

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
SUBJECT: SANTA ROSA TOURISM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT  
AREA ANNUAL REPORT  
STAFF PRESENTER: DANIELLE O'LEARY, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER  
  
AGENDA ACTION: MOTION

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Planning and Economic Development Department that the Council, by motion, approve the 2015 Annual Report and adopt the 2016/2017 Budget for the Santa Rosa Tourism Business Improvement Area (SRTBIA).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Santa Rosa's economic development program partners with the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce and Visit Santa Rosa (formerly known as Santa Rosa Convention and Visitors Bureau) to produce unique Santa Rosa tourism campaigns, actively promote Santa Rosa as a worthy Sonoma County tourism destination, and operate and manage the California Welcome Center located in Railroad Square. It is the practice that Council reviews the annual accomplishments and budget for the SRTBIA assessment, since it has been established back in September 2010.

BACKGROUND

1. The Santa Rosa Tourism Business Improvement Area (SRTBIA) was established on September 3, 2010 via Ordinance #3946. The Ordinance established a 3% assessment on the room rate of each hotel in Santa Rosa and was estimated to produce approximately \$1 million annually, split between Visit Santa Rosa (VSR) (70%) and the City of Santa Rosa's Economic Development Program (30%), after a 2% administrative fee.
2. The SRTBIA is Santa Rosa's second Business Improvement Area (BIA) dedicated to securing a share of the tourism market. The Sonoma County Tourism (SCT) is funded through a BIA established in 2004 that assesses room nights on certain hotels within Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Petaluma, Cloverdale, Cotati, Sebastopol, Windsor and unincorporated areas of Sonoma County. While the SCT promotes

tourism to Sonoma County in general, the SRTBIA focuses exclusively on promoting Santa Rosa as a business and leisure travel destination.

3. The Annual Report is due to the Director of Planning and Economic Development by June 1 of each year.

### ANALYSIS

1. The attached Annual Report highlights activities and expenditures that have occurred during FY 2015/2016.
2. During the past year, the SRTBIA Advisory Board, the staff from Visit Santa Rosa and the City's economic development team collaborated on activities to promote Santa Rosa as a destination for leisure, sports and business travel, while also working independently to raise traveler awareness for Santa Rosa.
3. City and VSR goals focus on:
  - a. Increasing awareness of Santa Rosa as a visitor destination through public relations, marketing, and social media campaigns.
  - b. Maximize the effective use of SRTBIA funds through implementation and a coordinated work plan with VSR.
  - c. Conducting group sales that position Santa Rosa as the best place to meet for conferences, reunions and tour planners.
  - d. Attract new events that support the niche travel markets of: food and wine, arts and culture, craft breweries, and cycling.
4. The SRTBIA Advisory Board met on May 26, 2016 and approved the attached Annual Report and recommends approval by Council. SRTBIA Board Roster:
  - a. Max Childs, Courtyard Marriott
  - b. Donna Rentera, Best Western Garden Inn
  - c. Jonathan Coe, Santa Rosa Chamber President
  - d. Danielle O'Leary, Economic Development Manager City of Santa Rosa
  - e. Sally Shaffer, Hilton Santa Rosa
5. The SRTBIA Board must provide an annual report to the City Council, detailing the following:
  - a. Recommended changes to boundaries: No changes recommended.

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- b. The method and basis of levying assessments: No changes recommended.
- c. Amount of contributions made from sources other than assessments for Visit Santa Rosa (VSR):
  - i. \$31,000 - County of Sonoma Welcome Center funding
  - ii. \$38,753 - Merchandise Sales
  - iii. \$2,750 - Display and Advertising Sales
  - iv. \$6,070 - Certified Folder Contract Fees

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this action does not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The SRTBIA Advisory Board met on May 26, 2016 and approved the attached Annual Report and recommends approval by Council.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Santa Rosa Tourism Business Improvement Area Annual Report 2015
- Attachment 2 - City of Santa Rosa Historical Transient Occupancy Tax
- Attachment 3 - 2015 Annual County Tourism Report

CONTACT

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