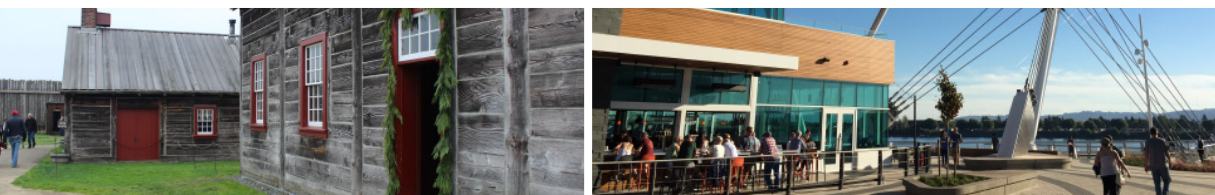




ANNUAL *tourism* REPORT

2★19

VISIT
V★NCOUVER
USA
Discover the Original™



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & BOARD CHAIR

Bolstered by the opening of Vancouver USA's new waterfront development, Vancouver hums with energy and excitement ahead for 2019.

Walk or drive through downtown Vancouver on almost any given night of the week and you will find hungry customers in line for street tacos, climbers scaling the walls at The Source, 20-somethings brewery hopping, and special events at the Kiggins Theatre. Head up Main Street to Uptown Village and the story is the same. Go east to The Mill or Columbia Tech Center and find a similar situation. Undoubtedly, the enthusiasm surrounding The Waterfront has helped generate new awareness and interest in Vancouver's offerings.

Keeping up with this growth is the challenge ahead. Proposed hotels continue to rise across the city (pg. 3), and our business development team is working to help fill hotel needs, including more than **33,000 room nights booked in 2018** (pg. 5). On the marketing front, our annual dining month program—Dine the Couve—tallied **record participation in 2018**, and we produced and distributed more than **15,000 walking maps** in preparation for The Waterfront grand opening (pg. 6).

As the primary tourism organization for Vancouver and Clark County, Visit Vancouver USA is tasked with anticipating this growth and deploying strategies to maximize the potential for increased visitor spending. We work closely with local businesses, attractions, hotel partners, and economic development entities to influence this tourism impact. The realization of The Waterfront is a testament to this partnership, and we will continue to build off this success in 2019.

Aiding us in our efforts, funds anticipated through the City of Vancouver's lodging tax grant program will help grow our targeted campaigns, marketing initiatives, and operational capabilities. A multi-year services and marketing agreement provides the needed sustainability in order to better compete with similar-sized destinations.

While 2019 will not be without its challenges, we look forward to the unprecedented opportunity for growth ahead. Thank you for helping us make Vancouver USA a great place for visitors and residents alike!



Kim Bennett

Kimberly Bennett, President & CEO



Kari Jonassen

Kari Jonassen, Chair of the Board

ABOUT US

Visit Vancouver USA is a non-profit 501 (c) 6 destination marketing organization. Our objective is to increase the overall economic impact of tourism on the Vancouver/Clark County economy through sustained growth in tourism spending. Our activities result in significant increases in visitor spending, tourism-related earnings, tax collections, and jobs.

Our Board of Directors is comprised of hospitality and business professionals, community leaders and City and County representatives. Their volunteer responsibilities include industry advocacy to build community-wide support for tourism, strengthen partnerships, increase productivity, maximize the return on investment, and determine the future course of Visit Vancouver USA's mission.

FUNDING

Visit Vancouver USA is funded by a Tourism Promotion Area (TPA). This special assessment charges hotel guests in Vancouver and unincorporated Clark County \$2. Total TPA collections in 2018 were **\$1,193,860**. Select marketing projects are funded in part through lodging tax funds provided by the City of Vancouver. Total lodging tax dollars spent in 2018 totaled **\$314,469**.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Blom*
Clark County Council

Jordan Boldt
Vancouver Farmers Market

Steve Bowers
Hampton Inn & Suites

Teresa Brum*
City of Vancouver

Melinda Capen
DoubleTree by Hilton

John Gush
Candlewood Suites

Ryan Hart*
Port of Vancouver USA

Kari Jonassen*
Homewood Suites by Hilton

Mike McLeod*
Hilton Vancouver WA

Carla Rise*
Staybridge Suites

Hosanna Smith
SpringHill Suites by Marriott

Brady Wilkerson
The Heathman Lodge

Kimberly Bennett*
Visit Vancouver USA

*** Denotes Executive Committee Member**

TOURISM IMPACT

Tourism provides strong benefits to our local economy and creates positive effects that ripple throughout the entire business community.



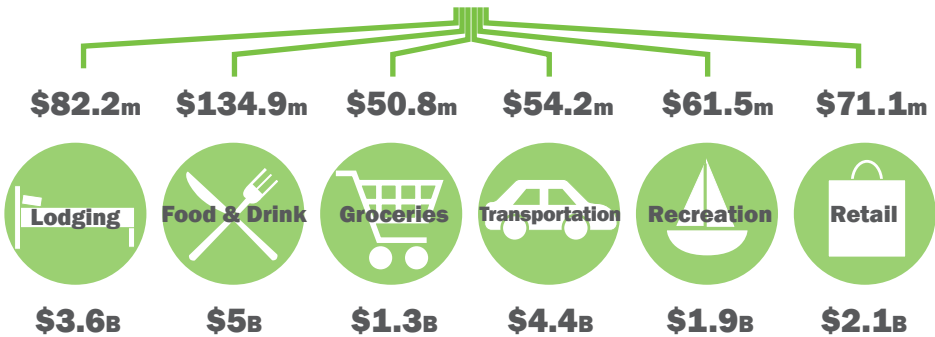
In 2017, visitors to Clark County generated a total economic impact of **\$509 million**.

Tax revenue collected from Clark County visitors in 2017 totaled **\$14.2 million** in local taxes & **\$33.7 million** in state taxes



Clark County tourism created **\$137 million** in job earnings

Clark County 2017 Destination Spending by Commodity
\$454.5 million



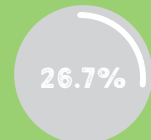
\$18.4 billion
Washington State 2017 Destination Spending by Commodity

Source: Dean Runyan Associates, Inc. on behalf of the Washington State Department of Commerce, Olympia
All figures are from 2017, the most recent at the time of printing.

HOTEL DEVELOPMENTS

Visit Vancouver USA tracks all new hotel supply proposed for the area. While room counts and actual hotels completed may differ from initial proposals, this supply pipeline provides an important gauge of Clark County's future tourism outlook.

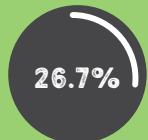
15 NEW HOTELS IN THE PIPELINE



IN CONSTRUCTION



IN REVIEW



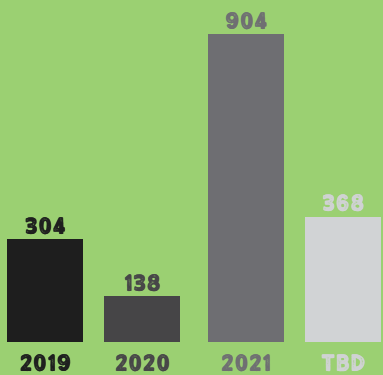
PRE-APPLICATION

MULTIPLE LOCATIONS



SURROUNDING AREA
DOWNTOWN/WATERFRONT
CENTRAL VANCOUVER
EAST VANCOUVER

1,714 NEW HOTEL ROOMS



CONVENTION & GROUP *business*



VANCOUVERUSA SPORTS

BRAND OVERVIEW

Vancouver USA Sports promotes Vancouver USA and Clark County as a sports event destination. Our sports development efforts bring numerous youth, amateur, collegiate, and professional sports events to the community.

The business development team here at Visit Vancouver USA serves as the on-the-ground, driving force responsible for recruiting sports events to Vancouver USA. Their focus is to foster relationships with area sports groups and to continue growing existing sports events in the community. Athletes and attendees from these events create a positive economic footprint by dining in area restaurants, shopping in the community, and staying in local hotels.



SPORTS EVENTS

Our team works with tournament planners, area coaches, collegiate associations, and venue managers to help solicit and retain sports events. Below is a selection of events, which showcases the diversity of sports groups playing in our community.

- HoopSource Tournament of Champions
- Adidas Clash at the Border
- WA Timbers Summer Slam
- APPLETREE Marathon
- Spartan Race
- Valhalla Lacrosse Summer Invasion
- USTA Adult Tennis Competitions



www.VancouverUSASports.com

DESTINATION SERVICES

Destination Services provide support services to groups that have booked their events in Vancouver USA. These services include maps, referrals, off-site opportunities, and community connections.



The **Show Your Badge program** is provided to select meetings and conventions to incentivize their attendees to visit downtown businesses offering special discounts. In 2018, the program:

- Expanded upon 2017 offerings; and was
- Offered to more than 12,000 convention delegates and event attendees

COMPETITIVE TARGETING

The business development team employs a variety of strategies to keep Vancouver competitive with other destinations vying for the attention of key meeting planners. Display advertisements on event position Vancouver in front of meeting planners during the site selection phase, influencing their decision-making process and encouraging them to choose Vancouver over similar destinations. Additionally, the business development team regularly attends tradeshow around the Northwest, including WSAE Annual Convention, The HIVE, NW Event Show, and Connect PNW.



WHAT OUR CLIENTS ARE SAYING

"EVERYTHING WENT VERY SMOOTHLY, AND PLANNING WAS SO MUCH EASIER THANKS TO THE HELP OF VISIT VANCOUVER USA. THE PEOPLE WHO HELPED ME WERE FRIENDLY AND KNOWLEDGEABLE, AND THEIR ASSISTANCE ALLOWED ME TO FOCUS ON MAKING OUR MEETING A SUCCESS WITHOUT HAVING TO WORRY."

"OUR REGIONAL CONFERENCE WAS A SUCCESS THANKS TO VANCOUVER USA. THEY PROVIDED OUR GUESTS INFORMATION ON LOCAL EVENTS AND OPTIONS MAKING IT EASY FOR OUR ATTENDEES TO NAVIGATE THE AREA. THEIR WARM WELCOME SET THE TONE FOR OUR EVENT."

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

- Assisted the hospitality community in booking **33,926 guest room nights** for conventions and meeting delegates, teams, vendors, and event attendees in 2018.
- Confirmed more than **38,912 room nights** in the Vancouver USA region for 2019 to 2022 and beyond.
- Prospected **84,509 potential room nights** for the Vancouver USA region from various markets for all future years.

CONVENTION CONVERSION REPORT

	2017	2018	% CHANGE
Definite Room Nights	27,255	33,926	+24%
Total Bookings	112	110	-1.8%

CONVENTION BUSINESS IMPACT

2018 was an incredibly eventful year for Visit Vancouver USA—booking and hosting numerous conferences, conventions, tournaments, and meetings. Below is a select list of groups that Visit Vancouver USA assisted in influencing to meet here, rather than another destination. The estimated economic impact to the Vancouver USA region from all 2018 bookings is more than \$14.6 million.

American Empress - 2019 & 2020
The Great Race - 2019
NanoCon Microbrewery Conference - 2019
PNW Monument Builders Association - 2019
WA Refuse & Recycling Association - 2019
West Coast Premier Tournaments - 2019
Northwest Regional Floodplain Management Association - 2020
School Nurse Organization of WA - 2020
WA State Council of Fire Fighters - 2020 & 2022
WA Farm Forestry Association - 2020
Pacific Fishery Management Council - 2021
Soroptimist Northwestern Region - 2022

TARGET MARKETS

The business development team at Visit Vancouver USA actively solicits group, corporate, and convention business from the following markets:

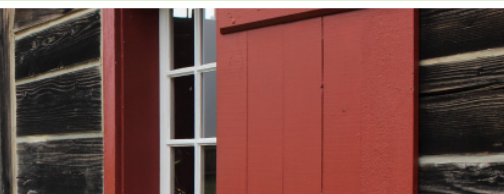
- Association - State/Regional/National
- Fraternal & Ethnic
- Educational
- Entertainment
- Government/Military
- Environmental
- Religious/Faith-Based
- Sports
- Social & Special Interests

TRADE ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS

Visit Vancouver USA actively participates in a variety of associations for business development, marketing, and educational opportunities.

- Destinations International
- Destination Marketing Association of the West
- Meeting Professionals International - Washington Chapter
- National Association of Sports Commissions
- Oregon Sports Authority
- Pacific Northwest Society of Government Meeting Professionals
- Professional Convention Management Association
- Religious Conference Management Association
- The Military Reunion Network
- Travel Portland
- U.S. Travel Association
- Washington Society of Association Executives
- Washington Tourism Alliance
- Washington State Destination Marketing Organizations

MARKETING & *communications*



2018 HIGHLIGHTS

- Produced print advertising campaigns for travel and lifestyle publications such as *Portland Monthly*, *Western Journey*, *Northwest Travel*, *1889 Magazine*, and *Northwest Meetings + Events*. Full page advertisements and accompanying editorial ran in June and October editions of *Alaska Airlines Beyond Magazine*, reaching an **estimated 4 million passengers**.
- Promoted local businesses and events through 33 authored posts on the VisitVancouverUSA.com blog. Stories like “The Couve by the Slice” and “Annual Events in Wine Country” **generated more than 50,000 views**. Some of the businesses and events highlighted included Vancouver Farmers Market, Night Market Vancouver, 3 Days of Aloha, Rally Pizza, NOM NOM, Loowit Brewing, and Magenta Theater.
- Contributed articles and influenced positive media coverage of the region through targeted media pitches, which resulted in Vancouver USA being featured in **more than 100 print and online pieces**.

DESTINATION PROMOTIONS

October marked the return of Visit Vancouver USA's popular dining month promotion, **Dine the Couve**. The event expanded to 31 participants across the city, all offering 3 for \$23 menus. Thousands of visitors and residents attended the event, dining at one or multiple establishments throughout the month of October. Success stories include one participating restaurant that reported more than 300 diners. The website landing page hosting menus for the event attracted **more than 40,000 total page views**.

TRAVEL MAGAZINE

- 95,000 copies distributed annually to convention groups, leisure travelers, area hotels, & visitor points of interest along the I-5 corridor & international gateways
- Additional 25,000 copies distributed to subscribers of *Portland Monthly*
- Additional 21,000 copies distributed to subscribers of *Seattle Met*
- 141,000 Total Distribution**



WALKING MAP

In partnership with the City of Vancouver and Vancouver's Downtown Association, Visit Vancouver USA produced a new walking map for visitors. The large, tear-off style maps provide a clear and colorful way of connecting Vancouver's new Waterfront with Downtown, Uptown Village, and the Historic Reserve. **Featuring more than 200 businesses and attractions**, the walking map serves as a valuable resource for visitors exploring downtown and the surrounding area.



LET'S GET SOCIAL

There's a conversation going on about Vancouver USA! The Visit Vancouver USA social media fan base grew exponentially across multiple platforms in 2018. Our social media efforts have increased user engagement and have made over a million impressions on potential visitors. Share what you love about Vancouver USA by tagging your posts with **#DiscoverVanUSA!**

Visit Vancouver USA
Fans: **17,400+**
+18% from 2017



@Vancouver_USA
Followers: **7,600+**
+36% from 2017

@Vancouver_USA
Followers: **4,900+**
+9% from 2017



MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Visit Vancouver USA works regularly with travel writers to influence positive stories about the area. In 2018, Vancouver's new waterfront commanded the attention of both local and regional media. *The Oregonian* dubbed the development “bustling and beautiful” and *Alaska Airlines Beyond* noted that The Waterfront is “changing the city's horizon along the Columbia River.”

The travel experts at AAA cast the spotlight on Vancouver USA, not once but twice to much acclaim. AAA's *Western Journey* magazine highlighted the ways in which the revitalization has complemented the city's natural and historic charm, while *Via* magazine laid out the case for a perfect weekend adventure in Vancouver. Special shout outs included the “mouthwatering” tacos at Little Conejo, the upscale seafood at WildFin American Grill, and the fermented specialty brews of Brothers Cascadia.



VANCOUVER USA IN THE NEWS

In 2018, Vancouver USA appeared in a variety of media publications including:

- 1889 Magazine
- Alaska Airlines Beyond
- Brewpublic
- Eater PDX
- Expedia Travel Blog
- Forbes
- Meeting News Northwest
- Meetings Today
- NW Travel & Life
- Northwest Meetings + Events
- OnTrak Magazine
- OPB
- The Oregonian
- Portland Monthly
- Sip Northwest
- Sports Events Magazine
- Sunset
- Taste Washington Travel
- Wander with Wonder
- Washington State Visitors Guide
- Washington State Wine Guide
- Wine Press Northwest

CAMPAIGN SPOTLIGHT

Funded through partnership with the City of Vancouver's Lodging Tax Grant Program, the **Waterfront Tourism Marketing Campaign** used the lure of the new waterfront development to attract potential travelers residing in markets around the Portland metro area. The yearlong campaign consisted of digital display ads, targeted e-blasts, sponsored content, dioramas at SeaTac International Airport, print advertising, radio ads, billboards, and transit wraps.

TRANSIT WRAPS



- 7-month duration**
- 52% reach**
- 9.1 frequency**
- 12,757,000+ impressions**

BILLBOARDS



- 6-month duration**
- 10 billboards in high profile locations**
- Digital bulletins across the metro area**
- 2,100,000+ impressions**

ONLINE MARKETING

Newsletters, homepage takeovers, and sponsored content highlighted Vancouver as a waterfront destination on popular travel and meetings websites such as Go Northwest, Real Food Traveler, Connect Association, and Northwest Travel.

- OregonLive Takeover: 1.3 million impressions
- Sponsored content: 17,774 page views
- Digital radio ads: 221,308 impression

DIGITAL TRACKING

Retargeting display ads helped influence consumer decisions to visit Vancouver, and tracking pixels monitored hotel and flight bookings. The retargeting ads delivered more than 10 million impressions and generated an **estimated economic impact of \$1.3 million**, including:

AVERAGE
DAILY RATE
\$125

2.3 NIGHTS
AVERAGE
LENGTH OF STAY

3,765
ROOM
NIGHTS

A LOOK AHEAD

The gleaming purple crane rising out of the ground signals the arrival of Hotel Indigo at The Waterfront. Construction will continue in 2019, before the 138-room hotel opens its doors in 2020. Just down the street at the Port of Vancouver USA's Terminal 1 project, Vesta Hospitality is expected to break ground on its 160-room AC Marriott.

Adding to the excitement, another wave of new restaurants drop anchor at The Waterfront this spring and summer. Among those, Maryhill Winery will open its 4,890-square-foot tasting room in late March/early April, and Barlow's Public House hopes to capture the summer crowds with a vibe of understated steakhouse elegance. In the Rediviva and Murdock buildings adjacent to Grant Street Pier, Lake Oswego export Pizzeria sul Lago promises Neapolitan pizzas crafted with farm foraged ingredients, and Stack 571 is preparing to serve its signature burgers and boozy shakes.

The award-winning Vancouver Waterfront Park will gain a further jewel in its crown this spring with an interactive art installation designed by Larry Kirkland. Headwaters Wall will feature a bronze topographical map of the area's regional watershed and incorporate a hands-on water play component for children.

Both the Marketing and Business Development teams at Visit Vancouver USA have already started promoting and selling these coming attractions to groups, leisure travelers, convention delegates, day visitors, and business travelers for future years.



A BIG SPLASH: 2018 AD HIGHLIGHTS



VISIT VANCOUVER USA OFFICE STAFF

Kimberly Bennett, President & CEO

Debra Ingram, Office Administrator

Jami Johnson, Director of Business Development

Christine Whitney, Business Development Manager

Gretchen Gettles, Business Development Manager

Michelle Hensler, Business Development Coordinator

Jacob Schmidt, Director of Marketing & Communications

Erica Thompson, Content Coordinator

Taylor Pulsipher, Digital Media Coordinator

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VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER

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