



AGENDA COVER MEMO

Memorandum Date: February 20, 2025

Board Order Date: March 11, 2025

TO:	Board of County Commissioners
DEPARTMENT:	CAO/ Community & Economic Development
PRESENTED BY:	Jason Harris, Community & Economic Development Manager
AGENDA ITEM TITLE:	ORDER/ In the Matter of Approving an Allocation Totaling \$51,161 for 2025 Rural Tourism Marketing Program (RTMP) Projects in the McKenzie River Area and Authorizing the County Administrator to Sign a One-Year RTMP Services Agreement with Four One-Year Options to Renew with the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce to Distribute the 2025 RTMP Funding Allocation

I. MOTION

Move to approve an allocation totaling \$51,161 for 2025 Rural Tourism Marketing Program (RTMP) projects in the McKenzie River area and authorizing County Administrator to sign a one-year RTMP Services Agreement with four one-year options to renew with the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce to distribute the 2025 RTMP funding allocation.

II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

This action authorizes the annual Rural Tourism Marketing Program funding to distribute transient lodging tax funds to the McKenzie River area. The funds are generated from the tax charged on overnight stays at short-term rentals, including but not limited to hotels, homes and/or campgrounds, and are used for programs that will generate more overnight stays. The County's distribution of the funds is recommended in accordance with Lane Code 4.005.175(G).

Annual revenues for the RTMP portion of the County's Transient Lodging Tax are approved for distribution at the beginning of each calendar year and based upon prior year tax receipts.

On February 4, 2025, the Board approved authorizing distribution of Rural Tourism Marketing Program funds directly to the 10 incorporated rural cities as well as issuing a request for proposal (RFP) process for a five-year RTMP service agreement for the McKenzie River area. This agreement is a contract for the first year (2025) with four (4), one-year options to renew annually pending board approval of allocations. Staff completed the RFP process and recommends the selection of the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce.

The Board is being requested to approve the 2025 RTMP allocation for the McKenzie River area totaling \$51,161 and authorize the County Administrator to sign a one-year RTMP Services Agreement with four, one-year options to renew with the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce to distribute the 2025 RTMP funding allocation.

III. BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

A. Board Action and Other History

The Board of Commissioners has distributed these funds annually to participating rural cities for the duration of the Rural Tourism Marketing Plan. Enacted in 1973 by the County, this tax ordinance has been modified since then to consistently generate more room tax revenue.

The Lane Code describes the use of the funding as follows: “the funds shall be used for purposes which the Board determines bears a relationship to producing transient room tax revenues through the visitor industry. Through the annual budget process, the Board shall appropriate these funds as follows:

- (a) Seventy percent (70%) shall be for marketing the visitor industry.
- (b) Ten percent (10%) shall be for operation of the Lane County Historical Museum or other museums as determined by the Board through the annual budget process. The Board specifically finds that the Lane County Historical Museum is a significant attraction for the visitor industry.
- (c) Ten percent (10%) shall be for special projects and administration. These funds shall be used for select special projects to enhance tourism as chosen by the Board annually under its own criteria, for more long-term funding for cultural or recreational projects or activities which the Board finds have significant impact on tourism, for administering and contract monitoring of expenditures of the LC 4.110(2) tax revenue, and for staffing for the Tourism Council.
- (d) Ten percent (10%) shall be used for tourism marketing of the areas outside the urban growth boundaries of the cities of Eugene and Springfield. These funds shall be used for proposals chosen by the Board according to its own criteria, with the general principle being that the areas which produce the taxes should benefit from their use.

The Lane County Rural Tourism Marketing Program (RTMP) focuses on the business of selling, packaging, and advertising rural Lane County in a unified, well-planned program. RTMP tourism product development in rural areas will focus on the following objectives and criteria to maximize:

1. Attraction of visitors to rural communities,
2. The length of stay by visitors,
3. County-wide visitation,
4. Return visits to rural Lane County communities.

On February 4, 2025, the Board approved RTMP allocations totaling \$470,488 for the cities of Coburg, Cottage Grove, Creswell, Dunes City, Florence, Junction City, Lowell, Oakridge, Veneta, and Westfir and authorized issuance of an RFP for a 2025 RTMP service agreement for 2025 allocations with four, one-year options to renew for the McKenzie River area.

B. Policy Issues

Lane Code provides for the purpose of the RTMP monies. The dollars allocated to the cities and McKenzie River area are to be used to promote and market Lane County. Allocating 2025 funds will be used for this purpose, and the Board will be aligned with the policies set forth by Lane Code.

C. Board Goals

The Board has emphasized priority on projects with regard to rural economic development. The RTMP Program provides critical funding to rural jurisdictions that assists in rural economic development.

D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations

The transient lodging tax receipts for allocation have already been collected throughout Lane County and are restricted for specific uses by ORS 320.300 and Lane Code 4.005. A \$521,649 total allocation is recommended for RTMP for 2025.

On February 4, 2025, the Board approved \$470,488 in allocations to the incorporated rural cities in Lane County. The allocation of \$51,161 for 2025 Rural Tourism Marketing Program (RTMP) in the McKenzie River area will complete the funding disbursement.

E. Health Implication

None

F. Analysis

The total 2025 RTMP funding distribution recommended by staff this year is \$521,649 based on the prior year funds currently available. The distribution of the RTMP funds for the 10 incorporated rural cities, totaling \$470,488, was approved by the Board at the February 4, 2025, meeting. The RTMP funding for the McKenzie River area meets the requirements of Lane Code, addresses the goals of the RTMP program and follows the practices used to determine the rural city allocations as approved in prior years.

For comparison, last year's total 2024 RTMP distribution amount was \$600,000. The 2024 amount was significantly larger than in recent years, in an effort to distribute the majority reserve funds that had accumulated and allow the rural cities to build up their own reserve if they wish to protect themselves against decreases in annual tax receipts rather than have the County bear that responsibility.

The formula for distribution of RTMP funds in 2025, other than the determination of the total distribution amount, followed the same percentage allocation as used in 2024. The distribution formula includes a base amount of \$16,598 for each community with the balance of funds distributed based on a percentage basis. Attached to this report is the 2025 RTMP allocations to the ten rural cities and the McKenzie River Area as well as allocations for the past five years. (Attachment A)

On February 4, 2025, staff recommended the Board authorize the issuance of an RFP for a 2025 RTMP services agreement for funding for the McKenzie River area with four, one-year options to renew to provide a stable funding partnership to aid in the long-term recovery and tourism promotion of the area. Past practice has been to issue an RFP for an annual allocation of RTMP funding. The board approved this motion on February 4, 2025. The four, one-year options to renew the service agreement may constitute a five-year agreement and RPTM funding under the full five years may exceed \$250,000. The RFP process utilized accounted for the potential of a five-year service agreement term and funding amount. The Board will be asked for authorization to exercise the renewal options and funding allocation on an annual basis.

Upon approval of this updated process, a request for proposals was issued for the McKenzie River area consistent to past practice. One proposal was received, and staff recommends selection of the proposal from the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce as it met the criteria established for the use of RTMP funds. (Attachment B)

G. Alternatives/Options

1. The Board can allocate funding to the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce as requested.
2. The Board can request more information and allocate funding at a later date.
3. The Board can elect against disbursing these funds at this time.

4. The Board can elect not to authorize County Administrator to sign a RTMP services agreement with the McKenzie Chamber of Commerce with four, one-year options to renew.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

Lane County Community & Economic Development recommends that the Board approve an allocation totaling \$51,161 for 2025 Rural Tourism Marketing Program Projects in the McKenzie River Area and authorize the County Administrator to sign a one year RTMP Services Agreement with four one-year options to renew with the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce to distribute the 2025 RTMP funding allocation.

V. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION

If the Board approves the attached Board Order, a services agreement will be finalized and executed and funding will be disbursed as soon as possible.

VI. FOLLOW UP

Staff will monitor performance under the agreement and inform the Board with any substantive updates.

VII. ATTACHMENTS

- A. Board Order
- B. RTMP Allocation Spreadsheet
- C. Rural Tourism Marketing Program Proposal – McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY, OREGON

ORDER NO:

IN THE MATTER OF APPROVING AN
ALLOCATION TOTALING \$51,161 FOR
2025 RURAL TOURISM MARKETING
PROGRAM (RTMP) PROJECTS IN THE
MCKENZIE RIVER AREA AND
AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY
ADMINISTRATOR TO SIGN A ONE-YEAR
RTMP SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH
FOUR ONE-YEAR OPTIONS TO RENEW
WITH THE MCKENZIE RIVER CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE TO DISTRIBUTE THE
2025 RTMP FUNDING ALLOCATION

WHEREAS, Lane County provides in Lane Code, Chapter 4.005.175 for distribution of lodging tax receipts for implementation of the Rural Tourism Marketing Program (RTMP); and

WHEREAS, the Rural Tourism Marketing Program was streamlined and updated by Order 03-10-1-3; and

WHEREAS, on February 4, 2025, the Board approved issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking an organization for which to administer a services agreement distributing the RTMP for the McKenzie River area in 2025 with four, one-year options to renew in order to provide a stable funding partnership to aid in the long-term recovery and tourism promotion of the area; and

WHEREAS, the County conducted a formal Request for Proposal process meeting the County solicitation standards for procurement of service that may exceed \$250,000 in funding over the five year term of the service agreement if all the annual options are approved and exercised; and

WHEREAS, the Board will continue to review and approve annual funding allocations to the McKenzie River area as consistent to Lane Code and Board discretion as part of the Lane County Rural Tourism Marketing Program as well as authorize the annual options to renew the service agreement with the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce over five years; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of County Commissioners of Lane County **ORDERS** as follows:

To approve an allocation totaling \$51,161 for 2025 Rural Tourism Marketing Program (RTMP) projects in the McKenzie River area and authorize County Administrator to sign a one-year RTMP Services Agreement with four one-year options to renew with the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce to distribute the 2025 RTMP funding allocation.

ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2025.

David Loveall, Chair
Lane County Board of Commissioners

ATTACHMENT B

Rural Tourism Marketing Program Funding Allocations by Year: 2020-2025

Total Allocations	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 Proposed Allocations
Coburg	\$ 14,787	\$ 15,700	\$ 17,964	\$ 20,965	\$ 36,344	\$ 31,625
Cottage Grove	\$ 33,900	\$ 33,935	\$ 33,184	\$ 34,587	\$ 55,551	\$ 49,095
Creswell	\$ 23,954	\$ 23,014	\$ 21,807	\$ 22,022	\$ 35,446	\$ 30,837
Dunes City	\$ 16,381	\$ 16,803	\$ 17,651	\$ 19,252	\$ 33,957	\$ 29,156
Florence	\$127,233	\$130,112	\$137,333	\$149,745	\$259,362	\$ 224,056
Junction City	\$ 13,724	\$ 14,235	\$ 14,739	\$ 15,977	\$ 26,767	\$ 23,486
Lowell	\$ 10,137	\$ 10,274	\$ 10,586	\$ 11,318	\$ 19,124	\$ 16,604
McKenzie*	\$ 35,438	\$ 35,580	\$ 35,622	\$ 36,238	\$ 57,979	\$ 51,161
Oakridge	\$ 18,850	\$ 18,775	\$ 18,743	\$ 19,207	\$ 31,369	\$ 27,402
Veneta	\$ 10,149	\$ 10,328	\$ 10,697	\$ 11,494	\$ 19,451	\$ 16,908
Westfir	\$ 10,872	\$ 11,605	\$ 12,581	\$ 13,959	\$ 24,651	\$ 21,319
Total	\$315,425	\$320,361	\$330,908	\$354,765	\$600,000	\$ 521,649

2025-2030 Rural Tourism Marketing Program

Administration for the McKenzie River Area

2025 Proposal

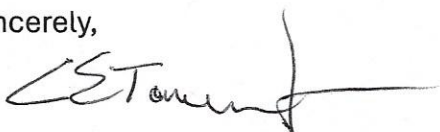
The Tourism Committee (TC) of the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce (MRCC) is pleased to submit the following proposal for the 2025 RTMP. The TC will direct and oversee the completion of the proposed projects. TC is a monthly convening of McKenzie River tourism businesses, community-based organizations, and other local stakeholders — to share updates on events, development projects, and other opportunities that enhance the region's tourism appeal, hospitality services, and infrastructure. We live and work in communities along the over 40-mile route from Cedar Flat to Belknap Hot Springs.

The Tourism Committee has effectively managed the McKenzie RTMP funding for over fifteen years and has effected a growth in visitors to the region over that period. The TC/MRCC was awarded and successfully completed contracts for McKenzie Marketing Plans as well as Special Projects Tourism Grants, Willamette Valley Visitor's Association Grants, and Travel Oregon Grants. Our most significant visible RTMP accomplishment is the construction of the McKenzie Welcomes You sign in Walterville erected in 2022.

Many of the specific projects described in the following proposal are activities that TC has been engaged in for several years and propose to continue these into 2025 and beyond. Also, many of the projects are conducted in close collaboration with Travel Lane County staff to promote the region's many recreational offerings. Activities highlight the events of the region as well as the region's cultural heritage. A new focus for the TC is exploring and documenting the historical role that Indigenous peoples have played in the area.

The TC team is dedicated to the success of the RTMP and is using it to help to play a role in the region's recovery from the 2020 Holiday Farm Fire. As a group we bring volunteer energy and talent worth thousands of dollars to supplement the \$51,162 stated in the Request for Proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CTannenbaum', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Carol Tannenbaum, Chair TC/MRCC

OFFEROR'S STATEMENTS AND CERTIFICATIONS FORM

Offeror's Name: McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce

Solicitation Title: 2025-2030 RTMP for the McKenzie River Area

OFFEROR STATEMENTS

Offer. Offeror offers to provide the required goods or services in accordance with the requirements of the solicitation stated above and the enclosed offer. The undersigned Offeror declares that the Offeror has carefully examined the above-named solicitation including all addenda, and that, if this Offer is accepted, Offeror will execute a contract with the County to furnish the goods or services of the Offer submitted with this form. Offeror attests that the information provided is true and accurate to the best of the personal knowledge of the person signing this Offer, and that the person signing has the authority to represent the individual or organization in whose name this Offer is submitted.

Offeror's Acceptance of Terms and Conditions. By execution of this Form, the undersigned Offeror accepts all terms and conditions of this solicitation, sample contract, and insurance requirements. Offeror agrees that the offer submitted for this solicitation will remain irrevocable for a period of 60 days from the date offers are due.

Offeror's Acknowledgement of Public Records Law. By execution of this Form, the undersigned Offeror acknowledges that its entire offer is subject to Oregon Public Records Law (ORS 192.410–192.505) and may be disclosed in its entirety to any person or organization making a records request, except for such information as may be exempt from disclosure under the law. Offeror agrees that all information included in this offer that is claimed to be exempt from disclosure has been clearly identified either in the Offeror Statement, or in an itemization attached hereto. Offeror further acknowledges its responsibility to defend and indemnify the County for any costs associated with establishing a claimed exemption.

ADDENDA

Offeror has received and considered, in the accompanying offer, the terms of the following addenda, if any:

CERTIFICATIONS

By signing this Offeror's Certification form, Offerer certifies that:

1. Certification of Resident Bidder Status. Offeror is X is not _____ (check one) a Resident Bidder, as defined in ORS 279A.120.
2. Certification of Non-Discrimination. Offeror has not discriminated and will not discriminate against a subcontractor in awarding a subcontract because the subcontractor is a disadvantaged business enterprise, minority-owned business, woman-owned business, a business that a service-disabled veteran owns, or an emerging small business that is certified under ORS 200.055.
3. Certification of Non-Collusion. This offer is made without connection or agreement with any individual, firm, partnership, corporation, or other entity making an offer for the same services and is in all respects fair and free from collusion or collaboration with any other Offeror.
4. Certification of Compliance with Tax Laws. Offeror has, to the best of Offeror's knowledge, complied with Oregon tax laws in the period prior to the submission of this offer, including:
 - (a) All tax laws of the State of Oregon, including but not limited to ORS 305.620 and ORS chapters 316, 317, and 318,

- (b) Any tax provisions imposed by a political subdivision of this state that applied to Offeror or its property, goods, services, operations, receipts, income, performance of or compensation for any work performed, and
- (c) Any rules, regulations, charter provisions, or ordinances that implemented or enforced any of the foregoing tax laws or provisions.

The undersigned, by signature here, acknowledges, accepts, and certifies to the statements and certifications as stated above.

OFFEROR


 Authorized signature
Ken Engelman
 Name of authorized signer
President
 Title
2/14/2025
 Date

McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce
 Offeror's legal name
POB 297
 Address
Walterville, OR 97489
93-0601736
 Federal Tax ID number

OPTIONAL CONTACT INFORMATION REGARDING THIS OFFER

Ken Engelman
 Contact name
541-896-3330
 Telephone number
president@mckenziechamber.com
 Email address

Proposal

2025-2030 Rural Tourism Marketing Program

Administration for the McKenzie River Area

**McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce
February 19, 2025**

Overview

McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce will manage and distribute RTMP funds for the McKenzie River to promote the selling, packaging, and advertising of the McKenzie River focusing on objectives and criteria to maximize the following:

1. Attraction of visitors to the McKenzie River
2. Length of stay for visitors
3. County-wide visitation
4. Return visits to the McKenzie River and surrounding communities

The McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce will facilitate proposal ideas to encourage growth in overnight lodging and visitors to the McKenzie River area from Cedar Flat to Belknap Hot Springs.

We work to expand the knowledge in the local area of McKenzie River area offerings through print, online, and promotional items allowing the Chamber to increase the appeal of both day trips and overnight stays.

The McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce will continue its existing cooperative arrangements with tourism-related organizations to provide space for the publications of other Chambers. It is our plan to partner with Oakridge and Sisters to build cooperation and reinforce branding among the Chambers.

All the following RTMP criteria are included in this proposal:

1. Increase transient room tax revenues countywide, as measured by increasing overall revenues from room tax from visitor stays, and by increasing room tax revenues during the tourism 'shoulder season' in the fall/early spring months.
2. Increase the number of visits and the amount of time spent by visitors in *rural* Lane County by improving the attractiveness of rural communities. The variety of such activities may include expanded attractions, beautification, and property enhancement projects on public property.
3. Focus general marketing on visitors from surrounding states and 'peak season' marketing to attract visitors from Oregon.
4. Continue the development of regional marketing with local, State, and private agencies. This includes increased involvement of the rural tourism organization in the existing network.
5. Monitor potential targets in western Canada and other international markets, maintaining flexibility for action.

6. Develop, advertise, and package rural Lane County attractions and group tour business that encourage overnight stays and extended visits by: (a.) Developing group travel opportunities; i.e. recreational vehicle, bicycle, parks, and campground activities, and (b.) Fostering coordination between Travel Lane County and rural tourism organizations to develop and package group travel tours, particularly as an extension of metro convention gatherings. (c.) Providing incentives for return visits; i.e. discount on room rate for next year, mail schedule of activities for next year, mail post card with thank you and welcome note.
7. Assist with rural area tourism staffing needs, and provide training on hospitality and service excellence. The objective is to maintain a reputation for excellence in hospitality and service.

RTMP Funding Request

Goal: To promote increased tourism and overnight stays in the McKenzie River area.

Budget for Proposed 2025 Projects:

Investment Set-aside	\$5,000.00
Travel Lane County Visitor Guide	4,550.00
Co-ordinate & Promote McKenzie Events	4,500.00
McKenzie River Discovery Center Support	5,000.00
McKenzie History Hwy & Indoor Expansion	4,000.00
McKenzie Crossing	7,500.00
McKenzie River Magic (Social Media Plan)	5,800.00
Shoulder Season Marketing	2,500.00
Resource Summary for Lodging/Visitor Support	2,000.00
McKenzie Tourism Website Improvement	4,312.00
Wayfinding Plan Implementation	2,000.00
Oregon's Boat: Film Festivals	2,000.00
Opportunity Fund	2,000.00

Total Expense	\$51,162.00
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McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce Managed Projects

The Tourism Committee of the McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce (MRCC/TC) will direct and oversee the completion of the proposed projects. The McKenzie River Tourism Committee is a regular convening of McKenzie River tourism businesses, community-based organizations, and other local stakeholders — to share updates on events, development projects, and other opportunities that enhance the region's tourism appeal, hospitality services, and infrastructure. It is an outgrowth of a Travel Oregon Rural Tourism Studio conducted in the area in 2010-2011. The Tourism Committee's project focus areas cover signature events, regional culture & history, recreational offerings (e.g., fishing, rafting, hiking, cycling, etc.), and local specialties. Our goal through collaborations between Travel Lane County and our partners is to enrich the McKenzie River as a travel destination and meet the demands of tourism.

The Chamber's Tourism Committee has effectively managed the RTMP funding for over fifteen years and has effected a growth in visitors to the region over that period. The MRCC has been awarded contracts for McKenzie Marketing Plans as well as Special Projects Tourism Grants, Willamette Valley Visitor's Association Grants, and Travel Oregon Grants.

The MRCC has been successful in disseminating information to visitors with three 24/7 kiosks, located at the Waltherville Shopping Center, the proposed McKenzie Discovery Center, and near the Windermere Real Estate office in Vida. Placement of additional visitor kiosks is in review. These displays also provide space for the publications of other Chambers of rural Lane County in exchange for displaying our information in their locations.

Providing information about the history, events, attractions, and activities available in the McKenzie area will influence people to come, return, and extend planned stays in the McKenzie River area.

Advertising focuses on Oregon, Washington, and Northern California by placing the Chamber's message regarding the McKenzie River in publications and electronic media that reach out to target markets.

Measurement and Evaluation:

Efforts in this McKenzie Rural Tourism Marketing Program will be evaluated and measured on individual project merits within the scope of the \$51,162 total budget. Specific sponsorship and development programs (outlined below) will have milestones and timeframes, that they will be completed during the contract period. Marketing items will be measured on their ability to reach potential visitors with McKenzie River messaging. Investment and Opportunity funds are additionally identified to capitalize on timely unplanned projects that match the mission and scope of the Tourism Committee.

Specific Project Descriptions for 2025

- A. Investment Set-aside:** Recently changes were made to collect and disperse the Transient Lodging Tax receipts on a different schedule through the State. Lane County decided to let the MRCC take responsibility to hold funds in reserve for any future shortfalls in TLT collections. Going forward the MRCC will keep at least 10% of annual RTMP distributions in an interest-bearing account for future use. All seven RTMP criteria are supported by this action.
- B. Travel Lane County Visitor Guide:** Since as early as 2010 the MRCC has traditionally partnered with Travel Lane County to support a shared McKenzie River business ad in the annual Travel Lane County Visitor Guide, "Eugene, Cascades & Coast". Much recovery work from COVID and the Holiday Farm Fire occurred in 2021 through 2024 and supporting the viability of tourism facing businesses is paramount for the area's continued recovery. Local businesses sign up to be a part of the advertisement which features local events and natural attractions that will draw visitors. Participation generates great exposure for the area where the guide is distributed, and participation helps to support TLC's work. Annual advertising in the TLC Visitor Guide will continue through the next five years at a similar funding level. Supports Criterion 4.
- C. Coordinate & Support McKenzie Events:** Promotion of the area's major McKenzie Events in a coordinated way began in 2014. Traditionally these events start in April, continue into December, and occur in locales along the corridor from Walterville to McKenzie Bridge. Beginning in 2014 the Chamber created a poster including the six events of the year (Wooden Boat Festival, Tokatee Celebration, Lavender Festival, Chainsaw & Arts Festival, Walterville Fair & Waddle, and Christmas Bazaar) and distributed them to a large area to provide for greater visibility of these events to potential visitors coming from outside of the McKenzie River corridor. Poster production has continued annually since inception. By 2019 several events were each attracting over 1,500 outside visitors to the river. After COVID and the Holiday Farm Fire all but the Wooden Boat Festival and The Chainsaw & Arts Festival returned in some form in 2021. The McKenzie Events list for 2025 are the Wooden Boat Festival, Tokatee Celebration, Lavender Bloom, McKenzie River Solstice Arts Festival (kick-off year), Walterville Fair and Waddle, McKenzie Holiday Lights and McKenzie Holiday Bazaar. Our McKenzie Events calendar is available to visitors at each event to encourage return visits to our river valley. A major goal is to create successful events that will be repeated regularly bringing in multiday overnight lodging. The McKenzie Tourism outcomes for all the promotions include increased stays at local lodges, generating business at local restaurants and stores and providing high quality activities for lodging guests. Annual event promotions employing print and digital media in collaboration with Travel Lane County will continue through 2029 at a budget level of \$4,500. This project supports Criteria 1, 2, 3, and 6.

- D. **McKenzie River Discovery Center Support:** The McKenzie River Chamber continues to support work to develop the McKenzie River Discovery Center as a world-class facility that will honor the river, highlight its unique geology, as well as its fishing and boating legacies. The Discovery Center will feature themed areas such as theaters and augmented reality projections, trails, cultural exhibits, riverboat displays, and a gallery for rotating exhibits. Studies have projected the facility will attract at least 35,000 to 50,000 visitors annually when constructed in 2027. The McKenzie Chamber's financial contribution supports the site's business and design plans. The project supports Criterion 2.
- E. **McKenzie History Hwy & Indoor Expansion:** Through support of the Willamette Valley Visitor Association, a group of local history enthusiasts created the McKenzie History Highway project in 2019. Over twenty-five panels depicting historic images of McKenzie River history (collected from local sources) were created and mounted on local business and public structures. A companion website (connected to a QR code on each panel) was created to make the panel locations and their pertinent information available to both residents and area visitors. This project will expand the focus by developing smaller (about 24" x 36") "historic vignette" panels for at least fifteen indoor spaces in commercial and community owned places. This is planned for years 2 through 4 of the 5 years at an estimated cost of \$400/panel, for a total of \$4,000. This project will also enhance the website by making it more searchable and better connecting individual panels to their geographic locations among other refinements. Once complete, website visitation metrics will be available to assess visitor engagements with the History Highway panels. Criteria 1,2 and 6 are supported by this effort.
- F. **McKenzie River Crossing:** The McKenzie's confluence with Blue River is a culturally significant site historically utilized by several Indigenous tribes. It is where the North/South Pacific Crest Trail dipped down off the Three Sisters to the Obsidian Cliffs, and where it also crossed the East/West McKenzie River Trail. In early 2024 work started to highlight native voices of the McKenzie River. The project documents through audio and visual techniques these stories that cover a variety of cultural topics. Stories are being shared at community centers and to also engage area residents in listening sessions to be marketed on tourism platforms. The scope of the McKenzie Crossing is modeled after the town of Wallowa's successful Nez Perce Interpretive Center. In 2025, we envision using the RTMP funds to discover and record local tribal history as we also create a tourism destination space while sharing our findings; and while applying for matching grants for securing additional operating costs for a more permanent space, at a pro-offered former Forest Service Building on that original trail, and to expand the following year (2026) to include a Trading Post to bring in income; then in 2027 expand again to create a cultural showroom and historical education area; then additionally expanding in 2028 to mentor young people in filmmaking so that in 2029, we can create a McKenzie Reel Film Festival there showcasing our recently discovered collaborative community's culture, while helping to rebuild Blue River. Success will be assessed by the participation of the community, co-funding from Non-profits and Tribal support. Supports Criteria 1, 2, 3, and 4.

- G. **McKenzie River Magic:** Over the past several years the Chamber has worked closely with Travel Lane County to encourage visitors to experience the McKenzie area and learn about all the outdoor recreational opportunities available to visitors through on-line marketing. This partnership will bring in McKenzie Community Partners (MCP) to present a solid Social Media presence that engages potential visitors with the goal of bringing more high value visitors to McKenzie River Events, attractions, and businesses. Work included in this project will include copywriting, photography and other media sourcing to push original content onto multiple platforms while engaging targeted groups. Work will continue through 2029 at a beginning per annum level of \$4,800 with inflation adjustments yearly. As a multiyear project, previous years' work will be amplified with increasing impact through the contract period. The MCP team has extensive expertise in social media marketing and digital media creation. Social media impressions and interactions (and other metrics) will be monitored with results shared with stakeholders. The process will constantly be monitored and enhanced based on these metrics, improving engagement and effectiveness. Supports Criteria 1, 3, 4, and 7.
- H. **Shoulder Season Marketing Campaign:** The Chamber is committed to bolstering the shoulder season (October through April) as it continues working towards building a year-round tourism economy. Working with Travel Lane County the \$2,500 budget for the 2025 work will add 1-2 promotional placements focused on the McKenzie River. Emphasis will be placed on messaging that promotes nightly stays for local lodging, supports business opportunities at local stores and restaurants, and supports high quality activities for lodging guests. Placements will add to the work that Travel Lane County and other organizations are promoting around travel experiences in the McKenzie River community. Criteria 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7 are supported by this project.
- I. **Resource Summary for Lodging/Visitor Support:** Working with Travel Lane County, the McKenzie Tourism Committee will provide updated information on area businesses and attractions to visitors staying in lodging properties in the region. In efforts to drive traffic to McKenzie River web content, the teams will draft visitor-facing QR codes for assets such as binder inserts and posters for in-market use throughout the McKenzie River Corridor. Regional RTMP funds will be used for any printing and distribution costs. As information continues to be updated in collaboration with the Travel Lane County team, modest annual resources will keep information current through 2029. Supports criteria 1, 3 and 6.
- J. **McKenzie Tourism Website Improvement:** The more information we can provide travelers via the web, the better we serve and support businesses in the McKenzie River area. The Tourism Committee will collaborate with a consultant to evaluate, plan, and implement a digital marketing strategy for McKenzie River. The region needs an updated brand that speaks to newer audiences. The committee will collaborate with a vendor to develop a new logo, colors, typeface, key messages, and guidelines for use. These guidelines can then be shared and used consistently everywhere McKenzie River is listed, providing a cohesive presence. For 2025 \$4,312 is earmarked to create a new McKenzie River Brand. Next development

of a new and improved website to be the foundation for all our marketing efforts will occur. All ads and outreach will then link to this website to provide visitors with more information on what can be done in the McKenzie River corridor. The website will be built with the ability and intention to update content regularly. This way, events and other timely information will remain relevant. Interlinking with the Travel Lane County digital presence is included as is the McKenzie History Highway web presence described above. Other phases of the digital marketing strategy will follow in subsequent years through 2029. We will create digital content that can be shared out by all businesses and groups within our region on their own channels (email, social media). This content will include photos, videos, articles, and social posts prepared and ready to be used by each entity. Criteria 1, 2 and 6 are supported by this effort.

- K. **Wayfinding Plan Implementation:** In 2019 the Chamber partnered with Travel Lane County to develop a McKenzie Wayfinding Plan. The Plan was completed in July 2019 and began implementation in late 2019 with the receipt of a \$20,000 Grant from the Willamette Valley Visitor Association. This grant supplemented RTMP funding to design and establish prominent signs for the western and eastern entrances to the McKenzie River corridor. The Oregon legislature approved \$150,000 in 2022 to kick start the sign construction process. Private donations of over \$50,000 were added to the project resources. The west corridor Gateway sign in Waltherville was completed with a ribbon cutting on September 23, 2022. Work on the eastern Gateway sign began in 2023 with completion in early 2024. The work for 2025 (\$2,000) covers permitting and installation of solar panels to enable lighting for the west Gateway sign in Waltherville. In addition, we will continue work to improve general wayfinding signage for events, attractions, trails, and tourism businesses with a focus on incorporating the region's cultural heritage in any new signage. Criterion two is supported by this effort.
- L. **Oregon's Boat-Film Festivals:** *Oregon's Boat: The McKenzie River Drift Boat* is an award-winning 35-minute documentary that brings to life the story of an iconic boat that evolved on the McKenzie River and has come to symbolize Oregon to the world. Since its completion in 2024, the film has been shown multiple times across the state. It has made waves at film festivals, winning six awards—including **Best Feature** at the Winter 2025 Oregon Documentary Film Festival! A \$2,000 grant to Oregon's Boat, a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, will support additional film festival entries throughout 2025, reaching a wider audience and highlighting the beauty of the McKenzie River and its communities. Every screening is an opportunity to promote Oregon, Lane County, and the river we love. No funding is planned beyond 2025. Supports Criteria 3 & 4.
- M. **Opportunity Fund:** The MRCC plans to set aside modest undedicated resources that can be applied quickly to respond to unanticipated opportunities to promote the area. Criterion three is supported by this effort.

McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce RTMP Project Team

McKenzie Chamber Tourism Team (Current Volunteers)

Carol Tannenbaum, McKenzie River Lavender, Chair
 Alyssa Brownlee, Horse Creek Lodge
 Randy Dersham, Oregon's Boat
 Jonnie Helfrich, Helfrich McKenzie Rafting
 Katherine K'iya Wilson, McKenzie Reel
 Gerry Aster, Vida McKenzie Community Center
 Margaret Beilharz, Upper McKenzie Community Center
 Jeff Dehne, Walterville Community Center & Grange
 Chris LaVoie, McKenzie Community Partners
 Cliff Richardson, Locals Helping Locals
 Stephen Hoshaw, Travel Lane County
 Connor Nolan, Travel Lane County
 Judy Casad, Windermere Realty

2025 MRCC Advertising Budget

Income	Cash	In-Kind
RTMP Funds	\$51,162.00	
Expenses:		
Investment Set-aside	\$5,000.00	
Travel Lane County Visitor Guide	4,550.00	
Co-ordinate & Promote McKenzie Events	4,500.00	2,000.00
McKenzie River Discovery Center Support	5,000.00	
McKenzie History Hwy. & Indoor Expansion	4,000.00	2,000.00
McKenzie Crossing	7,500.00	5,000.00
McKenzie River Magic (Social Media Plan)	5,800.00	2,000.00
Shoulder Season Marketing	2,500.00	
Resource Summary for Lodges/Visitor Support	2,000.00	
McKenzie Tourism Website Improvement	4,312.00	3,000.00
Wayfinding Plan Implementation	2,000.00	2,000.00
Oregon's Boat Film Festivals	2,000.00	
Opportunity Fund	2,000.00	
Total Expenses	\$51,162.00	\$16,000.00



LANE COUNTY'S RURAL TOURISM MARKETING PROGRAM

Board of County Commissioners – March 11, 2025

Jason Harris, Community & Economic Development Manager

Rural Tourism Marketing Program (RTMP)



- Lane Code and Board Discretion
- Allocates 10% of Transient Lodging Tax Revenues
 - Feb. 4, 2025 Board Approved 10 rural cities allocations

RTMP objectives/criteria

- Attraction of visitors to rural communities
- The length of stay by visitors
- County-wide visitation
- Return visits to rural Lane County communities



McKenzie River Area RFP



- Feb. 4 Board approved RFP Issuance
- To support long term recovery efforts staff recommends a RFP to enter into a 5-year service agreement
- Board to annually review & approve funding/agreement renewal
- McKenzie Chamber of Commerce only proposal submitted
- Authorization enter into Services Agreement with McKenzie River Chamber of Commerce & allocate \$51,161 for 2025 RTMP



McKenzie River RTMP 2025 Projects



- Travel Lane County Visitor Guide
- Coordination/Support of McKenzie Events
- McKenzie History Highway
- McKenzie River Crossing
- McKenzie River Magic
- Lodging/Visitor Support
- Website Improvements
- McKenzie Discovery Center Support
- Shoulder Season Marketing Campaign



Wooden Boat Festival

Rural Tourism Marketing Program

Funding Allocations 2020 -2025



Total Allocations	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		2025 Proposed Allocations	
Coburg	\$	14,787	\$	15,700	\$	17,964	\$	20,965	\$	36,344	\$	31,625
Cottage Grove	\$	33,900	\$	33,935	\$	33,184	\$	34,587	\$	55,551	\$	49,095
Creswell	\$	23,954	\$	23,014	\$	21,807	\$	22,022	\$	35,446	\$	30,837
Dunes City	\$	16,381	\$	16,803	\$	17,651	\$	19,252	\$	33,957	\$	29,156
Florence	\$	127,233	\$	130,112	\$	137,333	\$	149,745	\$	259,362	\$	224,056
Junction City	\$	13,724	\$	14,235	\$	14,739	\$	15,977	\$	26,767	\$	23,486
Lowell	\$	10,137	\$	10,274	\$	10,586	\$	11,318	\$	19,124	\$	16,604
McKenzie*	\$	35,438	\$	35,580	\$	35,622	\$	36,238	\$	57,979	\$	51,161
Oakridge	\$	18,850	\$	18,775	\$	18,743	\$	19,207	\$	31,369	\$	27,402
Veneta	\$	10,149	\$	10,328	\$	10,697	\$	11,494	\$	19,451	\$	16,908
Westfir	\$	10,872	\$	11,605	\$	12,581	\$	13,959	\$	24,651	\$	21,319
Total	\$	315,425	\$	320,361	\$	330,908	\$	354,765	\$	600,000	\$	521,649



QUESTIONS

Jason Harris, Community & Economic Development Manager