



ANNUAL REPORT

2024

VISIT
PHILADELPHIA®



PHILADELPHIA
Visitor Center
CORPORATION

2024

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Angela Val
Visit Philadelphia

Manuel N. Stamatakis (Chair)
Capital Management Enterprises

Anthony J. Conti, CPA
(Chair, Jan. 2025)
PricewaterhouseCoopers (retired)

Rhonda R. Cohen, Esquire (Vice Chair)

Robert W. Bogle (Vice Chair)
The Philadelphia Tribune

James Adamson
Kimpton Hotel Monaco Philadelphia

Reginald Archambault
The Bellevue Hotel

Darwin R. Beauvais, Esquire
Obermayer Rebmann
Maxwell & Hippel LLP

Matt Dickman
Comcast Corporation

Wendy Hamilton
PENN Entertainment, Inc.

Jazelle Jones
City of Philadelphia

Kevin T. Murnane
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Philadelphia Center City (retired)

Jacklin Rhoads
Office of PA Governor Josh Shapiro

Leslie Richards
University of Pennsylvania

James D. Schultz, Esquire
Scientific Games

Anthony P. Sorrentino
University of Pennsylvania

Carol Watson
Kimpton Hotel Palomar Philadelphia

VISIT PHILADELPHIA BASICS

WHAT WE DO



BUILDING

Greater Philadelphia's Image



DRIVING

the Local Economy



BOOSTING

Leisure Visitation

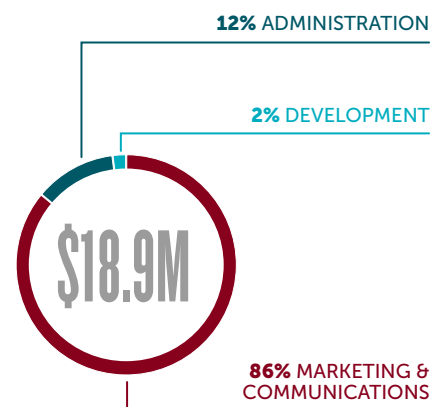
HOW WE DO IT

Visit Philadelphia has always taken an integrated approach to our work. Throughout 2024, we embraced a dynamic marketing strategy, leveraging our full suite of resources to showcase the lively spirit of Philadelphia and the region. We focused on driving visitor and resident support of the businesses and attractions that make our region a must-visit destination.

Our approach is always rooted in research. Using data analysis to fine-tune our strategies and target the right audiences, we've been able to consistently connect with visitors to our region in meaningful ways.

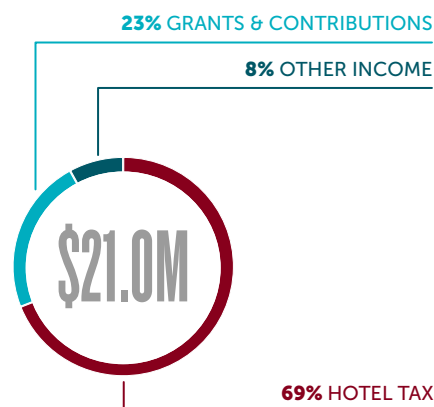
EXPENSES

Fiscal Year 2024



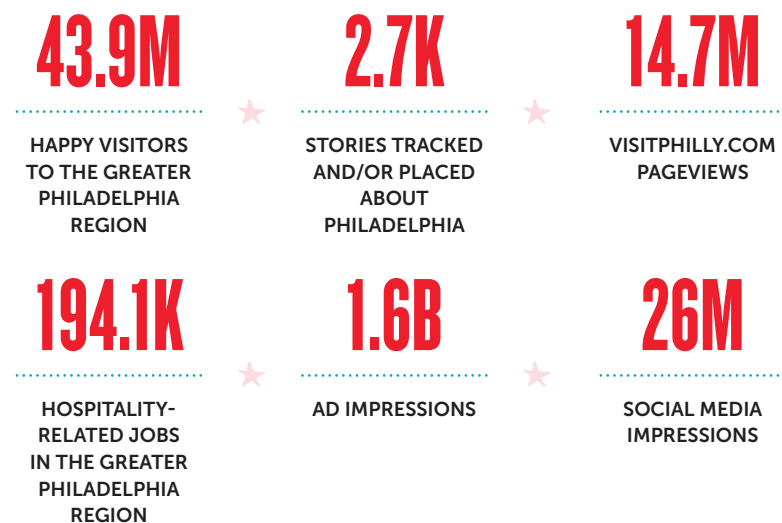
FUNDING SOURCES

Fiscal Year 2024



Note: Fiscal year 2024 ran from October 2023 through September 2024.

2024 RESULTS AT A GLANCE



Executive Message



Looking back on the past 12 months, I'm proud of all Visit Philadelphia has accomplished. In 2024, the tourism industry showed remarkable

growth, making meaningful gains across multiple indicators and boosting momentum to drive us further still.

Our data on the health of leisure travel demonstrate positive trends. Given diminishing rates of household savings in recent years and the added impact of inflation, we saw a lower average daily rate (ADR) on the ground. On the other hand, enthusiasm for leisure travel is at a record high, evidenced by increased occupancy rates around our region's busiest weekends, including those driven by concerts, stadium events and other major happenings.

Despite inflation, accommodation prices have remained stable, benefiting consumers and encouraging increased spending within the city. However, this poses challenges for hotel revenue and related city and state taxes.

A Message from our Chair



I've had the honor of serving as Chairman of the Board of Visit Philadelphia from 2003 to 2024. Reflecting on those years, I am struck by the extraordinary evolution of an organization that began as a bold experiment in

1996. Initially called the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation (GPTMC), the nonprofit launched at a time when few were interested in visiting our city and many expected it to fail. However, Visit Philadelphia demonstrated that investing in strategic advertising, engaging content and positive media coverage could greatly enhance the city's appeal. This approach not only attracted visitors but also significantly boosted the economic impact on the Greater Philadelphia region over the years.

Becoming a must-visit city didn't happen overnight. It was achieved through the efforts of many,

As you'll see in the following pages, Visit Philadelphia's marketing and programmatic highlights showcase exactly how we are reaching and connecting to travelers across target audiences, including diverse communities. These won us new fans, new visitors and new accolades in the form of industry awards for our people, projects and campaigns.

In the coming months, we'll be laying more groundwork for the massive citywide events on the way in 2026, including the semiquincentennial celebration of the United States' founding, the FIFA World Cup and Fan Festival™, baseball's All-Star Game, NCAA's March Madness and the 108th PGA Championship. We will also continue to focus on destination development, community relations, civic pride and stakeholder partnerships for 2026 and beyond.

I extend my deepest congratulations to industry partners on a memorable 2024. Here's to the year ahead and our shared achievements in making Philadelphia a destination of choice.

Sincerely,

Angela Val

Angela Val | President and CEO, Visit Philadelphia

including Visit Philadelphia and its many successful campaigns as well as the contributions of the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau; the Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation; the city; the commonwealth; our small businesses, hotels, arts and cultural attractions and the passionate Philadelphians who share their grit and pride with the world.

During my tenure as Chair of the Board, I've witnessed firsthand the growth and resilience of our tourism and hospitality sectors. Today, Visit Philadelphia is thriving, successfully elevating the city's image beyond just cheesesteaks and the Liberty Bell. As we approach the pivotal year of 2026, our collaborative efforts will be prominently displayed. As I pass the torch, I look forward to seeing this momentum continue, propelled by a shared passion for Philadelphia's bright future.

Sincerely,

Manny Stamatakis

Manny Stamatakis | 2024 Board Chair

2024 Tourism Industry Results

Travel — and especially leisure travel — continued to grow in 2024, with strong year-over-year gains in several key areas like visitation, visitor spending and total economic impact. We’re celebrating this steady growth that reflects many months of collective, purposeful effort.



5-COUNTY REGIONAL RESULTS

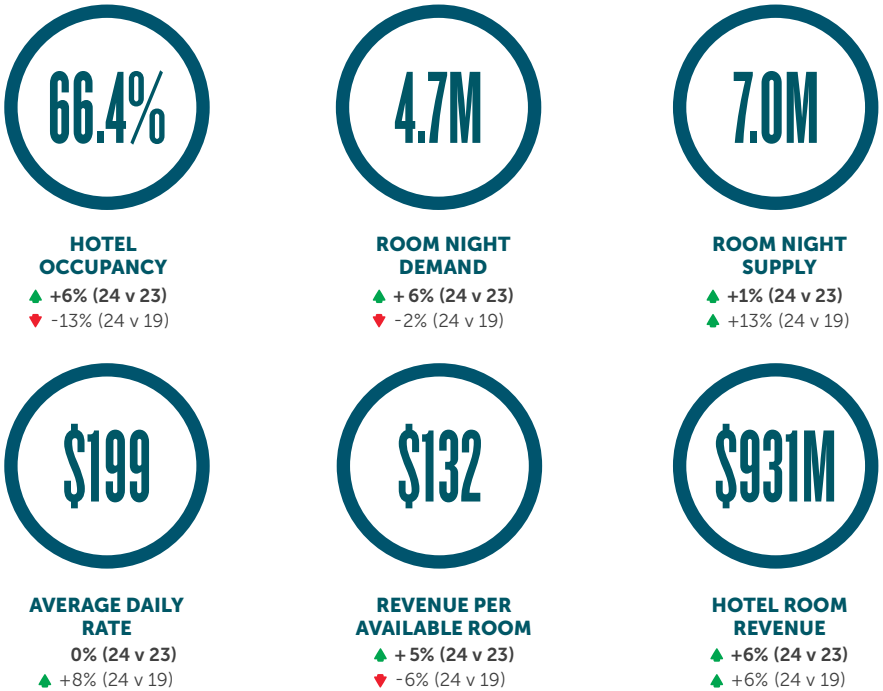


PHILADELPHIA COUNTY RESULTS



Sources: STR, Tourism Economics, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data provided in this report is based on the best available information at the time of publication. Some facts and figures may adjust as additional information becomes available.

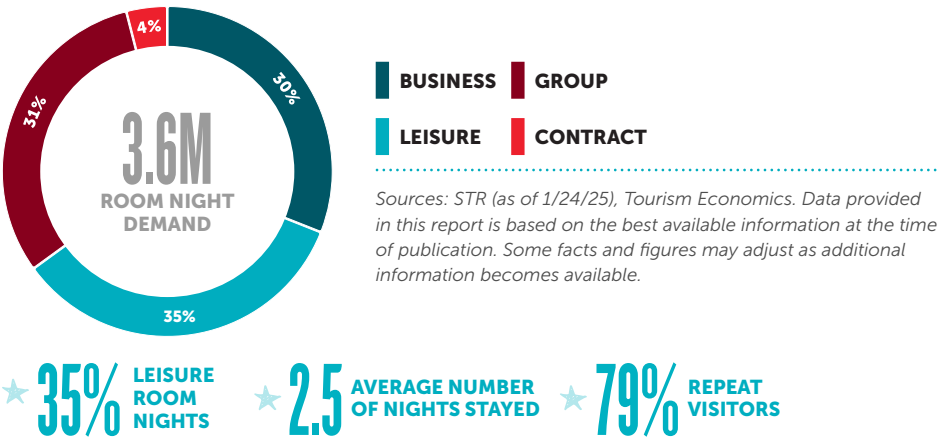
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY HOTEL PERFORMANCE



Source: STR (as of 1/1/24)

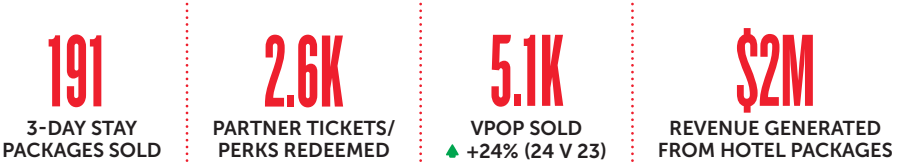
CENTER CITY HOTEL PERFORMANCE

Of the 3.6 million room nights consumed, demand among leisure visitors continued to lead Center City’s recovery. However, both the group and business segments picked up pace in 2024 versus 2023.



HOTEL PACKAGES

We’ve focused on promoting our new 3-Day Stay hotel package, which allows visitors to book two nights and get a third free, alongside our Visit Philly Overnight Package (VPOP), which offers exclusive experiential perks.



2024 Visit Philadelphia Marketing

Promoting Philadelphia is inspiring work given its legions of wonderful cultural, historical, culinary and sports-related offerings and the homegrown passion that permeates all of the above. In our 2024 marketing, we continued to tap Philly’s inimitable spirit as we built on the successes of recently launched campaigns celebrating our hidden gems, vital neighborhoods and diverse cultures and people. With new strategic partnerships and an emphasis on culinary and diverse marketing, we made an undeniable case for why visitors should choose to visit Philadelphia.

ADVERTISING BY THE NUMBERS



COME FOR PHILADELPHIA. STAY FOR Philly.

2024 marked year two for our “Come For Philadelphia. Stay For Philly.” campaign, a collaboration with the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau. The concept — pairing traditional tourist draws with lesser-known discoveries in a succinct, visually compelling format — continued to capture eyes and accolades with print, digital and out-of-home advertising.

We enhanced the campaign’s presence in New York City with an immersive takeover in Penn Station — Visit Philadelphia’s first “station domination” in five years. In addition to the 250 on-site digital and print ads, we deployed mobile retargeting to ensure that the more than 600,000 daily commuters passing through the station were reminded of Philly with follow-up ads on their personal devices.

The campaign continued to run here in 30th Street Station and maintained a more limited presence in Baltimore and Washington, D.C. For the first time, we expanded into the Atlanta market, targeting diverse audiences around the suburban perimeter. We utilized a mix of transit ads, billboards, social media and programmatic ads in various settings, including Ubers, TVs and bar jukeboxes.

The witty copy nodded to local culture while beckoning viewers with Philly arts, festivals, food and cultural attractions and emphasizing the short plane trip connecting the two cities. With a goal of attracting long-distance travelers who are likely to stay longer, the campaign ran during the summer months to encourage travel bookings for Atlanta’s September school break.

Integrated Projects

Marketing doesn’t happen in a vacuum, and we’ve done some of our most creative work when developing or supporting on-the-ground programs that tell a memorable story about our region, whether that’s about our central place in national history or our current leadership in the culinary scene.

TED DEMOCRACY

TED Democracy in Philadelphia is a new series honoring the city’s legacy as the birthplace of democracy. In 2024, Visit Philadelphia announced a three-year partnership with TED to host a series of high-profile public talks about the future of democracy in the very setting where founders devised the tenets of modern governance. We hosted three fireside chats with leading thinkers, including Governor Josh Shapiro. The series will culminate in 2026 with a daylong symposium during the semiquincentennial celebration.

CULINARY INITIATIVES

Visit Philadelphia continued to embrace its status as a top-tier food city by partnering with high-profile culinary events, positioning Philadelphia as the epicenter for food innovation and driving more food-related travel to the region.

- In April, Visit Philadelphia and Resy, an American Express company, sponsored the Chef Conference. Influential restaurateurs, chefs and media figures gathered for dinners, discussions and more, further positioning Philadelphia as a center for culinary innovation.
- In March, Visit Philadelphia collaborated with the James Beard Foundation and Platform by JBF for a three-night dining experience in New York City, showcasing Philly cuisine along with giveaways for restaurant tastings, hotel stays and conference tickets.
- In October 2023, we sponsored Chef Eli Kulp’s The Voi-âge Dinner Series, inviting renowned food luminaries to Philadelphia to cook alongside the city’s most celebrated and award-winning chefs.

CIVIC PRIDE

In 2024, we built on our civic pride campaign, inspiring residents to celebrate their communities and reignite their love of Philadelphia through three key initiatives:

- Showcased citywide “wins” and accolades on our **I-676 billboard**
- Promoted feel-good stories via the **Philly Love Stories** social media video series
- Launched **Our Favorite Philly Stories This Week** on visitphilly.com
- Sponsored new **Spreading the Love** segment on CBS to amplify positive Philadelphia stories



VISIT PHILADELPHIA

VISITPHILLY.COM

Philadelphia's Magic Gardens

COME FOR THE MURALS.

STAY FOR THE mosaics.

→ Amtrak

Moynihan Train Hall

8th Av

Exit

COME FOR PHILADELPHIA.

STAY FOR PHILLY.

SUSHI

AMTRAK POLICE

SANDWICHES

ESSE

TOP 10

Departures

Messaging

g

g

New York remains our leading overnight leisure market outside of Philadelphia, accounting for **16%** of our overnight visitors. With a swift **37-day** window from booking to arrival, New Yorkers are ideal for quick trips to Philadelphia. Our spring 2024 Station Domination successfully engaged nearly **68 million** viewers, promoting Philly as a prime summer getaway.

VISIT PHILADELPHIA'S "COME FOR PHILADELPHIA. STAY FOR PHILLY." CAMPAIGN IN NEW YORK'S PENN STATION



DRAG QUEEN STORYTIME TV SPOT WITH BRITTANY LYNN AND MORGAN WELLS

Diverse Marketing

In 2024, we went deeper with our “In Pursuit of a More Perfect Union” marketing campaign to build an authentic connection with diverse audiences, and we tied our work to current events to give it more resonance and immediacy. We looked for opportunities to create a continuing video series that could build interest and momentum over time. We also rolled out initiatives that not only celebrated the respective cultures of diverse audiences but which also promoted local artists, businesses and ongoing dialogue.

LITTLE FREE(DOM) LIBRARY

★ **10K** BANNED BOOKS
DISTRIBUTED

Initially launched as part of the In Pursuit of a More Perfect Union initiative during Black History Month, the Little Free(dom) Library made 1,500 copies of a dozen banned books by Black authors available at multiple tourist attractions, community centers and businesses in neighborhoods across Philly. We purchased books from Black-owned bookstores and commissioned the library’s design and related artwork from local artist Alloyus Mcilwaine.

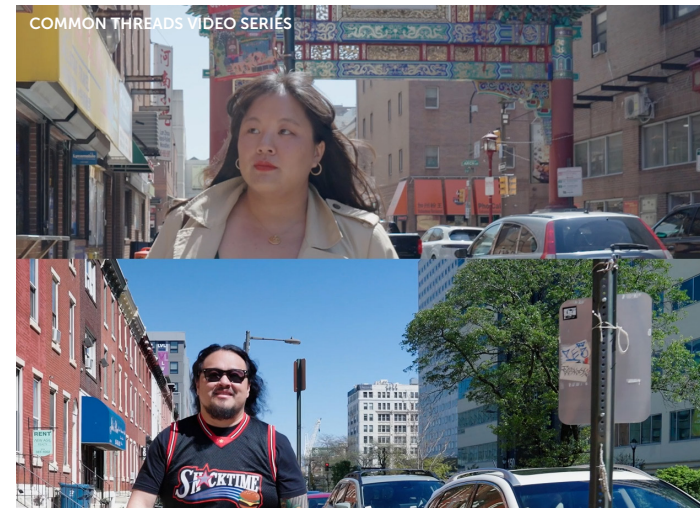
A Black History Month spot featuring educator Ms. Joyce Abbott (for whom the show Abbott Elementary is named) touted the library project and its activation around the city. We showcased the ad on connected TV (showing ad content to viewers watching TV via streaming).

The Little Free(dom) Library initiative demonstrates Philadelphia’s commitment, as the birthplace of the nation, to making banned stories accessible and available to both visitors and residents. Building on its success, we expanded the effort around the calendar year with new updates reflecting and representing additional history and heritage months, including Women’s History Month, National Arab American Heritage Month, Asian & Pacific American Heritage Month, Jewish American Heritage Month, Pride Month and Native American Heritage Month.

In order to make our collection of banned books available to a wider audience, Visit Philadelphia brought a “big” Little Free(dom) Library to major summer cultural events, including the Roots Picnic and the Juneteenth Parade and Festival. The library also appeared at the BlackStar Film Festival, the Asian American Film Festival, the Philadelphia Latino Arts & Film Festival at Cherry Street Pier, the Philadelphia Polo Classic and in Hispanic Heritage Month promotions in New York City and Washington, D.C.



COMMON THREADS VIDEO SERIES



COMMON THREADS

The “Common Threads” campaign generated an eight-part video series about Philadelphia’s AAPI communities, including Chinese, Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Hawaiian, Filipino and Japanese people and neighborhoods. The series focuses on how participants celebrate and honor significant cultural holidays and family traditions.

THIS IS HOME

During Hispanic Heritage Month, we launched the “This Is Home” video series, showcasing Philadelphia’s Latino communities, including Puerto Rican, Dominican, Mexican and Colombian, and local businesses and attractions within those communities. The goal of the videos was to truly reflect the richness of local Latino culture, emotionally connect viewers to depicted communities and demonstrate that Philly is a welcoming city.



PRIDE MONTH

In celebration of Pride Month, Visit Philadelphia sponsored a Guinness World Record-setting Drag Storytime at the National Constitution Center with 263 people in attendance.

In addition, Visit Philadelphia partnered with Pride Live to bring an exhibition to the Stonewall National Monument Visitor Center, highlighting the contributions of Philadelphians to the gay rights liberation movement of the late 1960s and 1970s; Philadelphia’s history as a site for early activism in the movement; and Philly’s current status as a destination and hub for LGBTQ+ visitors.



AWARDS 🏆

Our diverse marketing campaigns won numerous honors in 2024, including four Adrian Awards and two PR Daily Awards for the Drag Queen Storytime event. In addition, the In Pursuit of a More Perfect Union campaign won a Skift Idea Award and a Public Relations Society of America Peppercorn Award.

Additional Marketing: Web + Social

In 2024, Visit Philadelphia’s social media and web channels served as key entry points for leisure visitors and residents to engage with and discover the city. We continued to create practical and entertaining content that celebrates Philly’s history and culture.

WEB VISITPHILLY.COM BY THE NUMBERS



TRAFFIC REPORT

Year-over-year online traffic soared, thanks to major increases in site visits from paid content distribution, emails and paid search tactics. The gains from these three key traffic channels offset a small decline in organic search traffic. Close to 7.6 million users engaged in 10.6 million website sessions and 14.7 million pageviews on visitphilly.com. All three metrics saw positive year-over-year increases. In addition, close to 7 out of 10 website sessions were high-quality visitors viewing our articles and guides. Our 70% engagement rate is above the industry range, between 45% and 60%, for destination marketing organizations according to Tempest. Finally, Visitphilly.com sent over 2 million outbound clicks to our stakeholders’ websites.

(TOP) PICKS

For the second year, Things to Do in Philadelphia This Week & Weekend (aka Picks of the Week or PotW) surpassed 1 million pageviews. Even better: The team hit 1 million pageviews 35 days earlier than in 2023. The piece — which is updated every week — featured an astonishing 3,237 things to do throughout 2024.

AWARD-WINNING FEATURE

Our already-lauded date-filtering tool for PotW — which was used 668,866 times in 2024 — won a PR Daily Award in the Social Media & Digital Awards Interactive Content category. The tool also won a Silver President’s Award at the HSMIA Adrian Awards.

EMAIL UPDATES

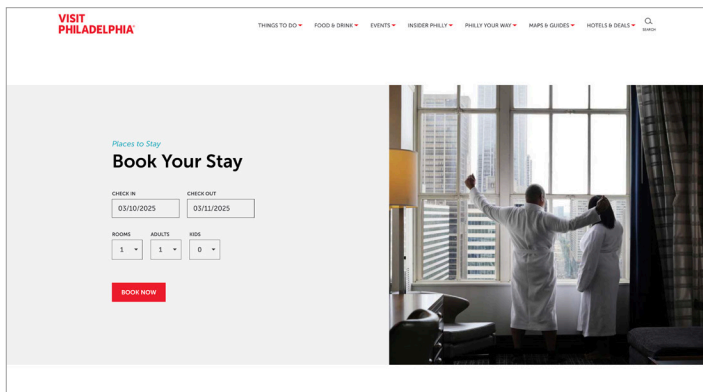
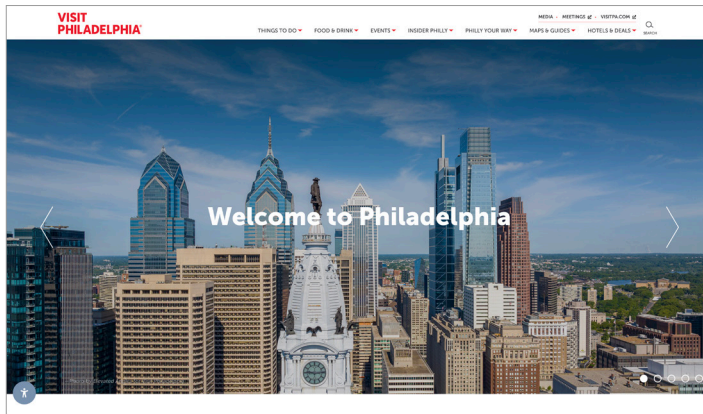
Our weekly events emails gained more traction in 2024. We also shortened our Thursday consumer emails while increasing send frequency. Overall, traffic to the site from the 117 emails sent in 2024 was up more than 67% year over year.

PAID CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

The web and social team collaborated monthly on a paid content distribution strategy that saw massive gains in 2024. These paid ads — which surface on Facebook, Instagram or Tik Tok — drove more than 2.2 million pageviews in 2024, up nearly 90% year over year.

NEW LOOK AHEAD

In 2024, the web, marketing and creative teams began work with Madden Media on a website refresh, which is in the process of being rolled out in early 2025.



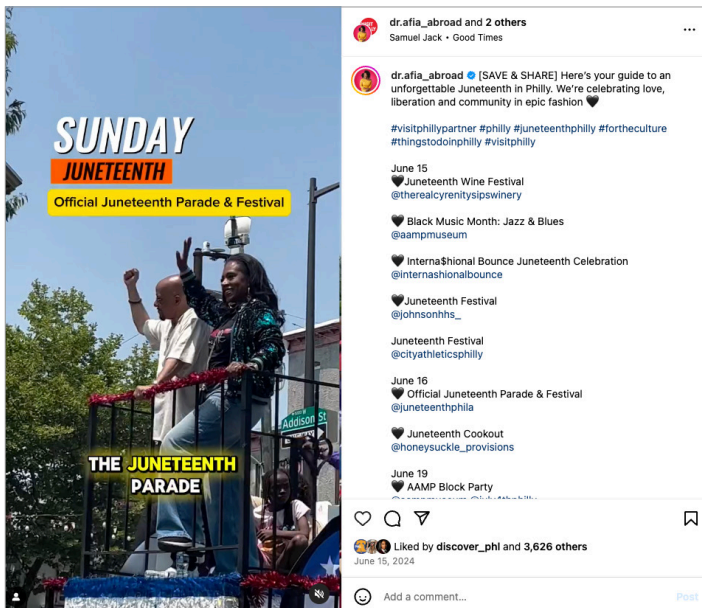
SOCIAL MEDIA

PHILLY LOVE STORIES

Launched in 2024, the Philly LOVE Stories video series highlights real-life stories of love, kindness and community in the City of Brotherly Love. The series features people like Arnold Ford, an elementary school vice principal whose daily hugs for students exemplify mentorship and care. The series was well-received, drawing more than 800K combined views on YouTube and Instagram.

FOR THE CULTURE

In this video series, we collaborated with local Black and African American creators to showcase events and festivals like the Roots Picnic, Juneteenth Festival & Parade and the BlackStar Film Festival. Highlights included a special post by @the.writeher about Mickalene Thomas’ exhibition “All About Love” at the Barnes Foundation. The series has achieved 690,743 views and 17,413 engagements, highlighting Philadelphia’s vibrant Black cultural scene.



DRAG QUEENS AROUND TOWN

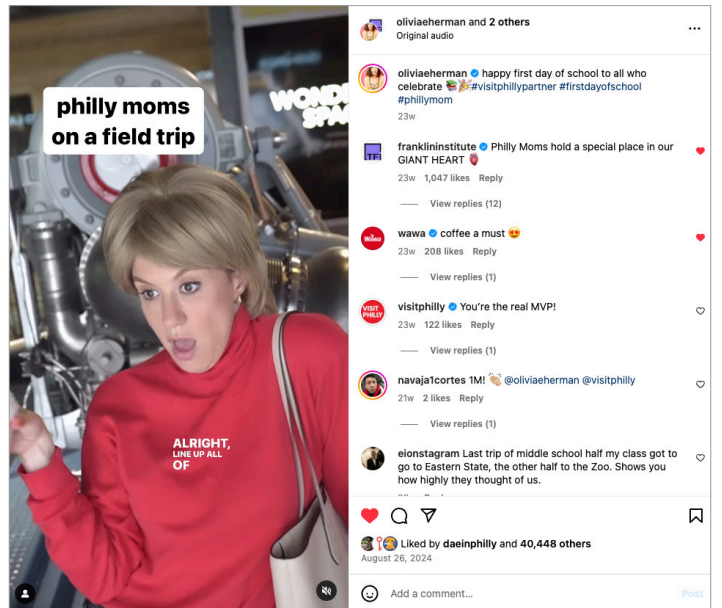
An extension of our LGBTQ+ Drag Storytime, Drag Queens Around Town is a video series that portrays drag queens doing everyday things around the city like climbing the Rocky Steps or visiting the National Constitution Center, emphasizing that Philly is a welcoming place for all. In 2024, the series garnered 353,400 views and 14,198 engagements.

BY THE NUMBERS



1 MILLION VIEWS WITH PHILLY MOM

Our partnership with influencer Philly Mom (@oliviaeherman) generated 1 million views on a collab post and an honorable mention from the PR Daily Social Media & Digital Awards for a Micro-Influencer Campaign — not to mention immeasurable joy for all who saw it. The videos “Philly Moms Talkin’ About the Eagles” and “Philly Moms on a Field Trip” explored pop culture and Philly nostalgia in depth.



HISTORY MAKERS

In this lighthearted video series, we placed historic figures John Adams, Betsy Ross and Ben Franklin in modern settings, leading to humorous outcomes. For example, Betsy Ross tries her hand at using today’s technology while working at the Visit Philadelphia headquarters, which brings about amusing mishaps. This three-part miniseries attracted over 75,000 views and 1,700 engagements.

AWARDS

Our social media strategy and content netted us multiple awards in 2024. Director of Social Media Eric Cortes was named to Philadelphia Metro’s Philadelphia Power List. Social Media Masters bestowed Visit Philadelphia with the Best Brand Presence on X and the It’s A Philly Thing awards, while Senior Manager of Social Content and Strategy Farah Farag won its Social Media Pro award. Our team also earned the PR Daily Social Media & Digital award for Best Instagram.



Communications

In 2024, we deepened our relationships with the media and crafted unique experiences for influencers and journalists. These efforts resulted in hundreds of positive media placements and continue to position Philadelphia a top U.S. travel destination.

OVERVIEW/BY THE NUMBERS

★ 50 PRESS RELEASES WRITTEN & SHARED ★ 110 REPORTERS PITCHED IN PERSON AT ANNUAL MEDIA EVENTS ★ 2,735 STORIES TRACKED AND PLACED

VISITING JOURNALIST PROGRAM

In 2024, Visit Philadelphia hosted nearly 40 journalists and influencers, curating immersive experiences that led to outstanding coverage in publications such as Condé Nast Traveler, Esquire, Forbes, Travel + Leisure and Essence.

HOT, FRESH FOOD COVERAGE

We welcomed over 30 top media outlets to The Chef Conference, showcasing Philadelphia’s vibrant food scene. This was part of our strategy to maximize media opportunities provided by large events, with the goal of enriching the visitor experience and elevating our city’s profile. Outlets such as The New York Times, Food & Wine, Bon Appétit and Esquire were present, contributing to extensive coverage that resulted in over 60 articles reaching nearly 22 million people.

OUT-OF-MARKET MEDIA EVENTS

Visit Philadelphia has maintained a longstanding relationship with multicultural journalist associations, and in 2024, we reconnected with these groups to host intimate conversations over dinner with dozens of the nation’s top media and influencers.

- July 9-13, 2024
National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ)
Hollywood, CA
- July 30-August 2, 2024
National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ)
Chicago, IL
- August 7-11, 2024
Asian American Journalist Association (AAJA)
Austin, TX
- September 5-8, 2024
National Lesbian and Gay Journalist Association (NLGJA)
Hollywood, CA

To establish our presence in the Atlanta market, we hosted an evening event for 20 key media and influencers. This successful gathering fostered valuable new relationships, enhancing our ability to host future press trips and strengthen our visibility in this crucial fly market.

ROAD TO 2026

Visit Philadelphia launched our journey to 2026 with a press conference at The Franklin Institute. Joined by Governor Josh Shapiro and over 200 stakeholders, we announced major events for the semiquincentennial, including the Visit Philly-sponsored TED Democracy series in partnership with TED. More than 60 media placements generated nearly 4 million unique views, including coverage on Good Morning America.



STANDOUT MEDIA MOMENTS

THE 25 BEST RESTAURANTS IN PHILADELPHIA RIGHT NOW

"The dining scene here is having a moment, whether it's outstanding pizza, fiery Ethiopian fried chicken or French-inflected cuisine that feels like a cozy dinner party."

THE NEW YORK TIMES

PHILLY WILL HOST TED TALKS WITH NATIONAL SPEAKERS AHEAD OF 250TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION IN 2026

"Because Philadelphia is the birthplace of America's modern-day democracy, we really did feel that we, out of every city and state here in the U.S., have a very special place in the role of this celebration."

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

A LOOK AT PHILADELPHIA'S UPCOMING SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

"It's going to be massive, and Philly's going to be the center of the universe."

GOOD MORNING AMERICA

9 PHENOMENAL PHILLY CHEESESTEAKS, FROM CLASSIC TO VEGAN TO LUXE

"Cheesesteaks aren't just a Philly thing, either: You can find them all over the U.S. and globally, from London to Sao Paulo to Dubai, and with all kinds of variations from vegan to luxe."

FOOD & WINE

IT'S THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE PHILADELPHIA'S BEST RESTAURANTS WORTH TRAVELING FOR

"The city's lauded food scene has one secret ingredient: local soul."

CONDÉ NAST TRAVELER

HOW PHILADELPHIA IS BECOMING THE NEW QUEER VACATION DESTINATION

"LGBTQ+ history and culture is woven into the very fabric of the City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection, making it a safe and enjoyable vacation spot."

TAGG MAGAZINE

FIVE GLAMOROUS WELLNESS EXPERIENCES IN PHILADELPHIA

"[In] the ritzy Rittenhouse neighborhood ... over-the-top renovations and amenities abound, making the area a very exciting destination for luxury-preferring health nuts in 2024."

FORBES MAGAZINE

THE SECRET IS OUT: THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN MARKET IN SOUTH PHILLY IS ONE OF THE BEST IN AMERICA

"Philadelphia's Southeast Asian Market has a remarkable history and perhaps the best mango sticky rice in the U.S."

FOOD & WINE

FALL IN LOVE WITH PHILADELPHIA

"With direct flights and Amtrak train service to the city or an easy two-hour drive from the airports of New York City, Philadelphia, affectionately known as Philly, offers charm and history in a walkable mashup of neighborhoods."

AAA

BEST PLACES TO TRAVEL IN DECEMBER

"Holiday magic is happening all around Philadelphia. The city's LOVE Park transforms into a European marketplace with 100+ vendors."

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

★ ALL-STAR ACCOLADES FOR PHILADELPHIA ★

25 MOST EXCITING PLACES TO VISIT IN 2024
Afar

BEST IN TRAVEL 2024
Lonely Planet

PHILLY NAMED ONE OF AMERICA'S TOP DESTINATIONS
Trip Advisor

10 BEST WALKABLE CITIES FOR TOURISTS IN 2024
USA Today

20 BEST ART MUSEUMS IN AMERICA (2024)
The Washington Post

100 BEST NEW HOTELS OF THE YEAR (2024)
Travel + Leisure

THE 26 BEST DISHES WE ATE ACROSS THE U.S. IN 2024
The New York Times

External Affairs

We know that we are stronger when we work together, which is why outreach to our communities, to our electeds and to neighboring tourism organizations is a crucial thread of our work. In 2024, this engagement brought excellent results.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS BY THE NUMBERS

★ **170** PARTNER EVENTS ATTENDED BY STAFF THROUGHOUT 2024 ★ **25** ATTRACTION, NEIGHBORHOOD AND COUNTY STAFF TOURS

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

MAYORAL TRANSITION

As Philadelphia’s first female mayor prepared to take office, Angela Val served as a Vice Chair on the Mayor’s 2026 Preparation Sub-Committee. Visit Philadelphia collaborated to pull together over 80 women leaders across the region to demonstrate support of Mayor Parker in full-page advertisements in regional publications.

CITY COUNCIL RECEPTION & BRIEFING

In February 2024, Visit Philadelphia and the PHLCVB hosted a reception at Estia to thank returning city council members and staff and welcome new members to council. In April, we again joined our partners at the PHLCVB to go to City Hall and brief council members and their teams on the industry’s latest needs and concerns.

GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO DEMOCRACY SUMMER CAMP

In partnership with the Governor’s team, Visit Philadelphia hosted a happy hour during the Governor’s Democracy Summer Camp, a nonpartisan gathering of 50+ content creators and influencers from around the country, about ways to participate in democracy via social media.

2026 PREPAREDNESS HEARING

The City Council’s Committee of Legislative Oversight held a hearing on investment in the upcoming semiquincentennial. Angela Val and members of the 2026 Coalition (Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau, Wawa Welcome America, Philadelphia Soccer 2026, Pennsylvania Visitor Center Corporation and Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance) addressed the need for marketing dollars to fully position the city and make the most of the opportunity.



STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS

BOUTIQUE HOTEL TOURS

Visit Philadelphia organized a staff tour of seven boutique hotels and two hotel-operated restaurants in the Center City area.

THEATER TOUR

Visit Philadelphia toured Theatre Exile, The Arden Theatre Company, Wilma Theater Company and the Philadelphia Theatre Company to learn about their work and offerings.

REGIONAL TOURS

In collaboration with Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board, we planned a full-day trip to scout Montgomery County attractions and hotels such as the Hotel West & Main, Elmwood Park Zoo, Valley Forge National Park, The Centre Theater and the John James Audubon Center.

NEIGHBORHOOD TOURS

Exploring Philadelphia’s diverse neighborhoods deepens our team’s understanding of the destination. This year, we explored historic sites and businesses in Germantown and North Philadelphia, visited new developments at the Navy Yard and partnered with the Chestnut Hill Business Association and East Falls Development Corporation to discover local attractions, Black-and women-owned businesses and new sites like the ROOST Hotel at the Driftway.

FALL FÊTE

Visit Philadelphia held its annual September soiree for tourism and hospitality sector partners. Guests joined to share their reflections on wins from the previous months and anticipate new initiatives while enjoying live music and the best of local food and drink.

WELCOME HOTEL GM HAPPY HOURS

The first inaugural New GM Happy Hour in October invited hotel managers and hospital leaders to network and share industry insights, with a plan for biannual meetings going forward.



DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

NEIGHBORHOOD TOURISM

Visit Philadelphia completed the first phase of its Neighborhood Tourism Assessment Project, researching and analyzing seven pilot neighborhoods to evaluate tourism opportunities in each community. The neighborhoods included:

- El Centro de Oro/Fairhill/Hunting Park
- North Philadelphia
- Parkside/Centennial District
- 9th Street Market
- Africatown
- Chinatown
- Germantown

DESTINATION OPTIMIZATION PROGRAM WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING

Our virtual self-led sessions enable participating businesses to leverage Google and Bing search optimization to amplify their online presence while driving more web conversions with key SEO tools and customized support. In addition, 75 local businesses attended an in-person workshop.

HOSPITALITY SYMPOSIUM

In 2024, Visit Philadelphia hosted our first-ever Philadelphia Hospitality Symposium, bringing together 200 frontline staff workers from the region's hotels, attractions and businesses at Rivers Casino for workshops on customer service and marketing strategies.

LUNCH & LEARN SERIES

As part of our continuing education for industry partners, we held two sessions about social media strategy and engagement for tourism.

IN THE COMMUNITY

In 2024, Visit Philadelphia staff dedicated over 150 volunteer hours to support various community organizations and programs, including Broad Street Love, Share Food Program, ACCT Philly, Honey's Angels, Center for Hope, The Homeless Assistance Fund, Inc. and United for Independence's 2024 Service Day. This commitment reflects our organization's dedication to enhancing and serving the communities in which we live and work.



Looking Ahead

As we ramp up our work alongside our partners for the year ahead, the Visit Philadelphia team eagerly anticipates the impact we can have on the local tourism sector, making Philadelphia a coveted and welcoming destination for all visitors. We have set rigorous goals for 2025, which we look forward to meeting while focusing on key priorities.

INDUSTRY FORECAST

Some of the headwinds we anticipate going into the new year include a changing climate for regulatory policy and geopolitical dynamics, a budget airline sector shakeup, trips and media coverage deferred to 2026 and the ongoing evolution of AI, among other factors.

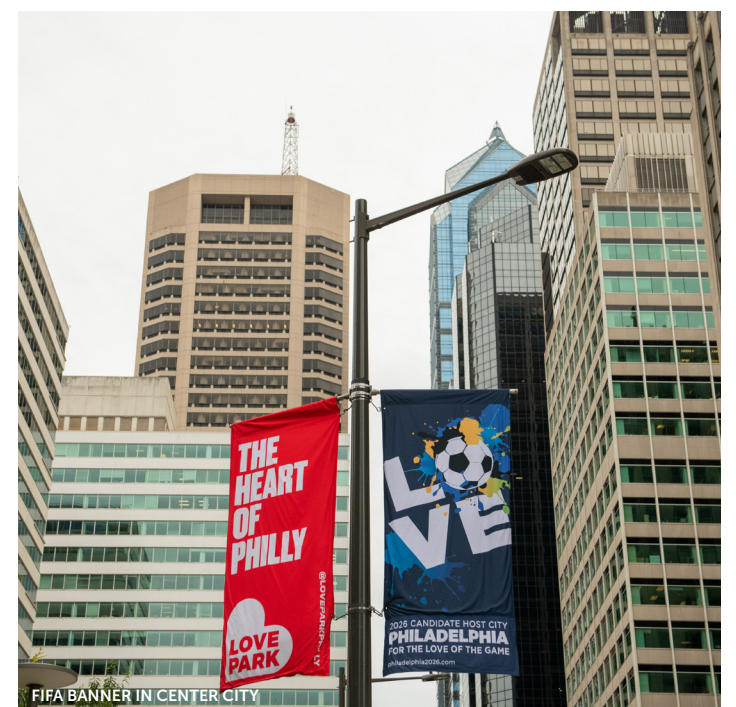
On the other hand, there's much momentum pushing us forward, including growth in international inbound travel, the prioritization of leisure travel, an increase in travel for large events and continued rebuilding for business and group travel.

2025 VP FOCUSES

In the coming months, we will focus on increasing overnight, day and repeat visitation to ensure that Philly remains a premier destination for leisure travelers.

With significant events like the semiquincentennial, the MLB All-Star Game and the FIFA World Cup 2026 on the horizon, Visit Philadelphia will dedicate this year to preparing for these events and maximizing the opportunity to showcase our city.

Our ongoing priorities will include bolstering civic pride; establishing Philly as a center for American history, democracy and thought leadership; and ensuring our city is a welcoming place for diverse audiences. We'll also focus on securing national media coverage around our key verticals, including culinary offerings, arts and culture and our vibrant neighborhoods.





PHILADELPHIA VISITOR
CENTER CORPORATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Deborah O'Brien (Chair)
Bank of America

Tiffany Newmuir (Vice Chair)
Comcast

W. Bradley Baturka, CPA (Treasurer)
Wipfli LLP

Shawn Andre Murray, MA, PHR
(Secretary)
Montgomery County Community College

James B. (J.B.) Broms
Accenture

Thomas A. Caramanico
McCormick Taylor Inc.

Gregg Caren
Philadelphia Convention
& Visitors Bureau

J.J. (Jonathan J.) Cutler
Heidrick & Struggles

Kortney Cruz
Independence Blue Cross

Aileen Dagrosa
Philadelphia Eagles

Paul Decker
Independent

John H. Estey
Independent

John Fricke
Canopy by Hilton Philadelphia
Center City

Todd Glickman
Comcast Spectacor
& Wells Fargo Center

David Gould
Harris Blitzer Sports
& Entertainment (HBSE)

Michael Harris
Philadelphia Phillies

Lauri Kavulich, Esquire
Clark Hill, PLC

Amy Shearer
Philadelphia Zoo

Angela Val
Visit Philadelphia

Governor's Representative
Robert J. Ghormoz
GSL Public Affairs

Mayor's Representative
Jazelle Jones
City of Philadelphia



Leadership
Message

2024 was marked by growth through partnership at the Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation. Driven by our mission to connect visitors with memorable Philadelphia places, people and experiences, last year we worked alongside hospitality partners and trusted attractions to drive visitation and better serve visitors at our four iconic Philadelphia locations.

As a long-time ticket partner to many of the region's museums, our visitor services team worked with attractions in new ways to connect more visitors to their sites, exhibits and experiences. New dual-entry ticket combos and cross-promotions helped us grow ticket sales on behalf of more than 50 area tours and attractions last year.

Connecting people to Philly's top attractions was made easier by the Philly PHLASH™. Funded in part by the local museums and attractions it serves, in 2024, the PHLASH celebrated its 30th season with a new brand and website to offer passengers a seamless, modern user experience. The result? Ridership and ticket sales grew by a third last year, setting the Philly PHLASH on course to serve even more visitors in 2025 and beyond.

Last year, Philadelphia's Historic District came together to establish new traditions and make big plans ahead of America's semiquincentennial celebration in 2026. We welcomed a new superintendent to Independence National Historical Park and hosted United for Independence, a district-wide day of service to clean and green the park.

Kicking off tourism season in Philadelphia takes a group effort! The Visitor Center's first annual Philly Opener gala, hosted during National Travel and Tourism Week, marked the start of visitor season in the City of Brotherly Love. We celebrated alongside over 400 leaders representing all of the city's and region's must-see sites and attractions.

Looking ahead, we are excited to connect visitors to the hundreds of world class events, experiences and exhibits taking place in the Philadelphia region this year.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Ott Lovell | President and CEO, Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation

WHO WE ARE

The Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation works alongside Visit Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau, the City of Philadelphia, the National Park Service and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to deliver world-class visitor experiences. We provide:

WELCOMING PUBLIC SPACES:

Our four visitor centers offer a safe, comfortable place to welcome travelers and provide information, recommendations and itinerary planning. Our iconic event space, The Liberty View, overlooks Independence Mall and regularly hosts celebrations and high-profile events.

PREMIERE CONCIERGE SERVICES:

While Visit Philadelphia inspires visitors to travel to Philadelphia, our visitor services team informs them about all the great things to do in Philly once they arrive. Our concierge staff pride themselves on being in the know about the latest attractions, institutions and events that enhance the visitor experience in the Philadelphia region.

SAFE, ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION TO KEY LOCAL ATTRACTIONS:

The Philly PHLASH Downtown Loop is a fast, convenient and reliable way for visitors and residents to travel from river to river. At \$2 a ride and \$5 for a day pass, PHLASH® buses are the most affordable and convenient way for visitors to explore our city's key attractions and vibrant downtown. Funded by SEPTA, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and 20-plus local partners, the PHLASH drives tourism in our city by connecting visitors to key destinations.



VISITATION TO ALL FOUR VISITOR CENTER LOCATIONS **INCREASED BY 21%** IN 2024 OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR.



BUSIEST DAY: SATURDAY
(Source: Placer.ai)



BUSIEST TIME OF DAY: 1PM-2PM
(Source: Placer.ai)



AVERAGE TIME SPENT BY VISITORS: 32 MIN
(Independence Visitor Center)



1.6 MILLION ANNUAL VISITORS*
▲+22% (24 v 23) ▼-40% (24 v 19)
*Includes visitors to Independence Visitor Center and LOVE Park Visitor Center and riders on the Philly PHLASH Downtown Loop

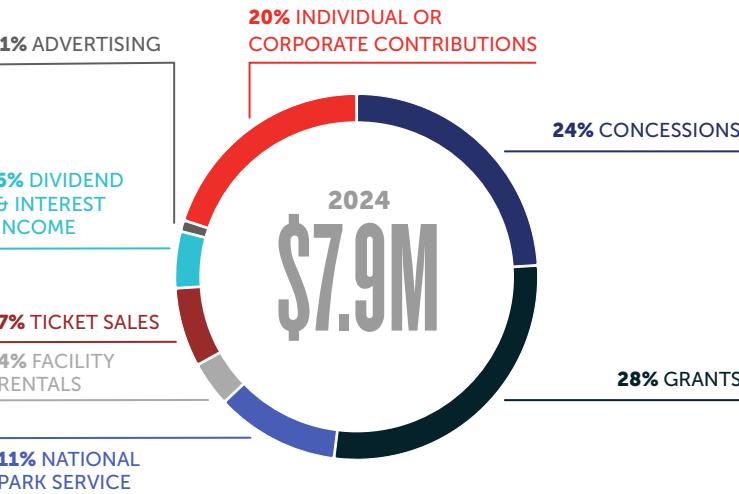


PHLASH RIDERSHIP: 11,200 AVERAGE RIDERS PER MONTH
▲+57% (24 v 23)

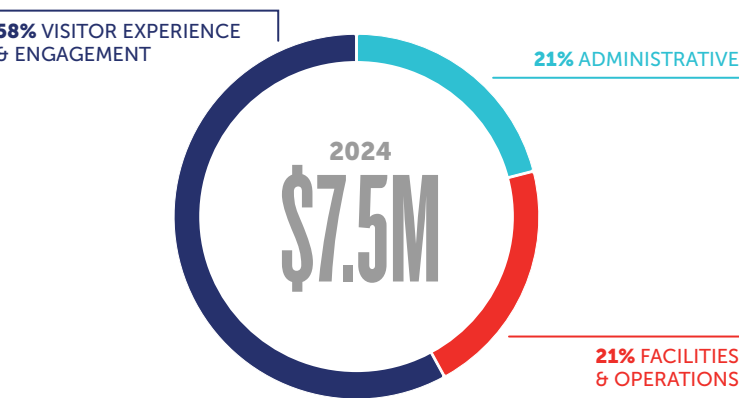


TOTAL PAGEVIEWS: 798,000
▲+26% (24 v 23) ▲+22% (24 v 19)

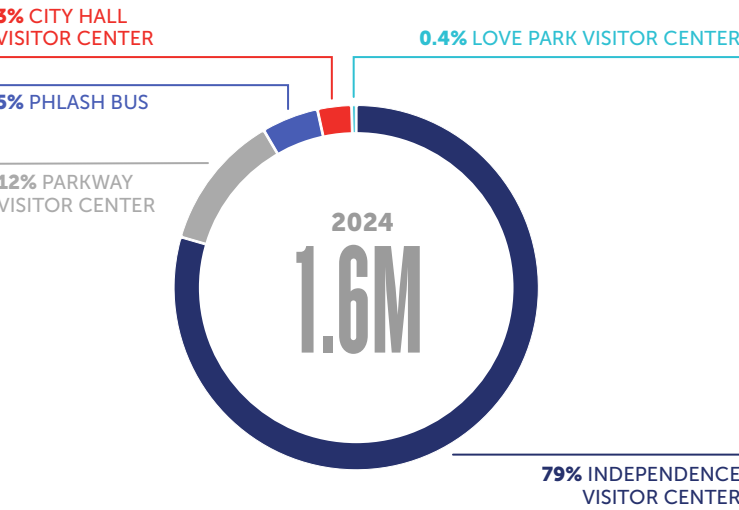
REVENUES



EXPENSES



TOTAL VISITATION



Note: Fiscal year 2024 ran from July 2023 through June 2024.

SOCIAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS ACROSS PLATFORMS

75.6K TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS
1.5M AUDIENCE IMPRESSIONS
997 UNIQUE POSTS



Overview of Visitor Centers

Four locations. Endless Possibilities.

We welcome visitors to Philadelphia at four iconic locations. Our concierge staff are passionate about our city, its culture and its history. We help visitors access all that the Philadelphia region has to offer — activities, tickets, reservations and guides.

INDEPENDENCE VISITOR CENTER

Located on Independence Mall just steps from the Liberty Bell Center, the Independence Visitor Center is the official visitor center of the city, the region and Independence National Historical Park. We serve visitors when they first arrive in the City of Brotherly Love, offering tickets, hotel and dining recommendations, maps and itinerary planning, a cafe and two gift shops.

In January 2024, the Independence Visitor Center welcomed Art Star, a woman-owned gallery and boutique gift shop, to the building's Arch Street entrance. The Art Star gift shop offers tourists carefully curated handmade and limited-edition items by emerging Philadelphia artists. In addition, for one weekend each month, the visitor center comes alive with an Art Star craft market, connecting local artists with visitors from around the globe.

CITY HALL VISITOR CENTER

The City Hall Visitor Center offers guests an inside look into America's most majestic municipal building. Philadelphia's City Hall is best experienced alongside a knowledgeable visitor center tour guide. Visitors can enjoy a bird's eye view of Philadelphia from the City Hall Tower and learn about the 250 individual Calder statues adorning the building.

A team of more than two dozen volunteer docents lead daily tours of City Hall and the City Hall Tower, offering visitors their unique takes on the well-researched history of one of our City's most treasured public spaces.

LOVE PARK VISITOR CENTER

In the heart of Center City in 2024, the LOVE Park Visitor Center provided wayfinding for diners, theatre goers and visitors. In partnership with Philadelphia Parks & Recreation and the City of Philadelphia, the LOVE Park Visitor Center offers tickets, maps and information, itinerary planning and a unique gift shop featuring locally made souvenirs and top selling Rocky™ merchandise from the Sly Stallone Shop.

THE PARKWAY VISITOR CENTER & ROCKY™ SHOP

Yo Adrian! We did it! In October 2023, the Parkway Visitor Center launched an official "Rocky™ Shop" in partnership with the Sly Stallone Shop, offering exclusive movie replicas and souvenirs from the Rocky film franchise. The visitor center offers tickets to all of the Parkway's iconic cultural attractions, including the Philadelphia Museum of Art and Barnes Foundation.

Located steps from the Rocky Statue at the base of the art museum steps, the Parkway Visitor Center and Rocky Shop staff greet over 5,000 visitors a week, offering recommendations on everything from cheesesteak spots to the fastest way to Mighty Mick's Gym or Adrian Balboa's fictional gravesite.

Historic District Partners

Philadelphia's Historic District represents some of the most iconic attractions in America — from the Liberty Bell to the Betsy Ross House and Christ Church Burial Ground.

In September 2023, the Visitor Center convened the museums, organizations and cultural institutions that surround Independence National Historical Park to answer the question — what can we achieve if we come together to improve, promote and preserve America's most historic square mile? The Historic District Partners was born out of this convening.

UNITED FOR INDEPENDENCE

The Historic District Partners identified seven priorities to improving the visitor experience in America's most historic square mile. Historic District member organizations are dedicating staff to lead work across key project areas: Advocacy, Data Collection and Analysis, Marketing and Partnerships, Organizational and Operational Strategies, Planning and Development, Public Safety and Transportation and 250th.

Driven by a desire to create a world-class visitor experience across Philadelphia's Historic District, on June 7, 2024, the Historic District Partners assembled staff from their respective museums, organizations and cultural institutions to host United for Independence, a district-wide volunteer effort to clean and green the park. With support from Subaru of America, the United for Independence volunteer day helped prepare Philadelphia's national park for peak tourist season while shining a spotlight on the resources needed to operate this prestigious historical landmark.

First-Ever Philly Opener THE PHILLY OPENER KICKS OFF TOURISM

On May 20, 2024, the Independence Visitor Center hosted the first-ever kickoff to the city's tourism season: The Philly Opener. Held during National Travel and Tourism Week, a packed house turned up to celebrate our city and honor Philadelphia Eagles wide receiver Brandon Graham as our Most Valuable Philadelphian.

The Philly Opener provided 400 VIP guests with a pep rally atmosphere, festive food from iconic Philly eateries, live entertainment and a sneak peek of celebrated tourism attractions of the upcoming season. This exciting annual event will kick off the 2025 tourism season in May.



Philly PHLASH Celebrates 30th Season

On May 17, 2024, the PHLASH began its 30th season offering visitors a safe, fast, reliable ride to Philadelphia’s most iconic attractions. To celebrate three decades on the road, the PHLASH service received three major transformations:

- 1 A MODERN BRAND** PHLASH’s iconic purple brand received a new update. A pop of pink and an eye-catching new design capture riders’ attention on the crowded streetscape, thanks to a partnership with the creative team at Visit Philadelphia.
- 2 A MOBILE-FRIENDLY USER EXPERIENCE** A new PHLASH website with real-time ride tracking offers riders the same user experience they have come to expect from popular rideshare apps. Additionally, thanks to support from SEPTA, PHLASH service is now searchable on all major transit map applications, allowing riders to find the PHLASH bus service on apps like Google Maps and Apple Maps.
- 3 A FAMILY AFFAIR** To meet modern travelers’ needs, PHLASH introduced a family pass, offering families of four to six the opportunity to travel across the city for \$10 a day. The family pass makes PHLASH competitive for larger groups, allowing families to travel from the Liberty Bell and Betsy Ross House to the Please Touch Museum’s carousel and back to the Seaport Museum’s submarine for less than the cost of a single rideshare.



The PHLASH is supported through funding from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, SEPTA, and local partners.



THE 2024 HISTORIC DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS — THANK YOU!

- African American Museum in Philadelphia
 - American Philosophical Society
 - Arch Street Meeting House
 - ArtPhilly
 - Association for Public Art
 - The Athenaeum of Philadelphia
 - Carpenters’ Hall
 - Christ Church Preservation Trust
 - Delaware River Waterfront Corporation
 - Elfreth’s Alley
 - Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia
 - Fireman’s Hall Museum
- Historic Collaborative of Philadelphia
 - Historic Philadelphia Inc.
 - Historical Society of Pennsylvania
 - Independence Historical Trust
 - Independence National Historical Park
 - Independence Seaport Museum
 - Lehigh Valley 250
 - Ministry of Awe
 - Museum of Illusions
 - Museum of the American Revolution
 - National Constitution Center
 - National Liberty Museum
- Old City District
 - Office of State Senator Saval
 - Philadelphia Landmarks
 - Philadelphia Visitor Center Corp
 - Science History Institute
 - SEPTA
 - United States Mint
 - Visit Philadelphia
 - Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History
 - WHYY

WE ARE SO THANKFUL TO OUR STAFF, WHO HELP CONNECT VISITORS TO GREAT EXPERIENCES!

Delysha Baez | Michael Cassidy | Elizabeth Coimbra | Andrea Coyle | Michael Crampton | Mya Crittenden | Kamryn Doan
Jonel Edmonds | Aaliyah Goodwin | Conley H. Heaberlin | Tina Jackson | Tomar Jackson | Paul Jeter | Teresa Johnson
Christine Keates | Victoria Kessler | Michael Kostic | Jake La Fronz | Troy Layne | Britni Lettsome | Arnetia Lewis | Sean Mack
James Mansfield | Joana Mata | Julius May | Colleen Murphy | Kathryn Ott Lovell | Natalie Saunders | Linda Sonnie
Maita Soukup | Linda Stanton | Sudha Suryadevara | Kimberly Torres | Samuel Warner

Visit Philadelphia

AWARDS



HSMIA Adrian Awards:
Silver Award
DEI Marketing

Silver President's Award, Digital
Technology

Bronze President's Award
DEI Marketing and Social

Bronze Award
PR and Communications



PR Daily Social Media & Digital Awards
Interactive Content
Micro-Influencer Campaign
(Honorable Mention)



PRSA Philadelphia
Pepperpot
DEI Program



Skift Idea Award
Marketing



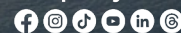
Social Media Masters
PHL Awards
Best Brand Presence on X
"It's a Philly Thing"

VISIT PHILADELPHIA believes in this city, and we have a set of values that match it. We lead with these values, which means that we are: **Passionate** about our city, our region and our mission. We believe passion drives success. Period. **Trustworthy**, meaning we do what we say we're going to do, and we do it to the very best of our abilities. Being true to our word tells the people around us that they can count on us. **Inclusive** of the people we invite to visit and the people we employ (including the diverse perspectives they bring along with them). **Respectful** of one another and of the diverse opinions we hold and share daily. **Collaborative** both internally and externally. That is, after all, when our work shines brightest and our results soar. **Innovative** because that's the only way we'll continue to blaze trails. Plus, status quo just isn't how we roll around here. **Hospitable** to our coworkers, our stakeholders, our visitors. Always (We are in the tourism and hospitality business, after all.)

Visit Philadelphia would not have had the year it did without the people who worked here.
Thank you to our 2024 team for all you did to support Philadelphia's tourism industry.

Won Jin An | Jasmine Armstrong | Ajene Atkins | Ethan Blades | Trino Boix | Daecia Borgia | Sheryl Brown | Roland Bui | Alethia Calbeck | Jessica Calter | Sabrina Carter | Jabari Cherry | Eric Cortes | Hope Daluisio | Daniel Davis | Mikey DeAngelis | Gianna DiAddezio | Liana Dunnell | Jovan Ellis | Farah Farag | Connor Fogel | Charity Foster | Neil Frauenglass | Michael Hanisco | Colsen Liney | Tameka Love | Keith McMenamin | Cathy McVey-Palmer | Sydney Milkman | Binh Nguyen | Rob Rabena | Adriana Ramirez | Cindy Ray | Jake Rhue | Andora Robinson | Jenea Robinson | Alex Donaruma | Emily Scalzo | Sindoor Shah | Laura Smythe | Kyle Stein | Cassie Tomkins | Angela Val | Jazmund Walker | Dan Wisniewski | Andrew Zwarych |

**VISIT
PHILADELPHIA®**
visitphilly.com



2005 Market St., Suite 3700
Philadelphia, PA 19103