

20
25

WE BELIEVE IN HERE.
BUSINESS PLAN



THE ELKHART COUNTY CVB
BELIEVES IN BEING THE
STEWARD FOR ELKHART
COUNTY'S WELL CRAFTED
LIFE AND EXPERIENCES.

CRAFTSMANSHIP AND
ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT
DEFINE ELKHART COUNTY.

IT IS WHAT WE **LOVE**
ABOUT **OUR** COMMUNITY.

IT IS WHY
WE BELIEVE
IN HERE.







ELKHART COUNTY, IN CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

- Incorporated in 1988.
- Private, 501(c)(6) non-profit corporation.
- Serves as the official tourism advertising / marketing and public / community relations organization for the Elkhart County hospitality industry through an annual contract with the Elkhart County Innkeeper Tax Commission.
- Funding source includes a 5 percent lodging tax collected from visitors at Elkhart County lodging facilities with more than 30 rooms plus other revenue.

VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Ethical
- Entrepreneurial
- Innovative
- Professional
- Collaborative
- Accountable
- Inclusive

The Elkhart County, IN Convention & Visitors Bureau proudly serves as the driving force behind tourism promotion and placemaking efforts, working hand-in-hand with partners from all sectors of the community. With an unwavering passion for our destination, we are committed to showcasing the unique charm and spirit of Elkhart County while bolstering its economic standing, and invigorating its entrepreneurial spirit.

At the Elkhart County CVB, we weave together the rich narrative of Elkhart County through innovative collaborations. By fostering strategic partnerships, we're proud to shine a spotlight on what makes our destination exceptional. Whether it's a place to live, work, or play, Elkhart County is more than a destination—it's a community filled with opportunity, energy, and endless possibilities.

VISION STATEMENT

Elkhart County is a Well Crafted, year-round destination that embodies a diversity of arts and cultural attractions, vibrant downtowns, sports and outdoor adventures, grounded in craftsmanship and an entrepreneurial spirit, attracting multi-generational audiences.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Elkhart County CVB is the county's champion for tourism promotion and placemaking initiatives. We achieve economic vitality and enhanced quality of place through diverse affiliations and collaborations.

ELKHART COUNTY, IN CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU ACCOUNTABILITY

- A seven-member Elkhart County Innkeeper Tax Commission, appointed by the Elkhart County government executives, oversees the lodging tax and contracts with the Elkhart County CVB.
- A seven-member Board of Directors provides fiscal and policy stewardship for the Elkhart County CVB.
- The Elkhart County Innkeeper Tax Commission and Elkhart County CVB Board of Directors meet concurrently bi-monthly.
- The Elkhart County CVB employs a professional staff to manage programs and operations, support the area's hospitality industry, and operate the Elkhart County Visitor Center.



ELKHART COUNTY IS A COMMUNITY OF MAKERS.

IT IS IN OUR DNA.



WE VALUE WHAT WE CREATE, AND THE SPREAD OF THE WELL CRAFTED DESTINATION BRAND DEMONSTRATES ITS POWER AND RESONANCE WITH OUR RESIDENTS, PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS.

2025 marks the third year of implementation of our long-term strategic plan, and the fruits of this work are revealing themselves across Elkhart County. From the energy and investment accelerating in each community to the growing appetite for vibrant events, engaging attractions, and beautiful gathering places, our position as a champion for placemaking is strong.

The roadmap for Elkhart County's continued success is clear in each of the four pillars identified in the strategic plan: Diversify, Curate, Balance and Advocate.



DIVERSIFY *(Market)*



BALANCE *(Manage)*



CURATE *(Develop)*



ADVOCATE *(Champion)*

DIVERSIFY

Communicating with external visitors and residents stands at the core of our mission and provides numerous opportunities for innovation. New and ongoing programs and initiatives from the Elkhart County Area Guide, Heritage Trail, Quilt Gardens, video storytelling, digital outreach to cooperative efforts and building relationships with travel media are among the success stories of 2023 and 2024. Building on these successes is the focus for 2025.

BALANCE

Focusing on broad goals requires devoting time and energy on organizational resources and data that is foundational to our activities. The Elkhart County CVB has oriented its staff and financial resources to guide our strategic goals while also implementing research tools to inform our work in youth sports, placemaking investments, and financial flexibility.

CURATE

As the Elkhart County destination embraces placemaking and experiences to greater degrees, the Elkhart County CVB is poised to aid in the research and development of impactful projects. This work has already resulted in the development of new events and budding relationships to cement Elkhart County's place as a leader in youth sports and outdoor recreation, while building on the arts and cultural heritage our residents hold dear.

ADVOCATE

Building and nurturing relationships, supported by communications tools that convey the significant impact of tourism on Elkhart County, has established the Elkhart County CVB as a leader. Concrete examples are visible through the increased adoption of the Well Crafted destination brand via multiple communications in our marketing and sponsorship programs. This has also been supported through the ongoing work of Vibrant Communities, which informs and guides leaders and residents to appreciate placemaking and place branding.



The ECCVB's strategic plan builds on Elkhart County's established strengths and positions us to reinforce our role as the champion for the local hospitality industry and community placemaking.

The plan's four strategic pillars – Diversify (Market), Curate (Develop), Balance (Manage), and Advocate (Champion) – will maximize outcomes associated with the identified market opportunities.





ELKHART COUNTY CVB KEY PRIORITY PROJECTS

RELATIONSHIPS & ADVOCACY ●●

The Elkhart County CVB will build on its strong relationships with partners while also developing and building new connections with key stakeholders, community leaders and influencers to advance Elkhart County's success.

EXPERIENCES & DEVELOPMENT ●●●

From Amish Country to the Heritage Trail and Quilt Gardens, Elkhart County's experiences are unique and engaging. We will build on and develop existing experiences while identifying opportunities to expand offerings that serve our diverse audiences.

RESEARCH ●●●

The Elkhart County CVB will integrate metrics that demonstrate effectiveness and undertake necessary research and data collection to develop key performance indicators (KPIs). Making progress on strategic initiatives will require the identification of metrics that best measure impact, rather than activity, in critical areas.

OUTDOOR RECREATION & YOUTH SPORTS ●●●

Development of trails, greenways and blueways that connect communities has created an opportunity. We will continue to work with partners to curate and communicate Elkhart County's parks, trails, and outdoor experiences. We will also continue to build on our existing youth sports experiences while identifying new opportunities to further growth in this niche.

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES & PLACEMAKING ●●●

The Elkhart County CVB has established as part of its mission to be a champion for placemaking in the community. The basic principles of placemaking create community vibrancy through investments in aesthetics, amenities, activation of public spaces and gateways. These same factors directly impact the experiences of visitors regardless of the primary driver of their visit.

WE BELIEVE IN HERE



The Elkhart County CVB's core values lead naturally into support for Elkhart County's key initiatives, activities and programs. These outreach programs in our local communities also help broaden our networks. Our \$726,000 investment in event sponsorships, area guide assistance, Vibrant Communities, downtown support, arts and culture support, product development, and targeted co-op community campaigns build better communities for residents and visitors.

- Vibrant Communities, partnership with Community Foundation of Elkhart County
- Downtown Elkhart and I-80/90 Exit 92 partnership with Elkhart City Redevelopment Commission
- Member of local, regional, state and national associations, including:
 - *Greater Elkhart, Goshen, Nappanee, Wakarusa and Middlebury chambers of commerce*
 - *Destinations International*
 - *American Bus Association*
 - *Indiana Chamber of Commerce*
 - *Indiana Tourism Association*
 - *Team Indiana*
 - *Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission*
 - *Economic Development Corporation of Elkhart County*
 - *Elkhart County Museum Association*
- Sponsor of multiple events and programs operated by non-profits across Elkhart County through Sponsorship, Area Guide Assistance Fund, and Community Support Grant programs
- Sponsor of leadership programs of Greater Elkhart and Goshen chambers of commerce
- Investment in 2025 local events, programs and product development such as:
 - *Elkhart Jazz Festival*
 - *Goshen First Fridays*
 - *Nappanee Apple Festival*
 - *Elkhart County Symphony*
 - *Midwest Museum of American Art Juried Regional*
 - *Goshen Hispanic Heritage Month Festival*
 - *Premier Arts*
 - *Elkhart Civic Theatre*
 - *River Bend Film Festival*
 - *Elkhart Art League*
 - *Phoenix Performing Arts*
 - *Wakarusa Maple Syrup Festival*
 - *Elkhart Hispanic Heritage Festival*
 - *Michiana Pottery Tour*
 - *Pumpkinvine Nature Trail*
 - *Elkhart County Historical Museum*
 - *Moose Rugby Grounds*
 - *Taste of the Gardens at Wellfield*
 - *Downtown Elkhart After Dark*
 - *Hall of Heroes Comic Con*
 - *Elkhart County Quilt and Fiber Expo*
 - *Ruthmere Museum*
 - *Elkhart Public Library Curbside Concerts*
 - *Winter Wonderland Holiday Lights at Wellfield*

TOURISM IN ELKHART COUNTY: MAKING AN IMPACT

FOR EVERY \$1 OF VISITOR ASSESSMENT, VISITORS SPEND \$221. WITHOUT VISITOR SPENDING, RESIDENTS WOULD HAVE TO PAY AN ADDITIONAL \$352 IN TAXES TO MAINTAIN CURRENT GOVERNMENT SERVICES.

- Approximately **\$1.186 billion** in total annual economic impact
- Visitors spend nearly **\$560 million** in a year
- Tourism and hospitality businesses invest an additional **\$263 million**
- Workers in Elkhart County tourism and hospitality earn over **\$169 million** in wages
- Over **7,000 jobs** are supported by tourism and hospitality activities in Elkhart County
- Total visitor spending results in nearly **\$38 Million** of local taxes collected (Halo Effect)

Estimates are based on CERTEC, INC's biannual assessment



ECCVB STRATEGIC DIRECTION

- Expanding the destination Well Crafted brand awareness through collaborative storytelling and cross promotion resulting in conversions among broader and more diverse target audience segments.
- Enhancing visitor and resident experiences through increased product development activities and a focus on improvements to quality of place.
- Securing and managing the resources to lead the organization's program of work that strives to balance marketing, communications and expanded development activities.
- Providing the tourism voice and heightened engagement to support our partners.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN AND THE FOUR PILLARS DEFINE OUR TACTICS FOR THE 2025 BUSINESS PLAN

DIVERSIFY	14
CURATE	20
BALANCE	24
ADVOCATE	26





DIVERSIFY

ECCVB MARKETING, SALES & SERVICES STRATEGY

The objective of the ECCVB tourism marketing, sales & services strategy is to drive the destination brand awareness and visitor conversion among broader and more diverse target audiences that include the niche markets identified by research. There are three targeted strategies for the leisure travel market and three for the group travel market.

DIVERSIFY PILLAR GOAL

Diversify the destination visitor base to better integrate multiple generations and interests. We expect to achieve higher travel conversion and extend stays by increasing the county's brand awareness and aligning experiences with an expanded market.

DIVERSIFY PILLAR TARGET MARKETS OF FOCUS

- Arts and cultural heritage travel
- Outdoor recreation and adventure travel
- Visiting friends & relatives and pass-thru travel
- Group meeting and social/reunion travel
- Youth sports travel
- Group tour travel

WELL CRAFTED ELKHART COUNTY DESTINATION

Strategy: *Elevate awareness and engagement with Elkhart County's Well Crafted brand by implementing a cohesive marketing plan that integrates content creation, media campaigns, and promotions, targeting various audiences through digital, print, and influencer partnerships, while showcasing local attractions and unique experiences.*

Tactics

- Create and manage a content plan integrating website content, social media actions, paid media campaigns, eNewsletter initiatives, and digital content (January - December)
- Manage photo and video shoots highlighting Elkhart County assets and activities (January - December)
- Produce and place print ads in publications targeting the external visitor and internal resident (January - December)
- Refresh existing and create new suggested leisure and group itineraries aligning with niche audiences (January - December)
- Produce and distribute Leisure eNewsletters to promote Elkhart County assets (January - December)
- Host travel journalists on FAM tours highlighting the destination (January - December)
- Produce and distribute press releases and story pitches highlighting the destination to local, regional, national and travel media (January - December)
- Manage and promote a Well Crafted Champions campaign (January - December)
- Manage and promote a Well Crafted foodie campaign (January - December)
- Manage and promote Elkhart County Restaurant Weeks campaign (January - March)
- Distribute Well Crafted promotional kits for regional and national travel journalists (April - December)
- Manage and promote a Roadtrippers influencer campaign focused on the RV audience (April - December)
- Manage and promote a Well Crafted campaign to cross-promote partner brands (May - December)
- Manage and promote a Well Crafted Brewery campaign in partnership with local stakeholders (September - October)

Metrics

- Track Well Crafted paid and organic digital promotions (January - December)
- Track qualified media inquiries (January - December)
- Track Media website analytics (January - December)
- Track RV website analytics (January - December)
- Track Users and Views of Leisure Itineraries (January - December)
- Track Blog Post analytics (January - December)
- Track Well Crafted Champions campaign results (January - December)
- Track Elkhart County Well Crafted partner brand campaign results (January - December)
- Track Google PPC ad campaign (March, June, September, December)
- Track Elkhart County Restaurant Weeks campaign results (March)
- Track Well Crafted Elkhart County promotional kit campaign to regional and national travel journalists (April - December)
- Track Roadtrippers influencer campaign results focused on the RV audience (April - December)
- Track Elkhart County Brewery campaign results (October - December)

HERITAGE TRAIL

Strategy: *Enhance and promote the Heritage Trail experience through wayfinding tools and custom digital content that highlights the trail's unique assets and attractions throughout the year.*

Tactics

- Produce Heritage Trail maps (January)
- Promote Heritage Trail audio driving tour (January - December)
- Manage Heritage Trail wayfinding signage and inventory (January - December)
- Produce and promote custom digital content highlighting Heritage Trail assets and experiences (January - December)

HERITAGE TRAIL (cont)*Metrics*

- Track Heritage Trail audio driving tours distribution via CD, USB, and streaming (January - December)
- Track Heritage Trail printed map distribution (January - December)
- Track PDF downloads of Heritage Trail map (January - December)
- Track Heritage Trail page website analytics (January - December)

QUILT GARDENS ALONG THE HERITAGE TRAIL

Strategy: Revitalize, elevate and sustain the Quilt Gardens and Quilt Murals experience by updating creative concepts and expanding marketing efforts through targeted ads and specialized itineraries.

Tactics

- Update creative concept for print and digital media (January - March)
- Update and create copy for production of Quilt Gardens and Quilt Murals signs (January - April)
- Update partner brand management guide and promotion guidelines (January - April)
- Coordinate and facilitate new Quilt Mural materials and production for murals in Bristol, Wakarusa and Nappanee (January - May)
- Produce and distribute Quilt Gardens rack cards (January - September)
- Confirm and maintain rack card distribution at Indiana Toll Road and Ohio Turnpike plazas (January - September)
- Produce and place ads in publications targeting the quilting and/or gardening market (January - December)
- Create and promote Quilt Gardens specialized itinerary (January - December)

Metrics

- Track paid and organic analytics (January - December)
- Track qualified media inquiries, generating media placements in print, broadcast, online and blog through impressions and advertising value equivalents (January - December)
- Track Quilt Gardens website analytics (January - December)
- Track rack card distribution (May - September)

ELKHART COUNTY AREA GUIDE

Strategy: Maximize the reach and impact of the Elkhart County Area Guide through comprehensive production, distribution, and digital integration, ensuring broad visibility and engagement across regional and digital platforms.

Tactics

- Develop and produce electronic version of 2025 Elkhart County Area Guide for digital distribution (January)
- Update creative concept for digital media (January - February)
- Confirm and place Elkhart County Area Guide with regional publication distribution (January - May)
- Oversee distribution of 150,000 printed copies of 2025 Elkhart County Area Guide (January - December)
- Confirm and maintain distribution at Indiana Toll Road and Ohio Turnpike plazas (January - December)
- Coordinate and collaborate design of 2026 Elkhart County Area Guide (April - June)
- Manage sales, content and production of the 2026 Elkhart County Area Guide (June - December)

Metrics

- Track distribution of 2025 Elkhart County Area Guide (January - December)
- Track digital distribution of 2025 electronic version of Elkhart County Area Guide (January - December)

ELKHART COUNTY EVENT CALENDAR

Strategy: Increase awareness among residents and visitors about diverse activities and events happening in the area, encouraging community engagement and participation.

Tactics

- Develop, produce, and distribute event calendar direct mail postcard (January - March)
- Create and manage a campaign integrating billboards, print, media, and digital promotion (January - December)

Metrics

- Track Event Calendar website analytics (January - December)
- Track paid and organic analytics (January - December)
- Track postcard distribution (April)

ELKHART COUNTY CO-OP CAMPAIGNS

Strategy: Leverage advertising opportunities by collaborating with various partners at a local, regional and state level, enhancing visibility and driving tourism and engagement to the Elkhart County area.

INDIANA TRAVEL GUIDE & VISITINDIANA.COM

Tactics

- Develop and produce brochure lead generation ad and listing ads (January)
- Develop and produce eNewsletter (January)

Metrics

- Track Elkhart County Area Guide requests received (January - December)

INDIANA FESTIVAL GUIDE

Tactics

- Produce and place full page ad (January)

INDIANA'S COOL NORTH

Tactics

- Produce and place Toll Road Exit-by-Exit Guide ad (January - February)
- Produce and place Toll Road Exit-by-Exit Guide map ad (January - February)

Metrics

- Track Elkhart County Area Guide requests received (January - December)

ELKHART COUNTY CO-OP CAMPAIGNS (cont)

DOWNTOWN ELKHART PROMOTIONS

Tactics

- Manage a campaign using digital, print, and media promoting Downtown Elkhart assets and experiences (January - December)

Metrics

- Track digital campaign analytics (March, June, September, December)

EXIT 92 PROMOTIONS

Tactics

- Refine and develop messaging for I-80/90 Exit 92 assets (January - December)
- Produce and distribute fold out Exit 92 lodging map (January - December)
- Produce and distribute commercial trucking specific Exit 92 rack card (January - December)
- Confirm and maintain outdoor billboards along I-80/90 Toll Road (January - December)
- Confirm and maintain collateral distribution at Indiana Toll Road and Ohio Turnpike plazas (January - December)
- Update website pages (February)
- Confirm and place full page ad in University of Notre Dame Football Program (April)
- Promote I-80/90 Exit 92 and its high density of assets and experiences through in-app ads (April - November)

Metrics

- Track commercial trucking rack card distribution (January - December)
- Track website page analytics (January - December)
- Track lodging map distribution (January - December)
- Track in-app ad impressions received (May - December)

SMALL MEETINGS MARKET

Strategy: Engage small meeting and event planners by leveraging targeted content, media promotion, partnership programs, and direct communication to drive awareness, site visits, and meeting opportunities in Elkhart County.

Tactics

- Produce and distribute direct mail postcard (January - April)
- Produce and place content in print and digital publications targeting small meeting and event planners (January - December)
- Identify and promote relevant small meetings events to local and regional media (January - December)
- Provide services, information and assistance to meeting and event planners (January - December)
- Update and distribute Meeting Planner Guide (January - December)
- Update and distribute RV Rally Planner Guide (January - December)
- Update website pages (January - December)

Metrics

- Track Meetings website analytics (January - December)
- Track PDF downloads of Meeting Planner Guide (January - December)
- Track PDF downloads of RV Rally Planner Guide (January - December)
- Track meeting market contacts, leads, and RFPs (January - December)
- Track direct mail postcard (April - May)

YOUTH SPORTS MARKET

Strategy: *Promote Elkhart County as a premier destination for youth sports through ad placements, collaboration and comprehensive support to sporting event organizers.*

Tactics

- Place print ad in publications targeting sports rights holders and sports event planners (January - December)
- Create and distribute press releases or story pitches to local, regional and travel media for the Elkhart County sports market (January - December)
- Collaborate with Team Indiana on sporting event initiatives and promotions aligning with Elkhart County assets (January - December)
- Provide services, information, promotional assets, and assistance to sporting event organizers (January - December)

Metrics

- Track PDF downloads of the Sports Facilities Profile Sheet (January - December)
- Track website page analytics (January - December)

TRAVEL TRADE MARKET

Strategy: *Actively engage and attract tour operators and group planners by leveraging targeted print and digital content, FAM tours, trade shows, and tailored itineraries while providing ongoing support and follow-up.*

Tactics

- Produce and place print and digital insertions in publications targeting tour operators and group planners (January - December)
- Produce, promote, and host FAM tour (January - December)
- Attend trade shows targeting tour operators and group planners (January - December)
- Produce and distribute Travel Trade eNewsletters to promote Elkhart County assets (January - December)
- Provide services, information and assistance to tour operators and group planners (January - December)
- Produce and distribute customized daytrip and overnight itineraries (January - December)
- Produce and send direct mail postcard (April - December)
- Update and create group profile sheet for travel trade shows (December)

Metrics

- Track Travel Trade website analytics (January - December)
- Track PDF downloads of Travel Trade profile sheet (January - December)
- Track travel trade leads and appointments (January - December)
- Track email follow up to tradeshow attendees (January - December)

CURATE

ECCVB DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The objective of the ECCVB curate strategy is to actively engage in product and community development activities that support the organization's role as a Destination Architect. This strategy approach will assist existing and new partners with development and delivery of more engaging experiences that align with the Well Crafted destination brand and targeted audiences while being synergistic with existing assets.

CURATE PILLAR GOAL

To stimulate spending and economic growth, we will implement strategies that support tourism development in strategic areas through promotional and training activities. We aim to promote, support, and facilitate the creation of a broader range of engaging experiences across the county and its communities.

CURATE PILLAR TARGET MARKETS OF FOCUS

- Event Support & Development
- Small Business Support
- Outdoor Recreation
- RV Industry Engagement
- Youth Sports Market Engagement
- Vibrant Communities Implementation

DESTINATION EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

Strategy: *Innovate and diversify Elkhart County’s tourism offerings by researching and developing niche-aligned experiential campaigns, cross-promotions, and partnerships with both traditional and non-traditional stakeholders, while enhancing visitor engagement and feedback integration across seasonal, culinary, and cultural experiences.*

Tactics

- Develop Well Crafted promotional kits for regional and national travel journalists (January - March)
- Research and develop a Well Crafted campaign to cross-promote partner brands (January - April)
- Research and develop a Well Crafted farm-to-table food experience (January - June)
- Develop a Well Crafted brewery campaign in partnership with local stakeholders (January - August)
- Research and develop countywide seasonal experiential art exhibitions activating and aligning with niche segmentation (January - December)
- Research and develop immersive and engaging experiences aligning with niche segmentation (January - December)
- Research new experiences in the Visitor Center aligning with niche segmentation (January - December)
- Develop and foster partnerships with both traditional tourism stakeholders and non-traditional ones to diversify the tourism offerings (January - December)
- Research and develop a feedback system to gather insights from stakeholders on ongoing experience development, ensuring their needs and expectations are met while remaining aligned with the ECCVB’s strategic direction and brand messaging (January - December)
- Research the viability and implementation of a countywide music promotion program (January - December)
- Research the viability and implementation of a tourism development fund (July - December)
- Research and develop a Well Crafted 2026 restaurant and dining-focused campaign (August – December)
- Research and develop a Well Crafted 2026 brewery experience in partnership with local stakeholders (August – December)

GROUP EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

Strategy: *Create a collaborative framework among local stakeholders, hoteliers, and regional partners to enhance the destination’s overall tourism ecosystem.*

Tactics

- Research and develop a strategy for local stakeholders, hoteliers and regional partners to provide education, inspiration, and partner-sharing opportunities (January - December)

OUTDOOR RECREATION DEVELOPMENT

Strategy: *Collaborate with local stakeholders in developing and enhancing outdoor experiences, including improved park and trail wayfinding and activating blueways experiences that align with niche market segments.*

Tactics

- Research and develop outdoor experiences in collaboration with local stakeholder organizations (January - December)
- Facilitate discussions with park and trail stakeholders on amenity wayfinding signage (January - December)
- Continue development and activation of countywide blueways experiences aligning with niche segmentation (January - December)

RV EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT

Strategy: Enhance and initiate engaging experiences for RV visitors in Elkhart County through collaboration with the RV industry and by communicating activities that resonate with the destination brand.

Tactics

- Develop an outreach strategy and facilitate discussions with RV industry stakeholders connecting RV travelers with Elkhart County assets (January - December)
- Research and develop a Roadtrippers influencer campaign for the RV family audience (January - December)

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

Strategy: Partner with the Community Foundation of Elkhart County to manage and coordinate Vibrant Communities activities by fostering creative ideation and community stakeholder engagement.

Tactics

- Facilitate community stakeholder discussions on amenity wayfinding and gateway signage (January - March)
- Manage and coordinate Vibrant Communities activities in cooperation with community partners (January - December)
- Foster and facilitate opportunities for creative ideation, innovation, and brainstorming conversations (January - December)
- Research, develop, and activate a new project implementation program for emerging communities (February - August)

BALANCE

ECCVB RESOURCE & MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The objective of the ECCVB Balance strategy is to engage in research that informs and guides development and promotion investment. Research findings will help guide a balanced approach between tourism promotion and development.

BALANCE PILLAR GOAL

Balance the areas of focus of the ECCVB to optimize its potential and lead the visitor industry and communities. Operate as a fiscally responsible and highly performing destination organization through a highly effective team and leveraged partnerships.

BALANCE PILLAR TARGET MARKETS OF FOCUS

- Elkhart County Innkeeper Tax Commission Members
- ECCVB Board of Directors
- ECCVB Staff
- Industry suppliers / vendors
- Industry partners

DESTINATION RESEARCH

Strategy: *Enhance informed decision-making and stakeholder engagement by collecting, analyzing, and reporting comprehensive tourism and economic impact data, while identifying opportunities to support strategic development initiatives.*

Tactics

- Develop research reporting parameters to stakeholders and partners (January - April)
- Explore tax-related funding opportunities to support new tourism development activities (January - July)
- Facilitate Certec Economic Impact Study (January - December)
- Collect and report findings of STR data (January - December)
- Analyze and communicate trends in Tourism Economics Symphony reports (January - December)
- Combine insights from multiple data streams into an Executive Summary (January - December)
- Identify and map local assets, including cultural, recreational, and historical sites, to create a comprehensive experience overview (January - December)
- Develop and implement a strategy to engage stakeholders in advancing youth sports facility investment (January - December)

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Strategy: *Achieve financial stability and operational efficiency while ensuring compliance with all financial obligations.*

Tactics

- Develop a sound 2025 line-item budget (January)
- Establish financial ratios and projections (January - December)
- Develop monthly financial reports and statements for the corporation (January - December)
- Perform all accounts receivable and payable for the corporation (January - December)
- Perform as the Commission's designated collections administrator for delinquencies (January - December)
- Develop monthly reports on collections activities and hotel occupancy trends (January - December)
- Complete all county, state and federal employee withholding obligations (January - December)
- Complete all grant financial requirements (January - December)
- Maintain a 95% collections rate of lodging tax receipts (January - December)
- Maintain a 95% collections rate of Elkhart County Area Guide contracts (January - December)

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Strategy: *Enhance employee engagement and satisfaction by maintaining accurate personnel records, providing comprehensive benefits support, managing contributions, and evaluating development opportunities*

Tactics

- Keep current all personnel records for each employee (January - December)
- Work with all employees to assist with interpretation of benefit plans and filing procedures (January - December)
- Oversee and report all employee personal time off (January - December)
- Manage the corporate / employee SRA contribution plans (January - December)
- Research benefit plans that best meet employee's needs and corporation budgetary requirements (January - December)
- Distribute Employee Professional Development Survey (December)

VISITOR CENTER SERVICES

Strategy: *Deliver exceptional customer experiences by offering friendly, personalized service and providing comprehensive, up-to-date resources at the Visitor Center.*

Tactics

- Provide friendly, personal service in-person and digitally (January - December)
- Provide and distribute the Elkhart County Area Guide, up-to-date local business brochures, maps, regional travel guides and other materials in a contemporary Visitor Center (January - December)

ADVOCATE

ECCVB STAKEHOLDER & RESIDENT RELATIONS STRATEGY

The objective of the ECCVB is to build a better understanding of the tourism industry's contributions to economic vitality and resident quality of place.

ADVOCATE PILLAR GOAL

Build relationships and advocate on behalf of the ECCVB and the tourism industry ensuring the recognized role of tourism and its economic impact. Inform and advocate on the importance and value of tourism and the ECCVB's vital role as the leader and expert of the destination's tourism development and promotion.

ADVOCATE PILLAR TARGET MARKETS OF FOCUS

- Elkhart County Innkeeper Tax Commission Members
- ECCVB Board of Directors
- Elected and Appointed Officials
- Industry partners
- Trade associations
- Media
- Residents

ECCVB ADVOCACY

Strategy: Strengthen relationships with key stakeholders and elected representatives by fostering collaboration, communicating the economic benefits of tourism, and supporting local partners through targeted engagement, recognition, and strategic messaging.

Tactics

- Communicate and collaborate ongoing promotion campaigns with partners (January - December)
- Assist event organizers to increase attendance and build their digital audience for re-targeting (January - December)
- Update and implement an advocacy meeting plan connecting the Elkhart County Innkeeper Tax Commission and ECCVB Board of Directors with key stakeholders/elected representatives (January - December)
- Distribute community Thank You Notes acknowledging Elkhart County partners, stakeholders and volunteer groups which support quality of place efforts (January - December)
- Facilitate meetings with Elkhart County stakeholders developing relationships and better understanding of partnership opportunities (January - December)
- Produce and distribute B2B eNewsletters (January - December)
- Update and distribute key messages on the value of quality of place (January - December)
- Implement a strategy engaging local stakeholders to integrate Well Crafted messaging (January - December)
- Develop, create, and distribute an annual report communicating the economic benefits of tourism to key stakeholders (January - March)
- Develop, create, and implement advocacy events communicating the economic benefits of tourism and facilitating connections between key stakeholders (January - December)
- Develop, create, and implement Well Crafted hospitality frontline worker campaign (March - October)

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Strategy: Amplify the value and economic impact of tourism in Elkhart County by distributing targeted advocacy messages, participating in media events, and engaging with travel media.

Tactics

- Develop and implement distribution plan for advocacy messages, including the annual report and handout, on the value of tourism and its economic impact on the destination (January - December)
- Attend regional and national media marketplace events representing the Elkhart County destination (January - December)
- Produce and distribute a quarterly tourism eNewsletter for travel media (March, June, September, December)

ECCVB SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMS

Strategy: Enhance community engagement by supporting quality of place events, increasing sponsorship program participation from underserved communities, and aligning sponsorship initiatives with the Well Crafted brand through updated practices and engagement tools.

Tactics

- Support community-based quality of place events consistent with the ECCVB Sponsorship Program, Area Guide Assistance Fund, and Community Support & Engagement programs (January - December)
- Develop increased participation in sponsorship program from traditionally underserved communities of Elkhart County (January - December)
- Evaluate, develop, and implement engagement tools and programs to assist ECCVB sponsorship partners in aligning with Well Crafted destination brand (January - December)
- Update sponsorship practices and internal guidelines as necessary (October - December)

ELKHART COUNTY INNKEEPER TAX COMMISSION

DAN SHOUP, PRESIDENT

121 River Park Drive, Middlebury, IN 46540
p: 574.536.5730 | e: dshoup118@gmail.com

GITA PATEL, VICE PRESIDENT

JSK Hospitality & Development, Vice President of Purchasing
121 South Dr. MLK Jr. Boulevard, South Bend, IN 46601
p: 574.904.4136 | e: gpatel@jskhotel.com

RICK JENKINS, SECRETARY / TREASURER

R&S Jenkins Properties, Owner
25530 CR 54, Nappanee, IN 46550
p: 574.903.3688 | e: ricjen49@gmail.com

DAN BOECHER

Hotel Elkhart, Partner
500 South Main Street, Elkhart, IN 46514
p: 574.903.4688 | e: dan.boecher@gmail.com

ANANT (A.J.) PATEL

JSK Hospitality & Development, President & CEO
121 South Dr. MLK Jr. Boulevard, South Bend, IN 46601
p: 574.320.2784 | e: apatel@jskhospitality.com

DOUG RISSER

The Exchange Travel Service, Owner
3110 Mallard Lane, Goshen, IN 46526
p: 574.533.6400 | e: doug@theexchangegoshen.com

BETH RONZONE

Red Roof Inn, Manager
2902 Cassopolis Street, Elkhart, IN 46514
p: 574.262.3691 x100 | e: i0018@redroof.com

LEVI KING, PRESIDENT

King Corporation, Owner
P. O. Box 11, Middlebury, IN 46540
p: 574.596.6954 | e: levijojo61@gmail.com

DAN BEARSS, VICE PRESIDENT

Alliance Marketing Group, President
110 West Waterford Street, Wakarusa, IN, 46573
p: 574.238.3535 | e: dbearss@nitdc.com

LARRY APP, SECRETARY / TREASURER

19933 CR 16, Bristol, IN 46507
p: 574.848.9284 | e: larry@roundstonellc.com

BRIAN HOFFER

Kindig & Sloat, Partner
102 Heritage Parkway, Nappanee, IN 46550-0031
p: 574.773.7996 | e: bhoffer@kindigandsloat.com

ARVIS DAWSON

Elkhart City Council, President
228 South Main Street, Apt 1, Elkhart, IN 46516
p: 574.536.1970 | e: arvisdawson@gmail.com

BRITTANY SHORT

Community Foundation of Elkhart County,
Connect in Elkhart County Initiative Director
240 East Jackson Boulevard, Suite 104
Elkhart, IN 46516
p: 574.295.8761 | e: brittany@inspiringgood.org

DAN SHOUP

Elkhart County Innkeeper Tax Commission President
121 River Park Drive, Middlebury, IN 46540
p: 574.536.5730 | e: dshoup118@gmail.com

ELKHART COUNTY CVB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ELKHART COUNTY CVB STAFF

JON HUNSBERGER, CDME

Executive Director | jon@eccvb.org

Responsibilities:

- Develop and manage short and long-term strategic business plans to connect visitors with local hospitality partners and enhance destination development in Elkhart County.
- Ensure organizational excellence through rigorous program evaluation and the consistent quality of finance, administration, marketing, and technology processes that attract visitors.
- Engage and energize team members, volunteers, and stakeholders to foster collaboration, feedback, and active involvement in initiatives.
- Recruit, coach, and retain high-performance teams, providing support and guidance to achieve the Bureau's established goals.
- Present policies and procedures to the ECCVB Board, ensuring team member guidelines and policies are up-to-date to support team success.
- Prepare and present business reports at Commission and Board meetings to track progress toward business objectives and manage the annual budget effectively.
- Provide bi-monthly updates and comprehensive year-end reports to the ECCVB Board, highlighting successes, challenges, and future opportunities.
- Build and maintain strategic relationships with business and government partners to enhance the ECCVB's brand and maximize the effectiveness of marketing initiatives.
- Maintain regular communication with elected officials, tourism leaders, and residents to build productive alliances and advocacy efforts.

JANIS LOGSDON, CDME

Director of Marketing and Sales | janis@eccvb.org

Responsibilities:

- Develop annual marketing and sales strategies, track budget goals, and manage co-op advertising initiatives to meet leisure sales targets while prospecting potential advertisers for increased media buys.
- Create and manage detailed marketing strategies, develop engaging content, oversee co-op promotions, and analyze media placements to attract leisure visitors and extend their stays.
- Build and maintain partnerships with local businesses and organizations, attend relevant meetings and events, and advise businesses on positioning to enhance the visitor experience.
- Conduct annual cost assessments for marketing initiatives, prepare sales and activity reports, and develop strategies to meet budget projections.
- Assist with visitor center operations, proofread marketing materials, and prepare division reports on project statuses.

CINDY OSTROM

Director of Finance and Administration | cindy@eccvb.org

Responsibilities:

- Oversee financial strategy, budgeting, forecasting, reporting, payroll, and compliance, ensuring organizational goals are met.
- Develop and implement policies, manage office operations, and provide administrative support.
- Manage vendor contracts, insurance, and facility maintenance.
- Lead the Visitors Center team, ensuring high-quality customer service and resource management.
- Manage recruitment, benefits programs, employee relations, personnel records, and satisfaction surveys.
- Support organizational projects and customer service backup as needed.

JESSICA MILLER-BARNHART

Director of IT and Online Strategy
jessica@eccvb.org

Responsibilities:

- Create and manage a comprehensive digital strategy for the Experience Elkhart County website, including design, content updates, and social media management, while executing targeted email promotions aligned with marketing objectives.
- Ensure the accuracy and integrity of the database, overseeing lead imports, fulfillment, and custom report creation to enhance workflow and support data-driven decision-making.
- Generate monthly reports evaluating marketing initiatives, digital performance metrics, and visitor data, providing insights and recommendations for improvement.
- Manage technology infrastructure, develop IT policies for security and efficiency, and stay updated on emerging technologies and vendor management.
- Facilitate collaborative marketing projects, support the Visitors Center staff, compile board report information, and maintain organized records to ensure compliance and integrity in operations.

AMANDA ECKELBARGER, CDME

Director of Strategic Initiatives | amanda@eccvb.org

Responsibilities:

- Lead strategic planning, ensuring innovative strategies across departments, brand integrity, and alignment with market trends and organizational goals.
- Collaborate with teams to implement strategic initiatives, providing mentorship, fostering collaboration, and ensuring alignment with marketing and branding objectives.
- Conduct market research to identify growth opportunities, develop new programs, and enhance tourism experiences through partnerships and campaigns.
- Manage and promote the “Well Crafted” and “We Believe In Here” brands, ensuring consistent visual identity and effective marketing campaigns.
- Oversee the distribution and fulfillment of visitor inquiries and bulk collateral materials, ensuring smooth operations and reporting.

LAURI LAWS

Destination Concierge | frontdesk@eccvb.org

Responsibilities:

- Provides professional, friendly, and personal service to visitors and callers of the Visitor Center to generate spending and economic impact throughout the destinations.
- Represents the direct and official resource to visitors of the Center by providing travel information and other visitor services in-person, over the phone, and online.

TERRY MARK

Director of Communications and Public Relations
terry@eccvb.org

Responsibilities:

- Develop and execute core communications and messaging strategies to enhance community support and awareness of the ECCVB's role in economic development, ensuring consistency in messaging across various channels.
- Create and distribute press releases, promotional materials, and content to secure media coverage, promoting Elkhart County as a top tourism destination through social media, newsletters, and other platforms.
- Lead meetings with ECCVB, community, and business stakeholders to integrate public relations strategies that promote quality of place, diversity, and visitor attraction.
- Organize public relations events and communication plans for the ECCVB and Executive Director, ensuring effective planning and execution to maximize participation.
- Manage sponsorship and grant programs, including developing guidelines and tracking project goals. Prepare reports on project statuses and maintain organized records for compliance.

JESSICA RISNER

Destination Sales Manager | jessica.risner@eccvb.org

Responsibilities:

- Research group tour trends to identify new opportunities and create compelling experiential offerings, collaborating with area partners to enhance services and attract groups.
- Develop themed itineraries and marketing support to extend overnight stays while managing a Travel Trade database and maintaining relationships with group planners, hotels, and attractions to secure group bookings.
- Host Familiarization Tours for tour planners, attend industry trade shows, and execute follow-up strategies to generate leads and foster destination resiliency, while providing educational opportunities for partners.
- Build relationships with special interest groups, such as RV and sports organizations, to develop targeted itineraries and coordinate group bid processes that enhance local economic impact.
- Maintain CRM databases, coordinate group rates, and prepare reports for tradeshow and sales missions while ensuring excellent customer service and responding to travel trade clients' requests.

ELKHART COUNTY CVB TOURISM & COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

JON HUNSBERGER, CDME

- Downtown Goshen, Inc.
Board of Directors
- Elkhart County Redevelopment
Commission President
- Elkhart Rotary Club Member
- Goshen Theater, Inc.
Board of Directors
- Goshen Theater, Inc. Strategic
Programming and Planning
Committee Chair
- Northern Indiana Tourism
Development Commission
Board of Directors, President
- Northern Indiana Advocates
Advisory Board Member
- Urban Land Institute Member
- South Bend Elkhart Regional
Partnership Board of Directors
- South Bend Elkhart Regional
Partnership Talent Attraction
Committee
- Vibrant Communities
Organizing Team

AMANDA ECKELBARGER, CDME

- Destinations International
30 Under 30 Alumni
Engagement Committee
Co-Chair
- Indiana Tourism Association
Board of Directors
- Indiana Tourism Association
Professional Development
Committee Chair
- Indiana Tourism Conference
Planning Committee
- Lerner 100 Celebration
Organizing Committee
- Lerner 100 Celebration
Communications Committee
Co-Chair

JANIS LOGSDON, CDME

- Northern Indiana Tourism
Development Commission
Marketing Committee

TERRY MARK

- Vibrant Communities
Organizing Team
- Tolson Center Board of Directors
- Tolson Center Executive
Committee
- Tolson Center Governance
Committee Chair
- Elkhart County Museum
Association

JESSICA MILLER-BARNHART

- Northern Indiana Tourism
Development Commission
Technology Ad-hoc
Taskforce
- Northern Indiana Tourism
Development Commission
Marketing Committee

CINDY OSTROM

- Vibrant Communities
Organizing Team
- 100 Women Who Care
- Lerner 100 Celebration
Organizing Committee
- Lerner 100 Celebration Grand
Event & Fundraising Committee





ELKHART COUNTY CVB 2025 BUDGET

EXPENSES

A/C#	LINE ITEM			
501	Staff Salaries	\$	690,000	
510	Payroll Taxes	\$	58,000	
630	Contract Labor	\$	1,000	
	<i>Personnel</i>			\$ 749,000 24%
503	Wellness Benefit	\$	4,000	
504	Health Insurance	\$	120,000	
505	Dental/Vision	\$	4,300	
506	SRA Contribution (Match)	\$	30,000	
	Benefit/Retirement			\$ 158,300 5%
147	Furniture & Fixtures	\$	1,500	
552	Meetings - Local	\$	12,000	
568	Workman's Comp Insurance	\$	2,000	
600	Office Supplies	\$	18,000	
610	Equipment Rental/Repair/Maintenance	\$	1,000	
611	Note Payable - Vehicle Lease	\$	7,500	
612	Vehicle Repair/Maint	\$	3,000	
613	Vehicle Registration/Plates	\$	1,000	
615	Fuel	\$	6,500	
	<i>Administrative</i>			\$ 52,500 1%
514	Community Relations/Event Sponsorship	\$	7,500	
515-1	Ad Placement - Leisure	\$	732,000	
515-2	Ad Placement - Group Meeting/Marketing	\$	32,800	
515-3	Ad Placement - Sponsorships	\$	160,000	
515-4	Ad Placement - Promotional Materials	\$	20,000	
518	Ad Production/Content Development	\$	10,000	
520	Area Guide Expenses	\$	131,900	
522	Printing	\$	18,000	
525	Postage	\$	25,000	
528-1	Quilt Garden Tour (Development)	\$	95,000	
528-9	New Product Development	\$	100,000	
530	Advocacy/Special Promotion/Event	\$	35,000	
531	Special FAM/Tour	\$	12,000	
535	Area Guide Assistance Grant	\$	23,500	
538-3	Partner Project - Vibrant Communities (Action Agenda)	\$	120,000	
539	Place Identity & Niche Segmentation	\$	10,000	
540	Research/Professional Fees	\$	100,000	
541-1	Technology - Hardware	\$	10,000	
541-2	Technology - Licensing/Software/Professional Assistance	\$	205,000	
545	Tradeshow/Sem/Marketplace	\$	6,000	
546	Professional/Continuing Education	\$	34,500	
548	Dues/Subscriptions	\$	50,000	
550	Travel - Tradeshow/Seminar/Meeting	\$	25,000	
555	Rent	\$	113,000	
558	Electricity	\$	8,000	
560	Water/Sewer	\$	2,000	
562	Gas	\$	2,000	
565	Telephone	\$	20,000	
570	Building/Liability Insurance	\$	11,500	
575	Building Maintenance/Repairs	\$	30,000	
580	Real Estate Taxes	\$	15,000	
585	Welcome Center	\$	3,000	
	<i>Product Development/Marketing</i>			\$ 2,167,700 70%

TOTAL EXPENSES \$ 3,127,500

REVENUE

A/C#	LINE ITEM		
305	Room Tax Revenue	\$	2,600,000
307	Area Guide Income	\$	177,000
308	Group Marketing Co-op Partnerships	\$	9,500
710	Interest Income	\$	60,000
711	Interest Income - Other Sources	\$	1,000
515-1	Exit #92 Campaign (Elkhart City RDC)	\$	160,000
515-1	Do Downtown Elkhart Campaign (Elkhart City RDC)	\$	60,000
538-3	Vibrant Communities Action Agenda (CFEC)	\$	60,000

TOTAL REVENUE \$ 3,127,500



3421 CASSOPOLIS STREET, STE 100 | ELKHART, INDIANA
ECCVB.ORG