

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY, OREGON

ORDER NO: 22-11-29-01

ORDER/IN THE MATTER OF APPROVING
ALLOCATIONS TOTALING \$36,238 FOR 2023
RURAL TOURISM MARKETING PROGRAM
(RTMP) PROJECTS IN THE MCKENZIE RIVER
AREA AND AUTHORIZING DISTRIBUTION OF
FUNDS

WHEREAS, Lane County provides in Lane Code, Chapter 4.005.175 for distribution of lodging tax receipts for implementation of the Rural Tourism Marketing Program (RTMP); and

WHEREAS, the Rural Tourism Marketing Program was streamlined and updated by Order 03-10-1-3; and

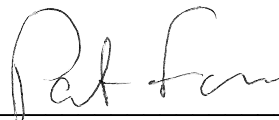
WHEREAS, project descriptions were reviewed for consistency with the Lane County Rural Tourism Marketing Program; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners has reviewed the proposal submitted for the McKenzie River.

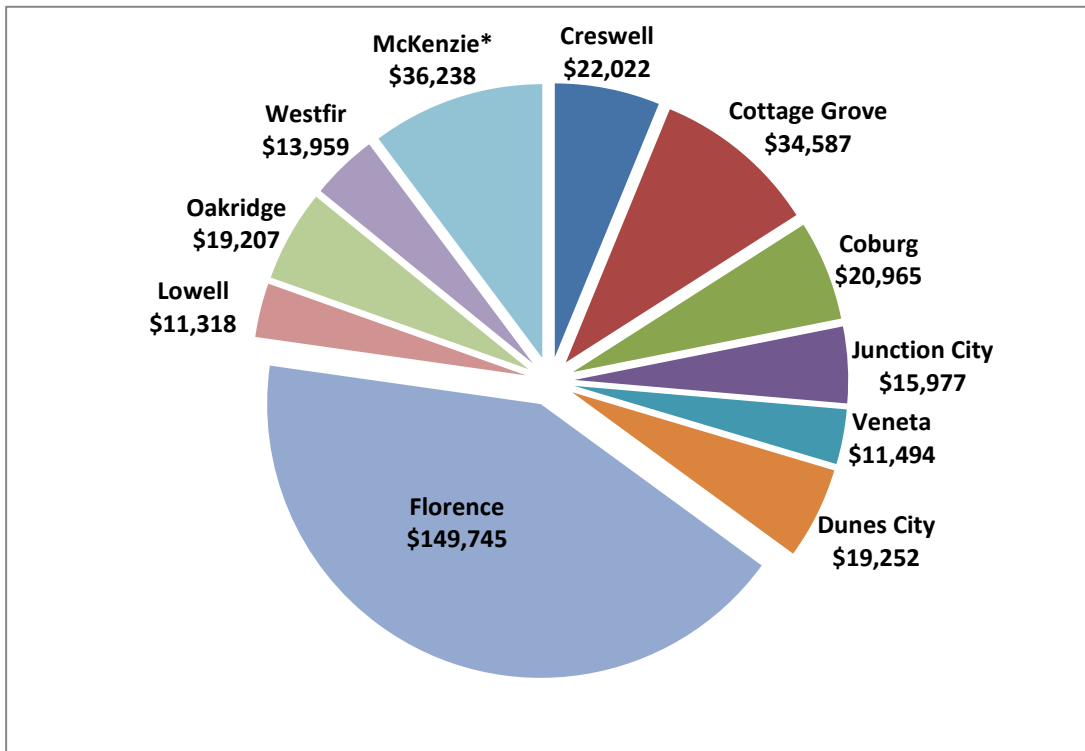
NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of County Commissioners of Lane County **ORDERS** as follows:

That distribution of funds is hereby authorized for delivery of the services described in the proposal received from the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce in the amount of \$36,238.

ADOPTED this 29th day of November, 2022.



Pat Farr, Chair
Lane County Board of Commissioners



Creswell	\$22,022
Cottage Grove	\$34,587
Coburg	\$20,965
Junction City	\$15,977
Veneta	\$11,494
Dunes City	\$19,252
Florence	\$149,745
Lowell	\$11,318
Oakridge	\$19,207
Westfir	\$13,959
McKenzie*	\$36,238
TOTAL	\$354,764

* McKenzie funds to be awarded in a bid process at a later date.

Rural Tourism Marketing Program
Funding Proposal
2023

Submitted by

McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce

Submitted to

Jenna Cusimano
Community and Economic Development
Lane County Public Service Building
125 East Eighth Avenue
Eugene, Oregon 97401

November 10 , 2022

Overview

McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce will apply and distribute RTMP funds for the McKenzie River to promote the selling, packaging, and advertising of the McKenzie River focusing on objectives and criteria to maximize the following:

1. Attraction of visitors to the McKenzie River
2. Length of stay by visitors
3. County-wide visitation
4. Return visits to the McKenzie River and surrounding communities

The McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce will facilitate proposal ideas to encourage growth in overnight lodging and visitors to the McKenzie River area from Cedar Flat to Belknap Hot Springs.

RTMP Funding Request

Goal: To promote increased tourism and overnight stays in the McKenzie River area.

Proposed Projects

Travel Lane County Visitor Guide	\$4,520.00
Wayfinding Implementation	4,400.00
Co-ordinate & Promote McKenzie Events	6,500.00
McKenzie River Discovery Center Support	5,000.00
Shoulder Season Marketing	3,900.00
Resource Summary for Lodges/Visitor Support	2,000.00
McKenzie History Hwy. Enhancements	2,000.00
Local Ads, PR & On-line Marketing	2,050.00
MRCC Website Improvement	3,958.00
Opportunity Fund	2,000.00
Total Expense	\$36,328.00

McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce Managed Projects

Applicant: McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 297, Walterville, OR 97489

Contact: Carol Tannenbaum

Signature _____

Date: November 10, 2022

1. Describe the projects and activities included in the plan. Who will conduct these activities and complete the projects? Are there any contingencies on readiness to proceed? If this is an ongoing project or marketing effort, please describe how it will be maintained / funded in the future.

A. Advertising - Overview

- a. Travel Lane County Visitor Guide
- b. Wayfinding Plan Implementation
- c. Co-ordinate & Promote McKenzie Events
- d. McKenzie River Discovery Center Support
- e. Shoulder Season Marketing
- f. Resource Summary for Lodges/Visitor Support
- g. McKenzie History Hwy. Enhancements
- h. Local Ads, PR Materials & Online Marketing
- i. MRCC Website Improvement
- j. Opportunity Fund

The Tourism Committee of the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce (MRCC/TC) will direct and oversee the completion of the proposed projects. The MRCC/TC is composed mostly of Chamber members who own tourism related businesses. The Chamber continues to improve upon its organization, team building, and community outreach. New members are being added and are participating in the goals of the Chamber. These new members bring many new talents and experience to the Chamber.

In the past, the Chamber has received US Forest Service funding to revitalize the Old McKenzie Fish Hatchery at Leaburg Lake. The Chamber has also been awarded contracts for McKenzie Marketing Plans as well as Special Projects Tourism Grants and Travel Oregon Grants.

The Chamber has been successful in disseminating information to visitors with three 24/7 kiosks, located at the Walterville Shopping Center, the proposed McKenzie Discovery Center, and near the Windermere Real Estate office in Vida. These displays also provide space for the publications of other Chambers of rural Lane County in exchange for displaying our information in their locations.

The proposed projects should proceed with no delay and therefore no contingencies are set in place. All activities will continue through December of 2023

2. In what specific way do projects support Lane County's Rural Tourism Marketing Program mission and project criteria?

Providing information about the history, events, attractions, and activities available in the McKenzie area will influence people to come, return, and extend planned stays in the McKenzie River area. Utilization of print and electronic media will make the advertising message more available.

Advertising will focus on Oregon, Washington, and Northern California by placing the Chamber's message regarding the McKenzie River in publications and electronic media that reach out to residents of these target markets. Education in the local market to the events, attractions, and activities available in the McKenzie River will increase 'mini-vacations' during peak and off seasons from the local area as well.

We work to expand the knowledge in the local area of McKenzie River area offerings through print, online, and promotional items the Chamber can increase the appeal of both day trips and overnight stays.

The McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce will continue its existing cooperative arrangements with tourism related organizations for providing space for the publications of other Chambers. It is our plan to partner with Oakridge and Sisters to build cooperation and reinforce branding among the Chambers.

A. All the following RTMP criteria are included in this proposal:

1. Increase transient room tax revenues countywide, as measured by increasing overall revenues from room tax from visitor stays, and by increasing room tax revenues during the tourism 'shoulder season' in the fall/early spring months.
2. Increase the number of visits and the amount of time spent by visitors in *rural* Lane County by improving the attractiveness of rural communities. The variety of such activities may include expanded attractions, beautification, and property enhancement projects on public property.
3. Focus general marketing on visitors from surrounding states and 'peak season' marketing to attract visitors from Oregon.
4. Continue the development of regional marketing with local, State, and private agencies. This includes increased involvement of the rural tourism organization in the existing network.
5. Monitor potential targets in western Canada and other international markets, maintaining flexibility for action.
6. Develop, advertise, and package rural Lane County attractions and group tour business that encourage overnight stays and extended visits by: (a.) Developing group travel opportunities; i.e. recreational vehicle, bicycle, parks, and campground activities, and (b.) Fostering coordination between Travel Lane County and rural tourism organizations to develop and package group travel tours, particularly as an extension of metro convention gatherings. (c.) Providing incentives for return visits; i.e. discount on room rate for next year, mail schedule of activities for next year, mail post card with thank you and welcome note.
7. Assist with rural area tourism staffing needs, and provide training on hospitality and service excellence. The objective is to maintain a reputation for excellence in hospitality and service.

3. What are your criteria for success in this project? How will you evaluate the effectiveness and measure the success of your project? In what measurable way will you be able to demonstrate that your project is designed to meet the tourism needs of your rural community? Please list at least one specific outcome you expect for each project activity.

- A. **Travel Lane County Visitor Guide:** The MRCC has traditionally partnered with Travel Lane County to support a shared McKenzie River business ad in the annual Travel Lane County Visitor Guide. Much recovery work from COVID has occurred in 2021 through 2022 and supporting the viability of tourism facing businesses is paramount at this time for the area's continued recovery from the 2020 wildfire. Local businesses sign up to be a part of the advertisement which will feature local events and natural attractions that will draw visitors. Participation generates great exposure for the area where the guide is distributed, and participation helps to support TLC's work.
Supports Criterion 4.

- B. **Wayfinding Plan Implementation:** In 2019 the Chamber partnered with Travel Lane County to develop a McKenzie Wayfinding Plan. The Plan was completed in July 2019 and implementation began in late 2019 with the receipt of a \$20,000 Grant from the Willamette Valley Visitor Association to supplement the RTMP funding to design and establish prominent signs for the western and eastern entrances to the area. With design work complete, cost estimates for sign building in hand, permitting approval work clearly defined, and permission to erect the signs on both ends of the corridor granted, a team began the process to construct the signs in 2022. We are seeking construction funds through Grants and charitable donations. The Oregon legislature approved \$150,000 in 2022 to kick start the process. The west corridor entry Gateway sign (Walterville) was completed with a ribbon cutting on September 23, 2022, two years after the Holiday Farm Fire. Completion of the eastern sign is planned for 2023. In addition, we will work to improve signage for events, attractions, trails, and tourism businesses with a focus on incorporating the region's cultural heritage in any new signage. Criterion 2 is supported by this effort.
- C. **Coordinate & Support McKenzie Events:** This project supports Criteria 1, 2, 3, and 6. Promotion of the area's six McKenzie Events (Wooden Boat Show, Lavender Festival, Tokatee Celebration, Chainsaw & Arts Festival, Walterville Fair & Waddle, and Christmas Bazaar) to a larger area will provide for greater visibility of these events to potential visitors coming from outside of the McKenzie River corridor. Traditionally these events start in April and continue into December and occur in locales along the corridor from Walterville to Rainbow. In 2020 the Lavender Festival was the only event to occur. All but the Wooden Boat Festival and The Chainsaw & Arts Festival returned in some form in 2021 and scheduling issues in 2022 kept the Chainsaw & Arts Festival off the calendar. We are optimistic that all the events will return in full in 2023 and a music event may be added to the McKenzie Event offerings. Our McKenzie Events calendar will be available to visitors at each event to encourage return visits to our river valley. A major goal is to create successful events that will be repeated regularly bringing in multiday overnight lodging. A special visitor survey was developed and applied in 2018 and continued in 2019 providing new tourist information to support our planning. The McKenzie Tourism outcomes for all the promotions include increased nightly stays at local lodges, generating business at local restaurants and stores and providing high quality activities for lodging guests.
- D. **McKenzie River Discovery Center Support:** The McKenzie River Chamber continues to support work to develop the McKenzie River Discovery Center as a world-class facility that will honor the river, highlight its unique geology, as well as its fishing and boating legacies. The Discovery Center will feature themed areas such as theaters and augmented reality projections, trails, cultural exhibits, riverboat displays, and a gallery for rotating exhibits. Studies have projected the facility will attract from 35,000 to 50,000 visitors annually when constructed in 2024. The McKenzie Chamber's financial contribution supports the site's business and design plans leading to a major capital fundraising campaign launch in 2023. The project supports Criterion 2.
- E. **Shoulder Season Marketing Campaign:** The Chamber is committed to bolstering the shoulder season as it continues working towards building a year-round tourism economy. In preparation for these efforts, the tourism committee will convene a special meeting with lodging and activity businesses that will be open during the shoulder season. A plan will be built in a phased approach that allows us to be respectful of the community. Emphasis will be placed on retaining nightly stays at local lodges, supporting business opportunities at local restaurants and stores, and promoting high quality activities for lodging guests. Criteria 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7 are supported by this project.

- F. **Resource Summary for Lodges/Visitor Support:** The McKenzie Tourism Committee will provide updated information on area businesses and attractions to visitors staying in lodging properties in the region. In 2015, using a grant from Travel Oregon, the Committee produced a “McKenzie River Directory” that included maps and local business information, that were distributed in a binder to every room at local lodging properties. The Committee will update and replace these binders with new visitor information packets, that will include Travel Lane County’s Visitor Guide, QR codes to direct visitors to more information, as well as printed contact information and directions to local businesses, since reliable cell service is not available at every property. Travel Lane County staff will assist with producing this information. RTMP funds will be used for printing and distribution costs. Supports criteria 1, 3 and 6.
- G. **McKenzie History Hwy. Enhancements:** Criteria 1,2 and 6 are supported by this effort. Through support of the Willamette Valley Visitor Association a group of local history enthusiasts created the McKenzie History Highway project in 2019. Over twenty-five panels depicting historic images of McKenzie River history (collected from local sources) were created and mounted on local business and public structures. A companion website (connected to a QR code on each panel) was created to make the panel locations and their pertinent information available to both residents and area visitors. This project will enhance the website by making it more searchable and better connecting individual panels to their geographic locations among other refinements. New panels may be created as well. Once complete, website visitation metrics will be available to assess visitor engagements with the History Highway panels.
- H. **Local Ads, PR & On-line Marketing Initiative:** Criteria 1, 3 and 4 are supported by this effort. In 2016 the Chamber established an on-line marketing presence. Efforts in 2018-2022 successfully promoted the McKenzie Events and are proposed to continue for 2023. Working closely with Travel Lane County, we encourage visitors to experience the McKenzie area and learn about all the outdoor recreational opportunities available to visitors. We will continue promoting McKenzie Events, generic McKenzie recreational opportunities including a special focus on mountain biking. Promotions will buy online advertising on websites that engage mountain bikers as well as those sites that target other outdoor recreational activities. We will integrate social media feeds into the website where possible. One measure of success will be to survey McKenzie River visitors about their experience and encourage them to write trip reviews.
- I. **MRCC Website Improvement:** Criteria 1, 2 and 6 are supported by this effort. A few years ago, the McKenzie Chamber of Commerce created a new website that successfully presents the McKenzie River to the traveling public as well as serving Chamber membership communication. It has links to both the Travel Lane County and Travel Oregon visitor platforms. New improvements will be added to refresh the website so that it meets the needs of the recovering area businesses. This project will keep the content of the website continually fresh. The more information we can provide travelers via the web, the better we serve and support businesses in the McKenzie River area.
- J. **Opportunity Fund:** The Chamber plans to set aside modest undedicated resources that can be applied quickly to respond to unanticipated opportunities to promote the area. Criteria 3 is supported by this effort.

4. Include a budget for your project. Include all resources and expenditures associated with the project.

Advertising Budget

Income	Cash	In-Kind
Tourism Marketing Funds	\$36,328.00	
Expenses:		
Travel Lane County Visitors Guide	4,520.00	
Wayfinding Plan Implementation	4,400.00	
Co-ordinate & Promote McKenzie Events	6,500.00	
Support McKenzie River Discovery Center	5,000.00	
Shoulder season Marketing Campaign	3,900.00	
Resource Summary for Lodges/Visitor Support	2,000.00	
McKenzie History Hwy. Enhancements	2,000.00	
Local Ads, PR & On-Line Marketing Initiative	2,050.00	1,000.00
MRCC Website Improvement	2,952.00	1,000.00
Opportunity Fund	2,000.00	
Total Expenses	\$36,328.00	

Approval Page

President	<u>Nadine Scott</u>	11-06-2022 12:49 PM PST
Vice-President	<u>Ken Engelman</u>	11-08-2022 8:21 AM PST
Secretary	<u>Judy Casad</u>	11-06-2022 1:09 PM PST
Treasurer	<u>Carol Tannenbaum</u>	11-06-2022 12:50 PM PST
Board Members:	<u>Patty Starr</u>	11-06-2022 5:00 PM PST
	<u>Chris LaVoie</u>	11-08-2022 8:23 AM PST
	<u>Mike Krause</u>	11-06-2022 12:55 PM PST

Date Signed _____