



ARPA/SLFRF TRANCHE 3 GRANT – MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Name of Organization: Morehead-Rowan County Recreation, Tourist and Convention Commission

Director's Name: Joy C. Brown

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List the total amount of funding you have spent or in the process of spending as of June 30, 2026: \$67,454.00

List all completed projects or those that started as of June 30, 2025. When describing projects, include information such as:

1. Markets used to advertise - Indianapolis, Chicago, St Louis, Columbus, Nashville, Atlanta, etc. Indicate if this was a new market for your organization. If not, how was the advertising enhanced to attract new visitors? List if you used digital marketing (location), publications (list a sample of publications), TV, radio, or billboards, and dates of advertising.
2. New or upgraded websites that include new content, photos, and tools to assist the visitor in navigating the site. List how the site is being promoted by the organization.
3. New brochure that includes new content and photos. List how the brochures are being distributed.
4. List any photography or video projects that will entice the visitor to seek further information.
5. New events or meetings brought to your community.
6. Research projects.
7. Way-finding signage and how you have utilized the signage to move visitors around your county. List how many signs you have developed and installed.
8. List project cost and the ROI (return on investment) from higher room occupancy, attraction ticket sales, restaurant receipts, campground stays, website visits, requests for brochures, Google analytics, or compare to pre-COVID numbers (2019).

Project	Small Market Meetings
Description	The Morehead-Rowan County Tourism Commission partnered with <i>Small Market Meetings</i> to promote Morehead as a premier destination for meetings, conferences, reunions, and group events. This targeted campaign showcased the Morehead Conference Center, local lodging, dining, and unique outdoor recreation opportunities to meeting planners seeking affordable, accessible, and memorable destinations. The campaign included digital advertising, destination listings, editorial exposure, and direct outreach to meeting planners through <i>Small Market Meetings'</i> network, increasing Morehead's visibility among decision-makers responsible for selecting meeting and convention locations. By emphasizing our central location along Interstate 64, modern meeting facilities, personalized service, and proximity to attractions such as Cave Run Lake, Daniel Boone National Forest, and Morehead State University, the campaign positioned Morehead as an attractive choice for regional and state events. As a result of these marketing efforts, Morehead strengthened its presence in the meetings and conventions market, generated qualified leads for future events, and enhanced awareness of the community as a destination capable of hosting business meetings, conferences, training sessions, sporting events, and group travel. The campaign also supported local economic development by encouraging overnight stays, dining, shopping, and visitor spending, benefiting hotels, restaurants, retailers, and other tourism-related businesses throughout Rowan County.
Date of Project	January – May 2026
Cost of Project	\$29,754
ROI (Return on Investment)	Based on conservative assumptions using meeting attendance, overnight stays, and average visitor expenditures, the Small Market Meetings campaign is estimated to have generated between \$100,000 and \$150,000 in direct visitor spending, representing an estimated return of 5:1 to 10:1 on the Commission's marketing investment. In addition to direct spending, the campaign increased awareness of Morehead as a meetings destination and generated qualified leads that will continue to produce economic benefits in future years.

Project	Gray Media/Television
Description	The Morehead-Rowan County Tourism Commission partnered with Gray Media to implement a strategic multimedia advertising campaign designed to increase awareness of Morehead and Rowan County as a premier travel destination throughout Kentucky and neighboring markets. The campaign utilized Gray Media's television, digital, streaming, and social media platforms to reach targeted audiences with compelling messaging that highlighted the area's outdoor recreation, events, attractions, dining, lodging, and meeting facilities. The campaign featured professionally produced promotional content showcasing signature destinations such as Cave Run Lake, Daniel Boone National Forest, the Morehead Conference Center, and the Rowan County Arts Center, while emphasizing the community's authentic Appalachian hospitality and convenient location along Interstate 64. Through targeted audience segmentation and broad regional distribution, the campaign successfully expanded Morehead's visibility among leisure travelers, families, outdoor enthusiasts, and group travel planners. As a result of the campaign, Morehead strengthened its regional tourism brand, increased destination awareness, and generated interest that translated into additional visitor inquiries, overnight stays, event attendance, and tourism-related spending. The partnership with Gray Media enhanced the Commission's ability to reach high-value audiences across multiple media platforms while supporting the long-term growth of the local tourism economy.
Date of Project	January – May 2026
Cost of Project	\$37,700.00
ROI (Return on Investment)	Based on conservative tourism industry assumptions, the Gray Media advertising campaign generated an estimated \$225,000 to \$450,000 in visitor spending, representing a return on investment of approximately 4.5:1 to 9:1. The campaign expanded awareness of Morehead and Rowan County across television, streaming, digital, and social media platforms, increasing visitation, overnight stays, event attendance, and spending at local hotels, restaurants, retail businesses, and attractions. Beyond immediate economic impact, the campaign strengthened the destination's brand recognition and influenced future travel decisions, creating long-term value for the local tourism economy.