



DATE: March 11, 2025

TO: Mayor Robinson and City Councilmembers

FROM: Jesse Canedo, Chief Economic Development Officer, 452-5236
Lorie Hoffman, Arts & Creative Economy Manager, 452-4246
Liz Flores, Cultural Tourism Specialist, 452-4869
Community Development Department

SUBJECT: An overview of Visit Bellevue's 2024 Destination Development Plan.

This Council item is an overview of Visit Bellevue's updated 2024 Destination Development Plan (DDP). Visit Bellevue is the City of Bellevue's official Destination Management Organization and a programmatic function of the Bellevue Convention Center Authority.

BACKGROUND

In 2017, Visit Bellevue published the first Destination Development Plan (DDP) as a roadmap to guide the organization's development and early work. Now, Visit Bellevue has updated the plan to reflect a post-COVID travel economy and a shifting, growing community.

Community input during the update process was robust, with Visit Bellevue leading over a year of outreach and stakeholder meetings. Outreach focused on gathering broad stakeholder insights and perspectives, including heavy involvement from the Visit Bellevue Advisory Board comprised of tourism and hospitality voices, City of Bellevue staff, and other stakeholders. In September 2024, the Bellevue Convention Center Authority Board approved this final plan.

This updated plan examines the tourism sector and "aims to position Bellevue as a premier destination that harmoniously blends urban sophistication, cultural richness, natural beauty, and technological innovation." The goal of the plan is to drive sustainable growth in the tourism sector, enhance the visitor experience and resident quality of life, and promote Bellevue's unique identity.

The plan includes high-level insights and strategic priorities that will grow tourism in a thoughtful and sustainable way that values the needs of residents and workers as well as visitors. The DDP will be shared broadly with the community at the 2025 Visit Bellevue annual meeting and Destination Development Awards ceremony on May 5.

CORE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Destination Development Plan is structured around six core strategic priorities, each aimed at defining and enhancing the visitor experience in the region.

- Urban Lifestyle & Placemaking
- Arts & Innovation
- Recreation & Experiences
- Culinary Destination
- Conferences & Events
- Built Environment & Enabling Conditions

Each priority area has sub-strategies and specific actions and Visit Bellevue's role can vary from lead to support or advocate. This plan takes a collaborative approach, meant for Visit Bellevue to work in partnership with a wide set of stakeholders over the next decade to advance.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF TOURISM

Overnight visitors play a vital role in the local economy. On average, visitors spend an additional 2.2-2.4 times the price of their hotel stay at local restaurants, retail, attractions, nightlife, and arts. For example, if a visitor spends \$300 on a hotel stay, we can expect them to spend an additional \$660-\$720 in the local economy during their stay. In 2024, Bellevue hosted 2.2 million overnight visitors who generated \$1.9 billion of economic impact in the community. The strategic actions in the plan are expected to boost tourism and tourism-related revenues.

LOOKING AHEAD

Staff will continue to work in close partnership with Visit Bellevue and will incorporate appropriate items into the updated Economic Development Plan.

Attachment A – Bellevue Destination Development Plan Update