

Tourist Development

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA**

SERVICE AREA: CULTURE/RECREATION

DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM: TOURIST DEVELOPMENT

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: Okaloosa Tourist Development is responsible for a unified marketing and servicing program that helps to increase economic growth activity through tourism on behalf of the South Okaloosa County areas of Destin, Fort Walton Beach, Okaloosa Island, Mary Esther, and Cinco Bayou. The TDC's top priority is to help increase the overall lodging occupancy levels.

REVENUE: Tourist Development is funded within the Tourist Development Trust Fund. Supporting revenue is Tourist Development Taxes (2nd and 5th cents) short term rental occupancy tax.

EXPENDITURES:

Category	Expenditures		Budget	
	FY10 Actual \$	FY11 Actual \$	FY12 Original \$	FY13 Approved \$
Personal Services	606,715	570,269	607,597	600,107
Operating Expenses	4,323,595	7,746,731	2,971,648	2,840,602
Capital Outlay	-168,450	28,602	48,000	530,500
Grants & Aids	7,000	14,500	15,000	15,000
Transfers Out	251,202	471,878	472,000	428,126
Reserves	0	0	2,190,755	4,040,665
Total	5,020,062	8,831,980	6,305,000	8,455,000

HISTORICAL STAFFING SUMMARY:

Category	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13
Full-time	9	9	9	9
Part-Time	2	2	2	2
Relief	0	0	0	0
Total	11	11	11	11

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS LAST YEAR:

- The Average Daily Lodging Rate for Oct 2011 -April 2012 was \$98.49 compared to the same period in the previous year \$90.12, up over 9%.
- The Average Lodging Occupancy rate for Oct 2011 -April 2012 was 44.6%. The rate for the same period in the previous year was 41.6%.
- The average Revenue per Available room for Oct 2011 -April 2012 was \$43.72. The average for the same period in the previous year was \$40.84. Up \$2.88 in 2012.
- The Tourist Development Tax revenue year to date through April 2012 increased more than 20% compared to the previous fiscal year, and represents the greatest revenue for this period (October through April) since inception.
- Increased the participation of the public and the tourism stakeholders at all TDC public meetings by hosting TDC meetings in larger rooms at the Emerald Coast Convention Center.
- Improved and updated the web site www.emeraldcoastfl.com, and developed and implemented separate web sites for the Convention Center and the FilmCommision.
- Designed and implemented the 2012 award-winning Visitors Guide in print, and published both online versions.
- Utilized social media and networking tools to inform and attract visitors. These tools include *foursquare*, *facebook*, *twitter*, *flickr*, and *youtube*.
- Continued digital and viral marketing efforts that broaden communication.
- The new partnership with Mayflower Bus Tours in Chicago has featured our destination as an ongoing planned tour bus itinerary during our 2011/2012 winter and 2012 spring seasons and forward.
- Increased funding to help special events coordinators advertise outside our destination to produce positive economic impact and increase overall occupancy percentages.

PROGRAM GOAL: To conduct proactive and productive sales, marketing, advertising, public relations, communications, and social networking initiatives for the taxing district to enhance economic growth for the area through increased visitation and tourism.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

1. Increase the monthly bed tax collections revenue and monthly lodging occupancy percentages each month over previous years. Return tourism numbers in 2012 to 2007 levels; the last good year before the nation’s economy began to decrease.
2. Provide quality beach improvements, facilities, landscaping and maintenance to enhance the ambiance and environment for visiting guests and local residents.
3. Increase the CVB sales leads and actual bookings by aggressively soliciting and marketing the SMERF (Social, Military, Educational, Religious, and Fraternal), Motor Coach, Family Reunion, Association, and Government organizations.
4. Reconstruct / improve Visitor’s Information Center and department offices on Okaloosa Island.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Performance Measures		Actual FY10/11	Estimated FY11/12	Adopted FY12/13
	Booked Groups	256	243	281
	Number of Trade Shows	32	35	41
	Number Sales Missions and FAMS	8	6	16

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
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SERVICE AREA: CULTURE/RECREATION

DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM: TOURIST DEVELOPMENT DUNE-BEACH NOURISHMENT

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: Beach restoration and monitoring of approximately nine and one-half miles for county beaches to include the beaches located within the city limits of the City of Destin.

REVENUE: Tourist Development is funded within the Tourist Development Trust Fund. Supporting revenue is Tourist Development Taxes (1st cent) short term rental occupancy tax and special assessment of properties.

EXPENDITURES:

Category	Expenditures		Budget	
	FY10 Actual \$	FY11 Actual \$	FY12 Original \$	FY13 Approved \$
Personal Services	0	0	0	0
Operating Expenses	392,825	165,864	1,204,000	1,117,000
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	0
Reserves	0	0	9,471,000	8,373,473
Total	392,825	165,864	10,675,000	9,490,473

HISTORICAL STAFFING SUMMARY:

No full-time equivalent (FTE) positions assigned to this program.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS LAST YEAR:

- Continued monitoring and protection of sea turtles through the turtle watch program.
- Continued maintenance cleaning of Okaloosa County and City of Destin beaches.
- Successful defense of construction bond at Florida Supreme Court.
- Received final Joint Coastal Permits for both Okaloosa Island and western Destin.
- Final planning stages for Western Destin Beach Restoration Project.
- Continued pursuit of a Federal Shore Protection Program.
- Work continued on the federally funded Section 204/Regional Sediment Management Study for Okaloosa County.
- Initial work to implement a recycling program targeted at beach goers.
- Aided other County Departments in pursuing passage of the Restore Act.
- Received authorization from the State to utilize beach restoration funds for a dune planting and sand fencing project for all 2.8 miles of Okaloosa Island.

PROGRAM GOAL: : Continue to work towards construction and funding the Western Destin Beach Restoration Project and seek long term beach restoration and a Federal funding partner through the Federal Shore Protection Program. Enhance and protect the Okaloosa County and City of Destin beaches through beach restoration and cleaning activities and sea turtle monitoring.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

1. Construct Western Destin Beach Restoration project.
2. Secure Congressional/US Army Corp of Engineers funding for Feasibility Study phase of the Federal Shore Protection Project.
3. Keep beaches clean from trash and other debris.
4. Protect nesting sea turtles.
5. Verify the annual beach restoration project assessment roll, containing a summary description of each parcel of real property within the unit, the name and address of the owner of each such parcel and the assessment authorized by ordinance against each parcel.
6. Establish beach recycling program to minimize use of landfill, save Tourist Development Tax funds, and promote recycling in the community.
7. Construct dune planting/sand fencing project for approximately 3 miles of Okaloosa Island.
8. Provide repair and maintenance funding for tourist destination beach access and park facilities.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Performance Measures		Actual FY10/11	Estimated FY11/12	Adopted FY12/13
	Construct Western Destin Project	No	No	Planned
	Finalize beach recycling program	No	Yes	Yes
	Continue Turtle Watch Program	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Construct Okaloosa Island Dune Planting Project	No	No	Planned
	Continue Cleaning of Beaches	Yes	Yes	Yes

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
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SERVICE AREA: CULTURE/RECREATION

DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM: CONVENTION CENTER

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: The Emerald Coast Convention Center (ECCC) provides economic impact to the tourism and general businesses of Okaloosa County. Also our mission is to provide a professional service team, exquisite food service and a spotlessly clean and safe environment for meetings, conventions, trade shows, public entertainment and all types of special event activities.

REVENUE: The Convention Center is funded by the Tourist Development trust fund, collections of the 3rd and 4th cent short term rental occupancy tax and by revenues created by activities at the center.

EXPENDITURES:

Category	Expenditures		Budget	
	FY10 Actual \$	FY11 Actual \$	FY12 Original \$	FY13 Approved \$
Personal Services	941,709	1,013,823	1,058,211	1,010,593
Operating Expenses	2,573,977	2,030,682	2,729,443	3,243,275
Capital Outlay	0	0	1,194,745	2,522,646
Debt Service	658,012	459,956	492,033	326,000
Grants & Aids	250,000	250,000.00	250,000	491,719
Transfer Out	250,000	513,054	532,051	491,719
Reserves	0	0	3,378,967	1,435,673
Total	4,673,698	4,267,515	9,635,450	9,521,625

HISTORICAL STAFFING SUMMARY:

Category	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13
Full-time	19	19	19	19
Part-Time	2	2	2	2
Relief	0	0	0	0
Total	21	21	21	21

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS LAST YEAR:

- Conducted and serviced 190 functions at the ECCC.
- Brought in and estimated economic impact of 15 million dollars to the County.
- Increased military business at the ECCC with several large conventions/meetings including Global EOD and expanded services to Eglin AFB and the Marine Corps.
- Have a current customer service rating of 4.5 out of 5 as returns of client surveys distributed to all clients indicated.
- Have managed expenses to run below the collections and revenue increasing the bottom line of the trust fund for the 3rd and 4th cent continually while providing the highest quality of professional services to our clients.
- Have had new signage consistent with new branding for the center installed.
- Implemented new marketing concepts with new marketing company, Lewis Communications with targeted conceptual components to our key market areas through traditional print advertising and trade show sponsorship publications.
- Have had interior modifications designed and installed to enhance the décor and interior public areas of the center.
- Paid down a significant portion of the debt for the construction of the ECCC.
- Have installed an elevator on the north end of the building with covered walkway area to assist with entry to the main level from the underground parking.

PROGRAM GOAL: To provide a clean, safe and well maintained Conference and Convention facility for visitors and local clients and guests to create economic impact and opportunities for local functions. Provide necessary performance data to the Executive Director of the TDC/CVB, the Tourist Development Council members and the Board of County Commissioners.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

1. Ensure that all functions of the ECCC comply with county policies and procedures.
2. Continue to improve sales for all revenue streams available to the center.
3. Provide all data necessary for a profitable and successful marketing campaign.
4. Continue to provide exemplary service, facilities, food service and technical services to all clients to ensure return to and re-use of the center to a majority of clients.
5. Enhance marketing efforts significantly in the areas of online advertising, social media and hosting meeting planner conventions at the ECCC.

The following projects are planned for FY 2013:

- Loading dock expansion is needed to alleviate problems unloading and loading of tradeshow exhibits. The current dock size does not allow fork lift access for large exhibits to be used.
- Exterior building surface requires repairs to eliminate moisture damage and improve appearance.
- Continue with design and approval for a Porte Cochere at both the main and South entrances to assist in entrance and exit of the building in inclement weather.
- Upgrade chiller #2 for more efficient operation of HVAC system.
- Construct 150' by 200' exhibition / event area on north property of the Convention Center.
- Sidewalk and landscaping to complement north property exhibition/event area.
- Outdoor sound and light package for exhibition/event area.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Performance Measures		Actual FY10/11	Estimated FY11/12	Adopted FY12/13
Input	FTEs for Convention Center Operations	19.5	19.5	19.5
	FTEs for Sales and Marketing	2	2	2
Efficiency	Number of Functions	239	230	240
	Estimated Economic Impact	\$16,000,000	\$15,000,000	\$15,000,000
	Revenue Projections	\$720,500	\$810,500	\$839,750
	Number of FTEs Involved	21.5	21.5	21.5
Effectiveness	Number of Events Per FTE	11	10.5	11
	Client Rating Survey Average	4.7 of 5.0	4.7 of 5.0	4.7 of 5.0
	Revenue Per FTE	\$33,516	\$37,674	\$39,058