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## Application

### Instructions

**Print to PDF** will convert the application plus any PDF attachments into a single PDF file. **Release for Review** will change the status of the application to Under Review and move it on to the evaluation process. **Negotiation** will allow you to unlock one or more sections of the application and route the application back to the applicant for further editing. **Annotations** allow internal staff to add notes that are visible to internal staff only and possibly also reviewers if they have a special security privilege. The applicant cannot see these notes. **Versions** will display all component versions that were created as a result of the negotiation process. **Feedback** allows staff to enter feedback about the application to the applicant. The feedback text will appear at the bottom of the application and will be visible to anyone who has access to the application. **Withdraw** changes the status of the application to Withdrawn and removes the app from the evaluation process.

### Application Details

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### 27194 - FY16 Region/CVB Marketing Plan - Final Application

28666 - FY16 Gardiner CVB Marketing Plan  
DOC Office of Tourism

Status: Under Review

Submitted Date: 05/04/2015 4:43 PM

### Applicant Information

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Comments:

#### Organization Information

Name:\* Gardiner Chamber of Commerce

Organization Type: Non-Profit Organization

Organization Website: [www.gardinerchamber.com](http://www.gardinerchamber.com)

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Comments:

## Community & Brand Support

### 1. Describe your destination.

*Describe your destination (who you are, who you wish to attract and why would they come) addressing your strengths, opportunities, and potential challenges. How does your destination align with Montana's brand pillars?*

The small hamlet of Gardiner is located in southwest Montana at the north entrance to the world's first national park. In the early 1880's, Gardiner's northern boundary was laid by the cantankerous Yellowstone concessionaire James McCartney. Since then, Gardiner has served as the original entrance to Yellowstone and is graced by the historic Roosevelt Arch, which was dedicated by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1903.

Our communities' small town Montana charm, natural splendor, and abundant wildlife truly make it a unique "home on the range" for our nearly 900 residents. Year-round access to America's Serengeti—[Yellowstone's Northern Range](#) truly differentiates Gardiner from other Yellowstone gateway communities. Gardiner is surrounded by some of the most beautiful landscapes in the lower 48. It also boasts a colorful history sprinkled with trappers, miners, mountain men and hunters including well known westerners like Jim Bridger and Calamity Jane.

Nestled between the Absaroka-Beartooth and the Gallatin Mountain Ranges—Gardiner lays claim to approximately 10 million acres of public lands. We also enjoy Montana's first access to the wild and scenic Yellowstone River – the longest free flowing river in the lower 48. Side effects of Gardiner's remote location include: limited public transportation, residential housing shortages, and public/private wildlife controversy.

Our charming small town offers relaxing hospitality while providing full service amenities. Many Gardiner restaurants offer local and sustainably grown produce and Montana raised beef and poultry. Our community offers a diverse selection of accommodations including modern hotels and inns, rustic cabins, quaint cottages, relaxing B&B's and vacation rentals. Our all-inclusive guest ranches give the visitor a true western experience, horseback riding and fishing by day, cowboy cookouts and campfires by night. Recreational activities available within Gardiner Basin include whitewater rafting, ziplining, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, fishing, photography, hiking, and soaking in hot springs.

Gardiner currently has \$24 million dollars of infrastructure improvements underway as part of the nationally recognized [Gardiner Gateway Project](#). When completed, the project will provide visitors vital amenities such as walkways, wayside signage, safer traffic routes, a Gardiner Welcome Center (including public restrooms), the Roosevelt Stage (in Arch Park), and reconstruction of the historic rail depot. Major phases are slated for completion in time for a National Park Service centennial event on 8/25/16 in the shadow of the Roosevelt Arch. The national exposure of this event is the perfect catalyst to increase tourism promotion and marketing efforts not only for Gardiner but for the State of Montana as well. In the past, few local efforts have been made to promote Gardiner and therefore a strategic brand has not been established. Creating a brand prior to the Centennial celebration is a critical next step in successfully increasing tourism promotion to our community.

The largest opportunity for tourism growth in Gardiner is the shoulder season (fall & spring), as well as, the winter season. According to National Park Service [gate counts](#), October through May only contributes approximately 30% of total annual north entrance visitation. The primary goal of our long-term marketing efforts is to attract more overnight visitors during this time.

Gardiner aligns perfectly with the state's brand pillars. Located at the heart of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, our charming western town is surrounded by unspoiled nature with beautiful vistas and landscapes that are home to the most diverse wildlife in Montana. Gardiner prides itself as the historic gateway to Montana's natural wonders. According to the Office of Tourism, 67% of first-time visitors travel to the state because of Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks. The more positive experiences visitors have in Gardiner the more visitors return to Montana.

Optional: Include attachments here [Gardiner\\_Historic\\_resources\\_survey.pdf](#)

### 2. How will your marketing plan address the three phases of the travel decision process of inspiration, orientation and facilitation?

Currently, our Visitor Information Center relies on the Montana State Brand and the Tourism Office's ability to reach mass markets with inspirational iconic imagery. By creating our own strategic brand, we will be better able to create inspirational marketing messages so that our messaging is just as consistent, inspiring and successful as the states'. Branding will help us identify what images and messages work and which ones don't. Consistency in marketing efforts will leverage state and regional efforts, inspiring more visitors to come to our community.

For the Orientation Phase, creating a brand that is uniquely Gardiner, will enhance efforts that are already in place such as: the use of maps, websites and one on one conversations with staff. Through the branding process, staff will be better equipped to express what makes Gardiner not only a gateway to the world's first National Park but a destination unto itself. It will also assist us in setting standards and guidelines for updates to our website and criteria for future digital, print and billboard media marketing plans.

Strong branding guidelines will assist both Visitor Center staff and local businesses in the facilitation phase of the visitors travel experience. Center staff will be better able to find out what local business will best provide the experience that the traveler is looking for. Local business owners will have a better understanding of what it is the potential guest is looking for and with that understanding, be better able to deliver an experience that meets the guests expectations. The end result being more long-term stays and return trips to the Gardiner Resort area.

Visitors will have brand reinforcement through all three phases of the travel decision process; therefore make future marketing efforts more impactful.

Optional: Include attachments here. [Gardiner MT - Visitor Perceptions Image and Spending 2013.pdf](#)

### 3. Who is your market?

**a. Define your target markets (demographic, geographic and psycho-graphic)**

The target market for increasing all visitation is the geo-traveler. Efforts should target promoting outdoor recreation to the snow-experience seeker and wildlife enthusiast.

Demographics:

- Age: 25-45
- HHI: \$60K-\$75K or more
- Bachelor's degree or higher
- Has taken 2+ domestic vacations in the past 12 months and was active on these trips
- Many ski more than once a month of average

Psychographics:

- Seeks balance between action and reflection.
- Motivated by skiing—keep in mind skiing is only one of many activities they enjoy(e.g., wildlife viewing, snowshoeing, dog sledding, history, culture, cross-country skiing, etc.).
- Wants to do multiple activities and experience them fully.
- Feels a unique connection to the natural world that only snow and winter can bring.
- Seeks the authenticity of people and places.

Geographics:

The target market for winter use is visitors and locals within a day's drive of Gardiner. Those visitors that do come in the shoulder and winter months to Gardiner do so because of our year-round access to Yellowstone's Northern Range. Gardiner makes a fantastic base camp for recreationists focused on snow and wildlife based activities. By creating a brand we can better communicate this to the potential visitor; thereby increasing revenues and creating a year-round economy. Future studies to understand winter spending habits in Gardiner should be conducted to further determine motivation for winter visits.

A secondary target goal of our efforts to create the "Gardiner Brand" is to increase time spent in town during this time. Currently, visitors spend less than ½ the day ([figure ITTR pg 12](#)) in our community. Efforts to increase summer length of stay should include promotion of play, shop, eat, and drink. The projected end result being Gardiner as a destination unto itself. The geographic market for these individuals would be residents within a days drive.

**b. What are your emerging markets?**

As the historic gateway to Yellowstone National Park, Gardiner is seeing an increase in the international tourist. According to the National Tourism Association (NTA), and UNWTO Data, The Americas were the best performing region in relative terms with growth of 7%, welcoming an additional 13 million international tourists. Growth was driven by North America (+8%). For 2015, UNWTO forecasts international tourist arrivals to grow between 3% and 4%. [UNWTO](#) .

The largest group in this emerging market is the Asian traveler. statistical data (*MTOT China Seminar— Haybina Hao presenter.*) includes:

A large proportion of the travelers between 2010-2030 will come from the Asia & Pacific region.

- 10 million Chinese outbound travelers in 2000, and 83 million in 2012. Two years ago China became #1 outbound source country. By 2030 the Chinese travelers will reach 1.8 billion.

Available information indicates that the highpoints for these visitors are as follows: sightseeing, driving, shopping, luxury and luxurious experiences at affordable prices. Activities included in this set are: camping, skiing, wildlife watching and rafting. All of which are available in Gardiner.

This data supports our belief that in order to compete in the world travel destination market, having a clear brand identity is necessary to communicate everything that we have to offer. In order to translate our offerings into other languages, we must first have a clear message. This is accomplished through the branding process.

**c. What research supports your target marketing?**

- [National Park Service Gate Visitation](#)
- [Bed Tax Collection](#)
- [ITRR Studies](#)
- [Montana Office of Tourism Studies](#)
- [UNWTO](#)

Optional: Include attachment here.

[MTOT\\_WinterExperience091511.pdf](#)

**4. Overall Goals**

- Increase bed tax collections (October-May)
- Increase time spent in Gardiner (June-Sept)
- Increase resort tax collections
- Increase return visitation to the state

Optional: Include attachments here.

## 5. Joint Venture Opportunities

### a. In what types of Joint Ventures with MTOT would you like to participate?

For this year we feel it is necessary to establish a strategic brand before investing in significant marketing efforts. Therefore we will not be pursuing co-ops media buys.

### b. In what other types of Joint Ventures would you like to participate? (Regions/CVBs, etc.)

If funding is still available after the branding process, we would like to collaborate with Yellowstone Country for regional marketing of the National Park Service Centennial event.

### c. What types of Joint Ventures have you done in the past? Were they successful - why or why not?

#### Northern Range Promotional Cooperative

An official partnership between the Gardiner and Cooke City/Silvergate/Colter Pass Chambers of Commerce. Initial funding sources included monetary funding and in kind staff/board hours from both Chambers. Grant funding from Yellowstone Country, The E-Marketing grant and a Montana Film Office grant.

This partnership was designed to create awareness of the Northern Range. This is an area that begins at Yankee Jim Canyon north of Gardiner, stretches across portions of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness area and the top portion of Yellowstone National Park-including Mammoth Hotsprings, Tower-Roosevelt and the Lamar Valley. It continues past Cooke City and Silver Gate, ending just beyond the Colter Pass MT/WY border on Hwy212. This project was designed to increase awareness of the year-round access available to visitors. its focus is on increasing shoulder season and winter tourism for both communities.

This partnership project began with a brand logo being developed. Rack cards were designed and a website was created.  
<http://www.yellowstonenorthernrange.com/>.

We then produced the Northern Range video. [Yellowstone's Northern Range](#) . The video has been an amazing hit. The first posting on our Facebook page reached nearly 79,000 people and received thousands of positive comments. It continues to receive many shares each time it is posted.

The website has been up for a year now and we believe that with additional promotion and updates it will continue to grow. The biggest challenges have been our ability to find additional funding and paid staffing for these priorities and tracking its impact on our shoulder season/winter tourism numbers.

#### Gardiner Gateway Project

Another co-op that has been hugely successful has been the Gardiner Gateway Project. In 2011, when Park Service published its final North Entrance /Park Street Improvement Plan, the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Gardiner Community Council approached Park Service with regards to the work that would be done. After many hours of collaboration the Gardiner Gateway Project was born.

This Project is designed to work across jurisdictional boundaries to restore and enhance the original and only year-round entrance to the world's first national park. When completed, the project will provide visitors and residents with vital amenities such as walkways, solutions for traffic congestion, a welcome center including public restrooms, an amphitheater at Arch Park and reconstruction of the historic depot.

On June 14th 2012, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Chamber and 13 other state, federal and local agencies. Working collaboratively, with funds from both local organizations and seed monies from the state of Montana, additional funding sources through various state and federal grants have been received.

The project has received close to 13 million in grant monies. Additional 13% matches have been provided by Park Service and Park County. Untold man hours have been donated by the staff of the 15 entities. For Gardiner's part in this monumental undertaking, the residents voted to pass a 3% seasonal resort tax. Last year was the first season for collections. The monies garnered by this tax will fund maintenance of the project for years to come.

This Project was the proud recipient of the 2013 Governor's Tourism Partnership of the Year Award.

The Institute for Tourism and Recreational Research had the opportunity to do a visitor/resident perception study prior to the project beginning. ITRR will do a follow-up study once the project has been completed. Completion for Phase I of the project is August 25, 2016; in time for the rededication of Roosevelt Arch and what we hope to have be the signature event for Park Service's 100th year anniversary.

Optional: Include attachments here.

Include pie chart here.

[Gardiner CVB Marketing Plan Budget Pie Chart.pdf](#)

**Marketing Segment, Strategy & Budget**

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Does research support this method?	Describe your method.	Supporting research/statistics	Provide a brief rationale.	Plan to measure success?	Marketing Method Evaluation	Estimated budget for each method.	Non bed tax funds?	Add'l Attchmnts
Marketing Support	Research	Yes	<p><b>We plan to do a branding project to better understand who we are as a tourism destination so we can communicate it properly to our target market.</b></p> <p><b>" A brand signals to consumers the qualities of the product that set it apart from other similar products."</b></p> <p><b>I. Stakeholder Consensus</b></p> <p>Developing a brand that can be embraced and leveraged by a broad range of stakeholders requires that those stakeholders be involved from the beginning.</p> <p>We will have a half day workshop open to all members of the business community. The workshop would be structured as follows:</p> <p><u>Briefing and Consensus Building</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are our goals?</li> <li>• Who is our target audience / desired consumer? Is it the geo-traveler as we believe?</li> <li>• What is a brand?</li> <li>• How will a brand help us reach out target audience?</li> <li>• Brand exploration from the perspective of a visitor....What are Gardiner's weaknesses. What are Gardiner's greatest strengths? Which are unique to Gardiner?</li> </ul> <p>Who are the primary competitors? What are their strengths? What are their weaknesses?</p> <p>From this exercise we'd have a clear</p>	<p><b>A Google search for "What is the best entrance for Yellowstone?" yields several answers, these 2 posts on Trip Advisor illustrate the challenge:</b></p> <p><i>KamperGirl, Appleton Wisconsin -- This is a summer trip? West Yellowstone (west entrance) has the most lodging options right near the entrance. Jackson (south) is too far away to stay in the city and drive each day to Yellowstone park, but is a great option if you are going to spend time in Grand Teton. Jackson Hole airport is actually inside GTNP. There is also lodging just outside the park border by the north entrance. Cody (east) is also too far away to stay in and drive into the park each day. Most of us prefer to stay inside Yellowstone itself. Any trip to YNP always involves a lot a driving, and staying inside the park helps reduce the number of hours you spend in the car each day. There are several airport options, Jackson Hole, Cody, Bozeman... Salt Lake City is a 6 hour drive, and a much more affordable option for many. Some fly into Denver, but that is a very long day away (10 hour drive?).</i></p> <p><b>Gardiner isn't even mentioned as an option.</b></p> <p><i>Dobby (Trip Advisor Destination Expert for Yellowstone) -- Just to add to Kampergirl's answer, look to the upper right on this page and there is an article on airports in the vicinity as well as lodging in the parks and in gateway cities. There is also an airport in Billings which positions you nicely to enter over Beartooth Pass if you are coming during the summer when it is open. When you do your planning, keep in mind that we usually recommend 3 to 4 days minimum in Yellowstone and 2 or 3 days in Grand Teton. Cody is also worth a visit if you have more time. If you decide to fly in to Salt Lake City and drive up, that will eat up most of a day on either end.</i></p> <p><b>No mention of Gardiner and its proximity to the Bozeman Airport.</b></p> <p><b>While this small bit of anecdotal evidence isn't scientific, it does give a snapshot of the lack of clear brand identity for Gardiner. See Branding Doc 2.</b></p>	<p><b>Gardiner needs to be able to do a branding process:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gardiner has never had a cohesive identity or a strategic marketing plan.</li> <li>• Branding will help identify the focus points of who we are, what we have to offer and who we are offering it to.</li> <li>• We are the historic 4-Season Gateway to Yellowstone National Park-- We need to do this.</li> <li>• The Gardiner Chamber of Commerce has limited resources on its own:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Seasonal tourism based economy limits the number of dues paying members.</li> <li>◦ Limited number of dues paying businesses that can realistically be located here.</li> <li>◦</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Once we attain CVB status and are able to utilize the resouces that will be made available with such a designation, we can then create a market plan. We will specifically target those who would enjoy our area and our services, thus spending our funds wisely.</li> </ul>	<p>We plan to measure our success at the end of the fiscal year by tracking Gardiner's bed tax collection revenues and doing a comparative analysis; pre-branding versus post-branding.</p>	\$20,900.00	Yes	<p><b>Branding Gardiner 2.docx</b></p>	

sense of support and participation by the business community, and a detailed understanding of the internal view of the brand.

**II. Research and Preliminary Brand Development**

The second step is to review available data and conduct a small amount of additional research to help shape a brand platform. Specifically in this phase:

Analyze the brand and the marketing strategies of the major Gardiner competitors, as well as a handful of other "best in class" national park gateway communities;

- Review commercially available research about traveler preferences and values in choosing destinations;
- Interview 4-6 external authorities to gather their perspective on Gardiner's unique value proposition for Yellowstone visitors; and
- Develop a preliminary brand platform for testing.

**III. Validation and Presentation to Stakeholders**

The final step is to test the preliminary brand platform with the target audience, and then thoroughly brief stakeholders and equip them to implement the brand, both in their own marketing and as part of a coordinated Gardiner marketing plan.

Access to target audience - For instance, if we could obtain a list of Yellowstone "interested" individuals from either lodging concessioners in the park, the Yellowstone Park Foundation, or the Yellowstone Association, that would save on costs. If we had to acquire a list that would add to costs.

- Methodology –

			<p>a brief online survey would be relatively simple, while a larger survey and or focus groups would be more costly and time intensive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder - the amount of sell-in required. At the basic level would be another workshop to present the brand platform and the findings of the research, discuss how each business could implement the brand in their own marketing, and then brainstorm the outline of a marketing program. This is generally all that's needed to achieve buy in and move to the next step – implementation. But if there are multiple sets of stakeholders who need to be briefed, and that can't happen in a single meeting or setting, the process becomes more complex.</li> </ul>							
Marketing Support	Administration	Yes	Administrative funding will support the salary for the Executive Director. We are small Chamber of Commerce with limited resources.					\$5,600.00	No	
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings		It is necessary for us to have a funds budgeted in this area so that our staff can attend the meetings that are required to fulfill the parameters of the grant.					\$1,500.00		
								<b>\$28,000.00</b>		

**Marketing Method Budget**

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget	Non bed tax funded budget
Marketing Support	Research	\$20,900.00	\$15,000.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$5,600.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$1,500.00	\$0.00
		<b>\$28,000.00</b>	<b>\$15,000.00</b>
		<b>\$28,000.00</b>	<b>\$15,000.00</b>

**Miscellaneous Attachments**

**Reg/CVB Required Documents**

File Name	Description	File Size
<a href="#">Gardiner CVB Documents.pdf (254 KB)</a>	Includes:Designation resolution #1204 Pledge of Understanding Certificate of Compliance FY16 Application for Lodging Tax Revenue	254 KB

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