data necessary for a profitable and successful marketing campaign.
4. Provide exemplary service, facilities, food service, and technical services to all clients to promote re-bookings of existing clients and recommendation of the center by existing clients to new clients.

The following projects are planned for FY 2016:

- Begin construction of Porte Cocheres at the main and south entrances to facilitate entrance and exit of the building in inclement weather.
- Replace carpeting in ballrooms.
- Replace /repair time worn roof structure in front of ECCC
- Create Architectural documentation for the design and construction of walkover structure from the ECCC to the south side of highway 98

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Performance Measures		Actual FY13/14	Estimated FY14/15	Adopted FY15/16
Output	Number of Trade Shows Attended by Sales Staff	28	34	34
	Number of Functions Held	157	160	150
	Revenues Generated by Functions	\$636,830	\$850,000	\$810,250
Effectiveness	Revenue Per Function	\$4.056	\$5,312	\$5,402
Reserves	Operations (target = 35%)	N/A	35%	35%
	Promotional Activities (target = 25%)	N/A	0%	25%
	Insured Loss Deductible (target = \$1.5M)	N/A	\$1.5M	\$1.5M

HISTORICAL STAFFING SUMMARY:

Category	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16
Full-time Administrative & Support	19	19	19	20
Full-time Management & Professional	12	12	12	12
Full-time Operations & Trades	5	5	5	5
Part-time	6	6	6	6
Total	42	42	42	43

EXPENDITURES:

Category	Expenditures		Budget		FY15/FY16 +/-	Increase/ Decrease
	FY13 Actual	FY14 Actual	FY15 Original	FY16 Approved		
Personnel Services	\$1,503,919	\$1,652,990	\$2,036,740	\$2,265,996	\$229,256	11.3%
Operating Expenses	\$6,051,415	\$6,900,095	\$6,819,475	\$7,869,138	\$1,049,663	15.49%
Capital Outlay	\$53,313	\$1,304,195	\$5,307,058	\$4,322,840	-984,218	-18.5%
Debt Service	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
Grants & Aids	\$8,067,309	\$802,908	\$957,687	\$1,260,876	\$303,189	31.7%
Other Uses	\$1,026,244	\$1,515,151	\$19,796,540	\$29,740,964	\$9,944,424	50.2%
Total	\$721,199	\$792,891	\$34,917,500	\$45,459,814	\$10,542,314	30.2%

ACCOUNTS:

Code	Category	FY14 Approved	FY15 Approved	FY16 Approved	FY15/FY16 +/-	Increase/ Decrease
10	SALARIES & WAGES	\$1,471,807	\$1,537,286	\$1,646,980	\$109,694	7.1%
	client services coordinator (new position); film commission liaison (previously contractual service)					
20	BENEFITS	\$499,523	\$499,454	\$619,016	\$119,562	23.9%
	two new positions; changes in life and health insurance coverage elections					
31	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$222,000	\$323,224	\$362,092	\$38,868	12.0%
	beach-related consulting services; lead generator service (new); marketing & economic impact survey					
32	ACCOUNTING & AUDITING	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0	0%
34	CONTRACT SERVICES	\$2,001,314	\$1,371,301	\$1,186,638	-\$184,663	-13.5%
	temporary staffing reduced; document scanning & storage (new); ECCC transit & audio/video reclassified to operating account; film commission services now in-house					
40	TRAVEL & PER DIEM	\$71,400	\$109,695	\$100,443	-\$9,252	-8.4%
	budget reduced based on prior year actuals for anticipated travel					
41	COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES	\$9,850	\$34,132	\$52,880	\$18,748	54.9%
	smart phone (4 new), website lodging direct booking (new)					
42	FREIGHT & POSTAGE	\$76,000	\$77,560	\$67,820	-\$9,740	-12.6%
	budget reduced based on prior year actuals					
43	UTILITY SERVICES	\$337,000	\$399,300	\$402,000	\$2,700	0.7%
	convention center irrigation pump - gulf power					
44	RENTS & LEASES	\$30,754	\$36,330	\$37,955	\$1,625	4.5%
	boat rental for private reef deployment (due to change in permit conditions); fleet rental for travel					
45	RISK MANAGEMENT ALLOCATION	\$118,387	\$132,533	\$132,093	-\$440	-0.3%
46	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	\$196,986	\$213,813	\$229,817	\$17,504	8.2%
	copier annual maintenance & repairs; ECCC software hosting					
47	PRINTING & BINDING	\$94,850	\$119,520	\$86,211	-\$33,309	-27.9%
	visitor guide contract; film commission					
48	PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITY	\$3,509,200	\$3,322,610	\$4,490,893	\$1,168,283	35.2%
	marketing to assist in airline recruitment; Chicago marketing; Gulf-to-Table initiative; destination photography/videography					
49	MISCELLANEOUS CHARGES	\$402,175	\$427,425	\$477,000	\$49,575	11.6%
	tax collector admin fee increase proportionate to TDT revenue increase					
51	OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$25,900	\$15,500	\$10,100	-\$5,400	-34.8%
	budget reduced based on prior year actuals					
52	OPERATING SUPPLIES	\$179,755	\$184,068	\$157,776	-\$26,292	-14.3%
	budget reduced based on prior year actuals					
54	BOOKS/PUBS/SUBS & MEMBERSHIPS	\$57,758	\$41,374	\$41,690	\$316	.08%
55	TRAINING & EDUCATION EXPENSES	\$23,750	\$11,090	\$32,230	\$21,140	190.6%
	new: CDME certification, DMAI summits, governor's conference, STS marketing college, advertising federation, marquee training, CSPI conference, academy for venue safety, crystal reports, regional security training, special event conference					
60	CAPITAL OUTLAY	\$7,274,375	\$5,307,058	\$4,322,840	-\$984,218	-18.5%
	beach accessways, artificial reef, living shorelines, digital map, SUV, welcome center					

	improvements, laptops, ECCC equipment, porte cochere, Hwy 98 walkover, ECCC improvements					
71	PRINCIPAL	\$155,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
81	AIDS TO GOVERNMENT AGENCIES	\$551,536	\$957,687	\$1,218,876	\$261,189	27.3%
	Okaloosa Island Fire District, Destin Fire Department, City of Destin, City of Fort Walton Beach					
82	AIDS TO PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS	\$15,000	\$0	\$42,000	\$42,000	0%
	Support for private organizations benefiting tourism.					
91	INTRAGOVERNMENTAL TRANSFERS	\$1,705,729	\$2,017,913	\$2,136,800	\$118,887	5.9%
	Parks (beach cleaning & parks maintenance), Debt Service Fund (MSBU), Capital Projects Fund (pole barn), Public Safety (lifeguards)					
99	RESERVES	\$14,826,201	\$17,778,627	\$27,604,164	\$9,825,537	55.3%
	35% O&M, 25% promotions, beach restoration, east pass dredging, future capital outlay, ECCC storm deductible					
	TOTAL	\$33,967,750	\$34,917,500	\$45,459,814	\$10,542,314	30.2%