



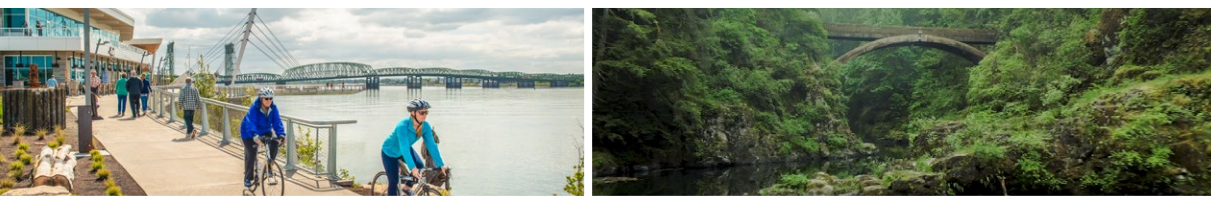
# ANNUAL *tourism* REPORT

# 2020

VISIT  
**VANCOUVER**  
USA



# VISIT Vancouver USA



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & BOARD CHAIR

The new decade rolls into Vancouver on a steady drumbeat of growth. From a consistent stream of new restaurants and tasting rooms opening on the Waterfront, to downtown business expansions, to sustained development on the eastside of the city, our tourism economy has continued to thrive.

This is immediately apparent in visitor spending, which increased an impressive 15.1 percent to \$585 million in 2018, the most recent year numbers are available. However, far from resting on our laurels, Visit Vancouver USA is leveraging this time for even more success in the future.

After commencing a sports feasibility study in partnership with Huddle Up Group in 2019, we will receive recommendations and move forward to maximize the impact of sports tourism in 2020 and beyond. Sports tourism is more stable in the face of economic changes and has the potential to shore up off-season lulls for our hotels and local business community. Initial results from the study point to excellent potential for growth. The first steps will likely involve coordinating with local organizers, rights holders, and facility staff, and increased communication and collaboration to help grow existing local events.

Visit Vancouver USA will also undergo a full rebranding in 2020. This initiative resulted from the organic change and growth happening throughout the destination. At the end of this process, our goal is a consistent brand that will carry us through the next 10 years of growth and expansion for Vancouver, resonate with our visitors, and holds true to the destination that locals know and love. The background process will seek feedback and input from stakeholders throughout the community.

We know 2020 will hold challenges as well. An evolving group market, slowing economic growth, and a rapid increase in hotel rooms in the city will mean that our marketing efforts will need to adjust and be more efficient than ever. We thank you for your partnership in helping us achieve our mission, and making Vancouver a great place for visitors and locals alike.



*Cliff Myers*

Cliff Myers, President & CEO



*Ryan Hart*

Ryan Hart, 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, overnight visitation, tourism-related earnings, tax collections, and jobs.

Our board of directors is composed of hospitality and business professionals, community leaders, and city and county representatives. Their volunteer duties include industry advocacy to build community-wide support for tourism, strengthen partnerships, increase productivity, maximize 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 all hotel guests with a flat \$2 per night fee and applies only to room night charges at hotels with 40 or more rooms. Total TPA collections in 2019 were \$1,205,950.

Visit Vancouver USA also receives 15 percent of lodging tax collections from the city of Vancouver to support the growth of tourism in the area. With additional hotels opening in the city, this three-year professional services contract is expected to increase from about \$350,000 in 2019 to approximately \$450,000 in 2021.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**John Blom\***  
Clark County Council

**Jordan Boldt**  
Vancouver Farmers Market

**Steve Bowers\***  
Hampton Inn & Suites

**Teresa Brum\***  
City of Vancouver

**Justin Friesen**  
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

**Seidy Selivanow**  
Kafix Coffee Lab

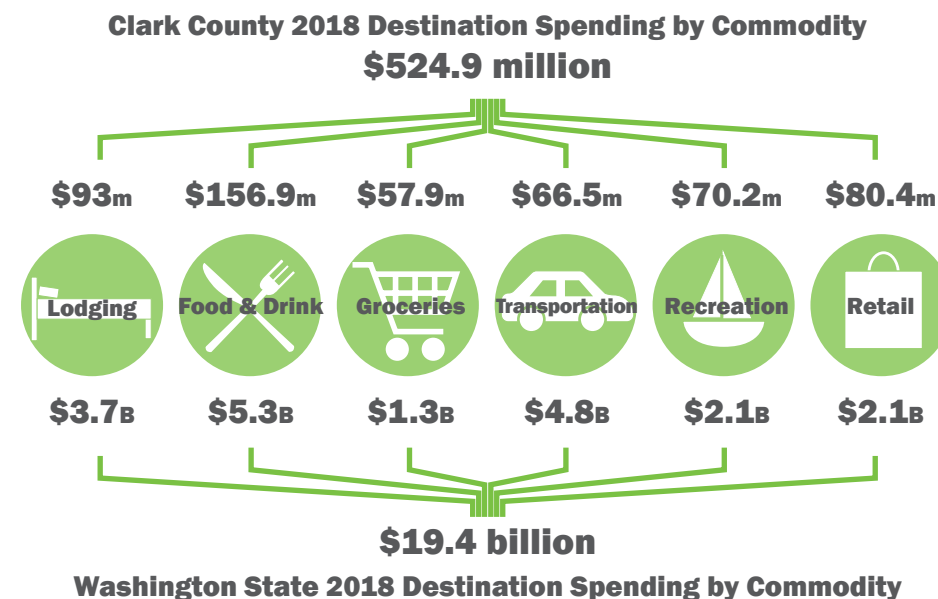
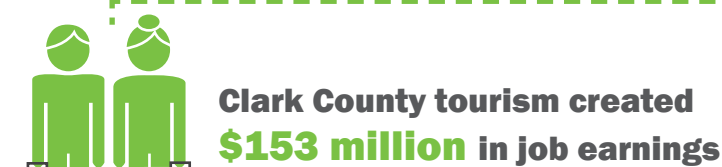
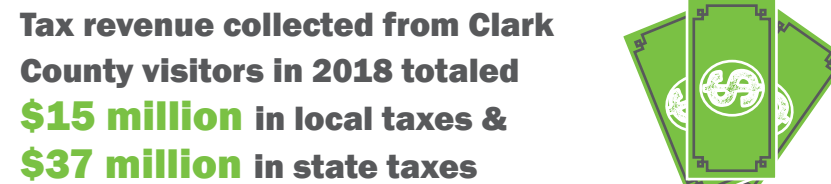
**Brady Wilkerson**  
The Heathman Lodge

**Cliff Myers\***  
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.

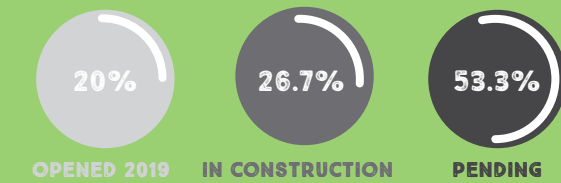


Source: Dean Runyan Associates, Inc. Washington State Travel Impacts & Visitor Volume

## HOTEL DEVELOPMENTS

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

## 15 NEW HOTELS IN THE PIPELINE

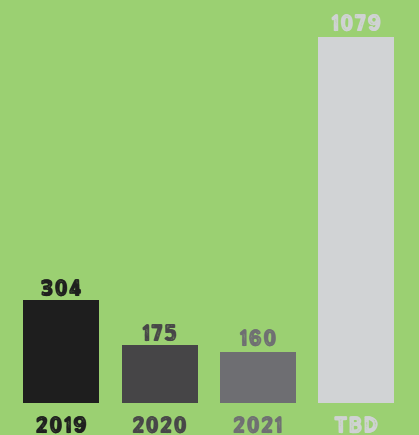


## MULTIPLE LOCATIONS



SURROUNDING AREA  
DOWNTOWN/WATERFRONT  
CENTRAL VANCOUVER  
EAST VANCOUVER

## 1,718 NEW HOTEL ROOMS





# CONVENTION & GROUP *business*



## VANCOUVERUSA SPORTS

### BRAND OVERVIEW

Visit 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.

Athletes and attendees from these events create a positive economic footprint by dining, shopping, and staying at hotels in the community. The business development team at Visit Vancouver USA leads on-the-ground efforts to recruit these sporting events. In 2019, Vancouver USA Sports partnered with Huddle Up Group to undertake a sports feasibility study with the goal of maximizing the sports tourism market. Results from the study will be available in 2020 and recommendations will begin to be implemented.



### 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
- College Showcase and ID Camp
- APPLETREE Marathon
- Spartan Race
- Valhalla Lacrosse Summer Invasion
- USTA Adult Tennis Competitions



[www.VancouverUSASports.com](http://www.VancouverUSASports.com)

### DESTINATION SERVICES

Destination Services provides 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 2019, the program:

- Offered to nearly 12,000 convention delegates and event attendees
- Heathman Lodge / Central Vancouver version in development

### COMPETITIVE TARGETING

The Business Development Team employs a variety of strategies to keep Vancouver competitive with other destinations lobbying for the attention of key meeting planners. Display advertisements on Cvent, an industry-leading site designed to help meeting planners book their events, position Vancouver in front of decision makers during the site selection phase, influencing their destination choices and encouraging them to choose Vancouver. Additionally, the business development team regularly attends tradeshows to network directly with these meeting planners, including WSAE Annual Convention, The HIVE, NW Event Show, Connect PNW, and the Sports ETA Symposium.



### WHAT OUR CLIENTS ARE SAYING

**"I WAS IMPRESSED WITH THE AMOUNT OF INFORMATION WE RECEIVED REGARDING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES IN THE AREA. WE WERE ABLE TO PROVIDE OUR MEMBERS WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR THEIR FREE TIME. I ALSO GREATLY ENJOYED THE MICROSITE YOU CREATED FOR OUR EVENT. IT WAS BEAUTIFULLY DONE AND ADDED A LEVEL OF PROFESSIONALISM TO OUR ORGANIZATION."**

**"OVER THE PAST 15 YEARS OF MY EXPERIENCE WITH CONTRACTING MEETINGS IN THE PORTLAND METRO AREA, VANCOUVER USA IS BY FAR A FAVORITE. NOT ONLY IS IT CLOSE TO THE PORTLAND AIRPORT, BUT IT OFFERS A UNIQUE VARIETY OF HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS, ESPECIALLY DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER."**

### 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

- Assisted the hospitality community in booking **29,366 guest room nights** for conventions and meeting delegates, teams, vendors, and event attendees in 2019.
- Confirmed more than **62,969 room nights** in the Vancouver USA region for 2020 to 2023 and beyond.
- Prospected **67,434 potential room nights** for the Vancouver USA region from various markets for all future years.

### CONVENTION CONVERSION REPORT

	2018	2019
Definite Room Nights	33,057	29,366
Total Bookings	110	104

### CONVENTION BUSINESS IMPACT

Vancouver USA had an incredibly eventful 2019 with the booking and hosting of 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 2019 bookings is more than \$31.6 million.

- National Council for Air and Stream Improvement – 2020 & 2021
- WA State Hospice & Palliative Care Organization – 2020
- American Association of University Women of WA State – 2020
- WA Association of Career & Technical Educators – 2020
- Land Surveyors' Association of WA – 2021
- PNW Regional Council of Carpenters – 2021
- WA State Podiatric Medical Association – 2021
- WA State Transit Association – 2021
- American Scientific Glassblowers Society – 2021
- American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association – 2022
- WA Activity Coordinators Association – 2022 & 2023
- American Public Works Association WA Chapter – 2022, 2024 & 2026

### TARGET MARKETS

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

- Association – State/Regional/National
- Corporate
- 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
- Sport Oregon
- Pacific Northwest Society of Government Meeting Professionals
- Professional Convention Management Association
- Travel Portland
- U.S. Travel Association
- Washington Society of Association Executives
- Washington Tourism Alliance
- Washington State Destination Marketing Organizations



# MARKETING & *communications*



## 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

- “Yeah, that Vancouver” campaign built off the success of Waterfront marketing in 2018 while telling expanded destination stories in Portland and throughout the Pacific Northwest, generating positive impressions of Vancouver and spreading interest and awareness of the city as a visitor destination.
- Produced print advertising campaigns for travel and lifestyle publications such as *Portland Monthly*, *Alaska Beyond*, *Northwest Travel*, and *1889 Magazine*. Full page advertisements and accompanying editorial ran in the June edition of *Alaska Beyond*, reaching an estimated **4 million passengers**.
- Generated 1,085,468 website pageviews (a 21% increase year-over-year) and more than a million views on Google Posts, a new platform for the agency. Web traffic was aided by 37 authored blog posts by Visit Vancouver USA staff, highlighting timely, visitor-relevant information and events.

## DESTINATION PROMOTIONS

October marked the return of Visit Vancouver USA's popular dining month promotion, **Dine the Couve**. The event expanded to 36 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 600 diners. The website landing page hosting menus for the event attracted **more than 43,000 total page views**.

## TRAVEL MAGAZINE

- 95,000 copies distributed annually to convention groups, leisure travelers, area hotels, and visitor points of interest along the I-5 corridor and 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**



## 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 2019. 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!**



## TOP INSTAGRAM POSTS



**@stephania\_hunt** ❤️ 741 🗨️ 41  
**@bethkellmer** ❤️ 665 🗨️ 15  
**@lisaridesagain** ❤️ 655 🗨️ 13

## NEW CHANNELS

In 2019, Vancouver USA began capitalizing on Google Posts, which allow destinations to provide additional time information to Googlers right on the search results page. This new platform generated more than a million views in its first year. In the fourth quarter, Vancouver USA launched our newest social channel, Pinterest. In just a few short months, the page garnered more than 40,000 monthly viewers, spreading the word about Vancouver far and wide.

## MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Visit Vancouver USA works regularly with travel writers to influence positive stories about the area. In 2019, Vancouver's new Waterfront, along with our coffee, dining, and outdoors scenes, continued to capture attention of regional writers. *Eater PDX* praised the culinary scene: “This funky little sister city is all grown up with its own burgeoning food and drink scene, including coffee roasters, great Mexican food, a ton of pho, award-winning breweries, fun farmers markets, and a handful of extraordinary food trucks.”

In April, Vancouver USA hosted Travel & Words, a conference of regional travel writers, for the first time. More than 70 writers explored the destination, got a firsthand look at the Waterfront, ate at our restaurants, and drank at our coffee shops and bars.



## VANCOUVER USA IN THE NEWS

In 2019, Vancouver USA appeared in a variety of media publications including:

- Alaska Air Magazine
- The Seattle Times
- Via Magazine
- Livability
- Eater PDX
- WalletHub
- Sunset Magazine
- Fox News
- Forbes
- Sip Northwest
- Northwest Travel
- Willamette Week
- KPTV
- KGW
- KATU Channel 2
- KOIN Channel 6
- The Oregonian
- Meetings Today
- Oregon Wine Press
- Portland Mercury
- Great Northwest Wine
- Smart Meetings

## CAMPAIGN SPOTLIGHT

Launched in May, our 2019 “Yeah, that Vancouver” campaign celebrated the ways the city has changed, especially since the opening of the Waterfront in 2018. The campaign built off the successful Waterfront marketing campaign in 2018 while telling the larger destination story through video and sponsored content. Billboards, print advertisements, digital display banners, targeted emails, radio, and social media rounded out the campaign.

### DIGITAL VIDEO



- **3-month flight**
- **Nearly 150,000 video views**
- **1.2 million+ reach**
- **13 million impressions**

### BILLBOARDS



- **4-month flight**
- **20 boards throughout Portland during campaign pulses**
- **18 million+ impressions**
- **Average frequency 17.5**

### ONLINE MARKETING

Sponsored content, print advertising, and targeted newsletters shared the story of our evolving destination. Spreads in *Portland Monthly* and the *Willamette Week* Summer Guide highlighted the Waterfront alongside copy that featured the vibrant downtown, dining, outdoors, and shopping scenes available to visitors.

- **985,000 digital impressions**
- **36,122 digital article views**
- **4 million+ circulation**

### 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 5 million impressions and generated an **estimated economic impact of \$316,000**, including:





## A LOOK AHEAD

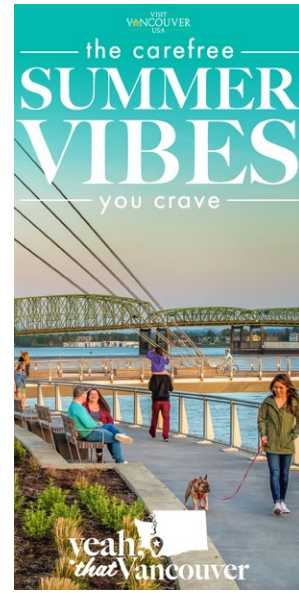
The Waterfront Vancouver continues to hum with life. Last summer, crowds of families and visitors enjoyed splashing around the new Headwaters Wall, chowing down on burgers at Stack 571 and fresh fried fish from The Daily Catch, and taking scenic photos of the pier. As the seasons changed, business chugged along, with Barlows Public House and Amavi Cellars and Pepper Bridge Winery bringing a more adult offering to the development. As always, people huddled along the water to enjoy the Christmas Ships, with onlookers filling new and stalwart restaurants to stay warm.

The growth in the city does not stop at the Waterfront. Plans are underway to redevelop the Waterfront Gateway, the connecting space between the Waterfront and Esther Short Park. Downtown and Uptown Village businesses continue to open and expand, while hotel and restaurant openings persist in central Vancouver and on the eastside. In 2020, we look forward to welcoming the Hotel Indigo, our first boutique property, to the market, closely followed by the AC Marriott on the Waterfront.

At Visit Vancouver USA, we strive to connect visitors to the entire destination, whether they're in town for a meeting or convention, on a vacation, stopping through, or visiting friends and family. We will continue to highlight experiences throughout the city and county, and create connections in the minds of our travelers between the new and exciting developments and longstanding jewels that make our community great.

Our new brand will serve as a launching post for future marketing initiatives and help us connect with leisure travelers, meeting delegates, and sports teams and spectators. Our efforts will continue to be shaped by the evolving destination and visitor offerings. We will look to extend conversations with the community, seek strategic partnerships, and continue to promote this beautiful destination to benefit locals and visitors alike.

## YEAH, THAT VANCOUVER



## VISIT VANCOUVER USA OFFICE STAFF

**Cliff Myers**, *President & CEO*

**Debra Ingram**, *Office Administrator*

**Chuck Ryder**, *Director of Business Development*

**Christine Whitney**, *Senior Business Development Manager*

**Gretchen Gettles-Fritz**, *Business Development Manager*

**Jazlyn Faulstick**, *Business Development Coordinator*

**Michelle McKenzie**, *Director of Marketing & Communications*

**Erica Thompson**, *Communications Manager*

**Taylor Pulsipher**, *Graphic Designer*

## VISIT VANCOUVER USA

*Business Development & Marketing Office*  
1220 Main Street, Suite 220  
Vancouver, Washington 98660  
[www.VisitVancouverUSA.com](http://www.VisitVancouverUSA.com)

## VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER

*Operated by the National Park Service*  
1501 E Evergreen Blvd.  
Vancouver, Washington 98661