



Fremont County Tourism Council 2018 Destination Marketing Report

2018 Volunteer Board Appointees

Heidi Anderson, Treasurer – completed Kristyn’s appointment ending 12/31/2018
Kristyn Econome, Treasurer – Fremont Adventure Recreation, resigned 7/31/2018
Peggy Gair, Secretary – Royal Gorge Bridge & Park through 12/31/2020
Blaine Heckart, Board – Quality Inn & Suites through 12/31/2020
Larry Hill, Board – Starlite Campground through 12/31/2019
Beth Katchmar, Vice-Chair – Pizza Madness through 12/31/2021
Steve Kaverman, Chair – Tourism Champion through 12/31/2019
John Miller, Board – Willie’s Antiques through 12/31/2021

Ex-Officio Members

Cañon City Chamber – Kris Webb
Commissioner – Dwayne McFall
Cañon City Council – represented intermittently by Dolly Gonzales
Florence City Council – open
Florence Chamber – Barna Kasa
Fremont Heritage Commission – Jim Nelson
Fremont EDC – represented intermittently by Mike Bandera

1 Lodging Tax Collections & Total Investments*

Budgeted State Remittance: \$185,000
Actual Lodging Tax Remittance: \$235,905 **(2.8% increase over 2017)**
CTO Matching Marketing Grant: \$25,000
OEDIT Grant: \$69,077 (actual \$75,000)

Total Fund: \$329,982

Total Investments & Expenses: \$286,720
Surplus: \$43,262

*As reported by County Finance Department, 2/20/19.

TABLE 1
Fremont County Tourism Council
2018 / Key Accounts Summary

Account/Activity	Budget	Authorized	Variance + /-
Destination Management Services	\$65,000	\$68,250	-\$3,250
Traditional Marketing	\$10,000	\$5,500	+\$4,500
Community Funding	\$6,000	\$9,501	-\$3,501
Visitor Guide Distribution	\$26,000	\$25,033	+\$966
Internet Marketing	\$50,000	\$45,921	+\$4,078
OEDIT Digital Marketing	\$25,000	\$25,000	0
OEDIT Electronic Outdoor	\$20,000	\$20,000	0
OEDIT VisitCOS Partnership	\$10,000	\$10,000	0
OEDIT Video & Photo	\$20,000	\$20,000	0
Visitor Guide Fulfillment	\$31,000	\$21,000	+\$10,000
Chamber Services	\$12,000	\$10,999	+\$1,000
Tourism Relations	\$3,400	\$3,007	+\$393
County Services	\$1,264	\$1,264	0

Since 2014, the Fremont County Tourism Council has been successful in securing grants totaling \$455,000.00 dollars, plus additional monies through gifts. Together, grants and gifts amount to one-third of total funding over this period. The effective use of these dollars has enabled the Tourism Council to improve its reach and impact in attracting visitors to the region. Visitor spending has created a huge return on investment, benefiting every resident, supporting hundreds businesses and the jobs they create. **Tourism Pays!**

2 Economic Benefits

Lodging tax collections of \$235,905 means \$11,795,250 was spent just on hotels! Assuming an average room sold for \$100 per night, means 117,952 room-nights happened. If guest(s) in each of those rooms spent another \$100 in the region, an ADDITIONAL \$11,795,250 was spent here.

Research conducted for the Colorado Tourism Office by Dean Runyon Associates provides another snapshot of economic impact of tourism to Fremont County.

Impact/Benefit	2016	2017	Change
Travel Spending	\$64.8 million	\$71.0 million	+\$6.2 million
Earnings	\$16.6 million	\$18.1 million	+\$1.5 million
Tourism Jobs	825	897	+72
Local Taxes	\$2.4 million	\$2.7 million	+\$0.3 million
State Taxes	\$ 1.9 million	\$2.0 million	+\$0.1 million

2018 figures are anticipated in June, and are expected to show continuing improvement.
Complete Report: [Colorado Travel Impacts](#)

Tourism is one of the most powerful drivers of Colorado's economy, creating jobs faster than any other industry sector while fueling business income and tax revenues that support everything from schools to transportation to municipal services. In 2017, Colorado attracted a record 84.7 million visitors, plus 1 million international visitors, who collectively spent \$20.9 billion, generating \$1.28 billion in local and state taxes, and directly supporting over 171,000 jobs with earnings of over \$6.3 billion.

Skeptics of lodging taxes, increased tourism and destination marketing investments should be relieved to learn that to replace the \$1.28 billion in local and state tax revenues generated by visitors to Colorado in the 2017 calendar year would require an additional \$228 in tax payments from each of state's 5.61 million residents.

3 Digital Marketing

All performance statistics are for the calendar year.

- **Facebook**
 - **People Reached 555,782**
 - Impressions 1,451,674
 - Engagement 94,407 (Likes, Shares, Comments)

Facebook campaigns 2018 Reach Acquisition Cost: \$0.0138 per person reached.

- **Google Search and Re-Targeting and YouTube campaigns**

- Search clicks 68,527
- Display Clicks 69,853
- Video Views 851,339
- Total Impressions 17,700,000

Google campaigns 2018 Total Acquisition Cost: \$0.0281 per person

- **Website Traffic**

- Visitors 169,498
- Page views 382,480
- Visitor Guide Requests 1,405

CTO Social Media Coops

(The CTO matched every FCTC investment of \$1,000 with \$1,000)

- **Royal Gorge Region – What a River Trip can Teach Kids**
 - People Reached Organically (@no cost to CTO or FCTC): 68,295
 - Paid Reach 142,098
 - Likes 1,246
- **6 Trails for Biking Bliss the Royal Gorge Region**
 - Total Reach 131,430
 - Likes 1,077

Other Digital & Print Marketing Channels

- VisitCOS.com email newsletters
- Colorado.com email newsletters
- Colorado.com Native Ads
- Colorado.com Sponsored Content Page
- Colorado.com Leads Program
- Colorado.com Web and Print Listings
- VisitCOS.com Native Ads
- 16th St. Mall Digital Billboard

Email Newsletters

VistaWorks publishes a monthly email newsletter for the FCTC with over **83,900 opt-in subscribers**. The newsletter highlights events, attractions, activities, etc.

4 Royal Gorge Visitor's Guide

Guides were ***distributed*** to tourist information racks and Colorado's ten official visitor centers under the terms of a \$13,953.00 contract with **Certified Folder Display Service, Inc.**

Colorado Activity Centers (CAC) also distributed guides to their own brochure & magazine racks, strategically complementing locations covered by Certified.

Colorado Activity Centers (CAC) fulfilled 9,592 direct requests for printed copies of the Royal Gorge Vacation Guide. A total of \$27,625 was invested in postage, handling and supplies, or \$2.75 per guide.

These requests reached us though the publisher's website and (1,351), as well as from leads programs subscribed to through the Colorado Tourism Office (6,869) and VISIT Colorado Springs (1,372).

Additional copies for the guide were distributed through the Cañon City Chamber of Commerce. **Total 2018 production was 100,000 copies.**

Cañon City Chamber of Commerce

The Cañon City Chamber of Commerce is the defacto 'OFFICE' and public face for the virtual organization that is FCTC, answering the published telephone numbers and responding to inquiries from email and walk-in visitors.

- Tourism telephone inquiries: 1,666 to tourism lines. 2,319 including tourism-related calls made to the General Information number
- Tourism Walk-in's to Chamber office: 1,568
- Visitor Cabin in Veteran's Park (May to September): 3,789
- The Chamber is the local repository of Royal Gorge Visitor's Guide. They are distributed to visitors from the Peabody and the Cabin in Veteran's Park, and are available to local businesses wishing to maintain their own supply for distribution.

CTO Grant Recipient

On behalf of the region, VistaWorks compiled and submitted an application for the Colorado Tourism Office grant in 2018. **For the 6th consecutive year, the FCTC was successful in obtaining a \$25,000 grant**, which we matched with \$25,000 from the FCTC budget. This money is invaluable and was used for the following:

- Expanded Social Media Promotion
- Expanded Search Engine Marketing
- Visitor Guide Fulfillment
- 360 Degree Video Production
- Stewardship Promotion of Trails
- Heritage Self-Guided Tour Guide Printing

Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) Grant Recipient

A \$75,000 marketing grant was invested as follows:

- Brand Awareness via Digital Marketing / Native Ads
- Photography and Videography
- Outdoor Digital Billboard Advertising
- Brand Awareness via Digital Marketing / Re-Marketing / YouTube

See TABLE 1 above for how that \$75,000 was invested in each category.

Destination Marketing Partners

As one of the few all-volunteer Destination Marketing Organization in Colorado, the Fremont County Tourism Council relies on its marketing partners to reach and influence prospective visitors. Integral to those efforts are:

- **VistaWorks**, Agency of Record. Coordinates all marketing campaigns, communications & ad buys. Website design, content creation and administrative support.
- **Fremont County**, administrative support with meeting minutes, accounts payable and financial reporting (special thanks to Charlene Halstead and Andy Lovins).
- **Colorado Activity Centers (CAC)**, publishes the Visitor Guide. CAC complements Guide distribution using their own racks and resources, and through 2018, fulfilled direct requests for Visitor Guides.
- **Certified Folder**, distributes Visitor Guides to racks over a wide area of the state.
- **VisitCOS** (Visit Colorado Springs) is a major generator of leads (prospective visitors, seeking information about our destination). VisitCOS produces News Releases and social media programming featuring stories about the Royal Gorge Region.
- **Colorado Tourism Office** and Colorado.com, the state's official tourism website, generates the majority of leads for our marketing efforts.

Fremont County Heritage Commission

The Council continued to work with the Heritage Commission on self-guided tours, using a portion of the CTO grant to support their projects. In 2018, the Heritage Commission distributed 3,384 print copies of seven (7) different tour booklets. Another 4,473 copies were downloaded electronically from FremontHeritage.com and RoyalGorgeRegion.com

Fremont Adventure Recreation – FAR

With FCTC/CTO support, FAR was able to print nearly 5,000 trail guides, all of which were distributed by June of 2017. FAR's full-color guides went out to biking/hiking shops across Colorado, in Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Buena Vista, Salida, Gunnison, and others. FAR also distributed the guides locally via the Chamber of Commerce, Red Canyon Cycles, as well as through other FAR supporters.

Community Grants

FCTC Bylaws require that at least 5% of annual lodging tax revenue be distributed to local community organizations. **\$9,501.00 was distributed to seven (7) community organizations to help fund event marketing efforts.**

City Lodging Tax Issue 2A

Following the failure of Issue 2B a proposal to create a City lodging tax, in 2017, the **Royal Gorge Regional Tourism Council (RGRTC)**, chartered by Cañon City, undertook an effort to obtain voter approval for Issue 2A on the November 2018 ballot. Despite support from the Board of County Commissioners, community leaders and businesses, it too failed to win voter approval by a narrow margin.

The City of Cañon City plans to revisit creating a Tourism Marketing District (Local Marketing District) using provisions of Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS).

Two members of the Fremont County Tourism Council also served on the RGRTC.

Industry Participation & Association

The FCTC is a member of both the Colorado Association of Destination Marketing Executives (CADMO) and the Tourism Industry Association of Colorado (TIAC).

CADMO's membership is comprised of ~25 Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO's) from across the state, and works closely with the Colorado Tourism Office. The FCTC Chairman participates in quarterly calls among members, and attends the Annual Retreat, and membership meeting conducted in conjunction with the Governor's Tourism Conference each fall.

TIAC's membership is comprised of DMO's and other tourism-related businesses across Colorado. Membership dues, and proceeds from the Annual Legislative Reception, support lobbying efforts in the state legislature; monitoring legislation that may impact tourism.

Tourism Relations / Conferences

- JANUARY

TIAC Legislative Reception. The Royal Gorge Region was a Bronze Sponsor of this annual event.

- MARCH

Region 13 Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Partnership (Re13TORP). Represents government and industry partners in Fremont, Custer, Chaffee and Lake Counties. Several meetings were held throughout the year.

- APRIL

Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area. Meeting with rafting, State Park and regional recreation operators, to promote Fremont County attractions and activities, as well as those in other Region 13 Counties.

FCTC Chairman was interviewed on the KRLN Morning Show concerning regional tourism, and FCTC efforts to promote Fremont County as a tourist destination.

- MAY

Southern Colorado Tourism Summit (SOCO Summit). The FCTC was a sponsor for this regional tourism conference. Sponsorship made it possible for several FCTC board members and volunteers to attend the conference at no charge. Volunteers staffed an information booth. FCTC Chairman conducted a one of the educational/professional development sessions offered during the conference.

- JUNE

Greater Arkansas Nature Association (GARNA). FCTC Chairman presented at GARNA's annual pre-season meeting for members of the Arkansas River Outfitter's Association (AROA) and river guides from most of the rafting operators on the Arkansas.

FODORS Writer Visit. FCTC and FAR representatives supported a 2 day visit to the area by a writer from Fodor's Travel Guide, a leading travel guidebook, assisting the author with updating the section of the travel guide featuring the Royal Gorge Region.

- JULY

FCTC and area tourism-related businesses supported a 2-Day Familiarization Tour (FAM) for staff of the Colorado Welcome Center in Lamar, Colorado.

- AUGUST

Accepted the resignation of FCTC Board Treasurer Kristyn Econome, following her appointment as a teacher with the Cañon City School District. Kristyn was replaced in September by Heidi Anderson, who fulfilled the remainder of Kristyn's appointment, which ended 12/31/18.

- OCTOBER

FCTC Chairman attended the Governor's Tourism Conference, attending meetings for the CADMO and \TIAC, held jointly with the conference.

2018 Press Releases & Media Coverage

1. Listed historic districts on <https://www.colorado.com/articles/see-free-colorado-historic-districts>
2. Submitted winter festivities to CTO for Dallas newspaper article
3. Created and began population press section on website
4. Submitted what's new Spring/Summer 2019 to CTO
5. Created and submitted fall field guide (itinerary) to CTO
6. Created and submitted winter field guide (itinerary) to CTO
7. Created and submitted content for two new sponsored CTO articles, currently on brand channel (2018/2019)
8. Submitted 10 additional articles for CTO brand channel (2018/2019)
9. Pitched women of the year content to CTO
10. Wrote Outdoor Retailer Media Pitch for CTO
11. Wrote Outdoor Retailer Media news release