

Mar 10, 2026

CCTAB Meeting

Invited Larry Jensen Timothy Riley Amy Anderson Mayor Helper Shanny Wilson
Tina Grange Jack Clark Kami McManus Kourtney Cox Layne Miller Tina Grange
Kristian Olsen Josh Patterson Scottie Kraync Christine Watkins Megan Marshall

Summary

Multiple festival and event updates covered local initiatives and detailed 2025 tourism revenue growth and 2026 marketing strategies.

City and Event Preparations

Multiple cities reported on upcoming events, including Price City's Easter egg hunt, Helper City's Dark Skies initiative, and the CERC's fully booked Women's Expo. Helper secured a Land and Water Conservation Grant, with a 580,000 cash match from Intermountain Electronics.

Tourism Review and Strategy

The Carbon County Office of Tourism reported that 2025 revenue nearly doubled in a decade, rising to over 458,900, with International Days and the Utah Renaissance Fair being the top events.

Event Funding and Coke Property

The advisory board unanimously approved the maximum 1,500 funding requests for the Rock and Coal Music Festival, International Days, and the Helper Art, Music, and Film Festival. The board passed a motion to increase funding to 30,000 for Scofield's playground equipment grant application to make a major investment into tourism. The board also anticipates the state acquiring the 180-acre coke ovens property soon, which is expected to renew interest in the Range Creek areas.

Details

1. Roll Call
2. Motion made by Lenise to approve the January meeting minutes with a second by Josh. All in favor. Motion carried

3. Price City Layne Miller reported that preparations for the International Days meeting and the Renaissance Fair are proceeding well. The armed combatants are actively practicing for the, which is described as real combat, and planning is well underway for the Rock and Coal Music Festival, scheduled for the second weekend in June. The St. Patrick's Day parade is coming up on Saturday at noon, preceded by a fire department pancake breakfast fundraiser from 9:30 to 11:00 AM

Wellington City Mayor, Jack Clark reported on events, including an Easter egg hunt planned for March 28th starting at 10:00 AM. They have welcomed a new police chief and are preparing to go out to bid for a contractor for a new building around the end of March or early April. Wellington will also host Pioneer Days on the weekend of July 24th, with a parade and fire department activities on that Saturday morning.

Helper City Mayor, Lenise provided an update for Helper, noting that the University of Utah Dark Skies scholars will be visiting from March 20th through the 22nd to take light readings and explore ways to view and direct people to the best dark sky locations. Filming for Salt and Honey will take place in Helper from March 23rd through April 17, with minimal anticipated street closures. Helper's Easter egg hunt will be on April 4th at Gardener Field in the city park, and Vibes will start in May, moving to a once-a-month schedule. Lenise shared the successful award of a land and water conservation grant, made possible by a \$580,000 cash match secured from John Houston. The grant will fund significant improvements, including a new restroom, press box, expanded dugouts, fencing, turfing for water cost savings, and batting cages, all in partnership with USU. Additionally, the Highway 6 exhibit opening is scheduled for May 1st at the museum, with a ribbon cutting at noon and an open house from 6:00 to 8:00 PM.

4. Carbon Events Recreation Center (CERC) Director, Kourtney Cox shared updates on several events happening, including a fully booked Women's Expo this weekend (Friday and Saturday). The annual Easter egg hunt is scheduled for the 21st at noon at the softball complex, and they will again incorporate an adaptive area based on positive feedback from the previous year. Casino Night will occur on April 24th and will feature prize giveaways, including overnight stays and rounds of golf donated by Mesquite and Wendover. The Fair and Rodeo planning is underway, and they are excited to be featured on the Cowboy Channel this year, providing nationwide reach for sponsors. The CERC will host a show for the Rock and Coal Music Festival on Friday and is planning an

even bigger Fourth of July concert and fireworks show, along with a new nighttime car show. Recent projects include finishing a grant for the motocross track with new fencing and sidewalk repairs. Facility improvements are being funded by the Black Diamond Rodeo, specifically for the main arena and holding pins, to improve water access and leveling.

5. USU Eastern Kristian Olsen provided updates from USU Eastern, noting that commencement will take place on Saturday, April 25th, with retiring Provost Larry Smith as the speaker. Olsen also reported that they survived the legislative session well and highlighted the four strategic priorities of the new president, Brad Mortonson, with the number one priority being statewide attention. USU Eastern secured \$350,000 to remodel the journalism space into a social work space and lab, allowing the expansion of the Master of Social Work program by about 12 students. This new resource will offer counseling to students and community members and is expected to be completed around this time next year. A new position for concurrent enrollment students was created and filled by Jessica Barker, who will help students, parents, and counselors take advantage of the opportunities. The Passport to Eastern event is scheduled for the first weekend in June (the fifth and sixth) and serves as a scholarship fundraiser while bringing influential people to the area to showcase the region. Excursions will be led by faculty members in their area of discipline, such as archaeology and geology, to highlight their quality and expertise, as well as the beautiful sites of the area. The goal is for attendees to fall in love with the area and continue to invest in both the campus and Carbon County.

6. Carbon County Office of Tourism 2025 Review: Tina Grange presented a review of the 2025 tax data for the Carbon County Office of Tourism, highlighting that revenue has nearly doubled in a decade, climbing from \$230,000 in 2016 to over \$458,900 in 2025. The strategy focused on encouraging visitors to use local towns as a base camp for adventure. Top five visitor origin states included Utah, Colorado, California, Nevada, and Arizona, with campaigns yielding high click-through rates. The top three events in 2025 were International Days, with 28,300 visits, the Price City Renaissance Fair with 20,000 visits, and Helper Saturday Vibes, with 7,800 visits for their Memorial Weekend event. Digital marketing in 2025 generated 122,580 website clicks, and performance on platforms like Spotify and Reddit significantly outperformed industry standards, demonstrating the effectiveness of the "let's go back" messaging. Organic social media growth saw a 98.3% increase in engagement, driven by the "discover the corridor" video series.

2026 Quarter 1 Strategy and Community Impact: The Quarter 1 strategy for 2026 focused on high-intent digital platforms, community engagement, and traditional storytelling, with engagement rates significantly higher than industry benchmarks. The "Tourism Works Here" community impact project, in partnership with ETV News, highlights small businesses to demonstrate the tangible impact of tourism on local livelihoods. Features on Grogg's Pinnacle Brewing Company in January and Farlainos in February garnered high views and engagement, showing residents' eagerness to support tourism when they see a direct benefit. **2026 Digital Platform Performance:** A partnership with roadtrippers.com launched in January 2026, generating over 200,000 impressions with a 1.5% click-through rate, which is 188% above the industry average. The Reddit platform campaign, focusing on stargazing, road trips, and Utah travel, saw the dark sky creative as the most powerful driver of high-intent traffic, with users spending significant time on lodging pages. Paid search and social metrics also showed high efficiency, with the dark skies campaign remaining the top performer, leading to the decision to continue the Dark Skies campaign throughout the entire year. **2026 Traditional Media and Direct Mail:** Traditional media strategy includes partnerships with Utah Stories, where advertising will pay for feature articles about community members. New partnerships were established with Southwest Travel Magazine and the returning Discover Utah magazine, which will involve full-page placements and digital assets targeting fly-drive markets. A direct mail strategy is using postcards to market Range Creek and Nine Mile Canyon tours, replacing visitor guides, and including custom water bottles with a booking code to track return on investment.

7. Event Funding Requests for Summer Festivals: The board reviewed three event funding requests and agreed to consider them separately. The requests are for the Rock and Coal Music Festival, International Days, and the Helper Art, Music, and Film Festival, all requesting the maximum of \$1,500. All three events meet the criteria of being a two or more day event that uses funding on out-of-area marketing. **Rock and Coal Festival Funding Approval:** A motion was made by Lenise to support the Rock and Coal Music Festival for \$1,500. The motion was seconded by Kami and unanimously approved by those in favor. **International Days Funding Approval (Scottie Kranjc recusing):** International Days, which draws a large number of people, was discussed and viewed as a great event that should be supported. A motion was made by Josh to support the full request for International Days, which was seconded by Lenise and unanimously approved. **Helper Art, Music and Film Festival Funding Approval (Lenise Peterman recusing):** The Helper Art, Music and Film Festival, a longstanding festival in the county, was briefly discussed and loved by the board. A motion to approve the funding request was made by Scottie, seconded by Josh and unanimously approved.

8. Scofield Playground Equipment Funding Request: Representative Watkins requested \$10,000 in matching funds for a \$131,546 playground equipment grant application for Scofield's park area, as they had previously failed to secure the grant due to a lack of matching funds last year. Scofield is a small community, and the required 40% matching grant is \$52,000. The grant is due soon through the state recreation department.

9. Discussion on Increased Scofield Funding: There was a discussion about leveraging the tourism tax reserves to assist the small community of Scofield, particularly since the town has a vision of becoming a tourism destination. The board currently has \$50,000 set aside for projects like this, and transferring additional funding from the reserves. Ultimately, a motion was made by Lenise to increase the funding to \$30,000 to make a major investment into Scofield for tourism, which was seconded by Josh and passed. The office will wait to see if the grant is awarded to start the process of the matching donation.

10. New Director for Helper Arts Festival: ^{Oren (Tx)} Warren Stainbrook has been named the new director of the Helper Arts Festival, and they are scheduled to meet on Friday to transition the responsibilities of the event. Lenise reported that a dialogue has been opened with the Utah Symphony regarding their interest in bringing a small symphonic group to Spring Canyon, possibly in July. The Utah Symphony is happy to return and will bring their full orchestra back to Helper in 2028. This smaller venue idea is something the symphony has been wanting to pursue, with suggestions for more music in the canyons, perhaps along the river.

11. Meeting Adjournment: A motion to adjourn the meeting was entertained by Lenise and seconded by Josh. All in favor. Motion carried.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

These meetings minutes are approved by a majority vote of the Carbon County Tax Advisory Board, dated this 12 day of May, 2026

Carbon County Tax Advisory Board Chair or Vice Chair





2025 Tourism Marketing & Visitation Report

The year 2025 gave us a chance to look back at how far we've come. In Carbon County, we know that a healthy future doesn't happen by accident—it's built on a diverse foundation. As we work to diversify our local economy, tourism has proven to be a crucial piece of that puzzle. It provides a steady, reliable rhythm that supports our small businesses. We have stayed committed to a "slow growth" approach.

Lodging Tax (TRT) Momentum: Our revenue has climbed from \$230,073 in 2016 to over \$458,900 in 2025. That's a 99% increase in a decade.

- **Restaurant Tax (TRCC) Momentum:** Our local dining scene is a pillar of this growth, nearly doubling since 2016 to reach \$407,499 this past year.

The "Basecamp" Philosophy: Where Conversation is the Adventure

In the Corridor, we don't rush the view, and we certainly don't skip the conversation. Our strategy is to encourage visitors to use our towns as a "Basecamp for Adventure." We want the adventure to start with the people they meet at the diner or the hotel desk.

Moments of Connection: Our Top 3 Events

Our events are the heartbeat of our community. In 2025, three gatherings stood out as the best examples of how we share our heritage:

1. **International Days (Price):** 28,300 visits. Our flagship celebration of the diverse cultures and family stories that built these towns.
2. **Utah Renaissance Faire:** 20,000 visits. A massive success that proved the Corridor is a premier destination for unique, storied experiences.
3. **Helper Saturday Vibes:** 7,800 visits. The gold standard of how small, consistent events create a space for visitors and locals to actually talk and connect.

Top 5 Visitor Origin States (2025)

Our Placer.ai data shows exactly where our visitors are coming from. We didn't just cast a wide net; we focused our budget on the people most likely to visit and spend time in our towns:

1. **Utah (In-State):** Still our most loyal audience. Our summer campaign saw a 7.05% click-through rate, proving that fellow Utahns still see the Corridor as their favorite getaway.
2. **Colorado:** Our strongest out-of-state drive market. We've become a reliable stop for our neighbors to the east.
3. **California:** This remains a high-value market for us. We specifically reached out to households with an average income of \$247,000 to bring high-impact spending to our local shops.
4. **Nevada:** A steady source of regional travelers who appreciate our pace of life.
5. **Arizona / Idaho:** These visitors are the core of our road-trip audience, often stopping here as they navigate the West.

Marketing Strategy & Impact

Our marketing focused on "Top-of-Funnel" awareness (introducing the Corridor to new people) and high-intent conversion (getting people to actually plan a trip) through modern digital channels.

- **Digital Dominance:** The Summer Out-of-State campaign generated 122,580 clicks to our site with a 7.23% click-through rate. This vastly outperforms industry standards, where most destinations are happy to see 2%. It shows that our message of "going back" is hitting home.
- **Platform Innovation:** We didn't just run ads; we found our audience where they live. Our Spotify ads performed 5–10x better than the platform average. Additionally, Reddit recognized our account as one of their best-performing tourism assets with a 1.58% CTR—nearly four times their typical benchmark.
- **Visual Storytelling:** Through YouTube and Connected TV (CTV), we delivered over 2.7 million impressions. This put the beauty and history of Carbon County on big screens in living rooms all across the West.
- **Organic Growth:** Our authentic social media approach saw a 98.3% increase in engagement year-over-year. This growth was driven by our "Discover the Corridor" video series, which tells the real stories of our people and our past.

The Bottom Line: A Balanced Foundation

Tourism in the Carbon Corridor is a verified economic engine that respects its limits. By nearly doubling tax revenues over the last decade through a multi-platform strategy of immersive, story-driven travel, we've provided a vital piece of the county's economic puzzle. This approach stays true to our past while ensuring a sustainable, storied future for every citizen and small business owner in Carbon County.

2026 Q1 INTEGRATED MARKETING & ANALYTICS REPORT

PREPARED FOR: CARBON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, DIRECTORS, AND ADVISORY BOARD

PREPARED BY: TINA GRANGE, TOURISM & FILM SPECIALIST

DATE: MARCH 9, 2026

REPORTING PERIOD: JANUARY 1 – MARCH 9, 2026

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2026 Q1 strategy for the Carbon Corridor focuses on high-intent digital platforms, niche community engagement, and traditional storytelling. By leveraging data-driven insights—aligned with the Kem C. Gardner Institute’s reporting standards—we have achieved engagement rates that are significantly higher than the 2026 travel industry benchmarks.

II. COMMUNITY IMPACT: TOURISM WORKS HERE (ETV NEWS PARTNERSHIP)

This initiative serves as a community advocacy tool rather than a traditional marketing campaign. By highlighting local small businesses, we demonstrate the tangible impact tourism has on Carbon County livelihoods and resident sentiment.

JANUARY FEATURE: GROGGS PINNACLE BREWING COMPANY The Story: Celebrating 30 years of business in the Corridor, founder Marty Beckman highlights how the intersection of local loyalty and tourism fueled their growth. ETV Website Reach: 1,309 total views on the feature article. Facebook Performance: This feature resonated deeply on social media, garnering 16,473 total views. The post generated high engagement with 674 total interactions, including 544 likes and 123 comments from the community. It also drove 498 direct link clicks back to the full story.

FEBRUARY FEATURE: FARLAINO’S RESTAURANT The Story: A Main Street staple, Farlaino’s Cafe stands as a testament to the power of local support and the growing influence of tourism in Southeastern Utah. ETV Website Reach: 561 total views on the feature article. Facebook Performance: The digital feature reached a significant audience with 9,404 total views. It earned 174 total interactions, including 153 likes and 20 comments. The post successfully funneled 197 direct link clicks to the ETV News website to read the full profile.

SUMMARY Total Multi-Platform Views: 27,750+ community-focused impressions. Analysis: The "Tourism Works Here" content consistently receives more views than typical Facebook posts for these platforms. This high engagement proves that our residents are eager to support tourism when they see the direct benefit to our local restaurant and hospitality owners.

III. PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS: DIGITAL & SOCIAL

SPECIALIZED TRAVEL PLATFORMS

ROADTRIPPERS.COM (LAUNCHED JAN 2026) Role: Direct trip-planning interface for road trippers. Assets: Brand landing page and Family Friendly Corridor Trip Guide. Key Results: 200,000+ Impressions; 1.5% CTR (Industry Avg: 0.52%). Analysis: Our CTR is 188% above industry average, indicating that the Family Friendly messaging is a high-value hook for travelers navigating through Utah.

REDDIT (LAUNCHED FEB 28, 2026) Strategy: Interest-based targeting (Stargazing, Road Trips, Utah travel). Key Results: Dark Sky Carousel reached 53,416 impressions with a 3-minute average on-site. Spring Free Form reached 52,032 impressions with a 2-minute average on-site. Analysis: The Dark Sky creative is our most powerful driver of high-intent traffic. Users are spending significant time on our Lodging pages, signaling active travel planning.

JANUARY PAID & ORGANIC SOCIAL (SOREN DATA)

PAID PERFORMANCE Paid Search (PMax) achieved an exceptional 8.77% CTR with a cost-per-click of only \$0.02. Paid Social delivered an overall 4.90% CTR, with the Dark Skies campaign alone hitting 7.39%.

ORGANIC GROWTH Total reach on TikTok has surpassed 132,000, while Facebook engagement remains healthy at 3.46%.

FEBRUARY PAID & ORGANIC SOCIAL (SOREN AUDIT DATA)

PAID PERFORMANCE Paid Search performance remained strong with an 8.75% CTR at a \$0.75 CPC. Paid Social metrics showed continued efficiency with a further reduced CPC of \$0.35 and an overall CTR of 4.56%. The "Dark Skies" campaign remained the top performer with a 7.19% CTR.

ORGANIC GROWTH Facebook organic engagement surged to 5.75% in February, nearly doubling the January rate, with 132 new page follows. Instagram reach also increased to 34,175, while TikTok total reach climbed to 134,000.

IV. TRADITIONAL MEDIA & DIRECT OUTREACH

PUBLICATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS Utah Stories: Ongoing 6-month commitment with 1/2 page ads and monthly features. Southwest Travel & Discover Utah: Full-page placements. Southwest Travel digital assets launch April 1, targeting high-HHI fly-drive markets.

DIRECT MAIL STRATEGY Leads Captured: 400 total postcards mailed to high-value leads.
200 Adventure-focused: 9 Mile & Range Creek tours sent to National Park partnership leads.
200 Spring-focused: Targeted to both in-state and out-of-state leads for immediate shoulder-season travel.

