BELLEVUE-REDMOND TOURISM PROMOTION AREA ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

June 23, 2026 — Bellevue City Hall
1:00 p.m. — Room 1E-113 / Virtual

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Chairperson Wade Hashimoto, Kate Hudson, Henning Nopper, Rocky Rosenbach, Kim Saunderson
MEMBERS REMOTE:	Cassandra Leiberman
MEMBERS ABSENT:	Nate Moore, Crystal Pia
STAFF PRESENT:	Manette Stamm, Lorie Hoffman, Lizzette Flores, Jesse Canedo, Department of Community Development
OTHERS PRESENT:	Megan Adams, Sheila Freeman, Visit Bellevue; Audrey Fan, Melody Lanthorn, Dustin Fletcher, Klya Boast, OneRedmond
MINUTES SECRETARY:	Gerry Lindsay

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chair Wade Hashimoto who presided. All members were present with the exception of Nate Moore and Crystal Pia

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

A. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Henning Nopper. The motion was seconded was by Rocky Rosenbach and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the May 26, 2026,minutes as submitted was made by Chair Wade Hashimoto. The motion was seconded was by Kim Saunderson and the motion carried unanimously.

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

4. ACTION, DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Action – 2027 Budget and Strategic Plan

Cultural Tourism Specialist Lizzette Flores explained that preparation of the annual budget and strategic plan is the primary responsibility of the BRTPA Advisory Board, and noted that the proposed 2027 budget and strategic plan incorporates recommendations made by the Board since its previous meeting. A recommendation from the Board is needed in order to forward the proposed 2027 BRTPA Annual Budget and Strategic Plan to the Bellevue City Council for approval.

Lizzette Flores reviewed the Board's oversight authority, explaining that the authority exercised by the BRTPA Advisory Board and Bellevue City Council supersedes advisory responsibilities of other Boards, and that Bellevue city staff provide oversight of the administrators responsible for the routine administration of the Tourism Promotion Area zones. The scopes of work and budgets of the organizations currently contracted to administer the tourism promotion funds have informed the proposed 2027 budget and scope of work. The city of Redmond's Lodging Tax Advisory Committee presented at the previous Board meeting and proposed joint funding initiatives with the TPA, including support for Redmond's free shuttle service, the Experience Redmond brand, public relations services, and tourism marketing activities.

The Board recessed from 1:06 p.m. to 1:19 p.m. to address technical audio issues.

Lizzette Flores resumed the review of the proposed 2027 budget and strategic plan, reminding the Board that it had previously reviewed draft scopes of work and budgets prepared by Visit Bellevue and OneRedmond, as well as a joint funding proposal presented by the City of Redmond's Lodging Tax Advisory Committee. It was explained that the budget and strategic plan in the meeting packet incorporates feedback from prior discussions and reflects the recommendations made by the advisory Board. While the draft scopes of work serve as the foundation for the budget, the Board retains the authority to direct both the strategic plan and the budget as it deems appropriate.

Lizzette Flores reviewed the allowable uses of tourism promotion funds, noting that they remain unchanged from prior years as established through the interlocal agreement between Bellevue and Redmond. The categories include marketing and communications, destination sales, tourism development, festivals and events programming, administration and research, and contingency and reserve funding.

The Board was shown the projected fund balances for both tourism promotion zones. The Bellevue zone was projected to maintain a balanced position because all anticipated revenues are budgeted for expenditure. The Redmond zone was projected to end the year with a reserve balance of approximately $69,500, reflecting a planned use of reserves to support budgeted activities.

With regard to the Redmond strategic plan, Lizzette Flores outlined the priorities, including the development of niche tourism programs; leveraging tourism data and analytics; strengthening destination sales efforts; promoting group business; and maintaining collaboration with both the City of Redmond and Visit Bellevue. The performance goals were noted to include achieving approximately 416,995 overnight room stays in 2027, representing growth over the 2025 baseline while recognizing that the major events anticipated in 2026 will not occur in 2027. Additional objectives focus on improving the digital marketing performance metrics; enhancing visitor experiences through digital concierge services; and expanding the use of analytics to measure campaign effectiveness and the development of visitor profiles. The tourism development initiatives include continued implementation of niche programming, such as a forest bathing program and shoulder-season activations, and the destination sales goals call for increased group sales leads; participation in sales missions; representation at industry events; and hosting site inspections. The proposed budget incorporates the advisory Board's recommendation to fully fund the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee's joint investment proposal, including the highlighted modifications reflected in the meeting materials.

Cassandra Leiberman asked about the reductions within the festivals and events category and sought clarification regarding the potential impacts. Audrey Fan, program lead for OneRedmond, explained that the funding previously allocated for sponsorships and the grant program had been transferred into the tourism development category following previous discussions.

Lizzette Flores presented the Bellevue strategic plan and noted that the key priorities included strengthening Bellevue's destination identity through a distinctive tourism brand; increasing high-value overnight visitation; expanding visitor experiences through events and attractions; supporting community vibrancy through tourism-related economic activity; and advancing destination stewardship through sustainable and accessible tourism practices. The performance targets for 2027, include increasing annual visitation to 2.5 million visitors; raising hotel occupancy to 73 percent; improving weekend occupancy rates; and generating an estimated economic impact of $2.2 billion. The destination sales objectives include securing 80,000 contracted room nights and generating 350,000 room-night leads, particularly targeting groups and events that will help fill periods of lower demand. The marketing initiatives include continued investments in website, social media, and earned media efforts; publication of an updated culinary guide showcasing Bellevue's dining scene; and the launch of a second international marketing campaign focused on South Korea.

With regard to Bellevue's tourism development and visitor experience initiatives, Lizzette Flores highlighted the established programs such as Bellhop and the Mobile Welcome Center, noting that the latter has evolved into the Viewfinder program, which will continue providing visitor services at major events, hotels, and other high-traffic locations. Future efforts will include expanded airport and cruise-related visitor connections. The destination stewardship objectives are entering the program's second year of operation. The goals include increasing listenership for the Bellevue Bound podcast; expanding participation in the Bellevue Cares program; adding accessibility verifications through Wheel the World; increasing sustainability certifications among restaurants and attractions; and growing attendance in the Bellevue Boost program. The Bellevue budget remains unchanged from the version previously reviewed by the Board. Like the earlier presentations, it assumes the expenditure of all projected revenues.

Chair Wade Hashimoto asked if Visit Bellevue intends to provide a post-event analysis of all FIFA-related activities and the effectiveness of the expenditures associated with those efforts. Lorie Hoffman confirmed that a review will be conducted and the data shared with the Board.

A motion to approve the 2027 BRTPA Annual Budget and Strategic Plan and recommend it to the Bellevue City Council for approval was made by Cassandra Leiberman. The motion was seconded Rocky Rosenbach and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMISSION QUICK BUSINESS – None

6. REPORTS

Megan Adams, Director of Destinations, Stewardship and Community Engagement, and Sheila Freeman, Director of Marketing and Communications, represented Visit Bellevue.

Megan Adams began with a review of key performance indicators and market trends for the first quarter and noted that the hotel lodging data showed overall positive growth from January through March despite a slight decline in March. Domestic overnight visitor spending in Bellevue totaled approximately $214 million during the first quarter, representing an increase of roughly $21 million, or 11 percent, compared with the same period in the previous year. The most significant gains were reported in retail spending, followed by dining and lodging expenditures. Seattle remains Bellevue's largest feeder market, and some of the increased visitation in Bellevue is attributable to improved regional connectivity provided by the light rail system.

With regard to the international visitation trends, it was stated that Bellevue welcomed more than 58,000 international visitors during the first quarter, reflecting a four percent increase over the prior year. Although overall international spending declined slightly by approximately one percent, retail spending by international visitors increased by ten percent. Restaurant spending declined by four percent and lodging expenditures decreased by five percent. Monthly visitation figures showed a modest decline in January followed by increases in both February and March. International travelers continue to be important and accordingly Bellevue is continuing with its efforts to remain a welcoming and inclusive destination. Among the international markets, visitors from China continued to generate the highest level of spending, with approximately 6500 visitors accounting for about $2.7 million in expenditures. Canadian visitors represented a larger number of travelers but generated slightly lower overall spending.

With regard to preparations for FIFA World Cup-related activities, Megan Adams said preliminary visitation data is beginning to emerge and will be shared with the Board when available. Visit Bellevue is focused on its core responsibilities of sales, marketing, visitor experience, and community engagement, and on supporting partner organizations throughout the city. There are collaborative efforts with hospitality partners, business associations, arts organizations, and community groups, and there is assistance provided by the City of Bellevue through financial support for promotional campaigns and visitor resources. Particular mention was made of promotional materials created for World Cup visitors, including fan-themed items that have already proven popular during early matches.

There are opportunities associated with the upcoming celebration of the 250th anniversary of the United States. Megan Adams said Visit Bellevue intends to promote local commemorative activities while positioning Bellevue as a modern expression of America's future, emphasizing innovation, cultural diversity, natural beauty, wellness, and entrepreneurship. The organization plans to support community celebrations and leverage national attention generated by major events such as the World Cup. Bellevue has been recognized by *USA Today* as one of the publication's "10 Best Summer Travel Destinations," a distinction viewed as a significant promotional achievement for the city.

Sheila Freeman reported strong performance across several marketing channels during the month of April, which was built on the work completed during the first quarter. Website traffic has already reached approximately half of the annual target. Paid media campaigns are gaining momentum, aided by new creative strategies and successful efforts on platforms such as TikTok. Earned media activities are generating substantial visibility through strategic placements and media relationships, with overall media value and audience reach significantly exceeding the annual benchmarks. Social media continues to serve as a primary channel for storytelling and audience engagement. Engagement remains one of the organization's most important performance measures. Upcoming culinary-themed promotional programs are expected to drive additional interaction and audience participation. Website click-through performance is also reported to be exceptionally strong, and indication that the marketing content is resonating effectively with target audiences.

Sheila Freeman described email communications as a key channel for maintaining engagement with visitors, stakeholders, and subscribers. The performance metrics are strong, particularly when compared with industry benchmarks. Growing the subscriber base remains a priority. Highlighted was the development of a dedicated mobile application intended to strengthen engagement, increase subscriptions, and provide more direct communication with visitors. The overall communication metrics indicate that the content being delivered remains relevant and valuable to the audience.

Sheila Freeman said *The View* is a video-based marketing program that has operated for nearly five years. The program, which includes talent costs, production expenses, and social media promotion, was reported to cost approximately $94,000 annually. The initiative has generated substantial impressions and audience engagement, resulting in a cost-per-click of approximately six cents. The program performs significantly better than many traditional tourism marketing efforts and is considered a highly effective investment. The program will evolve into a different format in the future.

With regard to the international marketing efforts, Sheila Freeman reported that a South Korean microsite has been launched and that Visit Bellevue recently hosted travel influencers from South Korea through a partnership program. Work is also underway with local partners to develop travel packages tailored to international visitors. Visit Bellevue is encouraging visitation from South Korea along with several initiatives connected to the FIFA World Cup, including the creation of a Bellevue Soccer Cup microsite that provides information on local activities, lodging packages, match schedules, and visitor resources. Other marketing support funded through World Cup-related initiatives include hotel stay-and-play packages, transportation incentives, coordinated advertising campaigns, and public relations efforts. The activities have generated approximately 185 media placements with a potential audience reach exceeding 85 million impressions. Positive media coverage has highlighted Bellevue as an attractive location for visitors attending World Cup events in the Seattle region.

Sheila Freeman explained that Bellevue has adopted selected elements of the regional *Let's Play SEA 26* branding initiative developed by regional tourism and sports organizations. The materials were adapted to reflect Bellevue's identity while maintaining consistency with the broader regional messaging. The goal is to ensure that visitors recognize Bellevue as an integral part of the overall event experience while still promoting the city's unique character and attractions.

Turning to destination sales activities, Sheila Freeman reported progress toward the annual goals, including lead generation, booked room nights, and conversion rates. The conversion rate remains consistent with the previous year, though lost business has increased somewhat. Much of the lost business, however, occurred during peak-demand periods, making the impact less significant than it otherwise might have been. The categories of lost business were reviewed and it was noted that the destination sales team continues to focus on innovation; industry outreach; trade show participation; site visits; and adapting to changing market conditions in order to attract additional meetings and convention business.

Kate Hudson provided additional context regarding the efforts to address the movement of convention and meeting business from Bellevue to Seattle. Visit Bellevue's sales leadership has been working with local hotels to develop an ambassador-style program designed to strengthen collaboration among hoteliers and improve Bellevue's competitiveness. The importance of coordinated efforts among hospitality partners was emphasized as being important to retain and grow business opportunities within Bellevue.

Megan Adams acknowledged that some contracted room blocks had been released but emphasized that efforts continue to capitalize on Bellevue's visibility during the international event. Additional strategies are being pursued to maximize business opportunities and attract visitors during the period of heightened global attention.

Megan Adams reported continued success with the Bellhop transportation program. Ridership figures, passenger satisfaction, and environmental benefits remain strong, and positive feedback has been received from local hotels. Ride Circuit, the service provider, has been responsive to suggestions from hospitality partners and is working to improve accessibility for international visitors by enabling greater functionality for overseas travelers using the mobile application. A pilot light rail shuttle program will be launched that will connect Bellevue's Downtown light rail station with destinations throughout the Bellhop service area. Beginning in August and operating through December, the pilot program will use dedicated shuttle vehicles to transport riders between the station and destinations within the service area. The initiative is intended to encourage light rail use, improve mobility for visitors, and evaluate demand for expanded transportation connections in the future.

Chair Wade Hashimoto sought clarification on how riders will access the service, and how usage data will be collected. Megan Adams said passengers arriving at the Downtown light rail station will be able to board the shuttle directly without requesting a ride through the Bellhop application. Drivers will record ridership statistics, pickup and drop-off locations, and demand patterns, while return trips will be requested through the existing Ride Circuit application and fulfilled by Bellhop vehicles. The pilot is designed both to encourage light rail ridership and to improve connectivity between the station and destinations within Bellevue, particularly for travelers carrying luggage. Because of funding limitations, the pilot will initially operate Monday through Friday. The pilot is intended to gather data and inform future expansion efforts, including potential increases to the fleet and additional community partnerships in 2027.

Chair Wade Hashimoto asked if the new shuttle service will require additional vehicles and whether it will affect Bellhop operations. Megan Adams responded that the dedicated shuttle vehicles are expected to relieve some pressure on the existing Bellhop fleet by handling transportation from the light rail station, allowing Bellhop vehicles to focus on other demands. The pilot will provide valuable information about rider behavior and service needs before any long-term expansion decisions are made.

With regard to the Bellevue Airport Shuttle program, Megan Adams reported strong growth and described the service as highly successful. During the reporting period, eight hotels participated in the airport shuttle program, and the data shows that the properties that actively promoted the service experienced the strongest ridership. The hotels that incorporated the shuttle into guest communications and lobby promotions consistently achieved higher utilization rates. Continued growth across participating properties led to an expansion of the program, which now includes eleven hotels. The Bellevue Cruise Shuttle was recently launched to provide transportation from Bellevue hotels to cruise terminals. Although return service is not yet available due to permitting limitations, the issue will be resolved in the future. Several hotels have already begun incorporating both shuttle services into their promotional packages and guest amenities.

Megan Adams reiterated that collaboration with hotel partners has become a major focus, particularly regarding transportation services. Meetings with local properties have generated enthusiasm for incorporating airport and cruise shuttle offerings into marketing materials and lodging packages. The ridership data continues to demonstrate that awareness and promotion directly influences program utilization, reinforcing the importance of coordinated marketing efforts among participating hotels.

The Board was informed that Bellevue Berry Week is coming up July 18. The associated Cake Picnic has sold out twice, resulting in an attendance of approximately 1000 participants. Sheila Freeman said the early registration data indicates that roughly 92 percent of attendees are from outside Bellevue, including visitors from other regions and from Canada. The event represents a strategic effort to attract visitors, particularly from Canada, and its popularity is viewed as evidence of successful destination marketing.

Megan Adams returned the focus to the World Cup-related activities and commended local hotels for embracing the event through themed decorations and hospitality initiatives. Visit

Bellevue's ambassador program is operating throughout the city on local match days, providing visitors with wayfinding assistance, recommendations, event information, and promotional materials. The success of "Bellevue Baller," a commemorative beer produced in partnership with a local brewery that is now available at numerous locations throughout the city. Additional online resources, including event calendars, transportation information, and themed visitor trails, are available through Visit Bellevue's website to support both residents and visitors during the tournament.

Megan Adams said the Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA) program is going very well. The training efforts continue to expand, and a new CTA Insider Series has been introduced to connect workers employed in Bellevue with local businesses, attractions, and experiences. The program has proven immediately popular, with sessions selling out quickly. Additional offerings will be developed to strengthen engagement among hospitality professionals and community stakeholders.

There has been increasing participation in the organization's online partner portal, with businesses regularly updating listings, posting events, and sharing promotional opportunities. In addition to online engagement, there has been extensive direct contact with local partners through meetings, consultations, and outreach activities designed to help organizations utilize Visit Bellevue's resources and maximize tourism-related opportunities.

With regard to the accessibility and community responsibility initiatives, Megan Adams said the Wheel the World accessibility program has reached a milestone of fifty verified businesses. Efforts are underway to increase public awareness of the accessibility offerings across Bellevue's hotels, restaurants, and attractions, and there are future plans to include collaborations with content creators and promotional campaigns focused on accessible travel.

The Bellevue Cares corporate social responsibility program is also gaining momentum. There has been significant interest from conference planners and meeting organizers who increasingly view community service opportunities as a valuable component of event planning. The program partners with several local nonprofit organizations and is being actively promoted by the destination sales team as a tool to attract conferences while simultaneously supporting local nonprofits and advancing sustainability goals. Both hospitality partners and prospective clients have responded enthusiastically to the initiative.

Megan Adams briefly highlighted the ongoing efforts related to the Green Key Global sustainability program and explained that the initiative remains in its early stages. Discussions are underway with local hospitality partners to develop a coordinated sustainability strategy and to promote Bellevue's environmental stewardship efforts collectively across the lodging community.

B. OneRedmond Q1 Report

Audrey Fan, program lead for OneRedmond explained that since the formation of the tourism promotion partnership in 2024, OneRedmond has worked closely with the City of Redmond and local hotels to develop initiatives intended to increase tourism activity and hotel occupancy, particularly during shoulder seasons and other periods of lower demand. The Redmond zone has ten hotels representing approximately 1598 rooms. The first-quarter performance was strong, with occupancy increasing by more than six percent year over year. Much of the improvement is attributable to the presence of the Cirque du Soleil engagement in Redmond. Although the average daily room rates declined slightly during the quarter, the increase in occupancy largely offset the reduction, resulting in revenue per available room remaining relatively stable. Both the occupancy and average daily rates exceeded the 2019 pre-pandemic levels.

With regard to the marketing and communications activities, Audrey Fan highlighted several accomplishments, including expanded support for pay-per-click advertising through the Experience Redmond tourism website, and the migration of niche tourism content onto that platform.

Dustin Fletcher with the organization's advertising and public relations agency described the marketing campaign built around the Cirque du Soleil performances at Marymoor Park. The campaign targeted audiences in the Portland, Spokane, and Boise markets, intentionally avoiding overlap with other in-state promotional efforts. The advertising utilized imagery supplied by Cirque du Soleil and incorporated branding developed for OneRedmond's "Best Ever" campaign. The marketing efforts focused primarily on awareness-building through social media platforms and directing users to immersive landing pages featuring event information, travel resources, lodging opportunities, and promotional offers from hotel partners. The campaign significantly exceeded the performance benchmarks, achieving exceptionally strong click-through rates and low advertising costs while generating substantial traffic to the website. The campaign was viewed as a successful example of leveraging a major event to raise awareness of Redmond as an overnight destination.

Transitioning to tourism development activities, Melody Lanthorn stated that because Redmond lacks a large convention center, the organization continues to focus on niche and experience-based tourism opportunities designed to generate overnight stays. Key areas of emphasis include wine tourism, dog-related tourism, wellness experiences, and other specialized visitor activities. Under the wine tourism initiative, OneRedmond maintains a partnership with the Woodinville Wine Country organization that provides district wine-tasting passes to hotels for distribution to guests as part of promotional lodging packages.

The dog tourism program continues to grow. Melody Lanthorn said the inaugural Redmond Poker Pup Crawl combined a pub-crawl concept with a pet-friendly walking event. The participants used a digital concierge platform to check in electronically at designated locations, earn rewards, and participate in a gamified experience that included prize drawings. While some technical issues were identified during the pilot effort, the event was fairly successful and the plan is to repeat it and expand it in the future. Additional dog-focused events were highlighted, including Pupchella, which exceeded all expectations and generated strong sales for participating vendors, many of whom sold out of merchandise before the event concluded. The related activities include a pre-event gathering hosted at a partner hotel, the upcoming Dog Days of Summer event at Marymoor Park, another Poker Pup Crawl, a Halloween-themed event, and the recurring Santa Paws and Claus celebration held during the holiday season. Banana, a well-known Corgi, will participate in the Dog Days of Summer program. Corgis became especially prominent at Pupchella after owners organized attendance through social media, resulting in a large and enthusiastic gathering of the breed at the event.

With regard to the wellness tourism initiatives, specifically the development of a forest bathing, or Shinrin-yoku, program, Melody Lanthorn explained that the concept originated in Japan as a means of encouraging individuals living in urban environments to reconnect with nature through designated green spaces. Inspiration for the program came from research showing significant increases in visitation to destinations that offer certified forest bathing experiences, particularly during slower tourism periods. Wellness travel has been identified by industry sources as one of the leading travel trends for 2026.

Chair Wade Hashimoto sought clarification regarding the nature of forest bathing, and Audrey Fan explained that the activity does not involve water but instead focuses on guided sensory experiences designed to help participants disconnect from daily stresses, become grounded in nature, and improve overall well-being. During the first phase of the project, consultants and subject matter experts were contacted, and a specialist in forest therapy was selected to assist with the development of the program. In the first quarter the efforts focused on identifying suitable trails within Redmond, including an evaluation of accessibility, parking, and other logistical considerations. Future phases will include both guided and self-guided experiences as well as certification of approved locations.

Melody Lanthorn provided updates on the accessible tourism and visitor services initiatives and said research is continuing. Wheel the World has been identified as the most likely future partner. There is ongoing participation in terms of educational seminars and collaboration with the City of Redmond to encourage businesses to improve accessibility and communicate those accommodations to travelers. The Seeker Digital Concierge platform continues to expand, supporting gamified visitor experiences such as the Poker Pup Crawl while providing trip-planning tools that function as a virtual concierge for visitors. With regard to transportation support efforts, it was noted that an independent shuttle service was pursued, but it was determined to be financially impractical. OneRedmond has elected to provide Sound Transit ORCA cards and ride-share gift cards to hotel partners instead. The hotels have responded positively and are utilizing the resources in a variety of ways to support guests.

Audrey Fan described participating in numerous tourism, destination marketing, and hospitality organizations, including regional tourism meetings, statewide destination marketing discussions, sports tourism events, and technology-focused conferences. Particular attention was given to conferences that introduce new tools and partnerships capable of supporting tourism promotion efforts. There is continuing participation in meetings and organizations related to group travel and convention business. Redmond's lack of a major convention facility requires placing a focus on smaller, self-contained group opportunities.

Turning to destination sales efforts, Melody Lanthorn said the hotel partners have made clear a desire to see a more proactive sales strategy. That has led OneRedmond to explore multiple avenues for attracting group business. Market intelligence gathered through industry data subscriptions is shared regularly with hotels to help identify potential opportunities. Alternative venues capable of accommodating larger events have been researched, including educational institutions, churches, and other facilities that could potentially serve as substitutes for a traditional conference center. Participation in industry events targeting entertainment travel planners has generated new contacts and promotional opportunities. One creative marketing approach involves partnering with a local animal rescue organization and offering event planners the opportunity to arrange visits from rescue puppies as part of conference activities. Strong interest was expressed in the concept during industry outreach events. While only a limited number of sales inquiries have progressed during the quarter, efforts are focused on building a pipeline of future opportunities and refining the marketing materials to attract inquiries that will generate overnight stays and hotel demand rather than event-only requests.

With regard to administration and research, Audrey Fan described focusing on advancing the tourism priorities as outlined in the Redmond's tourism strategic plan. Significant effort during the first quarter was devoted to integrating niche tourism content into the Experience Redmond platform, conducting hotel outreach, and participating in discussions regarding future funding priorities.

Audrey Fan made reference to legislative efforts concerning TPA assessments and explained that the additional tourism assessment authority is scheduled to sunset unless legislative action is taken. The issue remains a significant priority for tourism organizations throughout the state.

Kyla Boast, a tourism analytics partner, presented visitor data for the first quarter. The analysis excluded visitors associated with the Microsoft campus in order to provide a more accurate picture of destination tourism activity. During the quarter, Redmond welcomed approximately 72,900 overnight visitor trips, with an average stay of 4.8 days. The key source markets included the Seattle-Tacoma region, Portland, Los Angeles, and Spokane. The visitor demographics indicates a relatively affluent audience, with more than half reporting household incomes above $75,000 annually, and a substantial proportion falling within a prime spending age range. Visitor expenditures represented nearly 15 percent of all spending in Redmond, benefiting local businesses across retail, dining, and lodging sectors.

The data shows continued growth in tourism activity. Overnight trips increased by nearly ten percent compared with the prior year, though average lengths of stay shortened slightly as growth shifted from longer visits to more frequent two- and three-day trips. The trend aligns with the broader regional and national tourism patterns. Despite the shorter stays, visitor spending increased significantly during February and March, suggesting that OneRedmond's niche tourism strategies are attracting travelers with a strong propensity to spend. Additional demographic analysis confirms that the destination is successfully attracting higher-income households and family-oriented travelers, reinforcing the effectiveness of the current marketing efforts.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wade Hashimoto adjourned the meeting at 2:49 p.m.