

# 20 26

## BUSINESS PLAN





**THE ELKHART COUNTY  
CVB STEWARDS 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.**





1000# MAX LOAD EVENLY DISTRIBUTED

NEW BALLROOM EVENT RESTROOMS

MA  
EVENTS

CATERING



## ELKHART COUNTY, IN CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU, INC 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% lodging tax collected from visitors at Elkhart County lodging facilities with more than 30 rooms plus other revenue.

### VALUES & 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 bring the story of Elkhart County to life through creativity, collaboration, and connection. By cultivating bold partnerships and amplifying what makes our destination extraordinary, we showcase a place where innovation thrives and community spirit shines. Whether you come to belong, create, or unwind, Elkhart County isn't just a destination - it's an experience alive with opportunity, authenticity, and endless possibility.

## 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. The Well Crafted destination brand energizes our residents, partners and stakeholders to innovate and collaborate, cultivating vibrant experiences and upholding the highest standards of our craft.*

2026 is the fourth year of implementation of the Elkhart County CVB's long-term strategic plan. The successes are unmistakable - energy and investment in each community to create vibrant events, engaging attractions and inclusive gathering places. Placemaking is established in our community's core thanks to our advocacy.

Elkhart County's continued success is captured in these four pillars from our strategic plan: Diversify, Curate, Balance and Advocate.



**DIVERSIFY** (Market)



**BALANCE** (Manage)



**CURATE** (Develop)



**ADVOCATE** (Champion)

## DIVERSIFY

Communicating with visitors, residents and external audiences is an area rich with opportunity for innovation. The Elkhart County CVB will leverage tried-and-true strategies while incorporating fresh storytelling approaches and technologies to support the Elkhart County Area Guide, VisitElkhartCounty.com website, social media channels, and media outreach efforts.

## BALANCE

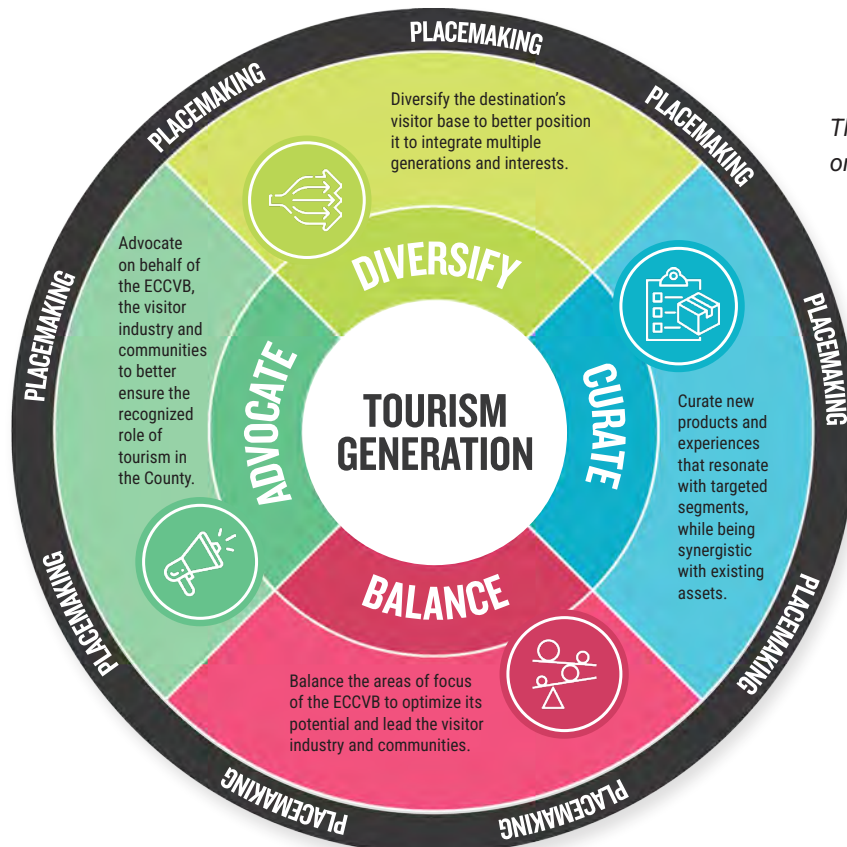
Focusing on broad goals requires devoting time and energy on organizational resources and data that is foundational to our activities. The Elkhart County CVB has oriented its staff and financial resources to guide our strategic goals while also implementing research tools to inform our work in youth 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. We will continue to support and facilitate a rich diversity of arts and culture projects ranging from public art, performing arts, and recreational sports.

## 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. Through relationships built through residential engagement activities, the Elkhart County CVB has established agency and influence with municipal and business leaders in placemaking development. By sponsoring events in all of our communities, we help foster activities that benefit residents and create satisfying experiences for visitors.



*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.*



GOSHEN  
brewing co.

GOSHEN  
brewing co.



# ELKHART COUNTY CVB

## KEY PRIORITY INITIATIVES

### RELATIONSHIPS & ADVOCACY ●●

The Elkhart County CVB will advance its strategic objectives by cultivating meaningful partnerships, forging new connections, and keeping community success and shared prosperity at the heart of everything we do.

### EXPERIENCES & DEVELOPMENT ●●●

From Amish Country to the Heritage Trail and Quilt Gardens, Elkhart County offers experiences that are as authentic as they are engaging. We will continue to elevate and expand these signature attractions while uncovering new opportunities that inspire exploration, celebrate creativity, and connect with our diverse audiences in meaningful ways.

### RESEARCH ●●●

The Elkhart County CVB will use data-driven insights to measure success and guide strategic decision-making. By developing clear key performance indicators (KPIs) and collecting meaningful research, we'll focus on metrics that reflect true impact - not just activity - ensuring our efforts deliver measurable results and lasting value for the community.

### OUTDOOR RECREATION & YOUTH SPORTS ●●●

The expansion of trails, greenways, and blueways connecting Elkhart County's communities has opened exciting new possibilities for outdoor adventure and exploration. We'll continue collaborating with partners to elevate and promote our parks, trails, and outdoor experiences, showcasing the county as a vibrant destination for recreation and connection. At the same time, we'll strengthen our thriving youth sports market and pursue new opportunities that drive growth, engagement, and community pride.

### VIBRANT COMMUNITIES & PLACEMAKING ●●●

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

# WE BELIEVE IN BUILDING COMMUNITY.

*The Elkhart County CVB is driven by its mission and core values to invest in our community. Through our key priority initiatives, we support arts and cultural events, community festivals, recreational programs, and placemaking projects. Our over \$750,000 investment amplifies the generous support from philanthropic partners, private donors and municipal funds and builds a powerful collective impact for our initiatives.*

Through these investments, Elkhart County's support and enthusiasm for quality of place projects is as high as it's ever been. The Elkhart County CVB works with and through critical collaborative partnerships to achieve momentous goals:

- Vibrant Communities of Elkhart County, partnership with Community Foundation of Elkhart County
- Downtown Elkhart and I-80/90 Exit 92 partnership with the city of Elkhart Redevelopment Commission
- Local, regional, state and national associations:
  - *Local: Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development Corp. of Elkhart County*
  - *Regional: Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission*
  - *State: Indiana Tourism Association, Indiana Chamber of Commerce, Team Indiana*
  - *National: Destinations International, American Bus Association*
- Sponsorship of events and programs across Elkhart County:
  - *Elkhart Jazz Festival*
  - *Goshen First Fridays*
  - *Nappanee Apple Festival*
  - *Elkhart County Symphony*
  - *Wakarusa Maple Syrup Festival*
  - *Bristol Corndog Festival*
  - *Michiana Pottery Tour*
  - *Taste of the Gardens*
  - *Pumpkinvine Classic*
  - *Premier Arts*
  - *Moose Rugby Grounds*
  - *Elkhart Hispanic Heritage Festival*
  - *River Bend Film Festival*
  - *Phoenix Performing Arts*
  - *Elkhart Civic Theatre*
  - *Curbside Concerts at Elkhart Public Library*
  - *Five Medals*
  - *Hall of Heroes Comic Con*
  - *Winter Wonderland Holiday Lights*
  - *Elkhart County Garden Expo*
  - *Middlebury Pumpkin Race*
  - *Elkhart Juried Regional at Midwest Museum of American Art*
  - *Nutcrackers in Nappanee*
  - *Groovin' in the Gardens*
  - *Mistletoe Market at Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds*

# 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 2026 BUSINESS PLAN TACTICS

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# DIVERSIFY

## ECCVB MARKETING, SALES & SERVICES STRATEGY

*The ECCVB Diversify pillar focuses on expanding destination brand awareness and driving visitor conversion across broader and more diverse audiences. It targets both leisure and group travel markets, aligning experiences with niche audiences identified through research to maximize engagement, visitation, and extended stays.*

### DIVERSIFY PILLAR GOAL

Grow and diversify the county's visitor base by reaching multiple generations and interest groups. By increasing brand awareness, highlighting unique experiences, and connecting visitors with tailored offerings, we aim to boost travel conversion, extend stays, and create more meaningful, engaging experiences for all audiences.

### 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

## **ELKHART COUNTY DESTINATION BRAND PROMOTION**

*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**

- Develop and manage a comprehensive content plan to support the Well Crafted brand, coordinating content creation, media campaigns, promotions, and partnerships across digital, print, and influencer channels to highlight local attractions, unique experiences, and engage target audiences (January - December)
- Manage the second year of the *Made for More* campaign promoting the attractions and experiences of Elkhart County (January - December)
- Plan and execute targeted niche marketing campaigns that promote diverse collections of experiences - spanning dining, recreation, and local attractions - while supporting partners to drive engagement and awareness (January - December)
- Develop and maintain a collection of itineraries to align with targeted niche segments (January - December)
- Develop and manage a comprehensive PR and media plan to support the Well Crafted brand, coordinating press outreach, story placements, media campaigns, and influencer partnerships to showcase local attractions, unique experiences, and increase destination awareness (January - December)

### **Performance Metrics & Key Indicators**

- Well Crafted paid and organic digital promotions (January - December)
- Qualified media inquiries and resulting earned media placements measured by impressions and advertising value equivalents (January - December)
- *Made For More* campaign results (January - December)
- Media page website analytics (January - December)
- RV page website analytics (January - December)
- Users and Views of Leisure Itineraries/Blogs (January - December)
- Blog Post analytics (January - December)
- Well Crafted Champions campaign results (January - December)
- Well Crafted foodie campaign (January - December)
- Well Crafted Elkhart County promotional kit campaign to regional and national travel journalists (April - December)
- Influencer campaign results (April - December)
- 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**

- Promote the Heritage Trail Audio Driving Tour through coordinated branding, marketing and digital outreach initiatives (January - December)

### **Performance Metrics & Key Indicators**

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

## DIVERSIFY

### 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**

- Refresh creative concepts and messaging for Quilt Gardens and Quilt Murals branding, marketing and digital outreach initiatives (January - March)
- Coordinate and facilitate new Quilt Mural materials and production for murals in Elkhart, Goshen and Middlebury (January - May)
- Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing and advertising plan for the Quilt Gardens and Quilt Murals, integrating print and digital media, targeted niche placements, and specialized itineraries to expand reach, attract new audiences, and sustain engagement throughout the season (January - September)
- Develop and execute a strategic PR and media plan for the Quilt Gardens along the Heritage Trail, coordinating press outreach, securing story placements, and amplifying media coverage to elevate the experience and boost public awareness (January - December)

#### **Performance Metrics & Key Indicators**

- Qualified media inquiries and resulting media placements measured by impressions and advertising value equivalents (January - December)
- Quilt Gardens page website analytics (January - December)
- Quilt Gardens map downloads (January - December)
- Paid and organic analytics (April - December)
- Rack card distribution (May - September)
- Behind the Blooms Quilt Garden paid and organic digital promotions (June - 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 manage a comprehensive content plan to distribute the Elkhart County Area Guide in digital, print, and social channels to maximize destination visibility and inspire travel (January - December)
- Coordinate, collaborate and manage the design and production of the 2027 Elkhart County Area Guide to ensure a cohesive, engaging, and on-brand publication that effectively reaches and inspires target audiences (January - December)

#### **Performance Metrics & Key Indicators**

- 2026 Elkhart County Area Guide print distribution (January - December)
- 2026 Elkhart County Area Guide digital distribution (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 and manage a comprehensive content plan to support the Elkhart County Event Calendar across digital, print, and social channels to highlight local festivals and events to target audiences (January - December)

### **Performance Metrics & Key Indicators**

- Event Calendar page website analytics (January - December)
- Paid and organic analytics (January - December)
- 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**

- Plan and execute advertising and promotional efforts by coordinating a co-op partnership with the Indiana Destination Development Corporation (January - December)

#### **Performance Metrics & Key Indicators**

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

### **INDIANA FESTIVAL GUIDE**

#### **Tactics**

- Plan and execute advertising efforts through a co-op partnership with the Indiana State Festival Association (January - December)

### **INDIANA'S COOL NORTH**

#### **Tactics**

- Plan and execute advertising and promotional efforts by coordinating a co-op partnership with the Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission (January - December)

#### **Performance Metrics & Key Indicators**

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

### **DOWNTOWN ELKHART PROMOTIONS**

#### **Tactics**

- Develop and manage a comprehensive content plan across digital, print, and social channels to promote Downtown Elkhart assets and experience (January - December)

#### **Performance Metrics & Key Indicators**

- Digital campaign analytics (March, June, September, December)

## DIVERSIFY

### ELKHART COUNTY CO-OP CAMPAIGNS (cont)

#### EXIT 92 PROMOTIONS

##### *Tactics*

- Develop and manage a comprehensive plan across digital and print to promote I-80/90 Exit 92 as the premier exit on the Indiana Toll Road, highlighting density of lodging and dining options to target audiences (January - December)

##### *Performance Metrics & Key Indicators*

- General rack card distribution (January - December)
- Exit 92 page website analytics (January - December)
- Commercial trucking rack card distribution (January - December)
- Lodging and restaurant rack card distribution (January - December)
- In-app ad impressions (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*

- Amplify Elkhart County as a premier destination for small meetings and events by producing and placing content in print and digital publications targeting small meeting and event planners, promoting relevant events and stories (January - December)
- Support meeting, event, and RV Rally planners by providing expert guidance, resources, and personalized assistance to enhance their planning, coordination, and overall event experience (January - December)

##### *Performance Metrics & Key Indicators*

- Meetings page website analytics (January - December)
- RV page website analytics (January - December)
- Meeting Planner Guide distribution (January - December)
- RV Rally Planner Guide distribution (January - December)
- Meeting market contacts, leads, and RFPs (January - December)

### 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*

- Develop and manage a comprehensive marketing plan to engage with sports rights holders and event planners to increase awareness, highlight key assets, and support sports event development in Elkhart County (January - December)
- Support sporting event organizers by providing services, information, promotional assets, and personalized assistance to enhance their planning, coordination, and overall event experience (January - December)

##### *Performance Metrics & Key Indicators*

- Sports Facilities Profile Sheet downloads (January - December)
- Sports page website 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**

- Develop and manage a comprehensive content plan to support in-bound group travel, coordinating content creation, media campaigns, promotions, and partnerships across digital and print channels to highlight local attractions, unique experiences, and engage target audiences (January - December)
- Support tour operators and group planners by providing services, information, promotional assets, and personalized assistance to enhance their planning, coordination, and overall experience (January - December)

### **Performance Metrics & Key Indicators**

- Travel Trade page website analytics (January - December)
- Travel Trade profile sheet downloads (January - December)
- Travel Trade show leads and appointments (January - December)
- Travel Trade show attendee follow-up (January - December)

# CURATE

## ECCVB DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

*The ECCVB Curate pillar focuses on fostering product and community development to strengthen the organization's role as a Destination Architect. This strategy supports existing and new partners in creating and delivering compelling experiences that reflect the Well Crafted destination brand, engage target audiences, and maximize the value of the county's unique assets.*

### CURATE PILLAR GOAL

Build and enhance tourism experiences across Elkhart County by implementing strategies that support development, promotion, and training initiatives. Facilitate the creation of a diverse range of engaging, high-quality experiences that drive visitor spending, strengthen communities, and align with the Well Crafted destination branding.

### CURATE PILLAR TARGET MARKETS OF FOCUS

- Event support and development
- Small business support
- Outdoor recreation
- RV industry engagement
- Youth sports market engagement
- Vibrant Communities initiatives

## 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 and implement the Catalytic Tourism Initiatives Program to accelerate priority experience development projects across the county that advance priority sectors (arts & culture, experiential tourism, outdoor recreation and youth sports) through focused program development and promotion (January - December)
- Research, design, and develop immersive experiences tailored to niche segments, while cultivating partnerships with traditional and non-traditional stakeholders to diversify and enhance destination offerings (January - December)
- Research and develop Quilt Gardens 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary experiences aligning with niche segmentation (January - December)
- Research the viability and implementation of a coordinated storytelling and tourism engagement programs that elevate cultural narratives and supports community revitalization through strategic event and partnership initiatives (January - December)
- Strengthen Elkhart County's event and arts ecosystem by supporting signature festivals, live music, and venue-based entertainment, while partnering with local performing arts organizations to expand access and opportunities across the community (January - 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

- Continue to work with local stakeholders, hoteliers and area partners to provide education, inspiration, and partner-sharing opportunities (January - December)
- Collaborate with stakeholders to implement immersive, high-impact visitor experiences that are accessible and engaging for groups, appealing to both first-time and repeat audiences, while aligning with key destination development pillars and supporting strategic growth initiatives (January - December)

## OUTDOOR RECREATION DEVELOPMENT

*Strategy: Collaborate with local stakeholders to develop and enhance outdoor experiences, including improved park and trail wayfinding, and activate blueways experiences that align with niche market segments.*

### Tactics

- Facilitate stakeholder collaboration to plan, enhance, and activate outdoor and water-based experiences, including amenities and wayfinding, ensuring alignment with niche visitor segments and countywide tourism goals (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**

- Facilitate collaboration with RV industry stakeholders to connect RV travelers with Elkhart County experiences and amenities, strengthening the county's position as a premier RV destination (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 and coordinate collaborative community initiatives - including wayfinding audits, Vibrant Communities programming, creative ideation, new project development, and neighborhood revitalization - in partnership with stakeholders and community partners throughout the year (January - December)



# BALANCE

## ECCVB RESOURCE & MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

*The ECCVB Balance pillar focuses on leveraging research to guide development and promotional investments, ensuring that efforts are informed, strategic, and aligned with both community and visitor priorities. Insights from research help maintain a thoughtful equilibrium between tourism promotion and development, optimizing outcomes for the county and its partners.*

### BALANCE PILLAR GOAL

Optimize the ECCVB's focus and resources to lead the destination and visitor industry effectively. Operate as a high-performing, fiscally responsible organization through a skilled team, strategic partnerships, and data-driven decision-making that supports both community and visitor objectives.

### BALANCE PILLAR TARGET MARKETS OF FOCUS

- Elkhart County Innkeeper Tax Commission Members
- ECCVB Board of Directors
- ECCVB Staff
- Industry suppliers and 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**

- Facilitate and oversee research and reporting efforts to evaluate Elkhart County's tourism performance, integrating data analysis and key insights to inform strategic decision-making and demonstrate economic impact (January - December)
- Lead stakeholder engagement and data-informed analysis to develop the next ECCVB Strategic Plan and Destination Plan, ensuring alignment with key development pillars and actionable recommendations for future growth (January - December)

## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

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

### **Tactics**

- Oversee the financial management and fiscal accountability of the organization through effective budgeting, reporting, compliance, and revenue collection practices that ensure transparency, sustainability, and organizational strength (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**

- Manage human resources operations and employee relations to maintain compliance, optimize benefits, and foster a supportive and growth-oriented workplace culture (January - 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**

- Deliver exceptional visitor services by providing personalized assistance, information, and resources both in-person and online to enhance the overall visitor experience (January - December)

# ADVOCATE

## ECCVB STAKEHOLDER & RESIDENT RELATIONS STRATEGY

*The ECCVB Advocate pillar strives to deepen understanding of how tourism drives economic growth, strengthens the community, and enhances the quality of life for Elkhart County residents by supporting local businesses, fostering meaningful partnerships, promoting the region's unique attractions, and showcasing Elkhart County as a premier destination for visitors and groups alike.*

### ADVOCATE PILLAR GOAL

Build and strengthen relationships while championing the ECCVB and the tourism industry, ensuring tourism's vital economic impact is recognized. Communicate the importance and value of tourism and reinforce the ECCVB's role as the leader and expert in developing and promoting Elkhart County as a premier destination.

### ADVOCATE PILLAR TARGET MARKETS OF FOCUS

- Elkhart County Innkeeper Tax Commission Members
- ECCVB Board of Directors
- Elected and appointed officials
- Tourism industry partners and local businesses
- Trade associations
- Media outlets
- Residents and community stakeholders

## **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**

- Coordinate ongoing promotion campaigns, support partner events, and implement targeted digital marketing strategies to expand event attendance and strengthen partners’ online presence (January - December)
- Facilitate meetings, develop advocacy events, and connect the Elkhart County Innkeeper Tax Commission and ECCVB Board with elected officials and industry leaders to advance tourism and quality of place initiatives (January - December)
- Create and distribute messaging that highlight the economic benefits of tourism, reinforce quality of place efforts, and inform stakeholders of destination performance (January - December)

## **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)

## **ECCVB SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMS**

*Strategy: Enhance community engagement by supporting quality of place events, increasing sponsorship program participation from underserved communities, and aligning sponsorship initiatives 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)

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# ELKHART COUNTY INNKEEPER TAX COMMISSION

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## **ANANT (A.J.) PATEL**

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

## **DOUG RISSER**

*The Exchange Travel Service, Owner*  
3110 Mallard Lane, Goshen, IN 46526  
574.849.5942 | doug@theexchangeoshen.com

## **BETH RONZONE**

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

# ELKHART COUNTY CVB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## **LEVI KING, PRESIDENT**

*King Corporation, Owner*  
PO Box 728, Shipshewana, IN 46565  
574.596.6954 | leviujo61@gmail.com

## **BRITTANY SHORT, VICE PRESIDENT**

*Director, Pumpkinvine Trails Coalition  
Community Foundation of Elkhart County*  
210 East Jackson Boulevard, Suite 301, Elkhart, IN 46516  
574.295.8761 | brittany@inspiringgood.org

## **LARRY APP, SECRETARY / TREASURER**

19933 CR 16, Bristol, IN 46507  
574.215.4055 | larry@roundstonellc.com

## **BRIAN HOFFER**

*Kindig & Sloat, Partner*  
102 Heritage Parkway, Nappanee, IN 46550-0031  
574.773.7996 | bhooffer@kindigandsloat.com

## **ARVIS DAWSON**

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

## **ROCHALI D NEWBIL**

*South Side Inc, Chief Executive Officer*  
739 Oakdale Drive, Elkhart, IN 46517  
574.333.1290 | ricknewbill@gmail.com

## **DAN SHOUP**

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





# ELKHART COUNTY CVB STAFF

## **JON HUNSBERGER, CDME, MUD**

*Executive Director*  
[jon@eccvb.org](mailto: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.

## **CINDY OSTROM**

*Director of Finance and Administration*  
[cindy@eccvb.org](mailto: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.

## **LAURI LAWS**

*Destination Concierge*  
[frontdesk@eccvb.org](mailto: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.

## 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.

## 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 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 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.
- Facilitate collaborative marketing projects, support the Visitors Center staff, compile board report, and maintain organized records to ensure compliance and integrity in operations.

## 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 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 visitor experiences.
- Conduct annual cost assessments for marketing initiatives, prepare sales and activity reports, and develop strategies to meet budget projections.
- Assist with proofread marketing materials, and prepare division reports on project statuses.

## 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, MUD**

- Downtown Goshen, Inc. Board of Directors
- Elkhart County Redevelopment Commission President
- Elkhart Rotary Club Member
- Goshen Theater, Inc. Board of Directors
- Goshen Theater, Inc. Programming and Marketing 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 Committee Co-Chair
- Indiana Tourism Association Board of Directors
- Indiana Tourism Association Professional Development Committee Chair
- Indiana Tourism Conference Planning Committee

## **JANIS LOGSDON, CDME**

- Elkhart Festivals Inc. Board of Directors, Secretary
- Elkhart ArtWalk Planning Committee
- 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**

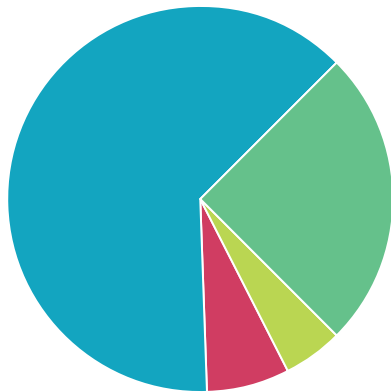
- Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission Technology Ad-hoc Taskforce
- Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission Marketing Committee

## **CINDY OSTROM**

- Vibrant Communities Organizing Team
- 100 Women Who Care



# ELKHART COUNTY CVB 2026 LINE ITEM BUDGET



**PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT / MARKETING**  
\$ 2,107,300 – 63%

**PERSONNEL**  
\$ 853,500 – 25%

**ADMINISTRATIVE / FACILITY**  
\$ 254,200 – 7%

**BENEFIT/RETIREMENT**  
\$ 183,500 – 5%

## EXPENSES

A/C#	LINE	ITEM
501	Staff Salaries	\$ 785,000
510	Payroll Taxes	\$ 67,500
630	Contract Labor	\$ 1,000
<b>PERSONNEL</b>		<b>\$ 853,500 – 25%</b>
504	Health Insurance	\$ 140,000
505	Dental/Vision	\$ 4,500
506	SRA Contribution (Match)	\$ 39,000
<b>BENEFIT/RETIREMENT</b>		<b>\$ 183,500 – 5%</b>
147	Furniture & Fixtures	\$ 1,500
552	Meetings - Local	\$ 12,000
555	Rent	\$ 113,000
558	Electricity	\$ 8,000
560	Water/Sewer	\$ 2,000
562	Gas	\$ 2,000
565	Telephone	\$ 20,000
568	Workman's Comp Insurance	\$ 2,000
570	Building/Liability Insurance	\$ 11,500
575	Building Maintenance/Repairs	\$ 30,000
580	Real Estate Taxes	\$ 15,000
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	\$ 1,200
615	Fuel	\$ 6,500
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE / FACILITY</b>		<b>\$ 254,200 – 7%</b>

514	Community Relations/Event Sponsorship	\$ 7,500
515-1	Ad Placement - Leisure	\$ 828,000
515-2	Ad Placement - Group Meeting/Marketing	\$ 32,800
515-3	Ad Placement - Sponsorships	\$ 200,000
515-4	Ad Placement - Promotional Materials	\$ 20,000
518	Ad Production/Content Development	\$ 10,000
520	Area Guide Expenses	\$ 130,500
522	Printing	\$ 18,000
525	Postage	\$ 25,000
528-1	Quilt Garden Tour (Development)	\$ 87,000
528-9	New Product Development	\$ 125,000
530	Advocacy/Special Promotion/Event	\$ 50,000
531	Special FAM/Tour	\$ 15,000
535	Area Guide Assistance Grant	\$ 23,500
538-3	Partner Project - Vibrant Communities (Action Agenda)	\$ 70,000
540	Research/Professional Fees	\$ 110,000
541-1	Technology Hardware	\$ 10,000
541-2	Technology - Licensing/Software/Professional Assistance	\$ 225,000
545	Tradeshow/Sem/Marketplace	\$ 6,000
546	Professional/Continuing Education	\$ 34,500
548	Dues/Subscriptions	\$ 52,000
550	Travel - Tradeshow/Seminar/Meeting	\$ 25,000
585	Welcome Center	\$ 3,000

## PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT/MARKETING

**\$ 2,107,300 – 63%**

**TOTAL EXPENSES**

**\$ 3,398,500**

## REVENUE

A/C#	LINE	ITEM
305	Room Tax Revenue	\$ 2,900,000
307	Area Guide Income	\$ 185,000
308	Group Marketing Co-op Partnerships	\$ 9,500
710	Interest Income	\$ 48,000
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)	\$ 35,000

**TOTAL REVENUE**

**\$ 3,398,500**

*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.*



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

