


A rock climber in a blue jacket and helmet is climbing a large, textured rock face on the left side of the image. The background shows a vast landscape with a valley, trees, and a cloudy sky at sunset or sunrise.

FORGE  YOUR
VISIT *Billings*
OWN  PATH

FY24 MARKETING PLAN & BUDGET

A photograph of two hikers standing on a rocky cliff edge, looking out over a city at dusk. The sky is cloudy and the city lights are visible in the distance. The hiker on the left is wearing a green jacket and a purple helmet, while the hiker on the right is wearing a purple jacket and a white helmet. They are both wearing climbing gear and holding ropes.

BORN IN THE SHADOWS OF THE RIMROCKS FED ON THE WATERS OF THE YELLOWSTONE

Shaped by the Yellowstone River and sheltered by the sandstone Rimrocks, Billings is a place of forever views and forever memories, where urban amenities and modern conveniences meet the edge of the genuine frontier, and the adventure of the untamed wilderness and history are at your front door.

MORE THAN
2.6M VISITORS ANNUALLY

SPECTACULAR
UNTAMED WILDERNESS AND **HISTORY** AT YOUR FRONT DOOR

BREATHTAKING EXPERIENCES BY DAY, AND **RELAXING HOSPITALITY** AT NIGHT



MISSION STATEMENT

THE MISSION OF VISIT BILLINGS IS TO GENERATE ROOM NIGHTS FOR LODGING FACILITIES IN THE CITY OF BILLINGS BY EFFECTIVELY MARKETING THE REGION AS A PREFERRED TRAVEL DESTINATION.

In 2021, visitors to Montana spent

**\$5.15
BILLION**

at retailers, restaurants and bars, gas stations, and lodging businesses, to name a few.

10K JOBS

Tourism supports more than 10,000 jobs locally in the Billings' area.

BILLINGS TOURISM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT BOARD LEADERSHIP



GEORGE MARAGOS

Chairman

Northern Hotel



JOE STUDINER

Treasurer

Erck Hotels

-Hampton Inn

-Hampton Inn & Suites

-Homewood Suites by Hilton



STEVE WAHRLICH

Member

Best Western Plus

Clocktower Inn & Suites



SHELLI MANN

Member

Boothill Inn & Suites



JEFF SCHOENHARD

Vice Chair

Kelly Inn Hotels

-BestWestern PLUS Kelly Inn & Suites

-LaQuinta Inn & Suites

-Kelly Inn



RON SPENCE

Member

Billings Hotel & Convention Center



Jordan Clayton

Member

Home2 Suites by Hilton



TOBY O'ROURKE

Ex-Officio (Chamber Board of Directors)

President/CEO, Kampgrounds of America

MEET THE BILLINGS TEAM



JOHN BREWER, CAE, CATP

President & CEO
Billings Chamber of Commerce
john@billingschamber.com



LUKE ASHMORE, PDM, CATP

Special Projects & Programs Manager
Visit Billings
luke@visitbillings.com



ALEX TYSON, IOM, CATP

Executive Director
Visit Billings
alex@visitbillings.com



EVAN DECKER, PDM, CATP

Sports Tourism Manager
Visit Billings
evan@visitbillings.com



ALY EGGART, MSPR, CAPT

Leisure Marketing, Sales, & Social Media Manager
Visit Billings
alyson@visitbillings.com



MEGAN STEVENSON

Director of Finance
Visit Billings
megan@visitbillings.com

As managed by:



WHO WE ARE

Visit Billings is the brand that encompasses the Billings Tourism Business Improvement District (BTBID) and the Billings Convention and Visitors Bureau (BCVB). Both organizations are managed by the Billings Chamber of Commerce. The Visit Billings team is committed to growing visitation at Montana's Trailhead.

WHAT WE DO

- Responsible for the development and growth of the tourism industry through promotion, marketing, and strategy.
- Working domestically and internationally to develop and enhance sustainable tourism for the city and region in the leisure, meetings and sporting events markets.
- Increase awareness and engaging with consumers in both drive and flight markets, as well as with media, the travel industry, meeting and conference planners, and sports promoters with research-driven marketing programs.



MARKETING CAMPAIGNS HIGHLIGHT THE OUTDOOR ADVENTURE, INCREDIBLE LANDSCAPES, ARTS AND CULTURE, CULINARY AND NIGHTLIFE, AS WELL AS THE MEETING AND SPORTS FACILITIES.



**IN BILLINGS, THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY
FUELS EVERY INDUSTRY, WHILE
EVERY INDUSTRY FUELS THE
TRAVEL INDUSTRY.**

When Visit Billings markets and sells Billings as a preferred travel destination, businesses in every corner of Yellowstone County across all sectors grow and foster the local economy. Tourism enhances the overall quality of life by helping support the local business community while also saving households nearly \$900 in taxes annually. The \$621 million that visitors spend in our local economy annually is not an accidental impact. It's the return on investment of marketing and sales strategies of the Visit Billings leadership, staff, and partners.

#TRAVELHEAD

2022 METRICS



ANNUAL OCCUPANCY: 68.8%

ANNUAL ADR: \$120.98

ANNUAL REVPAR: \$80.87

STR DATA BY QUARTER

	Occupancy	Avg Daily Rate	RevPAR
Winter	56.0%	\$103.90	\$58.23
Spring	76.2%	\$125.85	\$95.93
Summer	74.3%	\$137.57	\$102.24
Fall	60.7%	\$110.03	\$66.74

ANNUAL VISITOR TYPE*



Overnight Visitors

77.3%



Day Trip Visitors

31.2%

*The total percentages can exceed 100% as visitors can stay multiple days during their trip.

AVERAGE VISITOR SPENDING

\$380

Per Trip

18-24 - \$279

25-34 - \$303

35-44 - \$415

45-54 - \$369

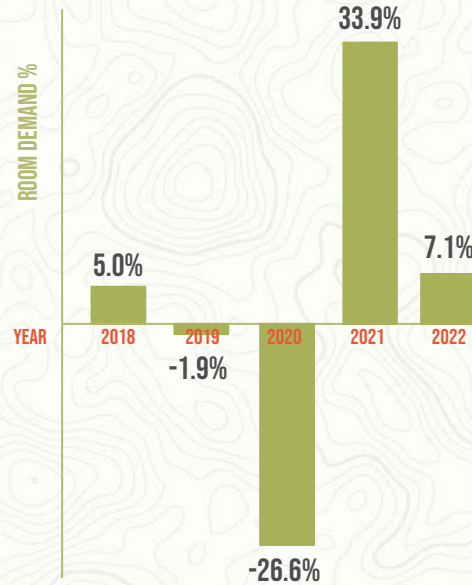
55-64 - \$370

65+ - \$335

Average Visitor Spending by Age Group



ANNUAL ROOM DEMAND PERCENT CHANGE PER SMITH TRAVEL RESEARCH:



ANNUAL OCCUPANCY



What is room demand? The number of rooms sold in a specified time period.

FY24 **STRATEGIC** **PRIORITIES**

- **INCREASE LEISURE VISITATION**
- **FOSTER SPORTS TOURISM**
- **THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE**
- **RECRUIT MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, AND REUNIONS**
- **THE INTERNATIONAL MARKETPLACE/DOMESTIC TOURS**
- **BILLINGS LOGAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**
- **THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

greetings from
BILLINGS
MONTANA

FY23: LEISURE MARKET AT A GLANCE



2011

2022 KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS



SPRING/SUMMER - NATIONAL ADVERTISING

WEBSITE TRAFFIC

285K

DISPLAY CTR

0.09%

IMPRESSIONS

22M

VIDEO COMPLETION

95%

ACTIVITIES GENERATED

222K



FALL/WINTER - REGIONAL ADVERTISING

WEBSITE TRAFFIC

134K

IMPRESSIONS

604K

IMPRESSIONS

9.8M

CONVERSION RATE

63%

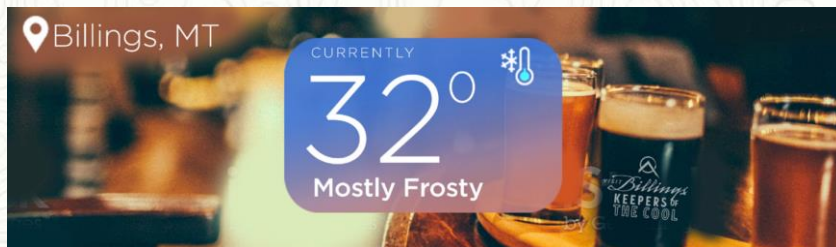
ACTIVITIES GENERATED

74K

LIFT IN CONVERSION

1.29%

Discovery drove over 604,000 impressions and yielded an impression conversion rate of 63%. Video provided a 1,294% lift in conversion rate.



2022 KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS



EVENTS - REGIONAL ADVERTISING

WEBSITE TRAFFIC	IMPRESSIONS	ACTIVITIES GENERATED
113K	14M	48K+
DISPLAY CTR	REACH	FREQUENCY
0.97%	260K	4.97

Social had a 0.97% CTR and reached 259,958 people at an average of 4.97 frequency

PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Secured feature coverage in *Road Trips for Families* (<https://www.roadtripsforfamilies.com/the-great-american-road-trip-in-billings-montana/>)
- Virtual meetings introducing Billings to more than 10 journalists/influencers representing more than 5 million earned media impressions
- Secured four journalists/influencers for a press visit scheduled for May/June 2023 for outdoor adventure and Billings Brew Trail feature articles



WEBSITE

WEBSITE TRAFFIC	AVG SESSION DURATION	CLICKS TO PARTNER SITES
391K	1:42	32K+
VISITOR GUIDE VIEWS	VISITOR GUIDE REQUESTS	E-NEWSLETTER SIGNUPS
4K+	1K+	1K+

TOP ONLINE MARKETS FOR WEBSITE VISITATION

CHICAGO 41K DENVER 30K DALLAS 28K
BILLINGS 26K SALT LAKE CITY 20K



Billings®

FY24 STRATEGIES, GOALS, AND TACTICS



KEY TRENDS



THE U.S. TRAVEL FOUNDATION IS FORECASTING AN INCREASE IN TRAVEL SPENDING IN 2023 COMPARED TO 2022 (AND 2019).

Travelers are, on average, **booking trips farther ahead for 2023** than they did back in 2019.

Billings
trail guides.
est. 1877

90% of travelers want to **experience a destination “like a local”**



About one-third of American travelers overall report they **used online video specifically for trip planning purposes**



THERE IS A RENEWED EMPHASIS ON FOOD-FOCUSED TRAVEL



Remote workers packing up and going somewhere new for a week or two, without ever telling their employer.


WE'RE HERE FOR ANYONE WHO LOVES BEING **OUTSIDE.**

Yes, outside as in outdoors outside - but also outside the norm. People who embrace pure unencumbered Montana in all its forms. People who go against the grain and believe that normal just isn't good enough. People who crave boldness and authenticity, rather than settling for the same old.

Billings was built on that outsider spirit. That despite appearances and naysayers, no climb was too steep. No trail was too rocky. No burger was too juicy.


On the idea of staying true to our roots is more important than fitting in with everyone and everything else. That's what is great about Billings. We have been authentic Montana since 1882. And maybe that makes us the outsiders of the bunch. That's just fine with us.

We are the world's biggest fans of being outside, because as we say: Forge Your Own Path.



OUTSIDERS SINCE 1882

FORGE YOUR OWN PATH



We've always known the best people in the world are outsiders. Plan your journey to come see us at VisitBillings.com




MADE FOR OUTSIDERS SINCE 1882

FORGE YOUR OWN PATH




We've always known the best people in the world are outsiders. Plan your journey to come see us at VisitBillings.com



BE AN OUTSIDER SINCE 1882

FORGE YOUR OWN PATH

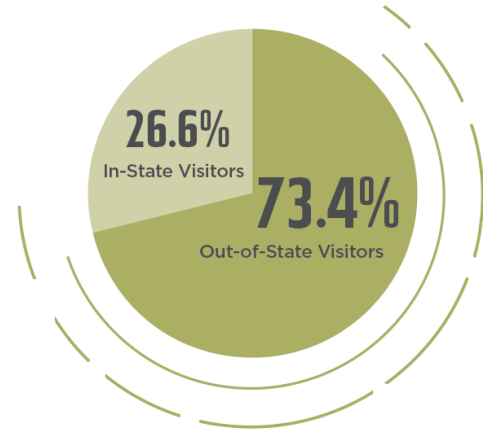


We've always known the best people in the world are outsiders. Plan your journey to come see us at VisitBillings.com

TARGET MARKETS



ORIGIN MARKETS



EMERGING MARKETS

Houston, TX | Portland, OR | Phoenix, AZ

ADVERTISING AND PROMOTIONS

GOAL:

DRIVE YEAR-ROUND VISITATION BY INCREASING AWARENESS FOR BILLINGS AS AN IDEAL TRAVEL DESTINATION, WITH BIG SKIES AND OUTDOOR ADVENTURE.

TACTICS:

- Build marketing campaigns and promotions that showcase rich visuals of the entire destination
- Launch new “Be an Outsider” campaign
- Create niche marketing campaigns such as Summer Events
- Continue to promote Great American Road Trip and its itineraries for repeat and first-time visitors
- Promote current and emerging flight markets
- Showcase Billings in fall and winter
- Drive media coverage through public relations



TRADITIONAL AND DIGITAL MEDIA

GOALS:

INCREASE BRAND AWARENESS THAT ENCOURAGES TARGET AUDIENCES TO DEEPEN CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT. INCREASE DIRECT FLIGHT AWARENESS TO BILLINGS FROM ORIGIN AND EMERGING MARKETS

TACTICS:

- Use a multi-channel media strategy
- In drive markets, use channels best for events such as search and display
- Engage with local media for promotion of Billings and support local business
- Prioritize Mea and Display
- Launch a Discovery Campaign to utilize Google's audience to deliver personalized and inspiring experiences
- Leverage channels such as search display and social for in flight markets
- Strategically place out-of-home billboards within and around Billings
- Utilize advanced analytics to maximize campaign efficiency and effectiveness
- Sponsor niche content for targeting two-wheel audience



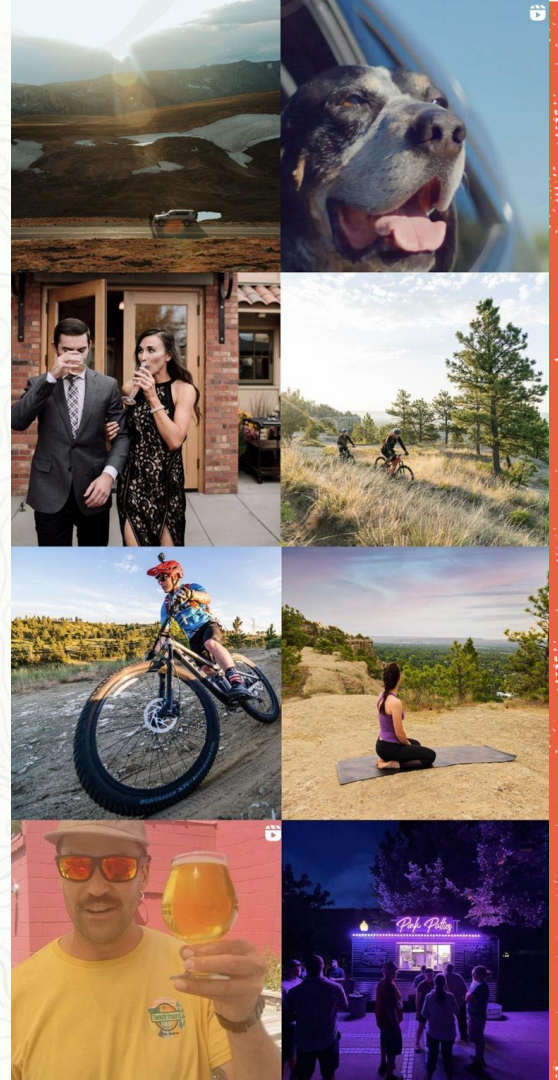
INTERACTIVE AND SOCIAL

GOALS:

**INCREASE BRAND INTERACTION WITH INFORMATIVE AND ENGAGING DIGITAL CONTENT
BUILDING AWARENESS AND LOYALTY, THROUGH GROWING SOCIAL, INFORMING
MEETING AND SPORTS PLANNERS, GROWING EMAIL LIST AND INCREASING WEBSITE
VISITATION.**

TACTICS:

- Use storytelling as the driving characteristic as well as using the Visit Billings' voice through Billings Trail Guide
- Develop integrated editorial content, plan, prepare and streamline across all channels
- Integrate seasonal messaging, key events and new local business etc
- Increase video content on all owned channels
- Encourage dialogue through Facebook
- Curate and utilize consumer-generated photography through Instagram
- Expose travelers to editorial and social content and blog articles through email marketing
- Develop a Plan Your Trip section on the website making travel to Billings as easy as possible
- Promote new blog content on website



PUBLIC RELATIONS

GOALS:

GENERATE EARNED MEDIA AND INFLUENCER COVERAGE BY POSITIONING POSITIONING THE DESTINATION AS AN AUTHENTIC, WELCOMING CITY. **INCREASE WEBSITE TRAFFIC THROUGH EARNED DIGITAL MEDIA PLACEMENTS** INCLUDING THE DESTINATION URL **PLACE EARNED MEDIA FEATURES IN TARGET PUBLICATIONS** WITH A TOTAL AUDIENCE IMPRESSIONS VALUE OF AT LEAST 10 MILLION

TACTICS:

- Identify new, cost-effective means to achieve similar ends of traditional travel/tourism media outreach.
- Explore offering digital experiences to media and influencers to reach a broader audience.
- Develop earned media tactics that tie directly to paid media efforts
- Leverage evolving industry trends as a framework for earned media content
- Share brief news and story ideas with greater frequency about Billings events.
- Explore partnerships with Brant MT and Visit Southeast Montana
- Attend PRSA event(s) or Brand MT sponsored opportunities





SPORTS MARKETING

GOALS:

GENERATE NEW ROOM NIGHTS FROM SPORTS EVENTS RECRUITED

TO THE AREAS

PARTNER WITH COLLEGIATE FOR NCAA AND NAIA EVENT BIDS

GROW EVENTS OR EXPAND EXISTING EVENTS

30 EVENTS TO BE BOOKED OR SUPPORTED IN BILLINGS

RETAIN EVENTS

TACTICS:

- Attend sporting event trade shows like SportsETA and TEAMS
- Generate new leads for sports events through collaboration
- Develop email templates and e-postcard for sports marketing
- Focus on Collegiate Sports for future bids
- Grow and retain sports events
- Develop and build upon sports sales toolkit for efficiencies in follow-up
- Create a marketing and advertising plan to promote sports
- Build a new section on the website dedicated to sports as a destination
- Receive certification with STS and continue subscription with Destinations International Economic Impact Calculator
- Develop sports planning booklet and support
- Capture new photography to build image library for marketing
- Begin planning logistics for a 2024 sports planner FAM tour
- Become active in Midland Roundtable
- Research the possibility of creating a sports advocacy committee
- Continue to work with key stakeholders

SPORTS MARKETING

LAUNCHED NEW SPORTS WEBPAGE



SPORTS TOURISM

VISIT BILLINGS WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THESE LONGSTANDING SPORTING EVENTS:

- MHSА Events
- Big Sky Volleyfest
- Big Sky Ballin'
- All-American Indian Shootout
- NCAA DII Cross Country Regional Championships
- Summer Softball & Baseball Tournaments
- 406 Race Series

SPORTS TOURISM

WE'RE ALSO LOOKING FORWARD TO HOSTING THE FOLLOWING NEW EVENTS:

- USPA Area 1 Championships
- Tour Montana
- Montana Winter Classic Pro-Am
- And more in the future!



VISITOR EXPERIENCE

GOALS:

**RAISE AWARENESS OF THE VALUE OF TOURISM
THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY THAT FOSTER
SUPPORT IN DIVERSITY & INCLUSION AND
SUPPORTING STAKEHOLDERS AND FRONT-LINE STAFF
THROUGH EDUCATION**

TACTICS:

- Continue encouraging stakeholder to become Certified Autism Organizations
- Develop a full advocacy campaign that educates the Billings community and residents on the benefits and economic impact of tourism
- Formally introduce the Certified Travel Ambassador (CTA)

VISITOR EXPERIENCE



**THE BILLINGS BREW TRAIL AND TRAILHEAD TREATS
COLLECTIVELY MARKET LOCAL BUSINESSES AS AN
EXPERIENCE TO BREW ENTHUSIASTS AND FOODIES.**

**EACH CELEBRATE THE UNIQUE DINING CULTURE THAT
CAN ONLY BE FOUND IN BILLINGS.**

VISITOR EXPERIENCE



Billings
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CERTIFIED TOURISM AMBASSADORS AND TRAIL GUIDES PROMOTE COMMUNITY PRIDE AND A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF THE MANY CULTURAL, HISTORICAL, AND EXPERIENTIAL ASSETS MONTANA'S TRAILHEAD OFFERS.

FY24 **STRATEGIC** **PRIORITIES** **(RECAP)**

- INCREASE LEISURE VISITATION
- FOSTER SPORTS TOURISM
- THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE
 - RECRUIT MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, AND REUNIONS
 - THE INTERNATIONAL MARKETPLACE/DOMESTIC TOURS
 - BILLINGS LOGAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
 - THE STRATEGIC PLAN



MEETING AND CONVENTION RECRUITMENT

GOALS:

- BUILD RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH KNOWLEDGE AND SUPPORT TO MEETING PLANNERS**
- ELEVATE BILLINGS TO GENERATE NEW ROOM NIGHTS FROM MEETINGS OR CONFERENCES**
- LONGER ITINERARIES SUPPORTING STATE ASSOCIATION AND CORPORATE MEETINGS.**
- SUPPORT NEW TOUR OPERATORS AND RETAIN EXISTING**
- 25 MEETINGS OR CONFERENCES**

TACTICS:

- Attend meeting and convention appointment-based events
- Generate new leads through collaboration
- Continue to develop digital and print sales material
- Maintain efforts on Cvent and other platforms
- Use e-communications to build relationships
- Consider potential meeting planner FAM tour
- Consider sponsorship opportunities
- Provide planners services to better facilitate attendees



GROUP TOUR MARKET

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK WAS THE SEVENTH MOST VISITED NATIONAL PARK IN THE UNITED STATES IN 2022

GOAL:

THROUGH BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND FOSTERING RELATIONSHIPS WITH NEW & EXISTING TOUR OPERATORS WE CAN ELEVATE BILLINGS BY OFFERING NEW PRODUCT INSIGHTS AND LONGER ITINERARIES THAT SHOWCASE BILLINGS TO INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC TOUR OPERATORS AS A MAJOR WESTERN TOUR DESTINATION

TACTICS:

- Attend an American Bus Association event and international events hosted in the US
- Work with Brand MT for opportunities to host FAM tours
- Elevate Billings in the Great American West (GAW) publications to garner exposure for Billings to the German, French, Italian, Belgium, Denmark, the UK, and Australia markets.
- Continue to advocate on a national level to shorten Visa interview wait times with the U.S. Travel Association



INSPIRE

As Brand MT inspires travel to Montana, Visit Billings inspires travel to Billings.



ORIENT

Once inspired to travel to Billings, help travelers find whys and ways to build Billings into their itineraries and agendas for leisure, sports, business, meetings, or group tour events.



FACILITATE

Once in Billings, facilitating visitors to ensure a positive experience and foster a repeat visitor is priority.

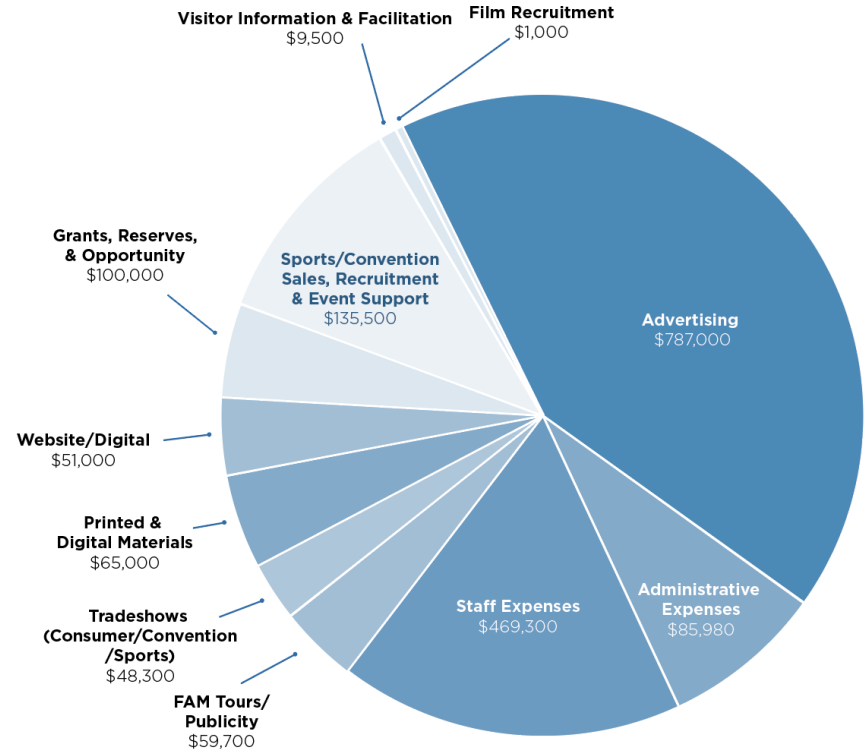




FY24 BUDGET BREAKDOWN

2024 BILLINGS TOURISM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BTBID) BUDGET

PROJECTED REVENUE	\$1,828,280
MARKETING & SALES TOTAL	\$1,273,000
Advertising	\$787,000
Grants, Reserves, & Opportunity	\$100,000
Printed & Digital Materials	\$65,000
Sports/Convention Sales, Recruitment & Event Support	\$135,500
Tradeshows (Consumer/Convention /Sports)	\$48,300
FAM Tours/Publicity	\$59,700
Website/Digital	\$51,000
Visitor Information & Facilitation	\$9,500
Film Recruitment	\$1,000
STAFF EXPENSES	\$469,300
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	\$85,980
BTBID TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,828,280





THANK YOU

Questions?

EPIC
SINCE 1882