

**TO:** City Council  
**FROM:** James L. App, City Manager  
**SUBJECT:** **Economic Strategy – Positioning:  
Marketing Plan**  
**DATE:** November 6, 2007

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**NEEDS:** For the City Council to consider a tourism marketing plan.

**FACTS:**

1. Developing and marketing the unique assets, heritage and character of the community is a key strategy of the 2006 Economic Strategy.
2. The City Council established a Promotion Coordinating Committee (PCC) to work with City staff to develop a marketing plan.

3. The PCC members are:

M. Gibson	C.E.O. P.R. Chamber of Commerce
S. Jacob	Ex. Dir. P.R. Wine Country Alliance
M. Johnson	Dir. of Operations Martin Resorts
P. Lyon	Dir. of Hospitality Services Estrella Associates, Inc.
M. Masia	Owner Adelaide Inn
N. Moye	Ex. Dir. P.R. Main Street Association
V. Robertson	C.E.O. P.R. Events Center

4. The PCC unanimously recommends adoption of the attached marketing plan.

#### **ANALYSIS &**

**CONCLUSION:** The marketing plan is focused on three objectives:

- Strengthen Paso Robles name recognition
- Position Paso Robles as a year-round culinary destination
- Build demand for week-long events, seminars and meetings

It includes key strategies to accomplish these objectives:

- Create a distinct image
- Showcase assets/unique attractions
- Tell the story with/through all partners
- Build acclaim through 3<sup>rd</sup> party endorsements

The Plan provides specific implementation actions for the eight month period to July 1, 2008. And, while it references budget amounts, the PCC is not yet recommending budget allocations pending more study. Part of their continuing study is consideration of the costs to develop a tourism web site and contractor proposals for brand development and/or public relations. They do, however, recommend authorizing establishment of a budget for, and hiring of, a City staff member to support tourism efforts.

**POLICY**

**REFERENCE:** 2003 General Plan; 2006 Economic Strategy; FY 2008-11 Budget/Financial Plan.

**FISCAL**

**IMPACT:** Approximately \$60,000 annually for Tourism Coordinator – included in the adopted FY 08-11 Budget/Financial Plan.

**OPTIONS:**

**A. City Council:**

- Adopt the Proposed Marketing Plan; and
- Establish a Tourism Position at the Administrative Assistant II Level.

**B. Amend, Modify or Reject the Option Above.**

Exhibits: A – Marketing Plan

**Paso Robles Tourism Mission:**

The mission of tourism promotion is to realize the full economic potential of an integrated approach to brand Paso Robles as a premier Central Coast destination. Paso Robles can attract visitors by positioning the place, its assets and unique attractions.

**Objectives:**

- Strengthen name recognition and long-term visibility of the Paso Robles brand
- Position Paso Robles as a year around culinary tourism destination
- Build demand for week-long events/corporate retreats and seminars

**Strategies:**

- Create an image/logo for the Paso Robles destination and a tool for the audience to utilize
- Tell the story – speak with a unified voice between all tourism partners
- Showcase the unique attractions of the region
  - California’s fastest growing premium wine region
  - California’s premier place for equestrian activities
  - The Central Coast’s culinary tourism destination
    - Fine dining restaurants
    - World-class wine
    - Premium Olive Oils
    - Sustainable/Organic Farms/Farmer’s Markets
  - Local events/attractions that demonstrate the community spirit
- Bring gatekeepers to experience the unique attractions of Paso Robles and build acclaim through third-party endorsement
- Measure overall return on investment (ROI)

**Audience:**

- Media — travel writers, lifestyle writers, food writers, women’s publications, niche publications (equestrian, aviation, etc.)
  - Target regional travel newspaper writers
  - Target national travel and lifestyle publications
  - Target online travel sources, blogs, pod casts, etc.
- Meeting planners — corporate retreats, seminars, week-long events
  - Target corporate businesses in the South Bay Area and Southern California
  - Target organizers of week-long events
  - Target new markets
- Cultural event coordinators
  - Art associations
  - Equestrian groups
  - Music groups
  - Culinary groups
  - Film producers
  - Writers/journalist organizations

**Goals – October - June 2008**

- Create a look and feel/logo for the destination
- Increase transient occupancy tax from X to X
- Host 4-6 writers
- Host 4-6 meeting planners
- Secure 2-4 regional story placements
- Secure 1-2 corporate retreats, seminars, week-long events
- Activate a Paso Robles destination Web Site

**Action Plan/Timeline**

**October 2007 – January 2008**

**Brand Development/Tool Kit/Advertising**

- An image/logo as well as a look and feel of the Paso Robles destination needs to be developed to provide the audience a visual for the brand that is to be created. This design will be integrated throughout all branding tools developed (i.e., letterhead, business cards, Web site, brochures, press kit, etc.).
- Solicit a design contractor to assess the look and feel of all the unique attractions in Paso Robles and determine a brand image that can encompass them creating a unified brand for the Paso Robles destination. Keep in mind how tourism partners may utilize this brand and encourage them to use the tools to extend overall reach. (i.e., partners using image on web sites, brochures, etc.)
- Create a Paso Robles destination Web site that encompasses all unique attractions, tourism partners (i.e., hotels, transportation companies, restaurants, etc.) and is the information source for the audience visiting and learning more about Paso Robles.  
Features to include:
  - Driving directions and flight options (map of the region)
  - Travel itineraries for 1-day; 3-days; 5-day stays
  - Paso Robles Wine Country
  - Paso Robles Downtown
  - Paso Robles Event Center
  - Community Calendar featuring all local events
  - Museums, recreation (i.e., golf, water slides), hot springs and retail
  - Itineraries for seniors and special packages
  - Paso Robles Blog for visitors to share their stories (monitored to maintain positive image)
  - Media Room
    - Section for all press releases
    - Downloadable images
    - Links to local resources (i.e., Main Street, Chamber, Wine Alliance, etc.)
- Tool Kit Deliverables:
  - Logo
  - Letterhead
  - Business Cards
  - Web site
  - Press kit
  - Image Advertisement

- Web site design
- Web site copy (most likely is a separate contractor)
- Advertising/promotions – The budget restricts the PCC from an aggressive advertising campaign, but there will be times that the Paso Robles destination needs to be part of a greater message. A small amount of advertising/promotional dollars should be used to promote the Paso Robles destination. This may be used through traditional advertising channels or through event marketing.
- Budget -- \$85,000
  - Brand Development Contractor - \$40,000 for tool kit deliverables
  - Printing – letterhead, business cards, press kit - \$10,000
  - Advertising/event marketing - \$35,000

### **October 2007 – June 2008**

#### **Public Relations**

- Establishing a year around public relations campaign keeps a consistent flow of news proactively going out about the Paso Robles community and positions the PCC as the contact for all tourism related activities for press contacts. Proactively pitching unique stories about the Paso Robles area to media contacts will create interest among writers to visit the area. Hosting writers in Paso Robles is important to selling in story ideas. Generating media coverage for the region creates third-party credibility from trustworthy sources consumers rely upon.
- Solicit a public relations contractor to create a public relations campaign and serve as point for press contacts. Contractor will work with all tourism partners to fulfill priority items – key message development, news bureau, tiered media list, execute culinary press tour and ongoing media hosting.
- Key Message Development – All tourism partners should speak with a unified voice to tell the story of Paso Robles. Focusing on key messages ensures the audience has a clear understanding of the area and the focus for the region’s public relations campaign.
  - The Paso Robles destination is centrally located halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles and is the conduit to the Pacific Ocean for the Central Valley.
  - Paso Robles is California’s fastest growing premium wine region with more than 170 wineries and 26,000 vineyard acres.
  - Paso Robles is the Central Coast’s culinary destination featuring sustainable grown olive oil, cheese, organic farms, grass fed beef and fine dining to compliment locally grown foods.
  - Paso Robles hosts many of the region’s top equestrian events at its quality Mid State Event Center facilities.
  - The community spirit of Paso Robles is its foundation embracing the quality of life families and individuals choose to live, work and play in this special place.

- Develop News Bureau – Create a monthly tool to send out to media audience about happenings in Paso Robles. This keeps the press aware of the multitude of activities and positions the PCC as the key contact for all things related to Paso Robles. The monthly communication tool should tie back to the community calendar on the Web site featuring new aspects of events. In addition, create news releases about national tourism trends that relate to Paso Robles. (i.e., culinary tourism, seasonal stories – harvest, etc.). Plan to distribute news releases through a wire service to broadcast regionally and nationally as well as target media audience (i.e., travel, lifestyle, food, women publications and niche media). All press releases should also be available on Web site.
- Tier Media Contacts – Create a press list of key target media. Tier media to determine top contacts to proactively pitch and host in Paso Robles versus those to be part of news bureau outreach. Focus top tier media on freelance writers with multiple outlets for story placement in regional and national publications.
- Spring Culinary Press Tour (April) – Invite 4-6 writers to a three-day tour of Paso Robles featuring all culinary tourism attributes of the region. Plan to pay for travel costs to bring writers to Paso Robles. Work with tourism partners to create a unique itinerary that positions Paso Robles as a year-around culinary destination. Activities may include – vineyard tours, organic farm tours, chef demonstrations, olive oil tasting, wine tastings, etc. Itinerary will include local personalities so writers meet the people who make Paso Robles a culinary destination. Showcasing all the unique aspects of the region in a three day press tour helps sell in regional and national stories for media contacts.
- Ongoing Media Hosting – Writers are on a busy schedule determined by deadlines and may not always be available to travel to the region when a scheduled tour is happening. At the same time publications are cutting travel budgets making it necessary to pay writers travel costs to visit a region. Working with writers on an individual basis to host them (pay travel costs) creates a year around approach to selling in regional and national stories. Each writer should be screened to ensure they have a story actually in the works or there is great potential to ensure a story results from a visit to the region.
- Budget - \$45,000
  - Public Relations Contractor - \$20,000
  - News Bureau - \$5,000
  - Spring Culinary Tour - \$15,000
  - Media Hosting - \$5,000

### **October 2007 – June 2008**

#### **Meeting Planners**

- Positioning Paso Robles as a central location ideal for corporate retreats of 20-75 persons, week-long niche events and seminars up to 300 persons helps drive mid-week hotel business. Showcasing the growing infrastructure of hotels and meeting rooms associated with them, transportation companies, winery event facilities, restaurants and the many attractions of the region positions Paso Robles as a destination for corporate retreats, seminars and week-long niche events.

- Develop Target List – Work with PCC, local hoteliers, Chamber and other resources to develop a target list of meeting planners in South Bay Area and Southern California to send monthly communication tool and target for a familiarization tour of the region.
- Meeting Planners Tour (February) – Invite 4-6 meeting planners to a three-day tour of Paso Robles to position the region as a central location ideal for corporate retreats, week-long events and seminars. Work with tourism partners to create a unique itinerary and generate the guest list for meeting planners’ tour. Showcase infrastructure, transportation companies, attractions, etc. Showcasing the central location and growing infrastructure helps sell Paso Robles as the place for corporate retreats, week-long events and seminars.
- Budget -- \$10,000

<b>Budget</b> <b>October 2007 – June 2008</b>
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▪ Brand Development/Tool Kit/Advertising	\$85,000
▪ Public Relations	\$45,000
▪ Meeting Planners	\$10,000
▪ Tourism Coordinator	\$60,000

Total	\$200,000
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