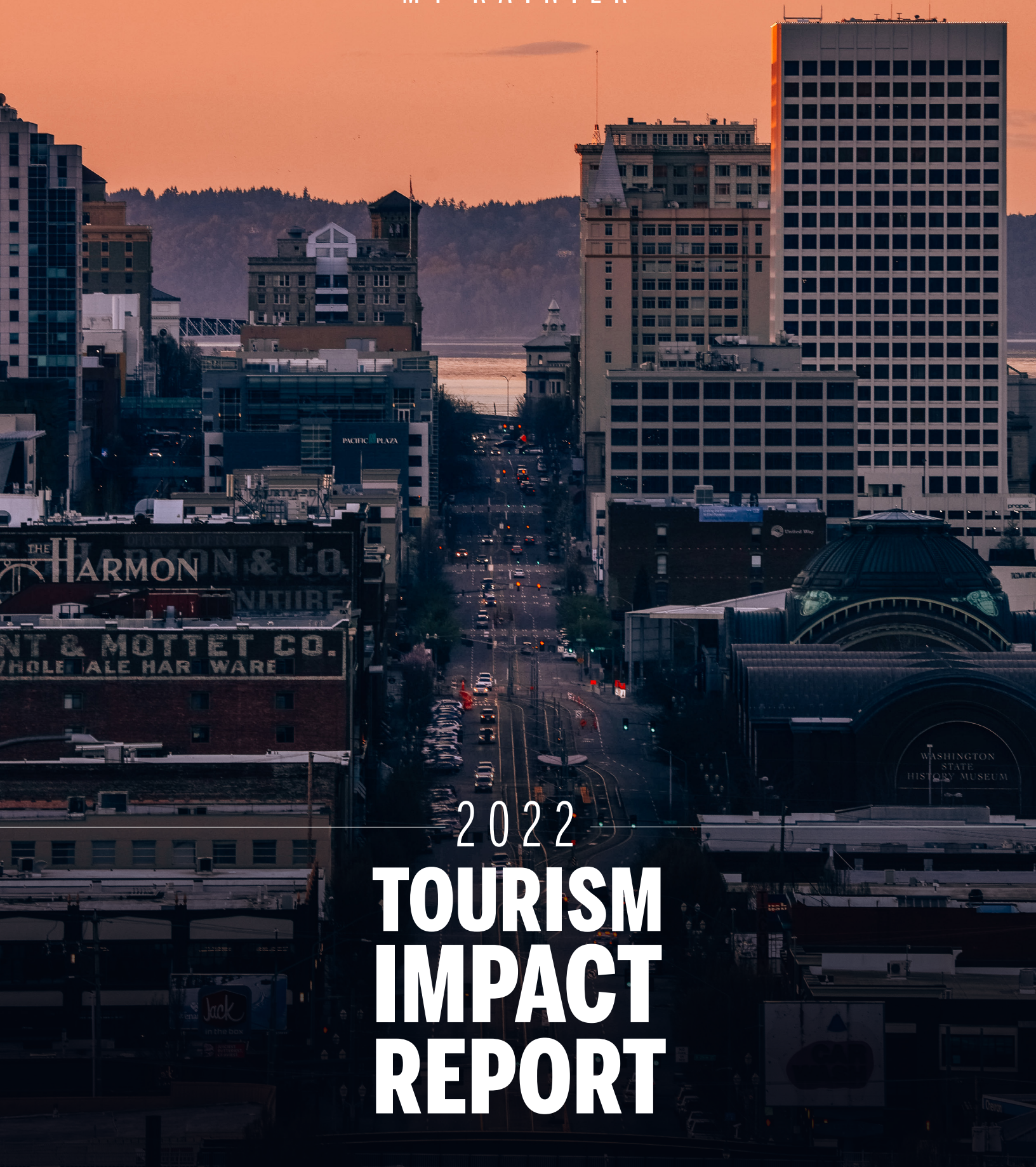


TRAVEL
TACOMA
MT RAINIER



2022
**TOURISM
IMPACT
REPORT**

2022

REPRESENTED THE YEAR THAT

Travelers returned to airplane seats, arena box offices lit up, convention centers again saw multiple events compete for dates, and most importantly for us, heads were back in beds.

RAINMAKERS

Dear Tourism Partners,

It seems like just yesterday we were writing the 2021 annual report, and here we are, reflecting on a sometimes turbulent, productive, and even record-breaking 2022. It's a story of *climate* and *weather*, metaphorically.

The "*climate*:" Broadly speaking – regionally, nationally, and globally – 2022 was yet another year of complexities in the narrative. Pendulum physics were in effect on the consumer psyche and travel habits. Pandemic chatter had tapered off, when Omicron hit the headlines early in the year, and then disappeared almost as fast as it arrived. By the end of the year, consumers had inflation on the mind, and seemed to have selective amnesia about the past three years. Travelers returned to airplane seats, arena box offices lit up, convention centers again saw multiple events compete for dates, and most importantly for us, heads were back in beds – although not yet to the same extent they had been.

The "*weather*:" With this as the backdrop, Travel Tacoma's sphere of influence ended with our most productive year to date in nearly every key performance indicator. In our three main channels – sports, meetings and conventions, and leisure tourism – we found sturdier ground to give us the footing we needed to put our collective talents to use. Sporting events were back, and the time we took in the interim to develop existing infrastructure into championship-ready venues really paid off. The relationships with meeting planners that we'd diligently maintained and evolved led to those planners helping us fill the future-business pipeline while we executed in-year events as well. Leisure visitors were still quicker to jump into a car than onto a plane, and they liked what they saw from our marketing, arriving and staying en masse.

The question we got most often in 2022 was: *Are things back to 2019 levels?* The answer was two-fold: At the social, "*climate*" level, it's getting there. At the organizational, "*weather*" level, I believe we have, and we've moved beyond.

In these pages, you'll read about both the *climate* and the *weather*:

While we may not control the climate, we're certainly proud of our influence on the weather ability to make it rain.

Without further ado: Let's step back to 2022.



Dean Burke
President and CEO
Travel Tacoma - Mt Rainier Tourism & Sports



PIERCE COUNTY TOURISM BREAKDOWN

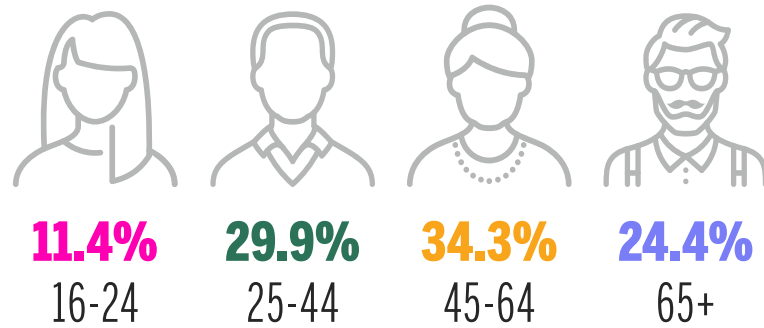
In the following pages, you'll read about the visitors to Pierce County and the impact they made: How many came. Who they were. Where they came from. Where they stayed. How much they spent. The Department of Revenue's data combined with new technology from our tourism-specific geolocation partner allows us deep insights from 2022 that we wanted to share with you, our stakeholders and other fans of our destination.

As Travel Tacoma and our geolocation data partner both focus on tourism, the nature of the geolocation data included in the following pages reflects this by only looking at visitors from outside 50 miles of Pierce County.

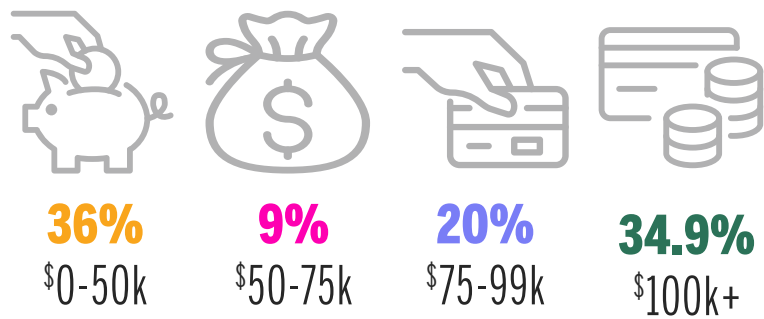
**WHO IS COMING?
WHERE ARE THEY
COMING FROM?
HOW ARE THEY
VISITING?**

WHO IS COMING?

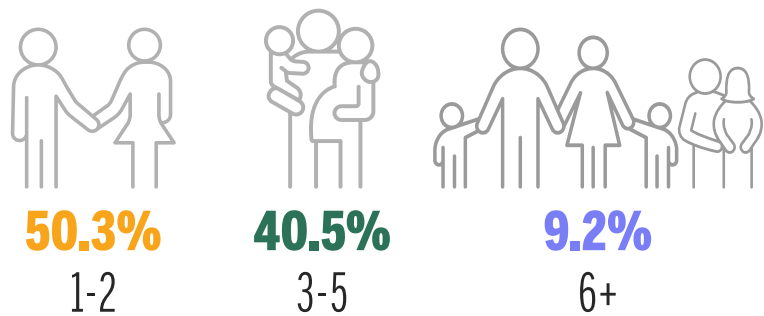
AGE



INCOME



HOUSEHOLD



This data represents a statistical model based on a sample size of devices. The model was developed and optimized by our tourism-specific geolocation partner to report on audiences, trends, spending, demographics, and key markets for visitors from outside 50 miles of the destination.

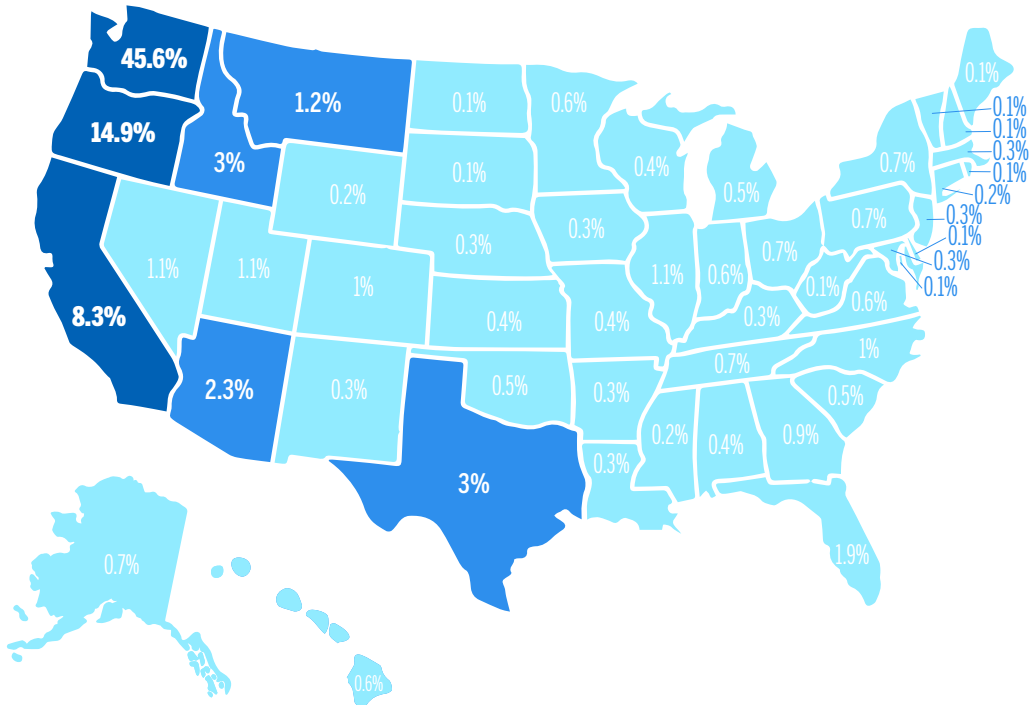
Geolocation data is collected and anonymized from mobile apps where the user has opted-in to provide location data.



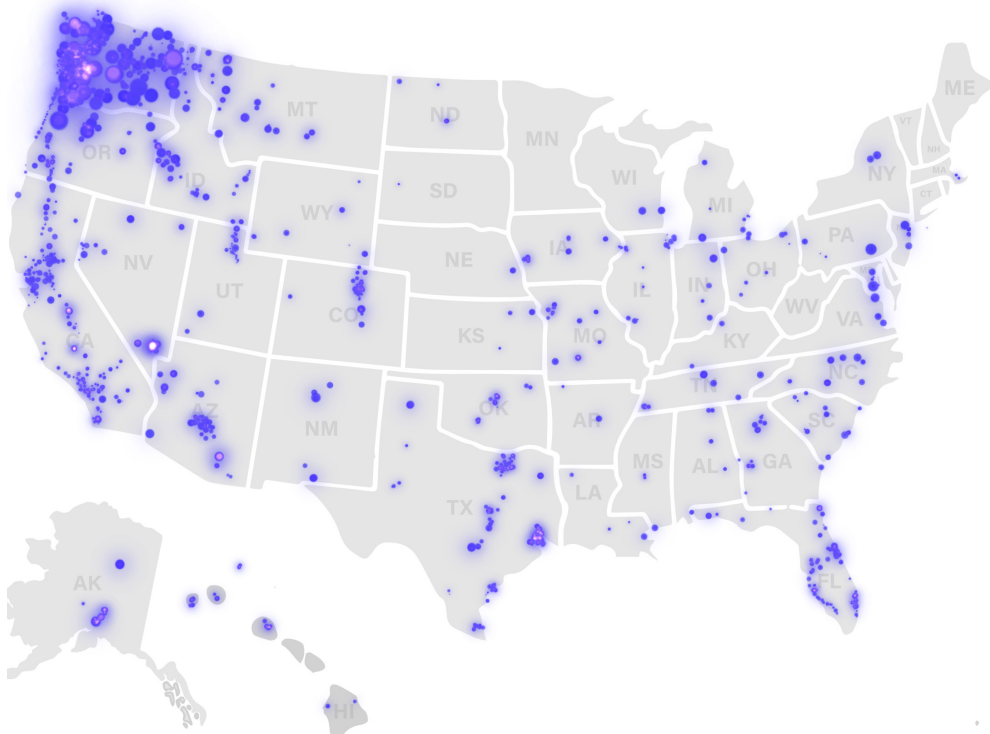
DEMOGRAPHICS

WHERE ARE THEY COMING FROM?

TRIPS BY STATE



VISITOR ORIGIN DENSITY



UNIQUE TRIPS

BY ORIGIN OF VISITOR

CITIES

TOP TEN

PORTLAND, OR	4.62%
VANCOUVER, WA	3.76%
SPOKANE, WA	2.51%
BELLINGHAM, WA	1.91%
MARYSVILLE, WA	1.91%
ARLINGTON, WA	1.43%
ABERDEEN, WA	1.41%
YAKIMA, WA	1.36%
LAKE STEVENS, WA	1.32%
ELLENSBURG, WA	1.29%

STATES

TOP TEN

WASHINGTON	45.61%
OREGON	14.91%
CALIFORNIA	8.35%
TEXAS	3.04%
IDAHO	3.00%
ARIZONA	2.28%
FLORIDA	1.92%
MONTANA	1.16%
NEVADA	1.11%
UTAH	1.07%

This data represents a statistical model based on a sample size of devices. The model was developed and optimized by our tourism-specific geolocation partner to report on audiences, trends, spending, demographics, and key markets for visitors from outside 50 miles of the destination.

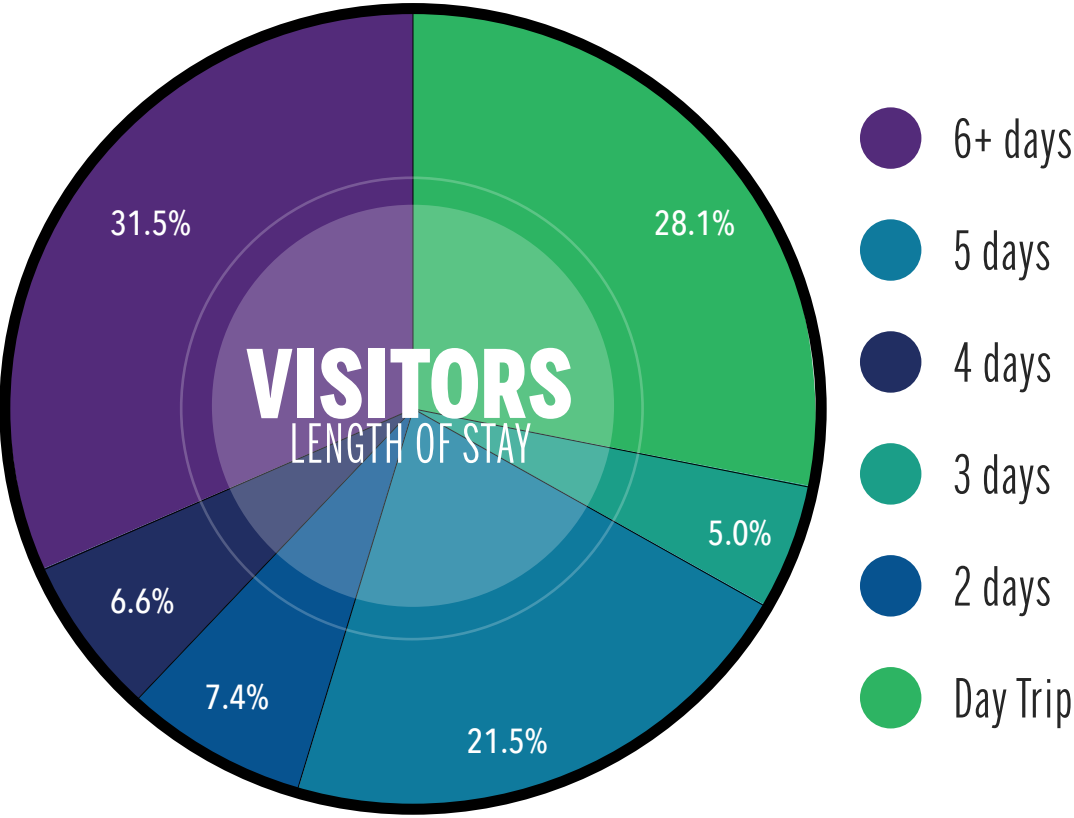
Geolocation data is collected and anonymized from mobile apps where the user has opted-in to provide location data.



HOW ARE THEY VISITING?

This data represents a statistical model based on a sample size of devices. The model was developed and optimized by our tourism-specific geolocation partner to report on audiences, trends, spending, demographics, and key markets for visitors from outside 50 miles of the destination.

Geolocation data is collected and anonymized from mobile apps where the user has opted-in to provide location data.



PIERCE COUNTY HOTEL INDUSTRY PERFORMANCE

Hotels in Pierce County broke \$200 million in revenue for the first time on record, and also recorded their highest average daily room rate (ADR) and revenue per available room (RevPAR). That is true both in our county, and nationally. While this seems like good news on the surface, it comes with the caveat that it was due mostly to the impact of inflation, rather than room demand.

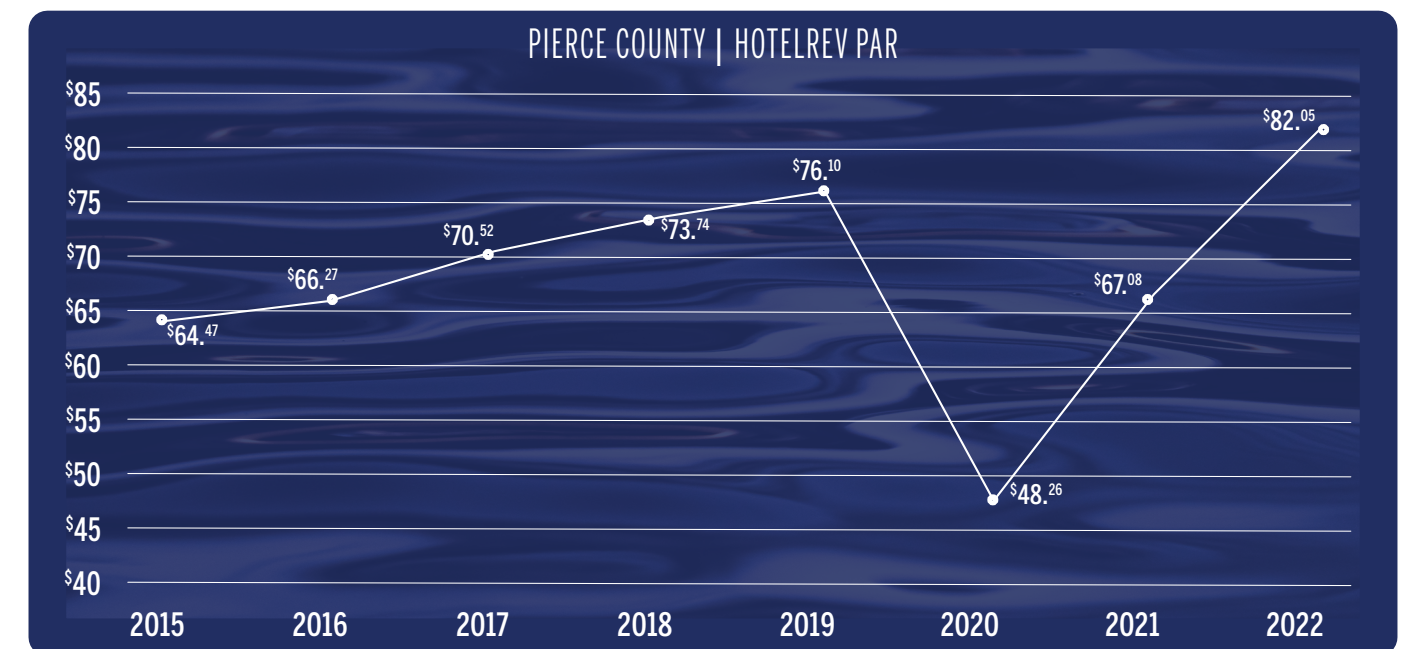
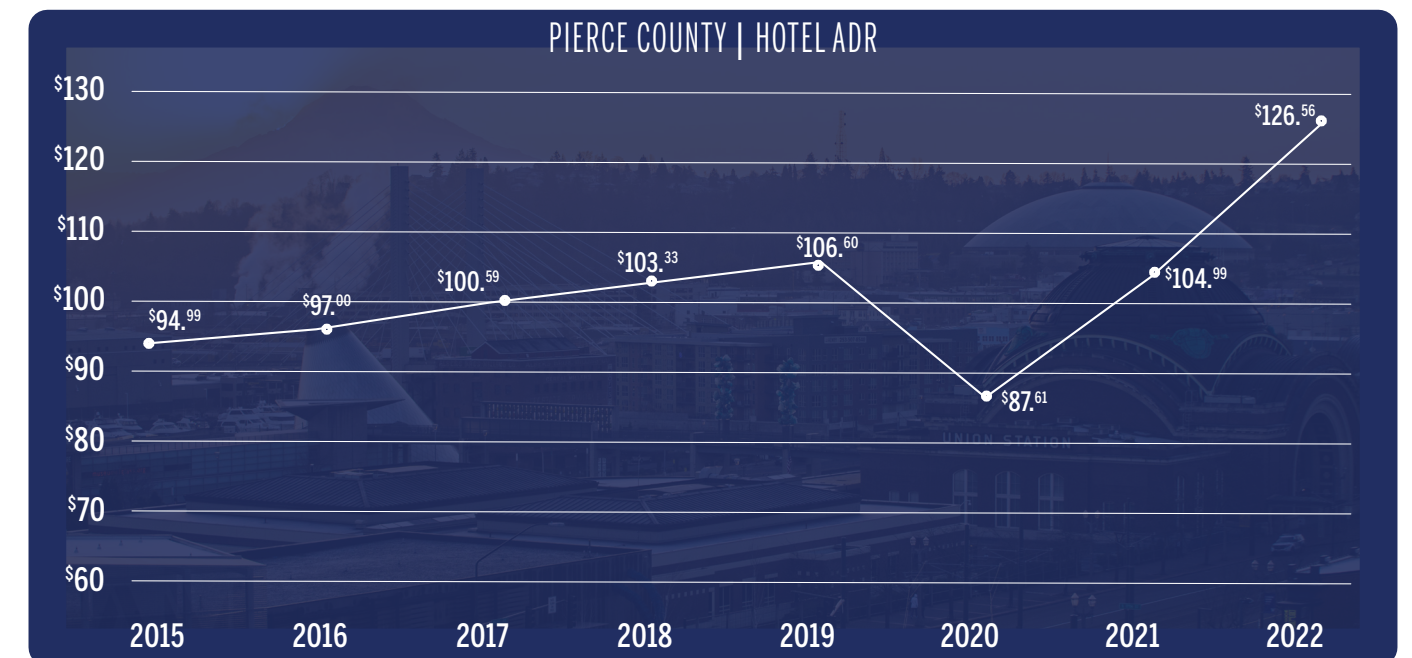
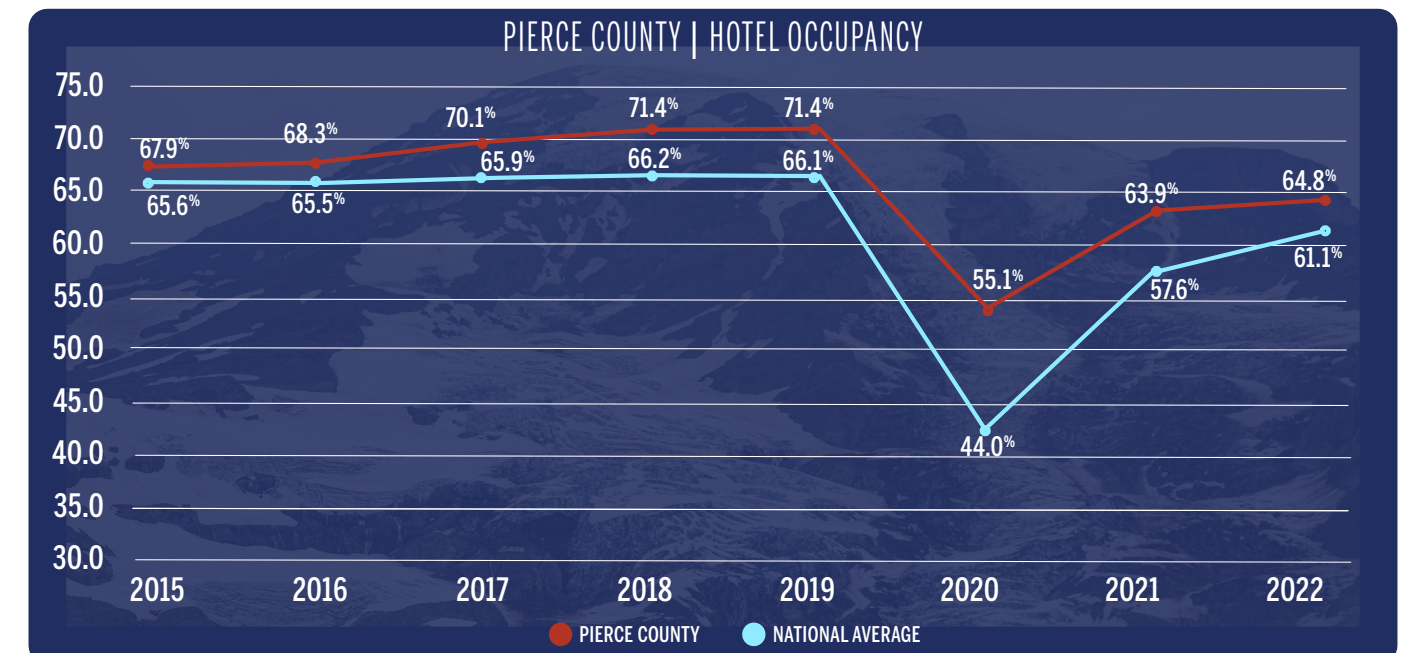
Indeed, occupancy was down year over year, though by a lesser degree than ADR was increased as a product of inflation. Put another way, the decrease in heads in beds was more than offset by the increase in how much the people in those beds were willing to pay to be there, resulting in record ADR, RevPAR, and revenue.

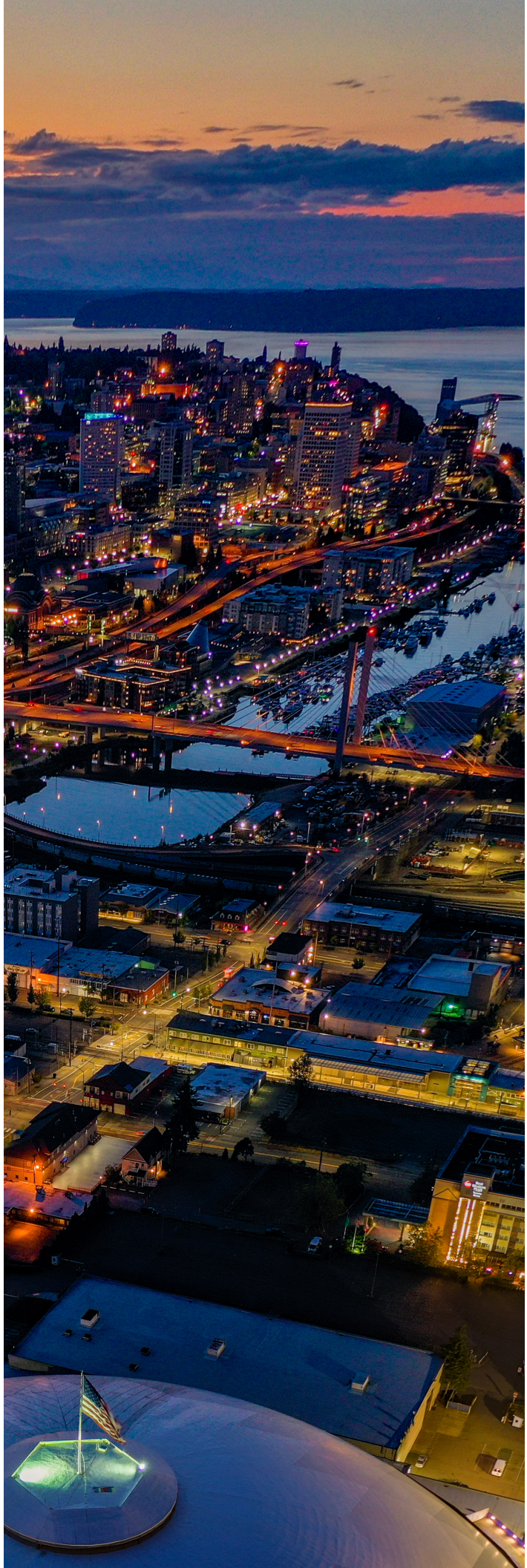
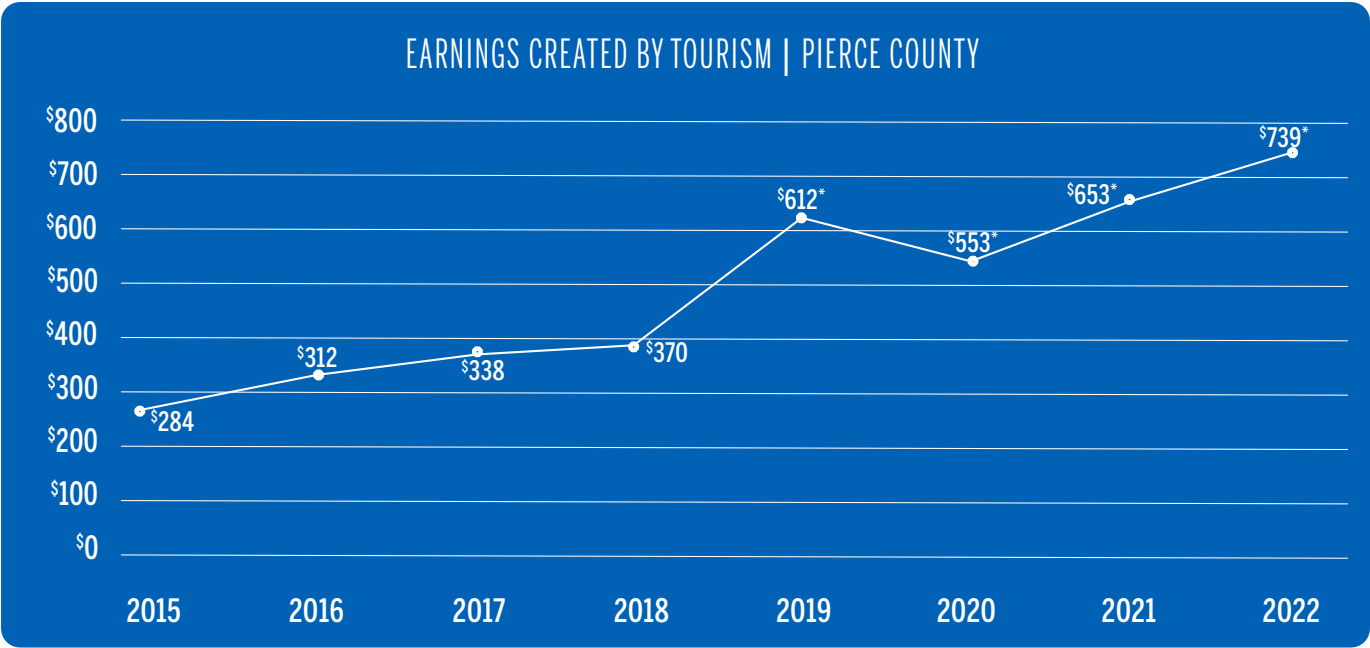
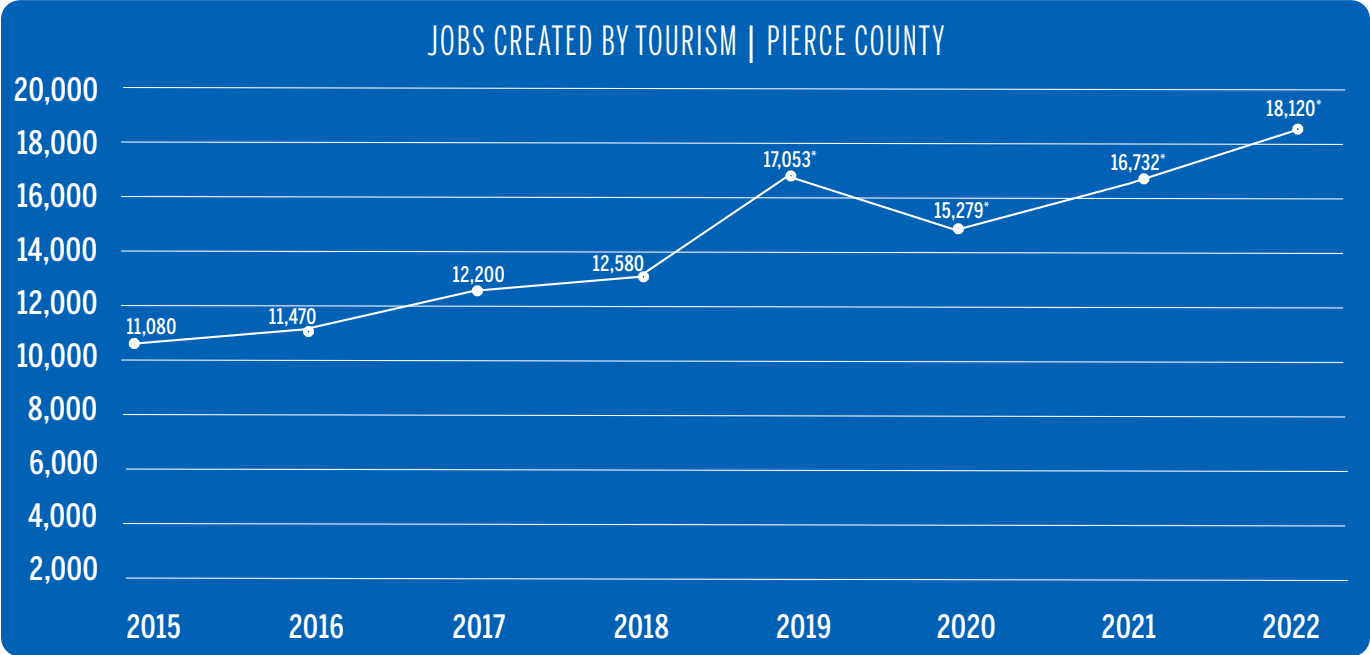
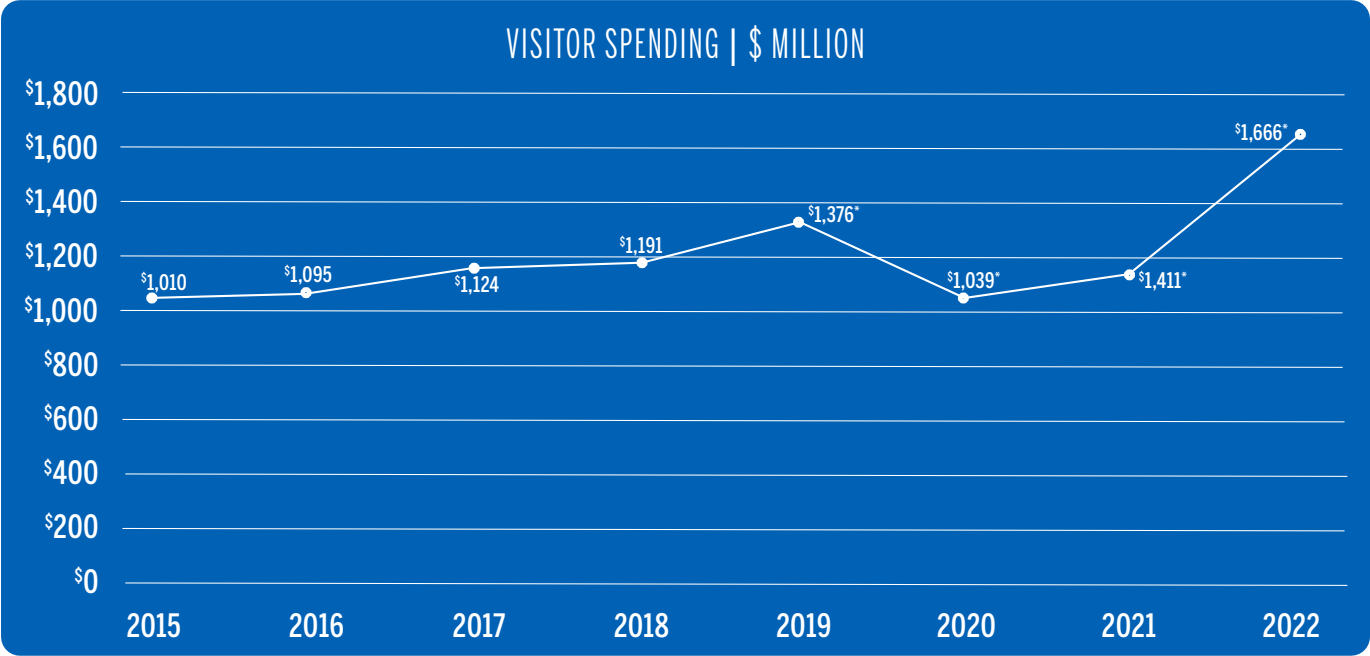
HOTEL AVERAGE DAILY RATE
\$126.56
(+20.5% year-over-year)
+18.7% from 2019

HOTEL OCCUPANCY
64.8%
(+1.5% year-over-year)
-9.2% from 2019

HOTEL REVPAR
\$82.05
(+22.4% year-over-year)
+7.8% from 2019

For national context, hotels nationwide were 62.7% occupied in 2022, which is -6.0% from 2019.





PIERCE COUNTY TOURISM IMPACT

The 2022 data from the Washington State Department of Revenue and Tourism Economics shows a destination still in recovery, combined with all the hallmarks of inflation. Demonstrating the continued recovery, visitor volume is rising, but remains 2.0% below pre-pandemic levels and employment is just modestly above pre-pandemic levels. Those relatively flat numbers, combined with visitor spending and employment earnings that are both up approximately 20%, demonstrates the impact of inflation.

*In 2019, Washington State Tourism transitioned from Dean Runyan Associates to Tourism Economics as a source for tourism data. While there is a continuity of the metrics being reported, the methods used to interpret it may have changed.

Source: Dean Runyan and Tourism Economics

2022

VISITOR SPENDING

\$1.67 BILLION

2022

VISITOR VOLUME

\$9.0 MILLION

GOALS AND ACTUALS

Throughout the year, Travel Tacoma works to achieve contracted goals, and regularly track and report on our progress against those goals. These are the results for 2022

MEETINGS AND BOOKED EVENTS

	2022 ACTUAL	2022 GOAL
SALES BOOKED ROOM NIGHTS	21,503	19,000
TOTAL COMBINED ECONOMIC IMPACT	\$24.0 million	NA
	2022 ACTUAL	2022 GOAL
SALES SERVICING		
Average Customer Service Survey Rating (out of 5)	4.96	4.75

SPORTS

	2022 ACTUAL	2022 GOAL
ROOM NIGHTS	58,680	29,937
VISITORS	201,700	102,902
TOTAL COMBINED ECONOMIC IMPACT	\$32.9 million	NA

MARKETING

	2022 ACTUAL	2022 GOAL
ROOM NIGHTS	20,758	11,000
NEW WEBSITE VISITORS	411,294	352,339
TOTAL SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS	49,516	48,498

THE BUSINESS OF GENERATING ROOM NIGHTS

Like nearly every destination marketing organization (DMO) in the country – in the world, really – everything we do is aimed at the recruitment of visitors to our destination for economic development purposes. For Travel Tacoma in particular, that mission is narrowed and focused to recruiting overnight visitors that we’re able to count in measurable and trackable ways.

Our actual mission statement, our singular purpose, our North Star, our raison d’être is: *To deliver room nights to Pierce County.*

To that end, Travel Tacoma generated more room nights in 2022 than we ever have in our history



While it was not the year where the tourism, meetings, events, and hospitality industries could declare a full recovery, the work Travel Tacoma did during the pandemic – staying connected and reconnecting with the meeting planners that are the source of much of our group business; creating sports venues like the NCAA championship cross-country course at Chambers Creek Regional Park; and finding that combination of leisure-marketing methods and technologies that allow us to put hard metrics against what was formerly more nebulous – began to truly pay off.

And as a reminder, when Travel Tacoma reports room nights generated, you’re seeing the bare minimum, most conservative number our efforts directly generated. Some of the actual results are unknowable, such as group business (attendees for sports, and meetings and conventions) that was booked outside of room blocks, those who were influenced or inspired to visit by our social media marketing, or those who interacted with our advertisements and later visited Pierce County and stayed in paid lodging, but did not use their mobile devices in a way that provides the data we need to attribute their stay to our marketing.

To generate these room nights, we continued to stand on three primary pillars of business:

MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

SPORTS

INDIVIDUAL LEISURE

2022 TOURISM IMPACT REPORT

THE BUSINESS OF GENERATING ROOM NIGHTS

Early in 2022, planners remained timid to secure events concerned about the Omicron variant and a future of returning to pre pandemic status of *"getting back to meeting in person."* Those concerns manifested as reduced booking windows for the first half of the year, increasing short-term commitments, reduced size of events, and expected flexible booking terms; resulting in the production of more local and regional meetings and conferences as a percentage of the total. In addition, many organizations were experiencing reduced budgets, reduced registrations, and attendee reluctance to travel by plane, when compared to the years immediately preceding the pandemic.

As we look farther out, conferences booking for future years had in many cases reduced in size with fewer attendees and therefore fewer guestrooms, suggesting a reduction in overall economic impact from these events.

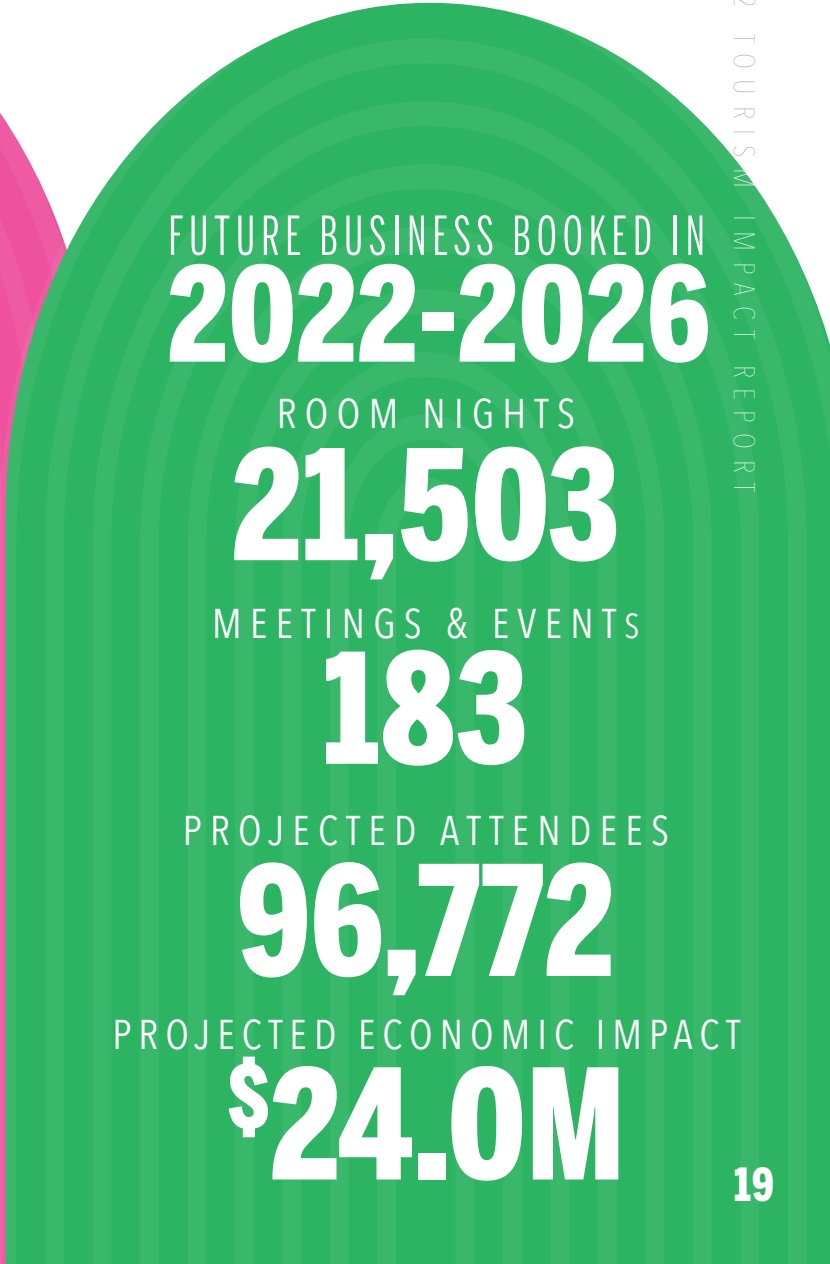
The booking narrative changed toward fall 2022, with an **increased volume** of leads returning to near pre-pandemic levels. While our team saw shorter booking windows, these were coupled with a higher volume of opportunities, and more planners were willing to secure future-year contracts.



MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:
#ACTIVITIESONBEHALFOFTOURISM



2022 TOURISM IMPACT REPORT

THE BUSINESS OF GENERATING ROOM NIGHTS

With tongue planted firmly in cheek, we often say “it’s easier to talk about the sports we don’t work with, than the ones we do. It’s a much shorter list.” This is the effect of having such a diverse region and diverse host assets.

We’ve been on a growth streak with gymnastics for several years now. Our “anchor-tenant,” the *Charity Choice Invitational*, has itself grown exponentially since it began, around 2015. Its strength acts like a gravity, attracting more opportunities. We now host multiple gymnastics events in Tacoma-Pierce County, that, in aggregate, generate some **8,000+ room nights**.

The *WIAA* (*Washington Interscholastic Activities Association*) has been a longstanding “legacy” partner, whose impacts generate more than **\$10 million in economic impact** and more than **18,000 room nights** as a complete portfolio. The organization took on new leadership after a previous 27 year run under its previous leaders. Together, we’ve worked hard to renew our regional commitments to the *WIAA* and to fend off the competitive bidding of the rest of the state who are actively trying to recruit the *WIAA* out of Tacoma-Pierce County.



SPORTS



BUSINESS DELIVERED
IN 2022

ROOM NIGHTS
58,680

EVENTS
50

ATTENDEES
201,700

EST. DIRECT SPENDING
\$32.9M



Cross-country running is another new pillar for us, as we celebrate our partnership with *Pierce County Parks & Recreation* and *Chambers Creek Regional Park*. In 2017 – 2019, we led the collaborative efforts to have an *NCAA Division-I-certified cross-country* starting line developed in an unused portion of the park. The results are that now we host half a dozen off-season (late fall) running events that generate revenue to the parks and on their first season alone, created more than **6,000 room nights**. Combined with our cross-country event efforts at *Fort Steilacoom Park*, we now have a combined hotel room night output of nearly **8,000 room nights**.

Continuing the theme of running off-road, we now enter our third year with the “*Vacation Races - Mt. Rainier Half Marathon*.” An event we recruited during the depths of the pandemic and brought to Ashford, drawing some **1,905 participants** from more than **40 states** who stay for several days, generating **2,289 room nights**, making a complete vacation of it.

But amateur sports have certainly been a massive part of the tourism economic recovery across the US. Losing the freedom to do our favorite sport was an emotional impact for people. Once that burden was lifted, sports were celebrated in big ways.

All of these are just a few highlight samples of the year and our work.

2022

WAS A BANNER YEAR FOR AMATEUR SPORTS with results that not only exceeded pre-pandemic benchmarks, but set all-time records for the history of our **30+ YEAR** work as a sports commission.

THE BUSINESS OF GENERATING ROOM NIGHTS

Pre-built itineraries continued to be the hot marketing property in 2022, as drive-market visitation continued as Pierce County's primary arrival method. We marketed a slate of new seasonal itineraries to targeted audiences of previous visitors and look-alikes, and followed the data to see if those people who interacted with our ads then came to Pierce County and stayed in paid lodging.

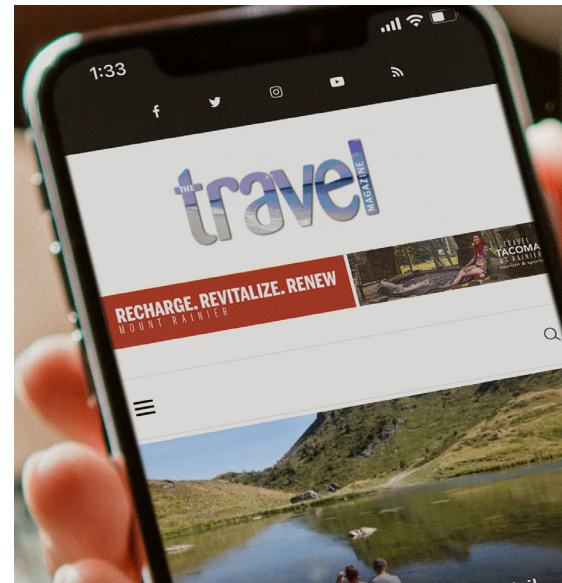
Corresponding to our effort to increase overnight visitation throughout Pierce County communities, these campaigns included such themed itineraries as *A Waterfront of Wonders*, *Road Trip to Paradise*, *A Simpler Time Holiday*, *Picturesque Pierce County*, *The Un-School*, *A Happy Harvest*, and *Relaxation at Rainier*.

Along with videography and PR campaigns tied to these itinerary-marketing campaigns, we continued to promote our tourism and hospitality partners through our website and social media platforms.

In addition, Travel Tacoma, in partnership with Museum of Glass and other mainstays of the Museum District, developed and executed the **TAG Festival: Together in Arts and Glass**. The outdoor areas around the Washington State History Museum, the Bridge of Glass, Museum of Glass and the Downtown Tacoma Waterfront became a hub of activity and artistic energy for a full day of festivities.



INDIVIDUAL LEISURE



BUSINESS DELIVERED IN 2022

ROOM NIGHTS

20,758

GOAL | 11,000

INDIVIDUAL CAMPAIGNS

8

VISITOR DAYS GENERATED

494,267



2022

TAG DREW MORE THAN AN ESTIMATED
**10,000 attendees to tour
the museums, listen to live
music, watch glassblowing
demonstrations, and graze and
shop the curated collection of
food trucks and market vendors**

2022 TOURISM IMPACT REPORT



MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **FAM TOURS** | Hosted regional familiarization tours and site visits with planners at the Greater Tacoma Convention Center and with local industry partners to recruit and persuade business decisions.
- **MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES** | Participated in one-on-one appointments with meeting planners and showcased the destination at twelve industry conferences.
- **CLIENT EVENTS** | Outbound sales efforts including sales calls and hosted client events, engaging planners from across the U.S. both in person and virtually.
- **SPONSORSHIPS** | Sponsored industry events and conferences to build destination exposure and interest.

SPORTS PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **ORGANIZERS AND GOVERNING BODIES** | Worked with event organizers and national governing bodies (WIAA, NCAA and others) to identify ideal locations, venues, and timing for upcoming events. This included working with public and private partners to organize site tours.
- **BIDS** | Submitted bids to targeted events, reviewing and assessing each for sustainability, ability to generate a target number of room nights, potential growth, and return on investment.
- **REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS** | Continued a multi-venue, multi-agency regional partnership that seeks to attract high-level NCAA events by highlighting the combined assets of the entire South Sound area.

MARKETING PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **ADVERTISING** | Developed and placed targeted, trackable, digital advertisements using geolocation technology that allows us to report on how many of our advertising targets interacted with the ads and then visited Pierce County and stayed in paid lodging.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT** | Grew our social media following by posting inspiring content and engaging followers and influencers.
- **MEDIA HOSTING** | Hosted travel media and social media influencers working on travel stories and content featuring Pierce County as a travel destination.
- **WEB CONTENT DEVELOPMENT** | Expanded the hub of our online destination: www.traveltacoma.com. Our leisure marketing efforts, including advertising, social media, and email, directed visitors to the site to help them plan and book their visits.



ACTIVITIES ON BEHALF OF TOURISM



2022

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MATT ALLEN | BOARD CHAIR
KEMPER SPORTS

NIGEL ENGLISH | CHAIR ELECT
COMMENCEMENT BANK

JEFF WOODWORTH | AT LARGE
WOODWORTH CAPITOL

BECKY NEWTON | SECRETARY
CITY OF LAKEWOOD

TOM PAVLIK | TREASURER
HOTEL MURANO

CARMEN PALMER | CITY OF SUMNER

JOE BUSHNELL | WA STATE HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION

ROSHAUN YATES | LIFESTYLE VALET

ADAM COOK | TACOMA VENUES & EVENTS

MIKE GOMMI | PIERCE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SHON SYLVIA | METRO PARKS TACOMA

PAT NAGLE | HARMON RESTAURANT

TED DANER | ACE HARDWARE



TRAVEL **TACOMA** MT RAINIER

VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER

1516 COMMERCE ST. | TACOMA, WA 98402
(253) 284-3254 | (800) 272-2662

traveltacoma.com

2022 TOURISM IMPACT REPORT