

DATE: January 10, 2022

TO: Mayor Robinson and City Councilmembers

FROM: Mac Cummins, Director (452-6191)  
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*Community Development Department*

SUBJECT: 2022 Bellevue Rock 'n' Roll Half Marathon

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**Background:**

In November of 2021, Visit Bellevue Washington approached the City with the opportunity for Bellevue to host the 2022 Washington State Rock 'n' Roll Half Marathon. IRONMAN Group, a professional producer of over 240 events around the world, had identified downtown Bellevue as the premier destination for the event, noting that Bellevue is a destination that their global audience will "want to write home about."

The race is scheduled for the weekend before Labor Day, September 3-4, 2022. This is traditionally a weekend with slow visitor traffic in Bellevue and will provide a needed boost for hotels still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and the slow return of business travelers.

The 2022 half marathon will provide many tangible benefits for Bellevue residents and highlight the city for tourism and economic development purposes. Local partners will work with the organizers to connect with local community organizations to help highlight the city's unique artistic and cultural offerings. Hosting the event supports the implementation of Bellevue's Economic Development and Destination Development plans. As part of those plans, the City and its partners are working on a variety of programs and products to attract more leisure travel to supplement our strength as a business travel destination.

The event will be headquartered at Downtown Park and the Bellevue Collection with ample hotels, restaurants, and retail within walking distance to the race start and finish. Bellevue Collection has agreed to host and provide parking at Bellevue Square.

The event will secure all necessary permits through the Bellevue Special Events Committee and provide a local community outreach liaison dedicated to community notification and event impact mitigation.

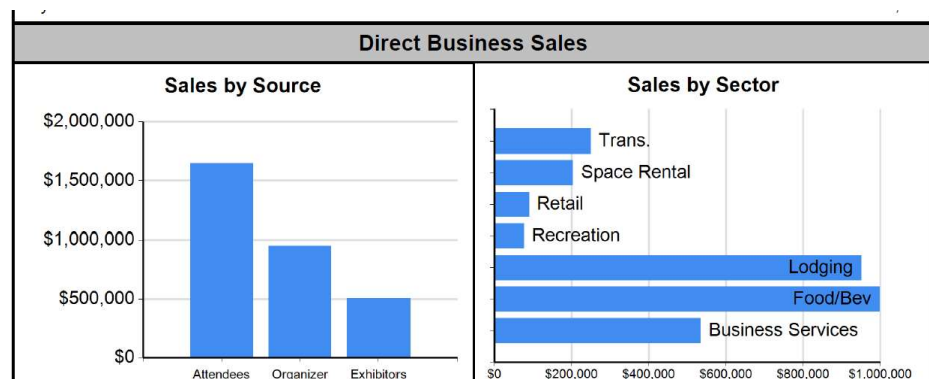
**Benefits for the Community:**

### Tourism Recovery and Economic Impact Benefit:

The COVID-19 pandemic decimated the tourism industry with an occupancy low of 9.7% in April 2020 and continued occupancies tracking below the national average. This event assists with tourism recovery by welcoming global tourists with spending power to benefit our local hotels, restaurants, and retail. Tourism Economic Impact projections include:

- 4,500 overnight attendees | 3,881 estimated room demand
- Business Sales: \$4,874,551
- Local Taxes: \$119,943

Additionally, with 6.7 million in total social following, this opportunity brings incredible branding power and awareness of Bellevue as an active lifestyle tourism destination.



### Community Benefit

The Rock 'n' Roll running event provides an opportunity for Bellevue's active lifestyle population. A "Kids Rock" kids race and 5K take place on Saturday followed by the Half marathon on Sunday.

The Half Marathon provides the opportunity to involve our neighborhoods and community groups along the race route with opportunity to receive grants from the IRONMAN Foundation. Additionally, there are many opportunities to showcase and strengthen our Creative Economy by featuring Bellevue's art and performance organizations along race route.

### Policy Guidance

Both the 2020 Economic Development Plan and Destination Development Plan include strategies that provide policy guidance to attract events that increase tourism and economic impact.

### Economic Development Plan Tourism Strategies

- Develop more activities and product offerings that take advantage of the city's assets and proximity to regional activities.
- Facilitate development of expanded visitor-related facilities to increase the number of conventions, performances, and special events the city can host.

### Destination Development Plan Events and Festival Strategy

- The destination development strategy should focus attention on creating, incubating, developing, and facilitating Bellevue events and festivals.