



## Chamber of Commerce

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### M E N D O C I N O C O A S T

On behalf of the Mendocino County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, I want to express our concern regarding the fiscal impact of the proposed changes to the Fort Bragg Promotion Committee.

Currently, the City contracts with the Chamber to administer the FBPC, which prepares and implements an annual marketing plan. The contract is for \$12,000 annually. The City is now proposing to move the Committee back in-house effective July 1st.

Historically, the Chamber and the City have worked together to support the local business community and we want to continue that positive relationship. We are constantly looking at every avenue and possibility to promote business in our City. We understand that every citizen and business derives direct benefits from a City that supports a growing economy. We play a major role in this and would like to work even more with the City in these efforts. We will support whatever the City's final decision is on this issue; however the loss of \$12,000 of annual funding to the Chamber would be significant and could greatly affect the more than 200 business members within the Fort Bragg City limits.

The Chamber empowers the local business community. More than half of our members are within the city of Fort Bragg. We promote, support and improve the business and economic climate through our monthly events, training as well as connecting businesses with local resources. Our Annual Business Expo gives businesses, non-profits and cottage industries that don't have storefronts the opportunity to have exposure as well as networking opportunities with other businesses. We support many non-profits in the City with their fundraising and events, which has a direct impact on our local economy.

The Visitor Center maintained by the Chamber sees nearly 10,000 visitors annually. Over 11,000 business referrals were made last year. Our Visitor's Guide has a distribution of 90,000 with the online version bringing an additional 90,000 views.

The Chamber organizes and promotes the Mendocino and Fort Bragg Whale Festivals as well as providing promotion and support for the Little River Whale Festival. These events bring thousands of visitors into the area each year. This work is all done in-house, within our budget and without having to contract out of area.

The Film Commission is an unfunded arm of the Chamber that has a very large fiscal impact on the County. There is room for growth and this is something we look forward to continuing in order to help our city to thrive economically. The Chamber is proud to carry this designation, as the official Mendocino County Film Commission. Need For Speed brought in nearly \$3 million. Nearly all of the crew stayed in Fort Bragg lodging and patronized our local businesses. Filming also leaves a footprint after the production leaves, as people see the Mendocino Coast and want to come here.

Regardless of whether the City does pull the FBPC back under direct administration we are asking that the City consider increasing the funding to the Chamber so that we may continue to promote, support and improve the business and economic climate in Fort Bragg. In past years, the City funded as much as \$30,000 to the Chamber. This shows Fort Bragg's business community your support and understanding of what a significant role a Chamber of Commerce plays. We respectfully request that the City considers continuing to provide funding so that we can properly staff the Chamber and potentially grow the Film Office. In addition, we ask that the City continues to allocate the current percentage of the TOT.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and your continued support.



# Chamber of Commerce

M E N D O C I N O C O A S T

Nancy Swithenbank, Board Chair

Tom Yates, Past Chair  
Owner, KOZT

Joshua Coate, Board Treasurer  
Manager, NCBC Tap Room

Denise McNicol, Director  
Owner, Headlands Inn

Jeanette Colombi, Director  
Owner, Colombi Motel

Greg Burke, Director  
Managing Broker and V.P. Mendo Realty, Fort Bragg

Tara Estes, Director  
Owner, The Chair/Salt Girl

Ray Alarcon, Director  
Owner, Alarcon Insurance

Paul Clark  
Owner/Broker C21

Douna Dooley  
Co-Owner, Sport Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge

Tom Honer  
Owner, Harvest Market

Myles Anderson  
Anderson Logging, Inc.

Sharon Davis  
CEO, Mendocino Coast Chamber of Commerce

Jeremiah K. Murphy, CPA  
Owner, Jeremiah K. Murphy, CPA



# Chamber of Commerce

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## M E N D O C I N O C O A S T

## MCCC Statistics

Average nearly 10,000 visitors to the Visitor Center annually.  
We made over 11,200 business referrals in 2015.

Visitor Guide has a distribution of 90,000 with the online version bringing an additional 90,000 views.

Distribution sites include:

- San Francisco - Pier 39
- Santa Rosa
- Pismo Beach
- Mendocino countywide locations
- eVisitors Guide  
(additional 90,000 impressions)
- AAA Offices
- All MCCC Info Packets

The Mendocino Coast Visitors Guide contains:

- Detailed street maps of each coastal community as well as Anderson Valley
- Location markers to create redundant coverage for local businesses
- Information on the Coastal Trail, Parks, Beaches, Wellness, and other attractions
- Wine map and information on our Film Office
- Year-round Festivals
- Facts and history
- Business Directory

The Chamber organizes and promotes the Mendocino and Fort Bragg Whale Festivals as well as providing promotion and support for the Little River Whale Festival. These events bring thousands of visitors into the area each year.

Our social media presence has grown significantly over the past year and we utilize this to support, highlight and promote our members. The Chamber Facebook page has 2,000 likes and an email list of over 1,000.

The Film Commission is an unfunded arm of the Chamber that has a very large fiscal impact on the County. Need For Speed brought in nearly 3 million. Filming also leaves a footprint after the production leaves, as people see the Mendocino Coast and want to come here.

6A) I am in favour of an increase in the transient occupancy tax (TOT). The current tax rate is artificially low, and does not reflect industry standards in tourism; concerns that a higher tax rate would drive potential guests away are specious. Fort Bragg as a whole is suffering from delayed maintenance and budgetary issues, especially as the town is attempting to expand, rehabilitate, and maintain many facilities such as the Coastal Trail, and it is critical to keep revenues up in order to support a high quality of life for current guests, visitors, and future generations. A drive toward short-sighted thinking in the name of expedience or reelection concerns reflects poorly upon the Council and we must think in the long term. A higher tax will allow us to improve the physical condition of the city, the services available, and the options for future developments, something benefits not just residents but those who wish to visit. Given that the matter under consideration is simply a ballot measure, not a tax increase from the Council itself, it's clear that this must be put to the ballot to allow voters to express their opinion on the issue.

6B) I am opposed to the use of Segways and similar devices on the Coastal Trail. I feel they would be detrimental to the experience of users, who would prefer a more serene environment — Segways are distracting, highly disruptive, noisy, and unpleasant to be around for many current users of the trail. Moreover, they could pose access barriers for disabled people, older adults using canes and walkers, parents with strollers, and other people with mobility impairments who lack the agility to move around such devices, especially when they are operated by inexperienced users who cannot adequately control or stop them. I am also disturbed by the potential precedent of allowing commercial uses of the Coastal Trail: I feel that it should be preserved and enshrined as a public, noncommercial, open access space available to all, and allowing a commercial use permit creates the risk that future permits will continue to encroach on recreational enjoyment of the trail. I urge you to reject any and all proposals for commercial use permits.

Regards,

s.e. smith

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Council I would strongly request you consider a better and actual share of funds for more than City Hall. The fact City Hall is to claim need of more monies for staff and now you want to take on the marketing of the area and the funds? Will this take away the small amount of funds the Chamber of commerce already gets? I do not like the conglomeration of money and community function under the grips of city hall. I also would strongly request the field and community programs money be shared with the MCPR for more scholarships and work for field upgrades. I also would strongly request the 5<sup>th</sup> level that would give Fort Bragg a small pot of funds for emergency shelter needs be it EWS or house/apartment fires and other things that happen in life that a local social safety net could and would be of value. This I would like to see the Mayor have freedom to use as he/she see's fit but also account for the funds and publically show the use of the funds as to determine the overall effective and compassionate use or not of funds. That could be a double edge sword for any Mayor as squandering and wasteful spending could be done but that would also be a political death upon a re-election. I hope you will honestly consider and share these funds with more than City Hall and Noyo Center. If not and if this attempted TOT allocation stays as it is currently written public opinion will be on the side of NO vote. Thank You Eric Dwyer 3/28/2016

MY change of direction request is as follows...

☐ .75% (i.e., less than one-half of the revenues) to substantially increase promotions and marketing for Fort Bragg; specifically given to the Chamber of Commerce (ABC) marketing group, NOT CITY HALL

☐ 0.5% (i.e., one-quarter of the revenues) to enhance Coastal Trail maintenance and security; City Hall funds

☐ 0.25% (i.e., one-eighth of the revenues) to support establishment of the Noyo Center Oceanarium (also known as the Whale House or Discovery Center) as a premiere visitor attraction; and Noyo center funds NOT CITY HALL

☐ 0.25% (i.e., one-eighth of the revenues) to undertake special projects that support tourism and benefit the community, including but not limited to repair and enhancement of local athletic fields. --Specifically funds to go to Mendocino Coast Park and Rec. Dept. NOT CITY HALL, NOT CV STAR CENTER.

0.25% for the formation of an Emergency shelter account under the Mayors direction. Money for the EWS and or shelter emergency for whatever life may have as a security net. This could be and would be a social service funding for the City as not to have to rely on the County BOD or Red Cross or other NGO groups may or may not be Hospitality House group and or Coast Hotel wellness center group to cover under and unfunded projects, could be a funding source for the Faith community group to run a EWS location I would think this would be as need is required but a funding source needed none the less...