

City of Alamogordo Promotion Board

Annual Report for FY21



In accordance with Ordinance No. 1014 requiring that all Boards, commissions and Committees submit a written Annual Report to the City Commission, below is the Annual report for the City of Alamogordo Promotion Board for FY21

Summary

The Promotion Board makes recommendations to staff and City Commission as to the promotion of the City of Alamogordo, including tourism, resident relocation, quality of life and overall marketing. The Board consists of five members (two lodging industry representatives, two tourism related industry representatives, and one at-large member): Bob Flotte, Owner of KHII & KEDU Radio; Chris Orwoll, Director of the New Mexico Museum of Space History; Marianne Schweers, Owner of the Heart of the Desert Pistachios & Wine; Nate Mandalia, Manager of The Classic Desert Aire Hotel; and Jessica Blackwell, Manager of the Hampton Inn, make up the current Board. Promotional advertising for FY21 was a little different and limited due to the Covid pandemic. Some of the items included were print advertising in tourism magazines, Texas Monthly, and visitor guides; digital advertising on tourism websites; LCD display ads in the El Paso Airport; a redesign of the brochures for Alamogordo; Newsletters and media blasts to our growing email list; social media advertising; creation of new photo and video assets related to Recovery Readiness; and regular updates to the tourism website. The NMTD's Co-op Marketing Grant was canceled for FY21, but the NMTD instead offered many different opportunities to past partners to improve Google listings, create virtual tourism, new google photospheres and much more. The City took advantage of every opportunity offered. Reminder, all this advertising, if successful, should lead to more overnight visitors and an increase in the Lodger's Tax, which is where the funding for the advertising comes from. That is why this advertising is targeted to populations that live outside of a 50 miles radius of City, additional demographics are also considered to increase our conversion rate.

Highlights for FY 21

- The NMTD launched a refresh of the New Mexico True brand. The new branding is a little cleaner and simpler, it continues to focus on experiences (sight doing not sightseeing), "True" statements, and our state moto, "Land of Enchantment" All our logo lockups have been updated and we have the greenlight to use them.
- Our NMTD NM True Story, filmed the end of 2019 was updated with the new NMTD branding it can be found on the City's YouTube page at the following link <https://youtu.be/wwX4EDUF7ds>
- The **Alamogordo Tourism Industry Partners**, which helps to bring together all the local attractions, hotels/motels, restaurants, City, Chamber and Parks/Forest to help to grow visitation and improve visitor experiences in our community, was not able to meet this year but involved parties are excited to begin meeting again with the lifting of Covid restrictions. There is a Facebook group where information was shared throughout 2020 and continues to be utilized.
- We provided local Alamogordo photography to Fly Roswell to utilize in their promotion of their new PHX flight.
- **A new 90 room hotel opened** in June 2021, the Hilton Home2Suites. We are excited to have the addition of 90 rooms to our community and the additional Lodger's Tax it will also bring in.
- **Branding for White Sands National Park** – It is important that Alamogordo is recognized as the "Gateway Community" to, and the "Home of", our Nation's 62nd National Park, White Sands National Park. The City has created a "Brand" for White Sands National Park and to ensure that. A logo has been created and business kits will be developed. Businesses who want to partner will be able to obtain these kits at no charge. This effort will help increase tourism to our community, as well as support local businesses, helping them to take advantage of the increased visitation to our community.

- **Southeast Regional Tourism Board** – Michelle Brideaux is a Board Member who was appointed by the State Tourism Secretary. The group meets Quarterly, for all FY21 the meetings were via Zoom rather than in different regional cities. The Winter Quarterly is always held following the Trends Conference in Santa Fe and the Spring Meeting is held following the Governor’s Conference on Hospitality and Tourism. Being a part of this board is incredibly important to our community to ensure that our voice is heard and that we receive as much attention and support as possible from the Tourism Dept. It is also a great resource and allows all the communities in the Southeast region to work together to help drive tourism to our part of the State. Having a seat on this board also gives Alamogordo an inside track to what is happening at the State Level.
- **White Sands National Park** – White Sands became a National Park the end of December 2019. This was very exciting for our community, and we had just started to see the impact redesignation was having on visitation when COVID halted everything. WSNP was closed for 4 months in 2020 (April – July), once they reopened in August visitation exploded. Every month since they reopened has had visitation that well exceeded the year prior (or 2 years prior for this April, May & June) except December of 2020, which is a month that we traditionally have a lot of foreign visitors, and overseas travel was still limited at that time. As expected and predicted through the economic studies, the redesignation of the White Sands from National Monument to National Park has been very beneficial for our community.
- **Google DMO Program** – The City of Alamogordo was accepted into a program funded by the State Tourism Dept. along with a company called Miles Partnership at the end of FY20 and continued into FY21. The first phase involved an audit of local, business and attraction Google listings. They focused on helping our City, and local businesses/attractions to improve their presence on Google which is incredibly important to economic development, increase visitation, improving the perception of our community and improving quality of life. The second phase included 360 Amplification, new Google Street Views, 360 Photospheres and the creation of a virtual tour highlighting 5 attractions in our community.
- Other programs we participated in included Social Content creation and implementation of 2 posts a week every week for a year, 2 written articles by NM Magazine staff, custom newsletter creation and distribution and Covid-safe photography/video creation.
- In June of 2020 the City of Alamogordo was awarded the **highest Co-op Marketing Grant they have ever received from the NM Tourism Dept.** (NMTD) with matched advertising valued at **\$65,991** for FY22.

COVID19 on the Budget & Lodger’s Tax Revenue

COVID-19 was expected to impact the FY21 revenue significantly. The FY budget was cut by more than 62% based on the restrictions that were to be implemented on hotel occupancy. Original FY21 estimated revenue was set at \$121,710. Thankfully, hotel stays were better than expected and we saw that throughout the year. The budget was revised to \$174, 739 in the spring and as of this report, FY21 has exceeded the FY20’s total revenue by 3.89% at \$226,605. Very good news!

Meetings Held & Attendance

July 17, 2020 – Meeting Canceled – COVID-19
 August 19, 2020 - Meeting Canceled – COVID-19
 September 16, 2020 - Meeting Canceled – COVID-19
 October 21, 2020 - Meeting Canceled – COVID-19

November 18, 2020 - Meeting Canceled – COVID-19
 December 16, 2020 - Meeting Canceled – COVID-19
 June 23, 2021 - Committee Met

Attendance for Promotions Board FY21

The Promotion Board meets the third Wednesday of each month at 10:00 am in the General Conference Room at City Hall

Month	Present	Absent
July	Meeting Canceled – COVID-19	
August	Meeting Canceled – COVID-19	
September	Meeting Canceled – COVID-19	
October	Meeting Canceled – COVID-19	
November	Meeting Canceled – COVID-19	
December	Meeting Canceled – COVID-19	
January	Meeting never scheduled due to COVID restrictions	
February	Meeting never scheduled due to COVID restrictions	
March	Meeting never scheduled due to COVID restrictions	
April	Meeting never scheduled due to COVID restrictions	
May	Meeting never scheduled due to COVID restrictions	
June	Bob Flotte, Nate Mandalia, Jessica Blackwell	Chris Orwoll, Marianne Schweers

FY21 Total Meeting Attendance (out of 1 meeting)

Member	Present	Absent
Bob Flotte	1	0
Chris Orwoll	0	1
Marianne Schweers	0	1
Nate Mandalia	1	0
Jessica Blackwell	1	0

1 total meeting for FY 2021, 6 meetings were canceled in 2020 due to COVID-19 and 5 were never scheduled for the beginning of 2021.