



## **Monterey County CVB Innovates As The Tourism Industry Recovers *Convention and Visitors Bureau launches Virtual Visitor Center and five-year Strategic Plan***

Monterey, Calif., March 3, 2022 – The last two years have proven that the world is both ever-changing and capable of significant innovation. With innovation in mind, the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau (Monterey County CVB) is preparing for the new future of the tourism industry. In the short-term, the destination marketing organization is innovating its operations through the new See Monterey Virtual Visitor Center. For the future, Monterey County CVB is developing its first-ever five-year Strategic Marketing Plan.

“The challenges and damage from the global pandemic have created an environment of innovation that is reshaping how we think about the future,” said Rob O’Keefe, president and CEO at Monterey County CVB. “This is not returning to normal; this an opportunity to come back better than we were before.”

Part of Monterey County CVB’s adaptation to meet travelers’ needs in 2022 is the launch of its [See Monterey Virtual Visitor Center](#), including a new See Monterey app. The platform provides a new way for visitors to explore what the county offers – from hotels to restaurants to activities to shopping and more - before and during their trips. In addition to the app, travelers can access the See Monterey Virtual Visitor Center on SeeMonterey.com through their desktop computers or a mobile-friendly version on their phones. All ways of accessing the center integrate a Live Chat component to allow visitors to connect directly with a Monterey County CVB team member.

Monterey County CVB is also investing in the future vision of the county’s tourism economy to help accelerate recovery. Since the pandemic, hotel occupancy has been impacted by hesitancy in group and meeting business and a near-total drop in international visitation. There has been a slow recovery in leisure visitor spending and hospitality employment. Monterey County CVB and its Board of Directors are contemplating a reimagined future, working with Coraggio Group, an industry expert in strategic planning.

“Since COVID-19 began, our community has come together in ways never before imagined,” said Chris Sommers, board chair for the Monterey County CVB and managing director at Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa. “We need this community collaboration and the resources to compete at a higher level because our competitors are definitely coming back aggressively.”

As part of the strategic planning process, Monterey County CVB will work alongside industry stakeholders and conduct town hall meetings for input from the community on the future of Monterey County’s tourism. The end result will lead to a nimble five-year Strategic Plan that will ensure Monterey County continues to thrive well into the future.

For more information on Monterey County CVB, visit [www.SeeMonterey.com](http://www.SeeMonterey.com).

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**ABOUT MONTEREY COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU**

The Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (Monterey County CVB) is a 501c6 non-profit organization that drives tourism for Monterey County. Tourism is the largest industry on the Monterey Peninsula and the second largest in the County. The MCCVB is a partnership of the hospitality community and local governments that aims to drive business growth through compelling marketing and targeted sales initiatives that maximize the benefits of tourism to its guests, members and the community. Travel spending in Monterey County was \$3.24 billion in 2019, representing a 3.3 percent increase from 2018. This \$3.24 billion in visitor spending supported 27,120 jobs, contributed \$296 million in total taxes and generated \$153 million local tax dollars that directly benefited the community. For more information, visit [www.SeeMonterey.com](http://www.SeeMonterey.com) and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

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