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Organization Name

The Fortuna Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center

Contact Person

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[Map It](#)

Project Overview

Project/Event Title

The Fortuna Chamber-Visitor Center- River Lodge revitalization and collaboration

Dates or Duration

Our proposal will be submitted to the City Fortuna for review and then a decision on which entity the will move forward with will happen July 20th, 2026

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Entry Id: 2590

Submitted on: 2026/06/22 at 4:15 am

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Amount of Funding Requested	
\$175,000.00	
What is the Return on Investment?	
Regarding the inquiry into Return on Investment (ROI), we plan to increase ROI by attracting more multi-day events to the River Lodge. Under the direction of the Fortuna Chamber, we will provide tourists with a comprehensive experience designed to increase hotel stays and generate city revenue. A key component of this initiative is the establishment of a Visitor Center conveniently located off the freeway. This center will serve as a high-quality first point of contact for travelers, offering an aesthetically pleasing and informative introduction to Fortuna. To tie overnight bookings to our initiatives, we will collaborate with lodging partners thru quarterly meeting on specific promotions, travel packages, and extended stay incentives	
Seasonal Impact	
The seasonal impact of our project, merging the Fortuna Chamber, Visitor Center, and River Lodge allows us to provide cohesive experience for visitors. We will ensure that every booking is informed of our walking-distance proximity to local hotels and the availability of block rates for special events. Additionally, we will educate guests on other local seasonal events occurring during their stay. While we aim to increase event volume year-round, while also putting focus on the winter season. By marketing and creating targeted events, we intend to increase hotel stays and further leverage Fortuna’s tourism assets.	
Feasibility & Track Record	
Our feasibility and track record as requested: Capacity and Leadership Since assuming the role of CEO/President in November 2024, I have significantly increased community awareness of the Chamber’s mission. Despite operating with a staff of one, I have grown our membership by 30% and established sustainable networking relationships with prominent local organizations and community leaders. Relevant Experience and Past Successes The Chamber has successfully preserved vital community events previously managed by the FBID group, including the Fortuna Al Gray Parade and Apple Harvest at Rohner Park. Additionally, we successfully launched a new "proof of concept" event, the Fall Festival. My efforts also include regional collaboration with other chambers and marketing Fortuna	

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at a Bay Area travel show to increase tourism.

Personal Background

I bring extensive entrepreneurial and philanthropic experience to this proposal, including:

- 20 years as owner-operator of five women's clothing boutiques.
- 10 years as owner-operator of two restaurants.
- 25 years of experience in fundraising.
- Extensive volunteer service for various community organizations.

We are confident that this combination of recent institutional growth and deep professional experience demonstrates our capacity to deliver on this proposal.

Innovation & Uniqueness

Merging these organizations will benefit the community by streamlining promotional information and enhancing the overall visitor experience. This consolidation allows us to focus on identifying new external opportunities for our city while utilizing the building asset for its original purpose.

By providing all resources within one vibrant location and through a single website, we can minimize misinformation and foster greater cross-collaboration. This unified approach makes the proposal uniquely compelling as a significant destination draw.

How will you define success with your project and ensure sustainability?

We define success by doubling the River Lodge bookings from 120 to 240 days per year. This growth will serve as our primary Key Performance Indicator (KPI), as it directly drives hotel occupancy and stimulates the local economy by creating consistent opportunities for catering companies, event coordinators, and other service providers in Fortuna.

The project is designed to become self-supporting by 2029. During the first two years (2027–2028), we expect to break even as all generated income is reinvested into maintenance, operating capital, and facility improvements. Sustainability will be achieved through increased event volume, strategic marketing, and long-term partnerships and sponsorships. Additionally, transitioning the management of event bookings from the City of Fortuna to our team will allow for more streamlined and effective operations.

By the third year, we anticipate the project will be fully self-supported through earned revenue as the event space establishes a strong reputation.

Room Night Strategy

To convert interest into overnight stays, our team will work directly with hotel owners to develop package opportunities for incoming events. We

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plan to utilize existing Chamber of Commerce marketing channels, launch dedicated social media campaigns, and conduct direct outreach to our target markets.

Has this project or idea been successfully tried elsewhere?

We have found like this project or idea has been successfully implemented elsewhere, there are several successful precedents.

The Kenai Peninsula Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center in Alaska has successfully operated a 10,000-square-foot event venue since 1992. Similarly, the Canon City Chamber of Commerce in Colorado has also seen success with this model.

By allowing the Fortuna Chamber & Visitor Center to merge and continue operating the River Lodge as an event center, the City of Fortuna will preserve the facility's name and reputation while allowing it to reach its full potential as a premier event space

Projected Room Nights

Our project aims to increase the number of multi-night stays at Fortuna hotels by introducing multi-day conferences and weekend events designed to boost the local tourism economy.
To provide a comprehensive answer, we estimate generating 25% more room nights.

Proposed Budget

Please find our proposed budget and strategic plan for the River Lodge transition below If the City of Fortuna chooses our proposal.

Currently, the River Lodge operates at an annual deficit of \$275,000, with only 120 days booked per year under city management. By relocating the Fortuna Chamber Visitor Center offices to the Lodge and managing it as an event venue, our primary objectives are to reduce costs, establish strategic partnerships, and double occupancy.

We are requesting \$275,000 in immediate funding to support this transition. We are also in active discussions regarding additional sponsorships from local foundations and private partners.

The requested funds will be allocated as follows:

- Operations & Staffing: Funding will cover salaries for a full-time Operations Manager, a part-time Events Coordinator, and two part-time conference assistants for setup and maintenance.
- Operating Capital: Coverage for essential expenses including utilities, insurance, permits, and signage.
- Future Enhancements: Long-term plans include Wayfinder signage, outdoor art installations, and the installation of EV charging stations.

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We anticipate a short and seamless transition and in the process of preparing our detailed proposal to the city

Certification

- Yes, I certify

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Notes



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