

CITY OF YUBA CITY
STAFF REPORT

Date: October 7, 2008
To: Honorable Mayor & Members of the City Council
From: Administration
Presentation By: Steve Kroeger, Assistant City Manager

Summary

Subject: Amendment to Memorandum of Understanding with the Yuba-Sutter Chamber of Commerce

Recommendation: Approve an Amendment to Memorandum of Understanding with the Yuba-Sutter Chamber of Commerce that provides for tourism program funding from Yuba City absent the participation of the City of Marysville, and changes the semi-annual reporting period to April and October.

Fiscal Impact: \$25,750; account 4120-63101, Economic Development – Dues & Subscriptions

Background:

At your meeting of May 20, 2008, the City Council approved \$25,750 in funding for the Chamber of Commerce for fiscal year 2008-09. The funding was conditioned on the other participating jurisdictions' approval of the formula for sharing costs and funding.

Analysis:

The attached letter from Chamber Executive Laura Nicholson provides an update on the Chamber's tourism activities and advises the City that the City of Marysville may not be participating in the program. Since Yuba City's contribution was conditioned on the participation of the other regional jurisdictions (i.e., including Marysville), if Marysville does not participate, then the current Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the Chamber would need to be amended in order for the City's payment to be made.

The Tourism program budget as initially presented by the Chamber to the City Council was \$55,000. Other jurisdiction funds included: Sutter County - \$7,306; Yuba County - \$13,202; Marysville - \$8,742. Absent Marysville's participation, the program would be funded at \$46,258. The Chamber is proposing to proceed with the tourism budget at this reduced level (i.e., not asking that the initial budget be re-apportioned among the remaining jurisdictions).

Although the State budget has been adopted since the date of the Chamber's letter of request (September 9, 2008), the Chamber has advised city staff that the City of Marysville remains uncertain regarding their ability to contribute funds to the program. The Chamber desires to continue with their Tourism program, needs funding in order to continue with this implementation, and is therefore requesting the MOU amendment in order to receive funds from Yuba City. On a related note, the

related note, the County of Sutter has submitted their share of the tourism program funding to the Chamber.

The Chamber is also requesting a change in months during which it provides semi-annual reporting regarding the Tourism program to April and October.

Fiscal Impact:

\$25,750; account 4120-63101, Economic Development – Dues & Subscriptions. Funding is included in the adopted FY2008-09 budget

Alternatives:

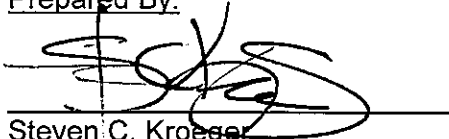
- 1) Do not approve amendment
- 2) Approve an amended MOU that places alternate conditions on City funding.

Recommendation:

Approve an Amendment to Memorandum of Understanding with the Yuba-Sutter Chamber of Commerce that provides for City funding absent the participation of the City of Marysville.


- Attachment:*
- 1) *Letter from Chamber Executive Director Laura Nicholson dated September 9, 2008.*
 - 2) *Community Service/Economic Development funding for FY 08/09 staff report dated May 20, 2008.*

Prepared By:



Steven C. Kroeger
Assistant City Manager

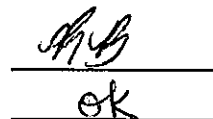
Submitted By:



Steven R. Jepsen
City Manager

Reviewed By:

Finance
City Attorney



OK

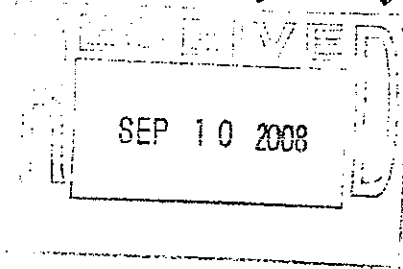


Yuba-Sutter
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

*Save & react
you*

September 9, 2008

Steven Jepsen
City Manager
City of Yuba City
1201 Civic Center Blvd.
Yuba City, CA 95993



Dear Mr. Jepsen,

I am writing to update you about the status of the tourism program at the Yuba-Sutter Chamber of Commerce. At this time, Sutter County, Yuba County and Yuba City have committed to funding the program in 2008-2009. The City of Marysville is waiting until a state budget is approved before determining if funding will be available.

Sutter County has requested an invoice for its share of the tourism program.

If Marysville is unable to participate, the Chamber will revise the tourism Memorandum of Understanding to reflect the three participating jurisdictions. We will be able to continue our tourism program as submitted with minor adjustments, primarily in the increased advertising budget. We will not request additional funds. We would also like to revise the MOU to make our 6-month reports on tourism in April and October of each year, to better adhere to the county's budget planning process.

I am pleased to report that the tourism advertising in VIA and Sunset magazines has generated 965 requests for Visitors Guides to date. We topped 18,000 visits to the tourism web site at www.visitubasutter.com, and 10,000 copies of the Farm Stands map, up from 7,500 copies a year ago, were distributed between April and July. We have already received calls to add more locations to the map next year.

We are excited about the future of tourism in Yuba-Sutter and appreciate the support of our city and county representatives in funding this effort.

Sincerely,

Laura Nicholson
Executive Director/CEO

**City of Yuba City
Staff Report**

Date: May 20, 2008
To: Honorable Mayor & Members of the City Council
From: Finance Department
Presentation By: Robin Bertagna, CPA, Finance Director

Summary

Subject: Community Service/Economic Development funding for FY 08/09

Recommendation: Approve FY 08/09 Funding Requests for Community Service and Economic Development Organizations, direct the Finance Director to include in the Proposed FY 08/09 Budget, and authorize the City Manager to enter into Agreements with the agencies noted.

Fiscal Impact: \$95,000 (\$17,250 account 4220-66001 Non-Departmental—Other Materials & Supplies, \$25,750 account 4120-63101 Economic Development—Dues and Subscriptions, and \$52,000 account 4120-62701 Economic Development—Professional Services)

Background:

Community Organizations have submitted requests for funding for FY 08/09 totaling \$98,750. These organizations have been invited to attend the Council Meeting on May 20, 2008, in order to present the Council with their work program for the upcoming year and answer any questions Council may have relative to their funding request.

Analysis:

Staff received the following requests for community contributions:

Organization	Requested	Recommended
Yuba-Sutter Chamber of Commerce	\$25,750	\$25,750*
Yuba-Sutter Economic Development Corp.	\$52,000	\$52,000
Yuba Sutter Regional Arts Council	\$16,000	\$12,250
The Acting Company	\$5,000	\$5,000
Totals	\$98,750	\$95,000

*The recommended funding for the Yuba-Sutter Chamber of Commerce is subject to the other participating jurisdictions approval of the formula for sharing of costs and funding.

For comparison purposes, in FY 07/08 the City provided funding for community organizations as follows:

Yuba-Sutter Chamber of Commerce	\$22,306
Yuba-Sutter Economic Development Corp.	\$52,000
Yuba Sutter Regional Arts Council	\$12,258
The Acting Company	<u>\$ 6,132</u>
Total	<u>\$92,696</u>

Given the City's economic constraints, it was requested that City Departments submit their budget requests for FY 08/09 with no increases in materials, supplies or services over what was approved for FY 07/08. Using the same rationale for approving funding requests for community organizations, staff recommends approval of funding requests as outlined above. Staff is recommending an increase of \$3,444 for the Chamber because their budget is developed utilizing a formula for funding which impacts not only the City but the other participating jurisdictions. It is recommended that the City's funding be subject to the approval of the related contributions from the other jurisdictions.

Fiscal Impact:

The FY 08/09 budget is still in the development stages and therefore would allow staff to incorporate funding requests for community service organizations as authorized by City Council.

Alternatives:

- 1) Fund as recommended
- 2) Increase funding to requested amounts
- 3) Decrease funding
- 4) Do not fund

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that Council authorize funding for community contributions at the levels outlined above, direct the Finance Director to include in the Proposed FY 08/09 Budget, and authorize the City Manager to enter into Agreements with the agencies noted for service deliverables in exchange for payment of the recommended funding.

Prepared By:



Robin Bertagna, CPA
Finance Director

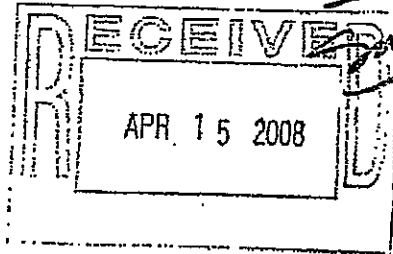
Submitted By:



Steven R. Jepsen
City Manager

Reviewed By:

City Attorney



April 14, 2008

Steve Jepsen
Yuba City City Manager
1201 Civic Center Blvd.
Yuba City, CA 95993

Enclosed please find the Yuba-Sutter Chamber of Commerce Tourism Committee 2008-2009 Proposed Budget and Program of Work.

The Tourism Committee is asking Yuba City to include this request for funding in the Yuba City budget for 2008-2009. The committee is requesting funding from Transient Occupancy Tax revenues raised by the county in 2007-2008.

The Tourism Committee is requesting \$55,000 in total funding from TOT funds from the four jurisdictions, including Yuba County, Sutter County, and the cities of Marysville and Yuba City. The funding request is based on a formula in which each jurisdiction pays a base rate of \$5,000. The remainder was determined using the percentage of hotel rooms in each jurisdiction.

The request for additional funding follows a successful year in which the Tourism Committee has continued to build the website at www.visitubasutter.com and the corresponding brochures, including the highly popular Farm Stands map. We moved forward with VIA and Sunset magazine advertising that is generating new requests for tourism information. An online description of Yuba-Sutter that launched on www.sunsetgetaways.com on April 1, 2008, resulted in 60 requests for Visitors Guides in the first week. We also are involved in regional efforts to promote the Yuba-Sutter community as outlined in the Program of Work.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. If you have questions, I can be reached at 743-6501.

Sincerely,

Laura Nicholson
Executive Director/CEO



2008-2009 TOURISM BUDGET

- Chamber administration of program (breakdown follows)	\$18,000
- Website updates & maintenance, new Features & content	\$ 2,000
- Website monthly update on site Current events & Coming Up (Will include ag updates) Note: Would prefer to update weekly but too costly	\$ 1,800
- Brochures & maps (design & printing) Note: Includes Farm Stands and historical brochures	\$10,000
- Advertising VIA/Sunset, etc.	\$15,000
- Promotion & Marketing (Detailed breakdown follows)	\$ 8,200
Breakdown:	
- Y-S Community guide to mail	\$ 2,000
- Yuba City historic homes tour brochure	\$ 2,000
- Postage & supplies	\$ 2,500
- CVTA Meetings mileage	\$ 500
- Tourism seminars and training	\$ 500
- Memberships	\$ 700
 Total:	 \$55,000

BREAKDOWN OF FUNDING BY JURISDICTION

	2007-2008	2008-2009 proposed
Sutter	7,285	7,306
Yuba	12,481	13,202
Marysville	7,961	8,742
Yuba City	22,306	25,750

Note: Yuba City provided additional funding of \$4,110 to the funding request for 2007-2008.

CHAMBER TOURISM ADMINISTRATION COSTS – 2008-2009
Per Month

Requests for information/staff time/:	800
Tourism materials distribution:	50
Special Events:	150
(Attending planning sessions for events, assisting groups with information, booths at events and production of welcome/tourism materials for tour groups, attending tourism seminars, etc.)	
Web site maintenance	300
(Added responsibilities include fact checking and continuous updating of tourism web site content, calendaring and adding and improving sections.)	
VIA magazine online calendar	20
Regularly submit local events	
Advertising & Promotion	55
(Coordinating all ad contracts, including magazine ads, online ads, and Special Interest Publication materials. Produce all written copy, proof ads, monitor requests for tourism information generated by advertising and prepare and mail materials.)	
Brochures production	60
(Update and fact check all brochures, produce new content, proof all tourism materials and arrange for distribution.)	
Telephone	30
Copier	15
(copying calendars, etc. – lease cost)	
Postage Meter (lease cost)	20 (% related to tourism)
Total:	\$1,500 per month



2008-2009 Tourism Program of Work

OVERALL GOALS:

- Develop partnerships within the tourism industry inside and outside the Yuba-Sutter community to provide more opportunities to promote the area.
- Improve and expand the tourism web site as outlined in the goals below.
- Work with the Central Valley Tourism Association and move toward a plan for a Visitors Center dedicated to tourism in the Yuba-Sutter community.

STEPS TO TAKE:

- Form a task force for planning a Tourism/Chamber office in Yuba City.
- Continue work on a 3-5 year plan for branding tourism in the Yuba-Sutter region, establishing a free standing tourism program and creating economic development opportunities for tourism in Yuba-Sutter. Includes planning for California Visitors Center designation.
- Add local photos of all major events and amenities, recreational, cultural and agriculture, to the tourism web site at www.visityubasutter.com.
- Add a bi-monthly short feature – What's Happening - that identifies upcoming local events and activities of interest to the tourism web site. A second short feature – Coming Up – would give previews of tourism-related events and activities to help in planning a visit.
- Increase web site use at least 20 percent in 2007-2008.
- Maintain and increase advertising and marketing opportunities and send What's Happening and Coming Up information to regional media via Chamberware. More effort to get articles and television coverage of Yuba-Sutter activities.
- Continue successful brochures and add Tour of Yuba City Historic Homes and a Yuba-Sutter community guide for people requesting tourism information.
- Attend Central Valley Tourism Association meetings to work in partnership on marketing opportunities for the Yuba-Sutter region.
- Review Visitors Guide and re-design to brand the area and update the appearance to be more related to today's tourism industry.
- Attend tourism related trade shows and seminars
- Pursue information on producing a hardcover Visitors Guides for hotel rooms in the region.



2007-2008 Tourism Report

BENCHMARKS:

- The Tourism web site is giving us a good view of use of the site. Since the launch of the site in May 2007, visits. Information obtained includes:

	# of Visitors	# of Visits	# of Page Views
Aug. 2007	1,742	2,007	5,920
Sept. 2007	1,683	1,884	5,147
Oct. 2007	1,701	1,960	5,446
Nov. 2007	1,621	1,894	5,404
Dec. 2007	1,566	1,803	5,364
Jan. 2008	1,732	1,959	5,480
Feb. 2008	1,870	2,130	6,226
March 2008	2,137	2,432	6,633

- Visitors to the tourism web site have come from 31 countries and territories. The majority of visitors, right around 80 percent come from the United States. The remaining countries include the most visitors from United Kingdom and Canada then Germany, Ireland, Mexico and India. Lesser numbers came from Australia, Belgium, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Norway, Phillipines, South Korea and Turkey and Romania.
- The Tourism web master put a guest book on the tourism web site to help with tracking. We will be working on ways to generate interest in signing up on the page.

MAGAZINE ADVERTISING

VIA Magazine and Sunset Magazine will both track leads from their online advertising service and will send weekly updates for 90 days.

- In the first week that the Yuba-Sutter area was featured at www.sunsetgetaways.com, there were 60 requests for Visitors Guides. In the second week, we received 25 requests. Tourism web site traffic is rising, indicating response to the advertising.
- A volunteer contacted area community groups and event organizers for information regarding visitors to the area.

OVERALL GOALS:

- Develop a strategic and comprehensive tourism plan based on focus groups and targeted research while initiating immediate actions to promote tourism in Yuba-Sutter.
- Develop partnerships within the tourism industry inside and outside the Yuba-Sutter community to provide more opportunities to promote the area.
- Develop a large, dynamic web site for tourism that is supported by print products for out-of-area and in-town visitors.

STEPS TO TAKE:

- Identify a target market for tourism – starting with Yuba-Sutter as a day trip destination.
- Develop a marketing plan for getting information out in this target market (VIA, Sunset, newspaper articles, etc.)
- Continue to produce the website-friendly brochures, deciding which ones we want to keep and which ones need to change.
- Hold focus groups with members of the tourism industry to determine their needs.
- Benchmark tourism (ie. Guestbook on web site, surveys) to determine where tourists come from, what they do, where they get information and how they spend.
- Join the Central Valley Tourism Association and Western Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus.
- Use all of the above information to develop a 3-5 year plan for tourism that expands off this foundation.

COMPLETED TO DATE:

TARGET MARKET:

- Identified six counties – Butte, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Yolo and Colusa -- as a target market for day trips to the Yuba-Sutter area. We included the Bay Area as another area to target due to the large number of people coming to visit the Sutter Buttes, recreational areas in Yuba County and various events and festivals.
- The Tourism web master made contact with web masters of various tourism web site listings to add a link to maximize searches to www.visitubasutter.com.

MARKETING PLAN:

- Reserved space in Gold Country Adventures – a brochure featuring highlighted communities - that is distributed along the I-5 corridor from Sacramento to Redding during the summer months.
- Contracted with Sunset Magazine for advertising in three issues starting in April. The circulation is 335,000 in the Northern California edition, which goes from Fresno County to the Oregon border. The committee also contracted for a Special Interest Publication called Weekend Getaways with a circulation of 500,000. The Yuba-Sutter region will be a featured advertiser online in the June issue.
- Contracted with VIA Magazine for May/June, July/August, September/October issues. The circulation is 2.85 million and includes Nevada and Utah.
- Advertising in Sunset and VIA is 4-color, 2X2 advertising. Both magazines include an online advertisers section. Weekly for 90 days, the Chamber will receive notices of the people who went to the Yuba-Sutter tourism web site using the magazines' online service.
- The Chamber staff began regularly adding events to VIA's online calendar and successfully placed the Total Home & Garden Show. "All submissions are subject to editing and heartless rejection," the magazine notes.
- A Tourism volunteer is coordinating with Yuba and Sutter counties to provide tourism materials at the state fair booth(s).

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS:

- Fifteen thousand of the 2008 Visitors Guides were published in January and have been distributed to more than 100 locations, including area hotels, motels and restaurants. About 5,000 Visitors Guides are being held for later distribution to the area recreational areas, 20 community events (see attached), the California State Fair and for requests.
- Reviewed brochures and began work on reprints of Walking Tour of Marysville, Historical landmarks and sites – 7,500 each - increased Farm Stands printing to 10,000 copies due to its popularity.
- Provided information to Roseville author Richard Calhoun for the book California Food Adventures to be released in Spring 2008.
- Provided tourism information, including information about recreational amenities, to the Mobil Travel Guide Road Atlas.
- Assisted the Extra/Ordinary Film Project (www.extraordinaryfilmproject.com) with hosting a film festival in Yuba-City to show 4 movies on a weekend and audition for part for scenes to be shot in the area. Identified groups that could assist.

FOCUS GROUPS:

- Mike Moyers facilitated two (2) focus groups centering on the hotels, motels and restaurants, recreational facilities and events. Each person was interviewed individually then participated in the focus group.

AFFILIATIONS – Memberships and seminars:

- Joined the Central Valley Tourism Association: Robert Reich, Yuba-Sutter Regional Arts Council, to attend meetings in Modesto.
- Joined the Western Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus.
- These affiliations offer numerous print and online opportunities to publicize the area, to have assistance publicizing the area through referrals and to travel writers; also to participate in tourism-related events.
- Robert Reich, Yuba-Sutter Regional Arts Council, attended a Cultural & Historical Tourism Seminar in Chico.
- Robert Reich, Yuba-Sutter Regional Arts Council, attended a Cultural & Historical Tourism Symposium in Monterey.
- Bill Simmons, Laura Nicholson and Caprice Jones attended the annual luncheon of the Yolo County Visitors Bureau with speaker Berkeley Young of Young Strategies on the Top 10 trends in tourism. Key message, "Don't be afraid to support tourism outside your Area. Partnerships are proving to drive tourism to surrounding areas
- Robert Reich attended the Civic Amenities findings event by the Great Valley Center in Folsom and we will attend the local event.

THINGS WE HAVE TALKED ABOUT DOING IN THE FUTURE

- Join California Travel and Tourism Commission.
- Hardbound Visitors Guides for hotel rooms. Need a count of the number of rooms.
- Tourism web site advertising
- Attend Tourism-related trade shows
- Display stands for tourism materials
- GPS locations on the web site
- New brochures – bird watching, fishing and camping guides, etc.
- Gold mining as a topic for the web site.
- Incentives to get people to sign the Tourism web site guest book.

MONTHLY TOURISM TO DO LIST

OCTOBER

DONE

- Develop a new tourism subcommittee that reflects the four areas of tourism -- recreational, cultural & historical, agricultural, events and festivals.
- Determine the target market for the next phase of the tourism program and identify the targeted counties.
- Determine what organizations the tourism subcommittee wants to join.
- Set a permanent monthly meeting date and time.
- Review the To Do list and Timeline and finalize.
- Review existing tourism materials, costs of re-printing (some need to be updated)

NOVEMBER

DONE

- Get advertising rates for Sunset and VIA magazines; other publications
- Determine what new brochures will be done in 2008.
- Put a guestbook on the web site to determine where visitors are coming from.
- Talk to leaders in Visitors Centers for direction, ideas and suggestions.

DECEMBER

DONE

- Decide what brochures to continue; which to change/delete, etc.; which to add. Suggestions have included bird watching, antiquing, fishing, boating and camping sites. Review all materials, including Yuba County tourism materials, for duplication and relevancy.
- Determine how many copies to make of each brochure and associated costs.
- Contract for new promotional materials.

JANUARY

DONE

- Request meeting with jurisdictions to meet February 15, 2008, MOU requirement.
- Submit items for events calendar for Sunset and VIA magazines – free.
- Begin collecting content for new brochures.
- Begin discussing the next phase of the tourism program and funding requests in the regular budget cycle.

FEBRUARY

DONE

- Determine contacts and timeline for budget hearings to submit requests
- Submit content for brochures to a-d agency for completion no later than mid-March
- Determine a master distribution list for tourism materials.
- Determine what focus groups are wanted. Mike Moyers will facilitate.

MARCH

- Request presentations to jurisdictions by April 15.
- Plan 2008-2009 program for budget cycle.
- Conduct focus groups. Written report to be filed March 14.
- Discuss findings of focus groups. Adjust To Do list accordingly.
- Determine a survey method using results from the focus group.

APRIL

- Distribute Tourism materials
- Make Tourism presentations
- Determine what Chambers, CVCs and Tourism centers, publications are within That 60-mile radius.
- Identify the tourism agencies, newspapers and magazines in this zone that might be sources for marketing.
- Determine what type of marketing opportunities are available and what we want to do.
- Plan for a promotional campaign. Assess funds for availability based on costs determined for VIA and Sunset magazine and any other publications. Determine a timeframe and cost for the campaign.

MAY

- Request meeting with jurisdictions to meet June 15, 2008, MOU requirement
- Contact Yuba and Sutter counties representatives for state fair. Make arrangements for tourism materials to go to state fair booths.
- Start promotional campaign

JUNE

- Make Tourism presentations