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Matching Grants Received for Local Tourism Programs

Harrisonburg, Va. – Harrisonburg Tourism, Harrisonburg Economic Development, and Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance (HDR) will receive matching grant funding for various local tourism initiatives as part of the Virginia Tourism Corporation’s (VTC) Marketing Leverage Program.

This program through VTC requires a minimum of three Virginia entities to partner financially in applying for the grant. VTC awards grant funding annually, which is matched and leveraged on average three to one by partner dollars.

“This is an opportunity for us to collaborate with other agencies to expand the available resources when marketing new tourism programs throughout the city and region,” explained Brenda Black, director of Harrisonburg Tourism and Visitor Services.

The programs Harrisonburg has partnered with other entities to receive grant funding are:

Destination Harrisonburg includes a cohesive and recognizable brand strategy, to increase visitation to the city of Harrisonburg. The program is designed to boost meals, lodging, and sales tax revenues in the city and create economic development and job growth in the travel industry with long-term job creation and business expansion. Destination Harrisonburg will encourage families to schedule longer visits with students; promote our quality of life amenities; drive more residents to attractions and tourism businesses; and support a sustainable and diversified Harrisonburg economy.

The Passport to a Shenandoah BeerWerks Adventure includes all four Harrisonburg breweries offering a collaborative, entertaining, and synergistic approach to drawing and creating relationships with visitors and cross-promoting these establishments. By focusing on the strengths of each locality, Harrisonburg is also part of a well-integrated marketing message that adds a fun way to visit our breweries and businesses, while taking part in cycling, golf, hiking, fishing, and many other outdoor activities along the trail.

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Harrisonburg's role in the existing **Shenandoah Spirits Trail** program has seen great success through its pocket guide program and expanded web presence over the past year. This grant will expand the program and target millennials and baby boomers throughout Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina who are interested in wine, beer and craft beverages, historic downtown's, art, scenic drives and outdoor recreation. While one of our objectives is to raise awareness about the participating establishments among locals, our main purpose with this marketing campaign is to increase visitation from a broader audience throughout D.C., Maryland, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina and more metropolitan areas of Virginia including Fairfax, Alexandria, Arlington, Richmond, Norfolk, and Virginia Beach.

Today's Shenandoah Valley Takes Flight is the second phase of a comprehensive marketing project headed up by the Shenandoah Valley Tourism Partnership, a professional collaboration between eleven partners representing fourteen tourism-forward municipalities stretching from Winchester to Lexington, and the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission as the financial agent. Harrisonburg's partnership is to promote the city and the Shenandoah Valley as an outstanding year-round destination to global visitors.

To see a full list of the grant recipients and the amount of grant funding distributed, visit www.vatc.org. For information about the programs and services offered by Harrisonburg Tourism and Visitor Services, visit www.visitharrisonburgva.com.

The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to almost 55,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.



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