



**Visalia Convention and Visitors Bureau
2023 Annual Report**

1. OPERATIONS OF THE BUREAU

The Visalia Convention and Visitors Bureau (VCVB) Board of Directors is comprised of members reflected in the organization's by-laws and has successfully maintained 501-C6 status. The 2023 Executive Committee is comprised of the CVB officers, one director and three members of the Visalia Tourism Marketing District Board (VTMD). The Executive Committee reviews initiatives and makes recommendations to the full board for implementation consideration. In compliance with our charter the governing board adopted a budget and provided monthly fiscal oversight, held monthly meetings, and ensured regulatory compliance.

2023 Board Development highlights include review of the tourism office location, recommendations to update the 2024 City of Visalia deliverables, and a Destination Marketing/Management Organization (DMO) Board workshop focused on DMO best practices. A key accomplishment of both the Visalia Convention and Visitors Bureau (VCVB) and the VTMD is the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the two organizations.

Beginning in 2024, the Visalia Convention and Visitors Bureau (VCVB) accepted the responsibility of implementing the VTMD Owners Association's Management District Plan. The MOU developed between the VTMD and the VCVB signifies a commitment to implementing DMO best practices and responsible fiscal oversight of both organizations.

The outcomes achieved toward growing tourism were highly dependent on the funds generated by the VTMD and the support of our tourism partners.

The 2023 convention and tourism deliverables were highly dependent on and represent initiatives funded by our strategic partners including, the Visalia Tourism Marketing District, Visit California, Sequoia Regional Tourism Council, Visit Yosemite Madera County and the Central Valley Tourism Association.

2. SERVICES RENDERED BY THE BUREAU

- a. **Attract conventions, groups, and meetings to use Visalia as an overnight destination.**

Deliverables

- **In Person Events**
 - Destination California – Sept 28-30, 2023
 - Cal Travel Summit – September 19-21, 2023
 - Cal SAE – December 12-13, 2023
- **Marketing**
 - CVENT
 - 1 Diamond Listing
 - Total Impressions: 2,627
 - 19 Meeting Space and Sleeping Room RFPs Received
 - Sports Events Magazine
 - Full page ad – August 2023
 - Full page ad – September 2023
 - Cal SAE Seasonal Spectacular – December 2023
 - Escalator Cling
 - Vendor booth management, décor and parting gifts
 - Newsletters
 - Accessible Meetings for All (1/30/2023) Sent: 1,333 | Open Rate: 9.22% | Click Through: .36%
 - Cal SAE Pre-event Mailer (12/11/2023) Sent: 153 | Open Rate: 44.7%
 - Cal SAE Follow Up Newsletter (12/29/2023) Sent: 272 | Open Rate: 43.28% | Click Through: 20%
 - VisitVisalia.com/Meetings-and-conventions
 - 360 Degree Interactive Virtual Tour
 - Meetings Planning Toolkit
 - Venues & Facilities
 - Sports Planner Guide
 - Incentives
 - Stay & Play
 - Why Choose Visalia
 - Submit RFP

- b. Create and distribute physical and/or electronic brochures, maps, and guides of Visalia and tourism attractions and/or activities to potential meeting planners and their groups and other visitors.**

Deliverables

- Restaurant Guide
- Visit Visalia Visitor Brochure Updated March 2023 (55,000 copies printed)
 - Distribution Channels include:
 - Certified Folder
 - Area Hotels - distributed by Certified Folder
 - Visitor Requests
- Production and distribution of 2023 Sequoia Visitors Guide
- Visalia: Then & Now Self-Guided Tour Map
 - NEW: Historical Walking Tour App (Created by Visalia Heritage)
- Blogs
 - Holiday Gift Guide 2023
 - Where to see holiday lights in Visalia
 - Updates to 8 Key Existing Blogs
- Press Releases: 6
 - Fan Fest 2024
 - CA Order of Eastern Star
 - Visalia Named Top Destination for Neurodiverse Travelers by "Travel + Leisure" Magazine
 - General's Hwy Reopens for Visitors
 - Visalia to host Miss CA
 - Fan Fest 2023

- c. Directly market the Sequoia Shuttle and the Majestic Mountain Loop. This should include a marketing plan with the Sequoia Shuttle portion coordinated with Transit and the Loop with the coordinating body.**

Deliverables

- Sequoia Shuttle Initiatives

Shuttle delayed start and transit strike severely restricted access during 2023.

 - Consumer Trade Show Promotions: LA Travel & Adventure Show -Prize basket giveaway
 - Press Release – Shuttle opening day resulting in 1 published article.
 - Visit Visalia Brochure – content listing
 - Visit Visalia Website – Dedicated pages:
 - Itinerary Page – Pageviews: 3,266 | Time on Page: 1:12
 - Blog – Pageviews: 2,606 | Time on Page 1:13
 - Account page – Pageviews: 241 | Time on Page: :43

- Majestic Mountain Loop (MML) Initiatives
 - Majestic Mountain Loop tri-fold brochure – Updated and reprinted 10,000
 - MML Website: majesticmountainloop.com
 - 2023 with % change over 2022
Users: 15K | Sessions: 20K (+19%) | Pageviews: 33K (+12%) | Bounce Rate: 70.42% (+6%)
 - VisitVisalia.com/Majestic-mountain-loop
 - Pageviews: 2,940 | Event Count: 18,862 | Avg Time on Site: 1:05
 - Blog – MML 3 of California's most beautiful national parks
 - Views: 2,113 | Event Count: 7,144 | Avg Time on Site: 1:01
 - VCA Visitors Guide Ad
 - VCA Road Trips Magazine Ad
 - Yosemite Journal Full Pag Ad, Sponsored Newsletter + social media

d. Offer convention groups advanced servicing options including welcome packets, concierge desk at event, welcome signs, etc.

Deliverables

- 20 convention groups were provided a variety of the following services:
 - room block inventory reports,
 - customized microsite,
 - concierge table
 - welcome posters,
 - opening ceremony welcome,
 - personalized attendee itineraries,
 - press release,
 - guest/spouse programs,
 - VIP welcome gifts,
 - "Show Your Badge" program (offering event attendees discounts at participating merchants/ restaurants)
 - post event recap reports.

e. Manage and enhance the Bureau website and social media to promote the destination in various media outlets to encourage visits to Visalia.

Deliverables

- VisitVisalia.com Key Results 2023: (vs 2022 Percentage change)
 - Users: 549,700 (5.8%)
 - Conversions: 33.1K (3.4%)
 - Engagement Rate: 47% (-5.3%)
 - Pageviews per user: 1.8 (-4.0%)

- **Social Media Engagement**

Our combined

social platforms reached 24M users delivering 28M impressions. We gained 1.5K new followers.

- Facebook: 8.1K likes = 6.7% increase YOY
- Instagram: 4,849 Followers = 7.9% increase YOY
- Twitter: 1,298 Followers = 1.2% increase YOY
- YouTube: 387 Subscribers = 13% increase YOY
- LinkedIn: 352 Followers = 37% increase YOY
- Pinterest: 177 Followers = 4.7% increase YOY
- Tik Tok: 150 Followers = 436% increase YOY

- **Additional Paid Social Media Campaigns**

2023 INTERNALLY MANAGED CAMPAIGNS					
	Flight	Reach	Engagement	CPC	Total Spend
Soccer City Springfest	Mar 17-24, 2023	13,764	98	\$0.78	\$69.38
4th of July Weekend	June 28-July 3, 2023	19,380	473	\$0.25	\$119.87
Park Pass Campaign #1	July 28-Aug 31, 2023	93,570	1,959	\$0.17	\$327.10
Dark Sky Festival	Aug 28-Sep 7, 2023	48,049	798	\$0.31	\$249.99
Visalia Senior Games	Oct 19-Nov 1, 2023	10,506	220	\$0.59	\$129.99
Park Pass Campaign #2	Dec 1-17, 2023	23,350	620	\$0.24	\$146.82
Park Pass Campaign #3	Dec 19-31, 2023	44,039	363	\$0.33	\$119.99
TOTALS		252,658	4531	Avg \$.38	\$1,163.14

- f. **Maintain a Calendar that lists major Festivals and Events that are taking place in Visalia, and the surrounding area, that could attract visitors and incur overnight stays.**

Deliverables

- Tourist friendly events are posted by CVB staff or submitted by the community. They can be found on www.visitvisalia.com/calendar
 - Pageviews: 41,612 | Avg. Engagement: 50s | Event Count: 190,019
 - Number of Events Marketed: 4
 - 2023 Events listed: 273
 - Annual Festivals & Events Page: Pageviews: 2,531 | Avg Eng: 29s | Event Count: 10,449
 - Generated event posters, flyers and cards for lodging property point of sales.
- g. Provide day to day management activities, including planning, acquisition of services, equipment, supplies and facilities to fulfill the annual Sales and Marketing Plan of the Bureau.

Deliverables

While the VCVB staffing was nearly depleted in 2023 the office operations, responsiveness to group sales initiatives and tourism marketing strategies were implemented with positive results.

3. ACTIVITIES TO BE TAKEN BY THE BUREAU WITHIN THEIR SCOPE OF WORK THE VCVB SHALL:

- a. **Conduct sales, marketing, advertising, and public relations activities that will attract conventions & meetings and extend leisure overnight stays in Visalia hotel properties for a greater economic impact.**

Deliverables

- Refer to:
 - 2 a,b,c,d,e,f,
 - Extend Stays
 - All but one convention lodging properties offer group rate 3 days pre and 3 days post.
- b. **Implement a comprehensive and strategic Sales and Marketing Plan by the Executive Director to be executed by VCVB Staff.**

Deliverables

Examples of marketing materials are on file and available upon request. Sales tracking form was reestablished in late 2023 and is available upon request.

- **Tourism**
 - Sequoia Visitors Guide - Full Page Back Cover
 - Sequoia Visitors Guide – Full page CAC
 - CA Visitors Guide - CVTA Co-Op
 - Certified Folder Display – Brochure placements
 - Visit California Newsletters - Nov 7, 2023 Dedicated
 - Visit CA Road Trips Magazine – ½ Page Ad
 - Visit CA Visitors Guide – MML, STC, Visit Visalia
 - Expedia: Flight Oct 20, 2023 – Jan 15, 2024
 - Tulare Co Relocation Guide
 - Westways Magazine
 - Consumer Newsletters
 - Dec 13, 2023: Sent: 6,195 | Opens: 906 (15.03%) | Clicks: 122
 - Hotel Beds: International marketing targeting travel agents and strategic partners (Visit CA Partnership)
 - Flight: Feb 1-April 30, 2023
Results: campaign targeted Canada, France, Germany, Mexico, UK, and USA –481 room nights were produced, up 30% vs 2019 and up 16% vs 2022.
 - BedsOnline Newsletter: March 20, 2023 | 142,757 agents reached | ~29% Open Rate
 - Flight: Sept 1-Nov 30, 2023
Results: Campaign targeted USA, Canada, UK, Mexico, Germany, France – 507 room nights produced, up 33% vs 2022
- **Majestic Mountain Loop**
 - CA Visitors Guide: 1/6 page MML ad (Co-op with VY | MC)
 - CA Road Trips Magazine: ¼ page MML ad
 - Yosemite Journal: Full page MML ad + advertorial
 - Visit Yosemite | Madera County Visitors Guide: Full page MML ad + advertorial
 - Sequoia Visitors Guide: Full page MML
 - Fresno Yosemite International Airport: concourse display
 - Visit Visalia office: banner display
 - Social Media: Managed by Mountain High Images (2023)
 - Facebook likes: 2.5K
 - Instagram followers: 392
 - Twitter followers: 87
 - Corporate Partnerships: Enterprise Rental Car and National Rental Car
 - User discount on Enterprise and National Rental Car
 - Visit Visalia Website: Total Pageviews: 5,053 | Time on Site: 1:05
 - Majestic Mountain Loop: Pageviews 2,940 | Time on Site 1:06
 - MML blog: Pageviews: 2,113 | Time on Site: 1:01

- Interviews,
Podcasts,
Appearances
 - Dawn Barklay – InsiderTravelReporter.com
 - Univision – CAD
 - Visalia is top destination for neurodiverse travelers - KSEE24 + CBS47
 - Visalia is top destination for neurodiverse travelers - 95.7FM Mike Pesto
- Hosted FAMs, Influencers and Travel Writers
 - Jochen Schlieman – Reisen Reisen: Mar 22, 2023
 - Diana Pastora Carson - Ability Magazine: March 28-30, 2023
 - Luxury Travel Agent FAM (HSVC): May 22, 2023
 - Iona Brownlie – The Sun UK: Sept 19, 2023
 - Jon Freese and Family – Jack and Jill Foundation (MML): Oct 7, 2023
 - Lisa Kadane – Autism Travel: Oct 9-11, 2023
- c. **Submit an annual review to the City Council each year that describes the success of the VCVB over the previous year.**
Pending
- d. **By October 14, 2022, provide an account of the proposed services for the next calendar year.**
N/A – Pending for 2024
- e. **Include any updates on partner organizations that the VCVB may be closely involved in. By October 12, 2023, provide an account of proposed services for the next contract year (s).**

Deliverables

- **Sequoia Tourism Council Key Initiatives**
 - Sequoia Visitor Guide
40,000 printed + www.discoverthesequoias.com
Distribution channels include:
 - Certified Folder: 27,500
 - Chambers of Commerce
 - Tradeshows
 - Advertising and Marketing
 - CA Visitors Guide: 1/8-page STC ad (co-op with CVTA)
 - Yosemite Journal: STC Ad Full page + advertorial + e-blasts
 - Big Blend Radio Monthly Interviews: 12 (Jan. – Dec. 2023)
 - National Parks Trip Media Leads
 - Social Media: Managed by Topograph
 - Facebook likes: increased 3% to 6.8K
 - Instagram followers: increased 21% to 1,725
 - Twitter followers: decreased .5% 583

- Trade Shows
 - World Ag Expo (Feb. 2023)
 - Los Angeles Travel & Adventure Show (Feb 18-19, 2023)
 - Attendance: 17,341 | Guides Distributed: 1,050
 - Bay Area Travel & Adventure Show (CANCELLED by Travel Show)
- Website: www.Discoverthesequoias.com
 - Users: 1,874 | Pageviews: 2,440
- **Central Valley Tourism Association - Key Initiatives**
 - CVTA Map and Guide
 - Co-op Visit CA Visitor Guide
 - Full page ad: 8 partners / co-op funding by Visit CA
 - Trade Shows
 - IPW (San Antonio, TX May 20-24, 2023)
 - Website: <https://www.visitcentralvalley.com/>
 - UK Trade and Media Representation: Black Diamond | International Tourism Group
 - Media FAM: Iona Brownlie – The Sun UK Sept 19, 2023
 -
- **High Sierra Visitor Council - Key Initiatives**
 - French Trade and Media Representation:
 - mNO France – to the trade and media
 - Contract with Local Freshies for social media and content creation.
 - Followers - IG: 2,524 | FB: 9.3K | Twitter: 967
 - HSVC Social Influencer and Trade FAMs
 - mNO Luxury Travel Agent FAM – May 22, 2023
 - 13 Travel Agents
 - Trade Shows
 - IPW (May 20-24, 2023)
 - Brand USA Media Forum
 - Website: <https://californiahighsierra.com/>
 - Multilanguage Itineraries: English, French, German, Chinese
- **Visit California Key Initiatives**
 - Story Submissions: 2 Submitted, 1 published
 - 2023 Media FAMs:
 - Jochen Schliemann “Reisen Reisen” podcast – 3/22/2023
 - “Electric Vehicle Road Trip” through CA
 - Website: <https://www.visitcalifornia.com/places-to-visit/visalia/>

- **US Travel Campaigns**
 - Brand USA
 - Global Inspiration Program - Visalia Cities Page
 - [English](#)
 - [French](#)
 - GIP Results:
 - Total Countries reached (print + digital): 192
 - Total printed guides: 125,000
 - Total impressions across 7 markets: 107M
 - **Visit USA UK**
 - Membership listing webpage
 - Member listing in Visit USA UK Travel Planner: 1/8 Page
- f. **Book 7300 room nights in new sales, where the lead is generated by the VCVB.**
- g. **Assist with at least 2,000 additional room nights, where the lead comes from another source, but assistance with room nights or making of the proposal was needed from the VCVB.**

Deliverables

Booked Business				
	Meetings Booked	Room Nights	Goal	Percent of Goal
New Business	11	1,955	7,300	27%

(CVB lead)				
Re- bookings (CVB lead)	15	12,381	0	12,381%
Leads Generated Outside CVB	1	520	2,000	26%
TOTAL	27	14,856	9,300	159%

- 2023 Actualized Events: 15
 - Actualized room nights: 6,023
 - Estimated attendees at actualized events: 9,780
 - Estimated economic* impact for actualized bookings resulting from CVB activities: \$2,500,497.50 (43% over expected ROI)

*Economic calculator methodology: see Appendix A

h. Develop new local travel itineraries and/or micro-adventures to entice visitors to stay, including a specific plan and implementation for target marketing the itineraries/adventures.

Deliverables

- New Itineraries
 - Moro to Morro Road Trip
 - Created new Moro to Morro Video
 - Historical Tours of the Visalia Cemetery
- Updated Existing Itineraries

i. Develop local features and attractions for new or returning visitors to further engage with.

Deliverables

- Renewed Commitment to CAD with renewal of Certified Autism Centers – 15 Total (6 hotels, 7 attractions, 2 businesses)
- Soccer City – Display Case Visit Visalia Events Poster
- Visit Visalia office – Fossil Display & Tulare County Museum Display
- Visalia Mall – Display Case Visit Visalia Posters
- Historic Walking Tour Videos for Tour App
- The Lofts at Fort Visalia – Micro Museum opened 12/7/2023

j. Provide personalized tourist information and assistance where needed.Deliverables

- Visitor Center Information Requests
 - In Office Visitors: 939 | (vs. 2022: 726 | +29% YOY)
 - Demographics by Country (total: 27 countries of origin)
 - United States: 658 (total: CA: 385, 45 states of origin)
 - Germany: 63
 - Canada: 25
 - Australia: 24
 - United Kingdom: 24
 - France: 21
 - Netherlands: 19
 - All others: 105

k. Share tradeshow calendar, industry partnerships and memberships with CITY for mutual planning purposes.Deliverables

Shared monthly in VCVB Board Meeting Packet and with the Convention Committee Members.

Appendix**A) Board of Directors****B) Economic Impact Calculator Methodology**

The estimated economic impact of meetings and conventions contracted by Visit Visalia is structured based on the scope of the event. International, national, statewide, regional, and local events all impact our local economy at different rates which were determined specifically for the Visalia market around 2008. These rates are then multiplied by the estimated attendance as provided by the meeting planner.

C) CVB Convention, Meeting & Event Calendar 2023**D) Key Destination Industry Partnerships 2023**

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. Brand USA | 2. Visit California |
| 3. Visit USA – UK Association | 4. California Travel Association |
| 5. DMA West | 6. California Society of Association Executives (CalSAE) |
| 7. High Sierra Visitor Council | 8. Central Valley Tourism Association |
| 9. Sequoia Tourism Council | |

E) Visit Visalia Trade Show Calendar 2023

Suzanne Bianco:

1. TravMedia IMM USA (Jan. 25-27, 2023)
2. Go West Summit (Feb. 28-Mar 2, 2023)
3. Visit CA Outlook Forum (Mar 7-9, 2023)
4. Visit CA LA Media Reception (May 4, 2023)

F) Proposed Trade Shows to Attend in 2024

Trade Show	Date	Location	Type
Emerge		San Antonio, TX	Group Sales
IMM Trav Media	Jan 24-26, 2024	New York, NY	PR
NY Travel Show	Jan 27-28, 2024	New York, NY	Tourism
LA Travel Show (STC)	Feb 3-4, 2024	LA	Tourism
Go West Summit	Feb 26-28, 2024	Lake Tahoe	Group Sales
Corporate Express	Mar 4-8, 2024	LA	Conventions
Visit CA Outlook Forum	Mar 11-13, 2024	Palm Springs	Industry
IPW (MML)	May 3-7, 2024	LA	Group Sales
Visit CA Media Event			Tourism
DMA West			Tourism
IMEX or CalSAE		Sacramento	Group Sales