



FY 23-24 Annual Report

Presented by the Visit 29 Palms Tourism Business Improvement District
September 2024



FY23-24 ANNUAL REPORT

Branded as Visit 29 Palms, the Twentynine Palms Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) was established in 2017 to increase awareness, interest, and positioning of the city as a premier travel destination. Operating under the Parking and Business Improvement Area Law of 1989, the Visit 29 Palms TBID is formed through a public-private partnership between the City of Twentynine Palms and the lodging operators and owners within the district, and is funded by the revenue generated by a 1.5% self-assessed TBID assessment levied across lodging properties within the district, excluding those on the Marine Base.

This annual report highlights the key accomplishments and marketing activities of Visit 29 Palms over the past year, showcasing our efforts to promote Twentynine Palms as a premier travel destination.

We thank outgoing Vice Chair Nalini “Ash” Maharaj and Boardmember Patricia Knight for their leadership, dedication, and tremendous contributions to the Tourism Business Improvement District during their years of hard work while serving on the Advisory Board, and welcome new Boardmembers Ashton Ramsey and Ben Uyeda.



TBID ADVISORY BOARD

RAKESH MEHTA
Chair

HEIDI GRUNT
Vice Chair

MARIA MADRID
Boardmember

ASHTON RAMSEY
Boardmember

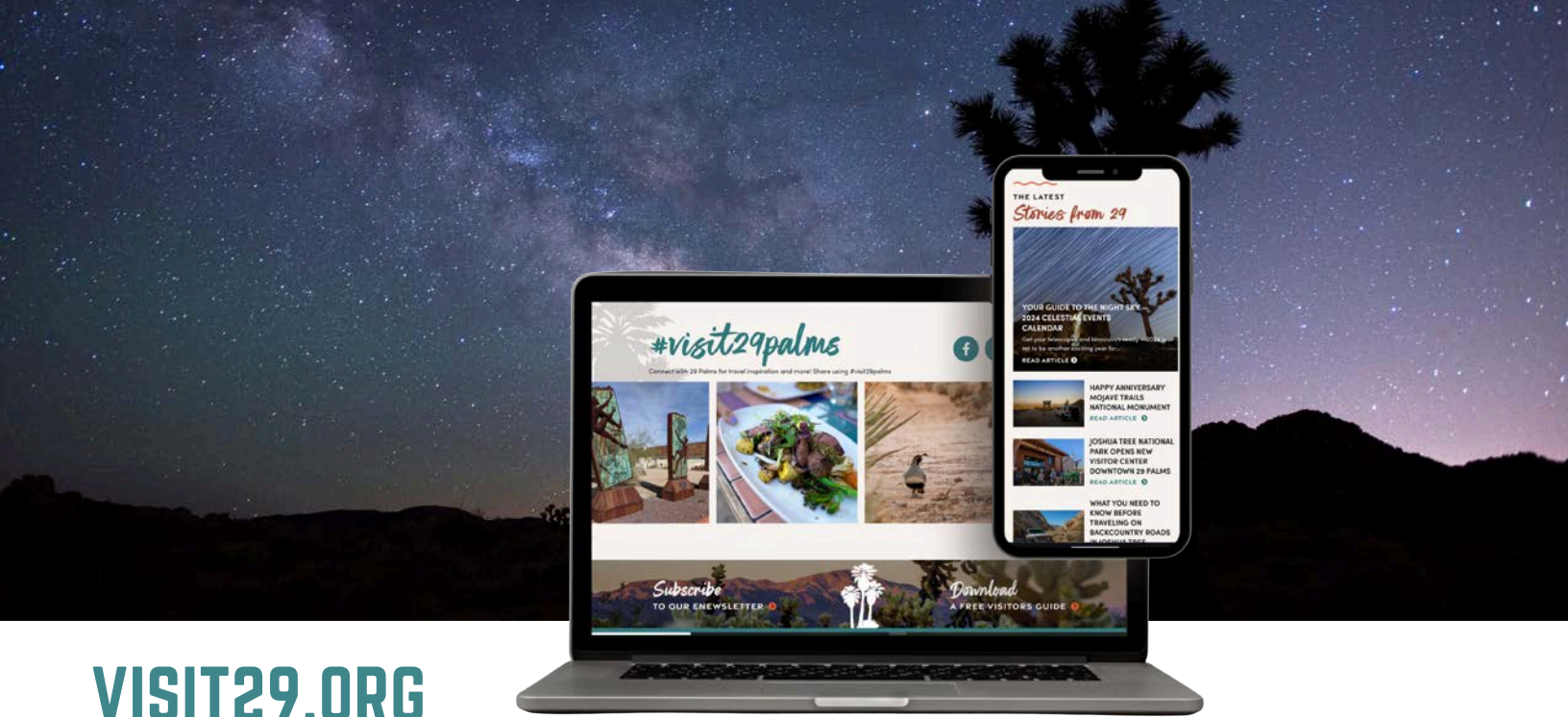
BEN UYEDA
Boardmember

TBID STAFF

BREANNE DUSASTRE
Director of Marketing

VISITOR CENTER STAFF

MARISSA KOZMA



VISIT29.ORG

Inspiring Visitors, Empowering Businesses

In December 2023, Visit 29 Palms launched a fully redesigned website, Visit29.org, proudly developed in partnership with Simpleview Inc., the leading experts in destination marketing websites. The beautiful new site features an updated digital brand style, enhanced visual storytelling, streamlined navigation, improved mobile engagement, and new tools for lead generation. Tourism destination websites play a crucial role in the travel consumer's journey, serving as both an inspirational resource and a practical tool for trip planning. With its intuitive design and engaging content, the new Visit29.org makes planning your next adventure to Twentynine Palms easier and more inspiring than ever, helping visitors discover all the unique experiences our vibrant community has to offer.

The redesigned Visit29.org not only enhances the travel consumer experience by showcasing the unique attractions and experiences that Twentynine Palms has to offer, but it also empowers our local business owners with interactive tools to manage and optimize their business listings and events. Through the integration of a user-friendly Extranet, businesses can easily update and refine their presence on the site. Additionally, the new self-serve event submission tool enables organizations and individuals to add their upcoming events to our online calendar, maximizing exposure and engagement.

102,701	247,000	10,359
Unique Site Visitors	Pageviews	Outbound Lodging Link Clicks
+16% vs. LY	+21% vs. LY	+14% vs. LY
2.4	01:53	54%
Pageviews by Session	Avg. Session Duration	Bounce Rate
+26% vs. LY	+25% vs. LY	-22% vs. LY



DIGITAL MARKETING

31K

Clicks

2.8%

Click Through Rate

\$0.38

Cost Per Click

Search Engine Marketing & Digital Display

Through targeted paid search and digital display campaigns, we effectively reached potential visitors searching for desert getaways, stargazing, and national park experiences. These campaigns drive significant traffic to our website, generating increased brand awareness, helping us remain competitive in California's highly dynamic tourism landscape.

44%

Open Rate

4%

Click Through Rate

21%

Grow in
Subscribers

Email Marketing

Our email marketing campaigns remained focused on delivering inspirational and engaging content to subscribers, showcasing seasonal experiences, upcoming events, destination news, and travel itineraries. By maintaining strong open and click-through rates, we effectively drove traffic to our website, fostering deeper engagement with Twentynine Palms' unique offerings and experiences.

286K

Organic Reach

6.8K

Content Interactions

1.2K

New Followers

Social Media

Our social media efforts focused on amplifying Twentynine Palms' brand across platforms, using a mix of engaging visuals, local stories, and event promotions. While growth was modest, we were able to foster deeper engagement with both visitors and the local community, laying a foundation for future improvements.



INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS

Our strategic presence in key regional airports—Palm Springs International, Ontario International, San Bernardino, and CBX—targets frequent travelers and promotes the destination to both domestic and international audiences. With year-round advertising at Palm Springs and co-op placements at Ontario through Discover Inland Empire, our ads capture the attention of millions, enhancing brand awareness and keeping Twentynine Palms top of mind for frequent travelers as these airports experience record-breaking passenger growth.

PAID & EARNED PRINT MEDIA

This year, Visit 29 Palms saw strong print media success with paid features in National Geographic Traveller's UK magazine and Palm Springs Life Desert Guide, along with earned coverage in AAA's Westways and Visit California's Road Trips magazine, making it our strongest year yet in print media exposure.

Paid Print Media



National Geographic Traveller

200K Circulation
Mailed + Monitored



Palm Springs Life Desert Guide

105K Circulation
Annual Publication

Earned Print Media



**Visit California
Road Trips**

1M Circulation

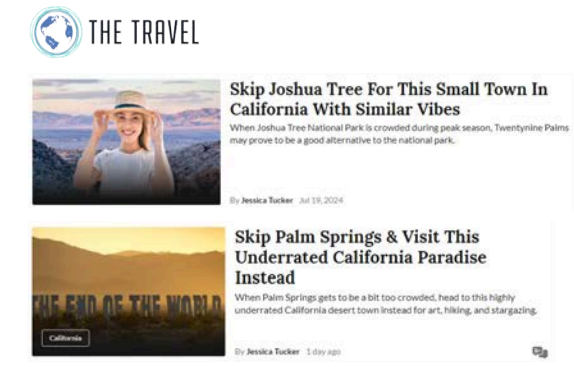
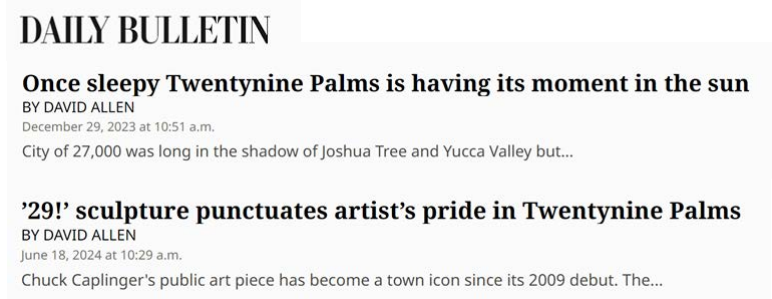
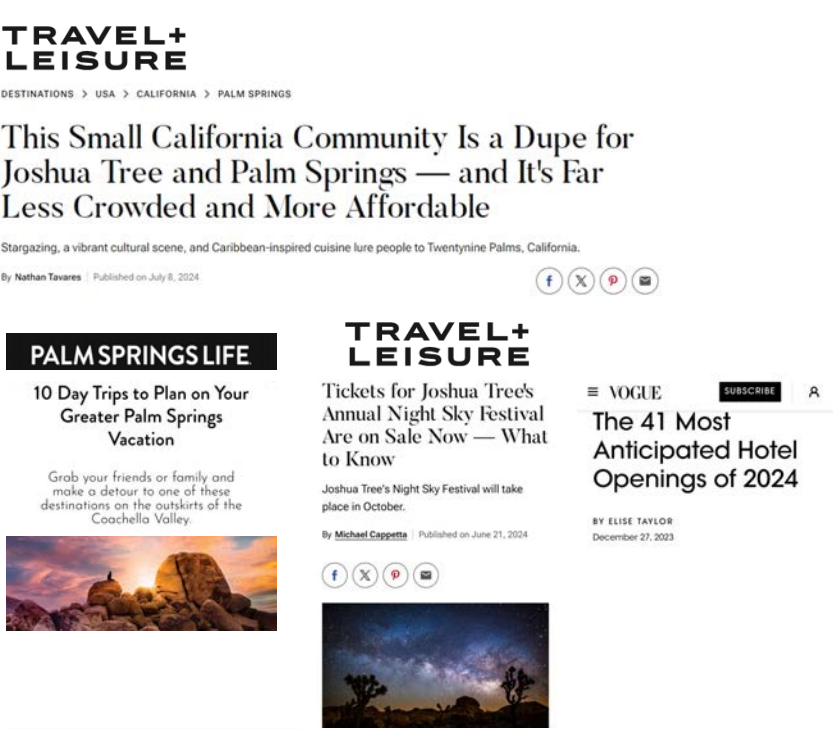


AAA's Westways

5M Circulation

EARNED DIGITAL MEDIA

Over the last year, Twentynine Palms has gained increased earned media attention, reflecting a positive shift in narrative and growing recognition of our unique destination. Many recent features highlight Twentynine Palms as an exciting alternative to Joshua Tree and Palm Springs, with a special focus on our vibrant art and restaurant scenes, unparalleled stargazing opportunities, and our positioning as the gateway to Joshua Tree National Park.





TRAVEL TRADE EVENTS



Visit California Outlook Forum | March 2024

Visit 29 Palms staff attended the 2024 California Outlook Forum, the leading in-state industry event hosted by Visit California for professionals in travel and tourism. This event offered valuable networking opportunities and insights into the evolving tourism landscape, helping Twentynine Palms position itself for future growth in the competitive tourism market.



Inland Empire Regional Tourism Summit | April 2024

Visit 29 Palms continued its leadership in the regional tourism market by sponsoring the 2024 Inland Empire Regional Tourism Summit, organized by Discover Inland Empire. This event reinforced the city's leadership in regional tourism, provided excellent networking opportunities, and included a panel opportunity to share the city's success stories, highlighting its growth and innovative strategies.



U.S. Travel Association's IPW | May 2024

Thanks to the support of our regional partners at Visit Greater Palm Springs and Visit California, Visit 29 Palms had the honor of being the chosen desert region partner at IPW 2024. This opportunity allowed our staff to participate in targeted one-on-one meetings with top global tour operators at the U.S. Travel Association's premier inbound travel trade show and were instrumental in promoting Twentynine Palms as a key destination, strengthening international relationships, and expanding the city's global reach.

FAM TOURS & CO-OPS

Discover Inland Empire Mexico FAM | December 2024

In partnership with Discover Inland Empire, we hosted a FAM Tour for top travel agents and buyers from Mexico. This visit allowed participants to experience Twentynine Palms' warm hospitality, unique attractions, and the natural beauty of Joshua Tree National Park, enhancing their ability to promote the destination.

Visit California Post-IPW FAM | May 2024

Following the U.S. Travel Association's IPW in May, Visit California organized several FAM Tours and itineraries to showcase diverse experiences across the state. Thanks to our partnership with Discover Inland Empire, Twentynine Palms was included in the "Adventure On Tap" itinerary with a lunch stop, opening up the opportunity for a group of travel media experience the unique charm of Twentynine Palms, further promoting the city as a must-visit destination in California.

Upcoming FAM Tours & Co-Op:



Brand USA MegaFAM | September 2024

Thanks to Visit 29 Palms' partnership with the Visit California UK office, we will have the opportunity to host a 10-member FAM group, featuring top travel agents from leading UK airlines such as British Airways and Aer Lingus. This tour promotes the twice-daily direct British Airways route to San Diego and highlights the scenic road trip between California and Arizona.



Visit California LA Media Reception | October 2024

Visit 29 Palms is excited to participate in Visit California's exclusive Media Reception in Los Angeles this October which will provide a powerful platform to network and pitch stories to top-tier travel and lifestyle media professionals based in the LA market, along with select regional and drive-market media.



"Adventure On Tap"
Post-IPW FAM Tour



SPONSORSHIP & EVENT GRANT PROGRAM

In January 2024, Visit 29 Palms launched a new Sponsorship and Event Grant Program, aimed to drive community engagement, foster industry collaboration, and attract overnight visitors to Twentynine Palms. This initiative represents a significant investment in our community's cultural and economic vitality, demonstrating our commitment to supporting local events and enriching the visitor experience.

The program was developed with extensive community input, with a community-led subcommittee working closely with TBID Advisory Board members and staff to craft comprehensive program guidelines. A Review Committee, comprised of community members, business owners, and TBID subcommittee members was formed to evaluate and score event grant applications, ensuring that funded events would support the growth of Twentynine Palms as a premier destination.

Following two application rounds, held in February and April, the Visit 29 Palms TBID's Advisory Board awarded 12 event grants and 16 sponsorships, supporting a total of 28 events between March and December. The investment in this program has supported a diverse array of events and programming, including film festivals, book festivals, music festivals, half marathons, art tours, and comedy events. By fostering a variety of cultural and recreational activities, the program aims to cultivate a culture of self-sustainability among event organizers, empowering them to develop financially viable events that will continue to thrive independently in the future. Through this strategic investment, Visit 29 Palms is not only working to boost tourism but also enriching the local community and enhancing Twentynine Palms' reputation as a vibrant and dynamic destination.

EVENTS SUPPORTED BY GRANT FUNDING



CONJURING CATHY ALLEN

MAY 9 - JUNE 2, 2024

Cathy Allen Studio



DESERT RAT CONVENTION

MAY 4, 2024

Old Schoolhouse Museum



SAND TO SKY SERIES

MAY 24-26, 2024

MAY 30 - JUNE 2, 2024

DESERTRADE

EVENTS SUPPORTED BY GRANT FUNDING



TO 29 AND BEYOND

MAY 9 - JUNE 2, 2024

Outpost 29



FREEDOM DAZE 29

MAY 4, 2024

Freedom Plaza



EVENTS SUPPORTED BY SPONSORSHIP FUNDING

Desert Moon Lunar Celebration | Sky's The Limit Observatory | March 2024

Hi-Desert Comedy | Rotating Venues | March, July, Aug 2024

All Summer's Eve Rendezvous Music Festival | The Palms | May 2024

Juneteenth Celebration | Knott's Sky Park | June 2024

Adobe Mara Arts Walk | Black Cactus Co-Working | Feb, April, May 2024

Mike's Maui Time | Live Music @ 29 Palms Farmers Market | March, April, May, June 2024

Chuck Caplinger's Desert Memories | Desert General Store | May - Aug 2024

Area 29 Galactic Gathering | City-Wide Event | Aug 2024

Area 29 Galactic Gathering Scavenger Hunt | City-Wide Businesses | Aug 2024



Photo Credit: Julie Laflamme

ASSESSING PROGRAM RESULTS

Post-Event Reporting Insights from Grant Recipients

Based on 175 survey responses, representing approx. 15% of total attendees across the five events supported by grants (Conjuring Cathy Allen, Desert Rat Convention, Sand to Sky Series, To 29 and Beyond, Freedom Daze 29) these events collectively benefited the local economy through expenditures in lodging, dining, retail, and other services.

Event Attendance and Engagement

Combined, these events attracted over 1,200 attendees, with a portion reported as coming from outside the region, including from Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco. Local residents also participated, often bringing visiting friends and family. Events ranged from intimate gatherings to larger, multi-day experiences, with daily attendance figures ranging from 125 to 340.

Leveraging Post-Event Insights for Future Funding Decisions

Utilizing post-event data and insights allows us to refine our funding strategies to maximize impact. By analyzing attendee demographics, spending patterns, and engagement levels, we can prioritize funding for events that demonstrate the potential to increase overnight visitation and boost visitor spending. As the program matures, these data-driven decisions will help enhance its effectiveness and sustainability.

Survey Insights

Based on 175 event attendee post-event survey responses

\$14,250

Spent on Overnight Accommodations

\$40,475

Spent at Restaurants, Retail Shops, Other Services

\$54,725

In Total Event Attendee Spending

\$312

Avg. Spend Per Surveyed Event Attendee

UPCOMING EVENTS

September - December, 2024

Supported by Visit 29 Palms Event Grant Funding:



29 QUEER FILM FESTIVAL

SEPT 20-22, 2024
Theatre 29



VACATION RACES JT 1/2 MARATHON

NOV 2, 2024
JT Lake & RV Campground
Freedom Plaza



29 PALMS BOOK FESTIVAL

NOV 8-9, 2024
Freedom Plaza



CLIMB SMART

DEC 6-8, 2024
Freedom Plaza & Joshua Tree NP



29 PALMS ROCK RUMBLE ROYALE

DEC 13-14, 2024
Freedom Plaza & Joshua Tree NP

Supported by Visit 29 Palms Event Sponsorship Funding:

Night Sky Festival | Sky's The Limit Observatory | Oct 2024

Art Tours After Dark | Basin-Wide Venues | Oct 2024

Joshua Tree Music Festival | JT RV Campground & Lake | Oct 2024

Joshua Tree National Park Art Exposition | 29 Palms Art Gallery | Nov 2024



CITY OF 29 PALMS VISITOR CENTER

Over the course of the year, the City's Visitor Center has engaged over 5,000 travelers from 45 U.S. states and 27 countries, showcasing the broad appeal of Twentynine Palms and California's Mojave desert region. Our staff directly connects visitors with local businesses, events, and attractions, enhancing their experience, and inspiring repeat visits and longer future lengths of stay, boosting the local economy and community vibrancy.

WHERE OUR VISITORS COME FROM

% comparison vs previous year



34% California	+2%
17% Western U.S.	+1%
14% Canada	+2%
12.6% Midwestern U.S.	+8%
10% Europe	-2%
6.5% Northeastern U.S.	+5%

5,084

Year-to-Date Visitors
26% Increase vs Previous Year

PAAC ART IN PUBLIC PLACES EXHIBITS

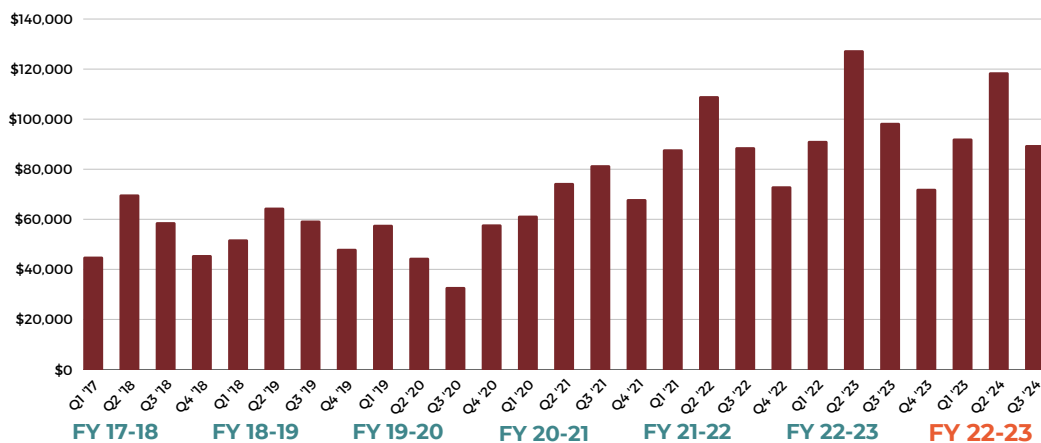
The City's Visitor Center continues to work in partnership with the Public Arts Advisory Committee (PAAC), providing gallery space for the quarterly Art in Public Places exhibits, showcasing the creativity and talent within our community and enhancing the cultural experience for visitors.





TBID ASSESSMENT COLLECTION

Year-Over-Year TBID Assessment Collection



YTD Collection
\$300,686
-5% vs LY

Year-to-date collections are \$300,686, reflecting a 5% decrease from last year. We anticipate ending the year with a total of approximately \$356,000. This decline aligns with broader trends across California’s tourism industry, with similar decreases in both the Inland Empire and Desert regions. Despite these fluctuations, Twentynine Palms is undergoing an exciting transformation. Our city has entered a new era, marked by a revitalized downtown, new businesses, and a National Park visitor center. These developments, along with our strong lodging infrastructure, position us for continued growth and success in the tourism sector.

As we look ahead, we are dedicated to continuing our efforts with the same passion and enthusiasm that have brought us this far and are committed to building on the momentum we’ve gained, ensuring that Twentynine Palms continues to thrive as a vibrant, welcoming destination. Our team’s dedication to this work and our love for this community inspire us to keep pushing forward, creating opportunities and unforgettable experiences for visitors. We are excited to embark on the next chapter and continue shaping the future of tourism in Twentynine Palms.



LOOKING AHEAD

As we look forward to our next term and continuing our hard work and dedication to the City of 29 Palms, we have updated and strengthened our marketing plan, and set a budget to support programs, initiatives, and events that we feel will allow us to build on our accomplishments, continue this momentum, and move us forward.

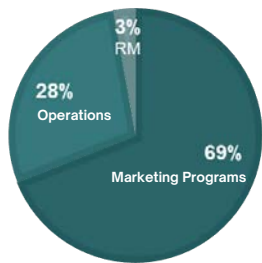
FY 2024-25 BUDGET

The 2024-25 Fiscal Year budget supports key initiatives, including marketing programs, the sponsorship and event grant program, partnerships, and operational support, and has been set for \$530,500.

REVENUE

FY24-25 Budget: \$530,500

- TBID Assessment: \$375,000
- TBID Reserves: \$150,000
- Other: \$5,500



EXPENDITURES

Marketing Programs \$369,854

- Event Sponsorship & Grants 37%
- Traditional Advertising 14%
- Digital Marketing 7.5%
- Partnerships & FAM Tours 4%

Operations \$151,054

- Salaries & Benefits 23%
- Contract Services 5%
- Visitor Center Building Maint. 0.5%
- Meeting & Travel 0.5%

Risk Management \$15,000

- Contingency 2%
- Miscellaneous Expense 1%

THANK YOU

visit 29  Palms™
DISCOVER THE Mojave Desert