



# City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.  
Valdez, AK 99686

## Meeting Agenda

### City Council

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Thursday, January 8, 2026

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

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#### Work Session with VCVB

#### WORK SESSION AGENDA - 6:00 pm

*Transcribed minutes are not taken for Work Sessions. Audio is available upon request.*

[Work Session: VCVB 2026 Budget](#)



Legislation Text

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**File #:** 26-0008, **Version:** 1

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**ITEM TITLE:**

Work Session: VCVB 2026 Budget

**SUBMITTED BY:** Faith Harris, VCVB

**FISCAL NOTES:**

Expenditure Required: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Unencumbered Balance: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Funding Source: [Click here to enter text.](#)

**RECOMMENDATION:**

[Click here to enter text.](#)

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:**

Council had conversations and provided instruction to VCVB management during prior work sessions. This work session is a chance for Council to review the final 2026 VCVB budget.

Materials provided by VCVB Executive Director Faith Harris are attached.



P.O. Box 1603 | 309 Fairbanks St Valdez, AK 99686  
907-835-2984 | ValdezAlaska.org | #DiscoverValdez

Discover Valdez  
Valdez Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc.  
309 Fairbanks St.  
Valdez, Alaska 99686

Attn: City Council Members, City Manager Duval, Director Nelson; Director Barberio  
The City of Valdez  
212 Chenega Avenue  
P.O. Box 307  
Valdez, AK 99686

Honorable Council Members:

Thank you for your longstanding engagement and support of Valdez Convention and Visitor Bureau. Since incorporating in 1983, the City of Valdez has been a vital support in the ongoing endeavors for this organization. Our ability to operate has been fully dependent on the generous financial contributions of the City of Valdez, and for that we are truly grateful.

Please accept this Official Approved Budget 2026 for review. We have taken all requests into application for the creation of this budget.

Also included is a Suggested Performance Indicators Document for review and consideration.

We look forward to a fruitful and steady 2026.

With Warm Regards,

*Faith Harris*

Faith Harris  
Discover Valdez (VCVB)

WHAT MATTERS MOST?



Official	Accounts	VCVB CVB Budget	Notes	2025	2024	2023
	Income					
	41100 City of Valdez Grant	\$505,000.00		\$546,650	\$531,245	\$531,245
	42000 Membership Income					
	<b>Membership Income - Total</b>	<b>\$32,000.00</b>		\$12,600		
<b>NEW</b>	<b>Draft Income from Office Supply Sales</b>	<b>\$30,000.00</b>	proposal for 2026; office supply store; uncertain			
	43000 Cooperative Advertising					
	<b>Cooperative Advertising - Total</b>	<b>\$32,600.00</b>		\$52,500		
	44000 Retail Sales		Proposed Gift Shop Sales		\$0	
	<b>Retail Sales - Total</b>	<b>\$6,800.00</b>		\$16,000		
	<b>Incentive Packages</b>					
	45000 Digital Advertising					
	<b>Digital Advertising - Total</b>	<b>\$400.00</b>		\$1,100		
	46100 Donations Received	\$800.00	would continue	\$200		
	46200 Interest Income	\$50.00	would continue	\$150		\$45
	46300 Special Event Income			\$250,000		
	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$607,650.00</b>		<b>#REF!</b>	<b>\$571,245</b>	<b>\$583,190</b>
	Expense					
	61000 Payroll Expenses					
	Wages					
	Events Wages	\$0.00	eliminated			
	<b>Wages - Total</b>	<b>\$246,133.00</b>		\$266,970		

<b>Payroll Expenses - Total</b>	<b>\$310,743.00</b>	<b>\$326,787</b>		
62000 Insurance				
<b>Insurance - Total</b>	<b>\$4,170.00</b>	<b>\$4,152</b>		
63000 Operating Costs				
63100 Administrative				
<b>Administrative - Total</b>	<b>\$69,450.00</b>	<b>\$63,401</b>		
<b>Communication Total</b>	<b>\$25,659.40</b>	<b>\$29,540</b>		
63300 Supplies				
<b>Supplies - Total</b>	<b>\$9,600.00</b>	<b>\$9,955</b>		
51000 Cost of Goods Sold				
<b>Cost of Goods Sold - Total</b>	<b>\$4,275.00</b>	<b>\$4,500</b>		
63400 Guides				
<b>Guides - Total</b>	<b>\$50,000.00</b>	<b>\$11,515</b>		
63500 Fees				
<b>Fees - Total</b>	<b>\$11,500.00</b>	<b>\$19,170</b>		
63600 Professional				
63610 Accounting Fees	<b>\$20,500.00</b>	\$20,000	\$18,000	\$24,000
63620 Financial Audit	<b>\$18,650.00</b>	\$18,150	\$16,750	\$16,750
<b>Professional - Total</b>	<b>\$39,150.00</b>	<b>\$38,150</b>		
<b>63700 Beautification</b>	<b>\$500</b>	<b>\$500</b>		
64000 Program Work				
64100 Advertising				
<b>Advertising - Total</b>	<b>\$12,000.00</b>	<b>\$36,500</b>		
64200 Marketing				
<b>Marketing - Total</b>	<b>\$13,488.00</b>	<b>\$77,000</b>		
64300 Trade Shows				
<b>Trade Shows - Total</b>	<b>\$6,225.00</b>	<b>\$139,080</b>		
65000 Travel and Sales				
<b>Travel and Sales - Total</b>	<b>\$7,720.00</b>	<b>\$19,900</b>		
66000 Special Events				
66100 Board and Member Meetings	<b>\$3,000.00</b>	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$500
66200 Special Events Contingency		\$10,000		\$900
66300 Board Member Training	<b>\$2,000.00</b>	\$1,000		
*New Line Item: Membership Meetings	<b>\$0.00</b>			

66400 Special Events		\$77,000		
<b>Special Events - Total</b>	<b>\$5,000.00</b>		\$89,000	
Depreciation expense				
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$587,480.40</b>		\$869,150	<b>\$579,237</b> <b>\$586,147</b>
Other Expense				
70001 Contingency Expenses	<b>\$18,000.00</b> expenses carried forward from 2025		\$10,000	\$6,243
Other Miscellaneous Expense				
Reconciliation Discrepancies				
<b>Total Other Expense</b>	<b>\$18,000.00</b>		\$10,000	<b>\$0</b> <b>\$6,243</b>
<b>Total Net Income</b>	<b>\$2,169.60</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0</b> <b>\$0</b>

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## Valdez Convention and Visitors Bureau

### Performance Metrics Review

#### 5 KEY METRICS FOR CVB BUSINESSES:

**1. Total Traffic and Individual Sources**

**2. Conversions –**

How many people click the links in posts?

Do they sign up for your newsletter or watch videos of your tours?

How many page visitors click to members?

How many make an inquiry about products or services?

**3. Conversion rates**

accurately tracks performance over time, taking into account seasonal fluctuations and one-off traffic spikes

**4. Repeat purchases from the same customers**

Revisiting website statistics hold steady or increase

**5. Average ratings across different platforms**

**Ratings Reviews:**

- Positive ratings [do influence](#) your local search ranking, which can lead to higher visibility in local searches for ideal tour seekers.
- [Nine out of ten travelers said](#) they read reviews before choosing an experience. That is a higher percentage than respondents who said location (88%) and price (87%) were important.
- [recent study found](#) that 68% of millennial travelers look for reviews no older than three months to gain the freshest perspective.
- In a TripAdvisor survey, 78% of respondents wanted to read reviews published within 90 days old.
- This means you need a consistent stream of reviews so they are always recent and relevant.

## **STANDARD VISITOR CENTER PERFORMANCE METRICS:**

### **Visitor Experience:**

- Visitor Satisfaction Survey: in center questionnaire
- Returning visitors Count
- Reviews: google, yelp, Tripadvisor
- Engagement metrics: Visitors with responses/visitors

### **Operational Efficiency:**

- Foot traffic: in-center visitor count
- How'd You find Us?: References source advertising
- Average spend per visitor
- cost per visitor: operating cost divided by visitor count
- conversion rates: web based engagement click through rates, social media;

### **Financial Impact:**

- Revenue per visitor;
- Average spend;
- Digital Metrics (Website/Booking)
- Website Traffic: How many people visit your site
- Click through: Online referrals from website visitors.
- Email Open/Click Rates: Effectiveness of email marketing
- Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC): Cost to attract one new visitor/customer.

## **DMO PERFORMANCE METRICS:**

### **1. Foundational Metrics:**

**Website Traffic/Sessions:** Volume of visitors.

**Conversion Rate:** Percentage of visitors/leads becoming customers.

**Brand Awareness:** How well the target audience recognizes the brand

### **2. Economic Impact**

**Visitor spending:** total money spent by visitors at destination (most recent study by COV)

**Accommodation tax revenue:** Revenue from lodging

**Occupancy rates:** Percent filled

**Average booking value:** n/a currently

**Return on Ad Spend:** revenue generated for every dollar spent on advertising

### 3. Digital And Marketing Effectiveness

**Website engagement: sessions; average bounce rate**

**Lead generation:** cost per lead, customer acquisition cost (dividing all sales and marketing costs by the number of new customers); click through rate

**ROAS (Return on Ad Spend): views, engagement,**

### 4. Social Media Channel Performance (Attribution)

**Engagement rate**

**customer lifetime value:** Total worth of a customer over their relationship with the business.

**retention rate:** ability to keep existing customers.

**Lead conversion:** How effectively leads turn into opportunities/sales.

**New customers**

### 5. Visitor Engagement And Loyalty:

**Participation rate:** engagement with ambassadors; sign up for deals, newsletters

**Retention/Repeat Visits:** repeats to the visitor center, repeats to the website

### 6. Operational Efficiency:

**Conversion Rates:** visitors taking actions, bookings, sign ups

**Staff Member Output:** engagement over visitor count

## **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: \*excerpt concepts source UStravel.org**

### **COMMUNITY:**

#### **Relocation**

- Track population (loss, gain and retain) over time for the community, and measure the influence of the DMO initiatives on the selection of the area for relocation of businesses and people.
- Many of the same attractors for visitors, like arts, dining, parks and natural attractions, are the same attractors for relocation. Promotion of a destination as a place to visit is in many ways also promoting a quality of life.

#### **Resident Sentiment**

- Balancing resident sentiment and travel demand is vital. Understanding barriers and drivers for residents can inform opening and community plans to welcome back guests.
- Focus on current barriers for residents and businesses as it pertains to travel, resident comfort with engaging with local establishments. Conducted routinely, DMOs can have a current line of sight into their community as the travel and health climate has changed rapidly over time.
- Resident sentiment will track with changes in the market and should be evaluated on a routine cadence (quarterly or annually). Travel will start locally and balancing resident needs with visitor demand is key for success.

#### **✓ Net Promoter Score**

- As a component of understanding resident sentiment, leverage Net Promoter Scores, which resonates with the business community, to see how likely residents are to recommend their community as a place to live and visit, and compare that with visitors.
- Understanding if resident and visitor experiences and perceptions differ can uncover gaps in resident sentiment and support as well as visitor experience.
- Ex. On a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 meaning “absolutely, not under any circumstances” and 10 meaning “absolutely, enthusiastically yes,” considering its attractions, parks, entertainment, restaurants and other things to see and do, how likely are you to recommend a visit to your friends, family or colleagues?

#### **TRAVELERS/ VISITORS**

## Soft Metrics with Traveler Content Engagement

- Soft metrics like CTR, content engagement and search data may have a resurgence because it is directional. Driving interest is important to capturing market share.
- Looking at engagement by demographic or geography can inform targeting and messaging. For example: if interest in “xyz” content increased with the age of audience members, then messaging could be geared toward that segment that is focused on safety and familiarity.

## Traveler Rating Score

- Historic purchase and search behavior can inform targeting during the recovery.
- Attaching a score for travel affinity, similar to a credit score, can identify travelers most likely to feel comfortable venturing out again, those who would be repeat visitors, and or are overall more likely to travel. These audiences can be evaluated in the messaging targeted to appeal to their unique travel behavior.

## Market share and growth rates

- Beyond looking at the U.S.’s market share for global travel, DMOs do not focus on this metric and it is important to understand how a destination’s travel industry is growing/declining in relation to the share of travel captured by the destination itself.
- Comparing growth rates for economic impact, hotel performance, and visitor volume in comparison to the larger area such as states or competitive city destinations can inform if the rate of decline or growth is at ‘healthy’ levels compared to the industry overall.
- By putting our community’s travel performance in context of the industry at large we can give perspective as to how the recovery is trending as well as when there are needs to increase efforts to grow economic value.

## MEDIA ROI

### Embrace ROI and Expand to Include Broader Metrics

- ROI, destination image and media mix evaluation is not new to DMOs, and must be evaluated through recovery initiatives and on an on-going basis to show the value of DMO investment to stakeholders in driving recovery.
- Attribution is going to look different with the majority of travelers changing or canceling travel plans due to the pandemic shifting the investment needed to drive incremental travel. Channel and content engagement has shifted with consumers spending. Images of destinations and likelihood to visit are probable to change.

Set KPIs to demonstrate the value of initiatives to show the holistic value of the DMO to the community.

### **Return on Ad-spend**

- One of the benefits --making our historical KPIs incredibly relevant and useful such as ROAS, visitation/Arrival Rate.

These give us levels to strive for while routinely tracking our incremental growth toward them.

- While destinations are closed and pent up demand is slowly returning, looking at overall demand, search and intent, is a great success-metric because search is intent. Intent is exponential-leads to visitation

### **Earned Media and Civic Pride**

- Traditionally DMOs have measured earned media in terms of dollars. DMOs play a role in generating positive PR for a destination, and people like to cheer for a winning team. It is likely that the more residents see other people talking positively about their home community, the more likely they will be internally to 'cheer for' and support the community itself.
- Look at how civic pride is increased with PR initiatives by a DMO. Ex. Social media shares.

And Lastly: Taken From a US Travel Webinar series:

\* From UStravel.org:

## KPI WISH LIST

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- Adopt a **holistic perspective**
- Align DMO efforts with the community: **Tourism = Community**
- **Quality over Quantity**
- Consider using **high-frequency metrics**
- Develop & implement **Financial Performance Indicators**
- Develop & implement **Diversity-related Metrics**
- **Centralize data** program efforts and with different data points:
  - Earned media efforts & civic pride
  - Marketing efforts & relocation data
  - Credit card spending & geolocation data
  - Resident promoter score & visitor perceptions
  - Traveler interest & geolocation data
- **Align Vision, Mission and Goals with KPIs** on an ongoing basis; consider creating a Data Quality Index

## NO LONGER RELEVANT LIST

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- **Benchmarking** is not relevant with **year-over-year comparisons**; ensure there are **long-term goals in place**
- Looking at only **one metric independently is not enough**; move towards a **holistic view and tell a meaningful story about the community**
- For PR, retire Ad Value Equivalency (EVA); **adopt goals that matter to the community**, such as positive image, diversity, etc.
- For groups, **retire room nights and adopt visitor spending**

## **Trip Advisor and Google Business Analytics:**

- Business Profile interactions
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### **What are interactions?**

Interactions are when people call, message, make bookings, ask for directions, and more from your Business Profile on Google

- How Many People Viewed the Business Profile:
- Calls made from your business profile
- Directions

### **Direction requests made from your Business Profile**

- Website Clicks from Business Profile

### **Current Main Data Resources:**

- ATIA
- Google
- Meta ads
- City of Valdez
- NPS visitor data: <https://www.responsible-datasets-in-context.com/posts/np-data/>
- Destination International
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