



Its primary focus is on better marketing Atlantic City.

CRDA Executive Director Matthew Doherty said the budget hike was needed to fund higher medical benefit costs and increased wages. "Keeping the CRDA on firm financial foundation allows us to continue to fund meaningful community projects while engaging potential new investors in attractions and events," Doherty said.

Of the approved \$6.7 million budget, more than \$5 million is allocated for marketing. Doherty says the main focus in 2019 will be conveying the message to out-of-towners that Atlantic City is undergoing a renaissance, and it's a destination once again worth visiting.

We're going to be much more aggressive in marketing the city," Doherty asserted.

Along with marketing, the CRDA budget allows for the hiring of 45 additional police officers, and money to help with the transition of governing control being returned from the state.

However, New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy (D) said recently that the state will retain control of Atlantic City until 2021.

Atlantic City Appeal

Hard Rock and Ocean Resort opened in June, and took the total number of casinos in the New Jersey gaming town to nine. The industry enjoyed its best summer in years, and there's plenty of optimism in the region.

Total gross gambling revenue (GGR) from land-based and online casinos, as well as recently liberalized sports betting, is nearly \$2.4 billion through October. That's a 6.3 percent increase on 2017.

However, six of the seven casinos that were open prior to Hard Rock and Ocean Resort are reporting lower GGR in 2018. Only Golden Nugget is in the black.

Borgata is down 6.2 percent, Bally's 9.7 percent, Caesars 14.6 percent, Harrah's 7.4 percent, Resorts 5.4 percent, and Tropicana 2.4 percent.

For Atlantic City to support nine casinos, gaming analysts say the town needs to grow tourism. Former Bally's executive Wayne Schaffel said recently if it doesn't, "Somebody's not going to make it." [동행복권파워볼](#)

CRDA Criticism

The CRDA hopes its marketing strategy will bring new and former visitors back to Atlantic City. For the agency's critics, that's presumably a welcomed mission.

The CRDA says on its website that it "uses casino reinvestments as a catalyst for meaningful, positive improvement in the lives of New Jersey residents statewide. In doing so, the CRDA has dramatically and positively altered Atlantic City's residential, commercial, cultural, and social landscape, while financially supporting quality-of-life improvement efforts."

Some have panned the CRDA for its use of funds. Along with its continuing subsidies provided to the scandal-ridden Miss America, a state audit concluded this fall that the authority “did not always ensure an effective and efficient use of its funds.”

The CRDA is primarily funded by a \$5 per occupied hotel room night charge paid by Atlantic City guests. The agency also receives \$3 per day for every parked car in town.