

# Tourist Development

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**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 (2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> cents) short term rental occupancy tax.

**EXPENDITURES:**

Category	Expenditures		Budget	
	FY09 Actual \$	FY10 Actual \$	FY11 Original \$	FY12 Approved \$
Personal Services	585,529	606,715	613,860	607,597
Operating Expenses	3,250,220	4,323,595	4,709,281	2,971,648
Capital Outlay	118,616	-168,450	39,400	48,000
Grants & Aids	14,193	7,000	15,000	15,000
Transfers Out	286,992	251,202	268,000	472,000
Reserves	0	0	2,316,059	2,190,755
Total	4,255,550	5,020,062	7,961,600	6,305,000

**HISTORICAL STAFFING SUMMARY:**

Category	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12
Full-time	11	11	11	11
Part-Time	0	0	0	0
Relief	0	0	0	0
Total	11	11	11	11

**MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS LAST YEAR:**

- The TDC took the lead coordinating and implementing national public relations and communications efforts in regard to the April 20, 2010 Deep Water Horizon Oil Spill accident off the Louisiana coast. The team effortlessly worked to combat the negative misperceptions by the national media that the northwest Florida Emerald Coast was impacted by the oil spill.

- The TDC partnered with other Northwest Florida TDCs to acquire a total of three BP grants given to the seven TDCs with funds dedicated towards marketing and advertising initiatives for each County’s destination.
- Even with a devastating negative economic impact to Okaloosa County businesses from April 20, 2010 through about February of 2011, the TDC was able to “tighten their belts” and balance their fiscal year budget.
- Increased the participation of the public and the tourism stakeholders at all TDC public meetings. The capacity of seating has been met and the result has been to host TDC meetings in larger rooms at the convention center. This is a positive and much sought after change, for the attendance has been wonderful with ideas freely exchanged and stakeholders feeling a part of the decision-making process and tourism organization.
- Enhanced the EmeraldCoastFL.com web site.
- Purchased and installed beach and pier cameras.
- Designed and developed an award-winning Visitors Guide.
- Implemented and launched social media and networking tools.
- Created digital and viral marketing promotions with high ROI.
- Partnered with VPS to help acquire Vision Airlines. TDC dedicated and allocated specific marketing funds for Vision Airlines.
- Utilizing local tourism and marketing professionals to help with the TDC’s efforts and goals.
- Placed the TDC’s advertising services out to bid as an RFP.
- A first for the TDC. The TDC’s CVB sales team landed a partnership with Mayflower Bus Tours. Mayflower Tours, from Chicago, will feature our destination as an ongoing planned tour bus itinerary during our 2011/2012 winter and 2012 spring seasons.
- Increased funding to help special events coordinators advertise outside our destination to produce positive economic impact and increase overall occupancy percentages.
- Streamlined the fulfillment process while increasing productivity

**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.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:**

Performance Measures		Actual FY09/10	Estimated FY10/11	Adopted FY11/12
	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 (1<sup>st</sup> cent) short term rental occupancy tax and special assessment of properties.

**EXPENDITURES:**

Category	Expenditures		Budget	
	FY09 Actual \$	FY10 Actual \$	FY11 Original \$	FY12 Approved \$
Personal Services	0	0	0	0
Operating Expenses	106,624	392,825	480,000	1,204,000
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	0
Reserves	0	0	7,198,800	9,471,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>106,624</b>	<b>392,825</b>	<b>7,678,800</b>	<b>10,675,000</b>

**HISTORICAL STAFFING SUMMARY:**

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

**MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS LAST YEAR:**

- Defense of Joint Coastal Permits for the Okaloosa Island and Western Destin Beach Restoration Projects through the administrative law process.
- Final draft of the Reconnaissance Study for the Federal Shore Protection Project.
- Defense of construction bond at the Florida Supreme Court.
- Successfully partnered with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a Federally funded Section 204/Regional Sediment Management Study for Okaloosa County.
- Continued monitoring and protection of sea turtles through the turtle watch program.
- Continued maintenance cleaning of Okaloosa County and City of Destin beaches.

**PROGRAM GOAL:** Continue to pursue the construction of one time emergency beach restoration projects for the critically eroded sections of Okaloosa County beaches 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:**

4. Obtain final Joint Coastal Permits for the Okaloosa Island and Western Destin Beach Restoration projects.
5. Begin construction of the Okaloosa Island and Western Destin Beach Restoration projects.
6. Successfully defend the bond validation appeal.
7. Secure Congressional appropriation for Feasibility Study phase of the Federal Shore Protection Project.
8. Keep beaches clean from trash and other debris.
9. Protect nesting sea turtles.
10. 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.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:**

<b>Performance Measures</b>		<b>Actual FY09/10</b>	<b>Estimated FY10/11</b>	<b>Adopted FY11/12</b>
	Finalize the Joint Coastal Permits			
	Negotiate the Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement			
	Adopt Annual Assessment by Resolution			
	Approve Assessment Roll			

**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 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> cent short term rental occupancy tax and by revenues created by activities at the center.

**EXPENDITURES:**

Category	Expenditures		Budget	
	FY09 Actual \$	FY10 Actual \$	FY11 Original \$	FY12 Approved \$
Personal Services	892,322	941,709	1,054,376	1,058,211
Operating Expenses	3,001,746	2,573,977	3,401,906	2,729,443
Capital Outlay	0	0	1,238,338	1,194,745
Debt Service	672,548	658,012	942,738	492,033
Grants & Aids	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
Transfer Out	250,000	250,000	545,149	532,051
Reserves	0	0	10,160,193	3,378,967
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,066,616</b>	<b>4,673,698</b>	<b>17,592,700</b>	<b>9,635,450</b>

**HISTORICAL STAFFING SUMMARY:**

Category	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12
Full-time	18	18	19	19
Part-Time	2	2	2	2
Relief	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>

## **MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS LAST YEAR:**

- Conducted and serviced 181 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 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> cent continually while providing the highest quality of professional services to our clients
- Have upgraded client service technologies in the areas of wireless internet and audio video services
- 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

**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

The following projects are planned for FY 2012:

- 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.
- An elevator to assist in American with Disability Act (ADA) requirements
- Replace front marquis sign with multi-colored LED sign
- Upgrade chiller #2 for more efficient operation of H-Vac system



**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:**

<b>Performance Measures</b>		<b>Actual FY09/10</b>	<b>Estimated FY10/11</b>	<b>Adopted FY11/12</b>
Input	FTEs for Convention Center Operations	19.5	19.5	19.5
	FTEs for Sales and Marketing	2	2	2
Efficiency	Number of Functions	240	181	200
	Estimated Economic Impact	\$16,000,000	\$16,000,000	\$15,000,000
	Revenue Projections	\$869,500.00	\$869,500.00	\$810,450.00
	Number of FTEs Involved	21.5	21.5	21.5
Effectiveness	Number of Events Per FTE	11	8.5	9.5
	Client Rating Survey Average	4.7 of 5.0	4.7 of 5.0	4.7 of 5.0
	Revenue Per FTE	\$40,442	\$40,442	\$37,695

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