



## **Garden City Visitors Bureau**

### **Mardi Gras in March 2024**

#### **Marketing Plan Overview:**

The Garden City Visitors Bureau's marketing plan for Mardi Gras in March aims to create a vibrant community event from February 17 to March 16, 2024. The highlight of the celebration is the Mardi Gras Block Party on March 16, held in the block area near 36th and Osage. This event will feature live music, food trucks, Mardi Gras swag, local vendors, street performers, and kids' activities. Local businesses will host special promotions, and attendees can participate in the Mardi Gras Passport program by collecting stamps to win prizes.

The marketing strategy includes billboard promotion, poster distribution, radio advertising, social media campaigns, and a focus on engaging participating businesses. The marketing budget is \$4,275, which is allocated for various promotional activities. This plan aims to boost local businesses and create a memorable community event while increasing overall visibility for Garden City.

#### **Timeline and Activities:**

The marketing plan is divided into two campaigns: one leading up to the event and one during the event.

##### **Pre-Event Campaign (February 17 - March 1):**

- Promote passport availability through local businesses, posters, and social media.
- Highlight participating businesses and their offerings.
- Feature family entertainment spots.
- Showcase coffee shops and breweries.
- Conduct live interviews with business owners to build excitement.
- Promote special activities leading up to the event.

##### **Event Campaign (March 2 - March 16):**

- Announce passport availability and encourage participation.

- Highlight music, performers, and kids' activities at the Block Party.
- Feature food trucks and local vendors.
- Provide countdown reminders for the Block Party.
- Promote last-minute passport submissions.

There will be regular engagement through Instagram Stories, Facebook event updates, and thank-you posts for sponsors throughout both campaigns. Sponsors will be recognized in posts, and traffic will be directed to the event list and online event calendar. The plan aims to effectively promote the Mardi Gras Block Party and engage the community while recognizing sponsor contributions.

### **Marketing and Advertising Activities:**

- **Billboard Promotion:** Seeking a 50/50 sponsorship for advertising on billboards along Chinden corridor and digital boards on the interstate.
- **Poster Distribution:** Distributing posters throughout the Boise Metro area.
- **Radio Advertising:** Airtime on Lotus stations with a 50/50 media sponsorship request.
- **Swag:** Mardi Gras swag, including bead bracelets and necklaces.
- **Targeted Social Media Campaigns:** Utilizing strategic hashtags and links for boosted posts.
- **Featured Blog:** Featuring a blog post on [visitgardencity.com](http://visitgardencity.com) in February.
- **Media and Public Relations:** Actively pursuing press relations and local earned media coverage for increased event visibility.
- **Sponsorship Requests:** Seeking 50/50 sponsorships for selected marketing activities.

These activities are designed to reach a broad audience and maximize the visibility of the Mardi Gras in March Block Party.

### **Target Audience**

The Mardi Gras in March campaign targets visitors within a two-hour driving radius of Garden City, emphasizing families looking for engaging and convenient holiday weekend activities. This aligns with SWITA grant requirements and reinforces the #StayAndPlay message by promoting Garden City as a vibrant destination for a weekend getaway or day trip.

### **Key Characteristics of the Target Audience:**

- **Geographic Reach:** Residents of nearby cities and towns within a two-hour drive, such as Boise, Nampa, Caldwell, Twin Falls, Mountain Home, the McCall area, and Ontario (Oregon).
- **Demographics:** Families with children, young professionals, and active adults interested in food, culture, and entertainment.
- **Psychographics:** Individuals seeking affordable, family-friendly recreational activities during a school holiday and Easter weekend.

## Messaging Focus:

- **Family-Friendly Activities:** Emphasize kids' activities, such as street performers, interactive games, and themed entertainment at the Block Party, to attract families.
- **Weekend Holiday Fun:** Highlight the opportunity for families to enjoy a festive outing during the school holiday and Easter weekend.
- **#StayAndPlay Campaign:** Promote the Block Party and other Garden City attractions, encouraging visitors to stay longer and explore lodging, dining, and nearby attractions.
- **Mardi Gras Passport Program:** Position the passport program as a fun, interactive way for families to discover local businesses while collecting stamps for prizes.

## Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

This section will provide measurable goals for success and ensure accountability across the campaign. It should include metrics such as:

- Attendance: 500 attendees at the Block Party.
- Passport Distribution: 5,000 distributed, with 10–20% submission rate for completed passports.
- Social Media Engagement: 1,000 likes/shares/comments across posts; 200 mentions using event hashtags.
- Website Traffic: 2,500 unique visitors to the event page.
- Sponsor Satisfaction: 90% positive feedback from participating businesses and sponsors.

## Marketing Budget Projection

*(Part of the overall \$10,000 Event Budget: From SWITA grant and GRURA grant)*

- **Billboard Promotion:** \$1,500 - Estimated cost for billboard advertising along the Chinden corridor and digital boards on the interstate.
- **Poster Distribution:** \$300 - Estimated cost for poster distribution through Karlee's distribution contact, covering the Boise Metro area.
- **Radio Advertising:** \$1,000 - Estimated cost for radio advertising, including airtime on Lotus stations, with a 50/50 media sponsorship request.
- **Printing:** \$525 - Estimated cost for printing 350 posters at \$1.50 each, including trimming.
- **Swag:** \$500 - Budget allocated for Mardi Gras swag, including bead bracelets and necklaces.
- **Social Media Promotion:** \$250 - Estimated cost for promoting posts on Instagram and Facebook at \$50 per post.
- **Miscellaneous:** \$200 - Additional budget for unforeseen expenses or last-minute needs.

**Total Marketing Budget: \$4,275**




Costs were estimated based on industry standards and anticipated expenses for billboard advertising, poster distribution, radio advertising, printing, swag purchase, and social media promotion. The budget provides flexibility for miscellaneous expenses that may arise during the campaign.

## Mardi Gras in March Marketing Content:







### Graphics Sample (Size: Flyer)

### Poster Copy

### Mardi Gras in March Block Party

 **Date:** March 16, 2024  
 **Time:** 11 am to 4 pm  
 **Location:** 36<sup>th</sup> and Osage Streets, Garden City

Experience the spirit of Mardi Gras right in the heart of Garden City. Gather your friends and family for an unforgettable day filled with:

-  **Live Music:** Immerse yourself in the vibrant rhythms.
-  **Food Trucks:** Savor a variety of delicious street foods.
-  **Mardi Gras Swag:** Get decked out in festive attire.
-  **Local Vendors:** Explore unique crafts and products.
-  **Street Performers:** Be dazzled by skilled entertainers.
-  **Kids Activities:** Fun-filled activities for the little ones.



### Garden City Businesses Join the Celebration

Local businesses are getting into the spirit, too! Each will host special events to add to the excitement. For a complete list of participating businesses and their events, please visit: [visitgardencity.com](https://www.visitgardencity.com)

### Win Amazing Prizes with the Mardi Gras in March Passport!

Be sure to grab your **Mardi Gras in March Passport** at the event. Detailed information about the passport will be available on [visitgardencity.com](https://www.visitgardencity.com) soon. Visit participating locations to get it stamped and enter a draw for incredible prizes!

*Celebrate Mardi Gras with us and make memories that last a lifetime!*

*Sponsor Logos Go here at the bottom (Leave bottom ¼ of the page)*

## Digital Marketing: Mardi Gras in March

### *Strategies*

- **Weekly "What's Happening This Week" Post (Every Monday):** Include a segment highlighting businesses participating in the Mardi Gras Passports, ensuring consistent visibility and reminders about the ongoing passport activities.
- **Online Events Calendar Highlight:** Regularly direct traffic to the online events calendar for detailed information on the Mardi Gras Passport and related activities.
- **February Newsletter Announcement:** Include an announcement about the Mardi Gras in March Block Party and the availability of Mardi Gras Passports, along with a preview of participating businesses and their offerings.
- **March Newsletter Feature:** Dedicate a section in the March newsletter to spotlight businesses involved in the Mardi Gras Passport event, including descriptions, images, or testimonials. Promote this newsletter on your social media channels for increased readership and engagement.

### **Social Media Campaign: Garden City's Mardi Gras Block Party and Business Event Focus**

*Block Party, Passport, and Participating Businesses*

*Duration: Four Weeks*

*February 17 – March 16, 2024*

**Duration: Two Weeks**

**March 2 – 16, 2024**

**Week 1: Starting March 2**

#### **Day 1 (March 2): Passport Availability Announcement**

- **Post:** Announce the availability of Mardi Gras Passports at participating locations.
- **Visual:** Image of a mock passport.
- **Hashtags:** #MardiGrasPassport #GardenCityAdventure #StartTheFun #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

#### **Day 3 (March 4): Highlight on Music and Performers**

- **Post:** Showcase the music bands and street performers for the block party.
- **Visual:** Collage of performers or a teaser video.
- **Hashtags:** #MusicMagic #GardenCityEntertainment #LivePerformances

#### **Day 5 (March 6): Focus on Kids' Activities**

- **Post:** Detail activities for kids during the block party.
- **Visual:** Photos of kids engaged in similar past events.
- **Hashtags:** #FamilyFun #KidsActivities #SafeAdventure

#### **Day 7 (March 8): Food Trucks Feature**

- **Post:** Preview of food trucks and their special dishes for the block party.
- **Visual:** Images of food and food trucks.
- **Hashtags:** #FoodieHeaven #GardenCityEats #CulinaryDelights #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

#### **Week 2: Leading up to March 16**

#### **Day 9 (March 10): Local Businesses Participation**

- **Post:** Highlight local businesses participating in the passport event.
- **Visual:** Photos/logos of businesses.
- **Hashtags:** #SupportLocal #CommunitySpirit #BusinessHighlightsv#MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

#### **Day 11 (March 12): Mardi Gras Passport Reminder**

- **Post:** Reminder to pick up and fill out passports before the block party.
- **Visual:** Image of a filled passport.
- **Hashtags:** #PassportToFun #PrizeDraw #ExploreAndWin #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

#### **Day 13 (March 14): Final Countdown to Block Party**

- **Post:** Countdown reminder for the block party.
- **Visual:** Countdown graphic or video.
- **Hashtags:** #CountingDown #AlmostThere #DontMissOut #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

#### **Day 15 (March 16): Last Call for Passport Submission**

- **Post:** Last call to submit completed passports at Riverside Hotel or participating locations.
- **Visual:** Energetic image/video of past events.
- **Hashtags:** #LastChance #JoinTheFun #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

**Note:** Confirm and update the post on Day 15 with the exact locations where passports can be returned. Regular engagement with followers and use of Instagram stories for daily updates are

recommended. Include all relevant links in bio or post captions. Utilize Facebook Events to track RSVPs.

## **Social Media Campaign: Garden City's Mardi Gras Passport Adventure**

*Passport Program and Business Event Focus*

*Duration: Four Weeks*

*February 17 – March 16, 2024*

### **Week 1: Starting February 17**

#### **Feb 17 (Day 1): Passport Launch**

- Announce the Mardi Gras Passports.
- Image of the passport and participating locations.
- Hashtags: #MardiGrasPassport #GardenCityAdventure #DiscoverGardenCity #StayAndPlay #VisitGardenCity #OasisFromTheOrdinary #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

#### **Feb 19 (Day 3): Highlight a Winery**

- Feature an urban winery.
- Images or video of the winery.
- Hashtags: #UrbanWinery #WineLovers #GardenCity #VisitIdaho #Wanderlust #Travel #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

#### **Feb 21 (Day 5): Feature a Family Entertainment Spot**

- Spotlight a family fun location.
- Fun activities visuals.
- Hashtags: #FamilyFun #StayAndPlay #GardenCity #FamilyTime #KidsActivities #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

### **Week 2: Starting February 24**

#### **Feb 24 (Day 1): Coffee Shop Feature**

- Showcase a coffee shop.
- Coffee and breakfast offerings visuals.
- Hashtags: #MorningCoffee #GardenCityCafe #LocalBrews #CoffeeLovers #VisitGardenCity #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

#### **Feb 26 (Day 3): Brewery Highlight**

- Focus on a brewery.
- Brewery images or video.
- Hashtags: #CraftBeer #BreweryTour #GardenCity #BeerLovers #VisitIdaho #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

### **Feb 28 (Day 5): Live Interview with a Business Owner**

- Live interview with a business owner.
- Interactive session visual.
- Hashtags: #LiveInterview #MeetTheOwner #GardenCityBusiness #Entrepreneurship #CommunitySpotlight #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

### **Week 3: Starting March 3**

#### **Mar 3 (Day 1): Special Activity Highlight**

- Promote a special activity.
- Activity visual.
- Hashtags: #UniqueExperiences #GardenCityAdventures #Staycation #FunTimes #DiscoverLocal #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

#### **Mar 5 (Day 3): Reminder to Collect Passport Stamps**

- Reminder for passport stamps.
- Partially stamped passport visual.
- Hashtags: #PassportJourney #StampCollection #ExploreGardenCity #AdventureAwaits #LocalExploration #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

#### **Mar 7 (Day 5): Share User Experiences**

- Share participant experiences and photos.
- User photos.
- Hashtags: #CommunitySpotlight #GardenCityStories #LocalLove #ShareYourStory #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

### **Week 4: Starting March 10**

#### **Mar 10 (Day 1): Final Week Countdown**

- Countdown to passport campaign end.
- Countdown graphic.
- Hashtags: #FinalCountdown #DontMissOut #MardiGrasInMarch #LastChance #ExcitementBuilds #StayandPlayinGardenCity

### **Mar 12 (Day 3): Last-Minute Highlights**

- Last-minute highlights and reminders.
- Collage of locations.
- Hashtags: #LastChance #GardenCity #MardiGrasPassport #AlmostThere #CatchTheFun #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

### **Mar 14 (Day 5): Final Call for Passport Submission**

- Last call for passport submission.
- Completed passport image.
- Hashtags: #SubmitNow #WinPrizes #GardenCityFun #EnterToWin #ClosingSoon #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

### **Mar 16 (Day 7): Block Party Reminder**

- Final block party reminder.
- Festive event image.
- Hashtags: #MardiGrasBlockParty #CelebrateWithUs #GardenCityEvents #PartyTime #JoinUs #MardiGrasinMarch #StayandPlayinGardenCity

### **Throughout the Campaign**

- Thank sponsors in posts, linking to their social media.
- Drive traffic to the Mardi Gras event list and online event calendar.
- Regular engagement, Instagram stories, and Facebook event updates.

This comprehensive plan should help to effectively promote the Mardi Gras in March Block Party and its associated activities, while also acknowledging the valuable contributions of sponsors and businesses.