



2021 Annual Report

SEATTLE
SOUTHSIDE 
Regional Tourism Authority





In the wake of the last year and a half, we all did our best individually and collectively to cope with and survive the uncertainty, fear, stress and pain caused the coronavirus crisis as the world came to a halt. Nothing has been left untouched. One thing that didn't change, however, was the RTA's commitment to our community. The services we provided and the relationships we developed changed, but we remained dedicated to helping our partners, cities and industry in any way we could.

Our organization was not immune. The Visitor Center was shuttered, we had to let go of staff, and I announced my plans to retire. I started with the organization more than 20 years ago and watched it grow into something I am prouder of than anything. While the foundations I have worked with my team to build are strong, I realized that I and the RTA are ready for change as we emerge into this post-pandemic world. I leave the organization in the competent hands of our amazingly supportive Board of Directors and incredibly talented staff as I introduce the new President and CEO, Mark Everton.

With Mark's leadership there is no doubt in my mind that our Seattle Southside destination and the Regional Tourism Authority are destined for even greater things to come. It has been my pleasure serving our community.

Sincerely,

Katherine Kertzman



I am proud to represent Seattle Southside and the Pacific Northwest and am energized by the continued growth of and endless possibilities for the Seattle Southside Regional Tourism Authority. I've called California home for over 50 years and have been fortunate to work primarily in the Bay Area, leading large teams of travel professionals on both the hotel and destination sides. I understand the needs of local hoteliers and the business goals they bring to the table, as well as holistic destination offerings that are important to leisure travelers, group meeting planners and conventions.

The post-COVID travel environment is ever-changing and (despite its many downsides) holds many new possibilities, and Seattle Southside is well positioned to grow and thrive while meeting and exceeding visitor expectations and the increased demand to visit our beautiful Northwest region. The key for us will be to turn the spotlight on the varied opportunities in our region and welcome people who have not been here in the past.

We are going to be focused on re-introducing the Seattle Southside region to travelers, groups, and corporations in a new and very different post-pandemic environment. Raising awareness of the destination, highlighting the unique identity of each of our destination cities, and focusing on leveraging our sports facilities will support the foundation of our upcoming strategies.

Here's to our future and all its bright possibilities,

Mark Everton
President & CEO

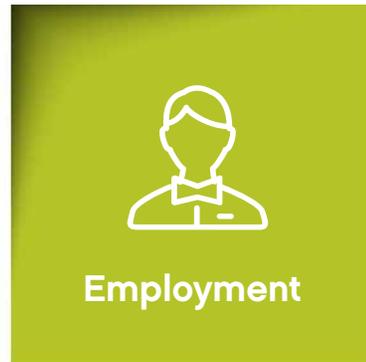
2020 Travel & Tourism Impacts



\$363.6M

53.9%

*



3,210

34.5%

*



\$36.5M

54.8%

*



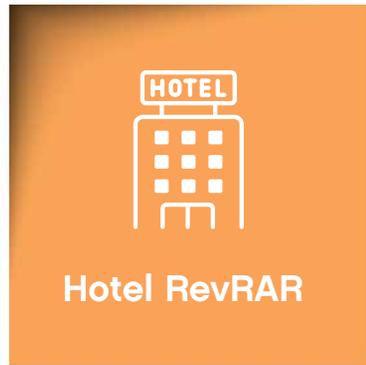
47.8%

36.9%

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\$88.36



\$42.20



\$2,068,020



1,459,002



*Dean Runyan Travel Impacts Report 2020p

**STR Report



Marketing & Communications

Like everyone, we had high hopes for 2020 and our marketing and communications plans reflected that sentiment. However, in March, due to the COVID-19 health crisis, travel restrictions, budget, and staff reductions, we had to drastically modify our plans and completely shift our messaging.

In the beginning all advertising was paused and efforts were shifted to focus on generating content to support partners. We did not want customers to forget about Seattle Southside, so we developed a recovery strategy to emphasize daydreaming of travel to our region. Due to the extended crisis, campaigns were paused on and off throughout the following months to remain sensitive to concurrent social and political events. With the decrease in paid advertising our focus shifted to updating and developing content to support the shift in consumer behavior. Development of the Seattle Southside Scenes campaign began during this time as well.

We adapted the media relations strategy to better position Seattle Southside RTA and RTA partners in the shifting landscape. Through sharing RTA news, virtual experiences, “good stuff” happening in Seattle Southside and keeping businesses open and ready to serve in the forefront of our media outreach, we secured over 253.9 million media impressions in 2020.

SEATTLE SOUTHSIDE TAKEOUT

B	I	N	G	O
Simply Thai Tukwila, WA	Behama Breeze Tukwila, WA	BU's Restaurant & Brewhouse Tukwila, WA	Mai Thai Tukwila, WA	Boiling Point Tukwila, WA
Famous Dave's Tukwila, WA	Clam Jumper Tukwila, WA	Outback Steakhouse Tukwila, WA	Tony's at Des Moines Creek Des Moines, WA	Des Moines Dog House Des Moines, WA
Los Bigotes de Villa Tukwila, WA	Red Robin Des Moines, WA		Five Guys Tukwila, WA	Indian Curry Palace Tukwila, WA
L&L Hawaiian Barbecue SeaTac, WA	Mini, The Dough-Nut Des Moines, WA	Vince's Italian Restaurant Burien, WA	Happy Teriyaki Tukwila, WA	Olive Garden Tukwila, WA
Cheesecake Factory Tukwila, WA	Mandarin Kitchen Des Moines, WA	Galliano's Cucina SeaTac, WA	Seattle Chocolate Tukwila, WA	SS Degree Bakery Cafe Tukwila, WA

Post a photo of your completed BINGO sheet to Instagram and use the hashtag #seattlesouthside to win a prize from the RTA!

SEATTLE SOUTHSIDE Regional Tourism Authority

Seattle Southside
Published by Open Social (1) March 26

TAKEOUT BINGO ROUND #2
New restaurants, same rules. Let's continue to support our local restaurants by ordering takeout or delivery!

*Previous BINGO is still valid for entry to win a prize
* Please feel to support your local favorite businesses, tag businesses that are still open for take-out or give helpful suggestions in the comments for businesses that did not fit on the BINGO card due to space but still need our support. We are all in this together!

Tag Photo

60 2 Comments 15 Shares

Most Relevant

Paul R Marshall: Vince's Italian Restaurant is a great place. I worked in lower Queen Anne about 20 years ago. I still consider this family.

Shonna Readrick: Kah gotta get on the bingo!

#KeepItMoving

PHASE ONE TO REOPEN WASHINGTON

HIGH RISK POPULATIONS
Continue to Stay Home, Stay Safe

RECREATION
Some outdoor recreation (hunting, fishing, golf, boating, hiking)

GET A COMPLETE LIST OF OPEN PARKS

SEATTLE SOUTHSIDE Regional Tourism Authority

Restaurants love Mother's Day. For most restaurants, Mother's Day is their biggest day of the year.

Mother's Day loves restaurants. Restaurants feed nearly half of all Americans on Mother's Day.

When 60 percent of restaurants are owned by women, restaurant owners don't just love mothers, they are mothers.

Restaurants will miss having you as our guests this Mother's Day, but we can still help you celebrate mom.

Remember takeout and delivery on May 10 for Mother's Day

SEATTLE SOUTHSIDE Regional Tourism Authority

CAN YOU GUESS THIS SEATTLE SOUTHSIDE ATTRACTION?

Alki Beach
 Redondo Beach Park
 Marlin View Park
 Des Moines Sports Park

Explore Seattle Southside Virtually

We're sure you'll enjoy all aspects of the social distancing measures and momentum on dining and entertainment venues taken by state and federal governments to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. We would like to encourage everyone to follow COVID and government guidelines, stay safe, and try to enjoy some quality time with your families.

We're also like to share some great ways to explore Seattle Southside from the comfort of your own home at SeattleSouthside.com. You'll find plenty of great ideas to be inspired and entertained from virtual tours of the Museum of Flight and other top Seattle-area museums, to happen from local restaurants to try all forms of our takeout/bingo game, there's a great variety of online experiences, stories, and games.

The Southside Explorer Blog is a fantastic resource for all things Seattle, Tukwila, and Des Moines. We have blogs on the history of the region, reviews of local happenings and little known area facts, collections.

of photos from our favorite parks and scenery spots and culture places and much more!

When government restrictions begin to loosen and restaurants, attractions, and hotels open their doors again, you'll be glad you spent some time on the Seattle Southside website and blog! Not only will you have discovered new ideas for the next restaurant and more attractions you have been seeking, if you signed up for the Go Mail - Save Some Paper! (you should do it!), you'll have access to exclusive deals and discounts at the top spots in your neighborhood and beyond! That way, you'll be fully prepared to get out, have fun and save money doing so.

In the meantime, don't forget to check out our website page for lots of entertaining, humorous, and inspirational videos: Videos.com/SeattleSouthside.

How to Support Local Businesses

We lean on the hospitality industry for the most important moments of our lives. Now, it's their turn to lean on us. If there was ever a time to show support for your neighbors and local businesses, it is now. Here are some tips to support your favorite local spots while practicing social distancing.

- Order Take-out/Delivery**
Your favorite restaurants may have to close their dining rooms, but many of them still offer take-out or delivery.
- Purchase Gift Cards/Items from Online Shops**
Buy gift cards so the business receives the funds now and you can treat yourself later.
- Donate Tickets**
If you had tickets to anything, and you're financially stable, please consider donating your ticket money and not reselling it online.
- Share Content on Social Media**
Share posts from local businesses on social media to help spread the word.
- Donate**
Small businesses are being hit the hardest by the current public health crisis. If possible, donate what you can to help them in these times of need.
- Leave Generous Tips**
If you can, leave a generous tip for the restaurant, servers and delivery drivers. Consider being extra generous on tips for restaurant workers and delivery drivers, since their incomes will have dropped significantly.

For a list of Seattle Southside restaurants offering take out and businesses selling gift cards, visit SeattleSouthside.com

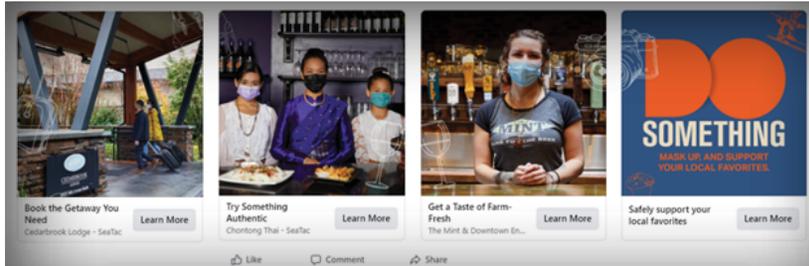
Highlights include:

- 104 media mentions and 253.9 million media impressions (+12.8M King County Campaign)
- Media results equated to approximately \$256,959 in advertising (+\$70,784 King County Campaign)
- Seattle Southside RTA held 7 writer and/or influencer familiarization tours (+13 King County Campaign)
- Total social media engagement (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) was 225,154



Marketing & Communications continued

Toward the end of the fourth quarter Seattle Southside RTA partnered with Visit Seattle to develop a King County Tourism Recovery campaign using funding from the CARES Act approved by the King County Council. \$8 million was committed to a marketing campaign supporting the recovery of tourism and hospitality businesses in King County. The RTA utilized \$2 million to focus awareness on South King County. The campaign was extended into early 2021.





Meeting, Group, & Sports Business Development

The RTA business development team developed a robust lead-generation campaign to launch in Spring of 2020 backed by intensive research on ideal target audiences, group sales data and partner input. Unfortunately, like many plans for 2020, this campaign was put on hold. In lieu of the meetings business climate, business development staff was reduced and refocused to content marketing and social selling strategies. Accomplishments include:

- Launched content marketing campaign to maintain meetings, sports, & group-focused brand awareness to proactively inform planners of local pandemic-related issues
- Attended 9 in-person or virtual sales conventions and tradeshow, resulting in 181 one-on-one meetings with event planners
- Launched a monthly meeting planner newsletter sent to the RTA's lists of around 5,000 planners as well as purchased lists of targeted market segments
- Redesigned the meeting- and sports-planner microsites with more refined and robust content
- Launched a social selling campaign through LinkedIn, increasing impressions by 185% and engagement by 110%
- Redesigned the meeting planner guide and profile sheets

Of RTA leads generated, the following data represents the events to be held in 2020 that were lost or cancelled due to COVID-19:

- 44 events
- 38,379 attendees expected
- 12,364 rooms requested
- \$7,842,024 in est. economic impact

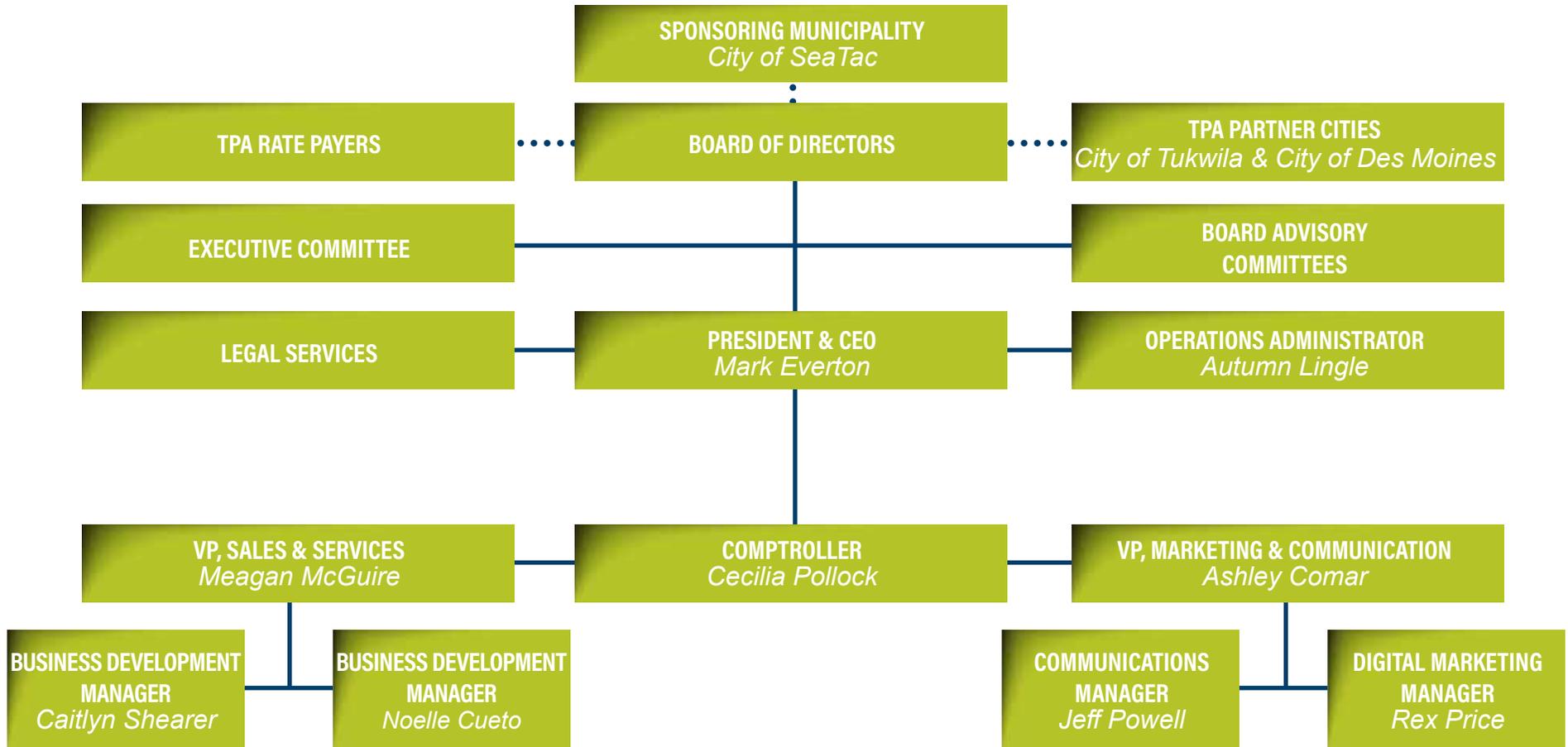


Partner & Visitor Services

Seattle Southside RTA's visitor center closed in March of 2020, reducing staff and redirecting partner and visitor services. The Westfield Southcenter mall shuttle also ceased operation in April. Partner services shifted to supporting partners during this difficult year. Accomplishments include:

- Partner recovery microsite, updated often, with relevant national and regional data, news, and information
- Monthly partner newsletter providing updated traveler sentiment reports, the latest news on recovery, STR and Cvent data on business development, and other relevant information on area business
- Developed products to assist partners with business recovery such as business-specific videos showcasing new cleanliness protocols, Welcome Back Toolkit (mailing campaign to encourage meeting planners to rebook their cancelled events), and provided additional opportunities to showcase partners through our media outlets

Seattle Southside Regional Tourism Authority Organizational Chart





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