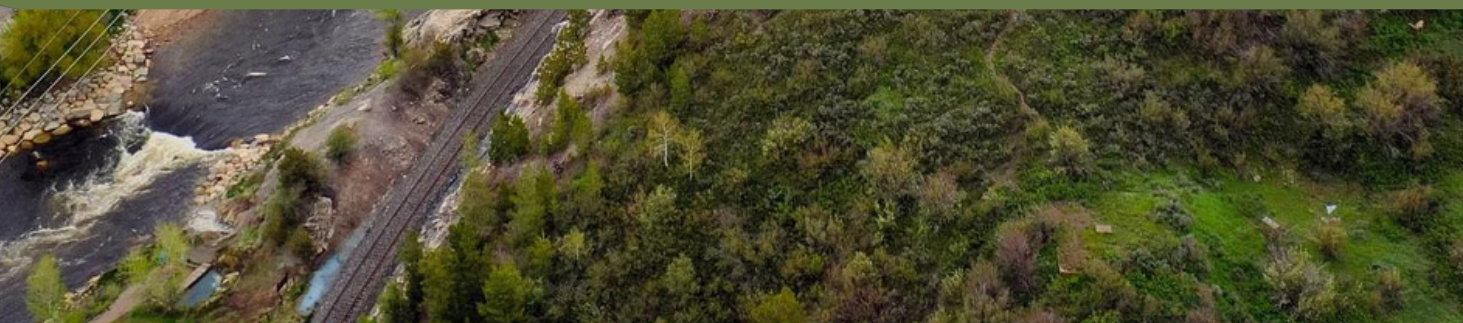




2023 ANNUAL REPORT



STEAMBOAT SPRINGS
CHAMBER



2023 CHAMBER STAFF



Sarah Leonard | Chief Executive Officer (CEO)



Laura Soard | Sr. Director of Destination Development & Communications



Angelica Salinas | Director of Membership & Engagement



Cecilia Morter | Programs Manager



Annaleigh Bonds | Communications & Administrative Manager



Kenzie Meadows | Digital Content Manager



Carol Halik | Finance Manager

2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Keriann Beadnell
YPN**

Steamboat Ski & Resort Corp.

**Kevin Booth
Transportation**

Yampa Valley Regional Airport

**Rex Brice
Food & Beverage**

Rex's Family of Restaurants

**Sarah Briones
Steamboat Mountain Village**

One Steamboat Place

**Michael Buccino
Steamboat Springs City Council**

Ex-Officio

**Ted Carey
Professional Services**

The UPS Store

**Amy Charity
Marketing Committee**

SBT GRVL

**Stacy Charlton
Lodging Assoc.**

Steamboat Lodging Co.

**Loretta Conway
Recreation**

Steamboat Tennis & Pickleball Center

**Loryn Duke
Mountain Operations**

Steamboat Ski & Resort Corp.

**Kathy Elliott
Shops & Retail**

Christy Sports

**Soniya Fidler
Medical Services**

Yampa Valley Medical Center

**Sarah Fox
Construction**

Fox Construction

**Gail Garey
Steamboat Springs City Council**

Ex-Officio

**Betse Grassby
Arts & Culture**

Steamboat Art Museum

**Jennifer Grathwohl
At Large**

Grathwohl Creative and Steamboat Symphony Orchestra

**Michael LaMotte
EDC**

Sotheby's

**Sonja Macys
Routt County Commissioner**

Ex-Officio

**Scott Marr
Lodging Operations**

Holiday Inn

**Michele Meyer
At Large**

Community Ag Alliance

**Sam Nelson
At Large**

BAR-U-EAT

**Geoff Petis
Real Estate**

Colorado Group Realty

**Dan Pirrallo
Lodging Operations**

Sheraton Steamboat Resort

**Liza Scudder
Main Street Steamboat**

Overland

**Mark Walker
Property Mgmt.**

Resort Group

**Celine Wicks
Steamboat Springs School District**

Ex-Officio

**Adam Wilson
Finance & Banking**

Vectra Bank

A LETTER FROM OUR CEO

SARAH LEONARD

2023 was a year of growth and change at the Steamboat Springs Chamber. We fully embraced our commitment to our vision of economic vitality in Routt County.

The Chamber is a community of over 600 businesses, organizations, local leaders, young professionals, and passionate residents working together to solve challenges, foster meaningful connections, develop the next generation of talent, and make Steamboat Springs an excellent place to live and do business.



Our work, advocating for pro-business policy, providing resources, professional development opportunities, business promotion, destination stewardship, and spearheading large-scale initiatives that businesses can't tackle on their own, is made possible through the investment our member businesses make into the Chamber.

In 2023 we hosted Secretary of State Jenna Griswold for a roundtable and organized a business tour for Representative Joe Neguse providing access to state decision makers for our members. We organized a committee to encourage young professionals and pro-business leaders to run for City Council. This committee did individual outreach, provided information, and helped organize the Step Up and Serve event. Our staff sat on the state advisory council working on a destination stewardship plan for Colorado, the first of its kind in the nation. Additionally, we provided professional development and networking opportunities through our programs and events.

We set our priorities each year based on member feedback. In 2023 this meant advocating for pro-business policy, providing programming that addressed workforce retention, and improving quality of life and protection of shared resources through our destination stewardship efforts. We are proud to share the results of our work with you in this year's annual report.

Thanks to the commitment of our incredible business leaders, workforce, elected officials, and community partners our community, and our Chamber is strong, resilient, and ready to lead.

On behalf of the Chamber team, thank you for your investment and your support.

A LETTER FROM OUR 2023 BOARD PRESIDENT

SARAH FOX

As a business owner in Steamboat Springs and a member of the Steamboat Springs Chamber Board of Directors since 2018, it has been an honor to serve this past year as Chamber Board President.



The Steamboat Springs Chamber has been serving our community for over 100 years, and that longevity is a direct result of its relevance, adaptability, and diverse leadership. During my term as Chair, I have been fortunate to experience the depth of talent and experience on the Board of Directors. Our 2023 Board included a total of 21 dedicated business owners and leaders in our community who represented local industries like outdoor recreation, hospitality, real estate, healthcare, arts & culture, transportation, agriculture, banking, and more. It's a dynamic and passionate group, dedicated to creating vitality in the Yampa Valley.

Together in 2023, our Board set the strategic direction for the Chamber staff to carry out its 2023 program of work. Our direction included advocacy for policy that supports business growth, using membership feedback to shape expanded programming and resource efforts, and conveying member impact and value to the community at-large. On a personal note, serving on the Chamber Board has allowed me to feel more connected to all areas of our community and I'm grateful for that.

It has been a true pleasure to serve as the President of the Steamboat Springs Chamber Board of Directors, and I'm honored to pass the torch to our new President, Soniya Fidler. I am incredibly proud of the talent and diverse experience of our Board of Directors and the hard-working Chamber staff. I have no doubt we will continue to reach new heights under the amazing leadership of Chamber CEO Sarah Leonard and her dedicated Steamboat Springs Chamber team.

On behalf of the local business community, thank you for your continued support of the Steamboat Springs Chamber.

VISION

Economic Vitality in Routt County.

MISSION

We are the catalyst for business growth.
We are the convener of leaders and influencers.
We champion for a thriving community.

2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ✓ Created processes for improving our communications efforts and connecting our members to important resources. We improved and streamlined our membership website, added membership pages to the homepage, and increased our presence at community events to talk about Chamber work.
- ✓ Took action on over 20 policy issues by testifying in front of elected officials, writing letters, providing endorsements and amendments to bills, and representing Yampa Valley businesses on various state and local boards including the Mountain Chamber Alliance and the Colorado Competitive Council.
- ✓ Hosted Secretary of State Jenna Griswold and Representative Joe Neguse for small business visits and meetings with members.
- ✓ Received two membership awards at the Annual Association of Colorado Chambers Conference for membership increase and membership retention.
- ✓ Added 47 new members.
- ✓ Expanded the business education series with topics like marketing and grants, introduced Coffee with Angelica, and launched a membership webinar series, significantly increasing attendance, and fostering stronger member connections.
- ✓ Invested more time and staff resources than ever to advancing destination stewardship and bringing the local resident into the process. We distributed our first ever resident sentiment survey and hosted a stakeholder workshop to hear and learn from our residents.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

ADVOCACY

Advocacy continues to be a top priority for the Chamber and our membership. This year we began releasing Advocacy Alerts to our members. These alerts provide background on policy issues, why they are important for businesses and their employees, and how they can take action. Advocacy is also a key theme in the programs we host that allow businesses and workforce to engage with elected officials, both at the local and state level.



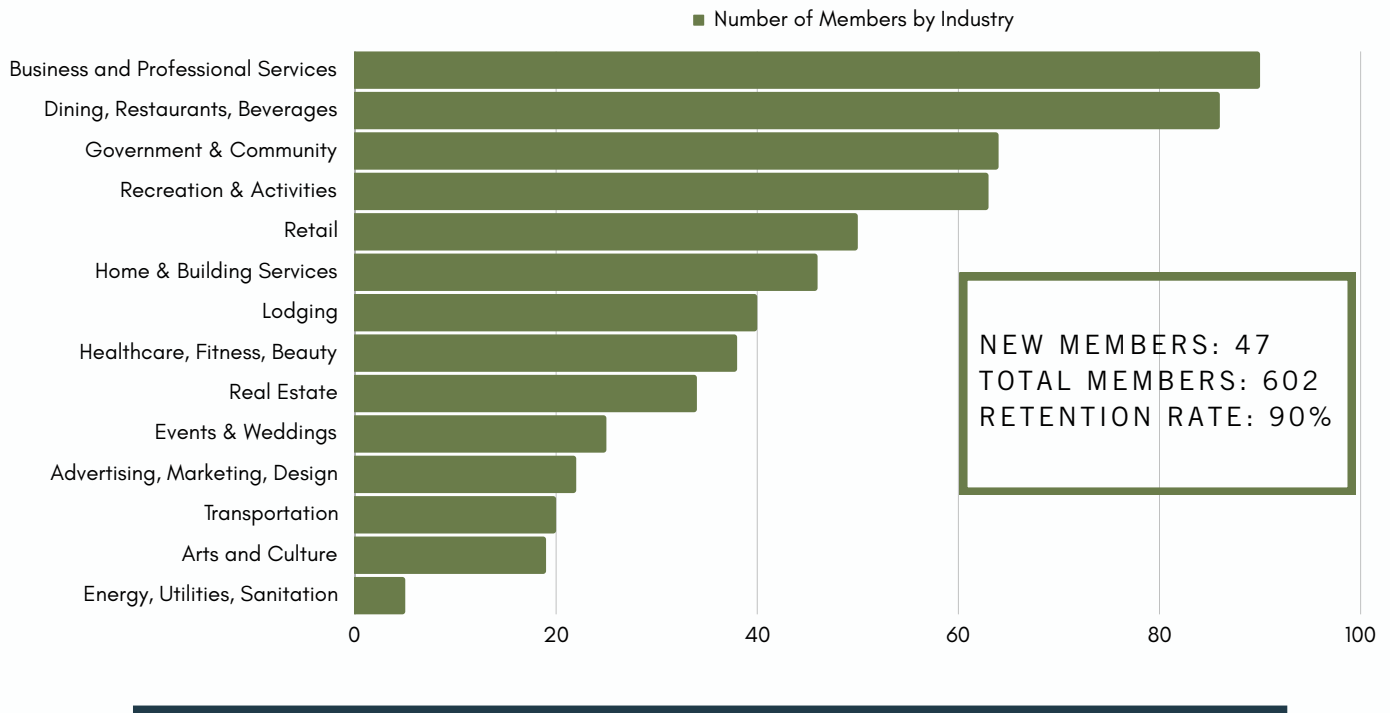
2023 PROGRAMS

In 2023 our programs and events ranged from educational webinars to large-scale professional development events, each created based off of feedback we received from membership. The Winter Expo and Thrive Together Women's Leadership Summit each had over 240 attendees.

In total, we hosted 60 hours of events this year, with over 124 speakers and booths, and had over 8,800 total event attendees.

- DEI Summit
- Economic Summit
- Thrive Together Women's Leadership Summit
- Sailors Thrive Sophomore Leadership Summit
- Winter Expo
- Routt to Home Series
- State of the City/County Webinar
- Step Up & Serve
- Marketing Business Education Series
- HR Business Education Series
- Grant Business Education Series
- Employment Law Update Series
- Mountain Chamber Alliance Legislative Series
- Networking Mixers

MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT



Coffee with Angelica

Coffee with Angelica is a monthly event where members and nonmembers have the opportunity to engage with our Director of Membership and Engagement, ask questions about Chamber membership and our work, and learn about upcoming opportunities.

Membership Webinars

The Membership Webinar series highlighted various membership benefits and gave members the opportunity to ask questions about how to fully utilize their membership.

Member Outreach Week

This year Chamber staff and board members reached out to 590+ members to thank them for investing in Chamber membership and contributing to the strength of the business community in the Yampa Valley. We also conducted a member survey during this week to best learn how we can support our members moving forward.

Industry Advocacy Groups

The Chamber represents many diverse businesses in Routt County. Our businesses are divided into 14 different industry sectors that together with the Board of Directors and Steamboat Springs City Council we bring together to discuss best practices, pool resources and advocate for policy that directly impacts their business. This initiative allows us to efficiently implement real, productive change.

Housing Solutions

The Chamber convenes a group of local business and community leaders quarterly to explore current housing challenges facing our community while proactively looking for actionable solutions. This group brings together stakeholders to collaborate, pool resources, and advocate for solutions as a united front. The housing group includes our local and state elected officials so they have an understanding how housing affects businesses and workforce.

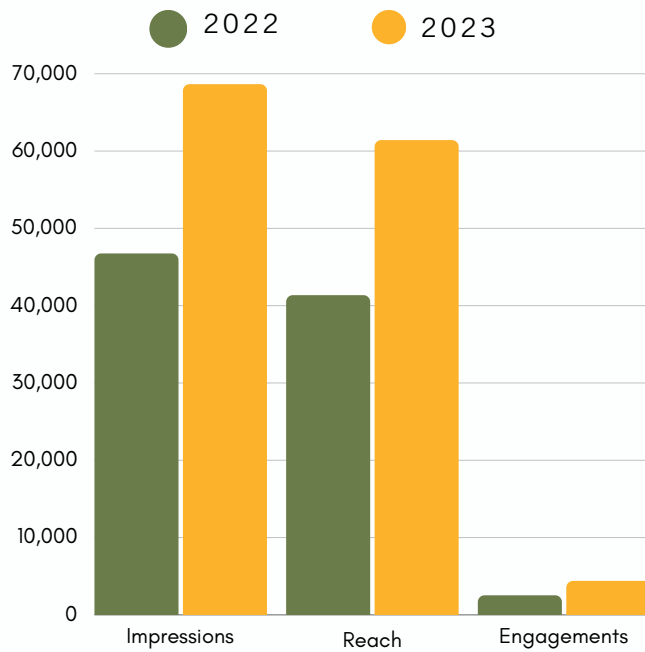
MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

In 2023 we evolved the Chamber communications program to improve engagement with our membership. Our strategic efforts resulted in an increase in both impressions and reach on both social channels as well as an increase in our email campaigns and email open rate. Our weekly communications included the Monday Minute newsletter, Chamber events and news emails, a bi-weekly Lodging Report, and more. We also partnered with members to promote their organizations and events through all channels.

INSTAGRAM



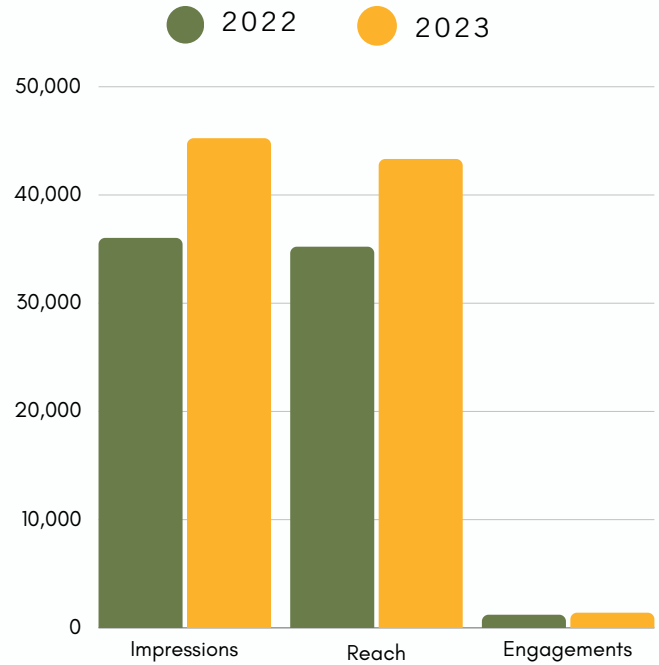
@STEAMBOATCHAMBER
FOLLOWERS: 2,024



FACEBOOK



STEAMBOAT SPRINGS CHAMBER
FOLLOWERS: 813



EMAIL



TOTAL CAMPAIGNS IN 2023: 207

OPEN RATE: 44%



COMMUNITY IMPACT

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS NETWORK

The Young Professionals Network (YPN) is a committee of the Steamboat Springs Chamber. YPN collaborates with the community to empower next generation leaders. In 2023, YPN accomplished the following:

- Provided \$12K in scholarships to graduating Routt County seniors to use for continuing education of their choice and to local Colorado Mountain College students.
- Expanded advocacy work to engage young professionals on local community issues.
- Partnered with the Yampa Valley Housing Authority (YVHA) to conduct a young professionals housing survey.
- Partnered with United Way by volunteering at their events and hosting a grocery gift card drive at their annual membership event.

2022-2023 LEADERSHIP STEAMBOAT

The Steamboat Springs Chamber facilitates Leadership Steamboat which is designed to develop informed, committed, and passionate leaders in business and community service. The 2023 Leadership Steamboat class titled their project, "Paint the Town with Pride" and partnered with Yampa Valley Pride to provide LGBTQIA2S+ awareness and fundraising events. Their goal was to raise funds for a future resource center in Steamboat Springs, donated to Better Tomorrow. This resource center became Queer Futures, which opened in December of 2023.

SPECIAL EVENTS



For 43 years, the Steamboat Springs Marathon has grown to become a highly valued cultural event to our community. From local, volunteer powered aid stations to the comrarderie and shared excitement at the finish line festival, this longstanding tradition continues to bring our community together in shared celebration.



The Fourth of July parade, with its 120 year legacy and deep ties to the Yampa Valley's western heritage, is more than just a celebration. The Chamber staff continues to organize and execute this event each year to keep the tradition alive. For us, the parade is about preserving our unique story, past, present, and future, for our locals. The parade made a return to Lincoln Ave. this year, bringing the celebration back to where it all began.

SHOP LOCAL

The Chamber encourages residents and visitors to shop locally at Yampa Valley businesses year-round through social posts, blog articles, and campaigns. Each year we also lead a holiday season Shop Local campaign to keep local businesses top of mind for holiday gifts. Here are a few ways we encouraged people to #ShopLocalSteamboat in 2023.

MEMBER MINUTES



New this year was our year-long Member Minute social media campaign. Each month, beginning in March, we featured a new or existing member business on our Instagram and Facebook channels. These features included a static social post with images of the business, upcoming events, or their staff. The reels from Member Minutes resulted in some of our top social posts of the year by reach and engagements.

SHOP LOCAL BINGO

A new initiative this year was our Shop Local Bingo, done in partnership with Main Street Steamboat and Steamboat Pilot & Today. Over 100 residents participated by shopping at local stores and restaurants.

Check out a few other ways we encouraged shopping local:

- [Chamber webpage](#)
- [Chamber blog article](#)
- [Steamboat Pilot & Today: From the Chamber column article](#)
- ["7 Holiday Gifts to Get Around Town" Instagram Reel](#)



COMMITTEES

The Chamber led or provided administrative services to seven committees in 2023, each made up of community stakeholders who rallied behind a unique purpose or to represent a specific industry. These committees met frequently throughout the year to discuss issues and make decisions related to their industry and purpose, with the goal of improving quality of life for community members.

MARKETING COMMITTEE

The marketing committee met monthly to discuss the Chamber's destination stewardship efforts and included local small business owners, marketing professionals, publishers and advertisers, and a City Council representative. In 2023 the committee evaluated the responses of the Resident Sentiment Survey and helped drive the strategic direction of the Chamber's developing destination stewardship work.

LODGING ASSOCIATION

The Lodging Association is comprised of nearly 50 lodging industry owners, property managers, and professionals who represent hotels. This group meets to discuss issues such as booking trends, proposed legislation, and other factors impacting the Lodging industry.

LOCAL MARKETING DISTRICT (LMD) BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The LMD, approved by voters in 2004, is a 2% lodging tax used to support air service and marketing through the LMD Board and its partners. The Chamber scheduled and ran monthly meetings, processed invoices, and published the LMD's annual report and operating plan.

STEAMBOAT MOUNTAIN VILLAGE (SMV) BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SMV is comprised of community leaders and Steamboat Resort area businesses. Its purpose is to engage with businesses in the mountain village area. The Chamber provides administrative services.

PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

The Public Policy Committee (PPC) is a subcommittee of the SSC Board of Directors, which monitors public policy issues in order to represent SSC membership interests before the community, elected officials, government staff, and other leaders and to keep SSC members informed about important issues. The PPC engages decision makers and encourages participation in the public policy process in order to strengthen our community.

MOUNTAIN CHAMBER ALLIANCE

The Steamboat Springs Chamber is a founding member of the Mountain Chamber Alliance (MCA), an organization created to help advance public policy goals that enhance economic vitality and oppose those with negative impacts to communities across the mountain region. It consists of chambers of commerce in Grand, Summit, Eagle, Routt, Chaffee, Lake, Garfield, Pitkin, Gunnison, and San Miguel counties.

CHAMBER STAFF ALSO REPRESENTS MEMBERS ON THESE BOARDS & COMMITTEES:

- Northwest Colorado Development Council
- Gondola Transit Center Planning Committee
- Routt County Economic Development Partnership Vice-Chair
- Climate Action Plan Economy Working Group
- Colorado Competitive Council Steering Committee
- Northwest Colorado Development Council
- First Impressions Council
- Steamboat Mountain Village Board
- Northwest Colorado Broadband Board
- Colorado Tourism Office Destination Stewardship Council
- Colorado Association of Destination Marketing Organizations
- Care for Colorado Coalition
- Tourism Industry Association of Colorado Board
- Economic Development Council of Colorado Board
- Routt Recreation & Conservation Roundtable
- Western Association of Chambers DEI Committee
- Boettcher Foundation Rural Collaborative
- City of Steamboat Springs Community Survey Committee
- Continental Divide Trail Gateway Community
- And more

DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP

In 2023, the Steamboat Springs Chamber, in partnership with the City of Steamboat Springs, created and executed a comprehensive plan to inform and educate travelers. Per the direction of the Steamboat Springs City Council, the Steamboat Springs Chamber focused our destination efforts on stewardship as we work to balance the visitor experience and the impacts on the local community and its assets. Our messaging focused on respecting the Yampa Valley and its residents, stewardship of the environment, and preserving our unique culture and heritage.

LEVERAGING CO-OPS

Colorado Historic Hot Springs Loop

2023 marks the eighth year we've worked with the Colorado Historic Hot Springs Loop, a collection of unique Colorado destinations that boast hot springs and small-town charm. This year's partnership focused on growing the number of participants in the loop to expand our reach and decrease individual costs, acquiring video and photo assets and growing social media efforts. The Hot Springs Loop partnership extends our reach and creates unique opportunities to speak to a high value guest.

Colorado Tourism Office

We leveraged several opportunities to expand our efforts with Colorado Tourism Office programs including:

Grants:

- Awarded a 2023 Marketing Matching Grant for \$40,000 which we used to fund the Colorado Historic Hot Springs Loop
- Awarded a 2023/24 Destination Blueprint Grant

PAID MEDIA CAMPAIGN

A small portion of the overall destination budget was allocated to pushing out messaging to visitors already in Steamboat Springs. This was the second year of our Kindness Floats the Boat campaign which spoke to responsible visitation and sustainable travel. The campaign was designed to inform, educate, and inspire visitors to maximize their memories while minimizing their impact.

Tactics

- Video series
- Display ads
- Social media ads
- Local radio spots



2Million+
Impressions Served

WEBSITE HIGHLIGHTS

Our website allows us to tell a year-round story through content for every season. Throughout the year we directed visitors to our Kindness Floats the Boat pages which cover visitor tips and expectations, stewardship principles, education resources and more. Overall YOY web traffic was down 36% as a result of using fewer resources to direct traffic to our site.

- WEB SESSIONS: 626,000
- UNIQUE VISITORS: 432,000
- PAGEVIEWS: 1,311,000
- AVERAGE SESSION DURATION: 2:00

VISITOR COMMUNICATIONS

Visit Steamboat Springs App

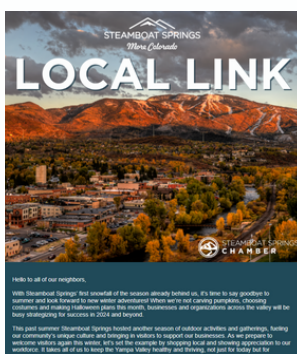
We continued to utilize our interactive trip planning app. Visitors can download our free app to their phone or use the desktop version to map out and save every trail, attraction, event, and restaurant they don't want to miss during their visit.

- Downloads: 1,579
- Users: 10,937

Email:

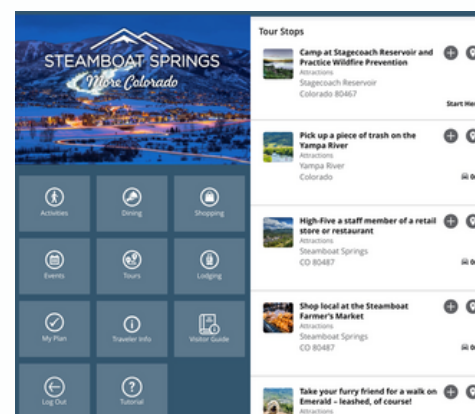
Our email campaigns engage with a high intent audience of past, present, and future travelers to Steamboat Springs. We utilize email to keep visitors engaged and thinking often of Steamboat Springs while providing stewardship messaging.

- Emails sent: 259,000
- Open Rate: 48%



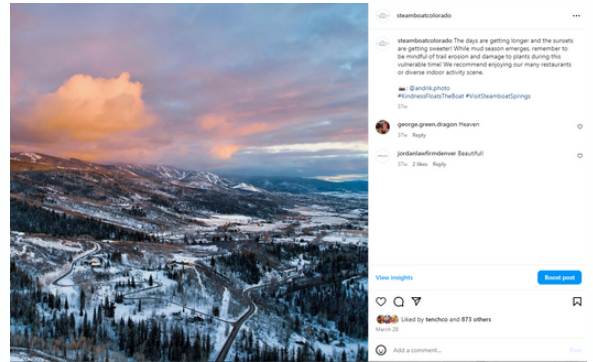
The Local Link

In 2023 we introduced the Local Link, an email update designed to connect residents with our work in the tourism sector. In this monthly communication, we share our visitor campaigns and communications, lodging occupancy information, tourism statistics, and upcoming events and activities with potential impacts to local roads or open spaces. [Sign up here.](#)



Visit Steamboat Springs Social

Social media continues to be one of the most influential parts of our overall media strategy. In 2023, we leveraged social media channels to share destination stewardship as the primary message and keep Steamboat Springs top of mind as a destination. We continued to share inspiring and educational content to our social audience of 122,000+.



2023 SOCIAL STATS

Follower Count

 **40K**

 **75K**

YoY Growth

+1%

+6%

Reach

3.6M

4M

Engagement

2%

7%

Public Relations

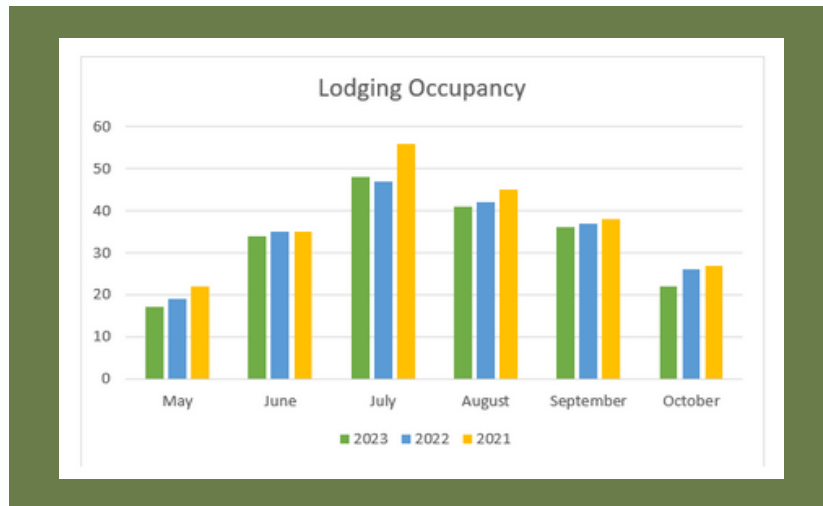
Due to our concentration on destination stewardship, in 2023 our PR efforts focused mainly on responding to requests for information, fact checking, and images. We also partnered with the Colorado Historic Hot Springs Loop and the Colorado Tourism Office on joint PR efforts.

Coverage Highlights:

- Phoenix Magazine – [5 US Winter Travel Destinations](#)
- The New York Times – [36 Hours in Steamboat Springs](#)
- Conde Nast – [Steamboat Springs: A Complete Guide to a Beloved Western Ski Town](#)
- Men's Journal – [Most Scenic Hot Springs in the World to Soak Away Stress](#)
- Chron.com – [Why you should visit these Colorado ski towns this summer](#)
- Travel Awaits – [11 Fantastic Experiences in Beautiful Steamboat Springs in Summer](#)
- 5280 – [4 Colorado Destinations for Multisport Adventure](#)
- Travel + Leisure – [This Road Trip Route Leads to Some of Colorado's Best Hot Springs — Including Natural Riverside Pools and Vapor Caves](#)
- Travel Curator – [Worth Driving For: Colorado's Historic Hot Springs Loop](#)

Lodging Occupancy

Overall lodging occupancy trended down last May-October. This can be attributed to several factors, including the reopening of international travel, inflation, and other economic impacts and lack of destination advertising.



VISITOR CENTER

Our Visitor Center staff engaged with around 6,500 visitors this past year, welcoming them to our beautiful region and guiding them on where they could dine, shop, and adventure in our valley. They also sold over \$75,000 worth of Chamber gift cards that will be used at participating member businesses.



“

Steamboat Springs has been an important part of my life for decades, and for me the Chamber has consistently held a place as a positive force. The team is passionate about promoting Steamboat both to the visitors as well as the locals- they do a great job walking the fine balance between trying to please both. The Chamber helps keep many groups organized and pointed in the correct direction- I wouldn't be able to serve on the Lodging Committee without their amazing support. I'm proud to be a partner with this amazing group!

- **Stacy Charlton, Lodging Association Chair**

”

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS!



We are grateful to our Partner Members for their continued support of our efforts. We also want to thank the local businesses, government entities, and individuals who sponsored our programs and events throughout the year. In 2023 we had a total of 94 event sponsors. We couldn't do it without you!



JOIN THE CHAMBER

Learn more about membership benefits or how you can become a member by visiting steamboatchamber.com/membership.