

Mat-Su CVB FY23 Annual Report



From the Board Chair

In FY23, tourism rebounded in a big way in the Mat-Su Valley, and across Alaska. It was encouraging to see, given the devastating impacts Covid had on our businesses just a few short years ago.

Mat-Su CVB led the way, promoting the region as a premier visitor destination. We use an efficient and targeted marketing strategy to reach visitors when they are making their travel decisions. We market to local Alaskans, to domestic visitors, members of the travel trade and travel media to tell our story.

Also in FY23, a major dream was realized, after more than a decade of hard work. In September 2022, the U.S. Economic Development Administration awarded a \$6.7 million grant to the Mat-Su Borough for construction and completion of the Gateway Visitor Center. There is still work to be done, but the project is now fully funded. This facility will have a major positive impact on the local visitor industry when it opens its doors, and I'm excited about what the future holds.

To our members, I thank you for your support on the Gateway project and for your valued commitment to the Mat-Su CVB. Together, we are providing economic development to the Mat-Su Borough through tourism development.

Mark Austin,
Mat-Su CVB FY23 Board Chair



FY2023 Board of Directors

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Mark Austin,
Musk Ox Farm

Vice Chair
Roberta Warner,
Alaska Tour & Travel

Past Chair
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Sheep Mountain Lodge

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Mat-Su Trails & Parks Foundation

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Revel Treks & Tours

Cole Chambers,
Rusts Flying Service & K2 Aviation

Fernando Salvador,
Alaska Collection by Pursuit

Sam Dinges,
Alaska Trails

Heather Dudick,
Alaska Railroad

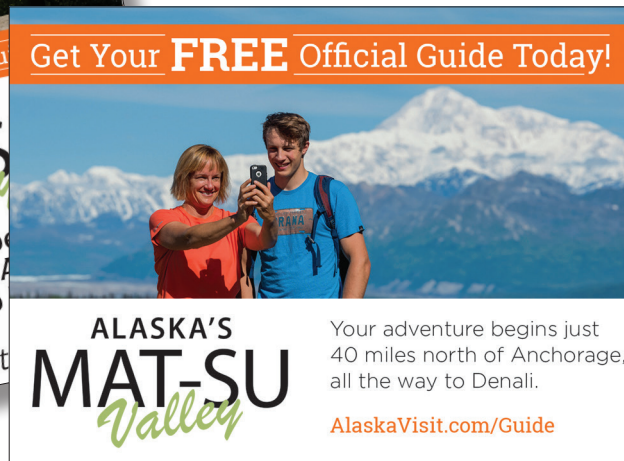


Sharing Mat-Su globally

In February, the Go West Summit was held in Anchorage, and the Mat-Su Valley was the home to a familiarization trip with 22 tour operators from around the world. Mat-Su CVB hosted the group, in conjunction with Visit Anchorage, for two nights and three days, highlighting winter packages that included dog mushing, glacier trekking and aurora viewing. These familiarization trips are crucial in attracting new businesses.

Promoting our destination to a national audience

The Mat-Su CVB placed display advertisements in national publications including AARP (right), Travel+Leisure (left), Outside (below) and Alaska Magazines, in addition to the state vacation planner.



3,567
Visitor Guide requests
directly from national ads

13.3%
Increase in e-newsletter
subscriptions

Reaching Alaskans

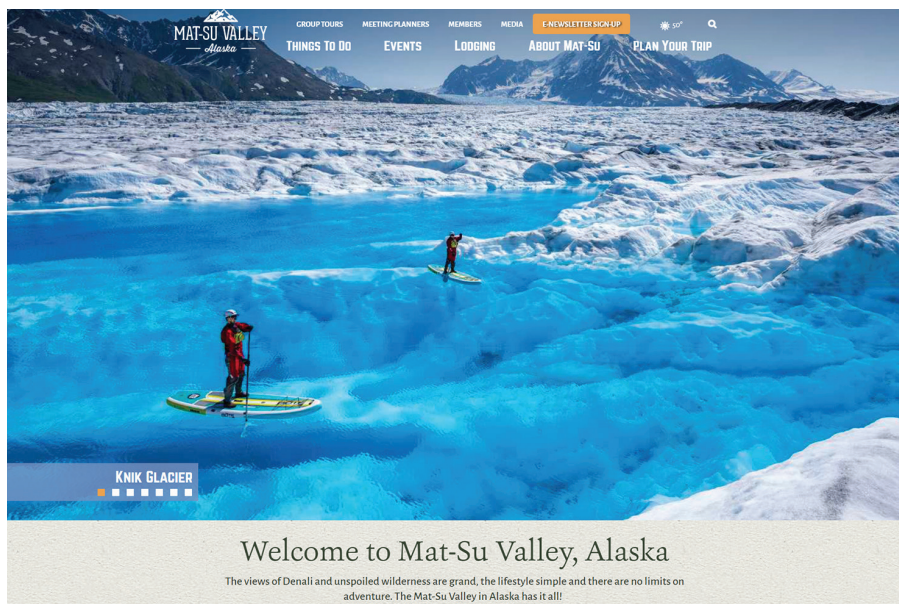
Alaskans and their visiting friends and relatives are an important market. Reaching them and influencing them to visit helps bring revenue to our communities.

The Mat-Su CVB reaches this market through geotargeted digital display ads, radio advertising in Southcentral, streaming television, geotargeted social media ad buys and at three in-state outdoor shows.



AlaskaVisit.com continues to grow

AlaskaVisit.com is our most important marketing tool that continues to see rapid growth. The web site generated 340,000 sessions in FY23, an increase of 48 percent from FY22. By driving traffic to the site, we also give our members increased exposure. Mat-Su CVB invests in paid search engine marketing and search engine optimization. This led to a 32 percent increase in organic traffic. Top pages were “Things to Do” and the calendar of events.



48%

**Total increase
over FY22**

256,000

**Total unique
visitors**

32%

**Total increase in
organic traffic**

Reaching visitors through social media

5.3 million

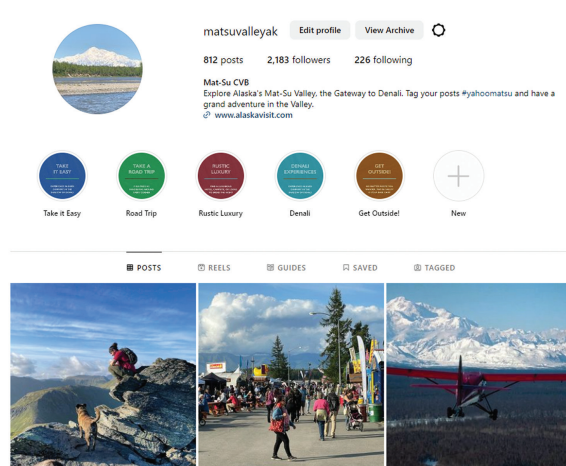
**Total reach
across all social
platforms**

51,000

**Engagements on
Facebook,
Instagram,
Twitter**

People look to social media for travel inspiration, so having a strong presence is important. In FY23, Mat-Su CVB's social media reach was 5.3 million, with more than 51,000 engagements on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.

One video about the Arctic Winter Games went viral, with more than 3.7 million views alone!



Telling Mat-Su's story

Travel writers tell the story of our destination, which inspires future visitors. In FY23, Mat-Su CVB assisted 30 national travel writers with Mat-Su itineraries, images or information for their stories.

Outlets included publications such as Travel Weekly and Northwest Travel & Life, along with social media influencers. Attending Alaska Media Road Show allows us to cultivate these relationships.

We also work locally to promote activities and experiences to in-state readers through publications like the Frontiersman, Anchorage Daily News and the Alaska Travelgram.



Gateway Visitor Center to become a reality

The Mat-Su CVB, in conjunction with the Mat-Su Borough, worked on a successful grant application for final construction funding for the Gateway Visitor Center.

In FY23, the U.S. Economic Development Administration awarded the borough a \$6.7 million grant for construction and completion of the Gateway Visitor Center. It is

hoped that the groundbreaking will take place in early 2024 with a tentative opening date of late 2025.

Getting the Gateway Visitor Center built has been a priority for the Mat-Su CVB Board of Directors for more than a decade. This grant will help that dream become a reality as we welcome visitors to a state of the art facility.

Arctic Winter Games to welcome the world in 2024



Since the Mat-Su Borough was awarded the bid to host the 2024 Arctic Winter Games, the Mat-Su CVB has been working closely with the Host Society. Casey Ressler, Mat-Su CVB President & CEO, is a member of the Host Society's executive committee and sits on the board, and the CVB staff have assisted the Host Society on a variety of projects in preparation of the 2024 Arctic Winter Games. We are ready to welcome 2,000 athletes and 4,000 visitors, coaches, media and volunteers to the Mat-Su Valley March 10-16, 2024.

Membership is the backbone of Mat-Su CVB

Providing tools for members' success

The success of the Mat-Su CVB relies on the success of our members, and that's why we provide a toolbox of resources, including cooperative advertising options, educational workshops, marketing programs and affordable digital marketing programs. We encourage you to take advantage of these!



251

**Active Mat-Su
CVB members**

30

New members

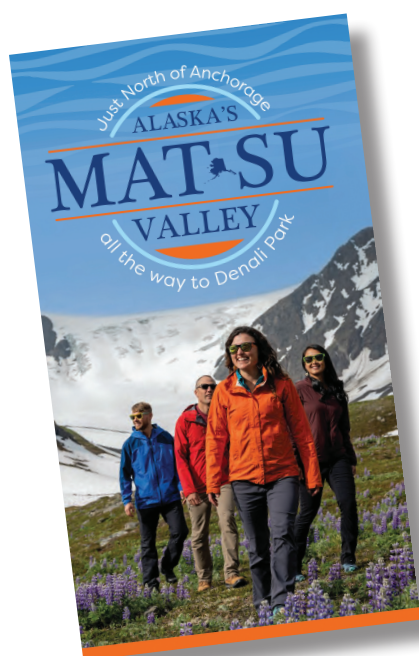
97%

**Member retention
rate**

Networking events build partnerships

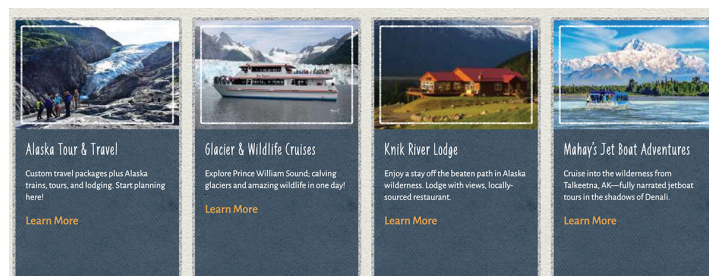
The Mat-Su CVB hosts several networking events throughout the year that lead to strong partnerships. In FY23, we hosted a Mat-Su Borough Candidate Forum, and member luncheons that covered topics such as best practices for social media marketing and cultural tourism initiatives. The annual spring member bar-becue had more than 60 attendees and featured the Arctic Winter Games host organization.

Affordable marketing opportunities for members



The 2023 Mat-Su Visitor Guide is filled with trip planning information. This year, 100,000 copies were printed. Every Mat-Su CVB member received a complimentary listing. Display advertising in the guide is among the most afford-

able in Alaska! These guides are distributed throughout Alaska, to tour operators and travel agents, at consumer and trade shows and through direct requests. Additionally, advertising options on AlaskaVisit.com give members the opportunity to use Mat-Su CVB's investment in online marketing to broaden their reach and attract more web site visitors and customers.



Statement of Financial Position

Statement of Financial Position (as of June 30, 2023)

Assets

Current assets:	
Cash	\$104,336.16
Memberships and grants receivable	\$9,852
Prepaid expenses	<u>\$8,170.14</u>
Total current assets	\$122,358.30

Property and Equipment	
Furniture and equipment	\$77,144.79
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(\$73,715.80)</u>
Net property and equipment	<u>\$3,428.99</u>
Security Deposits	\$3,790
Total assets	\$129,577.29

Liabilities and net assets

Current liabilities:	
Accounts payable	\$7,375.41
Payroll liabilities & deferred revenue	<u>\$43,747.41</u>
Total current liabilities	\$51,122.82
Unrestricted net assets	<u>\$78,454.47</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	\$129,577.29

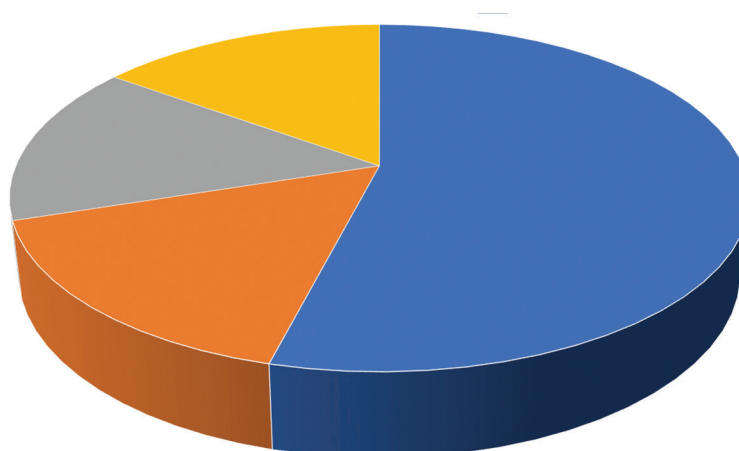
Per board policy, Mat-Su CVB's financial statements, accounting practices and reporting methods are audited every third year. The FY23 financial statements have not been audited.

FY23 Revenue Detail - \$901,240.84

Mat-Su Borough Grant Revenue	\$750,000
Membership Dues	\$43,983.99
Advertising Sales & Marketing Programs	\$78,863.42
Special Events & Fund-raisers	\$28,077.21
Interest	\$118.64
Capital credits	\$197.58
TOTAL REVENUE:	\$901,240.84

FY23 Expenses by Division

Marketing	\$538,970.34	58%	
Membership	\$143,141.55	15%	
Operations	\$125,873.94	14%	
Administration	\$119,710.72	13%	



Contact us!

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Advocates for the tourism industry

The Mat-Su CVB staff serves on numerous boards of directors, both locally and statewide, advocating for the Mat-Su tourism industry and our valued members.



YAHOO! Mat-Su

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