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For the first seven months of the fiscal year, Visit Tucson was on pace to have its most effective year in recent memory. All lodging indicators were climbing for the sixth consecutive year, sales and transient occupancy (bed) tax revenue were up significantly and we were well ahead of pace to achieve our performance metrics and complete most of the tactics outlined in our 2017-2020 strategic plan.

COVID-19 entered our collective consciousness in January, and by mid-March stay-at-home orders were in place and the mass cancellations of meetings, sports events, and leisure travel were underway. Realizing the tremendous effect COVID-19 would have on the tourism industry, we released a 2020-21 tourism recovery plan in April.

This 15-month plan incorporates key pillars of our 10-year Tucson Tourism Master Plan and focuses our reduced financial and human resources on those strategies that will drive the greatest return for our partners and stakeholders. At the same time, we are working closely with the Arizona Lodging and Tourism Association (AZLTA) to pass SB1335, which outlines the framework for additional funding through the establishment of tourism marketing authorities. You can read more about the recovery plan on pages 19-20.

COVID-19 has changed the world and impacted our industry for the foreseeable future. Despite these impacts (which you can read more about on pages 7-12), Visit Tucson
managed to achieve several goals and hit many of our key performance indicators in 2019-20. We celebrate these successes, in a small way, by mentioning them here, knowing results like these will form the foundation of Tucson’s recovery.

- Generated a return of $22 for every $1 invested in our organization.
- Secured 315 meetings, sports, and signature events with an estimated economic impact of $79.8 million.
- Achieved new records for media coverage (261 articles valued at $35.8 million) and social media presence (2.8 million engagements).
- Tracked $40 million in accommodations’ revenue over the 16-day Tucson Gem, Mineral & Fossil Showcase.

We know this global pandemic has affected you and our sympathies go out to those who have suffered losses over these past months. Not only will a recovery require a cohesive and deliberate plan to rebuild the industry, it will also take your support and collaboration. We need community involvement and invite you to review the enclosed plan and share your feedback. We welcome all ideas to contribute to our region’s revival and to bring visitors back to Tucson and Southern Arizona in the coming year.

Best Regards,

Brent DeRaad
President & CEO

“For the first seven months of the fiscal year, Visit Tucson was on pace to have its most effective year in recent memory.”
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2020-21 Executive Committee

Chair
Nancy Kluge, President & CEO
Reid Park Zoological Society

Vice Chair
John Denker, Associate Vice President,
Marketing & Brand Management
University of Arizona

Secretary
Amber Harkin, Regional Director, Operations
Lodging Dynamics Hospitality Group

Treasurer
Glenn Grabski, General Manager
Tucson Convention Center

Members at Large
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Gray Line Arizona

Laura Shaw, Senior Vice President
Sun Corridor Inc.

Andrew Stegen, General Manager
Westward Look Wyndham Grand Resort & Spa

2020-21 Board Members

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Trumpet Social Media

Dan Cavanagh, Consultant
Lloyd Construction

Steve Earnhart, Market President
iHeartMedia Tucson

Evan Feldhausen, Tax Shareholder
BeachFleischman

Bob Hoffman, President
Tucson Roadrunners

Hospitality/Visitor Services
Hillary Louarti, Owner
Diamond Transportation

Chris Squires, Managing Partner
Ten55 Brewing & Sausage House

Otton Suarez, General Manager
El Conquistador Tucson, A Hilton Resort

Laura True, Owner
White Stallion Ranch

Bryan Tubaugh, Executive Vice President
Focus Hospitality

Government
Sharon Bronson, Member
Pima County Board of Supervisors

Joe Winfield, Mayor
Town of Oro Valley

Elaine Becherer, Mayor’s Chief of Staff
City of Tucson

Members at Large
David Hatfield, Senior Director Air Service
Development and Marketing
Tucson Airport Authority

Amber Smith, President & CEO
Tucson Metro Chamber of Commerce
Visit Tucson’s Return on Investment (ROI)

$22:$1  
Visit Tucson generates $22 for the metro Tucson region for every $1 invested in the organization

$78,297,000  Leisure Visitor Inquiry Impact
$56,094,481  Meetings Economic Impact
$23,729,330  Sports Economic Impact
*$1,500,799  Mexico Economic Impact
$35,782,875  Public Relations Earned Media
$8,116,218  Film Direct Spending
$1,557,017  Tourism Economic Impact

$205,077,720  TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

VISIT TUCSON’S ECONOMIC IMPACT
DECREASED 14% IN 2019-20 DUE TO COVID-19 IMPACTS

+ $205,077,720 ÷ $9,200,000 (2019-20 Budget)

$22.29

*Counts only room nights booked by Vamos a Tucson
Visit Tucson Funding Overview

Visit Tucson is a 501(c)(6) nonprofit organization that provides destination marketing services for Pima County, City of Tucson, and the Town of Oro Valley. Combined, these entities are expected to invest $6.8 million in Visit Tucson in 2020-21, approximately 96% of the organization’s revenue.

Pima County, Tucson and Oro Valley invest only bed-tax revenue in Visit Tucson. Bed (transient occupancy) tax is paid by people who stay for 30 days or less in hotels, resorts, bed and breakfasts and short-term lodging facilities. Visit Tucson does not receive general fund revenue from these government entities.

While the Town of Oro Valley contributes a set amount each year, Pima County and City of Tucson contribute a percentage of bed tax collections. City of Tucson revenue is based on previous year collections, while Pima County revenue is based on current collections. With so much uncertainty this year, budgeted revenues and expenditures will be critically evaluated and adjusted each quarter, as necessary.

Private-sector revenue makes up the remaining $233,500 in Visit Tucson’s proposed 2020-21 fiscal year budget. Visit Tucson’s 500+ partner businesses pay annual membership dues, and many invest in advertising on our website and in our publications.

Funding Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$4,800,000</td>
<td>City of Tucson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,750,000</td>
<td>Pima County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$275,000</td>
<td>Town of Oro Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$233,500</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$7,058,500</td>
<td>Budgeted 2020-21 Revenue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COVID-19 AND ITS IMPACTS

Looking back, January 2020 seems like a lifetime ago. U.S. news outlets were just beginning to report on the coronavirus, but its impacts were being felt halfway around the world and few predicted the global pandemic which would result just a few months later. Tucson tourism was on track to have one of its best years ever. Visitation was strong, airport traffic was up, and the U.S. lodging industry had just wrapped up their 10th straight year of gains in revenue per available room (RevPAR). But beginning in mid-March, many states, including Arizona, issued stay-at-home orders and forced all but essential businesses to close.

Re-openings began in May, however increasing cases of COVID-19 led to recurring partial shutdowns in many states. During the second quarter of 2020, the Bureau of Economic Analysis reported that gross domestic product dropped at an annual rate of 32.9%, while unemployment soared to 11.1% at the end of June as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Today, futurists are speaking (virtually) about the “next normal” and tourism industry experts are predicting it will take until 2024 or 2025 for a full recovery. This section, which was written at the end of July 2020, provides an overview of how COVID-19 impacted the industry, Visit Tucson, and travelers.

National and Local Impacts

No industry has been immune from the impacts of COVID-19, but the travel and tourism industry has been hit extremely hard. From the beginning of March until mid-July, the U.S. Travel Association (USTA) reported losses of $297 billion in travel spending and $38 billion in federal, state, and local taxes. In June, the industry recorded an unemployment rate of 28.9%, the highest of different industries according to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. Without government intervention, USTA predicts the travel industry will lose $505 billion by the end of 2020 along with $81 billion in tax revenue and 8 million jobs.

Our nation’s airports have also suffered. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) reported passenger screenings at U.S. airports were down every day in March when compared to 2019, even before stay-at-home orders were issued. In April, screenings bottomed out with a drop of 96% the week of April 12-18. Air travel has grown since then, however passenger screenings were still off approximately 75% in mid-July. Locally, the trend has been similar with passenger decreases at Tucson International Airport of 49% in March, 94% in April, 85% in May and 71% in June.
Regarding lodging, U.S. hotels have lost more than $39 billion in revenue since the beginning of the year according to STR. While the year started off strong with national RevPAR growth of 2.2% in January and 1.7% in February, things declined dramatically after that. As of June 2020, year-to-date occupancy, average daily rate (ADR) and RevPAR are down 35%, 17% and 46% respectively. Tucson has fared slightly better with decreases of 30% in occupancy, 6% in ADR and 34% in RevPAR, but it’s difficult to find the silver lining with metro Tucson hotel room revenue decreasing $88 million, or 35%, in the first six months of the year.
COVID-19 AND ITS IMPACTS
CONTINUED

Visit Tucson Impacts

When states began shutting down, nearly all non-essential travel ceased. This is obvious in the lodging and airport statistics shared earlier, but it also directly impacted Visit Tucson’s web traffic, group bookings, and social media engagement. VisitTucson.org saw a nearly 50% drop in website traffic in the second half of March 2020 and April was worse, with traffic down almost 60% year-over-year. Steady increases were achieved through May and much of June, but when Arizona made headlines for a spike in COVID-19 cases, these gains were diminished.

"VisitTucson.org saw a nearly 50% drop in website traffic in the second half of March 2020"
The sales department had a similar experience. When closures first occurred, many groups postponed their meetings until fall. As time went on, meetings were postponed even longer, until 2021 or beyond, or were cancelled outright. By the end of July, sales handled the cancellation of 110 meetings and events representing 74,115 room nights and an estimated economic impact of $39.1 million. When combined with the loss of an additional 63 meetings and events that were in “lead” status (not yet definite), the overall lost economic impact exceeds $50 million.

Contrary to web traffic and group sales, social media engagement hit record levels during spring 2020. With Facebook and Instagram the preferred platforms for up-to-the-minute information for many people, and a large population working from home, Visit Tucson’s social media engagement increased 113% in the four-month period including March, April, May and June 2020 when compared to the same time period in 2019. While engagements are still up year over year in July, activity peaked in May with 209,268 Facebook engagements and 99,241 Instagram engagements.

But COVID-19 didn’t just impact our marketing efforts, it also impacted our operations. The drop in travel spending caused a corresponding $1 million drop in the 2019-20 budget (from $10.2 million to $9.2 million) and further decreases to the 2020-21 budget, which is forecast to be $7 million. These budget reductions led to hiring and wage freezes, the elimination of 12 positions, and program cuts in all departments.
Several of the leading industry research firms have been conducting regular surveys to measure traveler sentiment since the pandemic began. While the metrics may differ from report to report, the trends are the same, mirroring overall sentiment about COVID-19. When respondents believe the situation around COVID-19 is improving, their sentiment around travel improves and vice versa.

According to Destination Analysts, who have conducted 19 surveys since mid-March, the percentage of travelers who indicated the severity of the coronavirus situation will improve peaked at the beginning of June. This ties closely to the percentage of travelers who expressed excitement to travel now, which peaked at 58% in late May. The most recent findings from mid-July report that excitement to travel now dropped to 41%. Also, in mid-July, a record 47% of American travelers reported they don’t have any trip plans for the remainder of 2020.

MMGY Travel Intelligence reports that “domestic leisure travel will lead the recovery of demand for travel services” in their sixth and most recent survey conducted in early July. When asked how likely respondents would be to take a domestic leisure trip in the next six months, 39% indicated likely or extremely likely compared to 22% who indicated the same for a domestic business trip and 20% for an international leisure trip. Respondents also reported they were more than twice as likely to travel by car than by air, with one in five car travelers willing to drive more than 500 miles one way on their next trip.

Using a scale of 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (extremely likely), based on how you feel today, how likely are you to engage in each of the following activities during the next 6 months?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>2020- How likely are you to engage in each of the following?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take domestic leisure trip</td>
<td>MAR 27: 39%, APR 11: 31%, APR 24: 38%, MAY 8: 36%, JUN 9: 39%, JUL 8: 39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take domestic business trip</td>
<td>MAR 27: 26%, APR 11: 22%, APR 24: 22%, MAY 8: 24%, JUN 9: 27%, JUL 8: 27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take international leisure trip</td>
<td>MAR 27: 15%, APR 11: 13%, APR 24: 14%, MAY 8: 13%, JUN 9: 17%, JUL 8: 17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take international business trip</td>
<td>MAR 27: 15%, APR 11: 13%, APR 24: 14%, MAY 8: 13%, JUN 9: 17%, JUL 8: 17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MMGY Travel Intelligence
Industry experts believe consumers will need to be comfortable in their own communities before they would be willing to visit another. As of mid-July, Longwoods International reported 42% of respondents felt safe dining at local restaurants and shopping in their community compared to 32% who didn’t feel safe yet participating in those activities. When asked about their perceived safety traveling to another community the gap narrowed to 38% versus 36%, and when asked about the safety of opening up their community to visitors the gap disappeared with 36% of respondents on each side.

"...consumers will need to be comfortable in their own communities before they would be willing to visit another."
U.S. Tourism Overview

U.S. Hotels Break Records
Prior to COVID-19, U.S. hotels were experiencing the longest expansion on record, dating back to 2010. Key metrics grew each year and in 2019, record high levels for average daily rate (ADR) and revenue per available room (RevPAR) were measured. However, the rate of growth has been slowing for several years, and 2019 RevPAR increases were due almost solely to increases in average daily rate, as demand and supply grew at nearly the same rate. 2020 kicked-off following the same trendline in January and February, but as COVID-19 took hold in March, the numbers dropped dramatically. For more details please see the COVID-19 section of this report on pages 7-12.

Black Lives Matter
The killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor led to widespread protests and renewed demands for racial equality across the country and around the world. Corporations and organizations from all industries have responded and the tour and travel industry was no exception. In early June, 21 Black travel industry leaders penned an open letter compelling colleagues to address racial diversity in their organizations. Leading industry associations, Destinations International and the U.S. Travel Association conducted webinars and held thought-provoking Q/A sessions on the topic. The Black Travel Alliance noted that Black travelers spend more than $60 billion per year yet are underrepresented in our industry.

Visit Tucson created a staff diversity and inclusion committee in summer 2020 to enhance our organization. Staff diversity and inclusion training, improving our staff and board diversity, establishing a hospitality/tourism program scholarship for students of color at a local college and creating paid internship opportunities for students of color are some of the initiatives being undertaken.
The Growing Prevalence Of Flight Shaming

Greta Thunberg, a teenage climate activist from Sweden, drew extraordinary attention when she traveled from Europe to New York by boat to address the United Nations Climate Action Summit in August 2019. Thunberg’s refusal to travel by plane due to the carbon emissions created increased awareness of an already popular topic, especially in Europe. While flight shaming is most prevalent in Sweden, Germany and France, Citigroup predicted in October 2019 that carbon offset programs could cause airline industry profits to decrease by as much as 44% by 2025. While it’s difficult to determine the impact post-pandemic, it’s interesting to note that the government bailout of Air France included flight restrictions on domestic routes served by rail.

"Prior to COVID-19, U.S. hotels were experiencing the longest expansion on record..."
ARIZONA TOURISM OVERVIEW

Another Record-Breaking Year

In 2019, Arizona welcomed 46.8 million visitors (+3%) who spent $25.6 billion (+4.6%), breaking records in both categories. As a result, the travel industry generated 194,300 jobs statewide representing earnings of $7.7 billion and contributing more than $1 billion in state taxes. While it can be difficult to evaluate these numbers out of context, it’s worth noting the travel industry is the largest export-oriented industry in Arizona (ahead of microelectronics and aerospace) and contributed 6.5% of all state and local taxes collected in Arizona in fiscal year 2018-19. (Based on research by Dean Runyan Associates, Longwoods International and Tourism Economics.)

Arizona Hotels Outpace U.S. Hotels

In 2019, Arizona hotels reported a 2.4% increase in ADR to $124.43, slightly outpacing occupancy which grew at 1.9%. Combined, these metrics led to 4.4% growth in RevPAR, compared to a 1% increase in RevPAR in the U.S. Over the past four years, Arizona RevPAR has grown nearly 15% according to STR.

Tourism Funding Decreases

The Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT) receives funding from three sources; the general fund, Prop 202 (a proposition passed by Arizona voters in 2002 which allows gaming on tribal lands with funds earmarked for state agencies) and Prop 302 (a proposition passed by Maricopa County voters in 2000 that detailed funding mechanisms to build sports stadiums with dollars earmarked for AOT and Maricopa County DMOs). Although the Arizona State Legislature passed an emergency $11.8 billion budget for 2020-21, keeping most funding at current levels, AOT’s budget decreased because of declining revenue related to Props 202 and 302. It is difficult for Arizona tourism to remain competitive with other states when funding drops.

Arizona Hotel Occupancy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Occupancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>69%</td>
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Arizona Hotel Average Daily Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ADR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$124</td>
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Arizona Hotel RevPAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>RevPAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: STR, December 2016-19
Statewide Tourism Recovery Plan Released

The Arizona Office of Tourism released its tourism recovery plan at the annual Governor’s Conference on Tourism, which was held virtually in late July 2020. The plan, which was prepared in collaboration with Corragio Group, highlights three priorities focusing on leisure travel, urban centers, and rural areas. The plan assumes a steady and incremental recovery, while acknowledging the necessity of staying flexible, and pivoting to different strategies based on real-time trends. Partnerships with local DMOs, industry associations and public land stewards are key to the success of this plan.

“In 2019, Arizona welcomed 46.8 million visitors who spent $25.6 billion, breaking records in both categories.”
TUCSON TOURISM OVERVIEW

Pima County 2019 Travel Impacts

Direct Travel Spending = $2.6 billion (+5.8%)
Travel Industry Earnings = $796 million (+5.8%)
Travel-Related Jobs = 24,770 (+0%)
Local Tax Receipts = $80.6 million (+5.2%)
State Tax Receipts = $139.1 million (+5.2%)


Metro Tucson Hotel Industry Growth Strong in 2019

Prior to COVID-19, the nation’s hotel industry was experiencing its longest growth cycle on record. While Tucson lagged the curve when the recovery began in 2010, it outperformed the market for the last several years. At the conclusion of 2019, metro Tucson experienced 6.9% growth in RevPAR, ranking second only to Albuquerque in our competitive set of 14 western cities. This increase was nearly equally distributed between growth in occupancy (+3.8%) and growth in ADR (+2.9%), with exceptional performance from hotels in the Downtown and Midtown/East submarkets.


Because of visitor spending, each Pima County household had its tax burden reduced by $530 (+4%) in 2019

In February 2020, the annual Tucson Gem, Mineral & Fossil Showcase generated $35.2 million in hotel/resort revenue and $4.8 million in vacation rental revenue over 16 days. While hotel revenue was down 3.5% from the previous year, a percentage matching the decrease in available rooms, the average daily rate was up $9, or 5.3%. This was the first year that metrics for the vacation rental market were tracked with statistics indicating HAVRBO (HomeAway/Vacation Rental by Owner) catered more to higher-end homes and condos for rent than did Airbnb. Additionally, many of the 50 shows opened approximately one week early in 2020, leading to a 9.4% increase in RevPAR for the week of January 24-30, 2020.

Gem Show Generates $40 Million In Lodging Revenue

In February 2020, the annual Tucson Gem, Mineral & Fossil Showcase generated $35.2 million in hotel/resort revenue and $4.8 million in vacation rental revenue over 16 days. While hotel revenue was down 3.5% from the previous year, a percentage matching the decrease in available rooms, the average daily rate was up $9, or 5.3%. This was the first year that metrics for the vacation rental market were tracked with statistics indicating HAVRBO (HomeAway/Vacation Rental by Owner) catered more to higher-end homes and condos for rent than did Airbnb. Additionally, many of the 50 shows opened approximately one week early in 2020, leading to a 9.4% increase in RevPAR for the week of January 24-30, 2020.

New And Expanded Tucson Properties

Hotel development is critical to a destination and downtown Tucson will experience strong growth in the next 6-12 months when 500 new rooms are added including the DoubleTree by Hilton (170 rooms), the Graduate (165 rooms) and a dual-branded Home2Suites/Hampton Inn (199 rooms combined). Additionally, metro Tucson has added to its growing list of unique and unusual accommodations including: JTH Tucson (5 rooms) opened to widespread accolades in August 2019; the Downtown Clifton expanded to 30 rooms in October 2019; the Ball-Paylore House (1 home), a midcentury modern landmark opened in February 2020; and The Tuxon (112 rooms), Arizona’s first property to join Marriott International’s coveted Design Hotels collection when it opened in July 2020.

“Visitors to Pima County spent a record $2.6 billion in 2019, which contributed $80.6 million in local taxes.”
TOURISM RECOVERY PLAN

In April 2020, Visit Tucson initiated a tourism recovery plan to address the swift and severe impacts of COVID-19. The plan outlines a phased approach to relaunching efforts, with tactics designed to inspire travel when stay-at-home orders are in place and to encourage travel when they are lifted. Sales and marketing campaigns began locally and regionally, and will expand nationally and internationally, when air service schedules return to normal and borders reopen.

Highlights include:

- Provided six months of free membership to all partners in response to the financial impacts of COVID-19.
- Developed a dedicated webpage, VirtualTucson.org to support and promote virtual events and tours in association with the Southern Arizona Attractions Alliance, University of Arizona, and other local businesses.
- Launched Tucson-To-Go, a campaign encouraging residents to order take-out meals from participating restaurants, in partnership with Storyteller PR, the team behind Sonoran Restaurant Week.
- Collaborated with the City of Tucson and Mayor Romero to introduce Somos Uno/We Are One, a resiliency fund developed to support those impacted by COVID-19.
- Cooperated with Pima County to market to locals and visitors their Ready for You program which highlights enhanced guidelines designed to safely reopen businesses.
- Addressed reduced Visit Tucson revenue predictions through staff reductions, wage freezes, elimination of bonuses and programmatic adjustments.

RECOVERY PLAN SUMMARY

3 Goals
13 Strategies
122 Tactics

TACTICS
Progress as of July 2020
40 Accomplished
51 Underway
GOALS

1. Grow visitation to metro Tucson at levels commensurate with competitive cities once travel resumes.
   - Grow local visitation
   - Grow domestic visitation
   - Grow international visitation
   - Grow meetings business
   - Grow sports business
   - Grow film/television business

2. Work with local and regional government and business partners to help our community recover from COVID-19’s medical and fiscal impacts.
   - Partner to help area businesses impacted by COVID-19
   - Partner to house those impacted by COVID-19
   - Help tourism businesses impacted by COVID-19
   - Help industry workers impacted by COVID-19

3. Reshape Visit Tucson’s operation, as needed to maximize its 2020 impacts, while positioning metro Tucson’s tourism industry and Visit Tucson for recovery in 2021-22.
   - Reduce payroll and programming, while executing core functions
   - Pursue new revenue sources
   - Limit event investments to programs that attract visitors

Recovery Plan

Work with local and regional government and business partners to help our community recover from COVID-19’s medical and fiscal impacts.

3. Reshape Visit Tucson’s operation, as needed to maximize its 2020 impacts, while positioning metro Tucson’s tourism industry and Visit Tucson for recovery in 2021-22.
In the spring of 2017, Visit Tucson’s board of directors and staff drafted a three-year strategic plan that launched in July 2017 and concluded in June 2020. The plan highlighted five goals, 25 objectives, dozens of strategies, and hundreds of tactics. Overall, the plan successfully guided the organization for three years and the results are noteworthy.

Development of a tourism master plan was a key goal highlighted in the plan and the Metro Tucson Tourism Master Plan was released in August 2019 following an extensive process that included stakeholder workshops and interviews, visitor and resident surveys and additional research. Recommendations and strategic areas of focus were integrated into the final year of the 2017-20 Strategic Plan and the tourism master plan was intended to provide the foundation of the next three-year strategic plan. When COVID-19 hit, the 2020-21 tourism recovery plan was drafted, and a full integration was paused. Visit Tucson’s board will determine this year whether to extend the recovery plan or create a longer-term strategic plan for implementation in July 2021.

**2017-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN**

**THREE YEAR SUMMARY**

5 Goals
25 Objectives
380 Tactics

**TACTICS**

Progress as of July 2020

253 Accomplished (67%)
67 Not accomplished (18%)
60 Carried over to 2020-21 (15%)

"...the plan successfully guided the organization for three years and the results are noteworthy."
We have helped existing events grow and attract more visitors with the Gem Show, Arizona Bowl, Tucson Invitational Games and All Souls Procession serving as examples. We did not establish a new marquee event, though.

We invested heavily in video throughout the plan and distributed our messages through a variety of digital channels. We brought customers to Tucson — meeting planners, sports event organizers, film decision-makers and travel trade professionals — to experience the destination first-hand. In Mexico, we ran advertising on digital boards at border crossings and purchased segments during Sonoran newscasts promoting Tucson to potential visitors.

We completed a 10-year tourism master plan in August 2019, launched a certified tourism ambassador program, and strengthened our partnerships with government officials and area business organizations.

We grew our budget from $6.4 million in 2012-13 to $9.2 million in 2019-20. We did it by helping grow visitation, which generated the bed-tax revenue with which we’re funded. We are pursuing enabling legislation to create tourism marketing authorities.

The 20% growth in visitor spending on food from 2016 to 2019 attests to the success of our efforts. Our PR team generated $100 million in travel coverage during the plan’s 3 years with approximately 40% geared toward our unique culinary offerings. Additionally, our Free Yourself brand conveys our wide-open spaces to potential visitors seeking an escape.

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| GOALS |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1 | **Promote Tucson’s UNESCO City of Gastronomy designation and build on Visit Tucson’s “Free Yourself” brand** |
| 2 | **Use innovative and aggressive marketing strategies to generate increased leisure and meetings travel.** |
| 3 | **Engage the community through development of a tourism master plan.** |
| 4 | **Promote and grow the region’s visitor-worthy events and establish a marquee event to attract travelers.** |
| 5 | **Enlarge Visit Tucson’s budget with a focus on sustainable funding sources.** |
VISIT TUCSON’S DEPARTMENTS

MARKETING
PR & COMMUNICATIONS
SALES & SERVICES
TUCSON SPORTS
MEXICO MARKETING
TOURISM
FILM TUCSON
PARTNERSHIP & VISITOR SERVICES
The marketing department’s primary goal is to engage leisure, business, and international travelers with the “Free Yourself” brand and inspire them to experience everything Tucson and Southern Arizona have to offer. Through research and analysis, potential visitors from key markets are identified and targeted with relevant content and branded advertising deployed seasonally through a variety of media channels.

Visit Tucson’s media budget is relatively small when compared to many destinations in our competitive set. Keeping this competition in mind, along with the need to adjust with changing consumer habits, a paid media strategy that focuses primarily on digital platforms has been adopted to more accurately target specific audiences and better evaluate campaign return on investment (ROI).

### Highlights 2019-20

- **Integrated 360° video into more than 100 partner listings** through a partnership with Threshold 360, an industry leader in this field. This technology means more than simply enhancing the visual experience. According to Google, adding interior 360° experiences to a search result doubles the chances someone will visit a location in person.

- **Continued to define Tucson as a top cycling destination** through campaigns with Pink Bike and Cycling Tips, popular websites for mountain bikers and road bikers, respectively. Prior to publishing articles, each publication sent a professional cyclist to Tucson to experience our rides first-hand. The Pink Bike article included a video which was seen by more than 35,000 viewers. Cycling Tips published a two-part article that received over 65,000 page views.

- Understanding that social media is a key tool for travel planning, we **generated nearly 10,000 social engagements through a partnership with Blog Meets Brand**, a company that connects marketers with bloggers and social media influencers. Working with 15 influencers (or influencer teams), this sweeping campaign generated 90 social posts and blog articles over three months.
Instead of creating and implementing a year-long campaign, as in previous years, track travel trends throughout the pandemic to place targeted media messages in a series of three-month increments.

Engage consumers and drive visitation by focusing on and leveraging our owned media including the website, social platforms, e-newsletters, and Tucson Official Travel Guide. Redesign VisitTucson.org with changes to the navigation and site hierarchy and updates to existing content.

With fewer marketing dollars, use lower funnel tactics such as paid search and paid social to target repeat and regional visitors to Tucson in the upcoming year. Ease of accessibility and familiarity are priorities for travelers whose behaviors have changed due to Coronavirus.

Refresh the visual identity of the “Free Yourself” brand. This brand was launched seven years ago, and it resonates as much today as it did in 2013 – maybe more. Updating the font, colors and other graphic elements, while incorporating new video, will usher “Free Yourself” into the next decade.

Align efforts with the 10-year Metro Tucson Tourism Master Plan by emphasizing wellness and well-being throughout our owned and paid media. Tucson has long been known as a wellness destination, and while interest has been growing for many years, the recent global pandemic has sent it soaring.

An Innovative Partnership

Long gone are the days when a destination marketing campaign focused on print ads in top travel magazines. Today, content is king, and the key to success is ensuring potential visitors connect with our brand. Social media has become a trusted source for travel planning and landing in the feed of a top influencer can be as valuable as being featured in a traditional print magazine.

This year we partnered with Travel & Leisure on a sponsored content campaign which featured Tucson on their website and social platforms. Sponsored content is similar to an advertorial, but rather than simply crafting an ad to look like editorial copy, it’s a much closer collaboration where the publisher writes and designs the content within our guidelines. Working together with Travel & Leisure, we hosted an influencer who wrote her own content, ensuring an authentic voice in the published article and posts.

With nearly 100,000 article pageviews and more than 25,000 social engagements, this partnership with a trusted brand was a huge success.
Public relations and communications generates coverage of metro Tucson and Southern Arizona in local, national, and international publications. The PR team pitches story ideas to journalists and influencers, hosts press trips and conducts media missions in key cities. The department manages production of the Tucson Official Travel Guide and the Visit Tucson e-newsletter and generates content for VisitTucson.org, social media posts and ad placements as part of an integrated marketing/communications team.

"I could easily while away the next few days here just pedalling around the city."

Cyclist Magazine, August 2019

### Highlights 2019-20

- **Generated more than 2.8 million engagements** on Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest and Twitter, an increase of 108% over the previous year and 326% over the year before that. While gorgeous landscapes and sunsets continued to be the most-engaging posts, a renewed emphasis on Pinterest and unique campaigns such as 99 Summer Spins helped catapult us over the two million mark.

- During a fiscal year that had a tough ending, the PR team managed to generate a record level of earned media including 261 articles valued at $35.8 million, an increase of 9% over the previous year.

- To celebrate the culinary culture of our UNESCO City of Gastronomy, we partnered with Storyteller PR to launch the **first ever Sonoran Restaurant Week**, September 6-15, 2019. This inaugural event attracted 34 restaurants from across the metro Tucson area and generated 18 earned media placements (television, radio, digital and print) valued at more than $500,000. The website received 25,600 unique visitors, accounting for more than 166,000 pageviews.

- Dedicated to establishing Tucson as a top cycling destination, we collaborated with multiple journalists to generate seven cycling-related articles, including a 15-page cover story published in the U.K. and France editions of the premiere road-biking publication in Europe, Cyclist magazine.
As part of our commitment to visitors and partners, Visit Tucson will publish the 2021 Tucson Official Travel Guide in-house, allowing us to feature the most engaging content to potential visitors and to provide much-needed discounted advertising to partners.

Despite the recent and dramatic changes in the media landscape due to COVID-19, the PR team will leverage the current momentum and generate $20 million in earned media coverage. We will strategically focus our pitches on Tucson’s wide-open spaces when targeting editors, freelancers, and journalists, while continuing to showcase our well-established foodie reputation.

Update potential visitors on COVID-19 impacts, restrictions and information sources throughout the pandemic on a dedicated page on VisitTucson.org and VamosATucson.com.

Priorities 2020-21

PR Goes National

Visit Tucson was able to break into top-tier travel and lifestyle publications this fiscal year by working with national PR firm, bread & Butter. Based in New York with 13 additional offices scattered around the country, including Los Angeles, San Francisco and Chicago, bread & Butter is recognized for their expertise in food, beverage, hotel, and travel PR. Through close collaboration and a 12-month contract, we were able to generate 32 articles valued at more than $7 million in publications such as AFAR, Conde Nast Traveler, Men’s Journal, Travel & Leisure and Domino.

After five years of rapidly growing earned media coverage, working with a national PR firm was the logical next step. Having already leveraged our UNESCO City of Gastronomy designation, we expanded our messaging to include topics where Tucson has a competitive advantage such as cycling, dark skies and outdoor adventure. Hiring bread & Butter gave Tucson presence in the largest media market in the U.S. and the results have generated a return on investment that exceeds 100:1.
SALES & SERVICES

Visit Tucson’s sales department markets metro Tucson for national and international meetings and conventions. Sales works with meeting planners locally and in target cities to generate bookings for the region’s hotels, resorts, and unique meeting venues and for Tucson Convention Center. After a booking is secured, the convention services department connects the planners with partner businesses and services. The convention services director represents Visit Tucson for the Tucson Gem, Mineral & Fossil Showcase and is the liaison for show owners, operators and vendors with the City of Tucson and Pima County.

Highlights 2019-20

- Welcomed 266 qualified meeting and event planners to Tucson including 100 planners representing an estimated 197,000 room nights for customized site tours of local hotels, resorts, and attractions and 166 planners who participated in organized familiarization trips.

- Prior to COVID-19, on track to exceed all key performance indicators including meetings and room nights booked as well as leads generated. As of March 1, 2020, the group sales’ effort had generated 695 leads and converted 287 definite meetings totaling 144,622 total room nights.

- Participated in 31 separate outbound travel, trade shows and sales missions through March 10, 2020 – a record pace for any fiscal year.

"Welcomed 266 qualified meeting and event planners to Tucson including 100 planners representing an estimated 197,000 room nights."
Priorities 2020-21

- With decreasing budgets, participate in top industry tradeshows that occur during the fiscal year. Consider how to maximize our presence in targeted shows that move to a virtual platform.

- Continue to focus on SMERF (Social, Military, Educational, Religious & Fraternal) business and trade associations, as they represent the market segments with the strongest likelihood of uninterrupted meetings business.

- With an emphasis on short-haul and drive travel, actively and aggressively pursue meetings business from Arizona, Southern California, New Mexico, and west Texas.

- Through collaboration with the American Hotel & Lodging Association, the Arizona Lodging & Tourism Association and local resorts and hotels, ensure clients are familiar with the hotel safety and cleanliness guidelines implemented in properties throughout Pima County.

How May We Help?

Visit Tucson will continue to drive meetings business by providing the greatest customer service in the industry. The top priority for our sales team is to identify the meetings best suited for the Tucson market and collaborate with hotel partners to ensure each RFP receives timely, thorough, and accurate responses. But the service doesn’t stop once the meeting is booked. We work closely with meeting planners to grow attendance by offering free marketing tools such as an event microsite and e-promo post cards. Upon arrival in Tucson, groups are welcomed with personalized airport signage. Complimentary registrars and delivery of visitor guides are also available.

With extensive industry experience, the sales and services department knows metro Tucson: its hotels, restaurants, attractions and service providers. They are well positioned to host top clients on targeted site inspections and FAM tours and can assist partners when onsite, or even step in, if necessary. The sales and services team’s in-depth knowledge ensures each client is perfectly matched with the appropriate suppliers for an efficient and exceptional experience.
**TUCSON SPORTS**

Visit Tucson Sports is charged with securing sporting events that require hotel rooms and fill venues throughout the metro Tucson area. Professional, amateur and youth sporting events at all levels (regional, national, and international) whose needs match the facilities in Pima County, City of Tucson and Town of Oro Valley are pursued. Local sports organizers are given assistance to grow their existing events, while new events are targeted to fill need periods.

"A record 373 teams participated in the Tucson Association of Realtors Soccer Shootout in 2019."

**Highlights 2019-20**

- Hosted five Major League Soccer and three Korean professional baseball teams for preseason training and a record 373 teams participating in the Tucson Association of Realtors Soccer Shootout.


- Secured training camps, for the second year, with Federacion Espanola de Rugby (Spain 7s Men’s National Team). While here, the players also conducted a skills session with local youth rugby clubs including the Tucson Blackbirds, Salpointe High School Rugby, and Tucson Roosters.

- Collaborated with Team USA to host the USA Softball Women’s National Team when they competed against the University of Arizona softball team as part of their “Stand Beside Her” tour.
Focus on local, regional, and repeat groups which are the most likely to return in this fiscal year once COVID-19 wanes. Assist these groups to secure venues and increase event participation.

Communicate new COVID-19 health and safety protocols at facilities to organizers and rights holders. Stay current on all new regulations and guidelines related to sports tourism events and share them, as appropriate.

Expand the “Show Us Your Badge” program to provide greater value to Visit Tucson partners and sports events participants. The “Show Us Your Badge” program encourages local restaurants and other businesses to offer discounts to sports events participants, which are broadly promoted through event collateral and Visit Tucson.

Priorities 2020–21

Tucsonans have long lamented the loss of MLB spring training, but lovers of the sport know that professional baseball is still being played at Kino Sports Complex. The Vamos a Tucson Mexican Baseball Fiesta attracts Sonorans and Arizonans alike who eagerly await this annual event, known as much for the party in the stands as for the excitement on the field. For years, professional baseball teams from South Korea have conducted their spring training in Tucson. This year, for the first time, the NC Dinos held a month-long, fall training camp too.

Local baseball fans were especially thrilled this year to learn the MLB would return to Kino Sports Complex for qualifying rounds of the World Baseball Classic, scheduled to bring together teams from 12 countries over two weeks and generating more than 5,000 room nights. Sadly, this event was cancelled due to COVID-19. However, we appreciate the MLB’s commitment to Tucson and look forward to rescheduling the qualifying rounds of the World Baseball Classic when the time is right!
Visit Tucson’s Mexico marketing department works to increase the number and duration of overnight stays by visitors from Mexico. The department trains partner businesses to be “Mexico ready,” and creates and coordinates campaigns in Mexico that advertise Tucson as the preferred destination for shopping, dining, events, and other leisure pursuits. The department’s marketing program in Mexico, including two visitor centers in Sonora (located in Hermosillo and Ciudad Obregon), is branded Vamos a Tucson (“Let’s Go to Tucson”). Additionally, the Mexico marketing department collaborates with government officials, economic development agencies, and community leaders in Arizona and Mexico on mutually beneficial tourism and trade initiatives.

Mexico is by far the largest source of international visitors to Arizona with 4 million overnight trips in 2019, according to the Arizona Office of Tourism. Mexican visitors contribute an estimated $1 billion to metro Tucson’s economy every year, according to University of Arizona statistics.

**Highlights 2019-20**

- **Opened a new visitor center in Hermosillo, Sonora** in March 2020. Located near the U.S. Consulate, this visitor center is perfectly situated to attract the Mexico market interested in traveling to Tucson and southern Arizona.

- **Launched a revamped Vamos a Tucson website** targeting Spanish-speaking visitors in the U.S. and Mexico. This website accurately and easily integrates with Booking.com for accommodations and vehicle rentals. Since the launch of the new website, page views increased 100% when compared to the same period the previous year.

- **Expanded and strengthened Tucson’s culinary message in Sonora** by participating in Vino Fest San Carlos, a consumer show targeting foodies. In addition to partnering with the Arizona Office of Tourism to serve Arizona wines, we were joined by a delegation of tourism businesses including Chef Maria Mazon of Boca Tacos y Tequila.
Priorities 2020–21

- Initiate a comprehensive and strategic promotional campaign in Spanish targeting visitors from Sonora to address the pent-up demand created by the extended closure of the U.S. and Mexico border.

- Explore and implement new and innovative opportunities in the retail space to balance the growth of online shopping. Historically, shopping has been the number one reason visitors traveled from Mexico to Tucson and the goal of this initiative will be to retain jobs and sales tax in Tucson and Pima County.

- Seek partners to conduct a Mexico visitor study that examines visitors’ spending, length of stay, type of accommodations and more. Thousands of Mexico visitors, mostly from Sonora, visit Tucson and Southern Arizona annually, while spending millions in our region.

- Target the U.S. Hispanic market by leveraging our Vamos a Tucson owned media, including the website and social platforms and by expanding earned media efforts with local and regional Spanish language publications.

Cross-Border Collaboration

Women around the world have been making beer since ancient times. In the United States-Mexico border region, Visit Tucson spearheaded and sponsored a project where two groups of women brewers – one in Arizona and the other in Mexico – made history by collaborating on a new craft-beer in what was the first all-female binational brew project of its kind in Arizona.

In the spirit of diplomacy and with passion for craft beer, women brewers from Borderlands Brewing Company in Tucson and Turulata Brewing Company in Monterrey, Mexico cooperated on an original recipe for a hazy IPA, Las Hermanas (The Sisters). In order to brew the two versions of their beer, women from both breweries traveled across the border to work together at each other’s facility in December 2019 and the beer was released in Mexico and the U.S. in January 2020. Not only was Las Hermanas an instant sell-out, but the project was a PR success, generating five articles in Arizona and an additional five articles in Mexico with a total value of $864,978.
Visit Tucson’s tourism department promotes Tucson and Southern Arizona as a leisure destination to domestic and international receptive operators, tour operators, travel agents and group tour companies. Other duties include; conducting seminars to educate travel professionals about how best to market our destination; connecting clients directly with partner hotels and attractions using a strategic sales approach; collaborating with tour operators on cooperative advertising; and coordinating site inspections and familiarization (FAM) tours so travel professionals can experience the region first-hand.

“Generated 5,178 tour operator and receptive operator room nights with an economic impact of more than $1.5M.”

Highlights 2019-20

- Generated and tracked 3,189 tour operator room nights contributing $1 million in economic impact. To overcome tour operators’ reluctance to share sales figures, partnerships were developed that defined key objectives and measured results. Implementing this new approach in fiscal year 2019-20 allowed us to measure a portion of the room nights contributed by the tourism department for the first time in many years.

- For many international tour operators, receptive operators act as wholesalers, providing convenient and easy access to hotel inventory for FIT clients. This year we implemented a quarterly campaign, tracking an additional 1,989 receptive operator room nights contributing an additional $550,000 in economic impact resulting from our efforts with key receptive operator clients.

- With a large cycling community in the province of Quebec, Visit Tucson traveled to Montreal to attend the largest consumer bike show in Canada, Salon du Velo. While there, we established and expanded relationships with three top Montreal bike tour operators responsible for bringing several hundred cyclists to Tucson and Southern Arizona each year.
Priorities 2020-21

• Understanding that travelers are likely to stay closer to home this year, target regional tour operators whose customers can travel to Tucson on a non-stop flight or within one day’s drive. Develop and share unique itineraries that showcase Tucson’s wide, open spaces and wellness.

• Introduce 150 industry professionals to our destination through sponsorship of Global Travel Marketplace West, scheduled to take place at the Westin La Paloma Resort & Spa in May 2021. This elite conference connects the most influential travel advisors in North America with global suppliers for one-on-one meetings, board meetings and networking sessions.

• Participate in strategic co-operative marketing campaigns that drive tour operator room nights by targeting their travelers most likely to book a Tucson itinerary.

• Maintain a presence in our key international markets of Canada, UK and Germany by aligning our efforts with the Arizona Office of Tourism. While it won’t be possible to travel internationally in 2020-21 due to COVID-19 and our lower budget, we will work closely with AOT and their international representatives to ensure Tucson hotels and attractions are represented.

Online Training Takes Off

FTI is the third-largest tour operator in Europe, based in Munich and targeting German-speaking clients across the continent. FTI offers a variety of products which are sold direct to consumers or through travel agents. To ensure staff and agents are knowledgeable about the variety of products offered, FTI has established FTI Academy, an e-learning platform that offers innovative training on holiday destinations, hotels and airlines. With more than 14,000 registered users, FTI is one of the largest e-learning providers in Germany.

Through a partnership with the Arizona Office of Tourism and four other destination marketing organizations, including Visit Tucson, an Arizona module was developed and integrated into FTI Academy in March 2020. While the launch of this campaign unfortunately coincided with COVID-19 related travel restrictions, it also landed when agents were eager to expand their product knowledge and had the time to participate. In the first four months of this campaign (March-June 2020), 681 travel agents have been trained as Tucson and Arizona specialists, greatly exceeding our expectation of 500 agents trained.
Film Tucson markets Tucson and Southern Arizona as a production location for feature films, TV shows, print and television commercial advertising, and other filmed content that generates economic impact for our region. Other duties include: advocating for and supporting the local film industry; partnering with the Hanson Film Institute and the University of Arizona’s School of Theater, Film and Television to produce signature events such as Pitch Fest Tucson and Inside Track; and collaborating with local film festivals to market Tucson as a production location to visiting filmmakers.

“Tucson’s continued success with unscripted programming (a.k.a. reality TV) is due, in large part, to the diversity of assets we have to offer these shows.”

Highlights 2019-20

- Facilitated the production of an independent feature film titled Spiked, which contributed $2.2 million in local spending including 484 room nights during its 29 days of filming all over Tucson and Pima County.

- Assisted the filming of a two-part episode of the popular TV series Oprah’s Book Club, which generated 100 room nights and a local spend of over $400,000. The series, which airs on Apple TV+, prominently featured Tucson and the border region over the course of its 2-hour running time.

- Thanks to the popularity of the Tucson Gem, Mineral & Fossil Showcase, we were approached by two high-profile productions, Shop HQ and the Home Shopping Network, both of whom shot extensively throughout the citywide event, and together generated seven days of filming, 187 room nights, and spending of $450,000.

- Targeted border-related projects in the US and Mexico with Film Without Borders, a new campaign which promotes the ease of filming along the Nogales, Naco, and Sasabe perimeters in both countries.
Priorities 2020-21

• With television, movie and commercial filming slowly ramping up again in neighboring states, **offer Tucson as a viable alternative** to the inevitable bottleneck of productions vying for space in a congested production schedule.

• Increase filming in southern Arizona by **targeting independent films with a budget of $3 million or less** by offering substantial savings on hotels through Visit Tucson’s “master account incentive”.

• **Pursue unscripted episodic television programs** whose storylines are dependent on showcasing a region’s cultural background, especially those shows that will display Tucson’s rich culinary history to a national audience.

The Reality of Tucson

Tucson’s continued success with unscripted programming (a.k.a. reality TV) is due, in large part, to the diversity of assets we have to offer these shows. Your Australian nature series has a segment on rattlesnakes? We’ve got you (Crikey! It’s the Irwins on Animal Planet). The host of your extreme food show needs to consume two racks of ribs in one hour? Look no further (Man vs. Food at Pinnacle Peak Steak House).

For several years, we’ve been **pitching local personalities** to high-profile reality TV producers either at the annual RealScreen West conference, or by bringing talent scouts to Tucson so they can meet some of our more colorful characters. This has **led to a popular series on Netflix (Slobby’s World)** and a couple of upcoming shows you’ll be hearing about soon.

Once producers arrive, they’re smitten with the no-cost, stress-free City of Tucson and Pima County film permits, our multi-talented local crew base, and southern Arizona’s many budget-friendly lodging options. Of course, being able to film in Tucson’s 325 days of sunshine annually always helps, too.
PARTNERSHIP & VISITOR SERVICES

Visit Tucson’s partnership and visitor services department serves as the liaison between Visit Tucson and its travel industry partners in metro Tucson and Southern Arizona. The department provides visitors with destination information and connects them to Visit Tucson partner businesses offering local experiences that can enhance their stays. The Partnership team strengthens relationships with partners through regular communications, training sessions and exclusive events.

Highlights 2019-20

- Conducted monthly Certified Tourism Ambassador™ classes, training 189 ambassadors this fiscal year. The CTA program increases tourism by inspiring frontline hospitality employees, volunteers, and other community members to work together to turn every visitor encounter into a positive experience.

- Collaborated with Pima County to open the Southern Arizona Heritage & Visitor Center in January 2020. Located in the Historic Pima County Courthouse, the Center averaged more than 4,000 visitors a month, doubling the year-over-year monthly traffic from the previous center.

- Offered six months free membership to all Visit Tucson partners to help offset the financial impacts of COVID-19. Resources and training were also provided to help businesses recover.

- Despite several months when gatherings were restricted, measured record attendance at partner events, hosting 1,036 partners at 18 events throughout the year, including nearly 400 attendees at Visit Tucson’s first ever virtual Annual Meeting. Visit Tucson’s Annual Meeting, quarterly Tucson Tourism Trends and monthly “Meet & See” events are a great place to learn more about Visit Tucson and meet colleagues from across the industry.
Priorities 2020-21

- Offer an online version of the Certified Tourism Ambassador™ training to expand the number of ambassadors trained. When the time is right, resume in-person classes too.

- Continue to expand and improve partner relations through the development of new online partner trainings, and relaunch of in-person meetings and networking sessions, when appropriate.

- Involve partners with the ongoing implementation of the Metro Tucson Tourism Master Plan. Ensure the Tourism Master Plan provides the foundation for future tourism recovery and strategic planning efforts.
Visit Tucson staff collaborated with 51 boards, committees and civic and professional organizations in fiscal year 2019-20.

- Agave Heritage Festival
- Arizona Film & Media Coalition
- Arizona Lodging & Tourism Association
- Arizona-Mexico Commission
- Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum
- City of Tucson
- Destinations International Sales & Marketing Committee
- Destination Marketing Association West
- Downtown Tucson Partnership
- Festivals & Events Association of Tucson & Southern Arizona
- Governor’s Tourism Advisory Council
- Greater Tucson Leadership
- Green Valley-Sahuarita Chamber of Commerce
- Hotel Sales and Marketing Association International, AZ Chapter
- Junior League of Tucson
- Los DBacks Ambassadors
- National Charity League
- Network for Arizona Trails
- NOVA Home Loans Arizona Bowl
- Park Tucson Commission
- Pima Association of Governments Economic Vitality Advisory Committee
- Pima Association of Governments, Regional Action Network
- Pima County
- Pima County Loop Advisory Committee
- Rio Nuevo
- Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Alliance
- SKAL Club of Tucson
- Society of Government Meeting Professionals, AZ Chapter
- Southern Arizona Arts & Cultural Alliance
- Southern Arizona Leadership Council
- Southwest Folklife Alliance
- Sports ETA Education Standards Advisory Council
- Sports ETA Young Professionals Committee
- Sun Corridor Inc.
- Town of Oro Valley
- Tucson Association of Realtors
- Tucson Business Alliance
- Tucson Celtic Festival and Association
- Tucson Celtic Hammerheads
- Tucson Clean & Beautiful
- Tucson Conquistadores
- Tucson Jazz Festival
- Tucson Metro Chamber
- Tucson-Mexico Sister Cities
- Tucson Young Professionals
- UNESCO City of Gastronomy
- UNESCO Creative Cities Network
- United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona, Audit Committee
- University of Arizona-Design Thinking Challenge
- University of Arizona-Galileo Circle
- Visit Southern Arizona
“Goddess of Agave” Mural
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