



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 24-0725, **Version:** 1

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Planning and Building Department, Economic Development Division, recommending the Board consider the following:

- 1) Find that support for the Coloma-Lotus Business Council provides a public benefit by promoting tourism, entertainment, business, and leisure travel in the County; and
- 2) Approve and authorize the Chair to sign Agreement 8687 with the Coloma-Lotus Business Council, with a not-to-exceed amount of \$25,000, and a term of one (1) year effective upon execution.

**FUNDING:** Discretionary Transient Occupancy Tax.

### **DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND**

Policy B-16, Budget Policies, states that the County's Discretionary Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) revenue, excluding voter-approved Tahoe area-specific revenue, shall be directed toward the impact of tourism and economic development, with consideration for support of tourism and promotion activities within the County and for continued support for grant fund allocations to support Veteran programs within the County.

The Coloma-Lotus Business Council (Council) is a non-profit organization, whose primary objective is to take actions toward increasing visitation and tourism to the Coloma and Lotus river-valley recreation area by modernizing and updating associated websites, as well as developing other digital assets to boost overnight stays and off-season visitation to local businesses. Under Agreement #8687, a one-year Funding Agreement with a not-to-exceed of \$25,000, the Council will focus their efforts on the following:

- Conduct a thorough review and update of search engine optimization (SEO) strategies across all digital assets to improve visibility and ranking on search engine results pages.
- Analyze and enhance the user interface and user experience of both websites to streamline navigation and improve overall efficiency of site deployment.
- Optimize and re-purpose existing content to align with current best practices for website accessibility.
- Create new content, including videos, photos, and copy, to ensure relevance, accuracy, and alignment with current best practices for website deployment.
- Document content upgrades of the digital assets.
- Explore opportunities to integrate earned media and collaborate with external promotional partners to amplify visibility and attract a wider audience.
- Develop digital marketing partnerships with local business partners.
- Direct incoming traffic to overnight lodging pages.

- Measure and track clickthrough rates to business partner links.
- Track and analyze pageviews and clickthrough rates of target audiences for special events and lodging.

The funding provided under Funding Agreement #8687 will serve a public purpose and provide a valuable public benefit in that it will promote cultural activities, and/or promotional activities that enhance tourism and industry and/or local community events that encourage a sense of community to the people of the County.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

The Board may choose not to approve the proposed Funding Agreement as presented and direct staff to seek alternative options to expend this TOT funding consistent with Board Policy B-16.

### **PRIOR BOARD ACTION**

On December 10, 2019 (Legistar File 19-1818), the Board approved a new Budget Policy (B-16). Policy B-16, Section II, Item No. 13, states that “Transient Occupancy Tax revenue shall be directed toward the impact of tourism and economic development, with consideration for support of tourism and promotional activities within the County and for continued support for grant fund allocations to support Veteran programs within the County.”

On March 7, 2023 (Legistar File 23-0474), the Board directed the Chief Administrative Office (CAO) to maintain a philosophy of status quo with regard to soliciting requests for the allocation of TOT funds to promote tourism within the County and to return to the Board at the April 18, 2023 Special Budget Meeting to receive Board direction on which requests shall be included in the Recommended Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24.

On September 19, 2023 (Legistar File 23-1725), the Board approved a reduction to the Discretionary TOT contribution to replenish the Capital Projects Designation for Projects Tied to Tourism Impact to fund the Council, in the amount of \$25,000, and directed staff to return on September 26, 2023, with a Budget Resolution and Budget Amendment based on discussion and direction during this item.

On September 26, 2023 (Legistar File 23-1771), the Board approved an amendment to the County of El Dorado Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24 to reflect the Board’s direction at the September 19, 2023.

### **OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT**

County Counsel and Risk Management have approved the proposed Funding Agreement.

### **CAO RECOMMENDATION / COMMENTS**

Approve as recommended.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There is no change to Net County Cost associated with this item. Funding for this Agreement has been included as part of the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Adopted Budget. Funds will be released upon execution and Grantee will expend within the one-year term of the Agreement.

### **CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS**

- 1) The Clerk of the Board will obtain the Chair’s signature on two (2) original copies of the Funding

Agreement; and

2) The Clerk of the Board will forward one (1) fully-executed copy of the Funding Agreement to the Chief Administrative Office, Procurement and Contracts Division, for further processing.

**STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT**

Thriving Economy.

**CONTACT**

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