Community & Brand Support

Describe your destination (who you are, who you wish to attract and why they would come) addressing your strengths, opportunities, and potential challenges. How does your destination align with Montana's brand pillars?

The City of Livingston combines small town rustic charm and world class amenities with a twist of historic quirkiness. Our town of under 8,000 residents is rich with distinctive cultures; a colorful railroad history, the original gateway to Yellowstone, fly fishing mecca, historically picturesque and preserved downtown with vintage neon signs, more artists and writers per capita than anywhere in the state, ranch supply hub, eclectic boutiques, relaxed hospitality, a thriving theatre community, enthusiastic recreationists and a restaurant and bar scene that serves all tastes from robust to refined. Food writer Anthony Bourdain boasted of his love affair with Livingston and named our historic Murray Hotel among the top ten in the world, Jimmy Buffett celebrates Livingston in multiple songs, our town’s been the setting of myriad books and poems, and the New York Times and Architectural Digest recently highlighted Livingston as one of the best places to live and recreate. While Livingston is a magnet for travelers and recreationists from around the world, it is notably the favorite getaway spot for Montanans and folks from around the region who relish the town's casual authenticity, lack of pretense or traffic, genuine small business service and easy access to wild places, fine arts and celebrated cuisine. Many Montanans will tell you Livingston is one of the last "West" places that has retained all of what they love about the state.

This small railroad and ranching town was founded in conjunction with the Northern Pacific Railway in the late 1880s. The historic downtown area is anchored by beautiful brick architectural structures – our Livingston Depot was engineered by the same group that designed New York City’s Grand Central Station – and these storied buildings are home to diverse and distinctive small businesses. Livingston retains the visual appeal of an old Western movie set as over three quarters of our preserved structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, a testament to both their original construction and the values of today’s residents. Livingston is an epicenter of culture and outdoor exploration and our strongest cross-cultural touchstone is our location on the banks of the Yellowstone River. Livingston has a strong slate of events, both long-established and newer, that attract so many visitors, that the town’s population is nearly doubled during certain events. Our famed three-day 4th of July PRCA Rodeo, parade and fireworks are both legendary and nostalgic, the Hoot live music on Main Street festival features world-class musicians, summer Art Walks bring folks from miles around to our many galleries and our weekly summer Farmers Market and Livingston Film Festival are appealing to locals and visitors alike. This past October, Livingston competed against thousands of other communities across the nation to win a spot as a top ten town contender, the first time a Montana town has done so, to be featured in Season Five of Deluxe Corporation’s Small Business Revolution (SBR) television show; in early 2020, Livingston was selected as one of the top five towns in the nation. Although not ultimately the number one selection (based on popular vote against four other larger communities across the US), Livingston residents, fans and small businesses worked together in an unprecedented effort that has strengthened our cooperation and collaboration as a community.

The Livingston area has been a popular destination for a wide range of visitors for over a century. Due to our preserved downtown and magnificent natural surroundings, Livingston is a popular movie location; Rancho Deluxe, A River Runs Through It, The Horse Whisperer, and Walking Out, among them. When renowned actors, writers, and artists work and play in Livingston, they tend to put down roots and actors Peter Fonda, Margot Kidder, Whoopi Goldberg, Jeff Bridges, Michael Keaton and Saturday Night Live alumnus Rich Hall, musicians Ron Strykert and John Mayer and novelists Walter Kirn, Thomas McGuane and Jim Harrison have all called Livingston home. What makes Livingston uniquely appealing to so many is its abundance of gorgeous scenery, rich arts culture, vibrant nightlife, diverse dining experiences, exceptional theater productions, laid back lifestyle and history replete with colorful characters. Downtown Livingston shopping is a delight with owner-operated small businesses in historic spaces and include over a dozen art galleries, vintage and antique stores, Western and contemporary fashion, bookstores, home goods, gift shops, boutiques with hand-crafted goods, day spas and there’s a place on every block to grab a delicious bite to eat.
Livingston is the county seat of Park County and is situated in the middle of four stunning mountain ranges (Absaroka Beartooth Mountains, Crazy Mountains, Bangtail Mountains and the Bridger Mountains), nestled along Yellowstone River - the longest, free-flowing river in the lower 48 states, offers an incredible array of outdoor recreation opportunities and has preserved one of Montana's most eclectic and historic downtowns. Over 4 million visitors travel each year to our nation’s first national park - Yellowstone National Park (YNP) - and Park County includes two of the five entrances. Livingston is the original and only year-round entrance into the Park, making our gateway appealing in all seasons. While Livingston has the small Mission Field Airport to service smaller planes and personal jets, it is just situated just 40 minutes from Montana’s largest international airport – Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport.

To know Livingston is to love and its many unique charms could – and have – filled volumes. A few of our unmatched strengths include:

- We are the original and only year-round entrance to one of the top five visited, and our nation’s first national park - Yellowstone National Park.
- We are situated in one of the most sought-after areas in Montana for great outdoors experiences. We are the jumping off point for unbeatable natural resources and year round recreation activities in every direction, including day and back country hiking, biking, fly fishing, swimming and hot springs soaks, hunting, stand up paddle boarding, kayaking, whitewater rafting, floating, trail running, cross country and back country skiing, downhill skiing, snowshoeing, camping, snowmobiling, rock climbing, horseback riding, agate and rock hunting, bird and wildlife watching and berry and mushroom picking.
- We have the second proximity (based on "Montana standards of proximity") - one within 45 minutes and three resorts within two hours. Within a half hour to two hours via gorgeous drives to eight different state parks abundant with trails, activities, interpretive programs and water-based activities and within 5 minutes to one hour of 14 FWP fishing access sites. We’re in the heart of world-renowned wildlife migration patterns and blue-ribbon fishing.
- We are one half hour away from Montana’s public land-grant research universities – Go Bobcats! It is the state's largest university and offers baccalaureate degrees in 51 fields, master’s and doctoral degrees in 18 fields through its nine colleges. Livingston is the third largest home for many University of Montana students who have an average commute of a variety of short and long-term rental spaces available for a wide range of artistic endeavors and community events and houses a popular café. The center is home to the Dulcie Theatre, a 165-seat auditorium; a ballroom with attached catering space; the Mike and Eve Art Rehearsal Hall and the Movement Room, all available for public use.
- We are part of the Livingston Business Improvement District (LBID) - the entity that enhances the vitality of downtown Livingston by facilitating commerce, enhancing streetscapes, coordinating maintenance and improving security and safety. The LBID is responsible for lush hanging flower baskets (summer), dozens of banner promotions (year-round), graffiti removal and garbage removal; supports local events, and, champions downtown businesses and projects. LBID was the driving force in submitting an application to the Deluxe Corporation Small Business Revolution and guided the show's producers in downtown tours when they visited the area in December 2019.
- We are one of the original destination cities in the Montana Link of the National Park-to-Park Highway of the original Y/G B-Line (route from Yellowstone to Glacier).
- We are part of the Livingston Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) which was recently formed to generate room nights for lodging facilities in the City of Livingston and around Livingston (as well as the entire state of Montana), and it hasn’t slowed down since.
- We are home to the Crow Tribe Agency – Fort Parker. The U.S. government established Fort Parker in 1869 to provide the annuity goods — flour, sugar, coffee, etc. — promised to the tribe in the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 in exchange for the tribe relinquishing claim to lands outside the boundaries of the reservation defined in the treaty.

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We are home to Livingston HealthCare – recently relocated and reconstructed in 2015, a not-for-profit 25-bed critical access hospital and a multispecialty physician practice and also offering rehabilitation services and home-based services (named one of Best Rural Hospitals in U.S. for fourth consecutive year in 2019) and a fantastic field to table restaurant and adjacent hiking paths. The hospital also displays dozens of local artists' works including 11 large Russell Chatham paintings in public access areas.

We are situated within one-half hour to three hours of larger cities including Bozeman, Billings, Great Falls and Missoula. We are a little over an hour and a half from the stunning Tippet Rise Art Center, winner of a Leading Cultural Destination Award among their accolades.

We are home to a long stretch of the most famous blue-ribbon trout stream in America – the Yellowstone River. Because of its ideal location and miles of Yellowstone River and many tributaries, Livingston has become a fly fishing mecca. This best kept secret was exposed when the 1992 Robert Redford movie “A River Runs Through It” triggered a fly fishing frenzy across the nation. Several major scenes in the movie were filmed in Livingston and in nearby Paradise Valley. As the popularity of fly fishing grew, so did fly fishing tourism in and around Livingston (as well as the entire state of Montana), and it hasn’t slowed down since.

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We are part of an energized community and committed City and County commissioners and stakeholder groups work together and continue to develop creative ways to collaborate and coordinate.

We are home to the Livingston Food Resource Center which expanded in 2015 with a commercial kitchen, community meeting space and recently opened a bakery up the block that supplies bread to all food pantries in Montana using Montana-sourced organic whole grains. The Center also provides culinary training programs, commercial prep space for food entrepreneurs and meals for school kids, families and seniors in need, in addition to access to weekly food supplies.

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likely reasons Livingston has stayed small and not as developed as neighboring Bozeman, retaining our small-town charm that appeals to so many.

- The perception that Livingston is a gateway into Yellowstone National Park and not a destination to spend more time in before or after visiting the Park.
- COVID19 related issues (and future issues) that will reduce visitation to the area, may lead to some small business closures and fewer funds in local and state government infrastructure reserves.
- Largely seasonal visitation patterns with most tourist traffic occurring in July and August, and the shoulder seasons of May and June and September. Businesses must budget strategically for lean months.
- National and world events including terrorism, infectious diseases, climate change (affecting water temps on our much loved and over-fished Yellowstone River) and natural disasters (floods and wildfires) that impact tourism.
- Increasing use of local housing as short term rentals in Park County has made affordable housing a challenge for those working in the service and tourism industries. It also distorts the occupancy and average daily lodging rates at traditional lodging properties.
- Managing greater numbers of visitors and traffic flow negatively impacts County and City infrastructure. In 2019, another local option tax was introduced to the Montana Legislature, which would have allowed citizens to decide whether to impose a sales tax in Park County in order to pay for specific projects. The legislation would have given power to local voters, stressing it could be a way to lower local property taxes and raise more money from tourists who use local infrastructure but do not financially support it.
- There is no convention center in Livingston, or in Park County, to bring visitors to the area, create and sustain jobs, and generate direct and indirect spending and increase tax revenue.
- Lack of public transportation to and through YNP and increased tourist traffic to and through the Park.

With 58% of the land base in our County shared with Yellowstone National Park, Custer Gallatin National Forest, the Absaroka Beartooth Wilderness and other state land management agencies, Livingston and the surrounding areas offer more spectacular and pristine environments and landscape than anywhere else in the State of Montana. As the original and only year-round entrance into the nation’s first national park – which is also consistently ranked in the top 5 most popular national parks – and situated 10 minutes to 45 minutes away from eight state parks, fourteen fishing access sites and several dozen trailheads, Livingston offers visitors many different ways to experience our unspoiled nature. As a gateway community, Livingston provides visitors with an appealing and unique mix of gift shops, dining experiences, coffee shops and bakeries, art galleries, museums, live theatre performances, music venues, parks and trails and friendly residents. Livingston has eight motels (and a new Fairfield Inn set to open in July 2020) that host visitors who enjoy Livingston’s attractions and ease as a jumping off point to countless natural features. Park County is a wonderland of Montana moments for diverse visitors; world-class fly fishing, destination fine dining, whitewater rafting, dog sledding, challenging peak summits, relaxing hot springs, horseback trail rides, backcountry skiing, wildlife photo safaris, bonfire story time, big game hunting, mountain bike trail rides, riverside picnics, dancing to live music outdoors, enjoying local arts and often rubbing elbows with celebrities and local characters.

Describe your destination.

The overall goal of this first year as the newly designated CVB is to hone marketing plan goals that address the three phases of the travel decision process and complements what other CVBs and Tourism Regions have successfully utilized in targeting Montana visitors.

Inspiration: By employing authentic, enthusiastic and effective multi-media communication and outreach, the Livingston CVB will leverage Montana branding guidelines with a selection of inspiring imagery (Livingston is home to a wealth of fabulous photographers and videographers) and creative content in order to increase the desire to visit Livingston. The Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development (MTOTB) focuses a great deal of marketing efforts on Yellowstone National Park and mountain adventures; Livingston is situated in the heart of these amenities and is a natural jumping off point to begin explorations into those areas. Existing MTOTB branding imagery can be leveraged with Livingston’s unmatched amenities; targeted messages can help inspire exploration of the area. We will develop our new CVB website (tentatively reserved as www.explorelivingstonmt.com as we finalize our messaging, tagline and branding) which will focus on where to stay, dine, shop and explore. From the website, a mobile app will be developed so that the content we have on our website can be in a user-friendly mobile app format. Integrated social media posts and posts will be developed and disseminated and print advertising will be designed and distributed to local hotels, businesses and Yellowstone Country CVB partners. We’d also like to develop “selfie-station” geotagging maps where visitors can take selfies in front of iconic Livingston sites for organic peer-to-peer outreach and marketing. This could be a ‘treasure hunt’ feature with opportunity to win local prizes or gift certificates.

Orientation: Our intent this first year as the new CVB is to focus on providing efforts of a state of the art and up-to-date website and mobile app; new and expanded social media venues; and, print ads and materials. Marketing materials will include information about lodging; food/restaurants; business services; tourist destinations; area events; fishing reports; local culture, history and art; a community calendar; other areas to explore in Park County and in Yellowstone Country; area trailheads; maps and more. Because visitors to Montana have so many destinations to choose from when arriving from any direction of the state, we would like to work with Yellowstone Country and MOTB tools to help visitors plan multiple day vacations within our great state, including regional road trips with insider tips on highlights and hidden gems.

Facilitation: Through strategic placement and leveraging of printed materials, easy access to downloadable marketing materials via our mobile application and websites and continued positive networking and social media, the Livingston CVB will attract intentional and unintentional visitors with many opportunities to experience places to stay, eat, shop and explore. Other marketing plans will include presenting visitors with all the information one would need to have an exceptional experience in the Livingston area and to help them think about neighboring areas in Yellowstone Country that would further enhance their stay. The CVB with TBD and LBID member assistance is in the process of securing a downtown and historic space to provide a quaint and inviting visitor center that we hope to have staffed with trained and knowledgeable volunteers, ideally partnering with recreation specialists for more in-depth information, and direct access to outdoor equipment and services, like fishing and hiking guides.

Optional: Include attachments here

a. Define your target markets (demographic, geographic and psychographic).

Demographic: Livingston provides a plethora of outdoor exploration activities mixed with historic downtown shopping, cultural and dining experiences that appeal to a very wide demographic. Recently featured in the New York Times Style Magazine, author Natalie Storey penned “With Yellowstone National Park just an hour’s drive away, Livingston is a perfect base camp for hikers, and the town’s fishing guides make it their business to know every curve of the Yellowstone River. But the park’s mountains, streams and forests also play an integral role in the wild, eclectic art found in the community’s myriad galleries and boutiques. Considering Livingston’s lively restaurants, Old West architecture and three charming, well-stocked bookstores, visitors could be forgiven for opting to stay firmly within the town limits.”

Traditional tourism marketing in the area has focused on one-time visitors, often (1) families, on their way to Yellowstone. While that will continue to be a key group to target, with this new CVB iteration we’d like to expand that reach to bring more regional and repeat visitors. Livingston has been a (2) fly-fishing mecca for nearly a century and while it remains a multi-million-dollar industry and employs many in the region, the Yellowstone is becoming overfished and housing developments are further putting pressure on the river’s health. Fly fishing fans often return annually and we’ll continue to welcome them but would like to expand our (3) river sports (kayaking, stand up paddle boarding, floating, white water rafting) and outdoor enthusiast (hikers, campers, climbers, bikers) markets; highlighting the lesser known trails, areas and corners of the County where people can enjoy a more solitary connection with nature. (4) Ecotourism is a growing niche and as many businesses in our area are aware of their carbon footprint and environmental impact, we can highlight those options, including health food, vegetarian, and vegan options, to travelers who care deeply about the issues. We want to increase the outreach to (5) winter sports enthusiasts who enjoy cross country, backcountry and nearby downhill skiing, snow shoeing, sled dog rides, hot springs and day trips to Yellowstone as well as cozy winter dining experiences. Those who enjoy the (6) arts; from theatre, to music, to literature, to fine art are also a demographic that can be targeted more with literary tourism, art access and events, theatre and dining packages and music or live theatre getaways. (7) Hunting and related sportsmen are another distinct demographic that will require targeted outreach and amenities. (8) Destination weddings are an increasing demographic and Park County has an abundance of beautiful locations for weddings and caterers, florists and photographers able to make the occasion exceptional. While Livingston can be an excellent budget friendly choice, we also have amenities that appeal to those with (9) higher-end budgets and enjoy luxury spa experiences, gourmet picnics and wines, fine dining, shopping for bespoke fashion, original art and rare antiquities or books. Finally, the (10) Western mystique of dude ranch experiences to create lasting memories for the whole family is another demographic that
can be successfully targeted and matched with area resources. There is some overlap with the above demographics but younger, hip, professionals looking for a weekend getaway are drawn to Livingston's outdoor recreation, microbreweries, on-trend restaurants, record store, tattoo parlors, live music and stylish boutiques.

Geographic: Many people living in Montana and the greater Yellowstone area love the laid-back, quiet and quirky aspects that the region has long embodied. But as Montana communities become busier, more populated or are no longer thriving, many long for an authentic experience where they will still be blown away by nature but have easy access to modern and erudite amenities. Livingston is that rare place. Repeat and regional visitors are more likely to visit year-round, return to favorite shops, eateries and hotels and form connections and relationships in the area, creating a more stable income stream for Livingston and Park County.

A similar but wider geographic target is surrounding states; especially those with urban centers, that are within driving distance. As the world recovers from the coronavirus epidemic there will be a greater desire to avoid airports, crowded urban areas and attractions, and more desire to take lower-cost regional vacations where social distancing is built into the environment, as it is in our area.

Winter sports enthusiasts in areas where the snowfall has diminished are a potentially rich vein to tap, following more research on where these hot spots are. As social media and online access has automatically made much marketing national and international, we can target some of our outreach budget to that world-wide demographic in the future as we track travel trends in the coming year. This year, we would like to research national print media and markets for more micro-targeting of the above demographic niches.

Psychographic: The targeted demographics and geographic areas discussed above will be segmented with the intention to appeal to, and manage expectations and satisfaction with, that demographic's experience exploring Livingston. In some cases that segmentation will be messaging and language, others with resources and assets listed and others through the specific medium and intended audience. We envision our website will include category portals tailored to specific demographics and/or the types of vacations/visits people are seeking. Internally, we will utilize individual 'personas' to represent each demographic to help aim our messaging to each segment.

Overall, however, our perspective will be that we want visitors to feel welcome, at home, relaxed, well cared for and have such a great time that they want to return. We will also included the perspective that this is our home and we have great respect for wilderness, wild animals, rural values, a clean environment and civil behavior and expect visitors to share and respect those values.

b. What are your emerging markets?

Emerging markets we feel comfortable pursuing include regional weekend and staycation visitors, especially in the first year during the coronavirus pandemic. These markets might include, but are not limited to:

- Destination weddings, coordinating with local venues and vendors.
- Water sports fans in addition to fishing - stand up paddle boarders, kayakers, floaters and white-water rafters.
- Year-round outdoor enthusiasts (cross country, back country and downhill skiers, snowshoers, Yellowstone winter visitors, hikers, campers, climbers, bikers) with access to rental equipment and locals' adventure recommendations.
- Foodie and farm-to-table visitors – to educate and excite visitors about our restaurants, boutique health markets, farmer’s markets and farm-to-table programs (school, hospital, food pantry, local ranchers, aquaponic and greenhouse producers).
- Eco-tourists focused on footprint reduction (including local public transport and bike rentals) and healthy food choices (some overlap with food conscious marketing).
- Arts packages pairing theatre, film festivals, music festivals, art walks, readings with restaurant and hotel stays.
- A subset of the arts marketing is literary tourism with book store visits, readings, a tour and information about Livingston's noted writers, with overlapping movie and music ties.
- Those seeking luxury amenities, including spa experiences, gourmet picnics and wines, fine dining, shopping for bespoke fashion, original art and rare antiques or books.

Optional: Include attachments here.

c. What research supports your target marketing?

Research on each of the existing and emerging markets for Livingston and the Park County area has been utilized from the following sources:

- Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development
- Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research – Statewide Nonresident Travel Study
- Key Trends; Dependencies, Strengths, and Vulnerabilities in Park County, Montana, and its Area Economy – University of Montana – Dr. Larry Swanson, PhD
- Livingston Business Improvement District – www.downtownlivingston.org
- “A Guide to Livingston, Montana, the Literary Town on the Yellowstone River” – NY Times 2019
- Livingston Area Chamber of Commerce - https://livingston-chamber.com/
- “The Mountain Town That’s Waiting to Be Discovered” – Airbnb 2016
- ISSUU
- Trip Advisor

1) Consistent, professional marketing, targeting a wide demographic.

2) An increase in repeat and regional visitors.

3) Strategic, guided growth of sustainable tourism to markets and niches that increase local economic stability while minimizing environmental and cultural impact on local resources and residents.

a. In what types of co-ops with MTOT would you like to participate?

It will be important to be involved with a fall and/or winter advertising/marketing promotion opportunity. While Livingston doesn’t have a ski resort in the community or county, we are located just 40 minutes from Bridger Bowl, 1.5 hours from Showdown Ski Resort and two hours from Red Lodge Mountain Resort or Big Sky Resort. Livingston also offers multiple trailheads and...
forest service roads that are heavily utilized by a growing number of cross country and back country skiers. As the only winter gateway to Yellowstone National Park, we’d like to partner on some promotions. Additional opportunities may include co-op outreach to culinary and arts tourism niches as appropriate and Yellowstone National Park marketing to national and international markets.

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b. In what other types of co-ops would you like to participate? (Regions/CVBs, etc.)

When the Livingston Area Chamber of Commerce was the past designated CVB for Livingston, they participated in a variety of joint ventures/cooperative projects that included press trips, media events, trade shows such as IMEX and marketing campaigns. We look forward to continued partnerships and will actively seek further appropriate opportunities.

Nearby Bozeman is a bustling hub with a strong tourism and downtown partnership alliances that we are eager to work with. Many in Bozeman laud Livingston as the place they like to get away to, and we appeal to similar markets of outdoor enthusiasts, Yellowstone National Park travelers, skiers, foodies and lovers of the arts so can coordinate plans and engage in mutual recommendations.

Other co-op opportunities that would be important to pursue would include the neighboring communities of Park County, those that might not necessarily have the hotel room capacity to serve all of our visitors, but offer additional opportunities and unique characteristics that summon people to stay in Livingston as their home base and venture to the nearby communities during the day.

Northern Park County communities of Wilsall and Clyde Park are nestled in the Shields River Valley which is part of the original “YG - Bee Line” Route to Glacier National Park from YNP. Clyde Park is the only other incorporated community in Park County and Wilsall is the northernmost community in the County, located approximately 30 miles from Livingston. The Crazy Mountains and the Bridger Range surrounding these two ranching communities provide unbeatable views and multiple outdoor recreation amenities, popular for fishing, hiking, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. They also offer rustic dining and bar experiences to further flavor the day trip.

From Livingston, most travelers head south toward the north entrance of Yellowstone National Park. Traveling alongside the Yellowstone River down US Highway 89, the valley opens into miles of mountain views and spectacular western ranches. The small and friendly community of Emigrant is named for the nearby mountain, Emigrant Peak, which rises to an altitude of 10,960 feet. The area offers plenty of fishing opportunities as well as camping and floating. Side trips from this part of the County include visits to the Custer Gallatin National Forest, Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, the small community of Pray, and the popular resorts Chico Hot Springs and Sage Lodge. To the west are drainages popular for multitudes of outdoor activities including the Tom Miner Basin, Big Creek and Trail Creek.

Continuing south through the famous Yankee Jim Canyon, the second largest community in Park County is the quaint and colorful Gardiner. The town sits on the north edge of YNP, making it the only year-round entrance into Yellowstone. Gardiner’s small-town Montana charm, natural splendor and abundant wildlife truly make it a unique “home on the range” for nearly 900 residents. In 2017, the town received a much-needed $22 million facelift, which beautified the town with historic-looking street lamps, trees lining Park Street, new parking areas and necessary infrastructure improvements.

From Gardiner, Park County’s smallest towns include Cooke City and Silver Gate, accessed via US Hwy 212, leading to the southern-most part of Park County. Silver Gate is located on the Montana/Wyoming border at the northeast entrance into Yellowstone National Park. Cooke City is one of the entrances into YNP and is popular for the world-famous Absaroka-Beartooth Highway (ABH) that connects Cooke City with Red Lodge. The alpine and structural wonder of the Beartooth Highway, an “All-American Road” generally opens in late May. Visitors come from around the world to visit the two communities before and/or after they experience the ABH summer snowfields, high-mountain vistas and legendary curves. While postponed until 2021, Cooke City will host the International Hemingway Conference, as Ernest Hemingway spent many summers in the area (and much of his family settled in the region).

Another popular destination easily reached from Livingston is the award-winning Tippet Rise arts center outside of Fishtail with few lodging options but offering tours (bus or bike) of their many miles of outdoor sculptures and breathtaking views of the Beartooth Mountains and plains.

c. What types of co-ops have you done in the past? Were they successful - why or why not?

The history of past joint ventures as Livingston CVB is vague and not readily available from Livingston Area Chamber of Commerce who, through April 2020, had been the designated CVB; the most recent marketing plan presented by the Chamber indicated a completed joint venture with Yellowstone Country for spring and summer seasons with minimal results. No reason for the lack of results was indicated.

As the newly designated CVB for Livingston, LBID has historically collaborated with diverse entities and groups including collaboration with Livingston HealthCare, Yellowstone Bus Tours, Windrider Transit and Give A Hoot through Park County Community Foundation for banner production and hanging on our historic lamp posts in the LBID downtown area. The LBID supports and promotes local events with nonprofit and business groups including the Hoot Music Festival, Tap Into Montana Brew Fest, Farmer’s Markets, and the Night Owl Run. While vying to be featured on the Small Business Revolution television show recently, we worked with neighboring community entities to rally voters around the country including the neighboring Sweet Grass Chamber of Commerce, Montana Chamber of Commerce, Park County Community Foundation, Governor's Office of Economic Development, Montana Ambassadors, Prospera Business Network, Montana State University Extension Office, Montana Film Office, City and County Commissioners, Montana House of Representative Laurie Bishop, representatives of Governor Bullock and Jon Tester, as well as local business leaders, television and newspaper reporters, local filmmakers, writers, photographers, and cultural influencers with local ties like Jeff Bridges. Our work during this time with local businesses outside of the downtown Business Improvement District was strong and many indicated a desire to work more closely with LBID in the future – even requesting to expand LBID boundaries so that more businesses could be included in our group.

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### Marketing Segment, Method & Budget

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We have no past
As the new CVB, we will create new Explore Livingston Facebook, Instagram and Youtube channels, build brand awareness through consistent content of value to visitors. We will share content from local photographers, visitors, and hospitality businesses to increase our reach while minimizing expenses. Building hashtag awareness for #ExploreLivingston will help social media users recognize and tag us in relevant content. Content will include events, safety information, inspirational images, and seasonal features to build cohesive and responsive social media platforms visitors can rely on for information and inspiration to visit Livingston.

Livingston CVB social media statistics to use as a basis as this is our first year, however, we are able to draw information from multiple area resources including: 5 Ways Social Media has Transformed Tourism Marketing (Entrepreneur 2017); Social Media and Tourism Marketing: Complete Guide (Digital Nuisance Blog 2020); The Impact of Social Media on the Tourism Industry (Hospitality Net 2015); and, Online Viral Marketing in Tourism Industry - Social Media Marketing (Tourism Review News 2020). During LBID’s Small Business Revolution campaign this winter, our statistics demonstrated an ability to reach 1,000 people for every $10 we spent on boosted Facebook posts, we quadrupled our followers in two months, and our post reach was multiplied ten times with ‘call to action’ posts.

Success will be measured by engagement with our new social media platforms, number of followers and reach as well as number of posts and videos on a new YouTube channel. Our goal in this first year for social media followers in FY2021 is 1,000 for Facebook and 1,500 for Instagram followers.

Social media is now considered the most significant part of any marketing mix and is also one of the most cost-effective ways to engage our followers and access their circles of contacts. It also has built-in metrics to measure the effectiveness of various campaigns, posts, and content as well as targeted demographics for paid content. Ongoing growth in followers will be a measurable indicator that our strategy is effective and our content valuable to target markets.

Radio advertisers are once again dedicating increasing budgets to marketing over the radio airwaves. Even in the digital age, radio advertising is still seen as a highly effective and viable marketing medium. Radio will allow our message to be delivered to a targeted and captive audience at a cost that is much lower than most advertising mediums. This marketing method is one of the few advertising mediums that includes a built-in loyal audience. Most radio listeners have one or two favorite radio stations they tune in to regularly. Heavy radio users work listening into their daily habits and have specific times they tune in. Our radio advertisements will be tailored to specific times of day and radio programs to ensure we target our desired audience at the exact right time and are associated with content they prefer. There are a number of original content regional radio programs that we can advertise during to further hone our targeted reach.

With the advancement in technology, radio advertisements are becoming better when it comes to quality. Despite the competition from other forms of advertisement, Nielsen audio reports 243 million people listen to the radio, and have the potential to listen to advertisements. Every day, around 59% of the total American Population is listening to a radio program. 25% of those who are listening to radio advertisements are buying the product advertised after hearing it from the radio. Radio is one of the most accessible forms of media in the world today, despite the prevalence of the internet and television.

Radio advertisements can be more memorable compared to written and visual ads. According to researchers, sound can be stored effectively inside memory for longer than visuals. This is the reason why some companies are doing their best to create a memorable jingle that will stay in the minds of those who will listen to it. Also, there are positive associations with advertising that is in conjunction with preferred radio shows and times.

With this method being successful, we created brand new Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube channels for Explore Livingston with a baseline of zero followers to: Facebook (538 followers, 336 posts, 63,930 organic reach, 56,582 paid reach); Instagram (1,256 followers, 296 posts, 119,567 organic reach); YouTube (5 custom videos, 254 views, video weblinks on website.) We fell short of our goal of 1,000 Facebook followers and 1,500 Instagram followers by the end of FY21. We will continue to use these methods with more paid campaigns to build followers and promote our brand awareness and engagement to our website.

This method was successful. Due to the pandemic, we focused on the regional drive market with Yellowstone Public Radio which has a statewide reach, and adjusted our underwriting message seasonally, including Montana Aware messaging. We ran 3 ads per week during general programming and 2 ads per week underwriting “66 Counties,” a program highlighting Montana counties. As the pandemic impact on travel patterns changes, we intend to expand from the drive market to the national market and are unlikely to use this method of regional radio advertising except to market destination events bringing regional visitors to stay in Livingston.

This method was successful. We created brand new Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube channels, and generated organic reach of 254,856; Facebook (1,383 followers, 336 posts, 203,580 organic reach); Instagram (1,256 followers, 296 posts, 119,567 organic reach); YouTube (5 custom videos, 254 views, video weblinks on website.) We felt short of our goal of 1,000 Facebook followers and 1,500 Instagram followers by the end of FY21. We will continue to use these methods with more paid campaigns to build followers and promote our brand awareness and engagement to our website.

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recreation, activities, and our rich arts and culture offerings.

Print advertising will be an important part of our marketing mix. A report by Deluxe Corporation in 2018 related the benefits of print marketing and found that businesses in the United States spent $13.5 billion on social media advertising in 2017, and social media spending is expected to hit $17 billion by 2019. However, in a survey, 76 percent of small businesses say that their ideal marketing plans include online and print marketing.

Advertising in popular regional and state-wise publications we will be able to share the story of Livingston and its many amenities. Because we were just designated the CVB in April 2020 and because of COVID-19 issues, we pivoted our marketing strategy from the traditional focus of promoting tourism from across the nation/international market to providing pertinent information about pandemic impacts on travelers and traveling. Our goal for all marketing segments is to help the State of Montana and our local communities stay safe. With this in mind, we will be focusing print advertising methods with themes that encourage those in the regional drive market to plan visits to Livingston to enjoy our many outdoor recreational amenities and small-town cultural assets.

Six Reasons Why Print Marketing is Thriving (Target Marketing 2019): What Are the Advantages of Print Media Over Electronic Media? (Macromark 2019) and, Print is not Dead: How the Tourism Industry can Benefit from Print Ads (V) Free Press 2019). Additionally, the publications we have been researching for print ads reach well over 20,000 readers per publication.

Print advertising is difficult to measure, however our print advertising campaign success can be measured by placing three and measuring the circulation.

Placing ads in publications such as specialty magazines can effectively reach niche audiences that may be more difficult to target online, especially older populations.

This method was successful. In this first year as the CVB our print ad goals were to build brand quality and consistency. We created new branding logos and messaging for use across platforms. Because of the pandemic we focused on the drive market from established gateway and statewide publications including Destination Yellowstone, (45,000 printed planners, over 80,000 social media followers, over 200,000 web visitors annually) Destination Big Sky (10,000 print copies), Art Council of Big Sky Program ad included at no additional cost (8,000 copies) and Distinctly Montana (40,000 issues, 750,000 web visitors/month, 234,000 Facebook followers, 37,000 Instagram followers, 600, 000 annual readers, 7 million month reach.) We will continue with this methodology but expand our reach from drive market to national and international markets with publications targeted to travelers.

We intend to take advantage of opportunities provided by Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development, the Yellowstone Country Region, area communities and other regions that complement our marketing methods, content and strategies as we move forward in our first year as the designated CVB.

The current restrictions on travel have not quenched people’s desire to explore the world. People will continue to want experiences locally and globally that satisfy their need to explore new vistas, visit historic landmarks and experience other cultures. This was the case after the SARS epidemic, when travel surged in 2004. We

Measures of success will be dependent on the marketing method selected with joint venture partner(s) which we hope will be determined in the first quarter of FY2021.

Leveraging partnerships and collaborations provides much greater return on investment and many regions and CVBs that are well established may be great resources for joint ventures. This segment is a placeholder in case there is a project presented to us that would be important to participate in. Due to COVID 19 and the unforeseen outcomes of the pandemic, no marketing opportunities arose that met our immediate safety and education marketing needs, so no funds were spent on this method in FY 21. We expect to use this method and rely on its previous positive outcomes and have included it in our FY22 budget.

$1,250.00

$2,500.00
believe in the resilience of this industry and we know the future will be brighter. Messaging to our in-state travelers with an emphasis on our pristine outdoors, clean air, affordability and, of course, our outstanding state and national parks will be easy selling points.

A new website domain name - explorelivingstonmt.com - has been reserved and this funding will be used to develop this new website. In FY 20/21 we will focus on showcasing local attractions, interactive links to learn more and communicate directly with those providing services in our region, an events calendar, inspiring videos and photographs, an opt-in contact form to begin collecting email addresses for a new enewsletter.

As mentioned in the social media segment, with our shift in marketing focus in mind due to COVID related issues, we will continue to keep our website and social media outreach up to date with the latest travel information as well as details on openings, closures, state mandates, as well as wildfire information, road closures, weather conditions, etc.

The Tourism Advisory Council is responsible for approval of CVB marketing plans and funding and attendance is required. The meetings are also important to keep informed of overall marketing goals as a state. The Governor’s Conference is additional tool for valuable ideas and insight to continuously improve our marketing efforts.

The Tourism Advisory Council meetings and Governor’s Conference

Social Media and SEO: Do Social Shares Really matter for Ranking (Optimost 2019); Digital Marketing in Travel and Tourism Industry (Wixad 2018) and, Travel & Tourism Marketing in the Midst of COVID-19 (CrowdRiff 2020).

Success will be measured for the website by unique visitor sessions, page views and an engaging, practical and useful website.

The new website already underway will be a user-friendly website with regularly updated information that is usually inspiring, content-rich with engaging photos and videos and blogs. We will integrate social media, including YouTube, Facebook and Instagram.

This method was successful. We created an initial webpage on our first week as the CVB and then expanded and redesigned it in the fiscal year. (By the end of FY21, it had 1,853 unique visitors, 2,253 sessions, 4,501 page views.) We purchased drone video of Paradise Valley for the new homepage as the first impression for visitors. We continue to invest resources into updating events, weekly changing restaurant hours, travel inspiration, trails, and fire safety updates. We have distributed 4,000 business cards with a QR code to the website to hospitality businesses to give to visitors to access updated information on restaurant hours, events, etc. to increase website traffic. We only have 42 subscribers so far and plan to build on this to have viable eblast reach in the will need to build that list to have a viable email newsletter in the future. Visit https://www.explorelivingstonmt.com/

We will measure success by creating new relationships with travel

Marketing Support

The new CVB website www.explorelivingstonmt.com will include new messaging, tagline, and branding, and focus on where to stay, dine, shop, and explore in Livingston.

$3,000.00

While we were successful in virtually attending all TAC meetings, and the Governor’s Conference was canceled/delayed. We will continue to utilize this method in the future to take advantage of the conferences’ networking opportunities and to fulfill our requirements as a CVB.

$1,250.00

This method was successful and met our overall objective of staying within the allowable 20% for the administration budget. We will continue to use the marketing method to help maintain the operations of the Livingston CVB. Administration included rent, insurance, phone, Internet, postage, bank fees, accounting, and Executive Director time. We successfully completed our first audit.

$3,500.00

Marketing Support

Budget allocation for hotels, meals and mileage to FY 21 Tourism Advisory Council meetings and Governor’s Conference

Measures of success will be attendance at quarterly TAC meetings and the annual Governor’s Conference. Learning about programs, best practices from peers, and updates relevant to marketing Montana travel will also contribute to success.

Travel dollars in this category may be reduced as distances from Livingston to some conferences are close enough to travel to the host city and back in the same day, eliminating the need for hotel nights - although those nights would help the overall cause of CVBs and Regions and increase peer interaction. Measurement of success is attending all TAC and Governor’s Conference meetings.

$1,250.00
As we contemplated our first year as the CVB we ambitiously planned to develop a series of online self-guided walking tours in response to demand. However, this method pivoted from the intention to create online walking tours and market them through social media to address the more pressing need for pandemic safety and traveler education.

We will work with travel bloggers, filmmakers, and influencers to create social media content, custom videos, and build our photo library to increase our social media reach and effectively disseminate information about pandemic impacts to travelers to our area.

A survey fielded among U.S. adults found that 84 percent of respondents said they consulted travel influencers for recommendation on trips in some level out of which 18 percent said they did so often. (Statistica.com) 38% of all adults who expect to travel this summer said they’ll use social media to help plan their trips, including 54% of millennials. 49% of Gen Z adults and 50% of millennials follow at least one travel influencer on social media. (Influencers are the New Travel Agents for Millennials, Generation Z - Morning Consult.)

We will measure the number of videos created, blogs and social media posts.

$2,000.00

$17,500.00

Marketing Method Evaluation Attachments

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<th>Attachment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attachment 1</td>
<td>Livingston CVB FY21 Budget to Actual.pdf</td>
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<td>Livingston CVB FY21 Funds Expended Pie Chart.pdf</td>
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Marketing Method Budget

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This method was successful. Three custom Visit Livingston videos with pandemic-relevant information were created by travel bloggers and influencers with ties to the area (Traveling Mel, Wade Holland Media Dadventures, and Yellowstone Productions) and shared on our social media channels, website, and YouTube channel and on their platforms. Traveling Mel 38k+ Instagram followers, Montana native Wade Holland Media 190k+ followers, Yellowstone Productions 1.5k+ Instagram followers. Traveling Mel did an extensive blog about visiting Livingston. We worked with RoadWander Blog on a series of social media posts (27 Facebook, 24 Instagram, 46 stories on both platforms) about visiting Livingston. These relationships also yielded much-needed access to photos to build our starting-from-zero photo library. Videos (also includes FY 21/22 video projects not included in FY 20/21 budget) on https://www.explorelivingstonmt.com/inspiration
### Miscellaneous Attachments

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### Reg/CVB Required Documents

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