

Richmond Region Tourism Improvement District Mid-Year Report February 2026

Now midway through the third year of TID operations, this collective investment continues to demonstrate the value of a coordinated, hotel-led approach to driving visitation, strengthening hotel performance, and positioning the Richmond Region for long-term success.

Supported by the collaboration of hotels across Ashland, Chesterfield, Colonial Heights, Hanover, Henrico, and Richmond, the Tourism Improvement District continues to set a strong standard for regional partnership. Working closely with the team at Richmond Region Tourism, the TID Governance Committee remains focused on responsible stewardship of TID funds and on strategies that drive demand through year-round leisure marketing, recruitment of meetings, conventions, sports, and group tours, workforce development, and support for new events that generate overnight stays.

This mid-year update outlines the measurable results achieved during the first half of fiscal year 2025-2026, along with the strategic investments underway to support continued momentum throughout the year. These include initiatives tied to Richmond Region 250 and other demand-driving opportunities.

Thank you for your continued partnership and leadership.

Sincerely,

Neil Amin
TID Governance Committee Chair
CEO, Shamin Hotels

Mayush Mehta
TID Governance Committee Vice Chair
Regional Vice President, JP Hospitality



Governance Committee

The TID Governance Committee meets monthly to work closely with RRT staff on programmatic decisions, approval processes, budgeting, KPIs and direction for the future.

- Neil Amin, Shamin Hotels, Chair
- Ashley Lowery, Apple REIT
- Mayush Mehta, JP Hospitality, Vice Chair
- Nirav Mehta, S-Z Management
- Nick Patel, Kalyan Hospitality
- Ravi Patel, SINA Hospitality
- Robert Reed, SMI Hotel Group
- Vishal Savani, Savara Hospitality
- Mark Yardis, Shamin Hotels
- Lisa Sims, RRT Board Chair*
- Katherine O'Donnell, RRT President & CEO*
- **Non-voting members*

Leisure Marketing

Overview

Leisure Marketing, for the first half year of fiscal 2025-2026, did not miss a beat from the impressive results from the previous fiscal year with 26,217 hotel room nights generated and overall estimated economic impact of \$5,896,764. By creating the campaigns in-house rather than paying for fees for a marketing agency, we were able to purchase an additional \$179,000 in advertising.

This past six months, the Marketing team oversaw 10 TID funded campaigns. The three Sojern campaigns (all travel, mid-week and Black travelers) continued an upwards trajectory of results. Sojern was asked to push its efforts to increase overall results by at least 10 percent for the year, and they are on their way to accomplishing that goal.

With Sojern’s assistance, we continued to be “always on,” ensuring that qualified travel intenders are receiving ads every hour of every day.



The Drive December campaign, which ran in October and November, more than doubled results compared to the same period in the previous year.

The Expedia campaign that uses targeted Richmond Region ads to drive visitors to a customized Richmond Region landing page continued to drive impressive results as well in bookings, room nights, revenue and return on ad spend.

We added several new marketing campaigns strategies for this TID fiscal year, including campaigns from Epsilon – another digital marketing platform, D.C. Fox 5 and CBS 6, as well as Afar Travel Media. The latter three were designed to raise awareness of our region. The CBS 6 campaign included the coverage area from Richmond to Fredericksburg, Williamsburg, Charlottesville and to the North Carolina border.

And we brought back billboard marketing with Lamar for a four-month run with 13 billboards (10 static and three digital).

While most of these efforts will continue into the second half of the year, they will be complemented by newly created campaigns – Richmond Region 250 – Always Revolutionary and our World Cup marketing campaign to target fans attending games in Philadelphia and Atlanta.

Overall Results

July 1 to December 31, 2025

8,996
bookings

26,217
room nights

\$3,093,606
room revenue

\$5,896,764
total revenue

25,863
travelers

1,795
flights*

10.3:1
ROAS*

Individual Campaign Results

Sojern Midweek



Bookings	1,865
Travelers	2,716
Room Nights	3,554
Flights	473
Revenue	\$419,372
Economic Impact	\$619,248
ROAS	3.46:1

Sojern All Travel

Bookings	2,409
Travelers	3,405
Room Nights	4,659
Flights	536
Revenue	\$549,762
Economic Impact	\$776,340
ROAS	6.48:1

Sojern Black Visitors



Bookings	2,759
Travelers	3,684
Room Nights	5,746
Flights	594
Revenue	\$678,028
Economic Impact	\$839,952
ROAS	5.65:1

Drive December

Bookings	1,933
Travelers	2,395
Room Nights	3,730
Flights	192
Revenue	\$440,140
Economic Impact	\$546,060
ROAS	10.25:1

Expedia Campaign

Bookings	7,200
Travelers	13,663
Room Nights	8,528
Revenue	\$1,006,304
Economic Impact	\$3,115,164
ROAS	41.1:1

Television Marketing Campaigns

Fox News

Total Impressions Delivered: 9,874,333

Total Added Value: \$65,550 in added spots

Maximum exposure: No charge spots delivered across Fox’s most premium programming, including NFL, MLB, College Football and Fox Newscasts.

High-impact content: Produced and aired half hour special show, including a bonus Thanksgiving Day Re-run at no charge.

CBS 6

The campaign included the coverage area of Richmond to Fredericksburg to the North, Williamsburg to the East, Charlottesville to the West, and to the NC line to the South. This is the Richmond DMA (designated market area.).

The campaign reached 97.1% of all the households in the Richmond DMA. We estimate that to be about 459,172 households!

On average, a household in the Richmond DMA saw the commercial an average of 8.4 times.

The commercial during the Ravens and Chiefs NFL game on September 28th was the most watched commercial for the campaign with 102,200 households in the

Richmond DMA watching it! The Lions at the Packers NFL game on opening weekend (September 7th) reached 92,300 households. The audience of live sports is unbeatable when it comes to getting RRT’s message in front of a mass number of people at once.

The campaign delivered 3,843,400 household impressions over the course of July 14th through September 28th.

Afar Travel Media



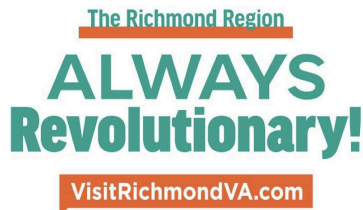
This year we did a media buy with Afar because of their excellent reputation in the industry and their reach both domestically and internationally.

They provided us support with:

- Social media posts
 - Reach: 214,136
 - Engagements: 3,710
 - Engagement Rates: 1.73%
- Targeted Emails
 - Opens: 1,310,254
 - Open rates: 51.18%
- Display ads
 - Impressions: 191,752
 - CTR: 4.10%

Also, in the fall 2025 edition of AFAR Magazine, there was an excellent feature of mountain biking in and around Richmond.

Lamar Billboard Program



During this program so far, the three static billboards have generated:

Plays: 525,211

Impressions: 9,317,012

The regular billboards (10) will be measured at the conclusion of our campaign.

Note: We did not include the results from the Epsilon campaign in this report as we need a larger time period of the campaign to better assess results.

Destination Sales & Sports Development

Overview

The Sales Department continues to advance the Richmond Region's market position, driving demand and reinforcing its competitiveness as a destination for meetings, conventions, and sports tournaments.

Tradeshow Overview

- Attended six TID funded tradeshow - three new for 2025 (Lamont & Associates, GBTA Annual Convention + NCAA Host Bid Symposium)
- Expanded booth presence at three tradeshow - one new for 2025 (Connect Marketplace 10 x 20)
- Hotel, venue, and collegiate partners joined us on six of the opportunities: Greater Richmond Convention Center, Four Points by Sheraton Richmond Midlothian, Henrico

Sports & Entertainment Authority, Hilton Richmond Downtown, Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa / Short Pump, Play Chesterfield, Virginia Crossings Hotel & Conference Center, and Virginia State University

Tradeshow Highlights

We launched a custom, scalable tradeshow booth that supports multiple configurations, enhancing brand visibility and delivering future time and cost efficiencies as we promote the region on the road.



ASAE

Kept 10 x 20 booth, two partners joined, booth engagement remained consistent with 2024.

Destination East

21 appointments / 13 new connections.

IMEX

Kept 10 x 20 booth, three partners joined, increased show engagement by 12%.

T.E.A.M.S Conference & Expo

Kept 20 x 20 booth, three partners joined, increased show engagement by 30%.

Holiday Showcase

Reduced to a 10 x 10 booth, one partner joined, both traffic decreased 40%.

Client Events

Monday Night Football Client Event in Baltimore



- Partnered with Henrico Sports & Entertainment Authority + Play Chesterfield
- Hosted 12 clients that included pre-game hospitality and networking followed by the game
- Clients included AJGA, CIAA, Corrigan Sports, Elite Tournaments, American Cornhole, Playeasy, Sports ETA, and Unrivaled Sports

GRP + RRT Client Dinner

- Partnered with GRP to host an exclusive dinner in Washington DC
- Hosted clients from Conference Direct, PBS, National Association of Social Workers, KLN Commercial Real Estate Services, Jalsa Salana USA, IQVIA, Event House Partners, Education Writers Association,

Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs, American Farm Bureau Federation, and Association of Children Museums

Event Incentives

Number of Event Incentives Approved	25
Estimated EIC	\$29,968,948
Estimated Total Room Nights	32,016
Conversion Rate	52%

Event Incentives Approved by FY	Meetings	Sports
FY 26	1	4
FY 27	6	1
FY 28	4	1
FY 29	2	1
FY 30	2	2
FY 31	0	1
Total	15	10

Event Status	Meetings	Sports	Total
Won	7	5	12
Lost	4	1	5
Undecided	3	4	7

Note: FY26 mid-year figures reflect approved FY26 totals through December 31; FY25 mid-year figures included all incentives approved overall.

Sales Marketing

ASAE

- Meetings Feature Second Tier - Second to None: The Richmond Region Case for Meetings That Matter (July 2025)
 - 433 clicks (229 unique)
 - 4th most viewed article between July 8-28
 - Ranked top 20 of articles during campaign run

- Daily News Display Ads (July – September)
 - July 2025 – 32,210 impressions | 25 clicks | .08% CTR
 - August 2025 – 26,503 impressions | 272 clicks | 1.03% CTR
 - September 25 – 27,839 impressions | 339 clicks | 12.8% CTR

LinkedIn Awareness Campaign: September – November

- Total Impressions: 668,935
- Total Clicks: 9,462
- Total Click-Through Rate (CTR): 1.41%
- Demographic Results by impressions and clicks: New York, Chicago, DC/Baltimore, Columbus, OH, Philadelphia, Atlanta, St. Louis, and Orlando



PCMA Engage Infographics Campaign: October – December

- Total Impressions: 210,510
- Total Clicks: 2,006
- Click-Through Rate (CTR): 0.953%

RCMA

- July Web Banner – 2,026 sent, 43.2% open rate, six unique clicks on our ad
- August Social Media Spotlight – four posts, 231 views
- October Web Banner – 1,425 sent, 43.4% open rate, seven unique clicks on our ad
- November Web Banner – 1,421 sent, 46.1% open rate, six unique clicks on our ad

SkyNav

SKYNAV is the Richmond Region's immersive 360° digital storytelling platform, transforming how travelers discover our region. It's a strategic marketing tool that increases exposure, drives engagement and visitation, strengthens the region's brand, and enhances our digital impact. It has been a gamechanger at tradeshow in how we promote the region to future clients.



Booking Promotions

The following booking promotions were renewed for this FY:

- **Come See, Fly Free** - Covers a 1.5-day experience aimed at securing new business opportunities through personalized visits
- **Group Sales** – Richmond Region Advantage: offers reimbursements to select-service hotels with less than 1,000 sq. ft. of meeting space to attract new business
- **Single-Property Meetings: Your Event, Your Extras** - Flexible incentive options aimed to attract new mid-week business in 2026 and 2027. (five events converted for 836 room nights an estimated \$315,057 economic impact)

Hotel Benefits

- Virginia Restaurant Lodging & Travel Association memberships provided to all TID hotels
- We have 91 TID hotels utilizing the Threshold360 platform

GROUP TOUR

Overview

The first half of FY26 focused on high-impact lead generation and the strategic alignment of the Richmond Region’s assets for the upcoming 2026/2027 tour seasons. By front-loading trade show participation and marketing collateral development, the Visitor Experience team has successfully activated over half of the annual Tourism Improvement District (TID) Group allocation, ensuring the region remains a top-tier choice for global tour operators.

Financial Performance Analysis

Our financial strategy for the first half of the year was intentionally aggressive to ensure Richmond remained top-of-mind during the primary booking window for national tour operators.

The majority of our mid-year investment was directed toward high-visibility presence at major industry marketplaces. We also completed a significant update to our marketing collateral, finalizing high-production assets needed for the 2026 250th Anniversary and the upcoming TBEX North America launch.

Currently, we maintain a healthy reserve of funding specifically earmarked for group incentives. These funds are being held as “closers” to secure definitive hotel contracts in the second half of the fiscal year. Our hosting and site-visit investments remain on track, covering the essential scouting costs for new, creator-led group itineraries.

Strategic Highlights & Sales Activity

Trade Show & Lead Generation

We maintained a dominant presence at major industry marketplaces, including ABA, SYTA, NTA, and the Georgia Motorcoach Regional Marketplace. These efforts have populated the 2026 pipeline with high-intent leads, particularly in the student and heritage travel segments.

Marketing & Collateral

The Movement Marketing campaign has significantly increased our digital footprint. We have finalized the updated Richmond Profile Sheet and digital sales kits to reflect the region’s readiness for the 250th Anniversary and specialized travel itineraries.



Experience the **RICHMOND REGION**

Where American history, creative energy, and cultural depth shape meaningful learning.

[VisitRichmondVA.com](https://www.VisitRichmondVA.com)

Request a custom itinerary!



The updated collateral highlights the Richmond Region’s unique, immersive experiences around Richmond Region 250.

FAM Tours & TBEX Strategic Integration

Mid-year activity included the scouting and development of “Pre-BEX” Group Tours for the TBEX North America conference. These efforts ensure that the content generated by global creators results in “plug-and-play” itineraries that are immediately viable for traditional group operators. To date, the team has developed 20 specialized tours, the majority of which are engineered to transition into permanent, scalable group offerings for the region.

ROI & LOOKING AHEAD

High-Value Affinity & Educational FAMs

We are leveraging the regional 250th anniversary and current momentum to target specialized travel planners through high-yield immersive experiences:

- **Educational Travel Conference (ETC) Learning Labs** - We are focusing on ETC delegates: highly qualified nonprofit planners from alumni associations and museums. These “Learning Labs” are educationally rich, immersive experiences designed for professional development and high-level networking.
- **Heritage Clubs International (HCI) Peer Group** - We are engaging HCI, the leading North American network for bank travel clubs. This partnership allows us to showcase the Richmond Region to planners who manage high-loyalty, high-profit customer relationships through premium, memorable group travel.
- **Strategic May FAM** - Currently under development in partnership with Movement Marketing, this late-spring FAM is designed to maximize visual storytelling and social media impact just ahead of the peak travel season.

Incentive Runway & Conversion

The focus for the second half of FY26 shifts from lead generation to conversion. Our remaining incentive funds will be the primary tool used to close pending deals during the peak spring booking cycles. Current leads represent a projected economic impact (EIC) exceeding \$1.2M for the Richmond region.



Richmond Region Tourism hosted the Recharge Lounge at ABA; engaging with top-tier tour operators to secure definitive bookings for the 2026/2027 season.

Workforce Development

I Am Tourism Hotel Edition

I Am Tourism Hotel Edition recognizes the vital role hotel teams play in driving the Richmond Region’s visitor economy. As the front door to the destination, hotel teams shape first impressions, create memorable stays, and connect guests to the people, places, and experiences that make our region unique. The digital marketing platform is helping team members tell that story. We currently offer English and Spanish platforms serving nearly 400 learners to date.

Check Out Digital Hotel IAT



Special Events Incubation Grants

TID Special Events Grants support the creation and growth of new events that drive visitation to the Richmond Region. Designed to help event organizers bring fresh, tourism-focused experiences to the region while boosting overnight stays and economic impact.

To date, the grant funding has generated an estimated 2,308 room nights and \$1,506,967 in estimated economic impact.

- East Coast Expositions LLC
- Commonwealth Basketball Group
- Esther Global Foundation
- The Branch Museum of Design
- Heather Teysko
- Mostly Sugar Media, LLC
- Special Olympics Virginia
- The Boone Foundation
- Richmond Film Network
- AC Sports

Administrative Operations

TID operations continue to support strong results for the region. Now midway through the third year of the program, the number of hotels in compliance with the TID has increased compared to prior years, and revenues and expenditures are tracking as expected when the TID was originally established.

Because the TID is administered by Richmond Region Tourism (RRT), TID activity is included in RRT’s annual audit. The FY25 audit covered the second year of TID operations and was conducted by Harris, Hardy & Johnstone. The audit found no issues, was accepted by the full RRT Board on November 19, 2025, and was shared with all TID jurisdictions.

During the first two quarters of FY26, TID operations have moved into a steady, predictable phase. Staff is actively managing program expenses and monitoring reserves to ensure funds are available when needed. The TID’s banking partner, Atlantic Union Bank, has assisted with short-term reserve planning to align available funds with anticipated future uses.

TID reserves are intentionally flexible. They are designed to support strategic opportunities—both within the current fiscal year and in future years—that drive tourism, increase hotel room nights, and deliver long-term value to participating jurisdictions. The TID Governance Committee retains the ability to deploy these funds thoughtfully as opportunities arise.

Income	YTD 12/31/2025	Budget YTD
Hoteliers/Jurisdiction Support	\$ 4,726,018	\$ 4,353,621
Net Banking Interest	\$ 106,438	\$ 83,667
Total Income	\$ 4,832,455	\$ 4,437,288
Expense	YTD	Budget YTD
Administration	\$ 161,589	\$ 425,012
Promotion/Sales/Marketing		
Group Tours	\$ 208,604	\$ 191,620
Sales	\$ 1,485,902	\$ 1,212,750
Marketing	\$ 1,071,949	\$ 985,000
TID Training/Memberships/Tool	\$ 211,227	\$ 160,697
	\$ 2,977,682	\$ 2,550,067
Expenses (ex-Reserve)	\$ 3,139,271	\$ 2,975,079
Reserve	\$ 1,449,737	\$ 1,331,186
Expenses Total	\$ 4,589,007	\$ 4,306,265