



Community Development

Agenda

Agenda

Tuesday, April 28, 2026 1pm

Bellevue Redmond Tourism Promotion Area Board

1E-113 or Zoom meeting

City of Bellevue, WA

The Bellevue-Redmond Tourism Promotion Area Advisory Board (Tourism Board) meetings are conducted in a hybrid manner with both in-person and virtual options. You may attend the meeting:

- In-person
- By calling (253) 215-8782 and entering Webinar ID: 844 7342 1227
- [www.zoom.us](https://www.zoom.us/j/84473421227) and entering Webinar ID: 844 7342 1227 Password: 463989
<https://cityofbellevue.zoom.us/j/84473421227>

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Call To Order | 1:00 pm |
| The Chair will call the meeting to order. | |
| 2. Approval Of Agenda and Minutes | 1:00 – 1:05 |
| A. The Chair will ask for approval of the agenda. | |
| B. The Chair will ask for approval of the [Month] regular meeting minutes. | |
| 3. Oral Communications | 1:05 – 1:15 |
| The time allowed for Oral Communications shall not exceed 30 minutes. Persons wishing to speak will be called to speak in the order in which they signed in. Speakers will be allowed to speak for three minutes. Additional time will not be allowed unless the Chair or a majority of the Commission allows additional time. | |
| 4. Action, Discussion, and Information Items | |
| A. Information - Welcome New Board Member | 1:15 – 1:20 |
| B. Information - Financial Review | 1:20 – 1:30 |
| C. Information – TPA Legislation Update | 1:30 – 1:45 |
| D. Discussion - 2027 Budget and Scope of Work | 1:45 – 3:00pm |
| 5. Commission Quick Business | |
| [if any] | 3:00pm |
| 6. Reports: No reports this meeting | |
| A. | |
| B. | |
| 7. Adjournment | 3:00pm |
| The Chair will adjourn the meeting. | |

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Rules of decorum for public communication and conduct at meetings were adopted by the City Council in Ordinance 6752. Copies of this ordinance can be found on the city's website and are also available from the City Clerk's Office.

TOURISM BOARD MEMBERS

Wade Hashimoto (Chair)

Kate Hudson (Vice Chair)

Cassandra Lieberman

Nate Moore

Henning Nopper

Crystal Pia

Rocky Rosenbach

Kim Saunderson

Staff Contacts

Lizzette Flores, Cultural Tourism Specialist, 425-452-4869

Lorie Hoffman, Arts & Creative Economy Manager, 425-452-4246



Community Development

Minutes

BELLEVUE-REDMOND TOURISM PROMOTION AREA ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

March 24, 2026
1:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E-113 / Virtual

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Dermarkarian, Cassandra Leiberman
MEMBERS REMOTE: Kate Hudson, Rocky Rosenbach, Crystal Pia, Nate Moore
MEMBERS ABSENT: Wade Hashimoto, Kim Saunderson
STAFF PRESENT: Manette Stamm, Lorie Hoffman, Lizzette Flores, Jesse Canedo, Department of Community Development
OTHERS PRESENT: Brad Jone, Jane Kantor, Meredith Langridge, Megan Adams, Sheila Freeman, Visit Bellevue; Kristina Hudson, Audrey Fan, Melody Lanthorn, OneRedmond
MINUTES SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m. by Caroline Dermarkarian who presided. All members were present with the exception of Wade Hashimoto and Kim Saunderson. It was noted that in accord with the bylaws restricting the number of online participants, Nate Moore counted as being present as non-voting visitor.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

A. Approval of Agenda

Cultural Tourism Specialist Lizzette Flores asked the members to revise the agenda to move item 4B, election of Chair and Vice Chair, to be last on the agenda.

Motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Cassandra Leiberman. The motion was seconded was by Kate Hudson and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the February 24, 2026, minutes as submitted was made by Cassandra Leiberman. The motion was seconded was by Rocky Rosenbach and the motion carried unanimously.

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

4. ACTION, DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Information – Welcome New Board Member

Lizzette Flores welcomed Crystal Pia to fill a vacant seat representing the Redmond side. The welcoming remarks expressed enthusiasm about the appointment. That was followed by a

brief round of introductions in which each member identified themselves and professional roles.

Lizzette Flores said an application was been received from Henning Nopper to fill the upcoming vacancy on the Bellevue side.

A motion to approve the applicant was made by Kate Hudson The motion was seconded by Cassandra Leiberman and the motion carried unanimously.

Lizzette Flores said the application would be forwarded to the City Manager for final review and confirmation prior to the next meeting.

C. Discussion – 2027 Budget and Scope of Work Bellevue Zone

Brad Jones, executive director of Visit Bellevue, underscored the importance of long-range planning in the hospitality and tourism sector, noting that early preparation helps destinations remain competitive. He reviewed Visit Bellevue’s organizational structure and history, highlighting its formal development beginning in 2017 and its partnership with the City of Bellevue to position tourism as a core element of economic development. He noted that designated tourism resources fund governance, advisory groups, and program-delivery teams, with most resources supporting operational initiatives rather than administrative costs.

He also outlined the organization’s updated strategic plan, which emphasizes creativity, safety, diversity, sustainability, and priorities such as urban placemaking, arts and innovation, recreation, culinary development, conferences and events, and long-term infrastructure planning. These efforts are supported by a refreshed destination branding initiative.

The brand position of radiant wonder has grounded Visit Bellevue into approachable luxury, nature’s nexus, global community and the future in focus. The approach is refining the marketing to about twenty million individuals in strategically identified markets. The completed destination development plan and finalized brand framework now provide a clear foundation for aligning a future strategy. Ultimately Bellevue is emerging as a sophisticated destination city that blends urban energy, global business leadership and natural beauty, creating a meaningful experience for both visitors and residents.

Strategic outcomes for the 2027 planning period focus on demand generation and long-term competitiveness. Key priorities include strengthening Bellevue’s identity within the regional market, increasing high-value overnight visitation, and investing in experiences and events that bolster slower periods such as weekends and shoulder seasons. These priorities also support community vibrancy and sustainable growth.

Some flagship initiatives are proposed for 2027. They include signature events and culinary tourism offerings to create incentives for overnight visits; expanded outdoor and waterfront experiences to leverage existing natural assets; and enhanced arts, culture, and innovation programming to support year-round engagement. Visit Bellevue plans to rebuild its content creation and strategic storytelling program to expand audience reach and further promote local hospitality businesses. A new speakers bureau initiative will serve as a resource to provide conference organizers with access to pre-identified subject matter experts from local industries, thereby increasing the destination’s competitive advantage in attracting meetings and events.

Brad Jones said Visit Bellevue has been on an extraordinary growth trajectory, primarily because of the BRTPA; 2026 is the first of the leveling off years. While growth is expected to stabilize in the near term, ambitious performance targets remain in place, including achieving

approximately 2.5 million overnight visitors; reaching a weekend hotel occupancy of 69 percent; maintaining an overall citywide occupancy rate of 73 percent; and generating an estimated economic impact exceeding \$2.5 billion dollars from overnight visitation.

Jane Kantor, director of destination sales for Visit Bellevue, highlighted the continued development of a specialized meeting and conference brand launched the previous year, which will remain a distinguishing feature of the marketing efforts. The performance metrics for 2027 were identified as generating approximately 350,000 room-night leads and securing bookings totaling 80,000 room nights. Several strategic initiatives were emphasized, including the continued refinement of trade show participation based on performance analysis, and the implementation of a targeted outreach program aimed at travelers associated with cruise itineraries to Alaska. The strategy is intended to capture a greater share of visitors passing through the Pacific Northwest by encouraging them to extend their stay on the Eastside.

Caroline Dermarkarian sought clarification regarding how the goals for 2027 compare to those for 2026. Jane Kantor said the 2026 goal is 235,000 leads and 76,000 room nights booked.

Cassandra Leiberman asked for more information about the speakers bureau. Jane Kantor explained that the bureau will consist of pre-vetted speakers with prepared biographies, enabling rapid coordination with conference organizers and reducing the delays associated with identifying appropriate experts on short notice. The bureau is intended to serve as a valuable sales and marketing tool.

Turning to marketing and communications, Brad Jones described the organization's core communication channels, which include earned media coverage, digital platforms, and visitor guides, each of which functions collectively to convert interest into confirmed travel plans. The organization continues to invest in visitor and culinary guides as key planning tools, both as print and digital planning resources. Visit Bellevue is growing its presence internationally, especially in Japan and South Korea where outreach efforts are entering their second year of sustained engagement. The initiatives are essential components of the broader strategy to strengthen global visibility and drive continued visitation growth in the years ahead.

Visit Bellevue is proactively incorporating artificial intelligence strategies into its destination marketing efforts. Artificial intelligence represents a significant opportunity to enhance how destinations are discovered and selected by travelers.

Brad Jones outlined the key performance indicators for marketing, including the paid media goals, social media goals, website traffic, and public relations outcomes. The website goal is to get to 1.4 million sessions in 2027. The website is currently being rebuilt and it will launch in a couple of months. Public relations is an area that has seen tremendous growth, including 260 placements and \$13 million in paid media value last year, a figure that has already been passed so far in 2026.

Caroline Dermarkarian asked the reason behind not increasing the 2027 goals. Brad Jones stressed the need to maintain realistic performance benchmarks in light of rapidly changing technology and market conditions. The key performance indicators put forward function as baseline return-on-investment benchmark tied to current funding levels rather than aspirational maximums. While the organization consistently aims to surpass the benchmarks the identified metrics represent minimum performance standards and provide for a stable framework for evaluating program effectiveness while allowing flexibility to achieve higher results when market conditions permit.

Visitor Experience head Meredith Langridge outlined a series of programs for 2027 that are designed to strengthen partnerships and enhance visitor mobility throughout the city. A particular emphasis was placed on transportation connectivity, including continued support for Bellhop and first-mile/last-mile services, especially in response to the expansion of regional transit infrastructure. The organization is committed to maintaining and expanding the mobile welcome center program in recognition of the need to deliver information directly to visitors at events and high-traffic locations rather than relying on a single fixed site.

Brad Jones announced a plan to replace the existing welcome center unit in 2027 through a shared funding arrangement with BCCA and the TPA. The goal is to introduce updated technology and features that are aligned with evolving transportation and sustainability priorities.

Meredith Langridge presented additional initiatives to expand visitor engagement and improve access to destination information. New digital visitor kiosks will be expanded to include additional hotel locations. There is interest in also exploring outdoor installations to reach a broader audience. Continued investment in outdoor tourism and recreational programming was also highlighted, including activation of major trail systems and waterfront developments intended to enhance the visitor experience and support year-round tourism activity.

Transportation partnerships remain a central focus. There has been progress made in airport shuttle services, and new efforts are under way to develop cruise-related transportation options designed to capture additional visitor demand from regional travel markets.

Kate Hudson suggested the potential placement of visitor kiosks at transit stations associated with the newly opened rail lines. Meredith Langridge confirmed that preliminary conversations with transit authorities have already begun. Further development of the concept could occur in the coming planning cycle.

Caroline Dermarkarian remarked that guests love the kiosks and asked if they can be used to book transportation services such as Bellhop or airport transfers directly. Meredith Langridge explained that while such functionality is desirable, it comes down to the issue of data privacy and security. It is not advisable to collect personal information through public kiosks. Instead, the system is designed to guide users to access booking services through their own personal devices, often by scanning a quick-response code. Brad Jones added that emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, may soon provide enhanced capabilities that could safely support more integrated booking functions in the future. Meredith Langridge said recent improvements made to the kiosk system include the addition of multiple language options to better accommodate international visitors and improve accessibility.

Cassandra Leiberman asked about the timeline for launching the cruise transportation program. Brad Jones said the program is set for launch in 2026. Meredith Langridge said it is in its initial phase and is focused on establishing service offerings, marketing the product, and building relationships with partners and vendors. Brad Jones added that the existing transportation fleets will be used in the early stages with the goal of developing a dedicated fleet as the program matures in the following planning cycle.

Meredith Langridge said the airport shuttle service currently serves nine hotels and is in the process of expanding to additional locations. The cruise transportation service will be particularly beneficial because its on-demand structure will allow it to serve all hotels in the area, thereby distributing opportunities more equitably across the hospitality sector.

Brad Jones said a strategic plan for Bellhop is being worked on. The demand for the service continues to grow significantly and the long-term sustainability of the program will require

broader community participation and funding support of around \$3 million. While the organization remains committed to ensuring that hotels continue to receive reliable service, the program delivery models may evolve as the service expands to meet residential and workforce needs. Visit Bellevue will need to be at the table, but it may also need to get out of the way in favor of collaboration with multiple agencies and stakeholders and support by a substantial community-level budget.

Meredith Langridge described the ongoing grant programs that support tourism-related events that are aligned with the destination development strategy, including an incubator program that typically supports several festivals and community events each year. Culinary tourism initiatives were also highlighted, with multiple culinary-themed events and promotional programs planned annually to strengthen the destination's appeal to food-focused travelers.

Answering a question asked by Cassandra Leiberman, Meredith Langridge explained that while some events may receive support over multiple years, the application process is being adjusted to require annual review in order to ensure continued program effectiveness and accountability.

Meredith Langridge shared with the group the performance goals related to visitor experience and community engagement. The objectives outlined included expanding the distribution of visitor surveys; increasing participation in mobile welcome center services and continuing to grow usage of the transportation and information programs such as Bellhop, the airport shuttle, and the digital kiosks.

Caroline Dermarkarian asked about the survey metrics, particularly the target percentage of visitors who will recommend the destination to others. Meredith Langridge clarified that the goal is to increase the proportion of respondents who strongly recommend the destination.

Destination Stewardship and Community Relations director Megan Adams outlined the department's core focus areas of sustainability, accessibility, and community engagement, all of which are intended to strengthen the destination's brand while enhancing the visitor experience. One significant initiative involves a partnership with a sustainability certification organization to verify environmentally responsible practices among local hotels. There are plans to expand certification efforts to restaurants, attractions, and other partners in 2027. The broader verification process is intended not only to demonstrate environmental responsibility but also to support marketing efforts that position the destination as a sustainable community.

Megan Adams highlighted the ongoing accessibility initiatives implemented through collaboration with Wheel the World, an international verification program designed to improve travel experiences for individuals with disabilities. The efforts are expected to generate increased visitation and measurable economic impact as accessibility improvements become more widely promoted. Also discussed were communication strategies, including the development of a locally focused podcast called Bellevue Bound designed to inform hospitality professionals, residents, and visitors about attractions, events, and community contributors. The Bellevue Cares program is a local version of a corporate social responsibility initiative. It enables visiting groups to participate in charitable activities, donations, or team-building programs that support local nonprofit organizations. The program is both a community benefit and a value-added experience for conference and group travelers.

With regard to cultural and community development efforts, Megan Adams emphasized the importance of arts, culture, and multicultural engagement in attracting visitors and encouraging longer stays.

There are numerous community organizations focused on creating fantastic community experiences for both locals and visitors. One mission of Visit Bellevue is to make those offerings easier to access. The initiatives are supported through ongoing collaboration with local businesses and community organizations through networking and educational programs designed to strengthen partnerships and provide resources to stakeholders throughout the hospitality sector.

Megan Adams stressed the importance of local businesses and promoting the work they are doing through continued growth in podcast engagement; increased participation by visiting groups in charitable programs; expansion of accessibility verification among partner organizations; and broader sustainability certification across restaurants and attractions. In 2027 the goal is to see ten percent of the groups coming to Bellevue participating in Bellevue Cares in some way and generating revenue for local non-profits. The Wheel the World program plans to identify ten new partners in 2027 in the hope of seeing a ten percent increase in ADA-related bookings. The Green Key Global hotel verifications relative to sustainability will happen in 2026; by 2027 the goal is to see 20 verified restaurants and attractions.

Caroline Dermarkarian asked for additional insights regarding the Bellevue Cares corporate social responsibility program, and asked whether materials were available for distribution to event planners. Brad Jones confirmed that the program is already operational and accessible through the organization's website, and further proposed providing a dedicated presentation at a future meeting to ensure stakeholders receive a comprehensive overview of program features and participation opportunities.

Brad Jones provided additional updates on recent program successes and future collaborative initiatives. Sustained investment in accessibility initiatives have begun to generate measurable recognition, including an upcoming feature highlighting the destination as a model community in AARP, a national publication. In addition, it was announced that there are plans to establish a hospitality sustainability think tank composed of industry partners. The initiative is intended to identify practical sustainability resources; build a shared knowledge base for local businesses; and encourage continuous improvement across the hospitality sector through collaboration with an external organization that will help guide the effort.

With regard to the budget, Brad Jones explained that overall it will remain flat compared with the prior year, which reflects a deliberate effort to stabilize financial planning following earlier revenue shortfalls. The gross budget is projected at just over \$3 million dollars, with net expenditures slightly below that amount after accounting for administrative fees. Prior adjustments to programming levels enabled the organization to build a substantial contingency reserve, which allows for a reduction in the contingency allocation from five percent to two percent moving forward. Although total revenue projections will remain unchanged for the coming year, the reallocation of contingency funds will permit a modest increase in certain program expenditures, particularly within marketing and communications, while most other operational categories will remain consistent with the previous year.

Cassandra Leiberman asked if there is normally a line item for reserves. Brad Jones said the term is contingency. Lorie Hoffman added that the reserves referred to are in the account that is not budgeted. The contingency is budgeted and can be accessed by the administrators if needed throughout the year. Additional details about the reserve balances will be presented at a subsequent meeting.

****BREAK****

Kristina Hudson outlined the mission of the OneRedmond organization, emphasizing its commitment to supporting the hotel and tourism industry through collaborative programs

designed to increase overnight stays. The tourism initiative was established relatively recently with funding from the TPA and represents an early stage in a longer-term development process aligned with the city's strategic plan, which includes the potential formation of a formal Destination Management Organization in future years. The upcoming planning period represents the fourth year of program implementation. The operations are supported by a small team of staff members and contractors responsible for executing specialized tourism initiatives.

Audrey Fan outlined the key strategic priorities and program areas designed to attract visitors in the absence of large indoor venues or major convention facilities and stressed the importance of developing niche tourism offerings tailored to the community's strengths, including wellness programming such as nature-based experiences, pet-friendly travel initiatives, and partnerships related to regional wine tourism. Continued collaboration with regional entertainment venues and outdoor attractions was identified as a central component of the strategy, along with exploration of new opportunities in youth sports, festivals, and other events capable of generating overnight stays. Additional priorities include sustained investment in marketing, public relations, and data-driven performance measures to improve the effectiveness of promotional campaigns. Regional cooperation with neighboring jurisdictions is important and there will be ongoing efforts to identify creative tourism solutions that can support economic growth despite infrastructure limitations.

With regard to the budget, Kristina Hudson said OneRedmond has also chosen to be conservative. The revenue projections are based on 2025 to ensure stability, though the draft budget does include a significant draw on the reserve funds in order to accommodate requests from the city and to meet the needs of local hotels. Among the requests is a proposed transportation initiative similar in concept to existing mobility programs; it will require a significant allocation of funds.

Audrey Fan focused on the projections for marketing and communications expenditures and explained that for 2027 the organization will continue the focus on data-informed promotional strategies, building on the performance data collected in prior years to better understand visitor behavior and economic impact. The planned investments include contracted marketing services; targeted advertising campaigns; website and content development; and expanded social media outreach designed to amplify the destination's visibility across priority markets. The initiatives were described as essential to strengthening brand recognition and ensuring the flexibility to adapt messaging and program content as tourism programs evolve.

Kate Hudson shifted to tourism development and program implementation efforts and outlined plans to maintain participation in professional conferences and industry events to monitor emerging trends and to build relationships with tourism partners. The budget includes funding to support the continuation and refinement of niche tourism initiatives, including nature-based wellness programming and other specialized experiences designed to differentiate the destination within the regional market. Strategic partnerships with entertainment venues, cultural organizations, and regional attractions were identified as critical components of the tourism strategy, along with investments in signage and wayfinding infrastructure to support visitor navigation and enhance the overall travel experience.

Kate Hudson explained that the proposed funding will support expanded mobility options for visitors, including rideshare coordination and transit access initiatives that connect hotels with transportation networks and nearby attractions. The proposed transportation allocation represents the largest change within the budget and is acknowledged as a prime factor contributing to the projected reduction in the reserve balances. Including the item in the draft budget is intended to prompt discussion among stakeholders regarding the long-term viability

and performance of transportation services and their role in supporting visitor satisfaction and hotel occupancy.

Kate Hudson said the festivals, events, and destination sales initiatives are aimed at supplementing the existing grant programs administered by the city of Redmond, thus enabling the tourism program to provide additional financial support for major events that generate overnight stays. Destination sales funding will also support participation in trade shows, sales missions and site visits designed to attract group business to local hotels. The investments were framed as targeted measures to expand the destination's reach among meeting planners and event organizers while strengthening collaboration with regional tourism partners.

Audrey Fan briefly reviewed the administrative and financial management practices associated with the tourism program and explained that the operational expenses reflect the responsibilities of managing a comprehensive program that includes staffing, technology, and financial oversight. To ensure accountability, the program utilizes external bookkeeping and accounting services; conducts financial reviews; and maintains ongoing investment in research and data analysis to support evidence-based decision-making.

Kate Hudson shared with the group a chart outlining the budget and program focus for each quarter in 2027. Also shared was the draft budget showing the proposed structure, projected revenue levels, and the program expenditures across key operational categories. The document included the ten percent contingency and the eight percent reserve draw consistent with the prior planning practices.

Lorie Hoffman stressed that the reserve levels are determined by the governing board each year and can be adjusted based on financial conditions and program priorities.

Cassandra Leiberman sought clarification regarding the reserve and contingency funds for the Bellevue and Redmond zones. Lorie Hoffman explained that the Bellevue program currently maintains a substantial reserve balance and is not planning any additional contributions to it within the upcoming budget cycle. For both zones, any surplus revenues beyond the projected expenses will be deposited into the reserve at year's end. Kristina Hudson added that the Redmond program is continuing to budget an annual contribution to reserves consistent with prior board direction. Audrey Fan stressed that the financial allocations remain subject to board oversight and may be adjusted in response to changing fiscal conditions or program priorities.

Cassandra Leiberman suggested that a reserve of \$97,526 at the end of 2027 for the Redmond zone seems a little low. Kristina Hudson voiced support for Redlink along with other stakeholders in Redmond, though more needs to be understood about it. There is an additional eight percent contribution that is not reflected because the funds cannot be used in 2027. Funds will not be shifted from one program to another. The inclusion of the transportation initiatives accounts for the anticipated reduction in reserves by the end of the planning period. The proposed budget was intentionally structured to include potential collaborative opportunities, allowing the board to evaluate program priorities before finalizing spending decisions.

Caroline Dermarkarian voiced the understanding that 2026 was the year for Redmond to build and put programs in place, and that 2027 would not see large expenses for research and studies. Kristina Hudson said the increase is tied to the ACH fee, a new line item not included in previous budgets.

Caroline Dermarkarian asked if 2026 is projected to be a better year than 2025. Audrey Fan explained that the revenue projections were intentionally conservative in line with uncertainty in the travel industry and the potential influence of external economic conditions on business travel demand. While the early performance indicators suggest positive occupancy trends, it makes sense to be cautious given the ongoing global and domestic developments that could affect travel patterns throughout the year. The organization is focusing on expanding niche tourism programs such as wellness, experiential travel, and family-oriented activities to attract regional visitors even during periods of reduced corporate travel. The initiatives are supported by emerging tourism trend data that indicates an increased demand for experiential and wellness-focused travel experiences. The year 2026 will likely be much the same as 2025, but the goal is to achieve more.

Caroline Dermarkarian indicated a level of unease about the reserve draw down to such a low level and encouraged identifying potential cost savings or program adjustments that could preserve financial stability. Audrey Fan acknowledged the concern and explained that the draft budget is intentionally designed to include a comprehensive set of potential initiatives. The expectation is that some items could be scaled back if necessary once the priorities are finalized. The approach is a strategy to ensure that opportunities for collaboration and program development are fully considered before final budget adoption.

Cassandra Leiberman suggested making enhancements to the organizational chart by including staff names, and providing additional explanatory context for certain niche tourism initiatives to improve stakeholder understanding.

Nate Moore commended the staff for their outreach efforts and successful collaboration with local hotels, noting that many initiatives have already produced tangible benefits at the operational level.

B. Action – Chair and Vice Chair Election

Caroline Dermarkarian explained that the selection process would follow the procedures outlined in parliamentary rules and clarified that nominations did not require a second and that voting would occur in the order nominations were received. The floor was opened for nominations for the position of Chair.

Caroline Dermarkarian nominated Wade Hashimoto to serve as Chair.

There were no other nominations made.

Wade Hashimoto was elected Chair by unanimous vote.

A motion to extend the meeting by five minutes was made by Caroline Dermarkarian. The motion was seconded by Kate Hudson and the motion carried unanimously.

Kate Hudson self-nominated to serve as Vice Chair.

There were no other nominations made.

Kate Hudson was elected to serve as Vice Chair by unanimous vote.

5. COMMISSION QUICK BUSINESS – None

6. REPORTS – None

7. ADJOURNMENT

Caroline Dermarkarian adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.



Community Development

Information

BRTPA Financial Review

At today's meeting, the board will receive an information only update on an upcoming financial review of both BRTPA Zone Administrators, and the overall financial control systems of administering the BRTPA

Bylaw/Code Support: This item is presented to the Board as information only since it falls under **3.100.080** "Limitations" of the BRTPA Advisory Board.

BACKGROUND

In 2023 the Cities of Bellevue and Redmond entered into an Interlocal Agreement for the joint establishment of a Tourism Promotion Area. This document is one of the foundational documents for the current Bellevue-Redmond Tourism Promotion Area, and established the City of Bellevue as the Legislative Authority, responsible for, among other things, receiving petitions, imposing charges, and contract administration for the BRTPA.

The Bellevue-Redmond Tourism Promotion Area (BRTPA) is now in its third year. Supporting the BRTPA has been an evolving process and administering the BRTPA has required all parties to be adaptable and learn along the way. For example, billing and reimbursement practices have needed to evolve over the last three years to assure stewardship of public dollars and delivery of the agreed upon public benefits.

As we move toward the 2027 budget and new contracts for the individual zones, the City of Bellevue is looking to further improve and standardize billing and reimbursement practices across both zones to ensure delivery of the agreed-upon public benefits. To support this work, the City of Bellevue will engage an independent firm to conduct a financial review of Visit Bellevue, OneRedmond, and the City's administrative processes. We expect the process to take 2-3 months, and staff will present findings to the BRTPA Board at a future meeting.

We anticipate this external review will provide objective analysis, identify areas for improved alignment across the two zones, and help ensure that BRTPA funds are being administered responsibly and in accordance with RCW 35.101, BCC 4.60, adopted budgets, and approved workplans.

NEXT STEPS

Once the review is complete, any recommended operational adjustments will be presented to the BRTPA Board.

STAFF CONTACT

Lorie Hoffman, Arts & Creative Economy Manager,
425-452-4246, lhoffman@bellevuewa.gov



Community Development

Information

TPA Legislation Update

At today's meeting, the board will receive an information only update on the current status of state legislation to update TPA RCWs.

Bylaw/Code Support: This item is presented to the Board since it affects the Board's ability to implement 3.100.070 "Powers and Duties," specifically, 3.100.070.D & E - the development of recommendation of annual strategic plans and budgets.

BACKGROUND

RCW 35.101, that statute which governs Tourism Promotion Areas in Washington State originally capped charges at \$2.00 per night. In 2020, the legislature passed RCW 35.101.057 – Additional charge, which allows TPAs to collect up to \$3.00 in addition to the \$2.00 base charge. This section of the statute will expire on July 1, 2027 unless amended.

A program review was due to the Washington State Legislature about the additional assessments on January 1, 2026. That report is included in this packet in Attachment A. Eight TPAs currently have an additional assessment:

	Location	Year Adopted	Base Fee	Additional Fee	Total
1	Spokane	2021	\$2.00	\$3.00	\$5.00
2	Tri-Cities	2021	\$2.00	\$1.00	\$3.00
3	Yakima	2022	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$4.00
4	Spokane Valley	2023	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$4.00
5	Bellingham	2023	\$2.00	\$3.00	\$5.00
6	Bellevue/Redmond	2023	\$2.00	\$0.50	\$2.50
7	Union Gap	2024	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$4.00
8	Walla Walla	2025	\$2.00	\$1.00	\$3.00

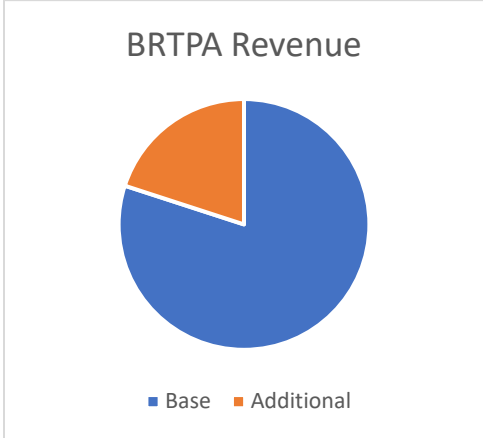
During the 2026 State Legislative Session an effort was led by representatives in the Tourism sector to amend the RCW, making the temporary additional fee a permanent part of the statute. The 2026 session was a short session and HB 2278 (Attachment B) was not successful in the time available.

Since additional charges are not due to sunset until July 1, 2027 there is another opportunity to revisit similar legislation in the longer 2027 legislative session.

Bellevue Redmond TPA Context

Bellevue and Redmond Zones of the TPA both charge \$2.50 pre night. \$2.00 base charge, and then \$0.50 of additional charge. The additional charge represents 20% of TPA revenues in Bellevue and Redmond.

If the TPA legislation allowing for the extension of the additional fee does not pass in the 2027 session, BRTPA programs may need to be scaled back during 2027 in order to meet the budget shortfall that would be created once the additional assessment expired on July 1, or reserve funding could be used to make up the difference in projected vs actual revenues. The shortfall would be approximate 10% of overall revenues (loosing 20% of income for half a year).



Additionally, if no legislative fix is provided. The BRTPA will need to plan a 20% roll-back during the 2028 TPA budget to \$2.00 per room night.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will continue to monitor legislative activity around this issue.

ATTACHMENTS

- A) Impacts of Tourism Promotional Areas in Washington State
- B) 2026 House Bill 2278

STAFF CONTACT

Lorie Hoffman, Arts & Creative Economy Manager,
425-452-4246, lhoffman@bellevuewa.gov



Community Development

Action

Action

Tuesday, April 28, 2026

Bellevue-Redmond Tourism Promotion Area Board

1E-113 or Zoom Meeting

City of Bellevue, WA

Annual Report to the City of Redmond

At today's meeting, staff will present a report prepared for our partner City of Redmond, concerning BRTPA's revenues and expenditures, strategic plan, budget, and management agreements.

Motion: A motion to approve the Annual Report to the City of Redmond.

Code and bylaw support: This item supported by the Interlocal Agreement between the City of Redmond and the City of Bellevue which establishes the BRTPA, section IX, C, 6. "Provide an annual report to Redmond City Council concerning BRTPA; revenue and expenditures, strategic plan, budget, and management agreements."

Background In accordance with the Interlocal Agreement between the City of Redmond and the City of Bellevue establishing the BRTPA, the advisory board is required to present an annual report to the Redmond City Council. This report must address BRTPA activities, revenues and expenditures, the strategic plan, and management agreements. The information compiled for this year's report is based on the Annual Reports submitted by the current TPA Administrators for the Bellevue and Redmond Zones, Visit Bellevue and OneRedmond, respectively.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board motions to approve the Annual Report to the City of Redmond.

Options

Option 1: Board motions to approve the Annual Report to the City of Redmond.

Option 2: Board elects to approve the Annual Report to the City of Redmond, with changes.

Option 3: Board does not approve the Annual Report, and substantial revisions are made.

Next Steps

If TPA board approves, staff will submit the Annual Report to the City of Redmond, in accordance with the Interlocal Agreement between the two cities, with or without changes.

If not approved, staff will follow recommendations from board and return with a revised report for further review.

Attachments

Attachment C: Annual Report to the City of Redmond.

Staff Contact

Lizzette Flores

Cultural Tourism Specialist

425-452-4869



Community Development

Discussion

Discussion

Tuesday April 28, 2025 1pm

Bellevue-Redmond Tourism Promotion Area (TPA)

Advisory Board

1E-113 or Zoom Meeting

City of Bellevue, WA

2027 Proposed Budget and Scope of Work - Discussion

At today's meeting Bellevue-Redmond Tourism Promotion Area Board will have an open discussion about the proposed 2027 Budgets and Scopes of Work.

Code/Bylaw support: This item is presented to the Advisory Board today in line with the roles and responsibilities outlined in Bellevue City Code 3.100.070

3.100.070 D. Develop and recommend an annual strategic/business plan for use of lodging charge revenue to be submitted to the legislative authority no later than July 30th of each year. An exception shall be made for the first year of the BRTPA, during which the annual strategic/business plan shall be submitted no later than December 31st.

3.100.070 E. Develop and recommend an annual budget, to be submitted to the legislative authority no later than July 30th of each year. An exception shall be made for the first year of the BRTPA, during which the annual budget shall be submitted no later than December 31st.

BACKGROUND

Under the interlocal agreement between Bellevue and Redmond, contractors must submit their annual budgets and work plans to the TPA Advisory Board for review and approval before seeking final approval from the Bellevue City Council. Visit Bellevue acts as the official Destination Management Organization (DMO) for the City of Bellevue and manages the TPA funds allocated to the Bellevue zone. OneRedmond acts as the administrator of TPA funds for the Redmond Zone, working to increase tourism in Redmond. These two organizations presented their drafts to the TPA Advisory Board at the March 24th meeting. At today's meeting the Board will discuss and make recommendations for the 2027 Budget and Scope of Work.

BRTPA Board Role: The BRTPA Advisory Board is responsible for developing and recommending an annual strategic plan and budget for the use of lodging charge revenues. In doing so, board members should consider the priorities of the hotel stakeholders they represent within their respective zones.

Some questions for consideration may include: What are the priority needs within each zone? Should reserves and contingencies be incorporated into the planning process? What industry trends or external factors may influence the hotel sector over the next one to two years? The board may also evaluate criteria such as return on investment, program cost-effectiveness, and other relevant measures when forming its recommendations.

Some considerations and definitions.

The following considerations and definitions are provided for clarity:

Contingency refers to an allowance for unforeseen conditions, held in the account during the year it is budgeted and available for use. If a certain category's expenses are higher than expected, a contractor may use contingency funds to cover these expenses.

Reserve denotes resources set aside to address potential risks. Reserves may be drawn from if they are budgeted in that year's contract. Any unused funds in an account at the end of the calendar year go into that account's reserves. Those funds will be available for use in future years, if they are accounted for in a budget.

NEXT STEPS

The edits and suggestions recommended by the Board will be conveyed to TPA Administrators Visit Bellevue and OneRedmond, who will incorporate recommendations into revised drafts. Once a budget and scope of work are approved by the Board, by June 2026, the finalized documents will be submitted to Bellevue City Council in July of this year, for adoption in 2027.

ATTACHMENTS

STAFF CONTACT

Lizzette Flores, Cultural Tourism Specialist
425-452-4869, lflores@bellevuewa.gov

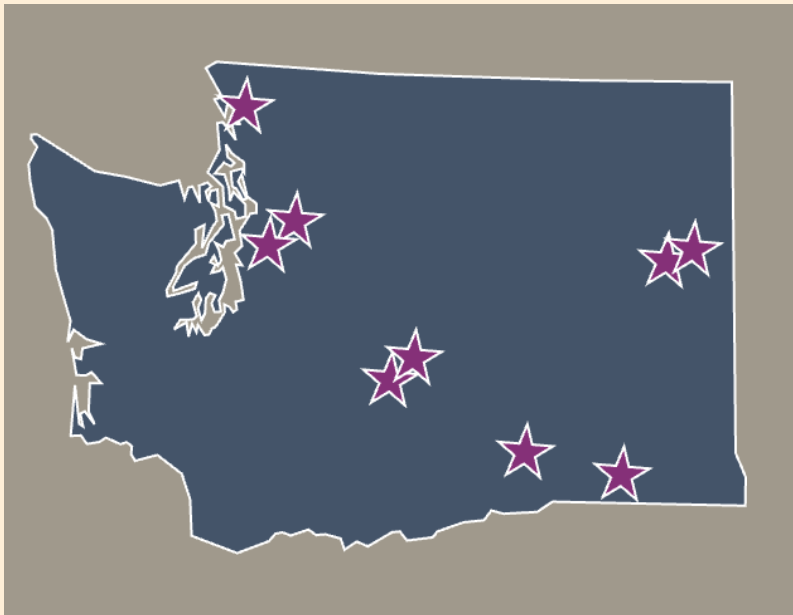


Community Development

Attachment A

Impacts of Tourism Promotion Areas in Washington State

An Analysis of Eight Washington State
Destination Marketing Organizations



WASHINGTON STATE DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATIONS
PREPARED BY | UNCOMMON BRIDGES | JANUARY 2, 2026

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Executive Summary

In 2025, the Washington State Destination Marketing Organizations contracted with Uncommon Bridges to write an impact report for each of the Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) that leveraged the opportunity to impose an additional Tourism Promotion Area (TPA) fee, as afforded to them by the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 35.101.057. This additional TPA charge of up to three dollars per night of stay is assessed on local hotels and motels with more than 40 units. Each DMO, through its TPA, can invest in additional marketing and promotional measures towards increasing the economic impact of tourism. This report fulfills the program review requirement of this TPA charge as articulated in RCW 35.101.058.

The following report:

- Analyzes how tourism promotion area funds imposed pursuant to RCW 35.101.057 were used during the period when the additional charge was imposed.
- Identifies specific marketing programs and campaigns that would not have been possible without the increase in TPA funding.
- Assesses whether additional TPA charges above two dollars contributed to an actual increase in the number of tourists, as defined in RCW 35.101.010.
- Assesses the average additional cost per visit per tourist due to additional TPA area charges above the two dollars.

Key conclusions:

- TPA funds provide critical resources to Washington State DMOs and the communities they serve, allowing them to be creative and strategic in attracting visitors and building local tourism strategies with wide-ranging local economic benefits.
- Based on our methodology, additional TPA revenues above two dollars contributed to an average 26.99% increase in key metrics of tourism activity.
- DMOs, through their close contact with industry leaders and municipalities, are strategic connectors that can generate profound economic impact across a range of communities, and should be supported.

Therefore, Washington State DMOs make the following recommendations to provide certainty to future tourism marketing activities:

Enact legislation to eliminate the sunset provision on RCW 35.101.057 so that the additional TPA assessment provided in RCW 35.101.057 is made permanent.

For further information or questions, contact:

Becky Bogard
Government Relations
Washington State Destination Marketing Organizations
becky@bogardjohnson.com
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INTRODUCTION

The following report explains the history and context of Tourism Promotion Areas in Washington, and how the resources they generate have been utilized by eight destination marketing organizations. The first section provides a summary of the benefits that DMOs have gained from using TPA resources and the impacts of these investments on driving economic growth and local vitality. The second section is made up of case studies, including narrative and data for the following eight TPAs: Tri-Cities, Spokane, Spokane Valley, Walla Walla, Bellingham, Yakima, Bellevue/Redmond, and Union Gap.

What is a Tourism Promotion Area?

Tourism promotion funding in the state of Washington is a layered ecosystem of statewide and local efforts. Statewide promotion is implemented by the Washington Tourism Marketing Authority and the State of Washington Tourism, focusing on large-scale marketing, brand building, and targeted programs to provide a broad state-wide impact.

In contrast, local tourism promotion efforts are provided by local chambers of commerce, city and county economic development departments, and destination marketing organizations. A DMO is the principal organization responsible for leadership in the development, marketing, and sales of the tourism industry within its jurisdiction. DMOs typically utilize lodging taxes collected at the city or county level, combined with Tourism Promotion Area assessments, to fund marketing and events to boost tourism and group business in their various localities. In some instances, DMOs may also receive funding from grants and city or county general fund accounts. TPA funds are generally designed to supplement, not replace, other funding sources such as lodging tax and membership dues.

Washington's Tourism Promotion Area statute, as outlined in RCW 35.101, provides the foundation for local TPAs throughout the state. TPAs were initially established in 2003, and there are currently 18 DMOs in the state that receive some or all of their funding through an established TPA. The funds are typically used for targeted marketing, group sales efforts, sports tourism initiatives, and sponsoring local events.

Most DMOs are funded by a mix of lodging taxes (overseen by a Lodging Tax Advisory Committee, or LTAC) and TPA funds. While the legislation addresses only the additional TPA funds, this report highlights the success of marketing expenses from the total TPA funding pool.

Who receives the "additional" TPA assessment?

RCW 35.101 initially limited the tourism promotion area assessment to two dollars per occupied room per night, with fees assessed on hotels with 40 rooms or more. In 2020, RCW 35.101.057 provided an opportunity for destinations to increase their special lodging assessments up to a total of five dollars by adding an 'additional' assessment of up to three dollars, until June 30, 2027, with a program review requirement due to the legislature by January 1, 2026. There is a procedure whereby the majority of lodging establishments subject to the assessments must agree to them.

Eight DMOs implemented an 'additional' TPA assessment permitted under RCW 35.101.057:

	Location	Year Adopted	TPA fee	DMO
1.	Spokane	2021	\$2 base + \$3 additional = \$5	Visit Spokane
2.	Tri-Cities	2021	\$2 base + \$1 additional = \$3	Visit Tri-Cities
3.	Yakima	2022	\$2 base + \$2 additional = \$4	Yakima Valley Tourism
4.	Spokane Valley	2023	\$2 base + \$2 additional = \$4	Discover Spokane Valley
5.	Bellingham	2023	\$2 base + \$3 additional = \$5	Visit Bellingham
6.	Bellevue/Redmond	2023	\$2 base + \$0.50 additional = \$2.50	Visit Bellevue / OneRedmond
7.	Union Gap	2024	\$2 base + \$2 additional = \$4	Visit Union Gap
8.	Walla Walla	2025	\$2 base + \$1 additional = \$3	Visit Walla Walla

IMPACT SUMMARY

Every Washington DMO utilizes its TPA-derived funds to benefit the communities it serves. Increased visitation leads to higher visitor spending, benefiting both large and small businesses, contributing to a thriving local economy. Millions of dollars flow into Washington communities, supporting tens of thousands of jobs as a direct result of visitation and the DMOs' efforts to build destination awareness. Visitor attraction, in turn, generates state and local taxes that support governmental services, such as streets, public safety, and parks. The following report will aid you in understanding:

1. How DMOs receiving the additional TPA assessment have utilized those funds.
2. Marketing programs and campaigns that would not have been possible without the increase in TPA funding.
3. Specific groups, events, activities, and conferences that were made possible by the increased TPA funding and their economic benefit.
4. The additional TPA funding cost is borne by those guests staying overnight. In most cases, the additional TPA cost to the overnight guest is less than 1% of the lodging cost.

What is the impact of TPA funds?

The marketing pioneer John Wanamaker famously observed, "Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is I don't know which half." Washington's DMOs use TPA funds to solve this classic dilemma. Their strategies range widely, from supporting local festivals to deploying AI-enabled digital platforms. Crucially, they layer on top of each other, creating momentum that spurs tourism and economic vitality.

In our interviews with leaders of eight Washington DMOs, the following themes emerged, summarizing the benefits of TPA funds. Please note that in our research, we asked for negative experiences or challenges created by TPAs, and none were reported. TPA funds allowed DMOs to:

Improve Marketing Strategy

- Develop new lines of business, like sports tourism or group sales
- Differentiate and position small towns and rural areas
- Visit national tradeshow to improve destination exposure and learn industry best practices
- Investment in industry-standard reporting and tracking tools

"TPA funds allow for the ability to grow a budget instead of shrink a budget. That's momentum in a real way."

Add Strategic Capacity

- Provide a forum for cooperation among municipal and industry leaders to identify common problems and work towards solutions
- Hire staff and increase organizational capacity
- Allow hoteliers to offer group sales
- Add shared amenities for multiple hoteliers
- Connect local institutions around a shared tourism strategy
- Integrate sustainability and accessibility into hotel and tourism operations

"This money is not coming out of the legislature's pockets; it's coming from the industry. The industry is doing this because it sees the value in it. Our community is supportive of the work we are doing, and we are really well respected."

Increase Flexibility & Resilience

- Pivot and be nimble in the face of economic and political shifts
- Rebuild from the COVID pandemic
- Diversify the local economy

Invest, support & leverage local assets

- Drive revenue to local infrastructure like convention centers
- Drive events, tournaments, and partnerships to local sports facilities
- Give confidence to investors to build new developments and invest in hotel upgrades

"The TPA is protected by the industry, and we can promote long-term for them, without the fear of the lodging tax being taken away in hard times."

Create Community Vitality

- Strengthen local community pride and identity
- Attract and retain a local workforce
- Support the goals of local cities, counties, and area businesses
- Amplify local festivals and cultural events

"In a small town, a good event is a healthy mix of visitors and locals. Not only are they attracting visitors, but they are also creating a more livable community."

COMBINED DATA FINDINGS

Information in this report is based on self-reported data and interviews with DMO executives and staff. Due to the diversity of DMO circumstances, some data is incomplete. An explanation of data methodology is in the appendix.

Total Additional TPA Revenue Above \$2 Since 2021	\$16,851,639.00
Average Increased Cost to Visitor Across DMOs	\$3.58
Average Impact of Additional TPA Revenue on Key Tourism Metrics	+26.99%

	Average
Total Additional TPA Revenue Above \$2 (2021-2025)	\$2,106,454.88
Average Increased Cost to Visitor (2021-2025)	\$3.58
Average Additional Revenue Impact Ratio (2021-2025)	26.99%
Average Annual Change	
# Of Overnight Visitors	+6.49%
Social Media Impressions	+56.47%
Unique Website Visitors And/Or Sessions	+36.42%
Media Value of Earned Media	+51.14%
Direct Spending Of Overnight Visitors	+12.10%
Economic Impact of Groups to Destination	+30.77%
Overall Economic Impact Of Overnight Visitors	+12.12%
ROI on Paid Media	+2888.73%
Event Spending	+24.39%
Additional Revenue Above \$2	+28.29%
Annual Budget	+21.18%

1. Visit Spokane

As Washington's second-largest city and the home of a regional airport, Spokane serves as the primary cultural and economic hub for the rural communities east of the Cascades. The region attracts roughly 10.1 million overnight visitors annually, generating \$1.53 billion in direct spending and a total economic impact of \$2.4 billion.

Spokane was the first location to establish a TPA in Washington, and its evolution has set the standard for the rest of the state. Spokane currently collects the highest TPA fee in Washington. After introducing an additional two dollar assessment in 2020, the fee increased to the total rate of five dollars per room per night across 37 hotels in June 2024.

Visit Spokane drives overall regional destination marketing, manages group sales for the convention center, and operates a visitor center. TPA funds make up more than 60 percent of the DMO budget. The funds have helped the DMO align with other municipal groups in the city and county, and transition from a reactive role to a proactive one where they are the driver of key conversations.

The TPA also contributes significantly to the budget of the Spokane Sports Commission, which utilizes the funds to recruit major youth and collegiate sporting events, manage tournament operations, and coordinate with hotels and community stakeholders. The influx of athletes, families, and fans not only energizes the community but also fosters a spirit of camaraderie and pride.

Strategic Approach

TPA revenue was critical to Spokane's pandemic recovery and remains central to its long-term growth. The region is currently focused on its Destination Development Plan, which aims to increase the annual economic impact of overnight visitors from \$1.5 billion to \$2 billion. Visit Spokane achieved its lead generation goal by producing 294,345 room night leads against a target of 300,000 and exceeded its booking goal contracting 85,000 room nights.

Before TPA collections increased in 2024, Visit Spokane met with every qualified hotelier to share with them the additional revenue forecast that would be generated from advertising. Through extensive outreach, communication, and reporting, Visit Spokane built consensus around the benefits of the TPA, ensuring that funds generated would be reinvested into programs that drive measurable results for the hospitality industry and the broader economy.

How the TPA funds were spent

- Convention business recruitment
- Website upgrade
- Digital meeting planner toolkit
- Sales missions and meeting planner outreach
- Investing in prospecting tools and systems included Cvent, Mint+, Knowland, and Tempest CRM
- Recruiting major sporting events

- Providing in-kind marketing and consulting services to festivals, events, conventions, and conferences
- Marketing the state park, Mount Spokane

Highlights

- Spokane Hoopfest, the largest 3-on-3 tournament in the world, generating 100,000 room nights
- Annual 12-kilometer Bloomsday Race
- Supporting Nuestro Raices, the largest regional Latino Festival
- Activating and growing connections with the Tribal communities

Looking Forward

- Supporting planning for long-term growth in the region

"We are the number one storyteller for small businesses, even compared to the local Chambers. That is 100 percent true in Spokane County, and we can't do that without the TPA dollars."



Spokane TPA Impact Analysis

	Spokane (2019-2024)
Total Additional TPA Revenue Above \$2	\$9,300,000.00
Average Increased Cost to Visitor	\$7.50
Avg. Impact of Add. TPA Revenue on Key Tourism Metrics	48.97%
Average Annual Change	
# Of Overnight Visitors	+1.03%

Social Media Impressions	+8.72%
Unique Website Visitors And/Or Sessions	+54.35%
Media Value of Earned Media	+25.83%
Direct Spending Of Overnight Visitors	+5.37%
Economic Impact of Groups to Destination	+23.15%
Overall Economic Impact Of Overnight Visitors	+6.30%
ROI on Paid Media	+28.89%
Event Spending	-0.23%
Additional Revenue Above \$2	-5.05%
Annual Budget	+5.18%

2. Visit Tri-Cities

Visit Tri-Cities was founded in 1969 to fuel economic vitality by marketing the Cities of Kennewick, Pasco, and Richland, a region spanning two counties. The organization also serves as the extended marketing arm for local sports facilities and the convention center.

Of the Visit Tri-Cities \$3.4 million budget for 2025, around 70 percent was generated by TPA funds. The initial TPA assessment was enacted in 2004 at one dollar fifty cents per room, per night, and has since been increased twice: to two dollars per night in January 2014, and again to three dollars per night in April 2021.

As a mature organization, Visit Tri-Cities has been able to chart its economic impact. Group sales, which include both sports and conventions, have generated a total visitor spending of approximately \$41.1 million booked from 2020 through 2024. Growing conference demand has spurred the expansion of the convention center, which is currently undergoing a \$70 million expansion to add 100,000 square feet of new space. TPA funds are currently being utilized to market and grow the group business pipeline necessary to fill this additional space.

Efforts to transform the Tri-Cities into a vibrant destination have also had a positive impact on the local population. Enhanced community vitality excites residents about where they live, thus aiding local efforts to attract and retain the workforce.

Strategic Approach

Every year, Visit Tri-Cities presents a marketing plan to the City Councils outlining its intended use of the allocated funds. As a result of the increased funding and organizational confidence, the agency has grown more proactive. Success with major events, such as IRONMAN 70.3, has proven the agency's capacity to support large-scale productions, enabling them to competitively bid for and secure additional high-profile events.

How the TPA funds were spent

- Hiring several positions in sports marketing, conventions, and sales
- Digital marketing campaigns and a deeper analysis of target customers
- Tri-Cities Water Follies, Columbia Cup, Over the River Airshow, Benton Franklin Fair & Rodeo
- Attracting the USA BMX Lumberjack Nationals in 2025, Northwest Athletic Conference (NWAC)
- Basketball Championships 2028, NWAC Volleyball Championships 2025-2027, 2026 Washington Interscholastic Activities (WIAA) 1A and 4A State Softball Championships
- World Horseshoe Pitching Championships in 2024, returning in 2027
- Securing the International Cherry Symposium and the National Onion Association in 2025
- Multi-year agreements for events such as the Northwest Vegetable Association & Oregon Potato Conference

Highlights

- IRONMAN 70.3 Washington Tri-Cities, an event that attracted more than 2,300 athletes and 10,000 visitors, \$7 million in visitor spending. A contract extension is projected through 2031.

- Travel Bloggers Exchange North America in 2022, welcomed 270 travel bloggers and social media influencers, resulting in content for the entire state of Washington.
- Increased local sense of pride and community identity.

Looking Forward

- American Cornhole League event, which will be broadcast on ESPN+ in 2026
- Expansion of Convention Center, scheduled to open in the Spring of 2026

“We have some storytelling to do to get people to recognize the great things we have here, and the TPA dollars allow us to do that. You walk around during an IRONMAN event, and they are saying, ‘I had no idea, I had never been here before.’ It changes the perception of the Tri-Cities, and they want to come back. For us, it’s crucial to have the marketing dollars to tell our story and open up opportunities for our businesses.”



Tri-Cities TPA Impact Analysis

	Tri-Cities (2020-2024)
Total Additional TPA Revenue Above \$2	\$2,683,666.00
Average Increased Cost to Visitor	\$2.30
Avg. Impact of Add. TPA Revenue on Key Tourism Metrics	23.20%
Average Annual Change	
# Of Overnight Visitors	+9.54%
Social Media Impressions	+26.14%
Unique Website Visitors And/Or Sessions	+39.38%

Media Value of Earned Media	+15.67%
Direct Spending Of Overnight Visitors	+26.70%
Economic Impact of Groups to Destination	+36.08%
Overall Economic Impact Of Overnight Visitors	+40.47%
ROI on Paid Media	+14209.21%
Event Spending	+109.82%
Additional Revenue Above \$2	+2.14%
Annual Budget	+11.32%

3. Yakima Valley Tourism

The Yakima Valley is an agricultural region, known for its wine tourism and outdoor activities. The Yakima Valley Visitors & Convention Bureau was established in 1957 to stimulate economic growth in the region through leisure travel, group tourism, wine tourism, conventions, meetings, and sporting events. The DMO is unique in that it manages both destination marketing and the convention center. TPA funds make up about half their budget, which totals approximately \$1.2 million for 2026.

The Yakima TPA was established in 2004 through a petition from local lodging properties with 40 or more units. It was formed to drive visitor spending in Yakima through targeted marketing, group sales efforts, sports tourism initiatives, and earned media exposure. After legislation was passed in 2020 to allow local jurisdictions to increase the collection rate up to an additional three dollars per night, Yakima Valley Tourism worked with the local lodging community to secure an agreement from more than 80 percent of the affected properties to implement an additional two dollar per occupied room, effective in 2021.

In 2020, Yakima embarked on an 18,000-square-foot addition of the convention center, which opened in 2021, and TPA funds have been crucial to marketing and promoting this community asset.

Strategic Approach

Yakima began collecting its additional two dollars in 2022, right as tourism began its slow recovery from COVID-19. To gather petition signatures, the team went door-to-door at 21 hotels, where they found the general managers working the front desks after having laid off their staff during the pandemic. With the promise of the funds and the need to rebuild, the organization drafted a strategic plan from 2023-2026.

How the TPA funds were spent

- Adding a staff member for group sales
- Marketing the convention center
- Attending national travel trade shows
- Access to media platforms to pitch journalists
- Media mission to Portland to share local beer, wine and food
- Purchasing a professional travel management customer relationship management system
- Amplifying local cultural festivals, like Taco Fest
- Hosting travel writers, podcasters and influencers to pitch stories about the Yakima Valley
- Participation in national conferences and training

Highlights

- Attracting the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) Boys and Girls State Track & Field Championships, which required partnering with the school district to improve the fields and facilities; TPA funds enhanced game and event operations, and the successful events increase the organization's chances of securing future events
- Hosting the valley's first podcaster, Allison Levine of Wine Soundtrack, who interviewed ten local winemakers
- Media coverage by travel writers and media outlets such as Travel Pulse, TimeOut, Forbes, Wine Enthusiast, Food & Wine, VinePair, and USA Today 10Best
- Yakima Valley's nominations for Best Wine Region in the USA

Looking Forward

- Supporting Yakima's Fanzone for the 2026 World Cup
- Launching a certified tourism ambassador program
- Celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States

"Our mission is to stimulate economic development through travel, and to do that takes resources, fiscal and people. The TPA has been crucial to do that. The initial assessment provided a foundation for more leisure and sports marketing, and it has allowed us to be much more effective. It's important for this momentum to continue."



Yakima Valley TPA Impact Analysis

	Yakima Valley (2021-2024)
Total Additional TPA Revenue Above \$2	\$1,124,873.00
Average Increased Cost to Visitor	\$6.35
Avg. Impact of Add. TPA Revenue on Key Tourism Metrics	14.87%
Average Annual Change	
# Of Overnight Visitors	+2.82%
Social Media Impressions	+77.36%
Unique Website Visitors And/Or Sessions	+17.23%
Media Value of Earned Media	+57.51%
Direct Spending Of Overnight Visitors	+6.41%
Economic Impact of Groups to Destination	+32.73%
Overall Economic Impact Of Overnight Visitors	+5.63%
ROI on Paid Media	
Event Spending	
Additional Revenue Above \$2	+5.07%
Annual Budget	+14.12%

4. Discover Spokane Valley

Spokane Valley, a city of 110,000 residents incorporated in 2003, is located between Spokane and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Known for its affordability and home to the region's only mall, the suburban city is now positioning itself to benefit from the region's growth as a sports-focused metropolitan area. This shift follows the addition of two major venues in downtown Spokane: The Podium, an indoor track and field facility, and OneSpokane Stadium. The recent arrival of men's and women's professional soccer teams further highlights the regional momentum that Spokane Valley seeks to capture.

Spokane Valley formed its own TPA in 2023 to differentiate itself from downtown Spokane and attract tourists to the unique offerings of its 16 hotels. The city launched the TPA with a base fee of two dollars, plus an additional two-dollar fee, for a total assessment of four dollars per overnight stay. Once the city decided to form its own TPA, it enabled city staff to have conversations with local hoteliers and partners to develop a vision for the funding. In the last two years, their TPA has generated \$1.3 million, which is split between the regional sports commission and contracting a marketing agency.

Strategic Approach

Discover Spokane Valley's board, which includes five hoteliers, spent their first years developing a five-year destination marketing plan with a consultant partner. They created a tourism brand, and focused on sports as a strategic initiative, as well as naming their assets like free parking and proximity to the highway. They rely on partners for implementation and ultimately decided to split their funds between the regional sports commission and contracting a marketing agency.

How the TPA funds were spent

- Tourism website, social media, and creative asset development
- The Opportunity Fund, seeding funding for small events
- Marketing their dedicated cross-country venue to collegiate sports
- Marketing their Hub Sports Center to traveling basketball and volleyball teams
- Capacity building for hoteliers on how to book sports teams
- Positioning their hotels as a lower-cost alternative to travelers visiting resorts and amusement parks in Coeur d'Alene
- Marketing the Crave! NW Food & Drink Festival
- Partnering with local ski hills and the regional fair
- Partnering with the professional soccer teams and the Spokane Indians minor league baseball team, to promote weekend stay and plan destination itineraries and ticket packages

Highlights

- Securing National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) cross country races at The Course in Spokane Valley

Looking Forward

- Marketing the opening of an indoor ice rink, currently under development

"This has generated innovation and sparked conversations about how the valley is unique and what we can offer that is not available in downtown Spokane. We want an identity here as well. We have several new hotels in development. As we build our retail and entertainment sector, the TPA helps with marketing so that it gives confidence in investment."



Spokane Valley TPA Impact Analysis

	Spokane Valley (2024-2025)
Total Additional TPA Revenue Above \$2	\$1,377,161.00
Average Increased Cost to Visitor	\$4.00
Avg. Impact of Add. TPA Revenue on Key Tourism Metrics	50.00%
Average Annual Change	
# Of Overnight Visitors	+0.47%
Social Media Impressions	
Unique Website Visitors And/Or Sessions	+22.56%
Media Value of Earned Media	
Direct Spending Of Overnight Visitors	+0.47%
Economic Impact of Groups to Destination	
Overall Economic Impact Of Overnight Visitors	+0.47%
ROI on Paid Media	
Event Spending	+0.46%
Additional Revenue Above \$2	-3.92%
Annual Budget	-3.92%

5. Visit Bellingham

Visit Bellingham was established in 1978 to raise awareness of Bellingham and the surrounding Whatcom County as a year-round travel destination. While the region is known for its outdoor recreation, farm-to-table restaurants, and as a key stop on the I-5 corridor, it faces challenges in attracting large events, as it does not have a convention center. Most recently, it has been impacted by the decline in tourists from Canada.

The region began collecting TPA funds from approximately 25 properties in 2022, with spending allocated as part of their annual budget starting in 2023. The initial assessment was for three dollars, the base two plus one additional. In 2025, the TPA contributed \$1.4 million to the annual DMO budget, accounting for more than half of its total budget of \$2.4 million.

Strategic Approach

When TPA discussions began, the Bellingham lodging community was excited, based on metrics that showed the potential revenue the region could generate. Individuals from the city, county, and lodging tax committee held extensive discussions about how to allocate TPA dollars versus lodging tax dollars. The TPA also required that they add additional hoteliers to the Board of Directors of Visit Bellingham, who now comprise half of their board.

How the TPA funds were spent

- Digital marketing strategy and advertising
- New marketing staff
- Incentivizing bids for tournaments
- Inviting travel writers to visit
- Development of sports and group sales
- Media outreach subscription and monitoring software

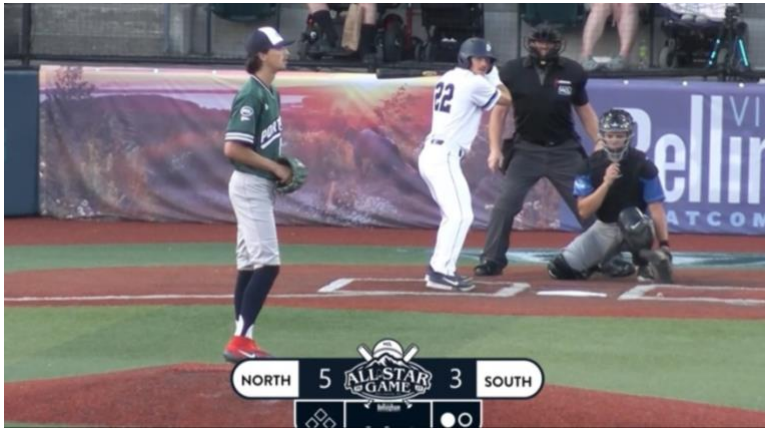
Highlights

- Securing the West Coast League All-Star game for the Bellingham Bells, which was broadcast nationally and generated \$400,000 visitor spend in one day
- A local restaurant made the list of *Esquire's* "top new restaurant" in the country

Looking Forward

- Bellingham Fanzone for the 2026 World Cup

"When the significant decrease in visitation from Canada hurt our local business community, we were able to quickly pivot our marketing domestically to meet those trends. We simply didn't have the capacity to be this nimble and effective before securing TPA funding."



Bellingham TPA Impact Analysis

	Bellingham (2022-2024)
Total Additional TPA Revenue Above \$2	\$866,666.00
Average Increased Cost to Visitor	\$3.78
Avg. Impact of Add. TPA Revenue on Key Tourism Metrics	19.67%
Average Annual Change	
# Of Overnight Visitors	+4.67%
Social Media Impressions	+70.72%
Unique Website Visitors And/Or Sessions	+7.37%
Media Value of Earned Media	+129.38%
Direct Spending Of Overnight Visitors	+4.42%
Economic Impact of Groups to Destination	+50.00%
Overall Economic Impact Of Overnight Visitors	+6.21%
ROI on Paid Media	+258.95%
Event Spending	+6.27%
Additional Revenue Above \$2	+8.33%
Annual Budget	+31.97%

6. Visit Bellevue

Visit Bellevue was founded in 2017 and serves as the official DMO for Bellevue, dedicated to driving economic growth, increasing overnight visitation, and enhancing the visitor experience.

Visit Bellevue initiated stakeholder discussions about TPA adoption in 2020. The following year, an industry expert was hired to conduct an analysis and assess the potential ROI. In 2023, the TPA was formed, with over 90 percent of hotels signing the petition process.

The implementation required navigating King County-specific regulations under state law, which mandates that two cities must partner to form a TPA. This required Bellevue to coordinate with the City of Redmond to establish their respective programs, a process that added seven months to the timeline. Bellevue and Redmond now operate the state's only multi-district TPA, currently collecting a two dollar and fifty cent fee per room night (two dollar base plus an additional fifty cent assessment).

TPA funds have enabled Visit Bellevue to establish a dedicated team and transition from a small organization to a strategic driver of the regional economy. Since the TPA was adopted, Visit Bellevue has been able to do 80 percent more marketing, expanding its outreach to become competitive on national and international stages. Its destination sales efforts focus on prospecting, relationship building, and developing new incremental group business for the city. This proactive approach has involved extensive travel, including attending 15 shows and completing two sales missions in 2025. The DMO has been actively marketing in Japan for the past two years and is planning to expand to South Korea.

The TPA investments have yielded immediate returns. Since the TPA's adoption, Bellevue has captured 80 to 90 percent of the partnership's total room nights. They have provided sponsorship funding for festivals, conventions, and conferences that accounted for 26,400 room nights and resulted in more than \$28 million in direct visitor spending.

Strategic Approach

The administration of TPA funds in Bellevue follows a structured oversight model where the City of Bellevue collects the revenue, and the City Council appoints an advisory board of four hotel general managers to oversee the funds. Each year, Visit Bellevue submits a budget for approval by the City Council. In 2026, the organization anticipates a net collection of \$2.9 million. The majority of these funds are dedicated to marketing, while the remainder is allocated to destination sales.

How the TPA funds were spent

- Adding a skilled sales manager, bringing the DMO team up to four in sales
- Paid marketing campaigns
- Public relations and media campaigns, hosting journalists, content creators, and social media
- Actively marketing in Japan for the past two years
- Updating collateral for destination sales
- Sponsorship funding to 25 festivals, events, conventions, and conferences
- Launching two podcasts, "The View" which is consumer-focused, and "Bellevue Boost," focused on industry
- Destination sales business development events with national associations

- Enhanced convention services tools like marketing materials, digital campaigns, social media outreach, and visitor information
- Prospecting sales tools subscriptions like Cvent, Mint+, Knowland, and Simpleview CRM

Highlights

- Northwest Chocolate Festival, 2025
- Lenovo’s Tech World Conference, 2024
- Annual Brick Con, the longest-running LEGO fan exhibition in the world
- Hosting Alpha Kappa Alpha, an influential national sorority
- Annual Japan Fair
- Launching a mobile marketing center housed in an electric vehicle that visits different events to share visitor information
- Increasing Bellevue’s overall accessibility, verified by Wheel the World

Looking Forward

- Launching a marketing campaign to South Korea
- Increasing sustainability and corporate social responsibility programs
- Adding digital accessibility features
- Reaching new AI-enabled marketing channels, including marketing attribution
- World Cup 2026
- Increasing culinary and cruise tourism
- Connecting the new light rail with high-quality walking and biking paths

“DMOs in Washington are behind the curve nationally. Without the TPA, we would go last in line. It is what makes our cities competitive with others in California, Arizona, Illinois, and Florida. We need to optimize it to get to the five-dollar threshold. We proved to our industry that it worked; we can generate a good ROI. We’ve made it through the proving phase and are now dreaming about the next chapter.”



Bellevue TPA Impact Analysis

	Bellevue (2022-2025)
Total Additional TPA Revenue Above \$2	\$1,178,200.00
Average Increased Cost to Visitor	\$1.19
Avg. Impact of Add. TPA Revenue on Key Tourism Metrics	10.23%
Average Annual Change	
# Of Overnight Visitors	+11.53%
Social Media Impressions	+81.62%
Unique Website Visitors And/Or Sessions	+111.18%
Media Value of Earned Media	+77.06%
Direct Spending Of Overnight Visitors	+14.13%
Economic Impact of Groups to Destination	+11.91%
Overall Economic Impact Of Overnight Visitors	+14.14%
ROI on Paid Media	+15.47%
Event Spending	+15.03%
Additional Revenue Above \$2	+19.74%
Annual Budget	+78.09%

7. One Redmond

OneRedmond serves as the administrator for the Redmond Zone of the Bellevue-Redmond Tourism Promotion Area. Under state law, cities in King County must partner to form a TPA, resulting in Bellevue and Redmond operating the only multi-district TPA in the state. In 2023, OneRedmond secured funding through this collaboration with the City of Bellevue. The funding consists of a two dollar and fifty cent fee per room night (two dollar base plus an additional fifty cent assessment) collected by 10 local hotels.

As a suburban community located near a larger city, OneRedmond faces the challenge of creating a distinct desire for people to visit Redmond. Because the city does not have large conference venues, marketing efforts focus on attracting visitors through strategic partnerships, unique local experiences, and targeted events.

Since 2023, OneRedmond has operated in start-up mode, establishing organizational processes for marketing and data tracking. TPA funds have helped the organization get established and set up systems to collect baseline data, establish performance metrics, and measure the long-term impact of tourism investments.

Strategic Approach

As the organization launched, OneRedmond worked closely with the City of Redmond to create a tourism strategic plan, which now serves as the guiding document. OneRedmond worked closely with hotel stakeholders to understand their needs, which were identified as increasing hotel occupancy, especially in the shoulder season. Many hotels lost staff and budgets for amenities during the pandemic, so OneRedmond has been creative in offering hotel packages that include amenities like ride-share gift cards. To stand out in a competitive marketplace, the organization developed a niche in dog tourism, mapping dog-friendly businesses, helping hotels become pet-friendly, and planning dog-friendly destination events.

How the TPA funds were spent

- Launching a geo-fencing booking widget
- Increasing local hotel bookings for visitors to Cirque du Soleil
- Researching and testing digital concierge platforms to help hoteliers with reduced staff

Highlights

- Establishing a dog tourism niche, launching Pup Crawl and Pupchella

Looking Forward

- Launching a shared digital concierge platform to share local event itineraries
- Poker Pup Run and Halloween dog events
- Sensory and accessibility tourism

“The hotels have stronger relationships through a collective effort. Now they feel like they have a voice, and it works a lot better. I can find out if they have any needs, and they are willing to communicate what's going on. The hotels know they have their champion in the city, and we are right by their side.”



Redmond TPA Impact Analysis

	Redmond (2024-2025)
Total Additional TPA Revenue Above \$2	\$167,073.00
Average Increased Cost to Visitor	\$1.40
Avg. Impact of Add. TPA Revenue on Key Tourism Metrics	37.71%
Average Annual Change	
# Of Overnight Visitors	+23.51%
Social Media Impressions	
Unique Website Visitors And/Or Sessions	
Media Value of Earned Media	
Direct Spending Of Overnight Visitors	+38.44%
Economic Impact of Groups to Destination	
Overall Economic Impact Of Overnight Visitors	+23.51%
ROI on Paid Media	
Event Spending	
Additional Revenue Above \$2	+100.00%
Annual Budget	

8. Visit Walla Walla

Visit Walla Walla was founded in 2004 during a period of rapid growth in the local wine industry. While agriculture and wine drive the economy in southeast Washington, tourism plays an essential role, supporting a diverse network of small businesses and serving as the fifth-largest industry in the region.

Like many rural destinations, Walla Walla faces the challenge of sustaining growth and ensuring that the benefits of tourism extend across the full range of local businesses year-round. Walla Walla is less competitive for large group bookings, as it lacks a convention center and the necessary infrastructure to host large sporting events. However, Walla Walla is an ideal location for festivals and events, which are increasingly powerful reasons for travel, especially among younger travelers who seek authentic, community-based experiences that reflect local culture and values.

Visit Walla Walla is a small destination marketing organization with just three staff members. The organization staffs a visitor kiosk full-time and works closely with the City's Parks and Recreation Department, helping promote events, provide visitor information, and align messaging that connects sports visitors with local attractions, dining, and lodging options.

The TPA was formed in 2011. Its members voted to add one dollar in 2025, bringing the total to three dollars per night. This fee is applied to room nights in 10 hotels with more than 40 rooms. In 2025, the additional TPA assessment added an additional \$154,000 to the DMO budget. Compared to other local industries, the hotel segment generates more revenue at a rate higher than the inflation rate.

Strategic Approach

Visit Walla Walla's approach relies on deepening regional collaboration, amplifying statewide marketing efforts, and developing new avenues for group and conference travel. The funds are focused on supporting and expanding a growing tourism sector without duplicating existing efforts or overextending local resources.

With future TPA funds, Visit Walla Walla plans to develop a dedicated sales department and hire a sales professional to lead long-term sales strategy. As a rural destination with quality hotels, distinctive meeting venues, and award-winning wine, Walla Walla is uniquely positioned to emerge as a leading conference and meeting destination. This growth will help drive midweek and shoulder-season visitation, strengthen local business revenues, and expand the Valley's reputation as a place where business and leisure thrive together.

How the TPA funds were spent

- Promoting festivals and cultural events, supporting more than a dozen local events, and helping to promote nearly 30 unique experiences across the valley in 2025
- Building a CRM and meeting planning toolkit
- Convening a valley-wide tourism industry happy hour, strengthening collaboration
- Sponsoring a documentary on Eastern Washington's Lowrider community directed by a Whitman College graduate
- Family-friendly signage and increased accessibility at Bennington Lake trails

Highlights

- Tour D'Farm, which invited guests to tour, eat, and drink at long tables set among fields, vineyards, and pastures at 14 farms
- The Day of the Dead Celebration, in partnership with the Mexican Consulate in Seattle
- The first large-scale Pride Event downtown in 2025

Looking Forward

- Downtown walking maps
- Developing a sales department and hire a sales professional to lead a long-term sales strategy, targeting association and meeting markets statewide and regionally

"A part of destination marketing work is to become the best version of ourselves, and show the pride, image, and respect for the role of being a host. Once people in the community appreciate their role in hospitality, people are coming to see us. People love coming to Walla Walla."



Walla Walla TPA Impact Analysis

	Walla Walla (2024-2025)
Total Additional TPA Revenue Above \$2	\$154,000.00
Average Increased Cost to Visitor	\$2.10
Avg. Impact of Add. TPA Revenue on Key Tourism Metrics	11.25%
Average Annual Change	
# Of Overnight Visitors	-1.67%
Social Media Impressions	+74.27%
Unique Website Visitors And/Or Sessions	+2.90%
Media Value of Earned Media	+1.39%
Direct Spending Of Overnight Visitors	0.85%
Economic Impact of Groups to Destination	
Overall Economic Impact Of Overnight Visitors	+0.21%
ROI on Paid Media	-68.86%
Event Spending	+15.00%
Additional Revenue Above \$2	+100.00%
Annual Budget	+11.51%

9. Visit Union Gap

The slogan for Union Gap, Washington, incorporated in 1883, is an “old town with new ideas.” The town of 6,700 residents, a 10-minute drive from downtown Yakima, is a hub for retail commerce, commercial, and light industrial areas. They are known for their sunny days, large antique mall, and craft breweries. Sports tournaments and wine tourism drive hotel occupancy. They have two hotels that are part of the TPA. They added two dollars to their base two dollars for their TPA collection in 2024. While the DMO had a budget of \$188,000 in 2025, the money goes a long way in marketing a small town.

Strategic Approach

Their TPA funds are allocated by a committee that also decides LTAC funding. The two hotels are on the committee, along with representatives from the museum and the Sports Commission. Together, they recommend a budget that is approved by the City Council. Organizations approach the committee to make requests for funding.

How the TPA funds were spent

- Purchasing Bandwago, a destination pass platform
- Advertising for the local museum
- Contracting with an award-winning tourism director
- Attracting Ski boat races

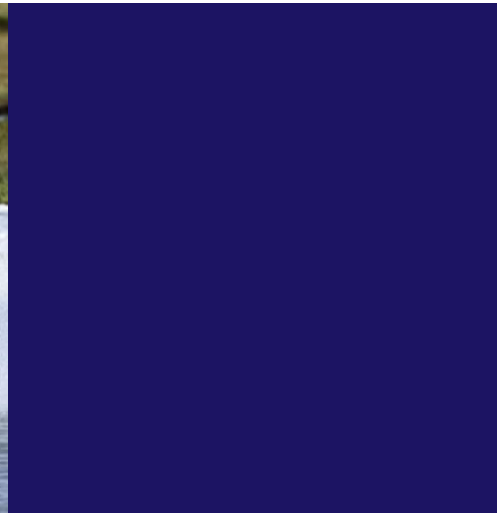
Highlights

- Spring Boat races at State Fair Park
- Podcast about Union Gap

Looking Forward

- Enhanced Town Days in 2026, making it a three-day event instead of two, with fireworks and band
- International speed boat races at the State Fair Park
- Celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States (Washington State has requested to commemorate this date, but there is no state funding available for this)
- Potentially attracting a new soccer complex and RV parks

“The increase in state taxes makes it difficult to collect local tax revenue. The last thing they should do is eliminate something that drives sales tax revenue to our communities. The TPA should be extended or enacted permanently.”



Union Gap TPA Impact Analysis

	Control/Launch Year (2024)	Analysis Year (2025)
# Of Overnight Visitors		
Social Media Impressions		
Unique Website Visitors And/Or Sessions		
Media Value of Earned Media		
Direct Spending Of Overnight Visitors		
Economic Impact of Groups to Destination		
Overall Economic Impact Of Overnight Visitors		
ROI on Paid Media		
Event Spending		
Additional Revenue Above \$2		
Annual Budget	\$ 213,267	\$ 188,396

*Data analysis is incomplete due to Union Gap's new status as a TPA.

APPENDIX: DATA ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

We use ten key indicators to conduct a comprehensive analysis to assess:

- If additional tourism promotion area charges above \$2 contributed to an increase in the number of tourists.
- The average additional cost to tourists due to additional tourism promotion area charges.

Quantitative Analysis Methodology

Question Statement	10 Quantitative Indicators
Do additional TPA charges above \$2 increase tourism?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in # Of Overnight Visitors • Change in Direct Spending Of Overnight Visitors • Change in Overall Economic Impact Of Overnight Visitors • Change in Economic Impact of Groups to Destination • Change in ROI on Paid Media • Change in Media Value of Earned Media • Change in Unique Website Visitors And/Or Sessions • Change in Social Media Impressions • Change in Event Spending
On average, how much more are visitors paying because of additional TPA charges above \$2?	Average Additional Cost to Visitor Per Visit

Tourism Indicator Normalization

This method makes it easier to compare changes in tourism numbers from year to year by including the effect of extra tourism fees that are more than \$2.

It does this by working out how much extra revenue those fees bring in compared to the DMO's yearly budget, and then using that percentage to adjust the tourism numbers.

A. Identify Study Period: Select data for years before and after the adoption of additional tourism promotion area charges.

B. Calculate the Additional Revenue Impact Ratio (for each target year):

$$\text{Additional Revenue Impact Ratio} = \frac{\text{TPA Fee Revenue from Additional Charges Above \$2}}{\text{Annual Budget}}$$

C. Average Additional Revenue Impact Ratio: Use the adjustment ratios for each year in the study period to derive an average additional revenue impact ratio, which shows the average percentage (%) of change in evaluation indicators correlated to the additional fee revenues above \$2.

Additional Cost to Visitor Per Visit

This method calculates the additional cost per visit to a destination because of additional TPA charges above \$2. To do so, we divide the average nights stayed per visit by the dollar amount above a \$2 fee collected.

$$\text{Average Additional Cost to Visitor} = \frac{\text{Average Nights Stayed Per Visit}}{\text{Additional TPA Fee Amount Above \$2}}$$

Quantitative Evaluation Metrics

CHANGE IN # OF OVERNIGHT VISITORS	PER YEAR
Change in Direct Spending Of Overnight Visitors	Per year
Change in Overall Economic Impact Of Overnight Visitors	Per year
Change in Unique Website Visitors And/Or Sessions	Number of unique website visitors annually before the additional charge, and in the years since.
Change in ROI on Paid Media	Total paid media impressions and engagements (clicks or redemptions etc.) per year.
Change in Media Value of Earned Media	Estimated annual value of earned media during the additional charge period, and/or links to significant earned press during this period.
Change in Social Media Impressions	Social media impressions over the additional spend period or social media impressions and engagement across platforms before the additional charge, and in the years since.
Change in Economic Impact of Groups to Destination	Annual impact of conventions, sports, and tour operations.
Change in DMO Event Spending	Total the DMO spent annually on festivals and events before and after the TPA charge.



Community Development

Attachment B

HOUSE BILL 2278

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

By Representatives Barnard, Ryu, Reed, Zahn, and Salahuddin

Prefiled 01/06/26. Read first time 01/12/26. Referred to Committee on Technology, Economic Development, & Veterans.

1 AN ACT Relating to tourism promotion areas; amending RCW
2 35.101.057; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the use of the
5 additional assessment on the furnishing of lodging authorized by RCW
6 35.101.057 has grown tourism. The intent of this legislation is to
7 permit the additional assessment to continue in a timely manner, so
8 that the growth of the tourism sector can continue.

9 **Sec. 2.** RCW 35.101.057 and 2020 c 215 s 2 are each amended to
10 read as follows:

11 ((~~1~~)) In addition to the two dollar charge authorized by RCW
12 35.101.050, a legislative authority may impose an additional charge
13 of up to three dollars per night of stay on the furnishing of lodging
14 by a lodging business located in the area. To impose the additional
15 charge, signatures of the persons who operate lodging businesses who
16 would pay sixty percent or more of the proposed charges must be
17 provided together with the proposed uses and projects to which the
18 proposed revenue from the additional charge shall be put, the total
19 estimate costs, and the estimated rate for the charge with a proposed

1 breakdown by class of lodging business if such classification is to
2 be used.

3 (~~(2) This section expires July 1, 2027.~~)

--- END ---



Community Development

Attachment C

2025 Bellevue-Redmond Tourism Advisory Board Annual Report to the City of Redmond

Summary

The Bellevue-Redmond Tourism Promotion Area (BRTPA) advanced its second full year of operations with new and expanded tourism programs across both zones. Visit Bellevue and OneRedmond delivered expanded tourism development programs, for both communities. The 2025 results demonstrate a maturing visitor economy supported by strategic investment, industry collaboration, and consistent alignment with city priorities. 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. The City of Bellevue takes their stewardship and oversight of the TPA board seriously. We value our collaboration with the City of Redmond hope that this agreement will continue to deliver the expected tourism results to both zones.

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 previous board Chair, Caroline Dermarkarian, retired earlier this year. In March 2026, TPA Board elected Wade Hashimoto, who previously served as vice chair, to replace her in this role. The board elected Kate Hudson as vice chair.

Tourism Promotion Area Advisory Board makes recommendations to the Bellevue City Council regarding the use of revenue from the TPA fee. The board continues to hold public meetings and gives feedback to 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. Board members find having a voice in shaping the future of tourism in the region valuable to them.

As of April 2026, the board members are: Nate Moore (Marriot, Redmond), Kim Saunderson (Residence Inn, Redmond), Crystal Pia (Hilton Garden Inn, Redmond) Cassandra Lieberman (Archer Hotel, Redmond), Rocky Rosenbach (Puget Sound Hospitality, Bellevue), Wade

Hashimoto (Westin and W Hotel, Bellevue), Henning Nopper (Hyatt Regency, Bellevue), and Kate Hudson (Residence Inn, Bellevue).

2025 Revenues and expenditures

Revenue figures for both Bellevue and Redmond closely aligned with projections, with both zones coming in slightly lower than 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 2024. In July 2024, the BRTPA Advisory Board’s Budget and Scope of work for 2025 were approved by Council.

Each zone administrator submits invoices monthly, and a summary of these invoices is presented to the BRTPA Advisory Board at every quarterly meeting. During a period of a few months at the end of 2025, OneRedmond, the current TPA Redmond zone administrator, asked to invoice twice a month in order to receive reimbursements more frequently. This proved to be an unsustainable administrative burden for the City and OneRedmond was asked to return to monthly invoices beginning in January 2026.

Summary of Revenues and Expenditures, January 1 – December 31, 2025:

	Revenues	Expenditures	Account Balance*
Bellevue	\$ 2,712,004	\$ 2,299,245	\$848,285
Redmond	\$ 806,806	\$ 829,861	\$688,154

* The account balance at the end of 2025. 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.

Development of 2026 Work plans and Budgets

The BRTPA Advisory board developed a 2026 budget and strategic plan for the TPA, which was presented to Bellevue City Council in July 2025.

As with previous years, 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 stages 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 2026 Budget	Redmond Zone 2026 Budget
<i>Projected Collections after administrative fees</i>	\$2,946,900	\$942,059*
<i>Marketing and Communication</i>	\$970,500	\$295,307
<i>Destination Sales</i>	\$662,200	\$178,584
<i>Tourism Development</i>	\$743,500	\$430,869
<i>Festivals and Events</i>	\$303,500	\$48,000
<i>Administration and Research</i>	\$110,400	\$272,084
<i>Contingency</i>	\$156,800	\$122,484

Each zone accounts for the 1 percent admin fee retained by DOR, and the 5 percent administrative fee retained by the Legislative Authority.

*The Redmond Zone’s budget includes a withdrawal of \$480,634 from their reserves.

Management agreements

Recognizing their local expertise, 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, 2026

The year ahead

City staff has received draft proposals of 2027 budgets and strategic plans from Visit Bellevue and OneRedmond. These will be used to develop the BRTPA Advisory Board’s 2027 Budget and Scope of Work, which is due to the City of Bellevue as part of the budget process in July 2026.

The City remains mindful of its responsibilities to the BRTPA and is committed to strong financial stewardship of TPA funds. As we enter our third year of implementation, the City will conduct a financial review of both zones to ensure that our processes remain sound and that all expenditures align with contracting requirements and with the interlocal agreement between our two cities. Once this review is complete, findings will be shared with the BRTPA Advisory Board and with the City of Redmond.

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