

## Media Contact

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### Prosperous years ahead for Visalia tourism despite pandemic

Large conventions choose Visalia for future years

**Visalia, Calif. (July 1, 2020)** - One of Visalia's key economic indicators – secured future hotel room nights - is signaling prosperous years ahead despite the recent COVID-19 outbreak. Visit Visalia, the area's leading hospitality and tourism organization, announced today major convention bookings for future years that combined will bring more than \$2.5 million into the local economy. These groups represent religious, fraternal and multi-level marketing segments and are estimated to bring 10,115 hotel room nights to the city. This outpaces 2019, which accounted for 9,156 room nights contracted and represented \$2.3 million in economic impact. This is some good news for the city, local businesses and hotels.

Today's announcement comes after the organization secured its largest booking yet – a Catholic fraternal organization dedicated to promoting and conducting educational, charitable, religious and social welfare works. This contract is estimated to bring to the city 8,500 cumulative room nights over a 5-year period and an economic impact of more than \$1.5 million.

In June 2020, Visalia anticipated welcoming another first-time group, its second largest convention booking to date but the pandemic forced its cancellation. Rather than lose that business, Visit Visalia and its industry partners came together to successfully rebook the group, saving 1,500 room nights and \$383,000 in economic impact to Visalia. Business retention, as well as new business development, have been critical to sustaining and building on the progress of the tourism and hospitality industry in Visalia, which supports over 5,400 jobs countywide.

“Our central location, arts and culture, vibrant downtown and culinary scene are creating regional and statewide buzz,” said Nellie Freeborn, executive director of Visit Visalia. “The investments of our partners in and around the city are getting attention. Our team is laser focused on performance and driving results. We are thrilled that visitors, meeting planners and convention attendees are taking notice.”

Other recent efforts by the bureau to support the local tourism industry include:

- The “[Fuel your wanderlust](#)” free gas card promotion, to create destination awareness and to attract Californians planning to take road trips rather than fly this summer
- Pivoting to highlight [Sequoia National Forest](#) and other outdoor recreation areas to provide options to visitors wanting to practice safe social distancing
- **Providing travel updates** and current operating statuses for our local national parks, restaurants, area attractions, and hotels on the Visit Visalia website and social media platforms

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#### ABOUT VISIT VISALIA:

Visit Visalia is a collaboration of the Visalia Tourism Marketing District and the Visalia Convention and Visitors Bureau (VCVB) dedicated to marketing, advertising, public relations and other promotional efforts that inspire travel to the City of Visalia. Visit Visalia works closely with local lodging properties, restaurants and attractions to foster interest in Visalia as a year-round destination for leisure, family, and meeting and convention travelers. For more information about Visit Visalia go to [www.VisitVisalia.com](http://www.VisitVisalia.com) and follow Visit Visalia on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and [Pinterest](#).