

2025 BUSINESS PLAN

VISITOMAHA™



VISIT OMAHA - OMAHA'S TOURISM AUTHORITY - VISITOMAHA.COM



**OMAHA TOURISM BRINGS FAMILIES
CLOSER TOGETHER AND HELPS
NEIGHBORHOODS GROW.**



VISIT OMAHA

MISSION

To stimulate economic growth for our community by increasing visitation.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Successfully sell and promote our community as a desirable visitor destination.
- Influence tourism development to ensure future destination success.
- Deliver a positive and memorable customer experience.
- Collaborate and enhance relationships with local organizations, businesses and stakeholders.
- Operate as an efficient, high-performing organization.

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

Visit Omaha creates sustainable visitor demand for the community through: meeting, event, sport and leisure marketing; collaborative relationships; broad industry experience; and unprecedented product knowledge. Visit Omaha's efforts result in economic growth and job creation for our community.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Relevance:

We are committed to being consistent, accountable, transparent, perseverant, and dedicated to excellence.

Innovation:

We are committed to being creative, pioneering, collaborative and problem-solving.

Gratitude:

We are committed to being appreciative of both the big and small contributions that make our organization and industry valuable to our community.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM TRENDS FOR 2025

LEISURE TRAVEL TRENDS

Omaha saw unprecedented tourism growth in 2022 and 2023, bringing an economic boost as visitor numbers and spending reached all-time highs. In 2024, growth persisted but at a slower rate, a pattern expected to carry into 2025.

Expedia predicts that higher travel costs will inspire consumers to seek “off-the-beaten-track” destinations that offer superior experiences for less money. According to a recent survey of 25,000 respondents, 63% of travelers want less crowded locations that will offer the increasingly popular “authentic experience.” Overall, traveler mindsets are changing as they embrace JOMO, or the “joy of missing out.” JOMO travel has been a focus for 62% of the respondents, helping to reduce stress and anxiety and create an effortless experience that means more quality time with loved ones.

Booking.com’s annual trend predictions, which surveyed more than 27,000 consumers, echo the sentiment of travelers wanting “easy” trips and added that baby boomers are ready to pack up and hit the road. Retired travelers are prioritizing getting away over building up their savings. In fact, 77% expressed interest in paying for their children and 81% will pay for their grandchildren to join the trip – spreading the joy of travel through the generations.

SALES FORECAST

Group business (including convention, meetings and motorcoach) in Omaha reached full recovery in 2023. However, nationally, this sector continues to work to regain momentum with industry experts predicting full recovery in 2026. The economy, a lasting reduction in business travel, and scheduling issues for groups planning on short notice continue to be concerns for group business, but industry leaders have reason to feel positive going into the new year.

According to Tourism Economics, an independent research firm dedicated to economic analysis and forecasts in the travel sphere, group business is expected to surge forward in 2025 with quarterly predictions looking more optimistic than previously forecasted.

Industry leaders aren’t the only ones feeling good about 2025. Amex Global Business Travel surveyed more than 500 meeting professionals and learned three-quarters are optimistic about the upcoming year. Many respondents are seeing an increase in budget, which they plan to allocate toward attendee engagement, sustainability and new technology.

The Visit Omaha sales team is currently outpacing its 2025 goal. The Future Pace reporting tool utilizes historical data along with definite and tentative business to provide a booking pace for the Visit Omaha sales team. This information helps in strategizing and updating sales goals based on market conditions. The Pace Target graph, on page 4, shows Omaha’s booking pace.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM TRENDS

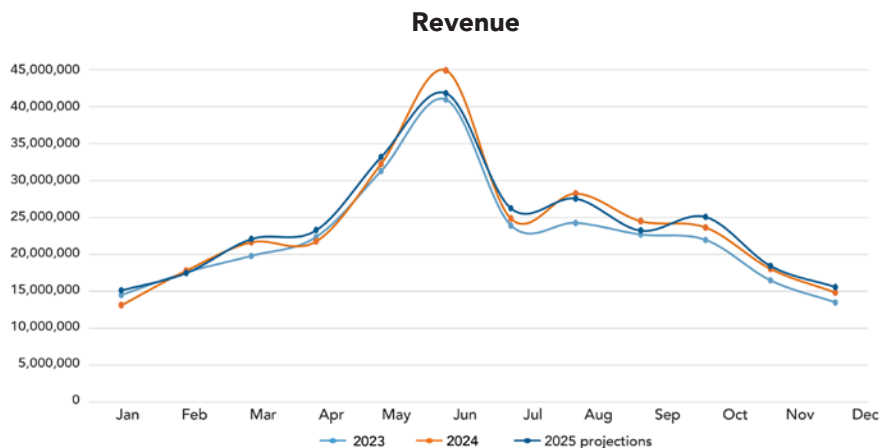
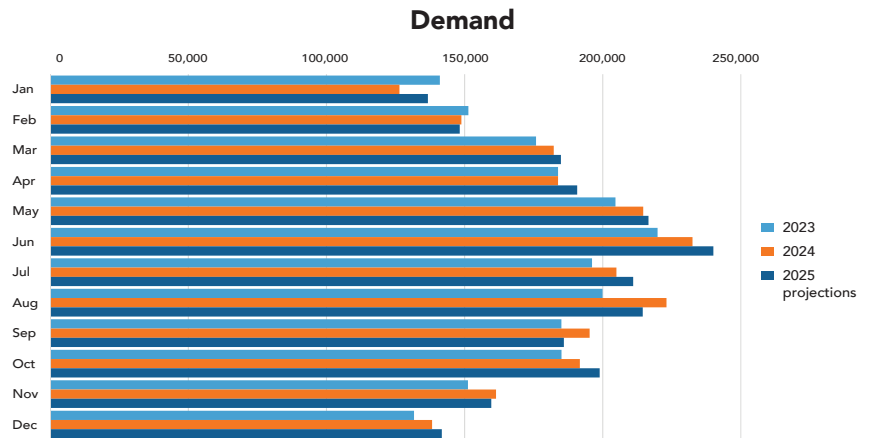
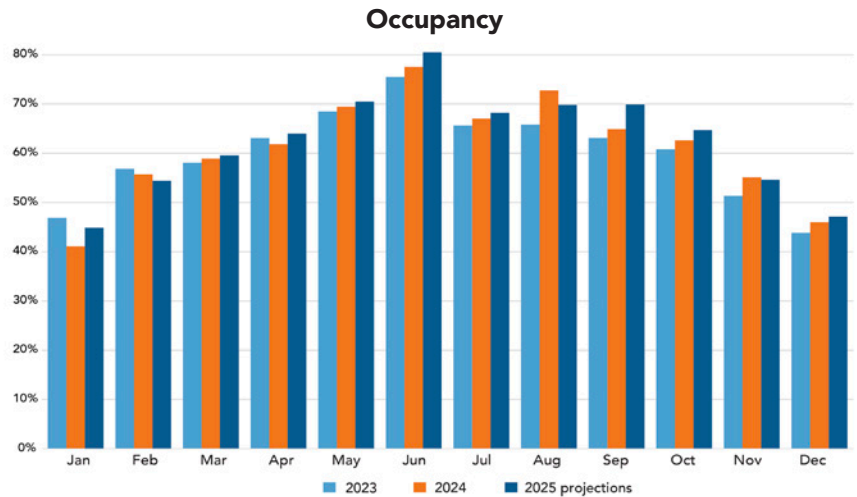
LOCAL STR PROJECTIONS

The most recent STR forecast for Douglas County hotels predicts 2025 will show slight increases over 2024. Occupancy is expected to be 62%, a 1% increase over 2024. All key metrics are expected to see a similar year-over-year increase with hotel demand and revenue also increasing by 1%. Revenue in 2025 is expected to reach \$289 million.

STR is a global research firm that tracks, reports and projects hotel data.

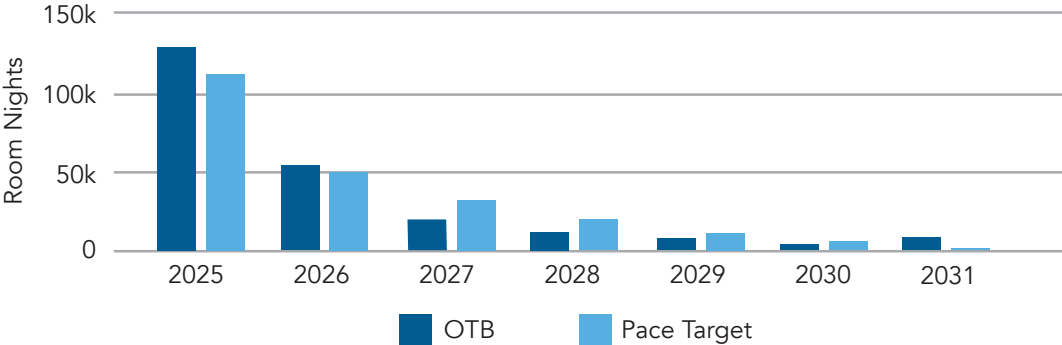
STR GROWTH

These graphs show Douglas County hotel data for 2023, 2024, and projections for 2025. The key metrics highlighted are: occupancy (the percentage of available hotel rooms that are occupied), demand (the number of hotel rooms sold in a specific time frame) and revenue (the total hotel room revenue generated from bookings).



PACE TARGET

This graph compares definite business on the books (OTB) to pace targets, which measure where sales bookings should be at any given time to ensure the year-end goal is met.



**Currently, only the 2025 year-end goal has been set. The goal is 158,000.*

The Pace Target chart above only includes definite business that has been secured as of October 2024. It does not include some annual events which are expected to go definite closer to their actual event dates. Those hotel room nights are considered tentative.

CURRENT TENTATIVE ROOM NIGHTS BY YEAR

2025	23,992
2026	82,050
2027	77,514
2028	52,259
2029	32,667
2030	24,240
2031	1,800

KEY EVENTS IN TENTATIVE OR DEFINITE STATUS

- Berkshire Hathaway – Definite for 2025; Tentative for 2026-2030
- College World Series – Definite for 2025 & 2026; Tentative for 2027 & 2028
- NSAA State Wrestling – Definite for 2025; Tentative for 2026-2029
- Presidents’ Day Volleyball – Definite for 2025; Tentative for 2026 & 2027
- Scooter’s Coffee – Definite through 2027; Tentative for 2028
- USA Triathlon – Definite for 2025
- Triple Crown SlumpBuster – Definite for 2025; Tentative for 2026
- MLK Volleyball – Definite for 2026 & 2027

MEETING, SPORTS AND EVENT SALES

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Visit Omaha's sales team is responsible for bringing convention, sports and event business to Omaha in order to increase revenue for local meeting and sports facilities, hotels, attractions, restaurants, vendors and retail shops.

The sales team focuses on selling Omaha as a viable destination for state, regional, national, and international conventions, meetings, sporting events, and motorcoach groups.

The team's efforts contribute to the economic health of our local community by increasing business revenue and tax revenue, which in turn help provide jobs for our friends, family and neighbors.

KEY AREAS OF WORK

- Identify and pursue citywide and single hotel meeting and event business for Omaha based on predetermined goals.
- Evaluate and review sales efforts in key markets to ensure sales team efficiencies.
- Continue to partner with national organizations, including American Society of Associate Executives (ASAE), Association Forum, Conference Direct, CONNECT, Cvent, HelmsBriscoe, Northstar Meetings Group, Maritz Global Events, and Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), to increase awareness of Omaha as a Midwest meeting destination.
- Collaborate with local sports facilities, organizations and SPORTS Nebraska to attract sporting events to Omaha.
- Engage and build relationships with local board members of national organizations to gain support for Omaha as a location for their annual or regional meetings.
- Ensure a professional, cohesive citywide sales effort by developing and maintaining a high level of trust and camaraderie with the local hospitality community.
- Enhance ongoing research programs to identify new meeting, sports and event business for the local community.
- Qualify, develop and generate motorcoach leads for local hotels, attractions and performing arts facilities.

NEW INITIATIVES

- Expand sales team to increase meeting, sports and event opportunities for Omaha, and create new promotional opportunities within the department to retain experienced sales staff members.
- Enhance Visit Omaha's partnership with AMC Institute to strategically improve Omaha's position as a location for the organization's meetings.
- Host two new familiarization tours for meeting planners affiliated with Northstar Meetings Group and Meeting Professionals International (MPI) to highlight Omaha's new and existing developments, enhancing awareness of the city as a prime meeting destination.
- Collaborate with the City of Omaha Parks Department to develop guidelines for booking local, regional and national tournaments at Tranquility and Levi Carter parks.
- Increase promotion of Omaha as a sports destination with a targeted sponsorship reaching 60 sports event rights holders at the annual TEAMS conference.
- Collaborate with Northstar Meetings Group to host an event in Dallas for planners with meetings and events that rotate into the Midwest, increasing awareness of Omaha as a potential destination.
- Provide local industry partners with the latest insights into the meeting, events and sports markets by bringing in a national expert to speak to the group.
- Offer hotel and venue partners an opportunity to attend seven trade shows with Visit Omaha to enhance visibility for their businesses while promoting the options Omaha provides.

TARGET GOALS

Generate:

500,000
Room night leads

150,000
Definite room nights

400,000
Attendees

60
Site visits

MEETING, SPORTS, AND EVENT SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Once a meeting or event is confirmed, the Visit Omaha services team is responsible for working with organizers to coordinate details before, during and after the event to increase attendance and satisfaction. The team's efforts generate business for local vendors who are hired by meeting and event planners.

The team quantifies success by measuring the event organizer's satisfaction, attendance, the number of referrals sent to local businesses, hotel room nights utilized, and the group's economic impact on the local community.

KEY AREAS OF WORK

- Support the sales team's efforts throughout the sales process and establish relationships with event organizers to enhance Omaha's ability to close business.
- Provide exceptional service and support to event organizers by providing planning assistance, site visit coordination, pre-attendance promotional materials, and registration support.
- Manage the "Show Your Badge" program to provide attendee discounts that increase business referrals to local businesses and restaurants.
- Serve as the destination expert to connect meeting and event planners with local businesses, speakers and community resources in order to leverage Omaha's assets.
- Coordinate with the hospitality community to ensure a positive experience for event organizers and attendees.
- Solicit and capture event organizer and attendee feedback, both formally and informally, and share the results with key industry stakeholders.

NEW INITIATIVES

- Develop a new group tour experience to improve Omaha's ability to secure motorcoach tour business.
- Obtain an Event Service Professional Association (ESPA) certification and attend the ESPA Annual Conference to gain industry knowledge from other event services professionals.
- Enhance the Omaha Criterium experience by partnering with Aksarben Village restaurants, bars and shops to offer discounts to participating athletes and fans.
- Plan a familiarization tour for Maritz Global Events team to increase awareness of Omaha as a meeting destination for its meeting planner clients.
- Add an Omaha Specialty pop-up page to Visit Omaha's online Meeting Planner Toolbox, offering clients easy access to local businesses that can bring unique experiential elements to their meetings.
- Earn an Intellectual Capital certificate through Destinations International to gain insights on how to maximize local resources when assisting meeting and event planners.
- Plan activities for the International Association of Emergency Managers board meeting to highlight Omaha as a potential destination for future meetings.
- Organize pre-planning meetings for both the Structural Building Components Association and the Lutheran Women's Missionary League to ensure clear understanding of their conference needs prior to their meeting dates.
- Host ASAE's Exceptional Board Meeting to showcase Omaha as a meeting and event destination to 90 CEOs from national associations.

TARGET GOALS

25

Post-event survey testimonials

550

Leads and/or referrals

20%

Increase in the "Show Your Badge" program participants

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Visit Omaha marketing and communications team is responsible for persuading leisure travelers to visit the community in order to increase revenue for local attractions, restaurants, bars, hotels, retail shops and other businesses. The team: crafts and articulates the destination's brand; leads the organization's direct-to-consumer advertising and promotion efforts; and executes advertising programs to support all sales efforts. The team strategically plans and implements all advertising and promotional efforts for Visit Omaha.

The team also manages Visit Omaha's network of social media channels, consumer and partner e-newsletters, the Omaha Visitors Guide and the VisitOmaha.com website. Visit Omaha's communication efforts focus on securing media coverage for Omaha, which in turn raises awareness of the city regionally and nationally.

Increased visitation from targeted markets, social media engagement and number of people reached through promotional and advertising efforts are the main metrics used to gauge success.

KEY AREAS OF WORK

- Execute a multimedia leisure advertising and promotion strategy to inspire visitation from core Midwest drive markets such as Kansas City, Des Moines, Sioux Falls, Minneapolis and Chicago, while researching and cultivating new fly markets to increase awareness of unique experiences that visitors can only enjoy in Omaha.
- Produce and maintain a high quality destination guide and an online network of platforms that provide inspirational content.
- Build upon the brand position that Omaha is the Midwest destination for memorable weekends because Omaha lets the traveler focus on creating new experiences instead of the hassles of travel.
- Enhance awareness of Omaha as a unique food destination by creating multimedia content for distribution through Visit Omaha's online social media network, through media partnerships, with paid advertising campaigns, and by managing Omaha Restaurant Week, which supports local restaurants and builds local brand advocates.
- Inspire new product development with initiatives that focus on creating unique travel-worthy experiences in neighborhoods and at existing attractions.
- Implement an ongoing local advocacy plan focused on educating residents and decision makers on how tourism brings families closer together and helps neighborhoods grow, value sentiments that research shows Omaha residents strongly embrace.
- Generate positive, inspirational and topical media coverage of Omaha as a desirable travel, meeting and sports destination by working with targeted travel writers, editors, bloggers, online media, and other influencers.
- Assist with the annual Omaha Metropolitan Area (OMA) Tourism Awards to recognize frontline staff who exemplify excellent customer service.

NEW INITIATIVES

- Utilize mobile visitation data to evaluate current target markets and identify new cities for potential promotion.
- Launch a new campaign targeting retired travelers in key target markets to increase weeknight visitation.
- Hire a local public relations firm to increase earned media promotion of Omaha.
- Add a gamification element to Omaha Restaurant Week to increase consumer engagement and restaurant visits. Gamification will offer users a gift after dining at three to five participating restaurants.
- Implement an email automation marketing campaign to increase open and click-through rates by providing new consumer database users with customized content.
- Highlight Omaha's new development with a yearlong advertising campaign geared toward meeting and sports planners.
- Educate local residents about the value of tourism by creating a new "What Tourism Looks Like" campaign.
- Increase visitation to the Omaha Visitors Center by creating an interactive game that rewards visitors who participate.

TARGET GOALS

5%

Increase in visitation from targeted markets

25%

Increase in overall active users

25%

Increase in GDPR-compliant consumer database

25%

Increase in social media engagement

60

Participating restaurants in Omaha Restaurant Week

6

Hosted media trips

VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The visitor information team is responsible for welcoming visitors into the city and providing helpful, inspirational information that encourages exploration and enjoyment, which translates into increased visitor spending throughout the community.

The team is dedicated to engaging and collaborating with local tourism partners, staying informed about available experiences and providing exceptional customer service.

With the help of experienced and dedicated volunteers, the team manages the downtown Omaha Visitors Center at 10th and Farnam Streets, and two visitor information kiosks at the Omaha airport. Serving as the city's official resource for visitor information, each location provides personalized service, engaging visuals, area maps, brochures, special offers and insider tips on what to see and do while visiting Omaha.

KEY AREAS OF WORK

- Year-round operation of the Omaha Visitors Center, airport information kiosks and satellite information locations throughout Douglas County.
- Provide visitors with engaging information and excellent customer service to ensure a memorable experience, which maximizes guest satisfaction and increases visitation to, and spending with, local tourism partners.
- Collaborate with tourism partners to educate frontline staff on tourism offerings throughout the community, providing a full-city approach to visitor hospitality.
- Educate local residents on things to do with visiting friends and family, which in turn increases local awareness and appreciation of Omaha as a tourism destination.
- Develop new programs to increase traffic at the Omaha Visitors Center and increase its relevancy with visitors and local residents.
- Recruit and retain Omaha Visitors Center volunteer ambassadors and provide continuing education opportunities through training and tours.
- Distribute Omaha promotional materials across the state in partnership with the Nebraska Tourism Commission.

NEW INITIATIVES

- Implement quarterly outreach to the airport and airline frontline staff to strengthen partnerships and increase awareness of the Omaha Visitors Center.
- Increase advocacy of tourism by educating local school students, families and new residents about the value of tourism through monthly outreach to schools, organizations and newcomer orientations.
- Boost recruitment and retention of volunteer ambassadors by developing four interactive experiences that enrich understanding of Omaha's tourism offerings and create meaningful connections among volunteers.
- Transform the front entrance of the Omaha Visitors Center to increase accessibility and enhance visibility.
- Improve signage and brochure displays inside the Omaha Visitors Center to enhance the visibility of visitor information.
- Expand the selection of retail items at the Omaha Visitors Center to increase revenue.



TARGET GOALS

Assist **14,000**
visitors at the Omaha
Visitors Center

Recruit, train
& retain a staff of **65**
volunteer Ambassadors

10%
Increase in retail
sales revenue

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Visit Omaha administration team develops and executes the strategic direction of the organization, manages daily operations and technology needs, ensures financial accountability and stability, leads community partnership and engagement efforts, and serves as administrator for the City of Omaha Destination Marketing Corporation (DMC). The DMC is a 501(c) 6 nonprofit entity that is responsible for the management of the Strategic Marketing Fund used to incentivize meeting and event business.

KEY AREAS OF WORK

- Achieve revenue and expense goals.
- Lead advocacy efforts to promote and educate community leaders on the value of tourism.
- Collaborate with local, state and regional organizations to increase awareness of Omaha as a tourism destination.
- Manage the Omaha Destination Marketing Corporation and the Strategic Marketing Fund to offer incentives to attract meeting and event business to our community.
- Serve as a resource to Douglas County Visitor Improvement Fund applicants.
- Maintain Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP) certification to ensure Visit Omaha continues to meet and exceed industry standards.
- Ensure the organization has leading-edge technology to maximize efficiency and productivity.
- Provide staff training to increase employee performance and job satisfaction.

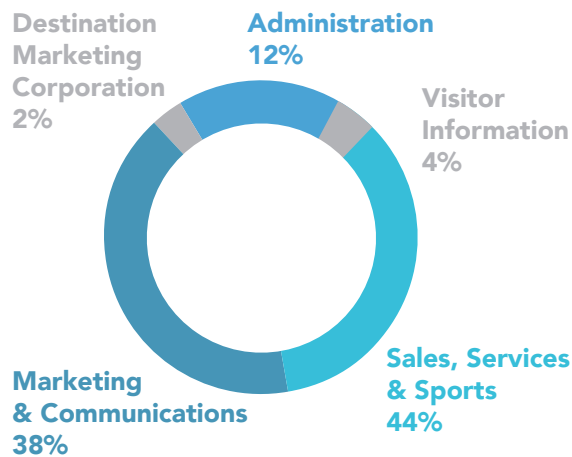
NEW INITIATIVES

- Expand existing office to better accommodate Visit Omaha's growing staff while providing flexible space that offers a variety of working environments and storage solutions.
- Research new financial and contract management tools to enhance accounting efficiency and improve tracking capabilities.
- Implement accounting redundancy measures to ensure the accuracy of monthly revenue and expense reports, offering continuous training to strengthen the Visit Omaha accounting team.
- Organize quarterly staff training and engagement events to enhance job satisfaction and employee camaraderie.
- Implement best practices for the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to increase operational productivity.

OMAHA DESTINATION MARKETING CORPORATION

To remain competitive, Visit Omaha created the Omaha Destination Marketing Corporation (DMC), a 501(c) 6 nonprofit organization. The DMC is funded through Visit Omaha's portion of the lodging tax paid by visitors. Each year, Visit Omaha sets its operational budget after calculating how much hotel tax revenue it will receive based on visitation projections. When that revenue exceeds projections, those dollars are saved in a reserve fund. The corporation allows Visit Omaha to take those reserve funds and use them as incentives to entice meeting, sports and event groups to select Omaha. Since the majority of meeting, sports and event business is booked three to five years in advance, the corporation allows Visit Omaha to earmark these funds and hold them until it is time to pay for a specific meeting or event. The Destination Marketing Corporation Board and the Omaha City Council approve fund disbursement.

2025 BUDGET BY DEPARTMENT



BUDGET

The majority of Visit Omaha's funding comes from hotel tax paid by visitors. The state collects a 5% lodging tax on each Douglas County hotel room booked: 1% is for the state's tourism promotion efforts; 2% goes to the county for tourism development; and the remaining 2% funds Visit Omaha's sales and marketing efforts. In addition, the City of Omaha collects a 5.5% occupation tax on hotel rooms; 0.5% goes to Visit Omaha. In 2025, the city will contribute \$2.4 million from its general fund to invest in tourism sales and promotion. Visit Omaha also generates private revenue selling advertising on its website and in its visitor guide, selling branded souvenirs at the Omaha Visitors Center, and through promotional and trade show partnerships with local hotels, attractions and restaurants.

2025 REVENUE

	Projected
Lodging Tax - County (2%)	\$6,026,211
Occupation Tax - City (0.5%)	\$1,289,512
General Fund - City	\$2,400,000
Private Dollars	\$133,000
Destination Marketing Corporation	\$203,478
Reserve Account	\$1,500,000

Total revenues \$11,552,201

2025 EXPENSES

	%	Projected
Administration	12%	\$1,323,552
Sales, Services & Sports	44%	\$5,136,825
Marketing & Communications	38%	\$4,370,170
Visitor Information	4%	\$476,935
Destination Marketing Corporation	2%	\$244,719

Total expenses by department \$11,552,201

**Adopted city budget*

VISIT OMAHA STAFF

ADMINISTRATION

Deborah Ward
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dean Miller
VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS

Jodie Jordon
OFFICE MANAGER

Kelly Thomsen
ACCOUNTING CLERK

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Jasmyn Goodwin
*VICE PRESIDENT OF
MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS*

Erin O'Brien
DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

Megan Feeney
MARKETING CONTENT MANAGER

Noelle Agenor
SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER

Lynn Mace
MARKETING RESEARCH ANALYST

Suleyma Garcia Mendez
MARKETING COORDINATOR

Amy Cunningham
GRAPHIC DESIGNER

MEETING, SPORTS AND EVENT SALES

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VICE PRESIDENT OF SALES & SERVICES

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Mattie Scheeter, CMP
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Matt Heck
SENIOR SALES MANAGER

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NATIONAL SALES MANAGER

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