



## FY 23-24 Business Plan





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW



### Mission:

Share a passion for the Richmond Region with the world.

### Vision:

As a thriving community, the Richmond Region is known for being inclusive and welcoming to all.

### About Us:

As the Region's destination organization, we are experts who have a deep love for the community in which we live, work, and play.

We enrich the lives of our residents and visitors by sharing the unique culture and humanity that is the Richmond Region.

We generate economic prosperity through tourism by attracting conventions, meetings, sports tournaments, and visitors and ensuring that all have an unforgettable experience.

We enhance the quality of life for the people in our community by supporting the places that make the Richmond Region wonderful.

We strengthen local programs that drive tourism through our Richmond Region Tourism Foundation.

We do all of this through a lens of diversity, equity and inclusion.

### Values:

At Richmond Region Tourism, our people are our biggest asset. Our internal cornerstones define our organizational culture and provide a road map for engaging with our community in making the Richmond Region welcoming for all.



#### *Passion*

Intense enthusiasm for our community and its people



#### *Inclusiveness*

Deep commitment to equity and community engagement to advance, develop and sustain the Region



#### *Integrity*

Dynamic culture built upon trust, honesty, and credibility



#### *Innovation*

Leading-edge work that is rooted in creativity and transformational for the Region



#### *Stewardship*

Ambassadors of our destination's development, image and reputation



#### *Courage*

Doing the right thing and upholding our values

## Richmond Region Tourism - Organization Overview

Richmond Region Tourism is the official destination marketing organization (DMO) for the Richmond Region that is comprised of Chesterfield, Hanover, Henrico and New Kent counties, as well as the cities of Richmond and Colonial Heights and the town of Ashland. An accredited member of Destinations International and a member of the U.S. Travel Association, Richmond Region Tourism is a private, nonprofit 501(c) 6 corporation and is in its 40th year of operation.

Richmond Region Tourism focuses on programs that directly impact hotel occupancy and drive visitor spending. Efficient and accountable fiscal controls are carefully monitored by the Richmond Region Tourism Board of Directors to ensure that resources are invested carefully and efficiently. To allow for adjustments to changing market conditions, select plan objectives and/or tactics may change throughout the year.

Richmond Region Tourism's primary funding comes from the transient lodging tax that hotel guests pay in the localities of Chesterfield, Hanover, Henrico and the City of Richmond. Richmond Region Tourism receives 2 percent of the transient lodging sales. RRT is also partially funded by Class B member localities (New Kent, Colonial Heights and Ashland), the Greater Richmond Convention Center Authority (GRCCA), ChamberRVA, and from other local partners and sponsors.

### Richmond Region Tourism is committed to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:

Every day we passionately promote the Richmond Region to the world. We take pride in our roles because we know it's important to the community's quality of life, economy, and collective identity. Richmond Region Tourism's success is dependent on all employees, partners and stakeholders showing up as their authentic selves because their unique perspectives and experiences add value and make our work stronger. To effectively market the region, we're weaving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion into every aspect of Richmond Region Tourism's strategy and values.

Richmond Region Tourism's DEI Task Force, a group of team members focused on advancing DEI, is collaborating internally and externally to drive positive change, and helping to establish the organization's priorities.

Richmond Region Tourism is committed to growing and investing in DEI for the long term. Here are three current internal goals:

- Educating staff and board members about the importance of a diverse, equitable and inclusive organization which improves the quality of life for our residents, partners, and visitors
- Strengthening and providing equitable access to opportunities for employee professional growth and advancement
- Developing best practices that support responsible sourcing, equitable partnerships, and business impact across all departments, both internally and externally





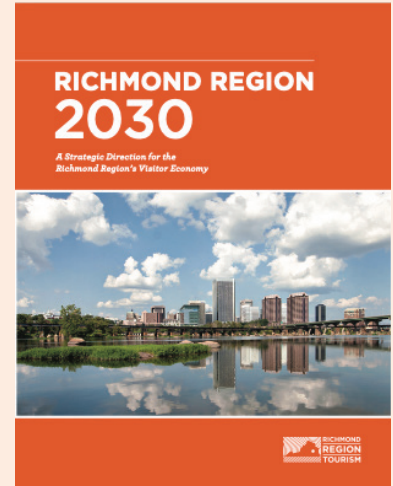
# TOURISM MASTER PLAN

## Richmond Region 2030: A Strategic Direction for the Richmond Region's Visitor Economy

Richmond Region 2030 was developed in 2019 with extensive feedback from the community. Launched in fall 2020, the plan establishes priorities that, when executed over the next decade, will ensure that the quality of the visitor experience can be balanced with the quality of life for residents; that we attract the kinds of visitors who would most appreciate the region's character; and that we responsibly grow our tourism industry for the benefit of all in our community.

In the next year, the board and staff will focus on four immediate priorities emerging from the Tourism Master Plan:

- Convention Center Headquarters Hotel
- Collaborative, high-investment inspiration campaign to align messaging with tourism and economic development
- Workforce development within the tourism industry
- Sustainable funding



Richmond Region 2030 is a robust and inclusive plan to move our industry and our community into the future. Visit [www.RichmondRegion2030.com](http://www.RichmondRegion2030.com) to read through the plan and engage in this important work.

## Tourism Improvement District

Under the leadership of a local Steering Committee and with the buy-in of the hotel community, Richmond Region Tourism is pursuing the establishment of a Richmond Region Tourism Improvement District (TID).

The TID will be a public-private partnership providing supplemental and protected funds for tourism promotion activities. The Region's hotel industry votes to assess itself: an assessment would be levied on lodging businesses with 41+ rooms within Chesterfield, Hanover, and Henrico Counties, Cities of Richmond and Colonial Heights and the Town of Ashland. Assessed lodging businesses may pass the assessment (not a tax) on to customers (visitors not residents).

Richmond Region Tourism manages and directs programmatic spend on behalf of, and with oversight from, the industry via a committee representative of the assessed lodging businesses. Funds will be used only for specific purposes associated with driving visitation and hotel occupancy – in turn, benefiting the assessed business, the Region and the entire community.

The assessment collection is targeted to begin July 1, 2023.





# ADMINISTRATION

Richmond Region Tourism's Administration Department oversees strategic planning, management, direction, execution and implementation and aligns strategies to achieve organizational goals and objectives. Leads the annual organization business plan development and related key performance metrics. Reviews results and data of all programs to ensure goals are met. The Administration Department also spearheads the implementation of the Tourism Master Plan in collaboration with the Executive Committee and staff.

The Administration Department provides support to the 22-seat Board of Directors, which governs Richmond Region Tourism, and the five-seat Greater Richmond Convention Center Authority (GRCCA), which governs the Greater Richmond Convention Center. The department oversees all financial and human related resources, benefits and welfare for the employees.

## Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is comprised of the following matrix of members:

### 10 (Seats) - Class A Membership Directors:

- Henrico County: 3 seats – 1 elected official and 2 seats filled by a hotel, attraction, retail, restaurant or tourism stakeholder
- City of Richmond: 3 seats – 1 elected official and 2 seats filled by a hotel, attraction, retail, restaurant or tourism stakeholder
- Chesterfield County: 2 seats – 1 elected official and 1 seat filled by a hotel, attraction, retail, restaurant or tourism stakeholder
- Hanover County: 1 seat – 1 elected official
- ChamberRVA: 1 seat – CEO

### 8 (Seats) – Ex Officio Directors:

- Capital Region Airport Commission: 1 seat – CEO
- Kings Dominion: 1 seat – CEO
- Richmond Raceway: 1 seat – CEO
- Venture Richmond: 1 seat – CEO
- Virginia Tourism Corporation: 1 seat – CEO
- Richmond Sports Backers: 1 seat – CEO
- Retail Merchants Association (InUnison): 1 seat – CEO
- Richmond Region Hospitality Association: 1 seat – CEO

### 1 (Seat) – Class B Shared Seat:

- Town of Ashland – Elected Official (holds vote FY23)
- City of Colonial Heights – Elected Official (holds vote FY22 and again in FY25)
- New Kent County – Elected Official (holds vote FY24)

### 3 (Seats) Other Appointed Directors:

- At-Large Director: 1 seat – appointed by the Richmond Region Tourism Board
- At-Large Director: 1 Corporate seat appointed by the Richmond Region Tourism Board
- At-Large Director: 1 seat appointed by the Museum Directors Association





## Administration Plan

### Objective:

Maintain effective financial and human resource management of all aspects of the organization.

### Tactics:

- Manage office facilities, equipment, office supplies and inventory while allowing staff to work a flexible hybrid work schedule. Ensure effective internal communications with staff
- Control purchasing and cost management with future budget planning
- Manage IT support and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System
- Manage employee relations and work with external HR consultant. Manage the recruiting and hiring process as needed
- Maintain job descriptions and performance appraisals for all positions
- Ensure the employee policies and procedures document is updated continuously to reflect recent laws and legislation. Communicate all changes to staff in an efficient manner
- Continually update the Crisis Communication Plan to accurately keep all staff informed and educated with tools and resources to follow in case of an emergency
- Monitor annually an efficient Technology Plan for keeping the appropriate technology trends and resources available to staff to conduct the mission of the organization
- Manage finances and all budget and accounting for Richmond Region Tourism and the Richmond Region Tourism Foundation
- Ensure that the organization maintains accreditation through the Destination Marketing Accreditation Program

### Specific Goals For FY24:

- Internship Program to focus on students in the tourism, hospitality management and sports management industry through local Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Offer department summer internship experiences as well as some fall/winter experiences - ongoing
- Tourism Diversity Matters Apprenticeship Program - work to provide a recent or upcoming college graduate with a concentration in business studies with an apprenticeship opportunity to gain valuable hands-on cross training experience through the rotation of various departments of the organization and with two other partners such as a hotel and the convention center. - Fall 2023
- Engage with a fractional CFO for a financial assessment designed to identify areas that are working well, highlight areas of improvement and provide expert advice with financial stability and processes as we lead into a Tourism Improvement District. - Fall 2022
- Possible accounting position should the TID be realized - Summer 2023
- Continually improve upon the Transparency landing page on the VisitRichmondVA.com website that will assist people with finding out more about Richmond Region Tourism - Ongoing
- Develop best practices that support responsible sourcing, equitable partnerships and business impact across all departments, both internally and externally. Survey vendors through the RISE (Report on Inclusive Spending Efforts) and track for diversity spending initiatives. Fall 2022 Create a new purchasing policy for goods and services. - Q1 2023
- Establish a new performance management software system to track employee annual and biannual reviews. - Q3 2023



Richmond Region Tourism's work in Diversity Equity and Inclusion is ongoing. An internal taskforce was created with staff led co-chairs to design a DEI plan which will focus on the following areas:

### ADVANCEMENT & RETENTION

Goal: Strengthen and provide equitable access to opportunities for employee professional growth and advancement.

Short Term Tactics:

- Conduct biannual data collection to find out where employees serve in leadership capacities and areas where they have leadership interest outside of the role at Richmond Region Tourism
- Identify areas of focus and organizations where Richmond Region Tourism should have representation
- Twice yearly assess professional development credentials/programs already acquired by staff and determine future ambitions for development via self-evaluation during reviews
- Compile a list of leadership and development opportunities within our community and industry
- Intentionally connect employees to leadership and professional development opportunities

### STAFF EDUCATION/ EXPERIENCES

Goal: Educate staff and board members about the importance of a diverse, equitable and inclusive organization which improves the quality of life for our residents, partners and visitors.

Short Term Tactics:

- Create partnerships with local community organizations to share their knowledge through educational presentations and written information, and optimize relationships with BLK RVA and OutRVA to educate staff on DEI topics
- Host educational experiences once a quarter, such as walking tours and heritage related training
- Intro DEI mission/vision and goals during IAT classes
- Incorporate DEI mission, vision statement, progress and accomplishments into new hire onboarding information

### BUSINESS IMPACT

Goal: Develop best practices that support responsible sourcing, equitable partnerships, and business impact across all departments, both internally and externally.

Short Term Tactics:

- Conduct survey of internal spending to determine areas of opportunity to increase economic impact among small, minority-owned businesses and services
- Establish qualitative and quantitative goals within each department that are relative, attainable and conducive to primary business function
- Create a responsible sourcing SOP for all employees with purchasing power
- Introduce goals to Richmond Region Tourism personnel, effective at the beginning of the next FY, and communicate expectations





# COMMUNITY RELATIONS

## Community Relations and Foundation Mission

To be a community shared value that advances tourism's impact on the quality of life in the Richmond Region by generating awareness and educating residents about the importance of tourism.

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

### Summary:

To advance the impact of tourism on Black and LGBTQ+ owned business through BLK RVA and OutRVA programs.

### Key Performance Indicators:

- Personally interact with a minimum of 60 partner businesses annually and grow BLK RVA and OutRVA business website listings by 10%
  - Create a resource document for distribution to assist in building capacity
    - Create quarterly emails to BLK RVA distribution list with the resource guide
- Grow BLK RVA and OutRVA social following by 10% annually
  - Coordinated social/engagement plan with Ryano Graphics for BLK RVA and Big Spoon for OutRVA
- Work with RRT Marketing on local implementation of national DEI campaigns
- Work with the City of Richmond to ensure our MEI score stays at 100
- Fundraise a minimum of \$50,000 annually for diversity, equity, and inclusion programs of the Richmond Region Tourism Foundation
- Sponsor a minimum of 10 local events by BLK RVA or OutRVA that promote Black culture and create safe spaces for both visitors and constituents.

## Ambassador Training

### Summary:

Engage constituents to learn what's in their own backyard and also gain a visitor's perspective of our region and knowledge of our many tourism products and offerings through I Am Tourism and the I Am Tourism Academy.

### Key Performance Indicators:

- Graduate 400 constituents annually through I Am Tourism program and 25 constituents through the I Am Tourism Academy.
- Utilize dedicated marketing plan to enhance the reach and awareness of I Am Tourism
- Create two annual graduate engagement events through exclusive tourism and hospitality experiences.
- Work with Visitor Experience to ask IAT graduates to volunteer for BLK RVA and OutRVA events

## Scholarship and Grant Distribution

### Summary:

Fundraise to invest in local students and businesses through various grant and sponsorship programs.

### Key Performance Indicators:

- Work with local post-graduate institutions to fund a minimum of ten annual, \$1,000 scholarships to students in hospitality management programs.
- Work with local post-graduate institutions to fund a minimum of two annual, \$2,500 scholarships to students in sports management programs.
- Work with RRT Sports Development team to award a minimum of \$35,000 in sports grant dollars to a minimum of 20 local sports organizations

## Workforce Development

### Summary:

Create workforce development programming, partnerships and strategies around promoting the importance of tourism as a career pathway and getting involved in local schools and colleges to help foster a new generation of tourism professionals.

### Key Performance Indicators:

- Annually update and/or introduce tourism education materials into local Career and Tech Education Centers (CTE) and collegiate hospitality programs to support career pathway promotion.
- Coordinate one annual staff presentation in each partner jurisdiction's CTE program
- Create collaboration action plan with tourism and hospitality partners (Chamber RVA, InUnison, VRLTA etc.)

## Scholarship and Grant Distribution

### Summary:

Produce signature fundraising events that raise awareness of tourism locally and fund the various programs, scholarships, and grant programs of the Richmond Region Tourism Foundation.

### Key Performance Indicators:

- Net a minimum of \$60,000 annually through three RRT signature events (RVA Sports Awards, Tourism Awards and Annual Meeting, and the Richmond Region Open)
- Maintain or increase attendance numbers in all three RRT signature events
- Seek to achieve a major sponsor renewal rate of 40% for Richmond Region Tourism Foundation signature events and programs.
- Create a sponsor recognition program to assist in sponsor renewal for Richmond Region Tourism Foundation signature events and programs.

## Advocacy and Local Public Relations

### Summary:

Educate residents through a coordinated public relations and community engagement plan.



### Key Performance Indicators:

- Generate a minimum of 120 local annual media mentions of Richmond Region Tourism or the Richmond Region Tourism Foundation through a local media relations plan
- Coordinate enhanced National Travel and Tourism Week marketing campaign to include annual Op-Ed on the impact of Tourism
- Coordinate annual tourism outlook media release at the beginning of each calendar year
- Produce annual Economic Impact Brochure to highlight the impact tourism has on our community
  - Coordinate annual media release to coincide with release of the Economic Impact Brochure highlighting the previous year's tourism spending and volume
- Send a monthly advocacy report to board of directors, local partners, elected officials and key stake holders as a quick digest of news featuring highlights, opportunities and challenges related to tourism
- Send a monthly local partner e-news solicitation to highlight important news and updates in the hospitality community
  - Grow e-news database by 10% annually
- Present one time annually to each partner jurisdiction's Board of Supervisors, City Council, or Town Council.
- Engage in a minimum of 5 local chamber of commerce or networking groups annually
- Present tourism information at a minimum of 24 community events
- Grow Richmond Region Tourism LinkedIn following by 10% annually



# MARKETING

## Overall Objectives

Marketing, like other RRT departments, will work toward achieving these four major objectives:

- Drive visitation to our Region
- Raise awareness of all that the region has to offer
- Promote DEI in all of our marketing efforts
- Disrupt and be different than other destination marketing efforts

In addition, the RRT Marketing department also will have these specific goals:

- In cooperation with ChamberRVA and GRP, oversee the rollout of the new RRT inspiration/image campaign, ensuring that assets from the 6 participating jurisdictions are included
- Ensure that the inspiration campaign assets and messaging are integrated throughout our marketing efforts – internally and externally
- Plan and create innovative and measurable marketing campaigns for the entire year. What gets measured, gets done
- Produce innovative and measurable PR efforts to target expanded drive and direct fly markets
- Push out social media posts that align with the goals and strategies in this plan and continually look for ways to increase and measure engagement
- Promote BLK RVA and OutRVA and the diversity of the region throughout our marketing and PR efforts
- Stretch when it comes to our creative efforts across all of the Marketing areas, status quo is not acceptable
- Continue to champion collaboration with other RRT departments as well as within the Marketing department
- Create the WOW moments in all of our paid, earned, owned and shared media
- Continue to expand our skills and expertise and begin to absorb some of the things we have traditionally farmed out into our job functions
- Be proactive in volunteering to assist on projects and in recommending new ideas and strategies
- Roll out project management software to keep internal clients in the loop



## Steps To Follow For Each Of Our Goals In 2022-2023:

For all our regular marketing and PR efforts and projects, including managing our vendors, we will follow these steps:

- Start by creating a process that the team is aware of and supports. (This process, once established, can be used or tweaked from year to year)
- Come up with the plan for the year and the strategies/tactics that will be included in that plan
- Develop and oversee the production of assets you will need for that plan
- Establish and measure performance (KPIs)
- Push ourselves and our vendors to exceed expectations
- Pause at intervals during the year to see if adjustments need to be made to the plan, reposition if necessary
- Present the results at year-end roundup
- Use this year's results as benchmarks for next year's plan

## Overall Marketing Goals

- Develop and plan 4-5 innovative and effective marketing campaigns for that will incorporate the theme of the inspiration campaign. They could include:
  - Outdoors Adventure
  - Only-in-Richmond Experiences
  - Arts, Culture and History
  - Food, beer and wine
- Oversee the rollout of the new RRT inspiration/image campaign, ensuring that the opinions of key stakeholders are heard, that the campaign process is a collaborative process, and that assets from the 6 participating jurisdictions are included
- Continue the mid-week campaign during shoulder season
- Work with Expedia on a Richmond Region focused campaign to drive people to a Richmond page on Expedia
- Marketing and Communications will work with arts and culture community on a co-op campaign where RVA will contribute marketing dollars based on the dollars contributed by arts and culture partners
- Expand our target drive markets to 6 hours out that include eastern Ohio, Western Pennsylvania
- Build out marketing plan for Pet Friendly Richmond
- Build out and help roll out marketing plans for:
  - BLK RVA (Under supervision of BLK RVA)
  - OutRVA (Under supervision of OutRVA)
  - Beer Trail

## PR and Communications

- Develop the 2022-2023 PR / Media Plan to include Marketing Plan strategies, other PR initiatives and KPIs
- Build a Content Management Plan/Calendar that includes a list of content produced within the organization and what parts fall under which Marketing staff member
- Maintain and enhance monthly reporting mechanisms that track and measure PR/Media KPIs
- Skills Development (Director of Marketing)
  - Create a plan for team skills development including a program for ongoing production of press releases, story pitches, Brandpoint articles (2) and fact sheets (3) each for Content Manager and Travel Media Manager.
- PR/Media Content Development: Fact Sheets, Itineraries, Articles, Web Page (Travel Media Manager and Content Manager)
  - Create Fact Sheets and Itineraries for at least six Richmond experiences (see suggestions below); write at least two Brandpoint articles, including one on BLK RVA; update Richmond Region Fast Facts; and produce updated content for Media page on visitrichmondva.com
    - BLK RVA (already on website)
    - OutRVA (already on website)
    - One Day in RVA
    - ½ Day in RVA
    - Weekend in RVA



- Oversee the production of 2023 Richmond Region Visitors Guide with inclusion of inspiration campaign messaging (if available in time) and features that highlight 2022-2023 campaign buckets.
- Consumer Enews (Director of Marketing, Travel Media Manager, Content Manager + Senior Digital Marketing Manager)
  - Consistently produce consumer e-newsletter and publish on time for all 12 months
- Promotions (Director of Marketing, Travel Media Manager)
  - Build out and oversee 2 promotions. Ideas include:
    - Beer Promotion: November – December 2022
    - Arts & Culture Collaboration
- Activations (Director of Marketing, Travel Media Manager)
  - Build out and manage two onsite activations – at least one in an drive market city and one local (airport, event or attraction)
- Story Pitches (Travel Media Manager)
  - Pitch story ideas about the Richmond Region to 5 regional media organizations per month.
- FAM Tours (Travel Media Manager with Director of Marketing support)
  - Host 2+ themed Media Fam Tours (5 to 10 writers each).
- RRT Expert Positioning
  - Plan and position RRT leadership to speak at industry/regional and national events.
- PR/Social Media Summit
  - Conduct an annual one-day PR/Social media summit to share strategies/advice/best practices with RRT partners.
- Develop a plan to manage Eleven-Six including an aggressive list of KPIs and delivery of a quarterly report on those KPIs.



## Web Development

- Provide RRT leadership with access to data/research from Arrivalist, Adara, TSI and Google Analytics
- Refresh with Simpleview of RRT's website to integrate new image campaign messaging
- Build new multicultural tourism pages for Hispanic & Asian markets
- Analytics comparison report including recommendations to improve web pages to achieve targeted traffic/engagement goals
- Analytics comparison report for overall destination visitation and hotel bookings/revenue
- Continue to identify the points of interest for Arrivalist
- Keep M&C and Sports videos up to date
- Produce four video projects to support yearly goals
- Enhance RRT's presence and assets on YouTube

## Creative Services

- Senior Creative Marketing Manager will build out one of the one-off campaigns
- Enhance the print photo library assets through at least three organized photo shoots.
- Contract with at least four photographers for shoots to expand our asset libraries, including dramatic skyline shots, additional James River Shots, recent photos from 7 jurisdictions, and photos that demonstrate our diverse region.
- Add at least two diverse photographers to vendor list and include in asset creations during the year.
- Conduct a photo contest for non-professionals.
- Create a plan on how to clean up our photography library and maintain it more efficiently.
- Create three marketing plans and campaigns this year to be assigned by VP of Marketing
- Develop Project Management Process

## Social Media

- Content Management/Creation
  - Develop a plan to create/manage content across marketing vehicles.
- Social Media Calendar
  - Complete the fundamentals of the social media calendar for FY 2022-2023.
- Social Media Reporting (Content Manager)
  - Establish a monthly report to track and measure social media KPIs
- Blog Content (Content Manager)
  - Create a guest blogger program to create at least six blog posts per year.
- Contests/Giveaways (Content Manager)
  - Create at least three contests/giveaways to increase engagement and raise awareness of the Richmond Region
- Inspiration Campaign Support
  - Amplify the messaging of the RRT inspiration campaign.
- Training / Professional Development
  - Continue monthly training with Two Six Digital and attend social media and/or tourism marketing conferences, workshops, etc.







## VISITOR EXPERIENCE

### Department Overview

The professionals of the Visitor Experience team connect, communicate, and deliver authentic RVA experiences to local travelers, out-of-town visitors, group tour operators, meeting and convention planners, and meeting and convention attendees. The team's responsibilities are to exceed planner expectations, track group tour bookings, communicate the region's rich experiences to our guests, and maximize out-of-town dollars spent in businesses throughout the destination. The team will create value-based, customized convention service proposals, incentivize and create new value to tour operators, leverage the marketing department's campaigns, and bring tourism businesses together to develop and curate the most authentic RVA experiences.

The Visitor Experience department will achieve the following goals to deliver on Richmond Region Tourism's mission statement:

- Collaborate with tourism product providers and developers and identify gaps and opportunities
- Customize convention service proposals to help planners, associations, and participants reach their goals
- Meet our visitors and guests where they are
- Increase departmental presence with regional stakeholders including hotels, attractions, restaurants, and event service providers
- Become the DMO industry leader in the group tour tracking and metrics
- Advocate for the visitor and the visitor experience to government and businesses throughout the destination
- Be intentional in our efforts to attract diverse experience providers and diverse visitors
- Exceed visitor expectations

### Group Tour

#### Objectives:

- Promote incentives to tour group owners to create a mechanism that will capture room nights, economic impact, and track effectiveness of the program
- Create the industry's best practice for tracking group tour economic impact and room night generation
- Create a group tour welcome center
- Expand group tour opportunity promotions to minority operators

## Visitor Interaction

### Objectives:

- Bring destination information to where people gather, festivals and events
- Work with existing downtown entities to ensure the streets and buildings are clean and welcoming
- Utilize technology to assist with our visitors' in-market needs and questions
- Reimagine the visitor center experience
- Create useful tools to make the destination more accessible to travelers with disabilities
- Continue support of RVA Accessible program

## Convention Services

### Objectives:

- 80% response to initial outreach
- 65% post-event survey response rate (industry average is less than 45% according to E-Auto Feedback)
- Develop new signage packages for conventions meeting downtown
- Meet and collaborate with businesses that support conventions
- Generate report to be added to Richmond Region Tourism's Annual Report that visualizes the impact convention services delivers to clients, Richmond Region Tourism, and the destination's economy

## Visitor Experience/Tourism Master Plan

### Objectives:

- Earn \$20,000 in Drive 2.0 Outdoor grant money
- Increase attendance at quarterly attractions meetings: 25 attendees minimum
- Meet with 50% of the experience providers in the region
- Implement OKR system within the VE department





# DESTINATION SALES

## Summary

The Sales Department at Richmond Region Tourism aims to increase the contribution of meetings, conventions, and sports tournaments in the region. Sports tourism has been a constant strength in the region and the industry as a catalyst for recovery from the pandemic. Workforce shortage continues to be an industry wide weakness. Meetings and conventions are starting to return and have presented us with an opportunity to redefine and reposition our region. Studies show meeting planners are more attracted to second-tier destinations like the Richmond Region. However, as an industry we are still threatened with higher than ever travel cost (hotel rates and airfare), and the learning curve of new professionals in the industry. RRT's sales department is redefining and repositioning the Richmond Region as a WFH destination – promoting how event organizers can 'work from here', 'win from here' and 'wow from here'. Through the goals and KPIs outlined below, the Sales Department will ensure that the Richmond Region is top-of-mind as a world-class and welcoming destination to host meetings, conventions, and sports tournaments.

## Work From Here

### Goal:

Recruit a diverse array of meetings, conventions, tradeshow, and sports tournaments.

### Key Performance Indicators:

- Attend 20-25 tradeshow and conferences for networking and industry education
- Conduct a sales department 'Recruit on a Tank of Gas' congruent sales mission this Fall to promote the Richmond region and its assets to at least 5 top account contacts and 1 prospective account contact within respective markets
  - Sports team will educate and promote the indoor facility opening in Henrico County Fall of 2023. Target City: Indianapolis
  - Destination Sales will educate and promote sustainability and our NetZero Emission initiative. Target City: TBD (look at Mint+ for direction)
  - Destination Sales will educate on our government and DEI initiatives. Target City: Washington, DC
  - Destination Sales will educate on our convention center packages. Target City: Atlanta, GA (look at new CVENT Dashboard for directions)
- Host a minimum of 2 Familiarization Tours
  - Sports will host a Field Trip on the front end of U.S. Sports Congress December 2022
  - Destination Sales will tentatively host a HelmsBriscoe Client Event around Hamilton Broadway in April of 2023
- Create and launch an I-FAM program to customize up to 3 day trips a quarter to familiarize meeting planners and rights-holders with the Richmond

region

- Business Development Coordinator and Sports Development Intern to produce a minimum of 48 RFP/Lead referrals to Sales Managers for prospecting

## Wow From Here

### Goal 1:

Strengthen the region's identity of being a welcoming destination for all to meet and play.

### Key Performance Indicators:

- Obtain/Maintain national memberships with organizations like Compete Sports Diversity, National Coalition of Black Meeting Professionals (NCBMP), MPI Potomac and Virginia, and All In Sports Consulting
- Partner with Community Relations and Visitor Experience to host, at least once annually, hospitality/partner training around DEIA (diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility)
- Create a formal DEIA RFI response that is refreshed once a year

### Goal 2:

Expand and enhance our target messaging through digital platforms.

### Key Performance Indicators:

- Rebrand bi-monthly Meetings Moments blog, WFH Moments, to be inclusive of sports. Increase readership by 25%
- Pre-Post conference and tradeshow communication

- Promote digital post-cards on LinkedIn one week before event
- Send Pre-show email to confirmed appointments 72 hours before the event with a specific 'ASK ME' target message
- Send a Post-Show email to appointments no later than one-week post-event to include a video and an invitation to next steps from the 'ASK ME' target messaging
- Drip campaign and automated outreach for each primary market
- Strengthen relationships with meeting planners and rights-holders via LinkedIn Ads by increasing engagement by 20%
- Enhance the content of the PlayRichmondVA Social Media accounts and increase followers and engagement by 25%

### Goal 3:

Deliver world-class experience and hospitality to internal and external clients.

#### Key Performance Indicators:

- Annual 'thank you recognition' for key accounts (i.e. CCL, VCU) and key restaurant and attraction partners
- Annual RVA Champions Reception to recognize at least 5 local residents that assist us in recruiting meetings, conventions and sports tournaments
- Annual Global Meetings Industry Day celebration and recognition of local partners
- Annual thank you recognition for Parks & Recreation and Convention Center staff
- Participation from an average of 15-20 hotels in the quarterly Hotel & Convention Leadership Meeting
- Annual State of the Sports Tourism Industry meeting to update partners on upcoming bids, events, and venue projects for the region
- Improve partnerships with hotels and restaurants to enhance our site visits experience (custom menus, welcome messaging, amenities in room, etc.)

## Win From Here

### Goal 1:

Maintain a national presence in the meetings and sports tourism industry.

#### Key Performance Indicators:

- When attending national conferences and tradeshow,

activate presence through RRT sponsorship, participate in shared state client event, or host an RRT exclusive client event per core market

- Corporate – MPI, PCMA
- Diversity/Multicultural - NCBMP, Blacks in Tourism and Travel
- Emerging Markets – Virginia Green Conference
- Fraternal – FEA/PFA
- Government - eVA Procurement Forum, SGMP
- Religious – RCMA, Connect Faith
- Sports – Sports ETA, TEAMS, US Sports Congress
- A minimum of 5 opportunities a year to moderate or participate on a panel and/or lead a roundtable discussion at an industry conference or tradeshow
- Strengthen relationship with Virginia Tourism Corporation and leverage event and marketing opportunities
  - Increase co-marketing with Sports Virginia by partnering on two campaigns a year
  - Partner with Virginia DMOS for Summer VADMO Client Event and Fall VADMO Education Event
- Serve on a minimum of three industry organization committees.
  - Board of Director for Sports ETA
  - Education Committee for Destinations International
  - DEI Committee for Sports ETA, MPI Potomac Chapter, and Destinations International

### Goal 2:

Educate business leaders in the community on tourism and strengthen the network of local champions that partner with RRT on meetings, conventions, and sports tournaments.

#### Key Performance Indicators:

- Connect with at least 2 club sports teams at all local colleges and universities
- Host bi-annual field trips for meeting planners at VCU
- Sales managers to participate in at least 3 local speaking engagements annually
- Increase Sports Grant Program applicants by 25%
- Collaborate with Greater Richmond Partnership and Virginia Bio+Tech Park to grow two emerging opportunities within the sustainability and science/bioscience secondary markets
- Maintain monthly communication with local service providers that support tourism events through event preview newsletters and upcoming event resumes