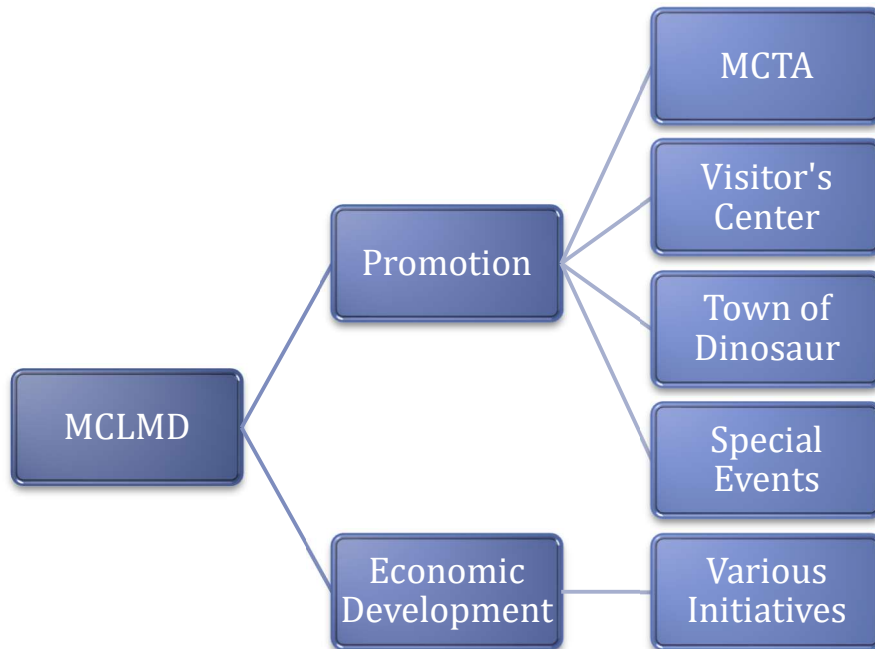


2025 Strategic Plan

Mission

The Moffat County Local Marketing District (MCLMD) will support, enhance and encourage initiatives that create economic diversification, development, and stability for Moffat County as it transitions from a coal reliant community. This will include, but is not limited to, the promotion of Moffat County as a premier recreation and tourism destination.



Background

The MCLMD board continues to maintain our key stakeholder partnerships with Moffat County Tourism Association (MCTA), Craig Chamber of Commerce, City of Craig, Moffat County, and the Town of Dinosaur.

All of these entities are vested in the future success of Moffat County. With the reality of a significant reduction in coal generated electricity and mining activities less than three years away; it is imperative that all stakeholders recognize the urgency of creating and sustaining a diverse economy and expedite efforts to achieve this paradigm shift. As MCLMD plans for 2025, it must also recognize the impending sunset of the current ballot initiative scheduled for the end of 2025. With the scheduled closing of one of the power plant units also

scheduled for 2025; the MCLMD and Moffat County's voting population must decide if the lodging tax revenue should be considered a viable source of funds for Moffat County for its aggressive pursuit of strategies and initiatives that will strengthen and diversify our economy and tourism industry.

For 2024, the YTD revenue through August 31, 2024, is \$210,189.68. Using a four-year average for the months of September through December, the projected revenue for 2024 is \$341,276.34. If this projection holds true, yearend revenue will be down 14% year-over-year 2023 v. 2024. While the projected revenue for 2024 is \$342,000, the MCLMD is using a conservative estimate of budgeted revenue of \$292,500 for our 2025 budget year or roughly 10% lower than the \$325,000 used for 2024. This conservative estimate reflects possible reduction in hunting season traffic due to the winter kill experienced during the 2022/23 winter with hunters who visited in 2023 not returning in 2024. The estimate also reflects possible future recessionary conditions in 2025.

If historic averages are correct, the yearend lodging tax revenue should be at or above the 2024 budget of \$325,000. For 2024, MCLMD allocated a significant portion of its budget, \$191,500, to existing events in Moffat County. These events ranged from summer events such as the Yampa River Roots Reggae Festival, Whittle the Wood, Balloon Festival, and Moffat County Fair. Other events included the Colorado High School Rodeo finals, Coal Mountain Skijoring, Dinosaur Stone Age Stampede, and festivals orchestrated by the Downtown Business Association.

MCLMD continues to be limited in how tax revenue can be used to further our strategic plan. This limitation illustrates the need for all municipal entities working together to steward economic development into projects that are tangible and deliverable to the citizens of Moffat County.

2025 Strategic Plan

The 2025 Strategic Plan will focus on our Cornerstone Projects while continuing to assist with funding events to draw tourists to Moffat County. The MCLMD will continue to uphold the will of the voters to implement a plan to diversify and develop the Moffat County economy, and to effectively promote its physical attributes. We expect that the Ex Officio Board be constructive and critical in its review of this plan. The MCLMD will use this feedback to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of this plan.

For 2025, the MCLMD strategic plan will be focused on four areas. Those areas include, 1.) Economic Development; 2.) Community Marketing / Promotion; 3.) Cornerstone Projects;

and 4.) Event Support. This plan will be governed by C.R.S. 29-25-101. This plan will also be governed by collaboration between MCLMD, MCTA, and the Visitor's Center (both Craig and Dinosaur) and other governmental entities as necessary. Input will also be solicited from the Craig Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Business Association, and concerned community members to collaborate on other projects that will promote Moffat County and develop its economy.

Economic Development

1. Moffat County faces the reality that three major employers will have shut down operations or significantly scaled back their operations by the end of 2028. MCLMD will support any efforts to identify alternative uses for our natural resources or industries that can capitalize on the infrastructure already created by such entities. Economic development also includes, but is not limited to, the expansion of existing businesses and programs to develop and encourage start-up businesses. MCLMD will also assist in other strategies designed to diversify and stabilize our local economy. Strengthening the economy also includes community development. The MCLMD will be an active participant in the discussion of community housing, regional transportation, and the Just Transition initiatives.

Community Marketing

1. MCLMD sees the need for an effective promotion of Moffat County, not only for recreation but also to attract businesses. The opportunity to promote various economic opportunity zones and development projects is time sensitive and MCLMD wants to assist in any way possible to expedite a prospectus for investors. With the construction of the river park and redevelopment of the courthouse site, MCLMD could entertain any partnership opportunities to promote the use of these assets.
2. *(Holdover Goal from 2023 and 2024 Plan)* MCLMD will begin a campaign to gain recognition for the contributions we make to economic expansion and diversification; support for local events; and other programs promoting tourism and our community. This includes but is not limited to 'Big Check' presentations for project supports; creating an Annual Report; quarterly ads (either print or on social media); consistent updates to stakeholder partners; and overall marketing. MCLMD receives its funding from visitors to our community, this revenue source is set to sunset in 2025. If the community wants to continue to reinvest after 2025, MCLMD needs to showcase its accomplishments to gain community awareness.

3. MCLMD will allocate funds to support community events. Funds will also be allocated to events, initiatives, and organizations that capitalize on the natural resources existing in Moffat County. These funds will be allocated with stipulations that each event, initiative, and organization will be evaluated based on its role in community development, number of visitors attracted, depth of business plan, financial viability, and how the event correlates to Moffat County's future vision. Special events should enhance community development. These events should also utilize data to evaluate their event's ability to draw outside visitors and how to determine how to increase participation through focused marketing efforts.
4. Provide financial support to the Moffat County Visitor's Center subject to a review of a detailed and complete financial information regarding operating expenses and revenues.
5. Provide a consistent and predictable funding process for event funding. This entails having one grant request session for existing events. The deadline for funding requests will be December 31, 2024. MCLMD will entertain requests for new events as they are received.

Cornerstone Projects for 2025

1. **Economic Development** – Provide financial support for economic development initiatives as presented by various local organizations and community individuals focused on looking forward to the economic diversification of Moffat County. These initiatives may include, but are not limited to, start-up businesses, business plan competitions, expansion of existing businesses, and resources for usability analysis of Moffat County resources. Also, providing resources and tools for those seeking funding to properly develop viable business plans and budgets to create sustainable local business.
 2. **Community Marketing / Attraction**– Financially support efforts to advertise key partners, events, initiatives, and organizations.
 3. **Town of Dinosaur Project Development and Strategic Support** – Consider resource requests from the Town of Dinosaur to further its promotion and economic development with initiatives that align with the 2025 MCLMD strategic plan.
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4. **Annual Report** – MCLMD will provide an annual report to key partners and the community highlighting board accomplishments through the utilization of Lodging Tax Revenue.
5. **Support of Recreational Opportunities** – Place an emphasis on events, initiatives, and organizations that capitalize on Moffat County’s natural resources.

2025 Budget Strategy

Based on the 2025 strategic plan and objectives listed above, the LMD Board proposes to amend the budget to reflect the following allocation strategy.

- Estimated 2025 Lodging Tax Revenue: \$292,500 *(\$325M in 2024)*
- Financial Support for up to \$100,000 for projects and initiatives which align with our Cornerstone projects. *(\$100M in 2024)*
- Financial support up to \$72,500 for existing events *(\$100M in 2024)*
- Financial support up to \$10,000 for MCLMD operational expenses *(\$15M in 2024)*
- Financial support up to \$15,000 for new events *(\$15M in 2024)*
- Financial support up to \$20,000 for Colorado High School Finals Rodeo *(\$20M in 2024)*
- Financial support up to \$75,000 for Strategic Partners *(\$75M in 2024)*
- MCLMD earmarks \$223,000 of historical, present, and future revenue for cornerstone projects, and new / emerging initiatives and/or projects emerging in 2025 and requesting MCLMD funds, subject to MCLMD’s statutory funding guidelines *(this total is based on current unencumbered cash on hand of \$232,000 based on August 31, 2024 financials; less \$135,080 and \$3,300 awarded to MRH and the Museum of Northwest Colorado (respectively) during the September 12, 2024 meeting, and \$130,000 of estimated 2024 revenue for Sept – Dec. based on historical 4-yr average)*
- This creates total possible budget expenditures of \$515,500 *(\$223,000 identified above plus the \$292,500 estimated 2025 budget).*