

Application Summary

Application: FY26 DMO Plan - Havre Area Chamber of Commerce

Applicant: Havre Area Chamber of Commerce

Funding opportunity: FY26 DMO Plan

Application Responses

Organization Name: Havre Area Chamber of Commerce

First Name: Shelli

Last Name: Sayers

Street Address 1: 130 5th Ave

Street Address 2:

City: Havre

State: MT

Zip: 59501

Funding Opportunity: FY26 DMO Plan

Amount Requested: 25,353

TAC Approved Budget: 25,353

General Description Information

1. Describe your destination (who you are, who you wish to attract and why would they come) addressing your strengths, opportunities, and potential challenges.:

1a. Destination:

Nestled along the serene Milk River, Havre, Montana is a tapestry of diverse geography. The plains are adorned with golden wheat fields and expansive rangelands, painting a picture of agricultural abundance. To the south, the landscape gracefully transitions into foothills and buttes, leading adventurers towards the majestic Bears Paw Mountain range-Home of Beaver Creek Park, the largest county park in the nation. Heading north, the rugged beauty of the badlands offers a scenic drive to Canada, where the stark contrasts of the terrain captivate the eye.

Havre is a town where history whispers through the streets, steeped in small-town charm and the warm embrace of Montana hospitality. Situated on US Highway 2, Havre serves as a vital travel corridor, stretching from Montana's eastern boarder to the gateway of Glacier National Park and the western frontier. Visitors are invited to take a deep breath of the crisp, fresh air, and immerse themselves in the tranquility of a slower pace of life. Whether exploring the historical landmarks or simply enjoying the natural beauty, Havre promises a memorable and rejuvenating experience.

1b. Strengths:

Rich Historical and Cultural Heritage: The historical districts of Havre showcase charming buildings and landmarks that tell the story of the town's past. Visitors can explore museums, historical sites, and enjoy self-guided walking tours and guided tours that bring Havre's rich heritage to life.

Natural Beauty and Outdoor Activities: Havre offers genuine Montana experiences with friendly locals and rich culture. Visitors can immerse themselves in the vibrant cultures of nearby Rocky Boy Indian Reservation (Chippewa and Cree Tribes) and the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation (Assiniboine and Gros Ventre Tribes), participating in cultural events, powwows, and festivals.

Uncrowded: Visitors to Havre will not experience wait times or require advance reservations, allowing for a more relaxed and enjoyable visit.

Year-Round Recreation: Havre experiences all four seasons, providing year-round recreation and opportunities for visitors and residents alike. Each season brings its own unique charm and activities, from the vibrant colors of fall to the snowy landscapes of winter, blooming flowers of spring and sunny days of summer.

Modern Conveniences: As the largest town along the US Highway 2 corridor between North Dakota and the Rocky Mountain Front, Havre's facilities and hotel properties offer the opportunity to host a variety of events. Whether as a destination or a convenient stopover for travelers, Havre's accommodations and amenities ensure a comfortable and enjoyable stay.

Havre's strengths lie in its ability to offer a blend of natural beauty, historical charm, cultural richness, and modern conveniences, making it a destination that promises unforgettable experiences for all who visit.

1c. Opportunities:

Development of Off-Season Tourism: By promoting shoulder season activities such as astro-tourism, wildlife viewing, outdoor recreation, and historical experiences Havre can attract visitors year-round and reduce seasonal dependency.

Cultural and Heritage Tourism: Leveraging the region's rich history and cultural sites can attract niche markets interested in agriculture, Native American History, Railroad History, and military sites. Havre Beneath the Streets offers a fascinating glimpse into the town's underground history, while Wahnapiya Buffalo Jump provides an educational experience about ancient hunting practices. Fort Assiniboine State Historical Site invites visitors to explore its storied past, and the H. Earl Clack Museum, part of the Dinosaur Trail, captivates dinosaur and history enthusiasts.

Affordability: Havre's affordability and lack of overcrowding make it an attractive destination, offering reasonably priced lodging, dining, and activities.

Outdoor Recreation: Outdoor recreation is abundant year-round in Havre. Beaver Creek Park, nestled in the Bears Paw Mountains, is the largest county owned parks in the nation and offers camping, hiking,

fishing, floating, and wildlife viewing opportunities. Fresno Reservoir is a haven for anglers and boating enthusiasts, providing ample opportunities for water-based activities.

Natural Beauty: The open spaces around Havre allow visitors to unwind, relax, and recharge. The area's low population density ensures unobstructed views of the night skies, making it an ideal spot for stargazing and witnessing the mesmerizing Northern Lights. Havre's geography is home to a wide variety of wildlife, offering both viewing and hunting opportunities for nature lovers.

Strategic Location: Havre's strategic location along US Highway 2, coupled with its diverse attractions and outdoor activities, positions it as a prime destination for travelers. By promoting these unique features and leveraging its historical and natural assets, Havre can increase its appeal and draw more visitors seeking memorable experiences.

1d. Potential Challenges:

Accessibility: Havre is off the beaten path for many travelers passing through the state. This geographic isolation can be a deterrent for those looking for more accessible destinations. Havre's primary mode of access is by driving, which can be limiting for those who prefer other forms of transportation. The town has one airport with only two daily flights to Billings, Montana, and the closest international airport is in Great Falls, Montana, 110 miles away, presenting challenges for visitors.

Although US Highway 2 is well maintained, it may deter visitors who prefer the convenience of traveling along an interstate. This can be a significant factor for those planning road trips or seeking quicker travel routes.

Located 40 miles north of Havre, the Port of Wildhorse into Alberta, Canada, operates on limited hours that change seasonally. The only 24-hour port in Montana is 100 Miles west of Havre off I-15, offering greater ease for Canadian visitors. Additionally, the fluctuating value of the Canadian dollar impacts the demand for travel, making it less predictable for Canadian tourists.

Economic and Political Factors: The ongoing trade war and economic instability pose challenges, affecting travel and economic conditions. These factors can influence the number of visitors and the overall economic health of the region.

Competition from Other Destinations: Havre faces competition from other locations in Montana that offer similar attractions and experiences.

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2. Briefly describe how your destination aligns with the Montana brand or describe the Brand strategy for your DMO.:

Spectacular, Unspoiled Nature

Havre is home to clean air, wide open spaces, and big skies free from light pollution. Its physical geography boasts creeks, rivers, lakes, badlands, buttes, plains, foothills, and mountains. The diverse landscape is home to a wide variety of wildlife and recreational opportunities. Beaver Creek Park covers over 10,000 acres, offering visitors a chance to immerse themselves in Montana's unspoiled natural beauty.

Vibrant and Charming Small Town

As the ninth largest town in Montana, Havre is a charming town that serves as the regional hub for Hill County and the Hi-Line. With over 500 locally owned and operated small businesses, Havre satisfies all shopping, dining, entertainment, and lodging needs. The historic downtown boasts an Art Alley, Town Square Park, shopping, restaurants, and taverns within walking distance from the Amtrak Train Station and lodging facilities. Havre offers small-town hospitality, making every visitor feel welcome.

Breathtaking Experiences and Relaxing Hospitality

Havre is a community that warmly welcome visitors, ensuring everyone experiences the true essence of Montana. Our residents take pride in being super hosts, offering genuine hospitality that makes every guest feel at home. Whether visitors come for a short visit or an extended stay, they'll find that Havre's friendly atmosphere and commitment to making their stay memorable are second to none.

Havre's accommodations range from cozy, locally owned establishments to well-known national brands, all providing the amenities visitors need for a comfortable and relaxing stay. Additionally, Havre offers a variety of lodging options through VRBO/Airbnb and campgrounds that cater to campers of all sizes.

Dining in Havre is a delightful experience, with options ranging from iconic local favorites to upscale modern eateries. Visitors can enjoy a drink at our local favorite brewery and immerse themselves in the vibrant community events and live theatre that happens year-round.

In Havre, Montana, visitors will find a welcoming community ready to share the beauty and charm of Montana.

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Destination Marketing: ☒

Destination Management: ☐

Destination Stewardship: ☐

Destination Development: ☐

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3a. Define your audience(s) (demographic, geographic and psycho-graphic):

Demographic:

- Retired Couples

- Families
- Solo Travelers
- Millennials
- Adventurers
- Cultural Enthusiasts
- Nature Lovers

Geographic:

- **Montana Residents:** Targeting the rest of Montana, encouraging residents to explore Havre as a destination for events, family visits, adventures, or short getaways.

Psychographic:

- **Local Business Supporters:** Visitors who value local businesses and locally produced items, seeking authentic and locally sourced experiences.
- **Nature Enthusiasts:** Individuals who enjoy scenic and diverse landscapes, seeking open spaces and less congestion without sacrificing accommodations and access to technology.
- **Frequent Getaway Seekers:** Visitors who value more frequent, shorter getaways, looking for a relaxing and rejuvenating experience in a less crowded environment.

3b. What research supports your DMO strategy? :

Havre relies on our agency partner to make recommendations that fit our targeting based on their research resources such as Nielson Ratings and Nielson Digital Ad Ratings, CEB Inconoculture Consumer Insights, Scarborough Research, SWAD Broadcast CPP forecasting, ComScore, and Quantcast. These tools provide access to radio and TV ratings, print circulation numbers, web usage statistics, core forecasting information, consumer psychographics and media usage trends. These resources help The Wendt Agency create highly targeted and cost-effective media strategies.

Havre DMO also pulled research used by Central Montana and applied it to our suggestions.

The followers of the TBID and Havre DMO through their joint Facebook page and their points of origin were also analyzed.

3c. What are your emerging markets?:

Havre, Montana is poised to attract a diverse range of visitors, thanks to its unique blend of natural beauty, rich history, and welcoming community. With the recent Regional Assistance Program Grant awarded to Havre, we are developing itinerary assets to effectively market Havre and highlight the exceptional experiences it offers. Here are the emerging markets for tourism in Havre:

1. **Nature Enthusiasts and Outdoor Adventurers:** Havre's diverse geography, including plains, foothills, buttes, and the Bears Paw Mountains, offers a plethora of outdoor activities such as hiking,

fishing, and wildlife viewing. The pristine natural environment and opportunities for adventure make it an ideal destination for those seeking to connect with nature.

2. **History Buffs and Cultural Explorers:** Havre's rich historical and cultural heritage, including attractions like Havre Beneath the Streets and Fort Assinniboine State Historic Site, appeals to visitors interested in exploring the past. The town's historical landmarks and museums provide a deep dive into the region's history and culture.
3. **Astro-Tourism:** With its unobstructed dark skies and minimal light pollution, Havre is perfect for stargazing and astrotourism. Beaver Creek Park is listed on the Trail to the Stars and presents a perfect opportunity for Havre to promote.

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4a. Describe proposed tactics and projects as related to overall goals and controlled by the organization in its financial statements.:

Goal: Promote Havre as a destination. There are so many people who live in Montana that have never visited or spent time exploring Havre and the surrounding areas. We want to spend this year promoting Havre to Montana.

The Havre DMO has an projected budget of \$21,656.

20% of the budget allocated towards administrative operations.

47% of the budget allocated towards paid media. Paid social media will be the main method of advertising.

11.5% of the budget allocated to website updates to make sure the site is strong for the traffic we are driving there from our social media efforts.

11.5% of the budget allocated to cooperative marketing in participating with Central Montana.

10% of the budget allocated to agency services to execute the paid social media and creative.

4b. How will the addition of LFST funds enhance your overall goals?:

The LFST funds of an estimated \$1303.00 will increase our overall budget and help enhance our marketing strategies.

5. Define and describe your overall objectives. Objectives are formed from your goals. They are logical, attainable steps to achieve the goals and are able to be measured.:

Objectives/Metrics/Evaluation:

OBJECTIVES	MEASURABLE METRICS FOR SUCCESS	REPORT THE METRIC ACHIEVED	EVALUATION OF SUCCESSFUL METRICS
Promote overnight stays in	Increase bed tax collections by 3%		

Havre and increase bed tax collections over FY25	(as measured by the Bed Tax Report).		
Increase website traffic	We now have Google Analytics in place to measure website traffic. In the past month we have seen 3000 visitors. We would like that number to increase to an average of 4000 visitors per month.		
Grow social media followers and engagement	Increase social media followers by 1%		

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Budget Form: Havre DMO Budget Form LFST LFUT.xlsx

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DMO Budget:

Havre DMO

Allowable Method	Budget	% Budgeted	Amend +/-	Updated Budget	% Budgeted
Lodging Facility USE Tax (LFUT) Budget					
Administration	\$4,071.00	15.27%		\$4,071.00	
Website Development (Online, Website, Mobile)	\$2,500.00	9.38%		\$2,500.00	
Cooperative Marketing	\$2,500.00	9.38%		\$2,500.00	
Paid Media	\$14,137.00	53.04%		\$14,137.00	
Agency Services	\$2,145.00	8.05%		\$2,145.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
TOTAL LFUT Budget	\$25,353.00	95.11%	\$0.00	\$25,353.00	

Lodging Facility SALES Tax (LFST) Budget					
Administration	\$261.00	0.98%		\$261.00	

Paid Media	\$1,042.00	3.91%		\$1,042.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
		0.00%		\$0.00	
TOTAL LFST Budget	\$1,303.00	4.89%	\$0.00	\$1,303.00	

TOTAL LFUT & LFST BUDGET	\$26,657.00	100.00%	\$0.00	\$26,657.00	1
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LFST Revenue Projection	1,303.00
LFUT Revenue Projection	20,353.00
Funds not spent during previous fiscal year	5,000.00
LFST Rollover Funds at Commerce	0.00
LFUT Rollover Funds at Commerce	0.00
Allocated Following Audit	0.00
Budget total	26,656.00

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The Narrative Evaluation report is used to a) provide a written evaluation of the Objectives and Metrics section and b) provide a written summary of how the LFST Funds were spent and the metric(s) achieved.:

TBD