



## Grant Details

### 95522 - FY21 Region/CVB Marketing Plan

#### 101309 - FY21 Miles City CVB Marketing Plan

#### DOC Office of Tourism

**Grant Title:** FY21 Miles City CVB Marketing Plan  
**Grant Number:** 21-51-024  
**Grant Status:** Underway  
**Comments:**  
**Applicant Organization:** Miles City Area Chamber of Commerce  
**Grantee Contact:** John Laney  
**Award Year:** 2020  
**Program Area:** DOC Office of Tourism  
**Amounts:**  
**Contract Dates:** Contract Sent                      Contract Received                      Contract Executed  
**Project Dates:** 06/15/2020                      07/01/2020                      06/30/2021  
                                  Proposal Date                      Project Start                      Project End  
**Grant Administrator:** Barb Sanem  
**Contract Number** 21-51-024  
**Award Year** 2020

#### Contract Dates

Contract Sent    Contract Received    Contract Executed    Contract Legal

**Project Dates** 07/01/2020  
 06/30/2021

Project Start    Project End

#### Comments

#### Amendment Comments

## Community & Brand Support

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

The Miles City CVB includes Miles City and an area we refer to as "our trade area". This trade area extends outward in all directions for a distance of at least 50 miles. Miles City is at the crossroads of the southeastern Montana highway system. Our position as described in the Eastern Montana Initiative is in the I-94 Corridor. We are located half way between the North Dakota border and the city of Billings. We are also the intersection of Montana 59 with Broadus 80 miles south and Jordan 80 miles to the north. The east west route of highway 212 from the South Dakota border through Baker and ends in Miles City.

Miles City and the surrounding area is a mixture of Badlands, Flatlands, and Rolling Hills. To the east we have flatlands that make for great farming along the Yellowstone River and the Powder River. This land plays home to some of the best bird watching and hunting anywhere. Whether you hunt with a camera or gun you will see pheasants, grouse, antelope, and a large variety of waterfowl. It is also a great place to hunt for both whitetail and mule deer. The badlands, with the Calypso Trail and the Scenic Drive are just a few miles further to the east. Unusual sandstone and rock formations make for an incredible backdrop for photographers and outdoor artists. To the south we have rolling hills and flatlands. This area is also home to all the same sorts of hunting and photography. The Tongue River runs through this area mirroring the offers to the east. The area to the north has been changed over the years and is farmed more than it use to be. Dryland grain farming covers the bulk of this land. Antelope, deer, and grouse are plentiful, but the bird count is less than in other directions. The west is a mixture of badlands, farmland, and river bottoms. The Yellowstone River has it's greatest presence to the west.

As stated earlier we have three rivers in our emident area. Unlike the prestine trout streams to the west, our rivers are full of Catfish, Paddlefish, Sturgeon, Walleye, Northern Pike, and Bass. This creates for interesting conversations with visitors because the Yellowstone river is a trout paradise in the west and has no trout in the east. Another thing that drives people to the Yellowstone River is to search for Moss Agates, only found in the dry beds of the river in the east.

The Eastern Montana Initiative has helped to bring the beauty of eastern Montana to the attention of so many more potential visitors. Now with a knowledge of what they have to look forward to it allows us the ability to concentrate on educating visitors on what they can do once they get here.

Miles City is a mecca for history buffs, whether they want Native history, Cavalry history, the Old West, Prehistoric times and digs, or Lewis and Clark, you can visualize it all in the Miles City area. You can actually walk the same parade ground that General Custer strolled at Fort Keogh. The Fort has been turned into a agriculture research center that has garnered world wide respect for their work with range plants and animals. This facility is open for tours.

The Range Riders Museum offers the best examples of "Old West" life you can find anywhere. The museum offers 11 buildings dedicated to life in the west.

The Waterworks Art Museum uses the history of the original waterworks facility to show off the culture of the west. The underground holding tanks of the old waterworks offers a

stunning display area for all types of shows.

For the more active visitor you can walk one of the seven walking trails offering river views to the architecture of the 1800's as you walk downtown Miles City. A solid example of unspoiled nature and a charming small town.

Miles City is not without it's challenges. Miles City still has no commercial air service with no solution to this problem in site. The search for a fixed wing operation continues due to the fact that we can't afford to buy our way back into the Essential Air Service program. We had plans in place to begin a "Sister City" program with Medora North Dakota featuring the history that exists between the two cities. The uncertain times with the Corona Virus has put this on hold. It is something we want to do and will put it in this years marketing plan, but to start it now is not prudent. The cancelation of the Bucking Horse Sale has left us still trying to figure our losses for this year. The impact on businesses, the non-profit service organizations, everyone involved in the local economy is yet to be confirmed.

But no matter what Miles City is still a vibrant charming small town surrounded by spectacular unspoiled nature. We will continue to offer breathtaking experiences as well as relaxing hospitality daily.

## **Describe your destination.**

We will inspire visitors with our area landscape, outdoor recreational offerings such as hunting, fishing, bird watching, and photography opportunities. We will also showcase our western history, native history, and military history. We will accomplish this through social media, radio and TV, print advertising, as well as partnering with Visit Southeast Montana and MOTBD, and potentially Madora, North Dakota. We will keep our website fresh and colorful with current photos and banners chronicling past, present, and future events.

We will help the orientation process by offering events that showcase what we are offering to the visitor. We have a varied inventory of attractions so it is necessary to highlight all of our offerings. We will accomplish this as stated before with a combination of social media and various forms of timely advertising. With our VIC in our office we can also offer hands on word of mouth assistance. Staying in contact with local hoteliers will build consistency in message as well as a solid sense of partnership. This will be easily done due to the fact that we also direct the TBID from the Chamber office'

As stated above we offer the Miles City VIC offering us the ability to assist visitors on a much higher level. We are also the Miles City Area Chamber of Commerce so we have the ability to capture the visitor from a different venue. We have the ability to actually sit down and help make plans, not only for their time in Miles City, but for the rest of their time in Montana.

## **Optional: Include attachments here**

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

ITRR as well as Arrivalist defines are target market last year as being from Montana, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Colorado, Washington, Idaho, Nebraska, Texas in that order. This year North Dakota and Wyoming are at the top with most staying the same. Interestingly Nebraska fell off the list and Utah and Wisconsin jumped on. This change with Utah and Wisconsin would suggest hunting as a driver for these two states. We are seeing visitors from Idaho and Washington lately which would indicate a merging market. Due to sample size in our area from ITRR it is difficult to dial it in but Arrivalist has given us great research figures. We lean toward families searching for history and the western experience, Native American and cavalry history, and dinosaur enthusiasts. The fall brings hunters and fishermen of all ages, predominately male, but that falls off as the seasons close. We have a large base of people seeking the beauty of the badlands, in all four seasons. We still see people following the Lewis and Clark Trail, usually a bit older visitor with no real time schedule, and as with most small eastern communities our sports and school events bring a great deal of traffic to Miles City.

We will target the outdoorsman, both for hunting, fishing, and photography, the western history and culture visitor, the Indian and dinosaur follower, as well as sports and community event goers. We will also look into the visitor that is looking to just relax. Our way of life is very inviting to many people.

### *b. What are your emerging markets?*

We think one of the biggest emerging markets is nature photography. With the quality of cell phone cameras more and more people are paying attention to their surrounding for the possibility of that breathtaking shot. We live in some of the most naturally photogenic areas available to the traveler. From sandstone formations to the northern lights pictures happen day and night. Based on the data presented by ITRR and arrivalist we are also looking at hunting as an area to pursue. We will look to partner with the state office to push hunting in our area. Another market we are looking at is the snowmobiler. We are seeing many North Dakota and Minnesota vehicles loaded with machines headed to the Bighorn Mountains. That makes us a great overnight stop. We have also increased our efforts to market both the Range Riders Museum and the Waterwork Art Museum with multiple funding sources to increase visitations for their events as well as their day to day visitations.

## **Optional: Include attachments here.**

### *c. What research supports your target marketing?*

We can see where the biggest segments of our visitors are coming from based on ITRR data and we can see from collection reports the best and the worst of times. We can see upticks during the hunting seasons, we know that summer is obviously our biggest time of the year. Going back to our emerging markets we are seeing movement in the early fall and late spring which leads us to believe that we are seeing the older traveler, or snowbird, but also that we are seeing people spending time before or after the summer rush. We will have to stay constant in studying research because with the cancellation of the Bucking Horse Sale we will need to make solid investments to help backfill the losses caused by the cancellation.

Our goals are to bring more visitors and promote longer stays. It is also a goal to cultivate repeat visitors. We want to increase our average stay to 1 from .8. We will encourage event sponsors to plan in advance so we can have a schedule of events far enough out so that people can plan ahead for return visits.

We will work much closer with Visit Southeast Montana to promote Miles City as well as the rest of the region for day trips.

We will promote the Range Riders Museum as well as the Waterworks Art Museum with a combination of available funds.

We will get involved with joint ventures as affordable along with actively participating in the new initiative plan.

Continue to work with the Chamber and the BHS to provide an avenue for magazine articles and advertising (free of Charge) It will be important to study research to see the effects of the Bucking Horse Sale cancellation as well as to continue ads to keep a momentum up for next years sale.

Increase our web presence as well as TV by using commercial footage as banner material with the same ad.

We will continue to work on our Sister Cityplan with Medora, North Dakota

We will always be mindful to educate our partners to the State Brand as it pertains to us as a community.

Partner with MOTBD in the marketing of hunting in our area.

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

As per the research we need to be entering into joint venture projects with MOTBD to increase our Spring and Fall Hunting opportunities. With the current position we are in as far as the uncertain status of the spring and summer we will be evaluating moving funds from FY20 to FY21 to increase presence.

marketing plan explanation.docx

**Optional: Include attachment here.**

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

We will participate with Southeast Montana to market hunting in the region. Also we will work together on day trip promotions as well as Fam trips to Miles City.

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

We haven't had a presence in the past due to funding but we will be a large presence thanks to the Initiative and the direction that the latest research is pointing us to.

**Optional: Include attachments here.**

**Optional: Include attachments here.** Book1 2021.xlsx

**Optional: Include attachment here:**

**Marketing Segment, Method & Budget**

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Describe your method.	Provide supporting research/statistics.	How do you plan to measure success?	Provide a brief rationale for this method.	Estimated budget for method.	Marketing Method Evaluation	Add'l Attchmnt
Consumer	Printed Material	Miles City CVB plans to print brochures to highlight hunting and fishing availabilities in our area, perhaps even listing outfitter options. We will craft the brochures to inform our target markets as described by our current research. We will target growing markets such as hunting.	We plan to measure the success by monitoring request and shelf picks from visitors at our VIC as well as in hotels and other local establishments that will have it available to people. Based on Travel and Tourism Research Assoc. 53% of U.S. travelers report using a printed resource in planning their travel in the last 12 months. This will be a targeted piece available to outdoors people and will be made	We plan to use the piece inventory to measure success. We will use the beginning inventory as a base and then count pieces at year end to see how wanted this information is.	We will produce a value piece that will give solid information. We will keep it timely, but not so that it will quickly become dated. We will always be sure that we print pieces that are	\$6,000.00		

		photography, and what the current situation dictates. We will also monitor the chance of starting our Medora plan.	available on our website so we can also rely on website analytics.		current and timely based on the most current research.			
Consumer	Print Advertising	We will place ads in the most effective places based on demographics, utilizing the locations we are attracting the most visitors from based on research from places like ITRR and Arrivalist. We will ad website addresses and phone numbers as a more timely approach to research also.	Our placements will be directed toward where we see as the most visitations based on as many avenues as possible such as ITRR and Arrivalist. We will monitor success based on event attendance and inquiries received at our office. We will monitor success based on those numbers as well as how it is performing in our quest to increase overnight stays. Based on Destination Analysts print usage in travel planning has risen close to 50% which is a much larger rise than that of visitor guide usage. While we target everyone, the older segment tends to use this method for outdoor specialty markets.	We will monitor analytics resulting from posted addresses on all of our ads as well as events monitoring to track increases of attendance. We will also watch to see if we are increasing our overnight stays from last years .06 to 1. as shown on Arrivalist .8	Miles City sponsors many events with a varied demographic so placements of print ads is a challenge. We have many western events, but we also have art shows, sporting events, bluegrass festivals, classic cars shows, a four day fair, new walking trails, and we will target new markets as they are identified such as nature photography and hunting. Print ads are a great way to get in front of the right people for the each event as well as general advertising.	\$8,000.00		
Consumer	Radio & Television Advertising	We will use research made available from all avenues especially ITRR and Arrivalist. We will utilize this to reach our most important target audiences. We will also study demographics and geographical reach so as to place our ads in the best areas to secure the visitors we are trying to reach. We will use cost as a criteria. We will only use 30 second spots ran between 6am and 7pm for radio and times that are advantageous and affordable for T.V. We will use our existing T.V. ads. because they are still timely and we own them. We still have our Medora Plan if it becomes a better thing to do as the year progresses.	Miles City CVB uses coverage maps, formats, cost, and demographics to justify placements for both Radio and TV. We will tag all ads with an address to afford the availability of analytic results as well as on site event monitoring for results of success or not. Number of people reached in a repetitory way have value based on increased numbers so this becomes a valued approach. We also have need based on lack of internet using making this almost the only way to advertise.	We will monitor analytics resulting from posted addresses on all of our ads as well as events monitoring to track increases of attendance. We will also watch to see if we are increasing our overnight stays from last years .6 to .8 as shown on Arrivalist.	The Miles City CVB would like to use \$2,000.00 for radio advertising and \$4,000.00 for TV advertising. Please see attachment about radio advertising. As far as TV, we have found for our money the best placement is with KULR in Billings. All our placements, both radio and TV will be 30 seconds in length utilizing the best affordable run times. Radio will always be run 6 am until 7 pm. TV will be best placement for the targeted audience.	\$8,000.00		
Consumer	Website/Internet	The Miles City CVB has plans to expand our website to make event attendance planning more user friendly. The Miles City Chamber office serves as a clearing house for tickets to almost all events. It is our hope that we can develop a way to track locations of the attendees as well	We have great analytics at our disposal to see the effectiveness of our site. Our plans to measure success is based on the same structure we utilize as research. These numbers give us great direction as well as a great measure of success. We want to see increases in all of our measureables or to be able to identify	We can access our analytics on a daily basis so we can measure success or failure very rapidly. Going back to last years marketing plan that was done almost the same time as this is we see that our visitors per day is up by 60, average stay is down slightly, our search engine visitor is 47%, facebook 42% and the other is	We have found that all the research says "Fresh is Best" so that is our direction. Our current analytics (June 30, 2019 - July 1, 2020) show Average visitor per day is 347 or 126,655 per year. Visitors are averaging 3.81 minutes staying on the	\$12,000.00		

	Development/Updates	as get a feel for pre-attendance numbers. Also by being event specific we can also push lodging bookings increasing overnight stays. We are seeing a split of visitors by category so we are going to put a big push on refreshing our product.	were we need to change. According to Miles Partnership over 72% of millennials use smartphones in thier trip planning. This statistic makes the decision to utilize this as a major piece of our ad budget.	11%. We get 74% of our traffic from mobile devices and 26% from desktops compared to 50-50 last year. These numbers give great direction. We are seeing better numbers as far as usage but a more fragmented location of response. We can watch this for possible trends.	site. Visitors go to an average of 5.92 pages per visit. Search engine referrals account for 47% of our visitors, facebook another 42% and the final 11% from othersources			
Marketing Support	Administration	The Miles City CVB uses its admin. budget for rent and office supplies as needed to do the operations of the Miles City CVB as well as house the local VIC for Miles City and other cities, regions, the State of Montana, and surrounding states. This is a year round facility offering both information and a one on one experience for our visitors.	We have a defined goal based on much research and using our admin. dollars to the best of our abilities while staying within our 20% of total budget and in accordance to rules and regs is our goal.	It will be a success if we accomplish our goals and stay within our budget and rules and regs.	We utilize these funds in accordance with the rules and regs. being mindful to not exceed 20% of the total budget.	\$7,236.00		
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	We will use the budgeted funds to attend TAC and Governors Conference meetings. We will only request reimbursements for legal expenses as written in the rules and regs.	The information gathered at these meetings is vetted by TAC and MOTBR for its value to us and our operation.	Attending these meetings while staying within the budget and gaining the most knowledge possible, sharing valuables with my board will be our measure of success.	Thge Miles City CVB uses bed tax funds to offset travel expenses encured attending TAC meetings as well as the Governors Conference on Tourism.	\$0.00	We moved \$3000.00 to Research to purchase a research/data opportunity	
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	We are looking to become a player in the joint venture world. We will be working with MOTBD to push Big Game Hunting options in the Miles City area. It has been proven with our latest research that we have a budding market that tends to point toward hunting as their reason for coming to our area. Knowing that MOTBD pushes hunting in the spring and fall we will be joining in.	ITRR and Arrivalist have shown that an emerging market was visitors from Utah and Wisconsin. Further research indicates that most are coming to hunt and fish. I think that it was the help of the Initiative and thier marketing that brought this market forward. We hope to start a joint venture with the state and Visaview in late March. Cost will be \$5060.00 per year. We have so little research in Eastern Montana that is as specific as this will be it will be a valueable tool. We look forward to quantifying all of our market segments with research from this.	The ITRR and Arrivalist data shows a growing market coming from Utah and Washington. We have dialed it down to hunting that is a major factor in them coming. We will monitor the growth of our visitors from these states to judge the value of our marketing.	We have data to show that it is important that we market to a group we have in the past ignored. Hunters are coming to our area on their own and we feel that we can increase visitors and overnight stays by a concerted effort to invite more of them. We also have funds we planned to use on our Medora project that can either be used for that this year our work with MOTBD on other emerging markets.	\$5,060.00	We will be moving \$6940.00 to Research to purchase a Research/Data Opportunity.	
Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	We want to have a line item with the initiative to be able to participate in anything that would be of value.	We will update ou research and statistics once we utilize a cooperative opportunity and a method is employed.	We will evaluate using best practices when and if the time comes	This is a placeholder in case a project would come up that would benefit the Miles City CVB and one of our partners.	\$0.00	We moved \$3000.00 to research to purchase a data/research opportunity.	
					The Miles City			

Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	We have used this category in years past when we have presented a plan that wasn't in the works at marketing plan time. This year with the Initiative in the works this may prove to be the most important category we have.	We will update Research and statistics once an Opportunity is identified and a method is employed.	We will evaluate using best practices when and if the time comes.	CVB uses this as placeholder for use in the event that something that will enhance our plan would come up during the fiscal year. We appreciate the ability to add projects, with approval, or aid an existing line item, again with approval, if it proves to have great value and falls in line with the state brand.	\$4,647.00		
Research	Survey/Data Collection	Based on the proposed data offerings from See Source combined with our JV project with MOTBD we will have avenues to see just how we are doing as it pertains to the brand pillars. We have been operating on small sample size research and assuming we are on target and now we will have the ability to position ourselves targeted hard data.	We will receive hard data from both Visa and Master Card to show both in state and non resident travelers that will be unique to just Miles City so we can craft our direction based on data. We initiated conversation with the staff at MOTBD and this research idea was highly encouraged.	We will get up to date information within a week of our purchase of the program so we will make improvements to our plan immediately. We will be able to monitor our progress as we go and also we will have past statistics that will chronicle our success based on recieved reports.	As mentioned above this plan will provide a road map for improvement as well as an ongoing report to show if we are going in a positive or negative direction. We will monitor direction on both a monthly, quarterly basis.	\$12,940.00		
						\$63,883.00		

**Marketing Method Evaluation Attachments**

- Attachment 1
- Attachment 2
- Attachment 3
- Attachment 4
- Attachment 5
- Attachment 6
- Attachment 7
- Attachment 8
- Attachment 9
- Attachment 10

**Marketing Method Budget**

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget	Non bed tax funded budget (optional)
Consumer	Printed Material	\$6,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Print Advertising	\$8,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Radio & Television Advertising	\$8,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	\$10,016.80	\$0.00
		\$32,016.80	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$7,236.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$0.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	\$5,060.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	\$0.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$4,647.00	\$0.00
		\$16,943.00	\$0.00
Research	Survey/Data Collection	\$12,940.00	\$0.00
		\$12,940.00	\$0.00
		\$61,899.80	\$0.00

### **Miscellaneous Attachments**

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Description	File Name	File Size
excel spreadsheet Covid19	Book1 2021.xlsx	11 KB
4/30/20 marketing plan explanation	marketing plan explanation.docx	15 KB
explanation	marketing plan explanation.docx	15 KB
FY20/21 Pie Chart	pie chart FY20.xlsx	16 KB
FY20/21 Pie Chart	pie chart FY20.xlsx	16 KB
FY20/21 Pie Chart	pie chart FY20.xlsx	16 KB

### **Reg/CVB Required Documents**

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Description	File Name	File Size
compliance forms	Compliance forms757.pdf	98 KB

