

# *The Vernon Advocate*

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Via e-mail - [hburrell@vernontwp.com](mailto:hburrell@vernontwp.com)

May 1, 2022

Howard Burrell, Mayor  
Vernon Township  
21 Church Street  
Vernon, NJ 07462

Dear Howard:

The business and economic value to Vernon area businesses and residents from a collaborative and cooperative marketing plan has been long discussed. Not only could such a program reduce the marketing and promotional costs for area businesses, it could attract more travelers and tourists to the many wonderful recreational and business assets leading to increased revenues and profits for local businesses and lower taxes.

This concept is not new, but until now it has not been pursued aggressively. I believe the time is right to take a serious look at the advantages that can come from a Cooperative Marketing Plan and do so by pursuing financial support from a [FY 2023 Cooperative Marketing Grant](#) from the New Jersey Division of Travel and Tourism. The Cooperative Marketing Grant Program is open to any New Jersey organization that can demonstrate a significant interest in the New Jersey tourism industry. However the application process requires meeting specific timeframes including submission of a [Declaration of Intent \(DOI\)](#) before June 16, 2022 at 3:30 pm (EST) and the submission of the 2023 grant application no later than June 20, 2022 at 3:30 pm (EST).

I have reached out to the Division of Travel and Tourism Executive Director Jeff Vasser and Colleen Karr the Divisions grant administrator regarding securing a grant to support the Vernon Area Collective Marketing concept and she was encouraging that I pursue the application process.

Pursuing this opportunity would involve a partnership between the municipalities of Vernon, Hamburg, Franklin and Hardyston, the Sussex County Chamber of Commerce, the Vernon Township Chamber of Commerce. It would also include representatives of key business interests including the Crystal Springs Resort, Realty Executives Mountain Properties, Berkshire Hathaway - Gross & Jansen Realtors, Mountain Creek Resort/Snow Operating, National Winter Activity Center - Winter4Kids, Great Gorge Golf Club, Hard Rock Café, Haven Hill Farm & Garden Center, The George Inn, Milano's Restaurant and the Blue Arrow Farm. The Straus News - Advertiser News North and South is being invited to be the project's media partner..

A designated representative of each of these potential partners would be identified in the Grant Application as the Board of Trustees to oversee the grant application process and the successful completion of the Cooperative Marketing Project if grant is approved.

The grant application announcement states that grants should produce a "General Marketing Plan developed to attract tourists..." with funding up to \$25,000. **Upon approval we must show a match of 25% from the listed Partners. This match would equitably shared by the 15 partners (not including Straus News/Advertiser News and the Chambers of Commerce). This would represent a cost to each of the 15 Partners of an estimated \$500..**

To capitalize on this opportunity I am prepared to volunteer my time to carry out all of steps required to submit the required DOI and FY 2023 Cooperative Marketing Grant application. There is no cost or risk to you if you decide to support this project.

To move this project forward I need your agreement to be designated as a Partner in the application document and your agreement to serve as a member of the Board of Trustees during the administration of the grant in the event it is approved and contribute your share of the 25% required match estimated to be \$500.

I pledge to provide all partners with progress reports and drafts of both the DOI and the content of the [FY 2023 Cooperative Marketing Grant](#) application prior to submission for your review, possible upgrades and edits.

Attached is an Executive Summary entitled Vision Statement for Vernon Area Communities, Businesses and Residents introducing my vision of a Vernon Area Cooperative Marketing Program to be included in the grant application, and how I believe it will serve as a springboard and catalyst for our area to work together to achieve the benefits that can come from working together. Included is a brief statement of my background and grant application experience.

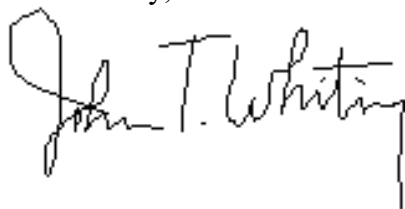
Time is of the essence. I request that you give this opportunity serious consideration and make responding a high priority. For me to be able to complete the FY 2023 Cooperative Marketing Grant process I must have received documentation of your approval and support by end of day Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup>. This can be accomplished by faxing the attached Vernon Area Cooperative Marketing Grant Partner Approval Form to me at 973-764-0375 or via e-mail.

In summary, this is a no risk and cost free way to take advantage of a New Jersey Travel and Tourism grant opportunity to pursue the benefits that can come from a Vernon Area Cooperative Marketing Program. Again, the service I am offering is *free* of charge to all Partners with the only expectation being that, if the application is approved Partners must share the cost of a 25% match estimated to be \$500 from each paying partner.

If you have questions about this proposal please feel free to contact me via e-mail. I do not text nor am I generally available to answer the telephone though messages left on my voice mail will be responded to as soon as possible.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John T. Whiting". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, thin tail on the "g".

Dr. John T. Whiting, Principal  
The Vernon Advocate