

RESONANCE



CITY OF BELLEVUE AND VISIT BELLEVUE WASHINGTON

Destination Development Plan Final Report

OCTOBER 26, 2017



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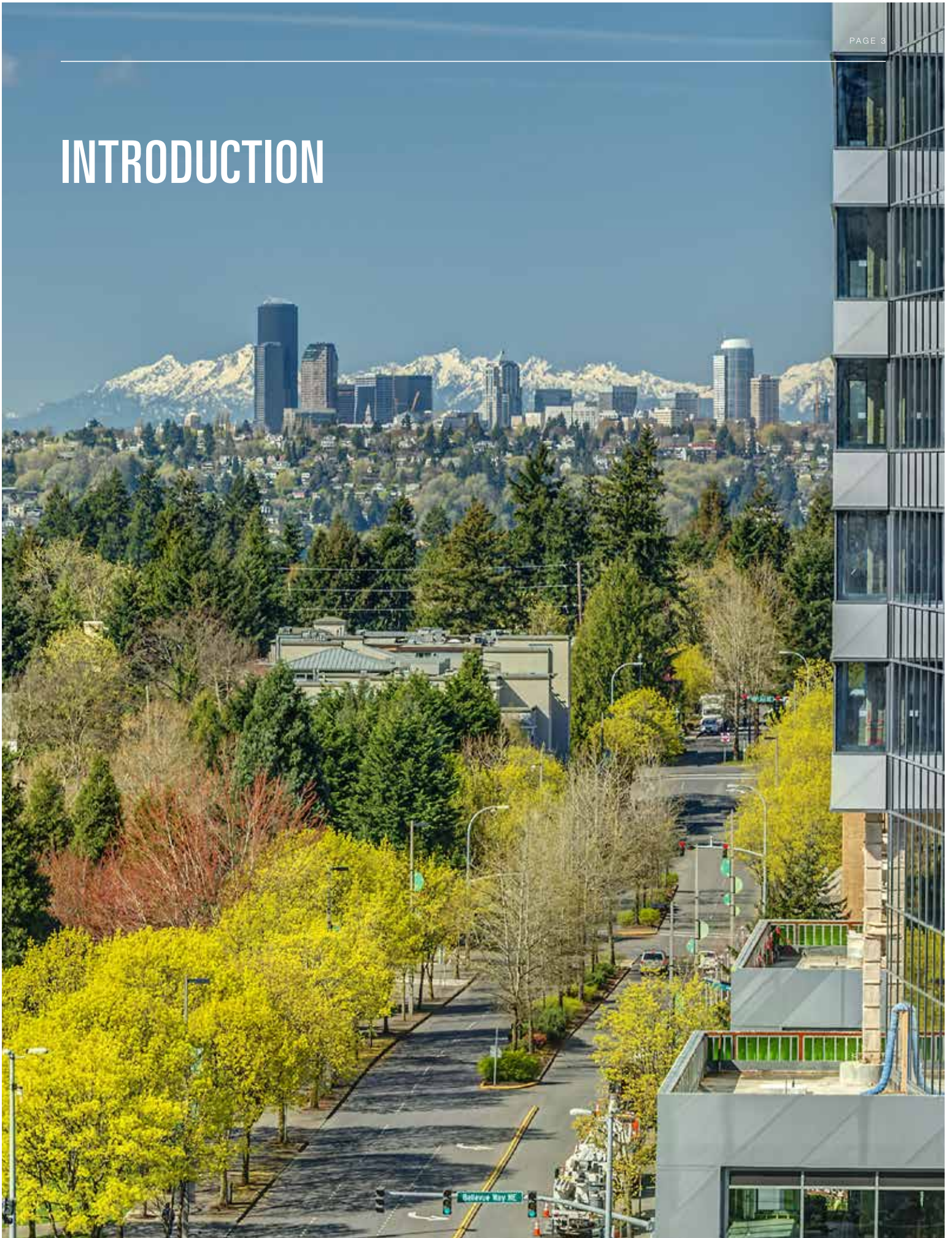
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INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

The City of Bellevue and Visit Bellevue Washington (VBW) engaged Resonance Consultancy in Mid-2016 to produce a Destination Development Plan that will improve the city's ability to attract visitors, conventioners and new businesses to the market.

Objectives

The objectives of the Destination Development Plan were to enhance the existing environment with four overarching goals: an enhanced visitor experience, economic growth, infrastructure improvement and employment growth. The City and Visit Bellevue also wanted a plan that is holistic in nature and provides value to the industry, visitors and residents alike.

The project was to look for areas of common interest between economic development and visitor development, with the final plan serving as a roadmap for branding, marketing, promotions, programming, facilities and infrastructure that will grow a sustainable volume of new and repeat visitors to the city. It was to be a forward-thinking plan with a special interest in changing trends and the future demands of regional and international visitors, business travelers and local residents.

The final report was to recommend which attributes Bellevue should strive to own and areas where the city can better position itself with programmatic enhancements. The plan was to envision a destination that is self-sustaining and that will:

- Complement existing economic development and Visit Bellevue strategic plans.
- Explore opportunities beyond downtown and imagine the entire city as part of the broader region for visitors.
- Create an environment that supports the city's businesses, appeals to business visitors, attracts entrepreneurs, and encourages repeat visits.
- Attract more weekend guests at local hotels.
- Reflect the needs and demands of future visitors.
- Imagine the city as a destination after the current construction boom and rezoning processes alter the built environment.
- Create a unique, memorable visitor experience.
- Increase visitation and additional tax revenue to fully fund the Destination Marketing Organization.

The finished product was to be a 10 year plan and a reference document for both Visit Bellevue and various departments within the City of Bellevue.

This document sets forth the Final Report of the Destination Development Strategy for Bellevue, and builds on the:

First Phase of the project, focused on activities designed to review and understand the history, current results, future plans and target market of Bellevue tourism within the context of the broader economy, economic development and quality of life, and to embark on a detailed examination of its characteristics, visitors, profile and market prospects; and

Second Phase of the project designed to create a future looking vision for Bellevue tourism, prioritize opportunities identified by the Situational Analysis and set forth detailed plans, actions and activities on how best to implement each of the recommendations.

Destination Development Plan - Phase One

The First Phase report (Situational Analysis) included analysis of Bellevue's tourism and visitor sector results, tourism assets, visitor satisfaction, tourism organization/operations and research capacity including:

- Overview of tourism in Bellevue.
- Review and assess City of Bellevue and Visit Bellevue Washington policies, strategies, plans, organizations, budgets and operations associated with Travel & Tourism.
- Tourism Asset Mapping for Bellevue and a keyword analysis from consumer reviews.
- Survey of Bellevue hotels to estimate business / leisure split.
- Stakeholder engagement sessions to understand the key issues and opportunities for Bellevue tourism.
- Bellevue destination survey to assess levels of satisfaction and produce a market segmentation analysis to profile the characteristics of the Bellevue visitor.

The Situational Analysis also included a competitive analysis of Bellevue's tourism products and services vis-à-vis its competitive set with detailed information on KPIs, issues, opportunities and best-case practices:

- Destination Assessment Report for Bellevue and its competitive set.
- Literature search on each of the competitive set to find challenges, successes, best practice and performance metrics.
- Review of publicly available destination comparison research.

The results and information from the Situational Analysis Report were used to gain broad input and priorities on tourism opportunities and challenges.

Destination Development Plan - Phase Two

The Second Phase of the project built upon the Situational Analysis and included a visioning workshop with a Steering Committee, a survey of the broader industry stakeholders to select the final recommendations, and a last series of conference calls to work out the implementation details of the final recommendations.

Steering Committee Workshop

On April 12, 2017 a group of 32 Bellevue tourism stakeholders, including the Mayor, gathered at City Hall for a day-long workshop to discuss and debate the opportunities set forth in the Conceptual Framework Report of the Bellevue Destination Development Strategy.

The workshop was conducted to put the 7 General Themes and 39 individual opportunities of the Conceptual Framework under a strategic microscope and consider how the opportunities can inform Bellevue's travel and tourism, economic development and placemaking strategy.

The objective of the workshop was to narrow the list of opportunities presented in the Conceptual Framework Report down to those items that deserve or warrant additional consideration by the broader stakeholder group, City officials / agencies and the community at large.

The first step of the workshop process was to articulate Bellevue's qualities, attributes and characteristics as a destination from several perspectives including: the leisure visitor, the business visitor, the industry, residents and the public sector. These results were then used by the participants to develop a Vision Statement for Bellevue tourism.

Vision Statement:

Bellevue Washington seeks to be a premium, vibrant, gateway destination to the Greater Seattle Region for regional and international visitors, that delivers a number of unique shared experiences that inspire visitors to share with family and friends and come back again and again.

This Vision Statement reflects the acknowledgement and desire of industry stakeholders to maintain and capitalize on Bellevue's strengths as a high quality, safe and diverse destination that serves two major market segments (occasional convenience travelers and active adventure travelers) that enjoy visiting Bellevue time and again for shopping, restaurants and its hotels, and using Bellevue as a homebase to visit the Greater Seattle Regional Area.

The workshop then rated each of the individual opportunities against the Vision Statement to help build an analysis of seven priority criteria:

1. Situational Analysis Score
2. Cost to Implement
3. Impact on Resident Quality of Life
4. Total Economic Impact
5. Opportunity for Visit Bellevue Washington or Bellevue Economic Development to Impact
6. Timing to Implementation
7. Fulfillment of Vision Statement

The individual opportunities were sorted according to their total scores. Of the 39 opportunities, Six with the lowest scores were dropped from the list, 12 opportunities moved forward unchanged, and a final list of 18 opportunities were combined into 5 broader categories that reflect their collective and related features.

Online Community Engagement

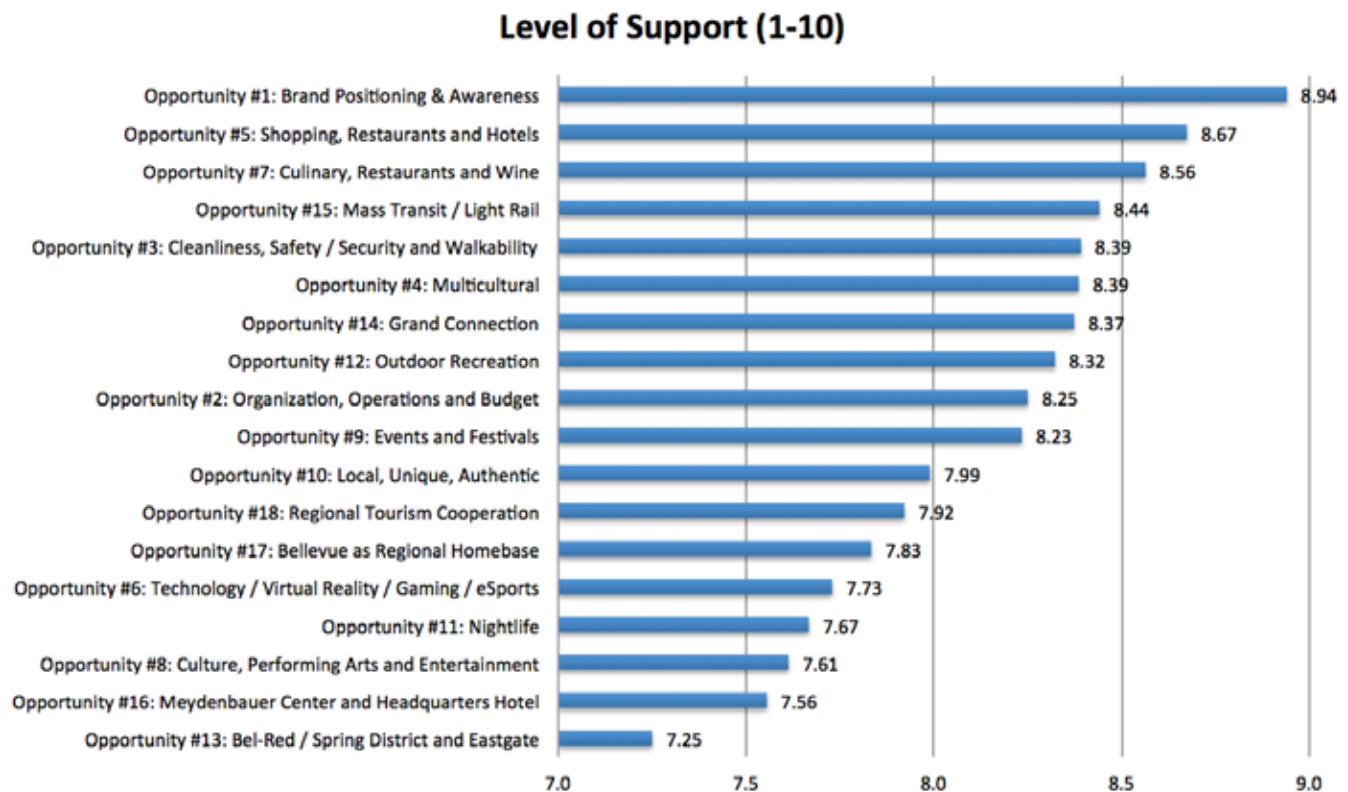
The narrowed list of 18 Opportunities was fleshed out by Resonance with additional definition and detailing, collection and illustration of best practice case studies from other destinations, and development / reporting of priority ranking for presentation in an Online Forum to understand preferences, assess priorities and collect general input from Bellevue stakeholders and residents. A copy of the priority ranking is attached at Appendix A.

Just after the July 4th holiday, Visit Bellevue Washington sent a document summarizing the 18 opportunities to approximately 200 Bellevue stakeholders for their feedback. The document was accompanied by an online

survey asking for stakeholder input regarding: which opportunities resonate, which are important, which will increase the quality of life for Bellevue residents, draw visitors and help Bellevue attract and retain businesses?

One hundred responses were received from the survey.

Based on the the results of the survey, all 18 opportunities scored in a tight cluster between 7.25 and 8.94 (on a scale of 1-10), and as a result, the project Steering Committee agreed to include all 18 opportunities in the Final Report.



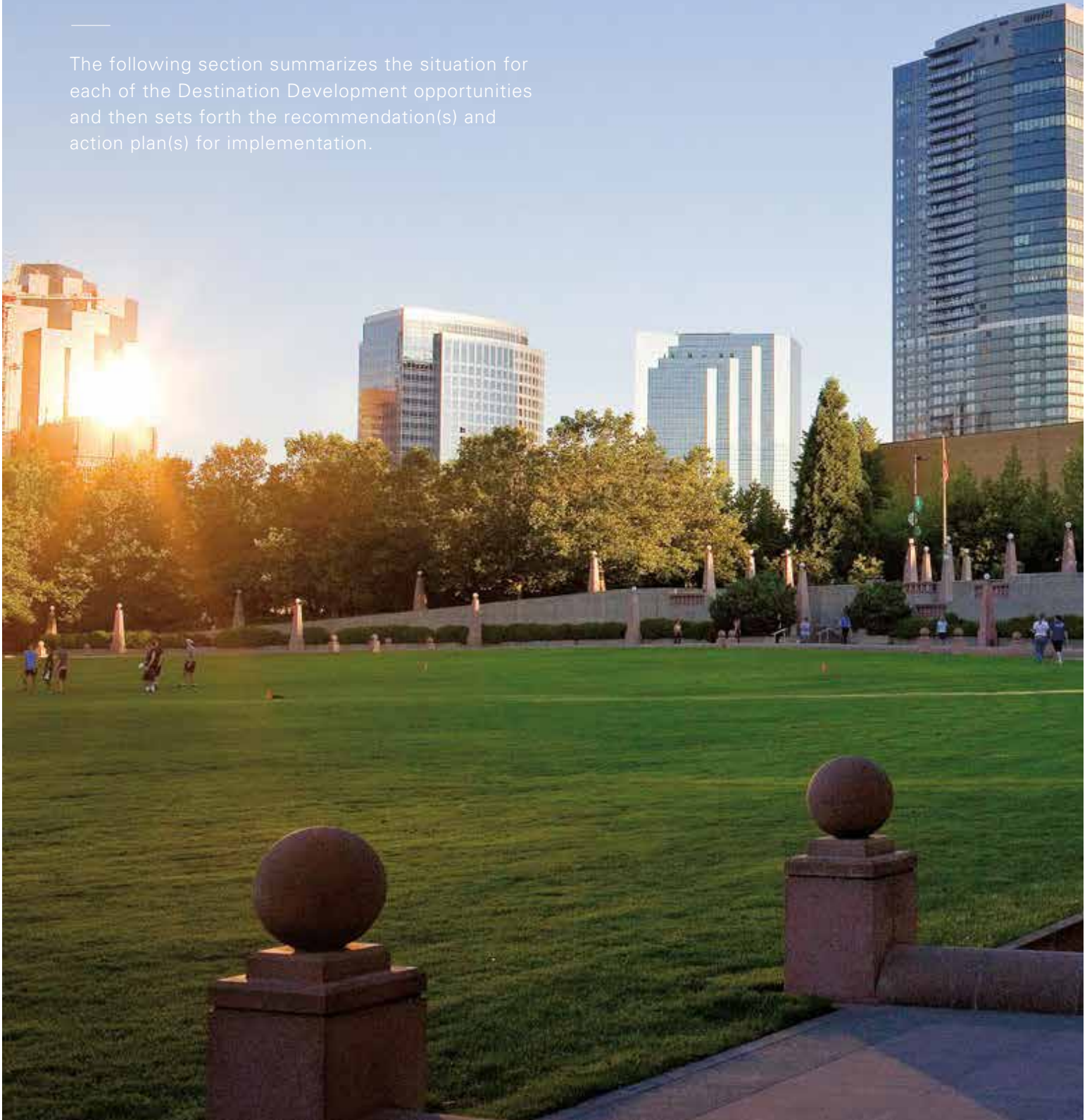
Final Stakeholder Engagement

With these results, Resonance then held a series of 13 online conference calls with Bellevue stakeholders, senior Meydenbauer Center and City management to collect ideas, as well as recommendations for actions and activities on how best to implement each of the recommendations.

This Final Report is a result of these activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION PLAN

The following section summarizes the situation for each of the Destination Development opportunities and then sets forth the recommendation(s) and action plan(s) for implementation.





01:

Brand Positioning & Awareness

Situation Summary:

Bellevue has not yet fully articulated its Destination Brand Strategy - a long-term plan for the region's brand that identifies its key audiences and articulates a brand proposition that will resonate with those audiences both today and in the future. With even greater marketing effort and destination development efforts targeted to its market segments, Bellevue tourism should enjoy long-term business development success.

Recommendation:

The Destination Brand Strategy for Bellevue should clearly define the destination's Brand Positioning and Brand Essence and utilize marketing, advertising, public relations and social media to reinforce Bellevue's character and message among the target audiences.

Please note, this recommendation does not suggest that Visit Bellevue should replace its current brand identity/logo, but rather examine its brand positioning to ensure alignment with the vision for the destination to define an overarching "Brand Essence" for the destination that succinctly articulates that positioning to guide and inform the creation of future marketing and communications initiatives.



Action Plan

Bellevue Brand and Marketing Strategy: Visit Bellevue will engage and work closely with a professional place branding and place marketing firm to develop a Brand Strategy, Brand Essence (ie. tagline) and Marketing Plan to attract business, meetings and leisure tourism to Bellevue.

- Bellevue Brand Strategy & Storyline - A positioning strategy that validates the business case for Bellevue and the audiences to be targeted with a narrative that defines and articulates an overarching Brand Essence for Bellevue, its relationship to other regional destination brands and its parent state brand.
- Bellevue Marketing Plan - With the brand established, the next step will be to create a Bellevue marketing plan to illustrate how the positioning will be brought to life through communications, advertising and engagement strategies.

Brand Strategy & Storyline

The Brand Strategy & Storyline articulates overarching aspirations, intentions and long-term goals for the development of a community and how it should be positioned and marketed as a destination relative to its competitive set. Components of the Brand Strategy & Storyline should include:



Marketing Plan

With the Brand Positioning and Brand Essence established, the next step will be to create a destination marketing plan to illustrate how the vision will be brought to life through communications, advertising and engagement strategies. The Marketing Plan recommends tactics and programs for the effective sharing of the brand messages with key constituencies and identifies the tools required to do so. The plan will identify actionable goals, resources and programs required to deliver the messaging and will be based on specific budget considerations. Who do you reach out to first? What do you say to them second? Where will messages be encountered?

The plan should detail recommendations for key tactical elements and components for achieving this and other objectives. It should also outline initial potential media opportunities, pitch topics and a target timeline for recommended communications activities. Finally, it should identify tactical recommendations for specific stakeholder audiences and grassroots activities, advertising and social media efforts among the general public.

The Bellevue Marketing Plan is anticipated to include, but is not necessarily limited to, detailed direction and information on items such as:

Media Outreach - Strategy and talking points for sharing key messaging with the media

Brand Launch - Program plan to introduce the new brand essence and the story behind it

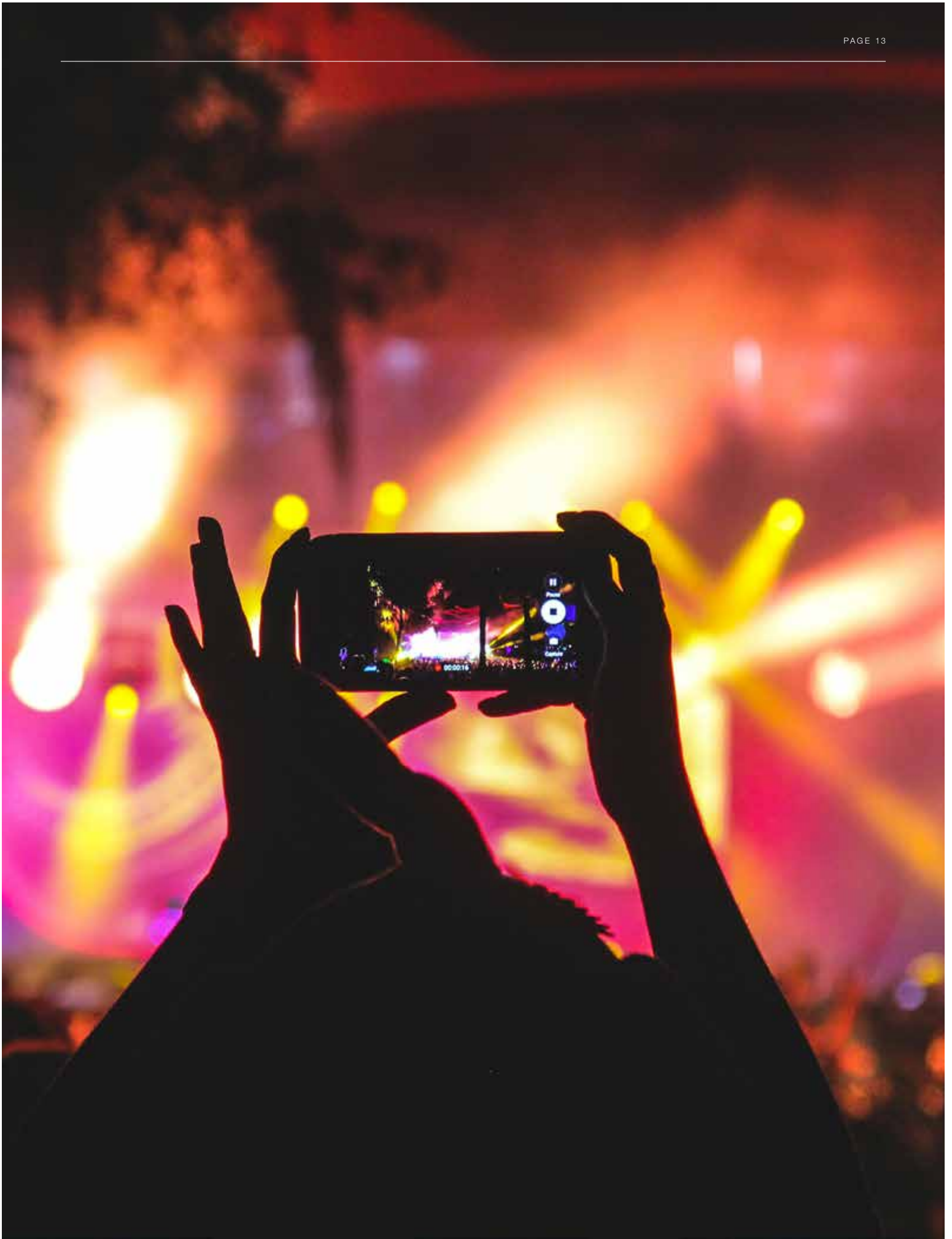
Destination Promotion and Collateral - Recommendations for creation of destination marketing materials in cooperation with other stakeholders to promote local and external visits to Bellevue through inclusion in locations such as government agencies and businesses including hospitality and retail establishments

Website - Strategic plan and content overview for an updated destination portal website

Digital Presence and Advertising - Strategy for ensuring digital presence, SEO rankings and creating and recommendations for implementing traditional and online advertising programs

Social Media - Strategy and content recommendations for planning and executing on-brand social media engagement

Budget & Schedule - Develop marketing management framework, budget and timeline



02:

Organization, Operations and Budget

Situation Summary:

Visit Bellevue Washington (VBW), which focuses on the leisure, meetings and business side of tourism in Bellevue, operates as a division of the Bellevue Convention Center Authority, which is funded by a city hotel tax. The budget allocated toward Visit Bellevue's marketing and promotion to visitors is modest and insufficient to reach a broad audience of potential visitors necessary to build week-long hotel occupancy and spending.

Recommendation:

The destination development strategy should explore the opportunities, benefits, limitations and logistics, and staffing structure of the VBW organization.



Action Plan

Independent DMMO: The Bellevue Convention Center Authority, which provides oversight for Meydenbauer Center and Visit Bellevue Washington, will continue to manage Visit Bellevue Washington while evolving it into a full service Destination Marketing and Management Organization (DMMO). Visit Bellevue Washington's Advisory Committee will continue to report to the Bellevue Convention Center Authority Board of Directors. Visit Bellevue Washington's funding will transition from a combination of Meydenbauer Center operating revenue, Bellevue's Transient Occupancy Tax and partner organizations into a newly dedicated funding structure. Initial estimates for VBW funding requirements are listed in section (VBW Budget Estimates) with annual totals ranging from \$2.4 to \$3.5 million. Charges for one-time, non-recurring projects are indicated separately in the VBW Budget Estimates pages - the total estimate is \$250,000.

Please note, for every 1% increase in weekend hotel occupancy, it is estimated that visitor spending in Bellevue will increase by more than \$2.3 million per year.

Full Service DMMO: The newly organized Visit Bellevue Washington will become a full service DMMO responsible for:

- Implementing the Bellevue Destination Development Plan;
- Managing all destination and product development activities for Bellevue;
- Generating public relations and communications stories and content for Bellevue as a premier destination;
- Delivering sales and servicing of all Bellevue group, meetings and conventions business; and
- Marketing and promoting Bellevue to all visitor markets (leisure, group, business and meetings, domestic and international).

Visit Bellevue Washington responsibilities for marketing and promotion will include:

Branding (see Recommendation #1)

Tourism Research - VBW should collect, purchase, maintain and communicate basic and detailed tourism statistics, research and information (nationally, statewide and countywide) on a regular basis to monitor, identify opportunities / threats and educate / inform industry stakeholders on recent trends, current results and future business outlook.

Website and Social Media Engagement - VBW should continue to build and enhance its digital marketing, promotions and communications resources and delivery by investing in in-house technology, personnel and activities that are leading edge or by commissioning and managing an outside vendor(s) that can deliver a customized solution that achieves Bellevue's digital goals and objectives.

Public Relations and Communications (see Recommendation #10)

Meetings, Conventions and Groups Marketing and Sales - VBW should continue to further establish and develop Bellevue as a premier destination (regional, state, national and international) for convention, event and groups by providing targeted sales efforts, quality servicing of event organizers and their events, and delivery of high quality travel and tourism products and services.

Visitor Information Centers - VBW will seek to balance physical visitor information centers (permanent, mobile and special event) and their associated staffing and volunteers, and hard copy requirements with the developing trend toward greater online and mobile phone technologies, applications and delivery of visitor information.

Collateral Materials - VBW should continue to produce a series of visitor guides, maps, itineraries and other marketing collateral to inspire and guide existing and potential visitors to Bellevue.

Regional and State-wide Cooperation (see Recommendation #18)

Professional Development - VBW should organize, facilitate and deliver professional development services associated with travel and tourism marketing and promotion, PR and communications and digital / social media engagement as well as quality customer services to Bellevue travel and tourism operators, city agencies and organizations.

Tourism Improvement District: The City of Bellevue, in conjunction with the Bellevue Convention Center Authority, will create a Tourism Improvement District (TID) to provide dedicated funding for the newly independent VBW and the activities and programs that it will direct and manage for the implementation of the Destination Development Plan. Based on the current annual rooms nights (1.3-1.5 million), it is thought that a TID of \$1 to \$2 per room night would generate competitive funding for an independent VBW. The City of Bellevue and BCCA will engage a professional services firm that specializes in creating and operating tourism improvement districts to assist in the effort for Bellevue.

VBW Executive Director: The Bellevue Convention Center Authority, will establish and hire the position of VBW Executive Director, who will be responsible for the creation, organizational development, strategy and operations of the full service Destination Marketing and Management Organization (DMMO).



The Power of Travel Promotion

Please note that it's not unusual for a DMMO to be challenged on the value or return on its tourism marketing investment. It's a natural and healthy question, and we encourage all tourism stakeholders to engage with DMMOs, including Visit Bellevue Washington, to ask the tough questions and make sure their tourism marketing investment is being spent wisely. With that said, if invested strategically and tactically, tourism marketing investment can definitely deliver for their destinations.

According to the US Travel Association's 2017 report, The Power of Travel Promotion:

World-class companies invest heavily to build brands and win customer loyalty. Brand-building investments in advertising, marketing and promotion can distinguish products, inspire consumers and separate successful brands from the market's also-rans.

What is true for consumer products is equally true for travel destinations. In today's highly competitive global marketplace, consumers have more choices than ever when it comes to mobile phones, cars, shampoo, soda—and travel options.

Like any product, travel destinations are brands that require investment to remain relevant, attractive and competitive. Destination marketing has proven effective at inspiring interest in a destination, growing tourism and supporting local businesses. A strong track record proves most states have more to gain by continually tapping into the power of promotion.

Travel provides essential support to state and local governments. Travel generated \$148 billion in total tax revenue in 2015. Without this impact, each U.S. household would pay \$1,200 more in taxes every year.

Investing in travel promotion generates a virtuous cycle of economic benefits. Travelers visiting a destination spend money at local attractions, hotels, retail, restaurants and transportation. Promotion also improves the quality of life for residents, offering a positive "halo effect" on perceptions of a destination for residents and visitors alike.

Investing in destination marketing drives broad economic growth. In fact, destinations with a higher concentration of visitor-related industries tend to grow faster than other regions. And growth in travel and tourism employment in a destination tends to be followed by a 1.5-percent rise in broader employment.

The situation for Bellevue is no different. To effectively capitalize on the opportunity for attracting new visitors to Bellevue and growing the industry, VBW must competitively fund and invest in destination marketing activities.

03:

Cleanliness, Safety / Security and Walkability

Situation Summary:

Although no destination wants to focus its time and energy on safety, security or cleanliness, research has shown that these criteria continue to be at the top of the list of destination attributes that visitors are seeking, and if they are missing or if there is an event that creates negative PR and communications, visitors are quick to book another destination. Attention and contingency planning are key to safety, security, cleanliness and walkability.

Although Bellevue enjoys an excellent reputation for a clean, safe / secure and walkable destination, it only takes one incident hitting the news and multiplied exponentially on social media to create a crisis of confidence and negative public relations. So, for Bellevue tourism, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Recommendation:

The fundamental character of Bellevue as a clean, safe / secure and walkable destination must be preserved and employed as important elements of the destination development strategy.



Action Plan

Visitor Safety and Security Program: Visit Bellevue and other community partners will work closely with the Bellevue Police Department to implement a series of tourism-related policing strategies:

- Educate tourists to reduce their risk of victimization.
- Encourage hotels and motels to adopt practices that will reduce guest victimization.
- Recommend changes to the physical environment to reduce opportunities for tourist crimes. Such measures might include putting up appropriate signs for visitors at key locations to prevent them from becoming lost or a traffic hazard, or inadvertently going into high-risk areas.
- To identify and address crime-related concerns.
- Engage police representatives to participate on the Visit Bellevue board and work with Meydenbauer Center, hotels, shops, restaurants and bars to understand tourism-related problems and concerns, and to develop joint crime prevention programs. Police should provide ongoing information about local crime to tourism officials.
- Assist police and private security staff to recognize and address tourist-related safety concerns.
- Help police and private security staff to know what particular crime risks tourists face, what resources are available, and how to access those resources.
- Help police to be prepared to help tourists access emergency shelters, transportation systems, and foreign embassies, and help them navigate the various criminal justice processes.

Certified Tourism Ambassador™ Program: Visit Bellevue will implement the Certified Tourism Ambassador™ (CTA) program, which is an industry-recognized certification that aligns the destination's people infrastructure its stakeholder businesses and front-line to increase tourism by enhancing the visitor experience. The program drives visitor spending through in-depth knowledge of the destination; gives destinations a competitive advantage; and ensures consistent delivery of a positive destination experience.

Downtown Sanitation Associates Program: Visit Bellevue will work with the Bellevue Downtown Association to consider the creation and deployment of uniformed sanitation associates to keep downtown Bellevue clean and beautiful for residents and visitors around the clock. Downtown Sanitation Associates work to:

- Sweep the sidewalks and curbsides
- Empty public litter baskets & solar powered recycle bins
- Remove graffiti
- Paint light poles, security gates, fire hydrants and newsstands
- Vacuum, scrub, wash and disinfect sidewalks
- Collect and remove garbage bags using the program's own sanitation truck

04:

Multicultural

Situation Summary:

Bellevue's development as a high tech corporate headquarters city has resulted in a culturally diverse population of residents and workforce that is rare and unique to the Greater Seattle Area, Washington State and the United States. In fact, few other places can claim the ethnic diversity of people that live and work in Bellevue, where more than 50% of the population is made up of minority ethnic groups, creating a rich tapestry of culture, arts, heritage, cuisine, entertainment, music and more that the destination could and should tap to add richness to its product portfolio.

Recommendation:

The destination development strategy needs to explore and incorporate the ethnic and cultural diversity of Bellevue as a key tourism asset and make it an important element of the strategy.



Action Plan

Development Plan and Tourism Boards: Visit Bellevue will infuse diversity and inclusion across all recommendations of the Destination Development Plan including, but not limited to, the makeup of all tourism directors, advisory and planning boards. As most modern, energetic cities have purposely broadened their councils, strategies, events and hospitality infrastructure to include a diversity of age and race, this produces a broader set of thinking, ideas, and experiences that will strengthen Bellevue's destination proposition – and create ambassadors in the process.

Multicultural Tourism Marketing Committee: Visit Bellevue will create a multicultural tourism marketing committee to focus the brand, strategy, plans and marketing dollars to capture a larger share of the multicultural visitor market. While many tourism activities such as shopping and events already receive visitation from multicultural visitors, it is believed that more would come and spend more money if they were specially invited and introduced to additional vibrant experiences within the destination.

Multicultural Tourism Events: Visit Bellevue will work to diversify the assortment of major tourism events by introducing and featuring events that appeal to all sectors of the community and resonate with multicultural visitors. For example, Visit Bellevue should feature and promote the Cultural Crossroads Festival - a 3-day multicultural celebration featuring performances from over 35 ethnic music and dance groups, and an international bazaar filled with handmade crafts and world cuisines - to a broader market of out-of-town visitors. Bellevue should also explore the opportunity for developing or growing an event or festival focused on its Chinese heritage and growing Chinese visitor market such as the Bellevue Collection's Lunar New Year.

Cultural Trail: Visit Bellevue and the City of Bellevue will work with the ethnic Chambers of Commerce and travel and tourism community to establish a Cultural Trail for Bellevue, building on the city's rich and important tapestry of ethnic and cultural experiences (culinary, music, performances and events). By connecting and packaging individual experiences in Bellevue into a "trail", it strengthens the proposition for ethnic visitors to the city, reduces the search cost for visitors who are seeking these activities, affords Bellevue the opportunity to boast a larger offering, and encourages the creators of these experiences to produce more and add them to the portfolio.

Multicultural Arts: The City of Bellevue's arts program manager, will work with existing arts organizations to establish a Multicultural Arts Council that creates new dynamic multicultural experiences that strengthen visitation opportunities to Bellevue and supplements existing venues and experiences by diversifying their offerings.

05:

Shopping, Restaurants and Hotels

Situation Summary:

When visitors were asked what the most important factors are for selecting Bellevue as a place to visit, they overwhelmingly said places to stay, places to eat and drink, and shopping, which lines up particularly well for Bellevue when compared to the list of 14 competitive destinations. For example, in the categories of Shopping and Hotels, Bellevue places first amongst the competitive set and for Restaurants, Bellevue places 3rd amongst the competitive set.

Recommendation:

Bellevue's hotels, restaurants and shops must continue to be diligent and striving to maintain their high levels of service quality and delivery.



Action Plan

Quality Performance Monitoring: Visit Bellevue will continue to monitor and report its tourism quality performance vis-a-vis its competitive set and the initial benchmark results established during this project as well as conduct and report regular visitor surveys / intercepts to identify issues and opportunities associated with its overall tourism asset portfolio and individual establishments. Visit Bellevue will share this information with business owners and operators, where necessary and appropriate, to address important issues that may impact the quality of the Bellevue visitor experience. This information will be used to understand failings or weaknesses, develop quality improvement programs and to agree what can be done to improve the quality of services.

Social Media Workshops: Visit Bellevue will organize and host a regular series of workshops / seminars to educate and inform tourism establishments and other stakeholders about their engagement with and response to important social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, TripAdvisor, Expedia, Yelp, Kayak and others that may have an impact on their business reputation, reviews and exposure. Visit Bellevue will also encourage its tourism establishments to subscribe to the business operator services of these social media platforms and take advantage of the business promotion and monitoring mechanisms they offer.

Tourism Business Awards: Visit Bellevue will create and operate an annual Bellevue Tourism Business Awards program to recognize and celebrate tourism-related businesses, employees, marketing and promotion campaigns, communications and PR efforts and events in Bellevue that reflect the ideals of high-quality tourism experience and service.

Certified Tourism Ambassador™ Program: See details for “Cleanliness, Safety / Security and Walkability”.

06:

Technology / Virtual Reality / Gaming / eSports

Situation Summary:

The Economic Development Council of Seattle & King County recently described Bellevue as “a major regional employment center where Information Technology companies are not only the largest employers in Bellevue, but also the fastest growing. The city’s IT employers attract the best talent from around world. Bellevue has even become an interactive media hub with several AAA (blockbuster) studios and a thriving indie gaming community.”

Recommendation:

Bellevue’s strengths in Technology, VR, Gaming and eSports are a unique asset that should be factored into the destination development strategy.



Action Plan

High Tech Workgroup: Visit Bellevue and the City of Bellevue Economic Development Department will create, organize, direct and manage a collection of technology, virtual reality, gaming and esports companies to form a high tech workgroup to vision, discuss and consider opportunities for an event, festival or attraction that could reflect their individual or collective research, talent, work, products or activities that would also benefit Bellevue as a visitor destination. It is suggested that Microsoft, Valve, Bungie and ArenaNet - NCsoft, Glu Mobile, Motiga and Sucker Punch Productions be key participants in this process.

The workgroup will review and consider best practice case studies of destinations that feature their brands and collective industrial strength in unique and interesting ways that serve as a pat on the back but also exist as important attractions to create visitor demand such as The Future of Flight Aviation Center & Boeing Tour, The National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum and The Intel Museum.

The workgroup will also review and consider unique events and festivals such as South by Southwest, C2 Montreal, or esports events such as The International and how they might translate to events and festivals for Bellevue.

These examples will serve as a primer of what has been done in other destinations and what could be done in Bellevue.

The workgroup will then create a vision for connecting Bellevue's high tech community and companies into the destination development plan.

Next, the workgroup will develop, define and articulate high tech destination development opportunities for vetting and feasibility analysis by Visit Bellevue and the City of Bellevue Economic Development Department.

Once an opportunity is agreed for undertaking by Visit Bellevue and the City of Bellevue Economic Development Department, the High Tech Workgroup will be engaged for partnership and assistance in moving forward.

07:

Culinary, Restaurants and Wine

Situation Summary:

The UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) recently released a new report on Gastronomy Tourism and found that seventy-five percent of Americans feel that food and dining are an important part of their trips and four in five say they have engaged in activities such as touring wineries and distilleries, eating with local families and engaging in hands-on experiences such as cooking classes led by local chefs while traveling. And, AAA estimates that some 22 million Americans expect to take a culinary-focused vacation in the next 12 months.

Although Bellevue is not particularly known as a culinary capital, a large portion of its visitors suggest that Bellevue's restaurants are one of the key reasons they visit the destination. Bellevue is nearby and serves as a home base for visitors enjoying the wineries and tasting rooms of Woodinville.

Recommendation:

The destination development strategy should embrace culinary (restaurants, chefs, events, experiences) and wine tourism as an important focus of its plan and grow, build and develop Bellevue as an important culinary and wine destination.



Action Plan

Culinary Tourism Strategy and Action Plan: Visit Bellevue will develop and implement a Culinary Tourism Strategy and Action Plan to celebrate and capitalize on the excellent food and beverage offerings in Bellevue and its regional suppliers of ingredients, craft brew and wines.

The culinary tourism development strategy will cover a broad selection of travel activities including: featured chefs, food, wine and beer festivals and events; tours of farms and artisanal production facilities; immersive food tours; cooking classes and wine tastings; accommodations with F&B offerings; farm-to-table restaurant dining and educational events; and farmers' markets. Agritourism, where travelers visit working farms, is also a growing opportunity.

The following actions for Bellevue's Culinary Tourism Strategy have been adopted from "The Rise of Food Tourism", a Special Report from the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance + Skift. Visit Bellevue will:

Create a Culinary Tourism Network of like-minded hospitality and tourism suppliers, people and companies, who are passionate about local food travel experiences. Participants should be committed to supporting the people in the community who produce and prepare the local food and beverage product. The communal network needs to be open and available to all stakeholders. It almost goes without saying that the more independent, locally focused and like-minded that participating companies are, the better.

Collaborate to build culinary experiences with the network to develop a well-rounded culinary tourism infrastructure. Once a network of suppliers is established, Visit Bellevue will crowdsource as many ideas as possible to create immersive local destination experiences. It will also seek out different potential partnerships integrating meals, tours, tastings, lodging, education and entertainment to develop dynamic product opportunities. Visit Bellevue will determine how all of these experiences can help deliver advocacy for the community and support special events.

Create special events and social media promotions for interdisciplinary events that combine culinary and other cultural activities to attract multiple markets and expand the audience beyond just hardcore food fanatics, so people who actually produce and prepare the F&B in Bellevue are able to engage with visitors at the event. Special events will be used as good business drivers, because participants and the media will assist in their promotion through their personal and professional social networks. Visit Bellevue will build social media contests aligned with the events, coordinate the online conversation and commit the necessary resources required to do it well.

Develop visually engaging campaigns with an educational message. Visit Bellevue promotional campaigns will show how the local culinary experience is unique to the destination by specifying local F&B industry personalities, their products, and the different venues and environments that visitors can explore. Culinary tourists are interested in learning about new food and their cultural contexts in a dramatic locale, so those elements will be expressed in all promotional vehicles. High-impact professional photography will be used, and supplemented with a collaborative source of user-generated photos to build organic consumer engagement.

Measure everything and share it. Visit Bellevue will create benchmarks that define the overall business goals. These will be broken down as much as possible by market segments and industry sectors to gauge what works well and what needs to be reworked during regular performance reviews. Once those metrics are baselined, they will be shared to create trust among all stakeholders, drive a culture of collaboration, and motivate individual participants to maintain their levels of commitment.

Specific concepts to be considered in the Bellevue Culinary Tourism Strategy might include:

“Bite of Bellevue” modeled after the Dine Out Vancouver (BC) Festival.

Tourism Vancouver’s Dine Out™ Vancouver Festival is Canada’s largest annual food and drink festival, attracting over 100,000 local and visiting food enthusiasts to experience the city’s exceptionally diverse culinary scene.

The festival gives diners the opportunity to select from hundreds of restaurants each offering unique three (or more) course prix-fix meals at \$20, \$30 or \$40 per person, many complemented by the Wines of British Columbia, and craft beer or cocktails.

Over the 17 days of the festival, a delicious schedule of culinary events allows festival goers to enjoy unique culinary experiences not available throughout the rest of the year. These can include guided dining adventures, brunch crawls, cooking classes and cocktail masterclasses, dinner and film pairings, debates, guest Chef lectures, BC VQA wine and craft beer tastings, street food markets and more!

Special low rates for hotel rooms and a host of dine-and-stay packages complete the festival experience giving those visitors that want a true ‘night on the town’, exclusive accommodation options for the duration of their festival stay.

Source: dineoutvancouver.com

“Tasting Bellevue” modeled after the Tasting Australia Festival.

Tasting Australia is a journey of South Australia’s produce from paddock to plate.

Since 1997, Tasting Australia has been one of Australia’s most anticipated culinary festivals.

Tasting Australia is a journey of South Australia’s produce from paddock to plate and a celebration of real food heroes.

Tasting Australia started as a media focused festival, led by Ian Parmenter and the Consuming Passions team. In 2014 the event took a new direction with the management brought within Events South Australia (ESA) - the State Government’s major events arm - under the leadership of chef and television personality Simon Bryant, wine expert Paul Henry, and Australian food icon Maggie Beer assuming her post as patron.

The eight-day festival surpasses just eating and drinking to uncover what South Australia's food-scene is all about: crusading local and seasonal produce; promoting its diverse culture; championing premium producers; indulging in a kaleidoscope of tastes and being treated to unforgettable dining experiences.

Food-lovers from across the globe will descend on Adelaide and South Australia's surrounding regions to immerse themselves in Tasting Australia.

From the farmgate to Town Square, at the Adelaide Central Market or in the vineyards of the Adelaide Hills where world-renowned natural wines begin their journey, there is no better place to discover and taste Australia's best than in South Australia.

Source: www.tastingaustralia.com.au

Bellevue Winery Collective modeled after the Winery Collective in San Francisco.

Winery Collective is San Francisco's multi-winery tasting room focused on boutique wineries. Winery Collective provides a unique experience allowing visitors to taste wines from dozens of small wineries across California right in San Francisco without having to travel to each of the wine regions. Meet winemakers, explore wine samplers, and experience wine country across California from Napa Valley to Santa Barbara while wine tasting in San Francisco.

Source: winerycollective.com

Bellevue Food or Beer or Wine Trail modeled after the Burren Food Trail.

We invite you to join us & get involved in our Burren food story. We are passionate about our food, growing and producing it locally for you to enjoy. Burren Food Trail is more than a listing of quality food establishments in the area – it aims to uncover for you the path that your food takes from field to plate. You can decide for yourself how to follow the trail – stop at every point or else dip in and out along the way, according to your taste, interest and location.

The members of the Burren Food Trail are bound by their commitment to building a sustainable future for the region. Each of the featured restaurants offers a Burren Food Trail Signature Dish to savour. Each member has achieved recognised quality awards and standards, and has also signed up to the Burren Food Trail Customer Promise: you will find staff who are knowledgeable about the regional food story, menus which state the source of local produce, information on local food events and markets as well as a commitment to maximise the use of local ingredients in all prepared food.

Explore the stories of the foods to the Burren through our themed trails. With five trails to choose from you can meet the producers, see the produce being made and taste the wonderful foods of the Burren.

- The Garden Market Trail
- Farm To Fork Trail
- Taste of The Ocean Trail
- Nature Child Trail
- Burren Cheese Trail

Source: www.burren.ie/food-dining/burren-food-trail/

Bellevue Central Market modeled after the West Side Market in Cleveland, Ohio.

Today, West Side Market is home to over 100 vendors of great ethnic diversity where you can find fine meats and fresh vegetables, fresh seafood, baked goods, dairy and cheese products, and even fresh flowers. Last year it is estimated that more than one million people visited the market.

With origins of the land dating back to 1840, the West Side Market is Cleveland's oldest publicly owned market. Beginning as an open air marketplace on a tract of land donated by two Ohio City landowners, Josiah Barber and Richard Lord, at the corner of West 25th (Pearl) and Lorain, it has undergone much growth and many improvements to arrive at its current form. The centerpiece of the market, the yellow brick markethouse with an interior concourse, was designed by the architects Benjamin Hubbel and W. Dominick Benes who also designed other famous buildings in Cleveland, such the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Wade Memorial Chapel in Lakeview Cemetery. The markethouse was dedicated and opened to the public in 1912. Its 137-foot clock tower has stood as a Cleveland landmark for over a century.

Tourists from all over the world tour the market every year drawn by television programs produced by the Travel Channel and Food Network featuring segments on the West Side Market. Whether as a day-tour destination or a weekly shopping experience, the West Side Market continues to be an interesting and historical Cleveland tradition.



08:

Culture, Performing Arts and Entertainment

Situation Summary:

Bellevue is definitely not able to compete with Seattle for cultural activities or performances, but residents and visitors alike have suggested that they might engage in these activities more often in Bellevue if they were offered, so as to avoid the traffic, congestion and inconvenience of commuting to Seattle. Further, visitors have indicated that they would definitely like to see more live music and shows in Bellevue, and are definitely interested in The Tateuchi Center – a 2,000-seat concert hall that is proposed for downtown Bellevue – which is currently in the process of raising funds for development.

Recommendation:

The destination development strategy should explore the opportunity presented by the proposed Tateuchi Center for building Bellevue's culture, performing arts, live music and shows.





Action Plan

Creative Economy Strategy: Visit Bellevue will work with the City of Bellevue Economic Development Department and its hired consultant to contribute to, review and comment on, and assist in the implementation of the Creative Economy Strategy for Bellevue now being undertaken by the City.

The Creative Economy Strategy will define the nature and role of the creative economy in Bellevue, provide an analysis of the growth potential of specific creative industries, define how the city and other major stakeholders can support the development and growth of these industries, and prioritize strategic actions and investments in the creative sector over the short and long term for implementation. The Strategy is intended to answer such questions as:

- What arts, cultural and creative opportunities and services does the Bellevue community value?
- What is the vision for Bellevue's creative industries in 2021 (3 years) and 2028 (10 years)?
- How can the City facilitate this vision?
- What strategic opportunities are available to creative sector stakeholders?
- What are the short (2021) and long term (2028) strategies and tactics for implementation?
- What are the necessary roles for the public and private sector in ensuring the arts receive the financing and support they need to meet strategic goals?

Once the Creative Economy Strategy is complete, Visit Bellevue will work with the Department of Economic Development to implement the recommendations and action plans from the strategy that fall under its jurisdiction, responsibility and abilities.

09:

Events and Festivals

Situation Summary:

Several organizations including the Bellevue Downtown Association and the Bellevue Special Events Committee are involved in the development and hosting of important events and festivals that add richness, vitality and economic contribution to the city. However these efforts tend to be individualistic, isolated and do not necessarily deliver the full potential to residents and visitors. Visitors have also suggested that they would return more often for new / more events and festivals.

Recommendation:

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





Action Plan

Events & Festival Strategy: Visit Bellevue will work with the Bellevue Downtown Association, the Bellevue Special Events Committee, major events producers and organizers, and industry stakeholders to create an arts, cultural and sports Events & Festival Strategy to set forth the vision, goals, strategy and plans for creating, incubating and facilitating visitor-related events and festivals in Bellevue that increase economic contribution from visitors and enhance the quality of life for residents.

Events & Festival Council: Visit Bellevue will facilitate an Events & Festivals Council of event and festival organizers, developers and operators, plus city and town agencies, venue managers and other interested parties to:

- Agree to a vision and strategy for Bellevue supported arts, cultural and sports events and festivals
- Identify and articulate detailed funding criteria for arts, cultural and sports events and festivals that will be supported by Bellevue organized sources
- Encourage coordination of events and festivals to maximize timing and impact, while reducing seasonality swings and unsustainable high-volume visitor traffic

Visit Bellevue will also engage with this Council to organize communication, marketing and promotion of Bellevue supported events as well as other events and festivals not supported by the City, but nevertheless of potential interest to Bellevue visitors.

Events & Festival Development Fund: Visit Bellevue will create, manage and administer an Events & Festivals Development Fund available to create, incubate, market and promote, manage, direct and facilitate events and festivals in Bellevue that fulfill grant criteria and deliver Key Performance Indicator results set forth by the Event & Festival Strategy.

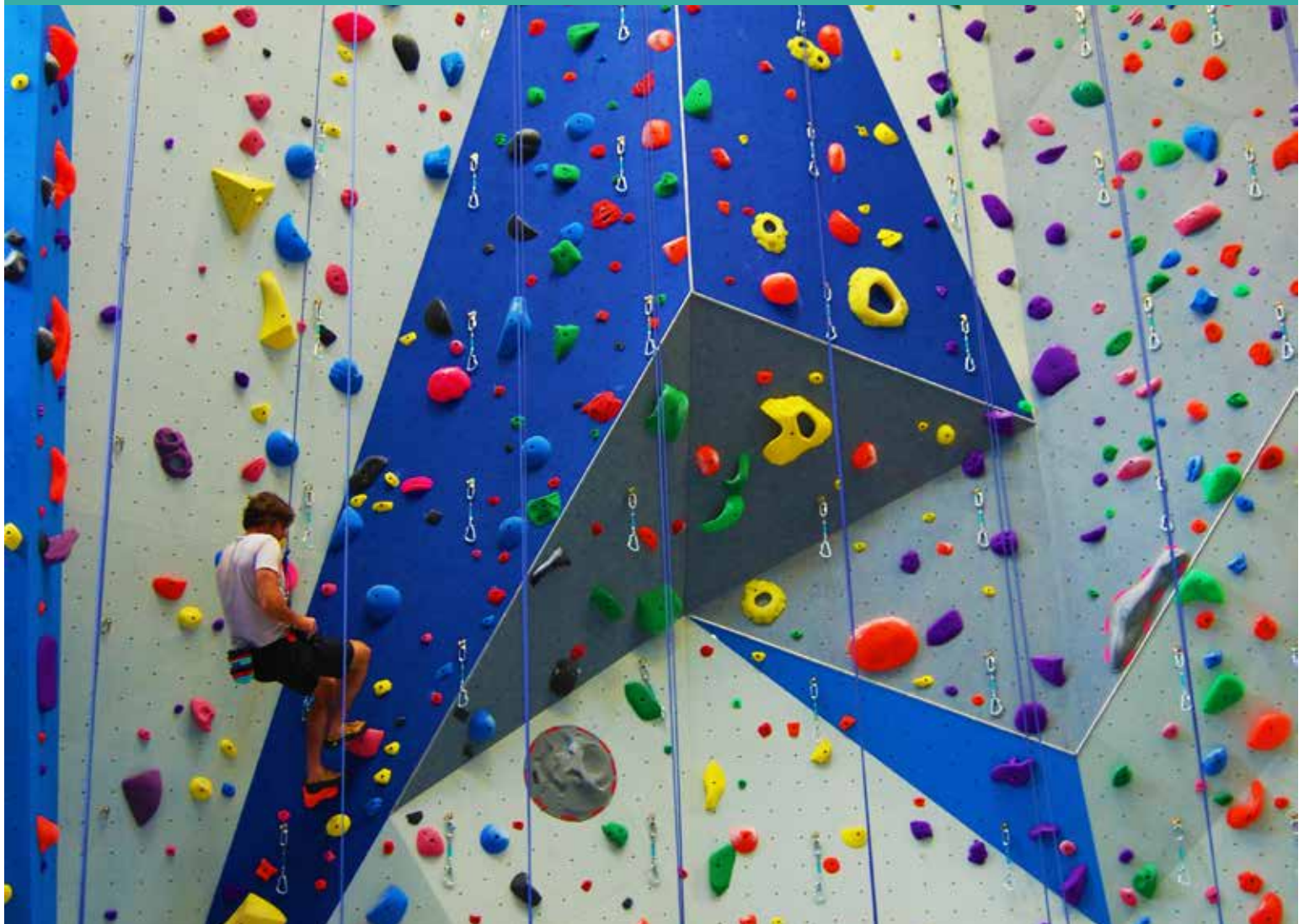
10: Communications & Storytelling

Situation Summary:

As a relatively new community and visitor destination, Bellevue has had a difficult time articulating its local, unique and authentic personality and stories that visitors seek out when they are selecting or visiting a destination.

Recommendation:

Bellevue should better articulate the actual visitor experience, and improve its storytelling and communications.



Action Plan

Content Development and Social Media Engagement: Visit Bellevue will become a “curator of destination content” following recommendations produced by Destination International’s Destination Next Futures Study.

An introduction regarding content strategy from “Destination Next Futures Study - Curators of Destination Content” follows.

With ubiquitous access to information channels and content publishing tools, the lines between content creator and consumer are effectively blurred. And with the proliferation of multiple content delivery platforms/formats, there is no longer a definitive travel information channel. The marketplace is now a conversation and content is indeed king.

The traditional marketplace messaging channel in destination marketing has been disrupted. Consumers are looking for ready access to consistently compelling and relevant content about authentic destination experiences to make their search for travel guidance easier and less risky.

Destination organizations need to evolve their role from information channel manager to content curator and story-teller. They need to focus on development and delivery of compelling content in formats and on platforms that visitors are embracing. This will mean a shift from static to dynamic media formats like video delivered in a mobile environment instead of the desktop. A key element will be the requirement for destination organizations to acquire the necessary content development competencies as part of their organizations.

The following actions for Bellevue have been adopted from DI’s Destination Next Futures Study - Curators of Destination Content. Visit Bellevue will:

- Create a senior management position responsible for destination PR / Communications with responsibility for Content Curation and dedicated staff and/or outside professional services to cover all aspects of Social Media.
- Invest more effort and resources into photographic and video content to market the destination.
- Focus significant attention on content creation and dissemination strategies. Content creation can be generated in-house or commissioned from 3rd party sources.
- Develop ways to connect with customers through all stages of their experience, from awareness to interest to booking to visiting to post-visit.
- Place greater emphasis on engaging with customers in two-way conversations thru social media.
- Participate more in building platforms to improve visitor experience.

Specifically, Visit Bellevue will employ digital and social media marketing strategies to inspire, engage and activate regional, national and international visitors to Bellevue through:

- Proprietary website platforms
- Social media channels
- Digital marketing and social campaigns
- Online photography and video

Proprietary Website Platform

The VisitBellevueWashington.com website is the consumer-facing online identity that visitors associate with travel to Bellevue. Visit Bellevue will consider expanding this site to meet the needs of domestic and international visitors as they journey through the travel lifecycle.

Social Media Channels

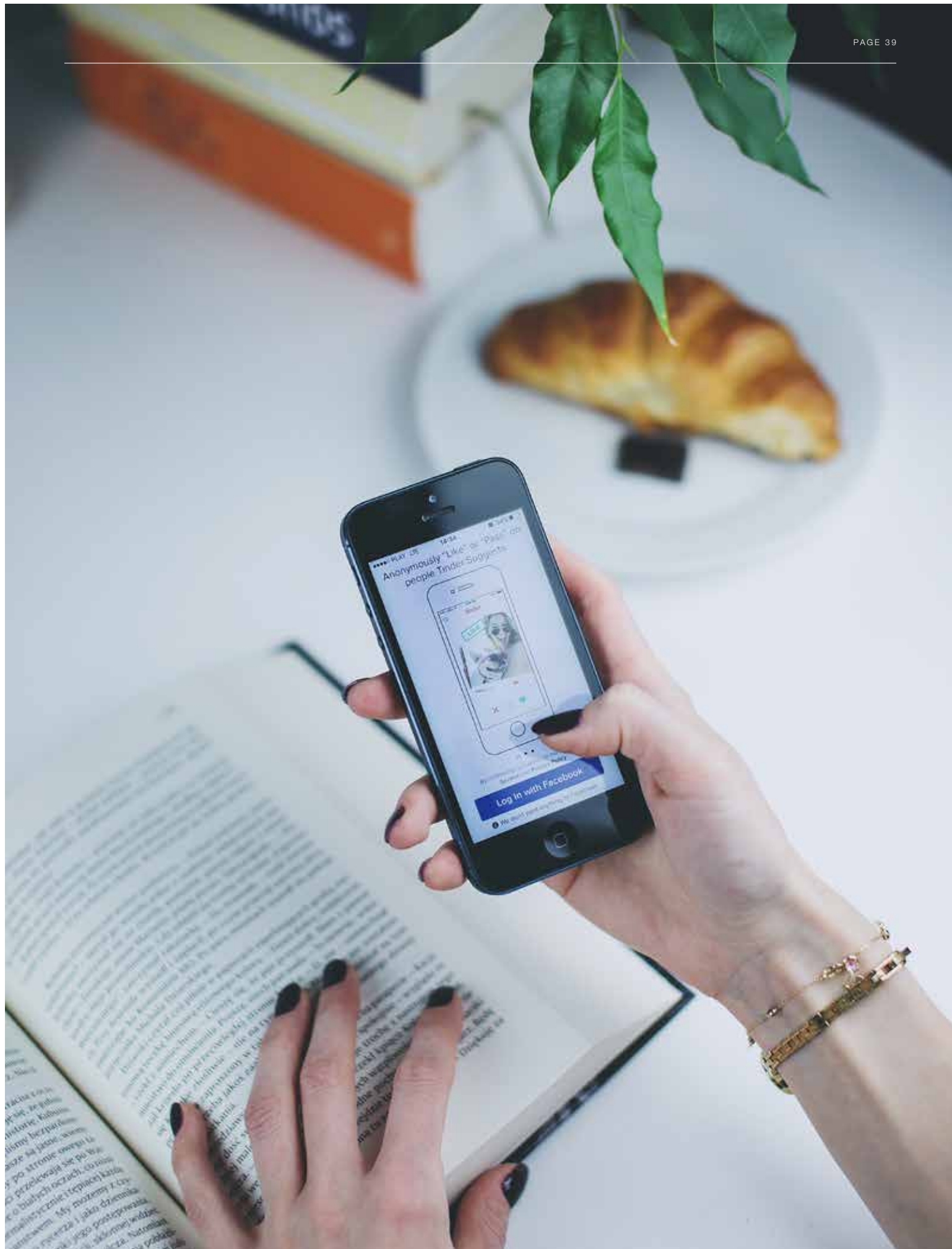
Visit Bellevue will also leverage related social media accounts in consumer-facing content and communications including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, Blogs, Google+ and Instagram.

Digital Marketing and Social Campaigns

Visit Bellevue's digital team will apply their marketing insights to create market- and culturally-relevant social media content and campaigns. In addition to engaging visitors through ongoing conversations via social media channels, Visit Bellevue will also develop a variety of custom programming that showcases the Bellevue experience and inspires visitors to visit Bellevue. Visit Bellevue will also cultivate a group of social media influencers who will share their experiences blogging and posting photos and videos of their Bellevue visits to further support Visit Bellevue's communications efforts with comprehensive digital content and promotion plans, as well as functionality on Visit Bellevue's main website that will move visitors from inspiration to action by providing them the tools to plan and create their own Bellevue visit and share their experiences.

Online Photography and Video

Visit Bellevue will use an increasing amount of online photography and video to connect with visitors-particularly in the inspirational phases of the travel lifecycle. By creating and cultivating content on the main website and social media channels, Visit Bellevue will be able to increase familiarity and affinity for Bellevue with visitors in the target markets.



11: Nightlife

Situation Summary:

When asked “What is nightlife like in Bellevue, WA?”, one resident suggested that:

“The majority of people out and about on a typical night in Bellevue are married business travelers who have to get up and go to meetings at Microsoft the following morning.
People who live in the suburbs of Bellevue go to Bellevue for nightlife.
People who live in Bellevue go to Seattle for nightlife.
People who live in Seattle stay in Seattle for nightlife.”

In fact, only 36% of Bellevue’s nightlife establishments are rated as “quality” places for nightlife, while more than 55% of shopping is rated as “quality” shopping.

Recommendation:

The destination development strategy should target the improvement of Bellevue nightlife to deliver evening activities that compare favorably to its daytime activities.



Action Plan

Nightlife Strategy: Visit Bellevue will work with the City of Bellevue Department of Economic Development, restaurants, bars, clubs, music, arts and entertainment venue owners/operators and other interested stakeholders to create a Nightlife Strategy for Bellevue that delivers a balanced strategy and plan for enhancing resident and visitor nightlife experiences, while maintaining a high-quality of life for residents. The strategy should encompass opportunities for Downtown, Crossroads and Factoria as well as future growth centers such as BelRed / Spring District and Eastgate.

According to the Responsible Hospitality Institute, the Nightlife Strategy developed for Bellevue should:

Form an Alliance - Collaborative partnerships between diverse stakeholders form the foundation of a well-planned and managed hospitality zone. An alliance may be responsible for allocating resources and crafting policies and procedures. Alliances may be divided up into several action teams to oversee implementation in specific areas. Bellevue should consider the city's current partnerships and guide the right partners to connect to make nightlife safe and vibrant.

Plan for People - Planning for how people will use a mixed-use hospitality zone at different times of day and for different purposes requires foresight and infrastructure. Residents expect a high quality of life, even in active hospitality zones. This requires clear community standards and management of sound, litter and waste. Nightlife patrons need safe rides home to prevent impaired driving. Coordination of transportation options requires a robust mobility management plan.

Assure Safety - Assuring nighttime safety requires systems to prevent crime and address disorder in public spaces and in private venues. Overall public safety requires a continuum of partnerships; police, fire marshals, private security and district ambassadors all have a role to play. Organizing nightlife businesses into trade associations can formalize best practices and lead to better communication with regulatory and enforcement agencies.

Enhance Vibrancy - Vibrancy in hospitality zones can be enhanced by creating a seamless flow of social experiences in public and private spaces—from sidewalk cafes and buskers to live entertainment in restaurants, bars and clubs. Truly vibrant cities maintain social activity at all times of day, evening and late at night. But vibrancy requires work. It takes systems to support venues, nurture performers and provide opportunities for entrepreneurs to showcase their talent.

12:

Outdoor Recreation

Situation Summary:

Bellevue is not considered an important outdoor activity / recreation destination. However, a large portion of its residents and visitors are “active adventurers”, so it seems natural for Bellevue to broaden its product offering of outdoor activities to encourage the outdoor visitor market segment. In addition, the development of new bike paths, infrastructure and bike share will have an important impact on Bellevue as a place for residents and visitors to ride. Also, for a city flanked on two sides by water, Bellevue has not taken sufficient advantage of its waterfront access and assets to the benefit of tourism or local residents who do not live on the water.

Recommendation:

The destination development strategy must capitalize on Bellevue’s outdoor recreation opportunities.





Action Plan

Product Development: Visit Bellevue will continue to work with City of Bellevue Parks and Recreation, Planning and Community Development, Development Services and private sector operators and activities to identify, envision, create, champion and develop new outdoor recreation opportunities for the benefit of Bellevue residents and visitors.

Marketing, Promotion and Awareness Building: Visit Bellevue will continue to undertake marketing, promotion and awareness building of Bellevue's existing and planned outdoor recreation opportunities in all its communications vehicles (websites, social media, blogs, press releases, etc.) connecting future and in-destination visitors to the many opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Itinerary Development: Visit Bellevue will continue to develop, market and promote outdoor recreation itineraries, activities, events and companies in Bellevue and in the Greater Seattle Region, especially on the Eastside to future and in-destination visitors. To market and promote out-of-town itineraires, Visit Bellevue will work with regional DMOs, tour operators, city / community Departments of Parks and Recreation and others to create and curate best of class outdoor recreation opportunities for its guests.

13:

BelRed / Spring District and Eastgate

Situation Summary:

Although Downtown Bellevue currently delivers the largest number of quality tourism experiences, BelRed / Spring District and Eastgate are showing significant signs of activity that are enjoyed and appreciated by visitors.

BelRed is poised to become a model for planning that incorporates more efficient use of urban land, large scale transit-oriented development, climate action, and economic vitality.

The 16 city blocks of the Spring District will feature commercial, educational and residential projects, including hotels, restaurants and diverse local shops.

Redevelopment in Eastgate will create a well-integrated, transit supportive, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use urban neighborhood.

Recommendation:

Bellevue must continue to contribute to the promotion, planning, programming and development of Bel-Red / Spring District and Eastgate to serve visitors and residents alike.





Action Plan

Product Development: Visit Bellevue will continue to work with the City of Bellevue's Department of Planning and Community Development and its Strategic Planning Managers for BelRed / Spring District and Eastgate to provide input, feedback and advice on issues and opportunities that might impact the visitor experience in these areas as the adopted subarea plans and zoning and code changes are put into effect. Special attention will be paid to potential visitor activities such as accommodations, restaurants, nightlife, retail, entertainment, outdoor recreation, parks, cultural / arts, events and festivals and transportation.

Marketing & Promotion: Visit Bellevue will work with City and local officials and leaders to help articulate, market and promote the unique sense of place and character that BelRed / Spring District is creating by building on its industrial past while incorporating new development types that will offer a unique experience for residents and visitors. Special attention will be paid to BelRed's Cultural / Arts District. The same activities associated with place promotion will be true for Eastgate, where special attention will be paid to the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust and Bellevue Airfield Park.

14:

Grand Connection

Situation Summary:

The Grand Connection will be a transformative urban experience that will improve non-motorized connectivity and create new opportunities for public space, recreation, and the arts in Bellevue. It begins at the waterfront of Lake Washington at Meydenbauer Bay Park, extending through Bellevue's dynamic downtown and ultimately connecting with the regional Eastside Rail Corridor in the Wilburton commercial area. It will also connect important civic and public places in the City of Bellevue and has the potential to play a significant role in creating national and international buzz for Bellevue and making it a must see destination.

Recommendation:

The destination development strategy should embrace the Grand Connection as one of its primary and critical tourism infrastructure components.





Action Plan

Branding Strategy: Visit Bellevue will work with the City of Bellevue and the Grand Connection team to assist with developing and implementing the Branding Strategy for the Grand Connection, so there is a seamless and consistent message being communicated to residents and out-of-town markets.

Marketing & Promotion: Visit Bellevue will work with the City of Bellevue and the Grand Connection team to build awareness and market and promote the Grand Connection to out-of-town visitors using all its communications vehicles (websites, social media, blogs, press releases, etc.) connecting future and in-destination visitors to the many opportunities for the Grand Connection.

Events & Festivals Strategy: Visit Bellevue will join forces with the City of Bellevue and the Grand Connection team to incorporate the Grand Connection programming, events and festivals into the broader Events & Festivals Strategy for Bellevue. The Grand Connection team will also play a major role as contributing member of the Event & Festival Council.

15:

Mass Transit / Light Rail

Situation Summary:

Although a large percentage of visitors arrive to Bellevue by automobile (83.4%), visitor research shows that a large number of visitors are interested in using mass transit / light rail during their visit for travel around town or nearby destinations / activities.

As construction progresses on the Greater Seattle area's Sound Transit East Link Line, with a targeted opening of 2023, just 6 years away, there is an opportunity to move visitors and tourists out of their autos and rental cars and onto the East Link line, connecting Bellevue to Downtown Seattle and SeaTac Airport.

Recommendation:

The destination development strategy should explore the mass transportation opportunities for Bellevue visitors.





Action Plan

Information and Communications: Visit Bellevue will prepare marketing, promotion and communications information and dissemination for its visitor markets (individual, group and meetings) to highlight and promote the pending East Link Extension, providing information and assistance for visitors seeking new transportation options between SeaTac, Seattle and Bellevue.

Seattle Citywides: Visit Bellevue will cooperate with Visit Seattle to develop plans and tactics to capitalize on the convenience of the East Link Extension in growing Seattle Citywides - conventions and exhibitions taking place in Seattle that require access to accommodations beyond their existing capacity.

Homebasing: Visit Bellevue will expand, enhance and extend its regional visitor activities portfolio and itineraries, emphasizing the ease and convenience of the East Link Extension for transportation between Bellevue, Seattle, SeaTac and other out-of-town destinations. Visit Bellevue will also work with local hotels and regional attractions to create homebasing packages for visitors seeking a combination of Bellevue accommodations and regional activities.

16:

Meydenbauer Center and Headquarters Hotel

Situation Summary:

According to Meydenbauer Center executives, a number of existing conferences and events, previously held in Bellevue, have grown too successful and too large for Meydenbauer Center, and have been forced to look to other destinations that can accommodate their meetings and events. At the same time, Meydenbauer Center has turned away meetings and conferences that it was too small to accommodate.

This situation is further compounded by the lack of an adjacent hotel adjacent to Meydenbauer Center, which, in other destinations, is a real asset that helps to sell meetings and convention business.

Recommendation:

The destination development strategy should explore the potential for and feasibility of an expanded Meydenbauer Center and development of a headquarters hotel.





Action Plan

Expansion Feasibility Study: Bellevue Convention Center Authority should complete and finalize its Expansion Feasibility Study undertaken by HVS Convention, Sports & Entertainment Facilities Consulting.

The Expansion Feasibility Study includes an analysis of potential expansion for Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue, Washington and an assessment of future market opportunities for Meydenbauer Center, including growth in convention and other group business. The Study also includes an assessment of Bellevue's hotel market and determination of the impact of the development of an adjacent hotel or hotels on Meydenbauer Center and the overall hotel market.

Following completion of the study, BCCA should share the report with the City of Bellevue and Bellevue tourism stakeholders, and work with all stakeholders and interested parties to implement the recommendations.

17:

Bellevue as Regional Home Base

Situation Summary:

It's not unusual, and in fact, it's actually pretty normal for destinations to promote itineraries that range near and far to capture the strengths and diversity of their broader geographic region and its experiences, attractions, neighborhoods, communities, towns and cities. In fact, Bellevue serves as home base for a number of regional day trip destinations and activities such as Seattle, Kirkland, Woodinville, wine tasting, outdoor recreation and sporting events, etc.

Ultimately, destinations want their visitors to enjoy their time out-and-about the region, but return back to homebase for shopping, entertainment, restaurants and accommodations, since that is where the economic impact is the largest for most destinations.

Recommendation:

The destination development strategy should focus Bellevue's attention on developing a regional home base strategy.





Action Plan

Itineraries: Visit Bellevue will continue to develop, market and promote a broad portfolio of itineraries, activities, events and attractions for the Greater Seattle Region, especially for places within a 3-hour drive from Bellevue to future and in-destination visitors. To market and promote out-of-town itineraires, Visit Bellevue will work with regional DMOs, tour operators, cities, communities, entertainment venues and attractions, and others to create and curate best of class visitor opportunities for its guests.

Homebasing: Visit Bellevue will expand, enhance and extend its regional visitor activities portfolio and itineraries, emphasizing the ease and convenience of the East Link Extension for transportation between Bellevue, Seattle, SeaTac and other out-of-town destinations. Visit Bellevue will also work with local hotels and regional attractions to create home basing packages for visitors seeking a combination of Bellevue accommodations and regional activities.

Regional Tourism Cooperation: See Regional Tourism Cooperation (Recommendation #18)

18:

Regional Tourism Cooperation

Situation Summary:

A number of regional tourism authorities / officials including Bellevue, Seattle, Kirkland, Woodinville, Bothell and others have suggested that a permanent / standing regional tourism committee, council or organization would greatly benefit the individual destinations and provide significantly greater cooperative programs and efforts on both the product development side and their sales / marketing efforts.

Recommendation:

The destination development strategy should explore the opportunities, benefits, limitations and costs associated with facilitating regional tourism cooperation.





Action Plan

Regional Tourism Council: Visit Bellevue, which may have the most to gain from regional cooperation, will take the lead to organize and manage a Greater Seattle Regional Tourism Council to share opportunities for growing the collective economic impact of tourism to the region.

The RTC will be comprised of regional DMOs/DMMOs, which will join forces on a voluntary basis, meet on a quarterly basis, to create cooperative marketing programs, share and rationalize events and festival calendars, develop and promote regional accommodations and activities packages, and encourage longer stay visitors by increasing the portfolio of tourism activities and attractions.

Initial activities, plans and programs by the regional DMOs/DMMOs should be completely voluntary, with no participation fees required or requested.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The following table illustrates the organizations that will lead and participate in carrying out the activities for each of the recommendations.





Recommendation / Action Plans	Lead Organization(s)	Contributing Organization(s)
1. Brand Positioning & Awareness		
1.1 Bellevue Brand & Marketing Strategy	Visit Bellevue Washington	Professional place branding and place marketing firm
2. Organization, Operations and Budget		
2.1 Independent Destination Marketing and Management Organization (DMMO)	Bellevue Convention Center Authority	City of Bellevue
2.2 Full Service DMMO	Visit Bellevue Washington	
2.3 Tourism Improvement District	City of Bellevue, in conjunction with the Bellevue Convention Center Authority	Professional services firm that specializes in creating and operating tourism improvement districts
2.4 VBW Executive Director	Bellevue Convention Center Authority	Destination / Tourism recruiting firm
3. Cleanliness, Safety / Security and Walkability		
3.1 Visitor Safety and Security	Visit Bellevue Washington and City of Bellevue Police Department	Bellevue tourism stakeholders (owners and operators)
3.2 Certified Tourism Ambassador™ (CTA) Program	Visit Bellevue Washington	
3.3 Downtown Sanitation Associates Program	Visit Bellevue Washington and Bellevue Downtown Association	
4. Multicultural		
4.1 Development Plan and Tourism Boards	Visit Bellevue Washington	Bellevue tourism stakeholders (ethnic)
4.2 Multicultural Tourism Marketing Committee	Visit Bellevue Washington	Bellevue tourism stakeholders (ethnic)
4.3 Multicultural Tourism Events	Visit Bellevue Washington	Ethnic Groups in Bellevue
4.4 Cultural Trail	Visit Bellevue Washington	Ethnic Chambers of Commerce
4.5 Multicultural Arts	City of Bellevue	Ethnic Groups in Bellevue
5. Shopping, Restaurants and Hotels		
5.1 Quality Performance Monitoring	Visit Bellevue Washington	Bellevue tourism stakeholders
5.2 Social Media Workshops	Visit Bellevue Washington	Bellevue tourism stakeholders
5.3 Tourism Business Awards	Visit Bellevue Washington	Bellevue tourism stakeholders
5.4 Certified Tourism Ambassador™ (CTA) Program	Visit Bellevue Washington	

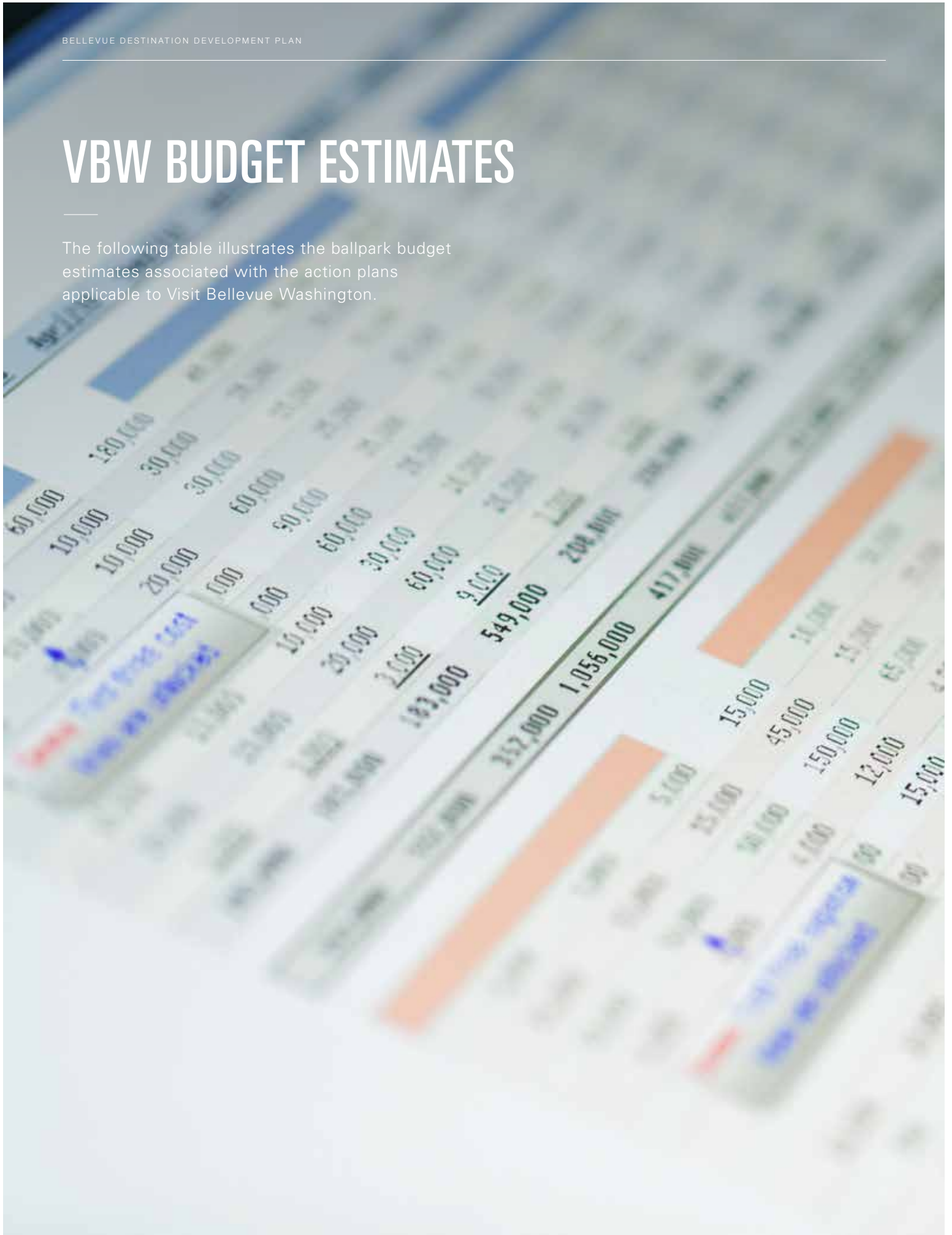
Recommendation / Action Plans	Lead Organization(s)	Contributing Organization(s)
6. Technology / Virtual Reality / Gaming / eSports		
6.1 High Tech Workgroup	Visit Bellevue Washington and the City of Bellevue Economic Development Department	Technology Stakeholders
7. Culinary, Restaurants and Wine		
7.1 Culinary Tourism Strategy and Action Plan	Visit Bellevue Washington	Bellevue's Culinary Stakeholders, City of Bellevue Economic Development Department
8. Culture, Performing Arts and Entertainment		
8.1 Creative Economy Strategy	City of Bellevue Economic Development Department	Visit Bellevue Washington
9. Events and Festivals		
9.1 Events & Festivals Strategy	Visit Bellevue Washington and Bellevue Downtown Association	Bellevue Special Events Committee, major events producers and organizers, and industry stakeholders
9.2 Events & Festivals Council	Visit Bellevue Washington	Event and festival organizers, developers and operators, plus city and town agencies, venue managers and other interested stakeholders
9.3 Events & Festivals Development Fund	Visit Bellevue Washington	
10. Communications & Storytelling		
10.1 Content Development and Social Media Engagement	Visit Bellevue Washington	Bellevue tourism stakeholders
11. Nightlife		
11.1 Nightlife Strategy	Visit Bellevue Washington	City of Bellevue Economic Development Department, restaurants, bars, clubs, music, arts and entertainment venue owners/operators and other nightlife stakeholders

Recommendation / Action Plans	Lead Organization(s)	Contributing Organization(s)
12. Outdoor Recreation		
12.1 Product Development	Visit Bellevue Washington	King County, City of Bellevue Parks and Recreation, Planning and Community Development, Development Services and private sector operators and activities
12.2 Marketing, Promotion and Awareness Building	Visit Bellevue Washington	Outdoor Recreation Stakeholders
12.3 Itinerary Development	Visit Bellevue Washington	Regional DMOs, tour operators, city / community Departments of Parks and Recreation and other outdoor recreation stakeholders
13. BelRed / Spring District and Eastgate		
13.1 Product Development	Visit Bellevue Washington and City of Bellevue Department of Planning and Community Development	Area Stakeholders including: accommodations, restaurants, nightlife, retail, entertainment, outdoor recreation, parks, cultural / arts, events and festivals and transportation
13.2 Marketing & Promotion	Visit Bellevue Washington	City of Bellevue and local stakeholders
14. Grand Connection		
14.1 Branding Strategy	Visit Bellevue Washington, City of Bellevue, Grand Connection Team	
14.2 Marketing & Promotion	Visit Bellevue Washington, City of Bellevue, Grand Connection Team	
14.3 Events & Festivals Strategy	Visit Bellevue Washington, City of Bellevue, Grand Connection Team	
15. Mass Transit / Light Rail		
15.1 Information and Communications	Visit Bellevue Washington	SoundTransit
15.2 Seattle Citywides	Visit Bellevue Washington and Visit Seattle	SoundTransit
15.3 Homebasing	Visit Bellevue Washington	SoundTransit, local hotels and regional attractions

Recommendation / Action Plans	Lead Organization(s)	Contributing Organization(s)
16. Meydenbauer Center and Headquarters Hotel		
16.1 Expansion Feasibility Study	Bellevue Convention Center Authority	City of Bellevue and tourism stakeholders
17. Bellevue as Regional Homebase		
17.1 Itineraries	Visit Bellevue Washington	Regional DMOs, tour operators, cities, communities, entertainment venues and attractions, and other stakeholders
17.2 Homebasing	Visit Bellevue Washington	SoundTransit, local hotels and regional attractions
17.3 Regional Tourism Cooperation	Visit Bellevue Washington	Regional DMOs
18. Regional Tourism Cooperation		
18.1 Regional Tourism Council	Visit Bellevue Washington	Regional DMOs

VBW BUDGET ESTIMATES

The following table illustrates the ballpark budget estimates associated with the action plans applicable to Visit Bellevue Washington.





Recommendation / Action Plans	Lead Organization(s)	Budget Estimate (annual) *one time charges
1. Brand Positioning & Awareness		
1.1 Bellevue Brand & Marketing Strategy	Visit Bellevue Washington	\$100,000*
2. Organization, Operations and Budget		
2.1 Independent Destination Marketing and Management Organization (DMMO)	Bellevue Convention Center Authority	To Be Determined
2.2 Full Service DMMO	Visit Bellevue Washington	\$2.0m-\$3.0m
2.3 Tourism Improvement District	City of Bellevue, in conjunction with the Bellevue Convention Center Authority	To Be Determined
2.4 VBW Executive Director	Bellevue Convention Center Authority	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
3. Cleanliness, Safety / Security and Walkability		
3.1 Visitor Safety and Security	Visit Bellevue Washington and City of Bellevue Police Department	\$50,000
3.2 Certified Tourism Ambassador™ (CTA) Program	Visit Bellevue Washington	\$50,000
3.3 Downtown Sanitation Associates Program	Visit Bellevue Washington and Downtown Association	\$100,000
4. Multicultural		
4.1 Development Plan and Tourism Boards	Visit Bellevue Washington	No Cost
4.2 Multicultural Tourism Marketing Committee	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
4.3 Multicultural Tourism Events	Visit Bellevue Washington	\$50,000
4.4 Cultural Trail	Visit Bellevue Washington	\$50,000
4.5 Multicultural Arts	City of Bellevue	To Be Determined
5. Shopping, Restaurants and Hotels		
5.1 Quality Performance Monitoring	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
5.2 Social Media Workshops	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
5.3 Tourism Business Awards	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
5.4 Certified Tourism Ambassador™ (CTA) Program	Visit Bellevue Washington	(see above)

Recommendation / Action Plans	Lead Organization(s)	Contributing Organization(s)
6. Technology / Virtual Reality / Gaming / eSports		
6.1 High Tech Workgroup	Visit Bellevue Washington and the City of Bellevue Economic Development Department	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
7. Culinary, Restaurants and Wine		
7.1 Culinary Tourism Strategy and Action Plan	Visit Bellevue Washington	\$50,000*
8. Culture, Performing Arts and Entertainment		
8.1 Creative Economy Strategy	City of Bellevue Economic Development Department	To Be Determined
9. Events and Festivals		
9.1 Events & Festivals Strategy	Visit Bellevue Washington and Bellevue Downtown Association	\$50,000*
9.2 Events & Festivals Council	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
9.3 Events & Festivals Development Fund	Visit Bellevue Washington	\$100,000-\$200,000
10. Communications & Storytelling		
10.1 Content Development and Social Media Engagement	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
11. Nightlife		
11.1 Nightlife Strategy	Visit Bellevue Washington	\$50,000*
12. Outdoor Recreation		
12.1 Product Development	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
12.2 Marketing, Promotion and Awareness Building	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
12.3 Itinerary Development	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
13. BelRed / Spring District and Eastgate		
13.1 Product Development	Visit Bellevue Washington and City of Bellevue Department of Planning and Community Development	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
13.2 Marketing & Promotion	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO

Recommendation / Action Plans	Lead Organization(s)	Contributing Organization(s)
14. Grand Connection		
14.1 Branding Strategy	Visit Bellevue Washington, City of Bellevue, Grand Connection Team	Included in 1.1 Bellevue Brand & Marketing Strategy
14.2 Marketing & Promotion	Visit Bellevue Washington, City of Bellevue, Grand Connection Team	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
14.3 Events & Festivals Strategy	Visit Bellevue Washington, City of Bellevue, Grand Connection Team	Included in 9.1 Events & Festivals Strategy
15. Mass Transit / Light Rail		
15.1 Information and Communications	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
15.2 Seattle Citywides	Visit Bellevue Washington and Visit Seattle	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
15.3 Homebasing	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
16. Meydenbauer Center and Headquarters Hotel		
16.1 Expansion Feasibility Study	Bellevue Convention Center Authority	To Be Determined
17. Bellevue as Regional Homebase		
17.1 Itineraries	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
17.2 Homebasing	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
17.3 Regional Tourism Cooperation	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
18. Regional Tourism Cooperation		
18.1 Regional Tourism Council	Visit Bellevue Washington	Included in 2.2 Full Service DMMO
Totals		
*Total One-Time Costs for Non-recurring Projects		\$250,000
Annual DMMO Costs		\$2.4m-\$3.5m
To Be Determined		There are likely to be other costs (unknown at this time) associated with this DDP that will accrue to other organizations and City Departments. Items are identified as "To Be Determined".



APPENDIX A – PRIORITY RANKING



The list of 18 recommendations have been scored for their Priority Ranking associated with:

1. Situational Analysis Score
2. Cost to Implement
3. Impact on Resident Quality of Life
4. Total Economic Impact
5. Opportunity for Visit Bellevue Washington or Bellevue Economic Development to Impact
6. Timing to Implementation
7. Fulfillment of Vision Statement

Based on all seven scores weighted equally, the overall priority for activation is:

Group 1 (First Priority)

Organization, Operations and Budget

Group 2 (Second Priority)

Bellevue as Regional Homebase

Culinary, Restaurants and Wine

Events and Festivals

The Grand Connection

Group 3 (Third Priority)

Brand Positioning & Awareness

Cleanliness, Safety / Security and Walkability

Multicultural

Shopping, Restaurants and Hotels

Group 4 (Fourth Priority)

Communications & Storytelling

Culture, Performing Arts and Entertainment

Mass Transit / Light Rail

Nightlife

Regional Tourism Cooperation

Technology / Virtual Reality / Gaming / eSports

Group 5 (Fifth Priority)

Bel-Red / Spring District and Eastgate

Meydenbauer Center and Headquarters Hotel

Outdoor Recreation

Generally speaking, the recommendations are relatively independent of each other and may be activated according to organizational capacity, available budgets or using one of the individual priority scores.

The exception to the rule is Recommendation #2 - Organization, Operations and Budget, which addresses the evolution of Visit Bellevue Washington into a full service Destination Marketing and Management Organization (DMMO). Since VBW will manage and direct many of the other recommendations, it is important that this recommendation be activated first.

Brand Positioning & Awareness

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
High	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Medium-Term	High

Organization, Operations and Budget

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
High	Medium	Low	Medium	High	Medium-Term	High

Cleanliness, Safety / Security and Walkability

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
High	Medium	High	Medium	Low	Short-Term	High

Multicultural

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Short-Term	High

Shopping, Restaurants and Hotels

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
High	Medium	Medium	High	Low	Short-Term	High

Technology / Virtual Reality / Gaming / eSports

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Medium-Term	High

Culinary, Restaurants and Wine

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
High	Low	High	Medium	Medium	Medium-Term	High

Culture, Performing Arts and Entertainment

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
High	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Long-Term	High

Events and Festivals

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
High	Medium	High	Medium	High	Medium-Term	High

Communications & Storytelling

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
High	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Long-Term	High

Nightlife

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Medium-Term	Medium-Term	High

Outdoor Recreation

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
Low	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Long-Term	Medium

Bel-Red / Spring District and Eastgate

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
Medium	High	High	High	High	Long-Term	Medium

The Grand Connection

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
High	Medium	High	High	High	Long-Term	High

Mass Transit / Light Rail

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
Medium	High	High	High	High	Long-Term	High

Meydenbauer Center and Headquarters Hotel

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
Medium	High	Medium	High	High	Long-Term	High

Bellevue as Regional Homebase

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
High	Low	Low	Medium	High	Short-Term	High

Regional Tourism Cooperation

Situational Analysis Score	Cost to Implement	Resident Quality of Life Impact	Economic Impact	Opportunity for VBW or BED to Impact	Timing to Implement	Fulfillment of Vision
Medium	Low	Low	Medium	High	Short-Term	Medium



RESONANCE

Vancouver

801 - 602 W Hastings St
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1P2
P +1.604.681.0804
E info@resonanceco.com

New York

6 East 43rd St - Floor 19
New York, NY 10017
P +1.347.817.7916
E info@resonanceco.com

California

120 Newport Center Dr.
Newport Beach, CA 92660
P +1.949.887.4476
E info@resonanceco.com



@ResonanceCo
ResonanceCo.com