



MEMORANDUM

Date: February 22, 2017

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator 

Re: **Visit Tucson**

Please see the attached February 21, 2017 letter from the Visit Tucson President and CEO in response to Item 5 on the February 21, 2017 Board of Supervisors Addendum.

County revenues to Visit Tucson flow through a statutorily fixed distribution formula, which states that 50 percent of all Bed Tax revenues from hotels, motels, resorts and other lodging in the unincorporated area of Pima County are automatically transferred to Visit Tucson. The County then enters into an annual funding agreement with Visit Tucson.

An independent Board of Directors governs Visit Tucson; and the Southern Arizona Attractions Alliance (primarily composed of Pima County attractions) has a standing position on Visit Tucson's Board of Directors. Mr. Craig Ivanyi, Executive Director of the Arizona-Sonoran Desert Museum, currently serves on the Executive Committee of the Visit Tucson Board.

If you have any further questions regarding this matter, please contact me.

CHH/anc

Attachment

c: Jan Leshar, Deputy County Administrator for Community and Health Services
Dr. John Moffatt, Director, Economic Development
Brent DeRaad, President and CEO, Visit Tucson



TO: Pima County Board of Supervisors
Chuck Huckelberry, Administrator, Pima County
Jan Leshar, Deputy County Administrator, Pima County
Tom Moulton, Director of Tourism & Attractions, Pima County

FROM: Brent DeRaad, President & CEO, Visit Tucson

RE: Horse Racing at Rillito Race Track

DATE: Feb. 21, 2017

Per the discussion at this morning's Board of Supervisors meeting, we at Visit Tucson have had 10 postings on our website related to horse racing at Rillito Race Track for the past two weeks. If you type in "Rillito Race Track" or "horse racing" in the search box at the top of our home page, you will see these items.

Rillito Race Track search: <https://www.visittucson.org/search/node/Rillito%20Race%20Track>

Horse racing search: <https://www.visittucson.org/search/node/horse%20racing>

On our events page, you will find one of those postings under "Spectator Sports." However, our calendar of events keyword search function on our new website, which launched in August, is not operating properly. All 10 postings should appear in the events section without having to use the master search function. We are working with our website vendor to fix our keyword search. I apologize for this malfunction.

After word reached us last week regarding Supervisor Miller's concerns, we also engaged in a Facebook campaign to promote horse racing at Rillito Race Track. It's my understanding that the campaign has generated 4,300 impressions in the past week with 100 click-throughs to Rillito information on www.visittucson.org. This campaign will run until the end of the season—March 17, 2017.

Additionally, the first activity listed on our Vamos a Tucson website events page -- <http://www.vamosatucson.com/eventos/> -- is horse racing at Rillito Race Track. We are also promoting horse racing on our Vamos a Tucson Facebook page.

In the spirit of partnership, I encourage any of you, or your staff, to contact me (770-2149 direct-office, bderaad@visittucson.org) whenever you have questions or suggestions. While we are far from perfect, we are eager to do all that we can to market and promote all attractions, events and activities that bring people to Tucson and Southern Arizona.

Attractions Promotion

We at Visit Tucson work closely with the Southern Arizona Attractions Alliance (SAAA) to produce and sell the annual Tucson Attractions Passport. For the past two weeks, we have distributed attractions passports to passengers booking Aeromar's flight to Tucson from Guadalajara, Mazatlan and Los Mochis.



Attractions Promotion (continued)

The SAAA president has a standing position on our board of directors. Craig Ivanyi, executive director of the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, serves on the executive committee of our board. We promote the attractions on our website, visitors guide and via social media. We also work with the attractions to provide marketing guidance.

Additionally, the Mt. Lemmon Science Tour app we funded last year for the University of Arizona College of Science, has been downloaded more than 55,000 times since it launched in November 2015.

Event Sponsorships

Along with marketing numerous area events, Visit Tucson invests cash in the following events that have ties to Pima County:

- Cactus Club Volleyball
- Korean professional baseball training
- Major League Soccer Preseason in Tucson
- Nova Home Loans Arizona Bowl
- Rugby – PAC 7s
- Tucson Association of Realtors Soccer Shoot-out
- Tucson Conquistadores Classic Senior PGA Tour event
- Tucson Gem, Mineral & Fossil Showcase
- Tucson Invitational Games—college baseball
- Vamos a Tucson Mexican Baseball Fiesta

Tourism Performance

We are in the midst of rapidly-improving times for tourism in Pima County. Following is the region’s hotel/resort performance in the first seven months of the 2016-17 fiscal year. Hotel/resort revenue per available room is up 9.1% so far this fiscal year.

| | <u>Occupancy</u> | <u>Average Daily Rate</u> | <u>Revenue Per Available Room</u> | <u>Occ Inc</u> | <u>ADR Inc</u> | <u>RevPAR Increase</u> |
|--------------|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Jan 2017 | 65.3% | \$112.96 | \$73.80 | 3.8% | 7.9% | 12.0% |
| Dec 2016 | 53.1% | \$87.08 | \$46.24 | 3.6% | 4.4% | 8.2% |
| Nov 2016 | 57.4% | \$95.93 | \$55.05 | 3.7% | 5.0% | 8.8% |
| October 2016 | 59.0% | \$102.42 | \$60.42 | 0.8% | 6.8% | 7.6% |
| Sept 2016 | 53.1% | \$87.20 | \$46.27 | 5.4% | 4.3% | 10.0% |
| August 2016 | 53.3% | \$78.71 | \$41.97 | 6.1% | 2.2% | 8.4% |
| July 2016 | <u>56.6%</u> | <u>\$77.05</u> | <u>\$43.61</u> | <u>6.0%</u> | <u>2.7%</u> | <u>8.9%</u> |
| Total | 56.8% | \$91.62 | \$52.48 | 4.2% | 4.8% | 9.1% |

Source: STR, Feb. 17, 2017

Thank You

On behalf of Visit Tucson’s staff and board of directors, thank you for the opportunity to serve as Pima County’s destination marketing organization. We appreciate your investment and are proud of our work and its impact on creating greater awareness of and interest in visiting Tucson and Southern Arizona.