

**City of Hollywood Office of Tourism
FYE 2009 Strategic Marketing Plan**

VISION

To be recognized as the citywide tourism marketing organization shaping the transformation of the City of Hollywood into a vibrant destination known for its distinctive natural and cultural assets.

MISSION

To provide industry leadership in the marketing of Hollywood as a premier year-round destination for all visitors. To serve as the marketing engine driving economic growth for the hospitality industry in the City of Hollywood.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Hollywood, tourism is an integral part of the economy, generating over \$438 million in tourism-related tax revenue and \$30 million in state taxes, and employing thousands of residents. The Hollywood Office of Tourism's (HOT) destination-wide tourism marketing strategy contributed to increases in year-end hotel occupancy that averaged out at 70.4 percent, compared to the national average of 63.2 percent and state of Florida average of 64.1 percent. Of the 31 municipalities in Broward County, Hollywood continues its steady increase in the contribution of bed tax dollars and its position as No. 2, second only to the city of Fort Lauderdale, in the contribution of tourist tax dollars.

The success of Hollywood's tourism program is especially impressive given the current down economy. In just two years, the Office of Tourism has progressed into an effective entity built on strategic tourism development, targeted markets, cooperative partnerships, stakeholder input and marketing initiatives that generate positive economic results for the City of Hollywood tourism industry.

As part of an initiative to streamline marketing efforts and increase efficiency, the Office of Tourism is coordinating its marketing efforts with the City of Hollywood Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Beach and Downtown Districts, as well as with the staff at the Office of the City Manager's Public Affairs and Marketing and the Business and Economic Development Office. This new alignment will create greater synergy, eliminate duplication of effort and help move Hollywood closer to implementing a single-branded approach to marketing.

In the national economy's current uncertain climate, and with the continued growth of the international flights being added to overseas markets at a time when markets and flights are being reduced, the importance of targeting international visitors cannot be overemphasized. With international inbound travel on the upswing and the Internet facilitating access to this audience, we are fine-tuning our marketing and sales strategy to more effectively reach these lucrative new opportunities. Hollywood's proximity to Miami International Airport, the destination's leader in international airlift, presents viable tourism opportunities that include the United Kingdom, Germany, Latin America

and Canada. Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, the domestic airlift leader, also is enhancing international service with new routes that include Latin America.

On the domestic travel front, our efforts will focus on the priority markets where Hollywood and Florida enjoy a strong position and significant share of destination business, including New York, whose passengers arriving at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport last year totaled nearly 4 million travelers; and Florida, where the southeast region represents a 70 percent fly market, according to VISIT FLORIDA research. Marketing efforts also will target Stable Destination Markets and Growth Destination Markets, as well as Traditional Drive Markets from short-haul locations within Florida, such as West Palm Beach/Fort Pierce, Naples/Marco, Tampa/St. Petersburg, Kissimmee and Orlando.

As a destination, Hollywood's distinctive natural and cultural assets, as well as its convenient location, offer something for every lifestyle and budget. But that alone will not deliver visitors to Hollywood. In a climate of increasing competitor marketing efforts and rising advertising costs, it is now more important than ever to market the destination.

The branding of Hollywood as a unique and appealing destination already is underway with the introduction this year of a new theme, "VisitHollywoodFL.org: Where You Want to Beach." The Tourism Marketing Advisory Board (HoTMAC) spent months creating and developing Hollywood's new logo and tag, which is being integrated through all marketing channels to better position our destination for visitor growth. With a strong identity that distinguishes Hollywood from the rest of its competitive set, we are committed to fully delivering the promise of the brand through a variety of product enhancements that include new visitor services and aesthetic improvements.

An aggressive online program launched in June 2008 already is spreading Hollywood's message to domestic and international audiences. Live online hotel booking with language translation and currency conversion, local "Hot Deals" and a downloadable vacation planner are available on our tourism website. The online initiatives – which include precision analytics, e-flyer enhancements, a naturally strong organic (non-paid) search presence and a sophisticated paid search – have generated positive economic results for Hollywood's hospitality industry and positive feedback from its hotel partners, whose input is helping to refine the online methodology.

Over the past year, VisitHollywoodFL.org has seen a steady increase in visitor traffic while lowering the average cost per visitor and increasing conversion rates (email form submits). Increased traffic to the site can be generated through a more prominent presence on the City's main website, HollywoodFL.org, which features more content and resources for residents, visitors and businesspeople. Strategies currently being explored for directing more visitors to the HOT site through HollywoodFL.org include a web portal, a dedicated navigational button and/or expanded and enhanced link text.

Other online opportunities for Hollywood's tourism industry include full- and half-day tour packages that can be promoted and sold on VisitHollywoodFL.org. Research shows

that visitors rate shopping as their second-favorite activity, behind visiting the beach. They also want to be able to explore the South Florida destination through convenient sightseeing tour offerings that can be easily purchased. This can be accomplished through the HOT website once a reliable and experienced vendor/operator has been secured. The CRA Beach District and HOT currently are interviewing vendors who offer the types of tours visitors desire, with hotel transportation and lunch and/or dinner included, such as shopping trips; day trips to Key West; South Beach excursions; Intracoastal boat tours; or Everglades nature tours.

In addition to convenient online booking, visitors would be able to purchase sightseeing tour packages at their hotel or the Hollywood Welcome Center expected to open by the end of 2008. HOT expects the visitor center will be located at Charnow Park near the new Garfield Street Parking Garage and Community Center. The welcome center also would promote various destination offerings, including local restaurants, stores, the Downtown arts and entertainment district, ArtsPark at Young Circle and HOT Express Trolley service.

In an effort to better understand and reach the international visitor market, HOT is encouraging the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau (GFLCVB) to include Hollywood as a subset of Visa View, an international visitor study available through VISIT FLORIDA and Visa credit card services. Visa, the top-ranked credit card company with 60 percent of the global market, is offering destinations the opportunity to provide area zip codes with Visa/VISIT FLORIDA, in turn, providing a monthly report showing Visa credit card usage from more than 150 overseas countries. Participation in this program through the GFLCVB would provide us with invaluable data on where visitors are coming from and how they are spending in the market.

While Hollywood has the physical assets that appeal to international visitors – including uncrowded beaches, a pedestrian-friendly environment and preserved nature area – we need to work on how international visitors experience our destination. In addition to the availability of an entertainment/sightseeing tour program, services that would enhance the international visitor experience could include a currency exchange and multilingual capability at the new welcome center. Plans are underway to establish a task force to identify and implement ways in which Hollywood can be more “international friendly.”

Year-round trolley service for hotel guests is essential to ensure the optimum experience for both international and domestic visitors. While the Hot Express Trolley is an effective way to promote Hollywood as a destination with plenty of things to do and see, local hotel operators feel the program ends just when they need it the most. HOT has secured verbal commitments for funding from our major hotel operators to make the program a self-sustaining, year-round operation. Trolley service will be launched in the fall, and by April, HOT hopes to finalize hotel commitments to extend it throughout the year.

The Office of Tourism also is developing ways to introduce the Hollywood destination to the more than 3 million cruise passengers who pass through Port Everglades each year. Currently, the port-area destination is being promoted as Fort Lauderdale, despite the fact

that 80 percent of Port Everglades is located in Hollywood. In an effort to better position Hollywood to attract pre- and post-cruise passenger business, the Office of Tourism is working with tour operators, travel agents and media who specialize in Florida cruise products, as well as the staff at Port Everglades, GFLCVB, Royal Caribbean, Celebrity Cruises and Holland America Line. Initiatives being pursued include incorporating Hollywood messaging and awareness-building tactics in the cruise line marketing and sales brochures and materials; hosting a familiarization tour for front-line cruise staff; creating an “Explore Hollywood” newsletter for cruise agents; and adding a pre- and post-cruise section to the VisitHollywoodFL.org website that highlights local hotels offering transportation and pre- and post-cruise pricing.

The Office of Tourism is keenly aware that promoting Hollywood as a destination must start before visitors arrive. Toward this end, HOT has engaged the services of renowned photographer Alan S. Maltz, the Official Fine Art Photographer for Florida named by VISIT FLORIDA and the Official Wildlife Photographer of Florida named by the Wildlife Foundation of Florida. Mr. Maltz has an appreciation of Hollywood’s natural beauty and visitor appeal, and is excited for the City to be the subject of his next photo shoot. This well-respected artist’s work will capture the very essence of Hollywood, and encourage VISIT FLORIDA to recognize and promote Hollywood as a significant beach destination.

HOT also is working with *Florida Travel + Life Magazine* on an exciting public relations opportunity that will entail a historic property makeover on Hollywood Beach. FTL management and staff are extremely enthusiastic about this project and have offered editorial, logistical and promotional support, the latter to include a sweepstakes promotion and the possible hosting of kickoff and unveiling events. In keeping with the “green” theme, FTL also would help secure a sponsor for the necessary eco-friendly materials, a professional exterior designer and landscape artist, and possibly designers and vendors to donate furnishings. FTL is offering extraordinary media and promotional support at virtually no cost to the City of Hollywood.

While the Office of Tourism develops effective strategies for sharing Hollywood’s many attributes with the uninitiated, we also recognize that we must continue to work on improving our destination. In response to visitor surveys that identified the State Road A1A Corridor as a weakness, a HoTMAC subcommittee was formed in 2008 to address blight issues on Hollywood Beach. Creative solutions are being developed and implemented with regard to property and landscape maintenance, street furniture and trash receptacle maintenance, street lighting and public safety, and overall cleanliness and appearance. All city-owned facilities and construction sites are being cleaned up, buildings are being painted, and landscaping improvements and other aesthetic enhancements are being made. HOT also continues to encourage small motel operators to elevate their properties through Superior Small Lodging (SSL) certification, grants and other improvement programs.

In a dynamic and ever-changing industry such as tourism, there is no room for complacency and we must keep driving forward. The Office of Tourism’s success to date

can be attributed to our ability to anticipate change and respond to our hospitality industry partners' needs in initiating creative marketing, advertising and public relations strategies. Exciting opportunities exist even in these challenging economic times and, now more than ever, must be fully explored with the utmost commitment to further strengthening Hollywood's tourism industry.