

# 2024 Bellevue-Redmond Tourism Advisory Board Annual Report to the City of Redmond

## Summary

Recognizing tourism's vital role in the local economy, the Bellevue Redmond Tourism Promotion Area (BRTPA) was established in 2023 to utilize fees collected from lodging businesses to enhance and expand tourism in both partner cities. Having completed their first full year, current BRTPA zone administrators, Visit Bellevue and OneRedmond have had the opportunity to develop tourism in exciting ways in 2024. Along with their quarterly reports to the BRTPA Advisory board, both administrators meet monthly with the City of Bellevue, with the intent of providing a full picture of what is being accomplished with TPA funds. We value our collaboration with the City of Redmond and are confident that this agreement will further foster a flourishing tourism economy, bringing benefits to both visitors and residents alike, in both cities.

## Advisory Board

The BRTPA Advisory Board is composed of 8 members, each a representative of their community's stakeholders, as required by BCC 3.100.010 and the interlocal agreement between the cities of Redmond and Bellevue (Interlocal Agreement). Each board member is assigned a numbered position with a prescribed term, ranging from two to four years. There are four representatives from the Redmond Zone, and four from the Bellevue Zone. The Board, headed by chair Caroline Dermarkarian and vice chair Wade Hashimoto, meets quarterly, every January, April, July and October, in addition to any special meetings called during the year.

Tourism Promotion Area Advisory Board makes recommendations to the Bellevue City Council regarding the use of revenue from the TPA fee. The board holds public meetings and makes studies, analyses and works closely with zone administrators throughout the year, informing decisions with industry expertise.

TPA board members have met individually with Bellevue City staff to provide additional opportunities for feedback and input on TPA initiatives. Summaries of these discussions have been compiled and presented either as reports or briefings during public meetings.

As of May 2025 the board members are: Nate Moore (Marriot, Redmond), Kim Saunderson (Residence Inn, Redmond), Rashed Kanaan (Aloft and Element, Redmond), Cassandra Lieberman (Archer Hotel, Redmond), Rocky Rosenbach (Courtyard Marriott, Bellevue), Wade Hashimoto (Westin and W Hotel, Bellevue), and Caroline Dermarkarian (Marriott, Bellevue), and Kate Hudson (Residence Inn, Bellevue).

## Revenues and expenditures

Revenue figures for both Bellevue and Redmond closely aligned with projections. Expenditures in each zone remained within the parameters established by the Interlocal Agreement between the two cities and adhered to the budgets approved by the Bellevue City Council in 2023. For this initial 16 month period, budget approvals occurred in October 2023; moving forward, budgets will be submitted to Bellevue City Council for approval by July of each subsequent year. Each zone administrator submits invoices on a monthly basis, and a summary of these invoices is presented to the BRTPA Advisory Board at every quarterly meeting. Alongside the quarterly reports, this process provides board members with a comprehensive picture of the tourism efforts being carried out. In 2025, invoicing has been standardized, providing a clear and consistent method for tracking monthly expenses.

Summary, October 2023 – December 31, 2024:

	Revenues	Expenditures	Account Balance*
Bellevue	\$ 3,611,276.09	\$ 3,388,394.80	\$256,050.96
Redmond	\$ 1,074,120.55	\$ 443,039.08	\$640,846.06

\* The account balance at the end of 2024. Includes accrued interest and the City of Bellevue's unspent funds from its 5% administrative fee, which were added back to each account proportionally to their revenues.

## Work plans and Budgets

As reported last year, work plans and budgets were presented to Bellevue City Council on October 16<sup>th</sup> 2023 and were approved as part of the Mid-Biennium Budget on November 20<sup>th</sup> 2023. These first budgets follow a 16 month cycle, ending December 31<sup>st</sup> 2024, while all subsequent budgets will follow a 12 month cycle.

Workplans for both the Bellevue and Redmond Zones follow the same format within the same allowable uses, further defined by specific areas of focus or buckets. The budgets within the buckets for each zone reflect the individual needs and priorities for the individual zones. The different work plans align with the different stage of tourism development for each zone.

Expenditures have been monitored, and both zones have adhered to their budgets while strategically utilizing contingency accounts. This approach ensures flexibility, allowing adjustments based on evolving research findings and data-driven spending priorities throughout the year.

Strategic plans for both zones are attached to this report together as Attachment A.

	Bellevue Zone 16-month total	Redmond Zone 16-month total
<b>Projected Collections after admin fees</b>	<b>\$3,726,160</b>	<b>\$1,106,807</b>
<i>Marketing and Communication</i>	\$1,043,923	\$0
<i>Destination Sales</i>	\$925,727	\$22,450
<i>Tourism Development</i>	\$921,000	\$68,340
<i>Festivals and Events</i>	\$305,110	\$0
<i>Admin and Research</i>	\$134,000	\$341,868
<i>Contingency (10%)</i>	\$396,400	\$117,746
<i>Reserves</i>	\$0	\$556,403
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,726,160</b>	<b>\$1,106,807</b>

## Management agreements

Recognizing their local expertise and expressing satisfaction with their work, the BRTPA Advisory Board has recommended renewing contracts with Visit Bellevue and OneRedmond to continue administering TPA funds for their respective zones. These contracts will remain in effect through December 31, 2025

## The year ahead

City staff will begin working with Visit Bellevue and OneRedmond on developing the 2026 budgets and strategic plans, which are due to the City of Bellevue as part of the budget process in July 2025.

We are grateful to the City of Redmond and to the BRTPA Board for their partnership.

## Attachments

Attachment A: Annual Report, OneRedmond

Attachment B: Annual Report, Visit Bellevue

## OneRedmond 2024 Annual Report

At today's meeting, OneRedmond, the administrator of Tourism Promotion Area (TPA) funds for the Redmond Zone, will present their 2024 Annual Report.

### BACKGROUND

OneRedmond serves as the administrator of Tourism Promotion Area (TPA) funds for the Redmond Zone, working with the City of Redmond to increase tourism in the City. Today, OneRedmond will present their 2024 Annual Report.

### OVERVIEW

As Redmond has not had an external Destination Management Organization (DMO) representing the interests of the lodging and tourism community, OneRedmond continues to work on developing the infrastructure and identifying partnerships and programs that support the tourism market with the goal to highlight and increase the Redmond Hotel occupancy. This work is being done collaboratively with the City of Redmond and our hotel community. Researching, developing and testing new pilot programs to increase overnight stays has been the top priority.

### EXPEDITURES

During 2024, OneRedmond primarily focused on the master planning for Redmond Tourism while also piloting several sales and development initiatives. Immediate research and consultant support were essential throughout the year to ensure rapid results. Excluding funds allocated for reserves, OneRedmond achieved a cost savings of approximately \$111,000 across the three main work categories—administration and research, destination development, and destination sales. This cost savings is expected to be a one-time occurrence, as the program will have a solid foundation in the coming year. It is important to note that while some areas of the budget experienced overspending, others were underspent due to fluctuating costs from the Fall of 2023 when the original budget was set. However, the budget's contingency fund was more than sufficient to absorb these variances.

Total for 2024	Actual	Budget
Administration and Research	\$349,197.80	\$342,868.00
Destination Development	\$36,057.67	\$68,340.00
Destination Sales	\$57,738.61	\$25,450.00
Contingency (10%)		\$117,745.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$442,994.08</b>	<b>\$554,403.00</b>



## **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:**

### **Master Planning:**

- Significant work on master planning of program infrastructure for long-term support of the Lodging and Tourism Industry in Redmond including SWOT analysis.
- Expanded and refined master venue and facility list for Redmond and surrounding areas, including:
  - Strengthening relationships with local venues and facilities.
  - Identifying venue and facility partnerships that drive overnight hotel stays.
- Engaged with key Tourism and Hospitality organizations to boost tourism and hospitality opportunities for Redmond Hotels, including:
  - State of Washington Tourism
  - Seattle Sports Commission
  - Washington Festivals and Events Association
  - Washington State Chapter of Meeting Professionals International
  - Puget Sound Business Travel Association
  - International Live Events Association
  - Eastside Tourism Council
- Continued to evaluate and implement tools that enhance tourism initiatives. Research was conducted on the following:
  - CRM Platforms:
    - Simpleview + Economic Impact Calculator, MINT
    - Tempest
  - Geofencing Platforms:
    - Datafy
    - Placer.ai
  - Hospitality Data & Analytics:
    - CoStar
    - Key Data
  - Booking Engines:
    - Ripe Booking

### **Program/Destination Development**

- Launched, developed, and managed partnership initiatives with Woodinville Wine Country in collaboration with the City of Redmond.
- Launched, developed, and managed partnership initiatives with Seattle Theatre Group (STG) for *Concerts at the Farm* (May – October 2024) in collaboration with the City of Redmond.
- Continual evaluation of partnerships' return on investment to Redmond Hotels to determine long-term support.

- Conducted research on various transportation options within Redmond to support tourism growth including the new Sound Transit 2-Line Light Rail options.
  - **Shuttles or motorcoaches** were tested and evaluated as a transportation solution for visitors in Redmond.
    - After full evaluation and testing, it was deemed not feasible due to lack of flexibility and a poor return on investments.
    - The pivot was made to a new pilot program of using ride share gift cards with tourism packages.
    - This transportation program is currently underway and will be evaluated in 2025 Q4.

### **Sales Support**

- Created template for uniform Group Request for Proposal
- Processed leads and distributed to Redmond Hotels as appropriate.
- Collaborated to secure the AVP Pro Beach Volleyball event at Marymoor Park, June 13 – 15, 2025.
  - Note: In January 2025, AVP Pro Beach Volleyball cancelled the 2025 event and has verbally committed to hosting the event in Marymoor Park in 2026.
  - OneRedmond partnered with Visit Bellevue in funding support of \$15,000.00 grant towards the overall request of \$75,000.00.
- Developed the strategy, logistics, and marketing efforts for “dog tourism” highlighting Redmond’s dog-friendly city
  - Created a new dog-focused event for March – April 2025.
- Staffing was increased both internally and externally to support the tourism efforts.

### **PR & Marketing**

- Created promotional assets and marketing ads for the dog-focused event
  - Secured SEA Airport billboard

### **Reserve Building**

- Successfully built a reserve fund held at the City of Bellevue for Redmond Hotels.

## Budget and Timeline

As work begins to build Redmond's DMO, the following budgets and timelines are outlined below.

### Proposed Timeline



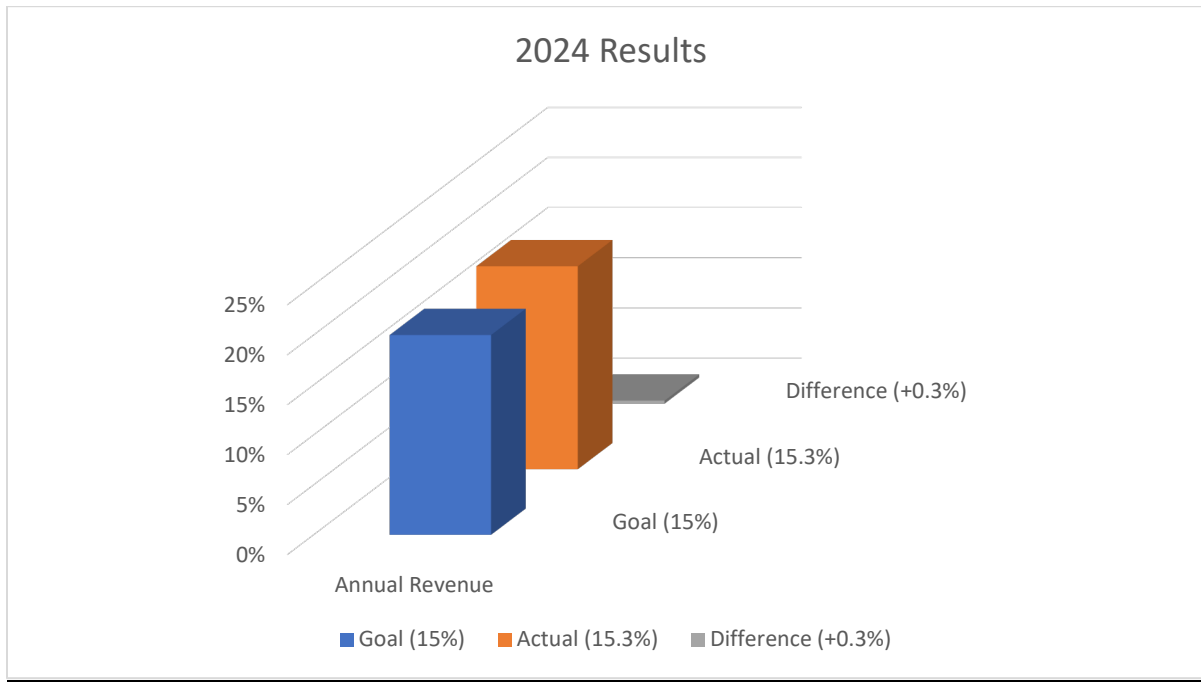
### Proposed Budget

	Sept - Dec '23	Q1 '24	Q2 '24	Q3 '24	Q4 '24	Total
Revenue (Based on previous year occupancy)	\$ 333,535	\$ 155,193	\$ 171,545	\$ 277,813	\$ 239,370	\$ 1,177,455
Department of Revenue (1%)	\$ 3,335	\$ 1,552	\$ 1,715	\$ 2,778	\$ 2,394	\$ 11,775
Legislative Authority Fee (Up to 5%)	\$ 16,677	\$ 7,760	\$ 8,577	\$ 13,891	\$ 11,968	\$ 58,873
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 313,523</b>	<b>\$ 145,881</b>	<b>\$ 161,252</b>	<b>\$ 261,144</b>	<b>\$ 225,007</b>	<b>\$ 1,106,807</b>
Administrative/Research/Data	\$ 77,868	\$ 66,000	\$ 66,000	\$ 66,000	\$ 66,000	\$ 341,868
Reserves	\$ 156,761	\$ 72,940	\$ 80,626	\$ 130,572	\$ 112,504	\$ 553,404
Destination Development	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,840	\$ 13,500	\$ 13,500	\$ 10,500	\$ 68,340
Destination Sales	\$ 4,700	\$ 8,750	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 25,450
Contingency (10%)	\$ 33,354	\$ 15,519	\$ 17,155	\$ 27,781	\$ 23,937	\$ 117,745
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 292,683</b>	<b>\$ 174,050</b>	<b>\$ 180,281</b>	<b>\$ 240,853</b>	<b>\$ 218,941</b>	<b>\$ 1,106,807</b>

### ANNUAL HOSPITALITY DATA FOR 2024:

The current hotel inventory in Redmond consists of 1,598 rooms across ten (10) full service and limited-service properties, a figure that has remained unchanged since 2023.

In 2024, a total of 400,876 guestrooms were sold, reflecting an 8.4% increase compared to 2023. Additionally, total guestroom revenue for the year reached \$79,266,155.00, representing a 15.3% year-over-year growth (Source: CoStar Report: February 2025).



The goal was to achieve a 15% increase in overnight visitors based on 2023's annual guestroom gross revenue, the actual **revenue exceeded the goal by 0.3%.**

- A closer look at the monthly comparison between 2023 and 2024 reveals that September 2024 did not see the same level of demand growth as September 2023.
- In late summer 2023, Microsoft Corporation lifted its previous travel freeze and encouraged more in-person collaboration and meetings.
- This shift contributed to a rise in both group and transient travel in September 2023, leading to occupancy gains for Redmond hotels.

## CONTACT

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# ANNUAL REPORT

2024



## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

# We Recognize, Respect, and Honor.

Visit Bellevue acknowledges that our destination is located on the Indigenous Land of the Coast Salish peoples, including the Duwamish, Suquamish Tribe, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, and Snoqualmie Indian Tribe. We thank and honor the caretakers of this land, which has been their home since time immemorial. We thank and honor their connection to the land and region, and pay respect to Coast Salish Elders past and present. We commit to care for the land and water, and equity.

### **Our Commitment**

Visit Bellevue is dedicated to:

- Supporting Indigenous-owned businesses and cultural initiatives.
- Promoting inclusive storytelling and authentic representation in tourism.
- Partnering with local Indigenous communities to celebrate their history and contributions.

We encourage visitors to learn more about the Indigenous heritage of this land and to engage with the rich traditions, stories, and perspectives that continue to shape Bellevue today.

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# Surpassing Recovery and Fueling a New Era of Growth.

Visit Bellevue serves as the official Destination Management Organization (DMO) for Bellevue, Washington, dedicated to driving economic growth, increasing overnight visitation, and enhancing the visitor experience.

In 2024, Bellevue achieved full recovery from the pandemic's impacts, surpassing historical benchmarks and solidifying its position as a premier destination for leisure, meetings, and business travel. Strategic investments, innovative marketing, and the full implementation of the Bellevue Destination Development Plan fueled this momentum, transforming Bellevue's tourism sector and expanding its economic impact.

## Key 2024 Achievements

- 2.2 million overnight visitors, strengthening Bellevue's hospitality sector.
- 75,000 future contracted room nights, generated through meetings and convention sales.
- 970 million marketing impressions and 900,000 engagements, achieved through robust paid media, content development, and a newly expanded focus on international markets.

With the continued support of the Tourism Promotion Area (TPA) investment, Visit Bellevue and its partners have surpassed recovery and are now poised for a new era of growth. Bellevue is no longer just a regional player—it is a destination of choice, attracting visitors from across the country and worldwide.





## THE TOURISM PROMOTION AREA

# Driving Bellevue's Tourism Success



The TPA was strategically established to serve as a powerful catalyst for Bellevue's tourism economy, fueling destination marketing, sales, and tourism development initiatives. This investment is designed to generate incremental overnight visitor demand while fostering long-term growth within Bellevue's lodging and tourism sectors.

Through a collaborative, forward-thinking approach, the TPA has been instrumental in accelerating Bellevue's recovery from the pandemic, transforming challenges into opportunities, and elevating the city's position as a premier travel destination. This synergy between public and private stakeholders has yielded remarkable results, positioning Bellevue as a city that not only competes but thrives in the national and international tourism landscape.

In 2024, these strategic investments propelled Bellevue's tourism success to new heights. Landmark initiatives such as Bellevue Lake Cruises—a first-of-its-kind waterfront experience, tour offerings, and the updated Destination Development Plan, have redefined Bellevue's tourism offerings. By strengthening infrastructure, enhancing visitor experiences, and introducing innovative programs, the TPA has played a pivotal role in actualizing Bellevue's vision as a dynamic, must-visit destination.

As we continue building on this momentum, the TPA remains a cornerstone of Bellevue's tourism strategy, driving sustainable growth, increasing economic impact, and ensuring that Bellevue remains a vibrant, world-class city for visitors and residents alike.

## MEET THE TEAM

# Building Stronger for Bellevue's Future

Our success is driven by a passionate, skilled team committed to positioning Bellevue as a premier travel destination. In 2024, we expanded our departments and added key roles, enhancing our ability to drive innovation, elevate visitor experiences, and strengthen community engagement.

### Strategic Team Growth in 2024

- **Destination Sales Manager (Small Market)** – Strengthening group sales and developing new verticals like sports and cruise tourism.
- **Event Services Manager** – Enhancing meetings and events with seamless planning and execution.
- **Tourism Manager** – Expanding visitor experiences through new programs like food tours and waterfront activities.
- **Destination Stewardship & Community Relations** – Ensuring sustainable and resilient tourism growth that diversifies economic success and elevates community well-being.

These additions bolster Bellevue's tourism strategy, enabling us to launch impactful programs, drive economic growth, and elevate our destination's global presence.



#### Destination Sales

Drives overnight visitation by promoting Bellevue for conventions, meetings, events, and corporate travel



#### Marketing & Communications

Elevates Bellevue's brand by creating awareness, visibility, strategic content, public relations, and targeted paid media campaigns



#### Visitor Experience

Enhances visitor experience through training, coordination, visitor services, festivals, and tourism development



#### Community Relations

Developing Bellevue's built environment and enabling conditions including the arts, innovation, sustainability, accessibility

## VISITOR ECONOMY CONTRIBUTIONS

# Overnight Visitor Impact to Bellevue

Bellevue's visitor economy is a vital pillar of the city's economic success, fueling job creation, business growth, and public services. Overnight visitors play a particularly crucial role, driving revenue across lodging, dining, retail, attractions, and transportation. Their impact extends beyond tourism, directly benefiting Bellevue residents, businesses, and infrastructure.

## What if Bellevue Lost its Overnight Visitors?

The financial contributions of overnight visitors significantly reduce the tax burden on Bellevue households. If overnight visitors disappeared, the city would face severe economic shortfalls, forcing residents to bear the cost.

- To maintain current city services, each household would need to pay an **additional \$1,279 per year in taxes**.
- To sustain the current level of economic activity, each household would need to spend an additional **\$44,122 per year** in local spending.

These numbers underscore the critical role of tourism in ensuring Bellevue remains a thriving, vibrant city.

## The Bellevue Visitor Economy-2024



# Hotels: The Backbone of Visitor Economy

Bellevue's hoteliers, hospitality teams, and lodging partners are at the heart of our city's visitor experience. They provide more than just a place to stay—they deliver quality service, enhance visitor satisfaction, and create a welcoming environment that encourages repeat visits.

**By partnering with Visit Bellevue and investing in tourism development, our hotels help:**

- Attract high-value visitors, supporting Bellevue's economy.
- Host conventions, meetings, and corporate travel, driving business tourism.
- Support major events and activations, strengthening the city's destination appeal.
- Provide jobs and economic opportunities, benefiting the local workforce.

As Bellevue's tourism industry continues to grow, our hotel partners remain essential to sustaining momentum and ensuring Bellevue thrives as a premier business, leisure, and events destination.

BELLEVUE HOTEL LODGING METRICS (2019 - 2024)

	SUPPLY	DEMAND	OCCUPANCY	REVENUE	ADR	REVPAR
2019	2,017,598	1,420,278	70%	\$261,689,981	\$184	\$130
2022	1,912,600	1,145,298	60%	\$214,006,728	\$188	\$113
2023	1,912,600	1,193,801	62%	\$232,362,063	\$195	\$122
2024	1,928,188	1,411,967	68%	\$272,329,697	\$208	\$141

# A City in Transformation

In 2018, Bellevue's tourism industry set out to transform the city into a premier destination and Visit Bellevue into a full-service Destination Management Organization (DMO). The Bellevue Destination Development Plan provided a clear roadmap, prioritizing branding, sales, marketing, tourism development, festivals, events, activations, and transportation.

Since then, we've made tremendous progress, strengthening Bellevue's competitiveness as a destination. A key milestone was securing sustainable funding through the Bellevue-Redmond Tourism Promotion Area (TPA)—a vital investment that continues to elevate Bellevue's tourism industry. Since evolving from a suburban community into a sophisticated, urban destination, we ask: "Who do we want to be?"

The updated Destination Development Plan defines this vision, positioning Bellevue as a city that seamlessly blends:



URBAN SOPHISTICATION



CULTURAL RICHNESS &amp; INNOVATION



NATURAL BEAUTY &amp; RECREATION



TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT

## Strategic Priorities for Sustainable Growth

The plan focuses on six key areas to drive economic growth, enhance visitor experiences, and enrich community life:

- **Urban Lifestyle & Placemaking** – Strengthening Bellevue's identity as a world-class city.
- **Arts & Innovation** – Supporting creative industries and cultural experiences.
- **Recreation & Experiences** – Expanding outdoor activities and unique attractions.
- **Culinary Destination** – Positioning Bellevue as a premier food and beverage hub.
- **Conferences & Events** – Enhancing Bellevue's reputation as a top-tier meeting destination.
- **Built Environment & Enabling Conditions** – Investing in infrastructure, accessibility, and sustainability.

This roadmap ensures that Bellevue remains a dynamic, inclusive, and attractive city for residents, businesses, and visitors alike—fostering long-term prosperity and quality of life.



# Bellevue's Strengths & Challenges

The following key strengths and challenges were identified and shared during Phase 1 of the project based on insights collected during the destination assessment, including stakeholder perspectives and destination performance analysis. These strengths and challenges form the foundation for the strategic recommendations that follow and they have guided the development of Bellevue's updated Destination Development Plan.

## Strengths

CATEGORY

Built Environment

Ideal Location

Bellevue boasts scenic views of Lake Washington, lush parks and proximity to Seattle's amenities.

Safe and Walkable Environment

"People choose Bellevue for its safety and cleanliness."

Strategic Features

Diverse Population

Bellevue is a minority-majority community, with over 60% of its population being non-white.

Tech Industry Hub

The birthplace of several tech giants, the three top employers in Bellevue are in the tech sector.

Activities & Experiences

Access to Nature

A base camp for exploring the Pacific Northwest, Bellevue's 80 miles of trails, close proximity to three national parks and access to Lake Washington set it apart for outdoorsy travelers.

Shopping Destination

Luxury and local shops make up Bellevue's eclectic retail offerings.

Strong Local Culinary Scene

With over 200 highly rated restaurants, Bellevue is becoming known as a culinary hotspot.

## Challenges

CATEGORY

Activities & Experiences

Underdeveloped Cultural Identity

"We have a vibrant, diverse community putting on shows, events and small festivals - people just aren't aware."

Limited Number and Maturity of Visitor Attractions

"As a rapidly maturing city, we lag behind other major cities' tourism assets. We need to be intentional in how we design the future of Bellevue's vibrancy."

Underfunded Arts and Culture

"All great cities have museums, yet Bellevue's are struggling. Part of this is because of limited capital and a scarcity mindset that to invest in Bellevue's art and culture ecosystem is to inherently take away from others."

Limited Nightlife

"Many of our restaurants close at 9 or 10 p.m., which makes it difficult to go out for a night on the town."

Business Travel

Reliance on Corporate Travel

"Corporate travel has not recovered to pre-pandemic levels; what will replace reduced business travel, including in tech?"

Limited Meeting and Conference Spaces

"We recently lost a large contract to Seattle because our current facilities were too small."

Industry Advancement

Lack of Labor

"There isn't a defined pipeline for the service industry. Those that we are able to hire usually live well outside the city because they can't afford to live closer."

Affordability Concerns

Bellevue's overall cost of living is 58% more than the national average and nearly 30% more than the state average.

## BELLEVUE DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

# Strategic Priorities:

Bellevue features a dynamic blend of urban sophistication, rich cultural heritage, lush parks and scenic views. This iteration of the Destination Development Plan builds upon the strong foundation laid by the initial plan, which was essential for establishing the Visit Bellevue organization and its core functions. With the foundational work now complete, this updated plan shifts our focus to growth and refinement. We can now concentrate on enhancing programming, driving innovation and executing strategic initiatives that align with Bellevue's evolving identity and aspirations.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

#### Urban Lifestyle & Placemaking

To foster well-rounded retail destinations, vibrant public spaces and engaging community activities, Visit Bellevue and its partners will implement initiatives that emphasize the city's exceptional quality of life and commitment to Pacific Northwest wellness. This includes promoting healthy living through accessible green spaces, wellness programs and a focus on sustainable urban development.



### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

#### Arts & Innovation

As a quickly maturing city, Bellevue has the opportunity to distinguish itself as a destination at the intersection of arts and technology. By activating events, installations and collaboration opportunities that celebrate this intersection, the city can become the hub of art, culture and technology advancement.



### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

#### Recreation & Experiences

Located in the heart of the Pacific Northwest, Bellevue's natural beauty and access to recreational opportunities create a formidable foundation to attract visitors looking for outdoor adventures. By leaning into this strength, Bellevue can create experiences that leave lasting impressions and encourage repeat visits.



### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

#### Culinary Destination

It takes intentional and strategic planning to become a culinary destination that not only showcases the city's diverse flavors and creativity but also encourages visitors to choose Bellevue in their vacation itinerary. Partnering with local chefs, restaurants and food festivals can help curate a distinctive and ever-evolving experience.



### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

#### Conferences & Events

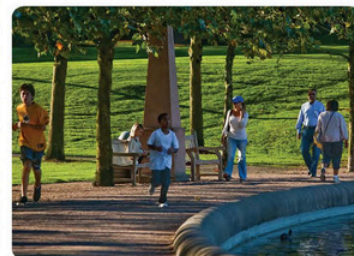
From international conferences to local festivals, there are ample opportunities for Visit Bellevue and its partners to build upon existing events and create new activations that enhance the city's reputation as a premier destination for business and leisure travelers.



### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6

#### Built Environment & Enabling Conditions

Ensuring that the visitor experience is both enjoyable and accessible is an important aspect of promoting destination stewardship. Improving Bellevue's vibrancy only goes as far as a visitor can experience it. By prioritizing transportation, public spaces and sustainable development, Visit Bellevue and its partners can ensure that the city creates an ecosystem where visitors feel welcome and safe.



# Recovery, Growth, and Sustaining our Lodging Industry

The global pandemic significantly impacted our tourism economy, erasing years of gains in visitor spending, employment, and tax revenues. However, we view this as a temporary setback and are committed to a robust recovery and future growth. In 2024, we saw a full recovery, with our lodging industry revenues rebounding over and beyond pre-pandemic levels.



By strategically investing Bellevue-Redmond TPA dollars to stimulate travel demand, we aim to accelerate Bellevue's recovery and invest in the future growth of our industry and community. Our focus is not just on recouping lost ground, but on creating a stronger, more resilient tourism sector that can withstand future challenges.

Our recovery strategy includes specific attention to creating new incremental lodging business in Bellevue and improving occupancy during traditionally slow periods and underperforming days of the week, specifically weekends and Q1, Q2 & Q4. This approach will ensure a more balanced and sustainable growth for our lodging industry and enhance Bellevue's position as a premier travel destination.



The Bellevue lodging industry has shown remarkable resilience in the face of the pandemic. We've made significant strides in putting the challenges of the pandemic behind us. With improving domestic travel conditions and the strategic use of TPA resources, we are well on our way to restoring and enhancing Bellevue's position as a premier travel destination.



# Overall Goals & Pace

## OVERNIGHT VISITORS

2024 RESULT



2.2M VISITORS

2025 GOAL



2.4M VISITORS

RECENT RESULTS 2022: 1.8M 2023: 1.93M 2024: 2.2M

## CITYWIDE HOTEL OCCUPANCY

2024 RESULT



68% OCCUPANCY

2025 GOAL



72% OCCUPANCY

RECENT RESULTS 2022: 60% 2023: 63% 2024: 68%

## WEEKEND HOTEL OCCUPANCY

2024 RESULT



64% OCCUPANCY

2025 GOAL



66% OCCUPANCY

RECENT RESULTS 2022: 57% 2023: 61% 2024: 64%

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

2024 RESULT



\$1.9B IMPACT

2025 GOAL



\$2B IMPACT

RECENT RESULTS 2022: \$1.4B 2023: \$1.5B 2024: \$1.9B



## 2024 TPA IMPACT SUMMARY

- + 248K new overnight visitors
- Improve citywide hotel occupancy by 9% and weekend occupancy by 5%
- Increase visitor spending by \$129M and overall economic impact by \$392M

## DEPARTMENT UPDATES

# Destination Sales

Visit Bellevue's Destination Sales was focused on prospecting, relationship building, and developing new incremental group business for Bellevue. The team expanded to include four FTE's with the addition of a Destination Sales Manager Small Market. The team traveled extensively including attending 15 shows and conducting two sales missions. Destination Sales attended business development events with the American Society of Association Executives, Destinations International, ConferenceDirect, HelmsBriscoe, LamontCo, Meeting Professionals International, Professional Convention Management Association, and several less recognized shows to support new verticals such as sports and cruise.

The Destination Sales team continued to leverage the effective event sponsorship program and focused on building attendance via convention services by our Event Services Manager with tools like marketing materials, digital campaigns, social media outreach, and visitor information. Prospecting sales tools included subscriptions and systems included Cvent, Mint+, Knowland, and Simpleview CRM, which were all important in the distribution mix. Additional programs in 2024 included paid marketing program for partnerships with third parties, advertising, and digital marketing to support and grow the sales program.

The success of Destination Sales achieved 98% of the lead generating goal by generating 294,345 room night leads on a goal of 300,000 room night leads. The reach achieved 116% of the room night booking goal by contracting 75,156 room nights on a booking goal of 65,000 room nights.

- Contributed 75,000 contracted room nights, reflecting the incremental business that enhances Bellevue's base visitor economy.
- Generated 295,000 room night leads, focusing on groups and events that wouldn't normally be in the City.
- Increased city-wide hotel occupancy to 68%, creating a seven-day-a-week business model as a vital part of this work.



# Overall Goals & Pace

### LEADS GENERATED

2024 RESULT



295K RM NIGHTS

2025 GOAL



375K RM NIGHTS

RECENT RESULTS 2022: 240K 2023: 269K 2024: 295K

### BOOKED BUSINESS

2024 RESULT



75K RM NIGHTS

2025 GOAL



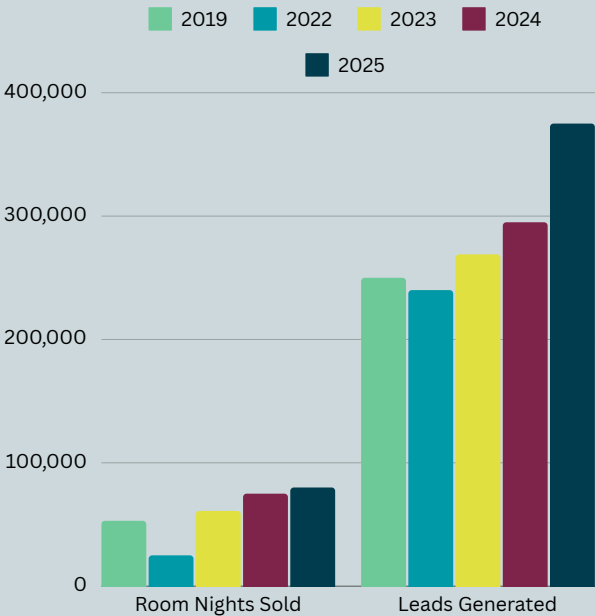
80K RM NIGHTS

RECENT RESULTS 2022: 25K 2023: 61K 2024: 75K



### 2024 TPA IMPACT SUMMARY

- Improved weekend and off-season hotel occupancy
- 85% pick up of room blocks. 26% Increase of booked rooms
- 21% Increase of leads
- Establish relationships with new annual events for Bellevue.



# Marketing & Communications

Our marketing and communications strategy is designed to elevate Bellevue's brand and position it as a premier visitor destination. We aim to welcome the world with a powerful website, a strategic content marketing approach, proactive public relations, engaging social media, targeted paid media, and innovative intercept marketing programs. These tools work in synergy to inspire potential visitors and raise the visibility, awareness, and perception of Bellevue.

## Paid Marketing

3.4%

CTR

Click Through Rate  
2024 Results

Our paid marketing plan built on significant learnings from previous campaigns. We've executed a dynamic ad format on our platforms and an intercept approach on leading OTA's and programmatic. This strategy targeted travelers searching for Seattle, Bellevue, and other Washington destinations. Our programmatic campaign, YouTube, Epsilon, and Sojern sites have significantly contributed to our website traffic

## Social Media & Content

In terms of organic social media and content development, we have established meaningful programs with content creators and weekly videos to highlight and showcase Bellevue's visitor experiences. Our owned media properties include Aspire, Insider's Edge, The Buzz, Rush Hour Alerts, and Media Alerts, as well as our organic social media channels. We aim to generate more impressions, engagements, clicks, and messages through our organic and boosted social media.

24M

IMPR

Impressions  
2024 Results



## WEBSITE

Our website, [visitbellevuewa.com](https://visitbellevuewa.com), is a key tool in our marketing strategy. We increased website traffic by 183% in 2024, reaching 604,754 unique users and 630,183 website sessions in 2024.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

Our public relations representation and programming are also a crucial part of our marketing and communications strategy. Together with our staff we have professional representation to pitch and represent Bellevue to the national and Canadian media, press, and content creators through pitching story ideas, media relations, newsletters, and facilitating familiarization trips.

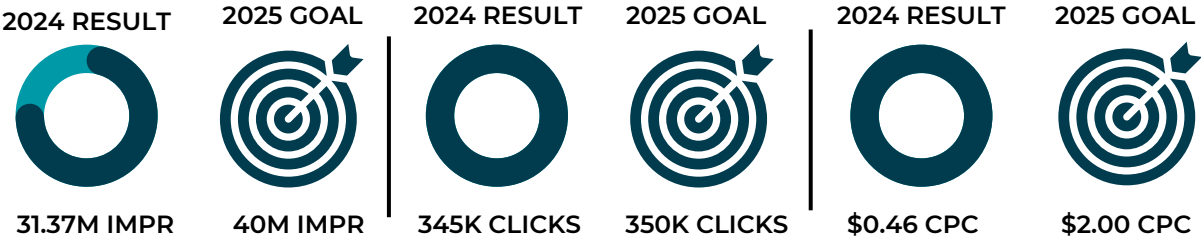


## OVERSEAS MARKETING

We executed our inaugural international campaign with our staff and agency to represent Visit Bellevue in Japan. We have established professional representation to guide us in the representation and development of an initial campaign. They arranged foreign journalist visits or FAMs, performed traditional PR and media relations, and managed organic and paid social media in addition to the Yuru-Chara development of Belle The Bobcat.

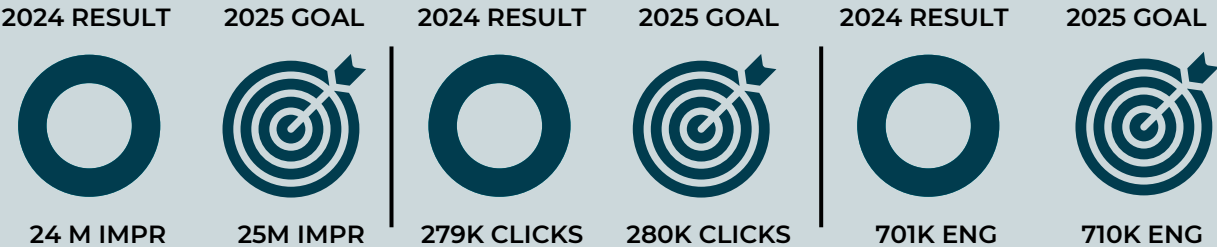
# Overall Goals & Pace

## PAID MEDIA GOALS



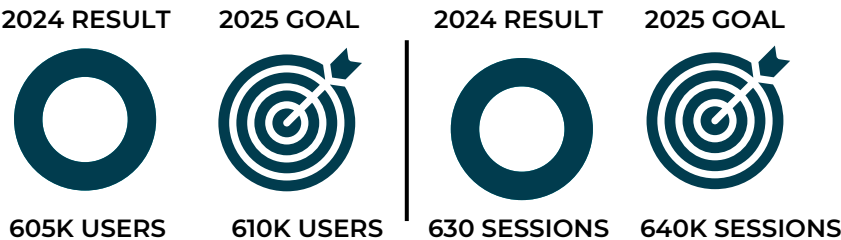
2022 TOTAL: 14.85 MILLION IMPRESSIONS / 48K CLICKS / \$5.81 CPC    2023 TOTAL: 17.8 MILLION IMPRESSIONS / 99K CLICKS / \$3.27 CPC    2024 TOTAL: 31.37 MILLION IMPRESSIONS / 345K CLICKS / \$0.46 CPC

## SOCIAL MEDIA GOALS



2022 TOTAL: 8.2 MILLION IMPR / 72.2K CLICKS / 154.3K ENGAGEMENTS    2023 TOTAL: 10.3 MILLION IMPR / 91K CLICKS / 391K ENGAGEMENTS    2024 TOTAL: 24 MILLION IMPR/ 279K CLICKS / 701K ENGAGEMENTS

## WEBSITE GOALS

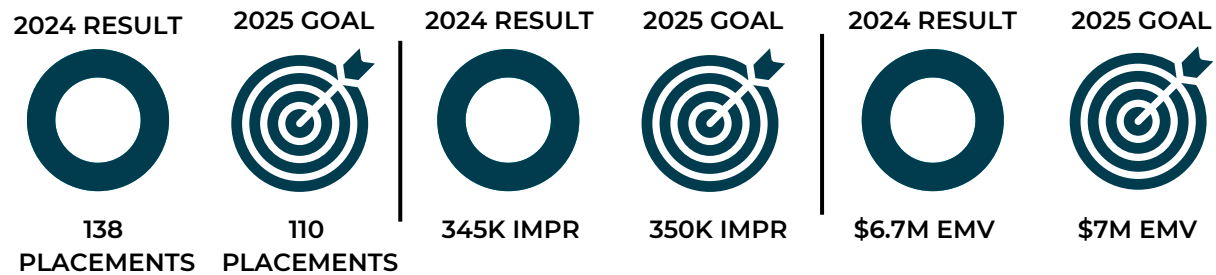


RECENT RESULTS 2022: 205K USERS / 260K SESSIONS 2023: 267K USERS / 319K SESSIONS 2024: 605K USERS / 630K SESSIONS

\*Impressions (IMPR), Cost Per Click (CPC), Engagements (ENG)

# Overall Goals & Pace

## PUBLIC RELATIONS GOALS



2023 TOTAL: 48 PLACEMENTS / \$3M MEDIA VALUE    2024 TOTAL: 138 PLACEMENTS / \$6.7M MEDIA VALUE



## 2024 TPA IMPACT SUMMARY

- Created 425M additional impressions
- Created 315K additional website sessions
- Improved CPC by \$2.84
- Created 14m more social media impressions 310K engagements, 190K clicks
- Generated +\$3.5m in earned media coverage

# Visitor Experience & Tourism Development

Our 2024 visitor experience and tourism development initiatives were designed to enhance the Bellevue experience while stimulating tourism growth. We implemented some new innovative programs to address the gaps and challenges faced by visitors and to provide them with memorable improved experiences.

## BELLHOP

Our BellHop service is a prime example of this innovation. This free, electric, on-demand shuttle service is designed to solve the first mile – last mile challenges in Bellevue. By providing a convenient and eco-friendly transportation option, we are enhancing the visitor experience and making it easier for visitors to explore the city. BellHop's success included finding two new partners to fully fund the program (Amazon & City of Bellevue). In 2024 BellHop served 87,000 passengers achieved a 10:26 wait time, saved over 12k gallons of fuel and achieved a 4.92 customer service rating.

## MOBILE WELCOME CENTER

Bellevue's Mobile Welcome Center, our all-electric traveling welcome center provided visitor services and information during 218 days and at more than 35 events. It was strategically located at popular spots including Bellevue Downtown Park, Bellevue Arts Museum, Bellevue Botanical Garden, City Center Plaza, and many shopping areas. It is estimated that the MWC served approximately 26k visitors providing them with valuable information and enhancing their experience while in Bellevue.





## DEPARTMENT UPDATES

### MOBILE CONCIERGE WEB-BASED APP AND FREESTANDING INTERACTIVE KIOSK

This progressive web app serves as an essential tool for attendees and visitors, offering real-time information on dining, attractions, shopping, events, and nightlife in Bellevue. With features like personalized itinerary building, online reservations, interactive mapping, wayfinding, live-chat attendee services, and social media integrations, Bellevue's offerings are conveniently accessible in the palm of your hand.

### FESTIVALS AND EVENTS INCUBATOR PROGRAM

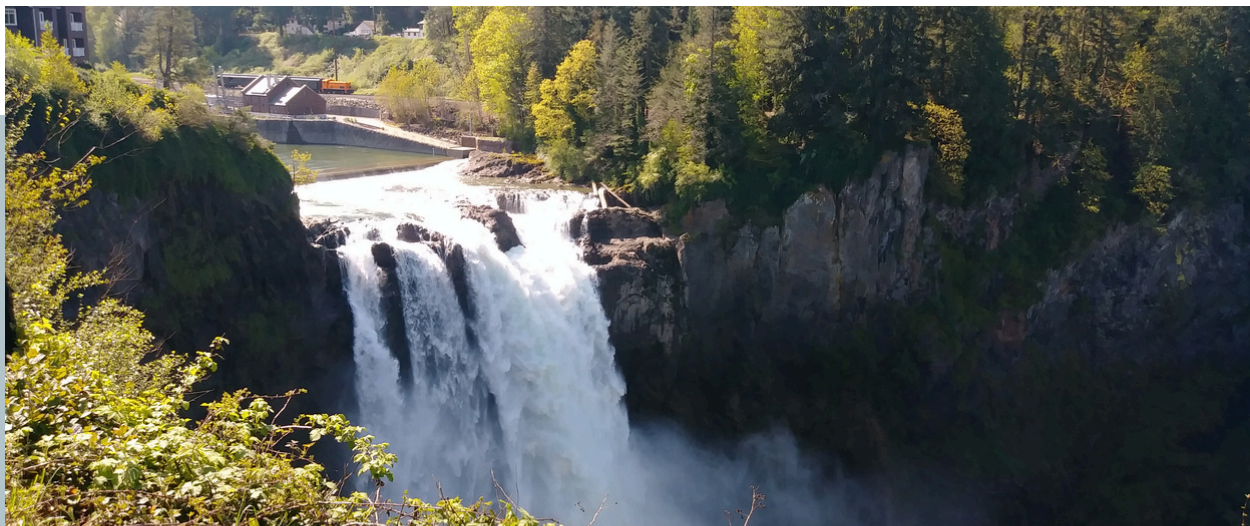
In collaboration with key stakeholders of Bellevue's hospitality industry, Visit Bellevue is proud to continue to support local festivals and events. This funding and support program in 2024 aimed to attract, incubate, and grow Bellevue festivals and events that celebrate and enhance our economy but also the quality of life for visitors and residents. In 2024, we provided sponsorship funding to six festivals and 14 conventions and conferences. These events represented 26,400 room nights and over \$28million in visitor spending.

### MULTICULTURAL TOURISM COUNCIL

Bellevue's Multicultural Council proved to be valuable knowledge in helping us welcome the world. As a city that values hospitality, diversity, inclusion, and equity, Bellevue strives to create an environment where everyone feels welcome. The Council's efforts helped us promote multi culturally owned businesses and provided resources to produce content so our visitors can explore and appreciate the diverse cultures that comprise Bellevue. Visit Bellevue is committed to the creation of a robust visitor resource hub and content that reflects the city's commitment to excellence in multicultural hospitality and tourism.

### REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Visit Bellevue in partnership with our surrounding communities has successfully established the Eastside Regional Tourism Council, and is actively working with our neighboring cities such as Woodinville, Redmond, Bothell, Kirkland and Issaquah to enhance our regional appeal. Our aim is to encourage longer-stay visitor by expanding the portfolio of tourism activities and attractions, thereby increasing the collective economic impact of tourism across our region.



# Tourism Development

The Bellevue Tourism Development program in 2024 was robust. Our shared vision to create and enable Bellevue-centric tour and attraction options was successful. Our long-term goal is to work with an existing tour and develop new business opportunities to create and build a tourism centric business plan for Bellevue and highlight Bellevue as destination city. Some of our 20024 programs include:

## BELLEVUE LAKE CRUISES

Visit Bellevue worked with Duffy Boats Northwest and the city of Bellevue to develop a pilot program to experience surrounding the waterfront beauty of Lake Washington aboard a luxury Duffy Electric boat. Guests enjoyed the incredible views of the Bellevue and Seattle skyline. The guided tour is a relaxing excursion past the old whaling station, floating bridges, and incredible shoreline estates. Guests enjoyed the beautiful vistas of Mt. Rainier, Olympic Mountains, and Bellevue's natural wetlands. During the 90-day pilot program we delivered a cruise to 688 guests from 15 states and 12 countries. We are currently seeking the continuation of this program and the ability for year around seasonal and special themed experiences.

## SAVOR BELLEVUE FOOD TOURS

Bellevue's Multicultural Council is a vital force in preparing the city to welcome the world with open arms. As a city that values hospitality, diversity, inclusion, and equity, Bellevue strives to create an environment where everyone feels welcome. The Council's efforts extend to promoting minority-owned businesses and providing resources to explore and appreciate the diverse cultures that comprise Bellevue. Since its establishment, Visit Bellevue has created a robust visitor resource hub that reflects the city's commitment to excellence in multicultural hospitality and tourism.

## BELLEVUE AIRPORT SHUTTLE

Seeking help to solve our collective connectivity and transportation challenges, Visit Bellevue worked to develop a new partnership with Eagle Transportation Service to establish the Bellevue Airport Shuttle program. Seeking a safe, reliable and convenient connection between SEA (Seattle-Tacoma International Airport) and hotels in Bellevue with a seven day a week hourly schedule an affordable fixed rate.

This Bellevue Airport Shuttle service continues to develop and establish itself as a best-in-class elevated shared transportation airport service. We continue to develop the service with special corporate and group discounts together with special logistics for locals and Bellevue workforce. We expect to be serving 150 – 200 passengers a day when fully optimized.

## DEPARTMENT UPDATES

### BIKEHOP PROGRAM

BikeHop is a new tourism pilot program developed in 2024 for Bellevue visitors offering complimentary e-bike at a four participating Bellevue hotels. We hope to continue to bring awareness and visibility to Bellevue's excellent outdoor recreation, parks and trails. Each complimentary e-bike comes with everything visitors need for the perfect outing. In 2025 we are seeking to add a few more hotel locations as well as establishing a central point along Eastrail where all hotels can send their guests for free e-bike usage.

### WATERFALL & WINE TOUR

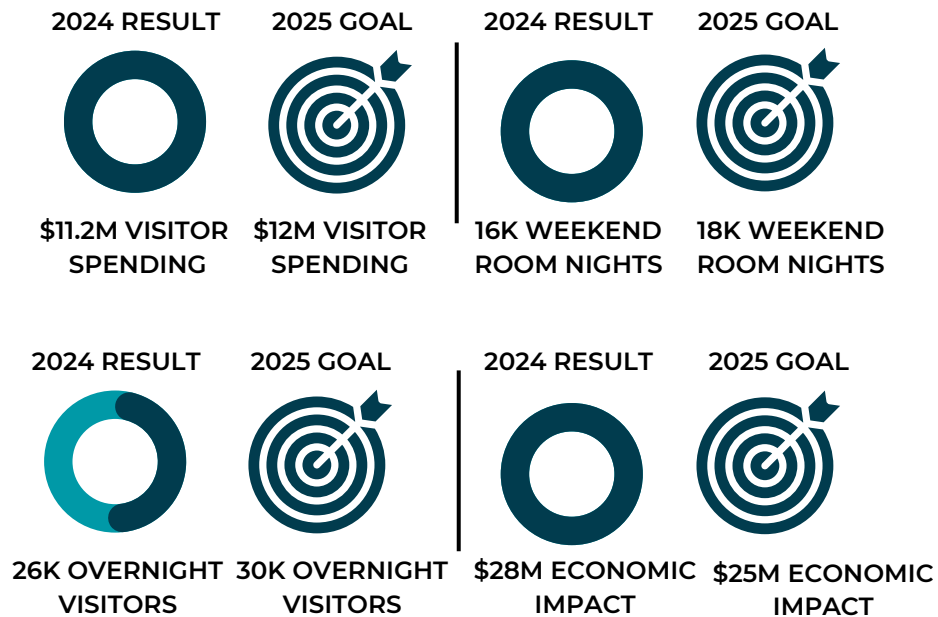
Visit Bellevue worked with Compass Outdoor Adventures to test a new tour highlighting the regions hiking to waterfalls and wine tasting. During this pilot program the tour program experiences varying levels of success, Visit Bellevue learned what it takes to promote, sell and curate such an offering. We also learned about the price points that our visitors are seeking and their available time for leisure activities. This knowledge will serve us well as we continue to develop future tour opportunities.



## VISITOR EXPERIENCE

# Overall Goals & Pace

## FESTIVALS AND EVENTS



## 2024 TPA IMPACT SUMMARY

- Promoted Multicultural Tourism
- Improved visitor transportation
- Developed culinary tourism programs
- Support keeping Bellevue clean & safe.
- Developed new Bellevue tours and attractions
- Improved nightlife & entertainment



# THANK YOU

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On behalf of Visit Bellevue, Bellevue's Official DMO, we would like to extend a thank you for the opportunity and ability to manage the newly instated TPA program of work in 2024. You have entrusted us to stimulate economic growth and inspire memorable visitor experiences for Bellevue. Our team shows up every day with a commitment to continue to grow and flourish through our community partnerships and destination programming.

Our dedicated team, innovative initiatives, and comprehensive approach to destination management are specialized and specifically designed for Bellevue. We take immense pride in the investment of the TPA funds to improve Bellevue's attractiveness as a travel destination and raise our collective quality of life. We are excited about the potential of the future and are committed to using this scope of work to enhance Bellevue's position as a premier leisure, meetings, and corporate destination. We look forward to working with our partners and stakeholders to achieve our shared goals and contribute to Bellevue's vibrant future.



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