

2024-2025
TDC Approved
Marketing Plan &
Tourism Department Budget



AVON PARK & LAKE PLACID, FL

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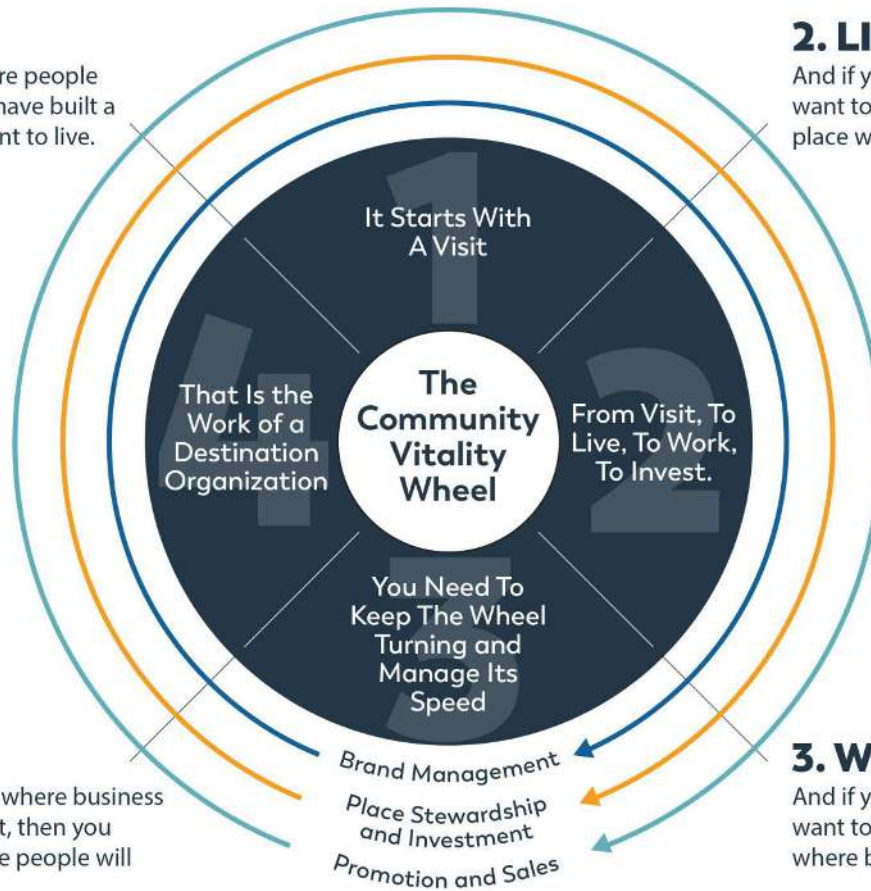
THE WORK OF A DESTINATION ORGANIZATION

1. VISIT

If you built a place where people want to visit, then you have built a place where people want to live.

2. LIVE

And if you built a place where people want to live, then you have built a place where people want to work.



4. INVEST

And if you built a place where business and residents will invest, then you have built a place where people will want to visit.

3. WORK

And if you built a place where people want to work, then you have built a place where business and residents will invest.

TDC Strategic Plan Vision & Mission

Vision: The Highlands County TDC inspires **research-based decision making** which leads to the type of tourism destination development that inspire future generations to remain in the community and not move out of town. The TDC allocates resources to enhance the **quality of life for our residents**; including efforts to **reduce seasonal employment** and to **create a place for families to raise their children**.

Mission: To contribute to a **positive quality of life** for the residents of Highlands County (our customer) through destination promotion, tourism development, advocacy and resource management – which are foundation pieces for future economic growth.



Strategic Pillars: Areas of Focus

Emphasis on digital assets & advertising

- >Madden Media

More PR/Media Relations to increase our Brand Awareness

- >Much PR

Projects to make destination more appealing & engaging to visitors

- >Create Experiences: Summer Splash & Nature Tours

Industry Partner Engagement & Education

- >Stakeholder Meetings – Group & Individual

- >Tourism Insights & Awards Luncheon

Streamline Administrative Duties

- >Add new/third position: Tourism Manager

Facility Enhancement/Development Projects

- >Huddle Up, Synergy Sports & Airstream - Guide with Data

- > Current Sports Complex upgrades/improvements/expansion

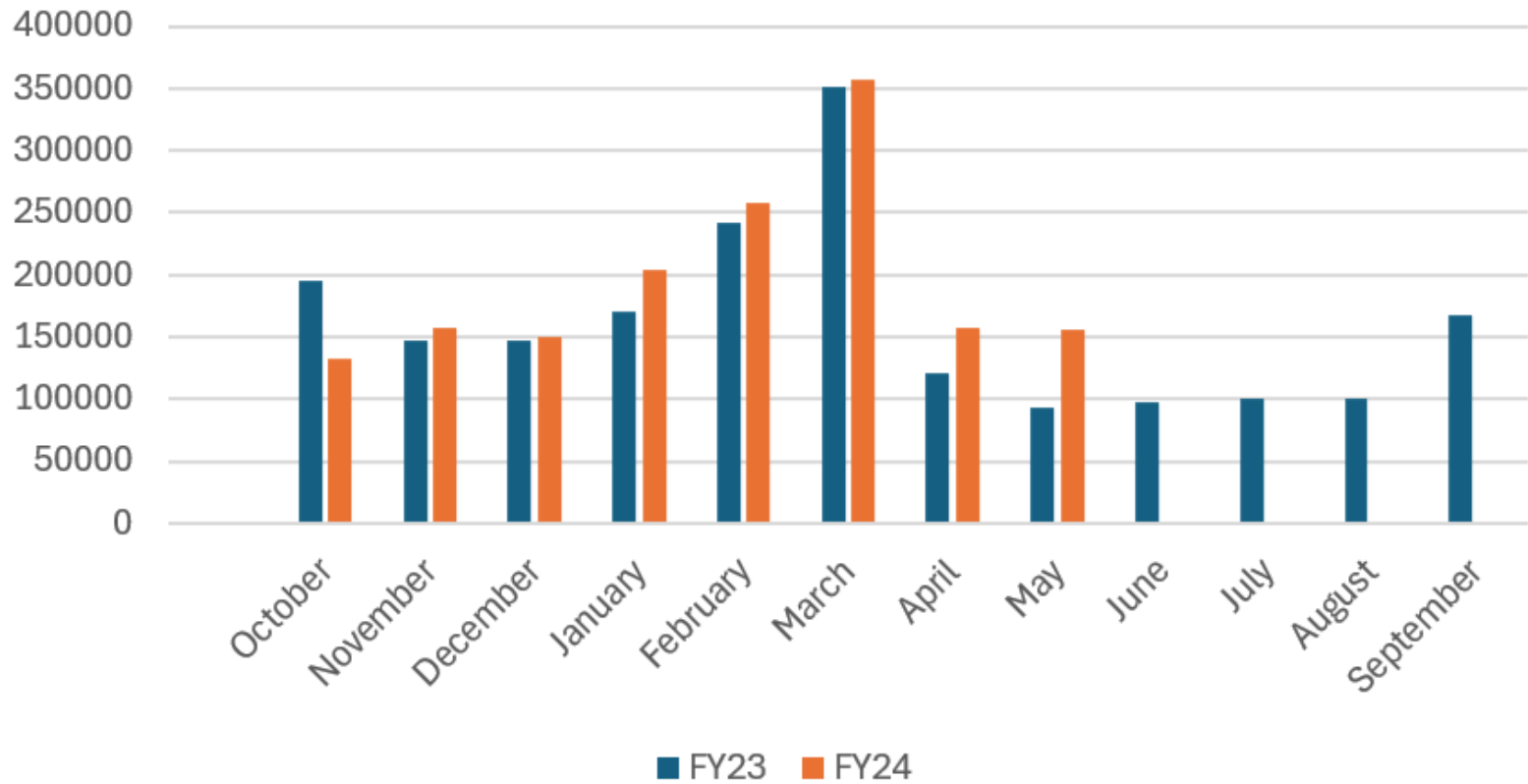
- > Sports Tourism Facility Grant Program

October 2023-May 2024

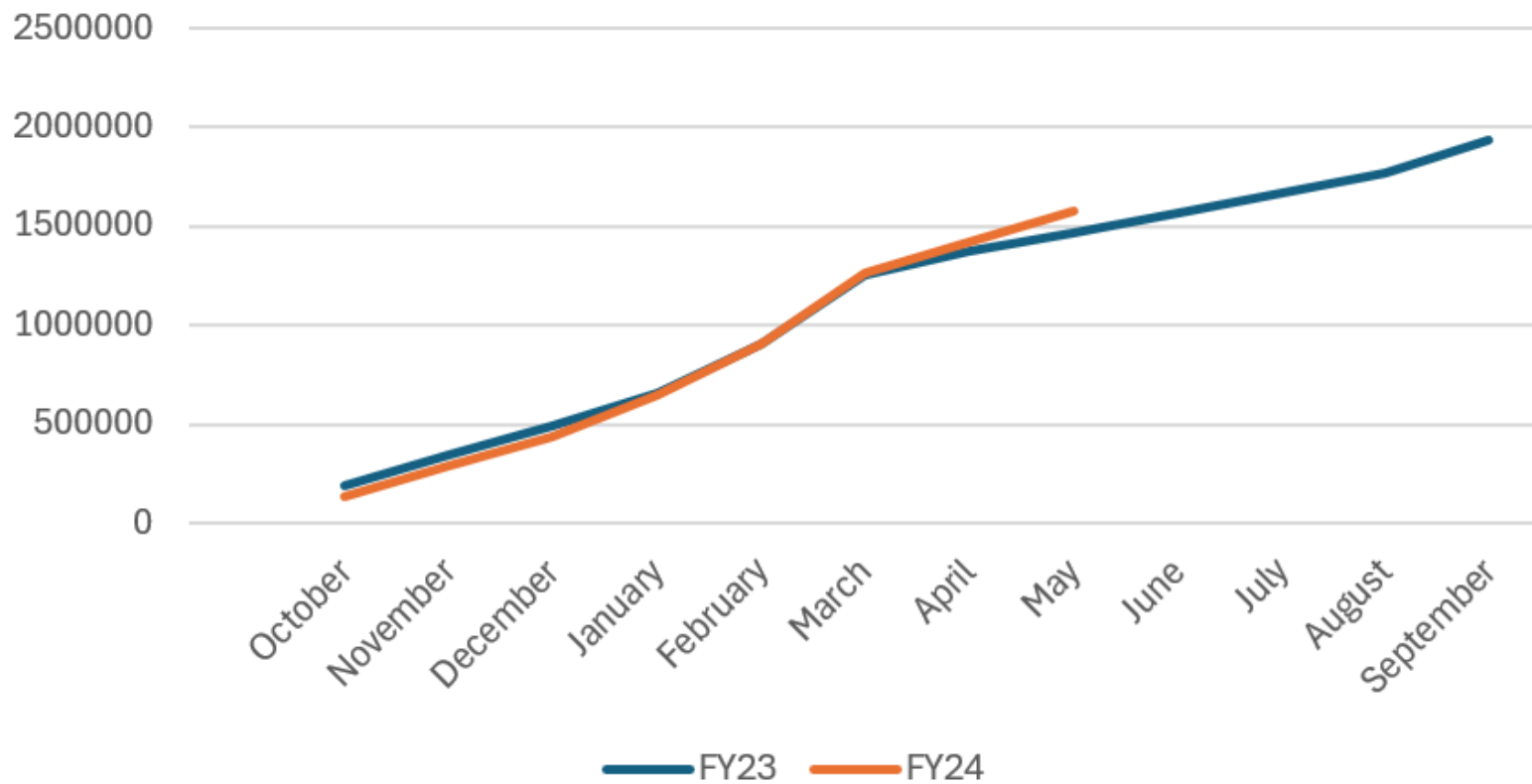
Occupancy and collections down from our initial estimations – here's why:

- o Nearly 32% decrease in collections Oct. 2022 vs Oct. 2023
 - o October 2022 was unusually high due to hurricane displaced persons moving to our hotels for extended stays
- o Hotels report occupancy decrease trend continued into November 2023 & December 2023
- o For current FY, positive collections increase started in January 2024 (vs January 2023)
- o Biggest collection increases were nearly 31% in April and 66% in May (2024 vs 2023), which are targeted months for TDC to fill hotel rooms.
- o Two major hotels do not share hotel data.

Monthly Collections



Total Collections



Anticipated TDC Collections

Preliminary TDC Budget

\$1,800,000 – Anticipated 2023-2024 TDT Collections

-\$360,000 (20% = 3rd penny for Asset Development)

\$1,440,00

-\$300,000 – Operations (#5301)

\$1,140,000* – Available for Marketing

+ \$20,000 – Possible FL Sports Foundation Grant Income

TOTAL FOR MARKETING: \$1,140,000 (+\$20,000)

o TDC: Use \$260,000 from Reserve Account for a \$1,420,000 budget. As of April 30, \$1,816,075 in this reserve account.

*This income projection is TBD; based on collections through April 2024.

Key Budget Recommendations

Operations – Acct 5301

New TDC staff member - As HGTV, facility development, and sports tourism activity ramps up, we see a need for a new TDC team member. Recommend adding a Tourism Manager as a county position to handle many of the day-to-day marketing and project duties. Funding from Operations 5301; total (w/benefits \$78,000)

Key Recommendations

Marketing – Acct 5305

Destination Development/Experiences – As the destination development leader, TDC can incentivize the development of new interactive experiences per our Tourism/Recreation Facility Study & Strategic Plan. Recommended budget up to \$50,000 for Splash Park development assistance and/or Nature Tour program like Martin County has done.

State Grant Consultant – In order to leverage TDC funds, TDC is proposing hiring a state grant consultant to find, apply, and manage any state grants TDC may be interested in. Recommended budget up to \$20,000

Key Budget Recommendations

Asset/3rd Penny – Acct 5309

Sports Complex Interior Netting – Last FY TDC was able to invest in exterior netting for lacrosse fields. We still need to invest in interior netting. Recommend upgrades up to \$150,000.

Sports Complex Land Purchase – Option to purchase additional 30+/- acres on east side of current Sports Complex. Recommend TDC portion of purchase price up to \$250,000 with matching FRDAP grant of \$200,000.

Key Budget Recommendations

Asset/3rd Penny – Acct 5309

Sports Facility Planning Grant Program – To assist in the development and improvement of sports facilities within Highlands County. This grant program would support long-term planning of existing sports facilities that enhance the capacity to host sports tourism events, thereby increasing the potential for economic impact through sports tourism. Grants would be awarded based on the Huddle Up Group’s facility assessment, each facility’s needs, the capacity to attract events that drive tourism and economic activity, and the potential impact on the community. By offering these grants, the TDC can improve the county’s physical infrastructure, promote community engagement and support the local economy. Recommend budgeting up to \$100,000 for FY 2024-2025 since first phase for any applicant would be developing a long-term or strategic plan for their facility.

Account 5305 (Marketing)	'23-'24 Budget	'24-'25 Budget	Notes
Advertising/SEM/SEO/Website	467,000	525,000	
Experience Enhancement	0	50,000	1) Summer Splash 2) Nature Experience
Promotions/PR	50,000	65,000	\$45k for Much PR; increase due to HGTV
Sports Marketing	78,000	82,000	Airstream Ventures
Visitor Services	20,000	40,000	Projects related to HGTV visitor enhancements
Industry Relations	10,000	20,000	Education for TDC staff & members & more local outreach
Event Grants: Contractual Services	500,000	575,000	New events + recurring events
Special Projects	130,000	63,000	Facility planning & HGTV Special Projects; State Grant Consultant
FSF Income	+29,174 (received/approved)	(+20,000) Not included in total below	
TOTAL	\$1,255,000 + \$29,174=\$1,284,174	\$1,420,000	+\$135,826

TDC Budget by Account

Account	Approved 2023-2024	Proposed 2024-2025	Funding Difference
Operations (5301)	185,000	300,000	+115,000
Marketing & Events (5305)	1,255,000	1,420,000	+165,000
Lakes (5306)	254,276	0	
Asset Enhance & Development (5309)	260,000 (Sports Complex: maintenance, exterior netting & goals)	450,000 (Sports Complex: interior netting, land purchase) TDC Sports Facility Grant	+\$190,000
TOTAL	1,700,000 (excluding Lakes)	2,170,000	+470,000

*Will bring adjusted budget back to
TDC & BOCC in early 2025.*

Any questions?



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