



600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC) agenda

Wednesday, May 7, 2025

12:30 PM

Oregon Convention Center, 777 NE Martin
Luther King Jr. Blvd. Portland Oregon,
97232,
Room F150

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81411140803?
pwd=RATb1kMK7VnTrbyy1ObzzKefkj949G.1](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81411140803?pwd=RATb1kMK7VnTrbyy1ObzzKefkj949G.1)

1. Call To Order and Roll Call

2. Public Communication

Public comment may be submitted in writing. It will also be heard in person and by electronic communication (video conference or telephone). Written comments should be submitted electronically by emailing amy.nelson@oregonmetro.gov. Testimony on agenda and non-agenda items will be taken at the beginning of the meeting.

Those wishing to testify orally are encouraged to sign up in advance by either: (a) contacting Amy Nelson by phone at 503-314-2360 and providing your name and the agenda item on which you wish to testify; or (b) registering by email by sending your name and the agenda item on which you wish to testify to amy.nelson@oregonmetro.gov. Those wishing to testify in person should fill out a card located on the table directly outside the meeting room door.

Those requesting to comment virtually during the meeting can do so by joining the meeting using this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87607282304?pwd=SFBiOVJHdWp0RVIRZU1uMDA0Vitqdz09> and using the "Raise Hand" feature in Zoom or emailing amy.nelson@oregonmetro.gov. Individuals will have three minutes to testify unless otherwise stated at the meeting.

3. Commission/Council Liaison Communication

4. General Manager Communications

5. Financial Update

5.1 MERC Finance Report

[MERC 25-20](#)

Presenter(s): Ashley Sloan, MERC Finance Manager

Attachments: [MERC Finance Report](#)

6. Venue Business Reports

7. Consent Agenda

- 7.1 In Consideration of the March 5, 2025 MERC Meeting Minutes [MERC 25-21](#)
Attachments: [MERC meeting minutes](#)

8. Presentations

- 8.1 First Opportunity Target Area (FOTA) Audit [MERC 25-22](#)
Presenter(s): Metro Auditor Brian Evans
Attachments: [FOTA audit](#)

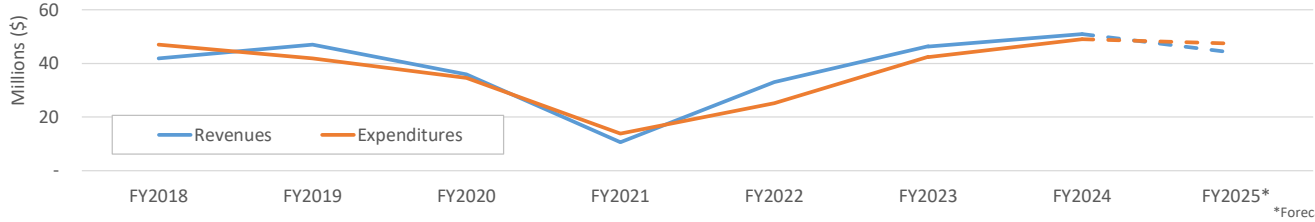
- 8.2 Travel Portland 2nd Quarter Report [MERC 25-23](#)
Presenter(s): Megan Conway, President & CEO
James Jessie, Chief Sales Officer
Marcus Hibdon, VP of Communications & International Tourism
Desiree Everett, VP of Convention Sales & Services

Attachments: [Travel Portland 2nd Quarter Report](#)

- 8.3 Expo Future Project Update [MERC 25-24](#)
Presenter(s): Craig Stroud, General Manager, Visitor Venues
Attachments: [Expo Future update](#)

9.0 Adjourn

OREGON CONVENTION CENTER

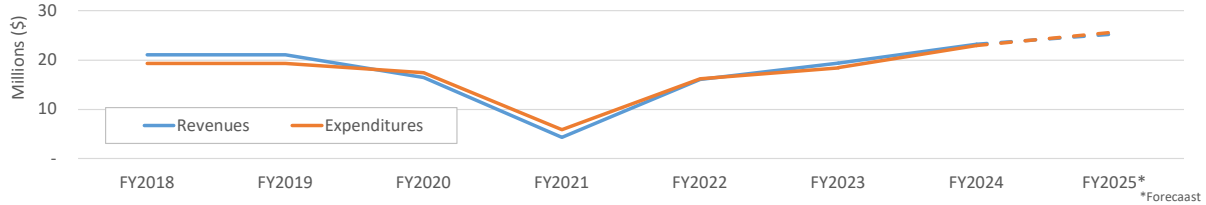


2024-25 Budget to Actual				2024-25 Forecast		YTD vs Prior Fiscal Year		
OPERATIONS	Adopted Budget	Actual thru Mar. 2025 (75% of the Fiscal Year)	% Budget thru March 2025	Year-End Forecast	Forecast Over/(Under) Budget	Actual thru March 2024	% Var	\$ Var
REVENUES								
Charges for Services								
Food & Beverage	14,864,290	9,732,826	65%	12,513,418	(2,350,872)	13,439,546	-28%	(3,706,720)
Facility Rentals	5,800,184	3,591,636	62%	5,150,000	(650,184)	4,142,438	-13%	(550,801)
Audio Visual	2,940,000	2,261,767	77%	3,000,000	60,000	2,250,590	0%	11,177
Parking Revenue	2,305,000	1,611,699	70%	2,114,912	(190,088)	1,623,958	-1%	(12,259)
All Other (Utility, Telecom, Etc.)	3,904,964	3,023,319	77%	4,142,903	237,939	3,381,170	-11%	(357,851)
Local Government Shared Revenues								
Lodging Excise Tax	14,901,200	8,496,794	57%	14,150,818	(750,382)	8,756,662	-3%	(259,867)
Visitor Facilities Trust Account	2,683,500	-	0%	2,209,500	(474,000)	-	-	-
Grants	-	22,126	-	22,126	22,126	228,134	-90%	(206,008)
Interest Earnings	384,311	396,566	103%	556,566	172,255	486,772	-19%	(90,206)
Miscellaneous Revenue	13,500	56,348	417%	64,997	51,497	50,260	12%	6,088
REVENUE TOTAL	47,796,949	29,193,081	61%	43,925,240	(3,871,709)	34,359,529	-18%	(5,166,448)
EXPENDITURES								
Food & Beverage	11,319,385	9,003,191	80%	11,951,091	631,706	9,579,851	-6%	(576,659)
Administration	2,364,053	1,199,999	51%	1,652,558	(711,495)	1,177,631	2%	22,368
Strategy & Business Development								
Marketing & Sales	6,870,429	5,122,469	75%	6,901,161	30,732	5,174,145	-1%	(51,676)
Admissions	337,636	278,116	82%	389,374	51,738	245,989	13%	32,127
Ticket Services	8,074	24,756	307%	32,782	24,708	16,010	55%	8,745
Guest Experience	668,555	538,678	81%	734,914	66,359	439,034	23%	99,644
Parking	1,291,793	937,054	73%	1,352,524	60,731	612,815	53%	324,239
Facilities & Operations								
Facility Management	6,194,304	4,086,784	66%	5,875,993	(318,311)	3,532,917	16%	553,867
Utility Services	937,500	769,381	82%	1,035,500	98,000	815,910	-6%	(46,529)
Audio Visual	2,226,000	1,654,799	74%	2,061,511	(164,489)	1,775,325	-7%	(120,525)
Telecommunications	926,259	567,135	61%	773,213	(153,046)	417,912	36%	149,223
Event Services								
Setup	4,690,076	2,865,949	61%	4,064,291	(625,785)	2,965,716	-3%	(99,767)
Event Operations	1,367,307	985,134	72%	1,376,977	9,670	834,814	18%	150,320
Public Safety	2,482,699	1,749,033	70%	2,455,987	(26,712)	1,695,928	3%	53,106
Non-Dept.								
Other	886,500	204,750	23%	409,500	(477,000)	170,625	20%	34,125
CAP Transfers	6,341,845	4,756,384	75%	6,341,845	-	4,155,768	14%	600,616
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	48,912,415	34,743,614	71%	47,409,221	(1,503,194)	33,610,391	3%	1,133,223
NET OPERATIONS	(1,115,466)	(5,550,533)		(3,483,981)	(2,368,515)	749,138		

FY2024-25 Capital Projects				FY2024 Capital Projects		FY2024 Capital Projects		
	Adopted Budget	Actual thru Mar. 2025 (75% of the Fiscal Year)	% Budget thru March 2025	Year-End Forecast	Over / (Under) Budget	Actual thru March 2024	% Var	\$ Var
REVENUES	1,860,355	200,000	11%	1,550,000	(310,355)	276,180	-28%	-
EXPENSES	7,352,250	2,642,774	36%	6,298,250	1,054,000	2,053,597	29%	589,177
NET	(5,491,895)	(2,442,774)		(4,748,250)	743,645	(1,777,418)	37%	2,230,071

FY2024-25 Beginning Fund Balance	20,895,128
Projected Change in Fund Balance	(8,232,231)
Projected Ending Fund Balance	12,662,897

PORTLAND'S PERFORMING ARTS VENUES

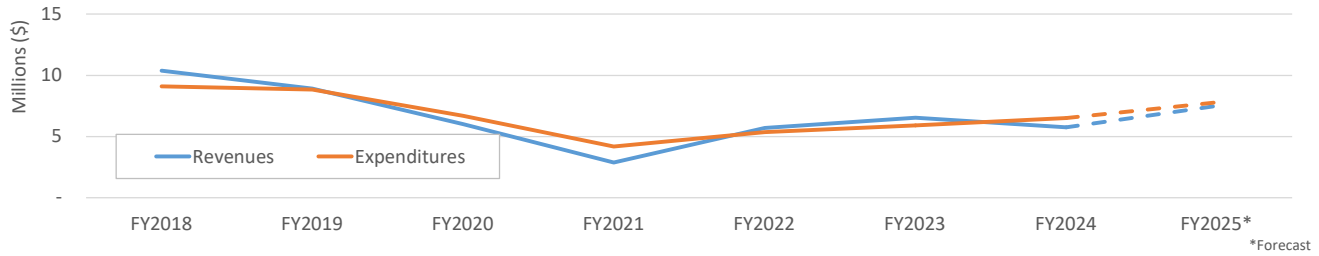


2024-25 Budget to Actual				2024-25 Forecast		YTD vs Prior Fiscal Year		
OPERATIONS	Adopted Budget	Actual thru Mar. 2025 (75% of the Fiscal Year)	% Budget thru March 2025	Year-End Forecast	Forecast Over/(Under) Budget	Actual thru March 2024	% Var	\$ Var
REVENUES								
Charges for Services								
Food & Beverage	1,572,208	1,374,810	87%	1,841,385	269,177	1,242,770	11%	132,041
Ticket Services	7,344,054	6,106,229	83%	7,685,832	341,778	5,624,194	9%	482,035
Production Services	3,522,659	2,281,875	65%	3,237,386	(285,273)	1,823,184	25%	458,690
Booking & Sales	2,700,470	1,877,400	70%	2,614,531	(85,939)	1,751,875	7%	125,526
P5 Presents	1,485,750	572,932	39%	1,400,000	(85,750)	969,599	-41%	(396,668)
Admissions	2,056,206	1,303,664	63%	2,584,793	528,587	1,058,929	23%	244,735
All Other (Utility, Telecom, Etc.)	2,204,326	1,464,309	66%	1,926,869	(277,457)	1,441,780	2%	22,530
Local Government Shared Revenues								
Lodging Excise Tax	1,603,971	898,927	56%	1,497,100	(106,871)	956,785	-6%	(57,858)
Visitor Facilities Trust Account	684,000	-	0%	684,000	-	-	-	-
All Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contributions from Governments	1,125,135	587,629	52%	1,125,135	-	559,700	5%	27,929
Contributions from Private Sources	109,580	-	0%	-	(109,580)	-	-	-
Grants	-	47,000	-	-	-	-	-	47,000
Interest Earnings	292,149	494,993	169%	551,094	258,945	597,020	-17%	(102,028)
Miscellaneous Revenue	43,000	(35,199)	-82%	(13,239)	(56,239)	25,005	-241%	(60,204)
Transfers-R	125,000	75,000	60%	125,000	-	-	-	75,000
REVENUE TOTAL	24,868,508	17,049,569	69%	25,259,885	391,377	16,050,841	6%	998,729
EXPENDITURES								
Food & Beverage	100,000	7,268	7%	54,338	(45,662)	70,729	-90%	(63,461)
Administration	1,420,489	1,046,179	74%	1,207,004	(213,485)	945,324	11%	100,855
Sales & Promotion								
Booking & Sales	587,801	350,050	60%	554,590	(33,211)	357,264	-2%	(7,214)
Marketing & Advertisement	452,953	275,930	61%	387,874	(65,079)	225,080	23%	50,851
Promoted Shows (P5 Presents)	1,457,886	639,716	44%	1,430,910	(26,976)	939,729	-32%	(300,013)
Culture & Community	725,278	368,283	51%	623,447	(101,831)	370,806	-1%	(2,523)
Youth Arts Program	144,330	70,576	49%	147,938	3,608	-	-	70,576
Facility Operations								
Maintenance & Custodial	5,151,339	4,054,332	79%	5,678,453	527,114	3,720,120	9%	334,212
Security	2,558,629	1,172,575	46%	1,810,091	(748,538)	855,008	37%	317,568
Event Services								
Event Coordination	1,638,805	1,280,292	78%	1,805,658	166,853	619,239	107%	661,053
Production Services	3,751,143	2,379,569	63%	3,412,374	(338,769)	2,446,095	-3%	(66,526)
Front of House	1,746,141	1,038,524	59%	1,519,702	(226,439)	1,385,287	-25%	(346,763)
Volunteer Services	154,710	89,650	58%	132,172	(22,538)	84,164	7%	5,486
Ticket Services	2,959,590	2,427,829	82%	3,144,174	184,584	2,002,155	21%	425,674
Non-Dept								
Grants and Loans	125,000	70,000	56%	125,000	-	-	-	70,000
CAP Transfers	3,625,450	2,719,087	75%	3,625,450	-	2,515,473	8%	203,614
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	26,599,544	17,989,862	68%	25,659,174	(940,370)	16,536,472	9%	1,453,390
NET OPERATIONS	(1,731,036)	(940,292)		(399,289)	1,331,747	(485,631)		

FY2024-25 Capital Projects				FY2024 Capital Projects				
	Adopted Budget	Actual thru Mar. 2025 (75% of the Fiscal Year)	% Budget thru March 2025	Year-End Forecast	Over / (Under) Budget	Actual thru March 2024	% Var	\$ Var
REVENUES	2,000,000	1,024,374	51%	1,000,000	(1,000,000)	-	100%	-
EXPENSES	7,589,200	4,908,125	65%	6,693,260	895,940	3,594,083	37%	1,314,042
NET	(5,589,200)	(3,883,751)		(5,693,260)	(104,060)	(3,594,083)	8%	(289,668)

FY2024-25 Beginning Fund Balance	9,485,449
Projected Change in Fund Balance	(6,092,549)
Projected Ending Fund Balance	3,392,900

PORTLAND EXPO CENTER



2024-25 Budget to Actual				2024-25 Forecast		YTD vs Prior Fiscal Year		
OPERATIONS	Adopted Budget	Actual thru Mar. 2025 (75% of the Fiscal Year)	% Budget thru March 2025	Year-End Forecast	Forecast Over/(Under) Budget	Actual thru March 2024	% Var	\$ Var
REVENUES								
Charges for Services								
Food & Beverage	579,000	424,775	73%	561,065	(17,935)	333,040	28%	91,736
Facility Rentals	2,142,042	1,601,358	75%	2,110,316	(31,726)	1,489,814	7%	111,544
Parking Revenue	2,202,158	1,589,456	72%	2,082,158	(120,000)	1,146,764	39%	442,692
Ticket Services	389,730	342,483	88%	413,462	23,732	341,118	0%	1,366
All Other (Utility, Telecom, Etc.)	927,975	668,950	72%	938,327	10,352	547,938	22%	121,012
Local Government Shared Revenues								
Visitor Facilities Trust Account	517,500	-	0%	517,500	-	-	-	-
Interest Earnings	75,000	17,162	23%	29,478	(45,522)	63,026	-73%	(45,863)
Miscellaneous Revenue	82,500	60,634	73%	97,134	14,634	31,343	93%	29,291
Transfers-R	400,000	-	0%	754,082	354,082	-	-	-
REVENUE TOTAL	7,315,905	4,704,819	64%	7,503,521	187,616	3,953,042	19%	751,777

EXPENDITURES								
Food & Beverage	46,000	4,490	10%	15,531	(30,469)	5,656	-21%	(1,166)
Administration	732,460	528,254	72%	744,184	11,724	395,350	34%	132,904
Sales & Marketing	434,658	297,384	68%	456,051	21,393	227,292	31%	70,092
Facility Operations	2,783,447	1,841,894	66%	2,698,877	(84,570)	1,333,904	38%	507,990
Special Services	554,014	280,535	51%	420,650	(133,364)	315,510	-11%	(34,975)
Event Coordination	544,477	410,638	75%	628,885	84,408	325,035	26%	85,602
Admissions	88,851	64,537	73%	95,704	6,853	55,189	17%	9,348
Ticket Services	277,422	168,461	61%	231,191	(46,231)	219,199	-23%	(50,738)
Parking	522,593	343,740	66%	536,639	14,046	174,933	96%	168,808
Non-Dept								
CAP Transfers	1,966,569	1,729,408	88%	1,966,569	-	1,668,210	4%	61,198
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	7,950,491	5,669,342	71%	7,794,281	(156,210)	4,720,277	20%	949,064

NET OPERATIONS	(634,586)	(964,523)		(290,760)	343,826	(767,236)		
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FY2024-25 Capital Projects				FY2024 Capital Projects				
	Adopted Budget	Actual thru Mar. 2025 (75% of the Fiscal Year)	% Budget thru March 2025	Year-End Forecast	Over / (Under) Budget	Actual thru March 2024	% Var	\$ Var
REVENUES	558,004	-	0%	-	(558,004)	-	-	-
EXPENSES	1,674,100	1,539,034	92%	1,686,100	(12,000)	382,348	303%	1,156,686
NET	(1,116,096)	(1,539,034)		(1,686,100)	(570,004)	(382,348)	303%	(1,156,686)

FY2024-25 Beginning Fund Balance	1,976,860
Projected Change in Fund Balance	(1,976,860)
Projected Ending Fund Balance	(0)

Meeting Minutes

Meeting details:

Meeting: Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission Meeting
Date: March 5, 2025
Time: 12:30pm - 2:30 pm
Place: Oregon Convention, Ballroom 204 | Zoom

Commissioners present:

Chair Karis Stoudamire-Phillips, Damien Hall, Deidra-Krys-Rusoff, Chris Oxley, Dañel Malán-González, Deanna Palm and David Penilton

Commissioners excused:

None

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Stoudamire-Phillips called the meeting to order at 12:32pm

Public Communication

- Chair Stoudamire-Phillips opened the meeting to members of the public wanting to testify on agenda and non-agenda items

Commission / Council Liaison Communication

- Commissioner Malán-González recently spoke at the Space to Grow event and congratulated OCC on a successful program.
- Commissioner Krys-Rusoff shared she recently attended the Auto, Golf, and Seafood Shows and praised venues staff on the successful events.
- Councilor Gerritt Rosenthal noted the Lunar New Year event at the Keller was well attended and the zoo had a strong weekend celebrating the new baby elephant. Supportive Housing Services continues its complicated and important work.

General Manager Communications

Craig Stroud welcomed Rachael Lembo as the new interim Executive Director of Portland's Centers for the Arts. Today MERC will receive the FY26 budget presentation and vote on the resolution to move it forward to COO Madrigal to incorporate into her proposed budget to Metro Council. The venues are scheduled to present to Council on April 22nd. MERC and Council will hold a joint workshop on public-private partnerships on April 3.

Consent Agenda

- **Consideration of the February 5, 2025, MERC Meeting Minutes**
This item was approved.

Attachment: [MERC meeting minutes](#)

COO Communications

Marissa Madrigal gave some context on the broader budget environment at Metro, sharing that the venues and many other departments are facing budget deficits in the coming year. The overall trends show revenues not keeping up with costs. It was requested that each department submit a balanced proposal, and that the Central Service departments submit reduction scenarios to help holistically address the deficits.

FY25-26 Proposed Budget Presentation

Ashley Sloan, MERC Finance Manager

Attachments: [FY26 MERC Budget Presentation](#)

- Commissioner Krys-Rusoff introduced the presentation, reviewed the format, and thanked venues staff for their work
- Sloan gave an overview of venue budget context touching on transient lodging tax, government support, expenses outpacing revenue, and inflationary pressure
- Cindy Wallace, Executive Director of the Oregon Convention Center gave an FY26 overview for OCC including their current state, operating environment, risks, and opportunities
- Rachael Lembo, Executive Director of Portland'5 gave an FY26 overview for P5 including their current state, attendance, building usage, operating environment risks and opportunities
- Matthew Rotchford, Executive Director Expo Center gave an FY26 overview for Expo including their current state, operating environment, risks, and opportunities
- Commissioner Krys-Rusoff spoke to the 33 FTE reductions and noted the positions are not being eliminated due to performance but because of the economic cycle we are in. All our hearts go out to the people we know will suffer because of these decisions.
- Commissioner Penilton acknowledged the difficult work and highlighted potential deeper challenges around federal cuts, declining TLT trends, and our current fund balance.
- Commissioner Malán-González asked if there are any other deferments that can be made prior to FTE cuts citing the \$600,000 for the Keller elevator as an example. Lembo acknowledged the difficult decision to add a Keller capital project to the list but explained that the Keller is the venue that currently brings in the most revenue and we cannot afford to have an elevator go down. The risk is too high to not address it with some type of capital investment. It also doesn't help address our operational sustainability.
- Commissioner Palm stated MERC's responsibility is to look at what is sustainable for the venues, and we can't have revenue at 7% and expenses at 17% for any length of time. MERC needs to spend time working on solutions with ongoing conversations outside of budget season.
- Commissioner Oxley agreed with Palm and noted MERC's focus should be on long term strategies. He asked why 2030 was a target number and was it informed by Travel Portland? Stroud responded the figure came from the Visitor Development Fund and they believe that is when we will get back to "2019" dollars. It was noted those are vastly discounted against the value of the dollar.
- Commissioner Oxley asked for clarification on Expo reserves. Stroud responded 2 months is the required amount of reserves which Expo did not have. Metro will be taking action in the

current FY to transfer money into Expo's fund balance to ensure solvency. In addition, we've put forth into the proposed budget \$400,000 of additional general fund money into the fund balance. If approved, together with the actions in the proposed budget will get us to roughly \$900,000.

- Commissioner Oxley asked about the reserve balance for P5. Sloan responded we are forecasting 3.4M and we'd like it to be at 4.4M. Sloan confirmed OCC is at 10.9M and we require 8.8M.
- Commissioner Oxley highlighted that the 17% staffing cuts at P5 needs to be brought into current city IGA conversations.
- Commissioner Penilton shared concerns on whether the proposed cuts are sufficient to get us to where we need to be. Stroud acknowledged the concern and uncertainty and noted the assumptions around the operating environment are being challenged at this point. We have worked to stabilize and are focused on more aggressive approach. Penilton stated we need to consider what our model should be, and from a revenue perspective we must have some other options. It's not sustainable the way it is now.
- Chair Stoudamire-Phillips echoed Oxley's concern that the city is not aware of the financial details at P5. She also highlighted Lembo's point of balancing the schedules of nonprofit and commercial shows at P5 to maximize revenue. She shared her interest in finding out if other cities are having similar experiences and losses in convention business.
- Commissioner Hall highlighted the footprint and impact our venues have and how do we start having difficult conversations now.
- Commissioner Kryz-Rusoff asked COO Madrigal about the PERS expense increase and stated that we can not make up that kind of revenue in a year. What kind of discussion are being held at the state level? This has to be addressed. Madrigal acknowledged this is something that is impacting all of Metro and every public institution. She noted her understanding is the PERS accounts have not seen the returns that were expected, and the charges have gone up and they will go up next year and this is something we will have to factor in. We individually don't control this, but this is a conversation we need to have as a community as it's having an impact on every corner of our state.
- Commissioner Kryz-Rusoff asked given these cuts, how comfortable do you feel that you will be able to meet the revenue expectations that you've set? Wallace responded her team are excellent forecasters and she is confident of the revenue goals for FY26 but highlighted if we do not make changes, we will be in the same situation next year. Lembo shared they have a decent idea of the schedule for next year and the events are there. What feels uncertain is on the national level. Rotchford shared his confidence in his sales team and highlighted the difficulties in transition.
- COO Madrigal highlighted the word reset and stated the need to reset across Metro. The ability for an organization to survive into the future will depend on adaptability and agility. This is the energy our teams are bringing to their work.

Action Agenda

- Resolution No. 25-04, For the purpose of approving the Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission ("MERC") Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 Proposed Budget

Attachments: [MERC Resolution 25-04](#)

Chair Stoudamire-Phillips called for a vote on Resolution No. 25-04.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hall, seconded by Commissioner Malán-González, that Resolution 25-04 be adopted. The motion passed by the following vote:

Aye: 7 Stoudamire-Phillips, Hall, Krys-Rusoff, Oxley, Malán-González, Palm and Penilton

Adjourn

There being no further business, Chair Stoudamire Phillips adjourned the meeting at 1:57 p.m.

Executive Session: under ORS 192.660(2)(d) to conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to conduct labor relations

- *Minutes submitted by Amy Nelson*



First Opportunity Target Area:

Clarify the program's purpose to improve governance and administration

April 2025

A Report by the Office of the Auditor

Brian Evans

Metro Auditor

Angela Owens

Principal Management Auditor

Gabby Poccia

Hatfield Resident Fellow

Metro Accountability Hotline

The Metro Accountability Hotline gives employees and citizens an avenue to report misconduct, waste or misuse of resources in any Metro or Metro Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC) facility or department.

The Hotline is administered by the Metro Auditor's Office. All reports are taken seriously and responded to in a timely manner. The auditor contracts with a hotline vendor, EthicsPoint, to provide and maintain the reporting system. Your report will serve the public interest and assist Metro in meeting high standards of public accountability.

To make a report, choose either of the following methods:

Dial 888-299-5460 (toll free in the U.S. and Canada)
File an online report at www.metroaccountability.org



Brian Evans
Metro Auditor
600 NE Grand Ave
Portland, OR 97232-2736
TEL 503 797 1892

MEMORANDUM

April 9, 2025

To: Lynn Peterson, Council President
Ashton Simpson, Councilor, District 1
Christine Lewis, Councilor, District 2
Gerritt Rosenthal, Councilor, District 3
Juan Carlos Gonzalez, Councilor, District 4
Mary Nolan, Councilor, District 5
Duncan Hwang, Councilor, District 6

From: Brian Evans, Metro Auditor

Re: Audit of First Opportunity Target Area Program

This report covers the audit of the First Opportunity Target Area (FOTA) program. FOTA began in 1989 to give eligible job applicants the first opportunity to apply for positions at the Oregon Convention Center. Positions at Portland's Centers for the Arts, and Portland Expo Center were later added. The purpose of the audit was to evaluate how administration of FOTA impacted program performance.

The audit found administration of FOTA was not aligned with the Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission's (MERC) 2015 policy guidance and intended program outcomes were unclear. MERC required annual updates to the program's income requirements and reviews of the zip code boundary every five years. FOTA requirements had not been updated for nearly ten years.

Program performance data and reporting were unreliable. We did not locate reports about Metro's implementation in recent years and contractor reports did not appear to be based on program requirements. We evaluated the program using different interpretation of intended outcomes and found FOTA provided limited economic opportunities. The audit also found weak relationships with community-based organizations (CBOs), which indicated additional efforts were needed to engage successfully.

We have discussed our findings and recommendations with Marissa Madrigal, COO; Craig Stroud, General Manager of Visitor Venues; Holly Calhoun, Deputy COO; Julio Garcia, Human Resources Director; Sebrina Owens-Wilson, DEI Director, and Kara Hill, Talent Acquisition Manager. I would like to acknowledge and thank all the people who assisted us in completing this audit.

Summary

The First Opportunity Target Area program (FOTA) began in 1989 after Metro received state funding to develop and operate the Oregon Convention Center (OCC). FOTA was designed to give eligible job applicants the first opportunity to apply for a position at the OCC. Positions at Portland's Centers for the Arts, and Portland Expo Center were later added to the program. Eligibility was based on household income and zip code.

The purpose of this audit was to evaluate how administration of FOTA impacted program performance. We found that FOTA was more of a step in Metro's recruitment process than a program. Management of FOTA was not aligned with the Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission's (MERC) 2015 policy guidance, and FOTA's intended outcomes were unclear.

FOTA's program requirements were not updated as required. MERC required annual updates to the income thresholds and reviews of the zip code boundary every five years. The program's requirements had not been updated for nearly ten years. As a result, fewer people were eligible.

The audit also found that FOTA performance data and reporting were unreliable. We did not locate any reports about Metro's implementation of FOTA in recent years. Two of MERC's contractors reported on FOTA regularly, but their reports did not appear to be based on the program's requirements. Without regular reporting and reliable data, decision makers cannot know if a program is effective.

We evaluated the program using different interpretations of desired outcomes, and found FOTA provided limited economic opportunities. Over the last five years, the program had a limited impact on the number of people hired. The number of positions filled through the program have also declined over time. Most positions filled were part-time and event-based work. This reduced the earning potential and benefits for employees.

Lastly, the audit found that weak relationships with community-based organizations (CBOs) limited FOTA's recruitment. Relationships were focused on a weekly job opportunity email sent to CBOs. The contact list for the email contained some out-of-date information. Our interviews with CBOs indicated additional efforts were needed for Metro to engage successfully.

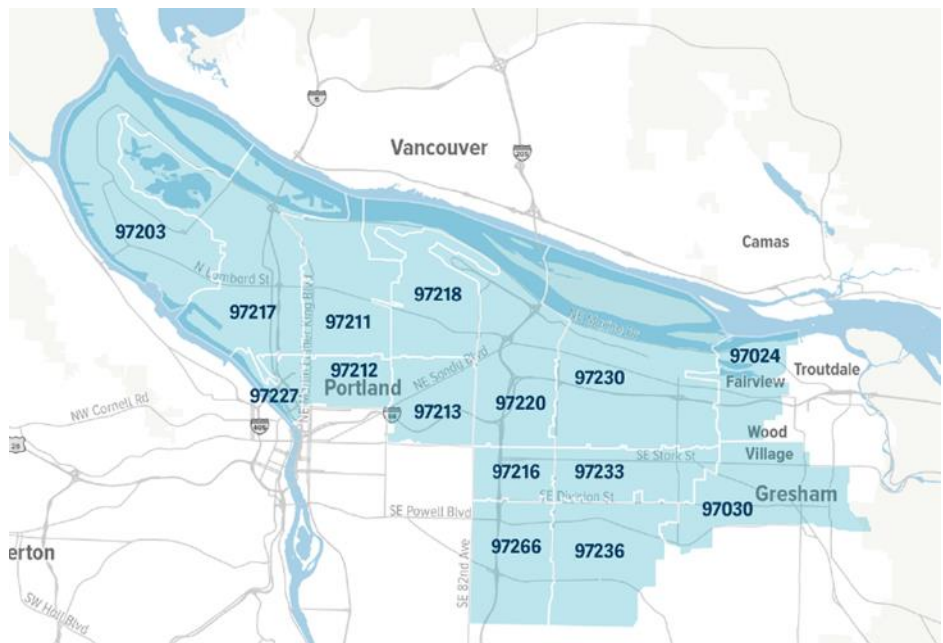
The audit included six recommendations. Five were designed to clarify MERC's policy direction and improve program administration. The last recommendation was made to ensure alignment between FOTA and other workforce diversity efforts.

Background

Metro’s First Opportunity Target Area program (FOTA) was designed to give eligible job applicants the first opportunity to apply for positions at the Oregon Convention Center (OCC). Positions at Portland’s Centers for the Arts (Portland’s), and Portland Expo Center (Expo) were later added to the program. To be eligible for FOTA, applicants must:

- Have a household income less than \$47,000 for a household of one or two OR \$65,000 for a household of three or more.
- Live in one of 15 zip codes.

Exhibit 1 The First Opportunity Target Area includes 15 zip codes in Multnomah County



Source: Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission Resolution 15-22a, January 6, 2016; Metro Website.

FOTA began in 1989 after Metro received state funding to develop and operate the OCC. The state required Metro, directly and through its partners, to pursue a policy of providing a first opportunity to jobs to economically disadvantaged residents living in economically-distressed neighborhoods near the OCC.

The OCC was built in and near neighborhoods that had a history of displacement because of government-sponsored construction projects. These projects led to the demolition of businesses, churches, and homes during the 1950’s through 1970’s. Communities of color were especially impacted by the displacement because racist housing policies restricted where they could live.

Initially, people who were unemployed or had income below the target area's median income were eligible to apply. They also needed to live in the immediate vicinity of the OCC. The target area boundary:

- Columbia Boulevard at the north end.
- 42nd Avenue at the east end.
- I-84 at the south end.
- Willamette River at the west end.

FOTA's requirements have changed over time. Portland's and Expo positions were added to the program. In 2003 and 2015, the income thresholds increased. The target area boundary expanded in 2015 to include its current zip codes.

The program initially sought to provide preference to contractors that hired employees who met the income thresholds and lived in the target area. The program also initially encouraged advertising contracting and purchasing opportunities to businesses in the target area. FOTA-specific contracting requirements were formalized in contracting and purchasing rules. They were later removed and replaced with agencywide contracting efforts related to state certified, woman-owned, minority-owned, and emerging small businesses.

Several parties across Metro were involved in administering FOTA. Metro's Human Resources (HR) department supported the recruitment process. The General Manager of Visitor Venues administered policies and procedures at OCC, Portland's, and Expo. The Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC) provided venue oversight and advised Metro Council on the adoption of venue policies, goals, and objectives. MERC approved updated FOTA requirements in 2015.

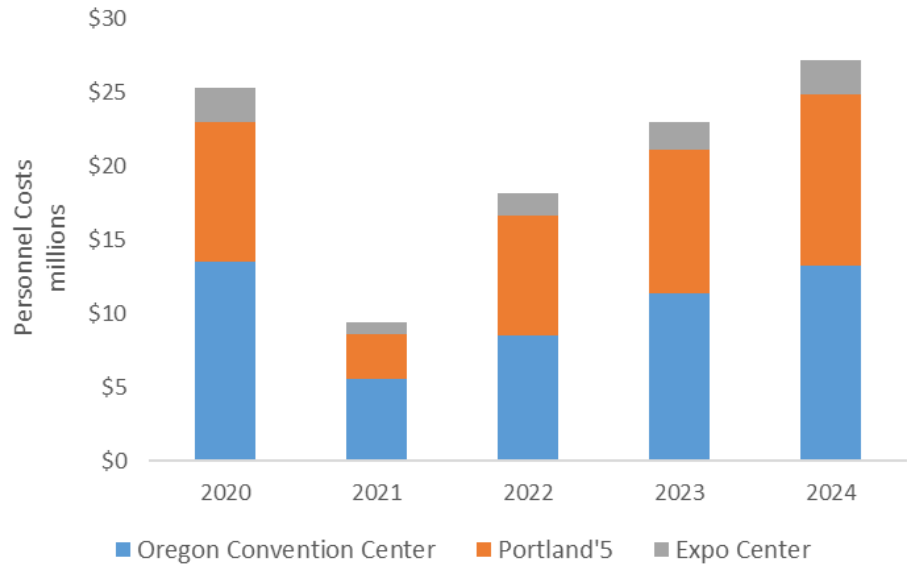
Metro policy required posting job opportunities for FOTA-eligible applicants before posting them for the general public. Qualified applicants were required to be considered first for open positions. If they were selected to interview, Metro was required to interview them first and make a hiring decision before opening the position to the general public.

Metro maintained public-facing websites for job opportunities. One was specifically for applicants who met FOTA requirements. Another was for general recruitments. Job opportunities were also forwarded to a contact list of community-based-organizations (CBOs).

HR reviewed applications to make sure applicants self-certified that they met the income and geographic requirements. Hiring managers across the venues were responsible for beginning the recruitment process and interviewing applicants. Metro used a recruiting software program, to manage and document recruitments.

FOTA requirements applied to all venue positions. The venues filled 501 positions over the last five fiscal years. Between FY 2019-20 and FY 2023-24, Metro spent about \$20 million per year on venue personnel costs, including wages and benefits.

Exhibit 2 Metro spent between \$9.4 million and \$27.2 million per year on visitor venue personnel costs in the last five fiscal years



Source: Auditor's office analysis of personnel costs in PeopleSoft. Costs adjusted for inflation.

Metro also contracted for some parts of venue operations. One contractor provided food and beverage services. Another promoted tourism in the region. These contractors were required to report FOTA information related to their total hires. The food and beverage contractor indicated they hired 553 total positions in the last three fiscal years. The tourism marketing contractor employed a total of 74 employees as of November 2024, so likely hired fewer employees during the same period.

Results

The audit found FOTA was more of a step in Metro’s recruitment process than a program. Management of FOTA was not aligned with MERC’s 2015 policy guidance, and its intended outcomes were not clear. Without clarity and oversight, Metro could not maintain an effective program. A 2015 evaluation found there was agreement about why the program began, but little consensus about what it was supposed to achieve. This weakness was evident in our review of the program’s current administration.

The 2015 program evaluation reported that FOTA suffered from a lack of high-level leadership and operational ownership. This audit found the lack of effective governance still existed. As a result:

- Program requirements were not updated as required.
- Performance data and reporting were ineffective.
- Economic opportunities through FOTA were limited.
- Weak relationships with community-based organizations limited program recruitment.

Metro documents, contractors, employees, and agency leadership characterized the program’s intended outcomes in different ways. Some viewed FOTA as a way to address displacement caused by the development of the OCC. Some believed the program was intended to increase workforce diversity. The program was also characterized as providing workforce development and career advancement. Several people emphasized the contributions of contractors instead of Metro.

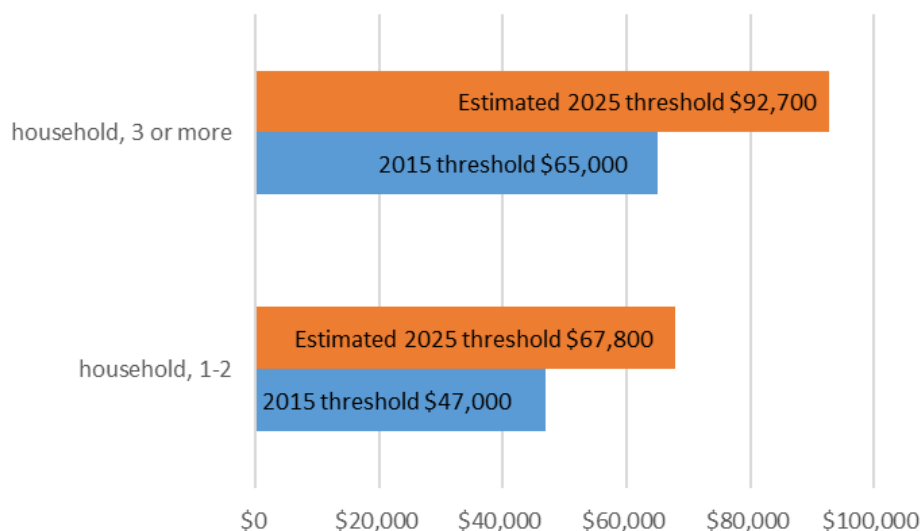
The relationship between FOTA and other diversity and equity goals was unclear. This weakness was also identified in the 2015 evaluation. In 2016, Metro published its Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity. The strategic plan made a connection between FOTA and agencywide workforce diversity goals, but how FOTA’s current administration aligned with those goals was unclear.

Program requirements were not updated as required

The audit found that FOTA criteria were not updated as required. As a result, fewer people were eligible. A 2015 MERC resolution required annual updates to the income thresholds. It also required MERC to review the target-area boundary every five years and update as necessary. The last review and update took place in 2015. This means the program’s requirements have not been updated for nearly ten years.

Income thresholds were supposed to be updated based on the University of Washington Self-Sufficiency Index (index). The index was intended to measure how much income was needed to meet basic needs without public or private assistance. We estimated the 2025 income thresholds would have been about \$67,800 for a household up to two. This estimate suggests an increase of about \$20,000 from the current threshold. For a household of three or more people, we estimated the income threshold would have been about \$92,700, or about \$27,800 more than the current threshold.

Exhibit 3 Updating income thresholds would make more people eligible for FOTA



Source: Auditor's Office estimate of 2025 FOTA income thresholds based on University of Washington Self-Sufficiency Indices for 2014, 2017, 2021 and Metro website as of 8/15/24.

Updating the income thresholds as specified in the 2015 MERC resolution could have increased FOTA eligibility for households in the current zip codes. The exact number was unclear because of how household income was reported in Census data, but we estimated it would likely be in the thousands.

The FOTA boundary was also supposed to be reviewed regularly to ensure it remained relevant in reaching its intended population. Because the target area has not been updated since 2015, the current boundary may not be aligned with the program's intent. The boundaries were updated in 2015 out of concerns for gentrification. Since then, in 2018, the City of Portland published a draft gentrification and displacement report showing several FOTA zip codes were experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, additional gentrification.

We identified two causes that appeared to be barriers to implementing the income and FOTA boundary updates. The first was the lack of clear roles and responsibilities. MERC was identified as being responsible for income and boundary updates. However, MERC is a volunteer commission with limited staff to complete the work. In practice, the General Manager of Visitor Venues and HR appeared to be most closely aligned with FOTA administration.

While those parts of Metro may have capacity to update income thresholds, reviewing the FOTA boundary could require a significant amount of work. The last boundary changes were created using a consultant, a cross-agency workgroup, a stakeholder task force, and sophisticated data analysis. If that

Performance data and reporting were ineffective

same approach were used again it would require dedicated resources, additional capacity, and clarity about roles and responsibilities.

The second barrier to implementing the updates was that the index for updating income thresholds in the 2015 MERC resolution was published every three to four years. As a result, it could not be used to update income thresholds annually. A different index would be needed to update income annually.

The audit found FOTA performance data and reporting were unreliable and could not be used to effectively evaluate the program. Without regular reporting and reliable data to understand program performance, decision-makers cannot know if a program is effective. We did not locate any internal or external reports about Metro's implementation of FOTA in recent years. Two of MERC's contractors reported on FOTA regularly, but their reports were inconsistent with each other, and did not appear to be based on the program's requirements.

Regular reporting about Metro's performance was not taking place. MERC meeting packets and minutes over the past ten years indicated that Metro rarely provided reports that included FOTA application and hiring data. In general, FOTA data was shared when the program was being formally evaluated in 2003 and 2015.

During the audit, HR provided FOTA performance data for fiscal year (FY) 2022-23 and FY 2023-24. HR also provided a report and data from 2016 that included two quarters of application and hiring information. This indicated program data was available, but it was not being reported at MERC meetings.

The level of detail varied across the reports we received. For instance, one contained the race and ethnicity of those hired through FOTA, internal, and general recruitments. If the intent of FOTA is to increase workforce diversity, then this information could help decision-makers understand which recruitment strategies contribute to Metro's workforce diversity goals. Another report summarized only FOTA recruitment information. It excluded race and ethnicity details but tracked applicants at each stage of the recruitment process. This information could help identify potential barriers for FOTA applicants during recruitment.

There were examples of incomplete and inaccurate data in the reports we reviewed. We noted inconsistencies between data in the recruitment software and PeopleSoft HR. For instance, some employees were identified as being hired through a FOTA recruitment process in one source, but not the other. It was also unclear how existing employees who were hired through a FOTA recruitment process would be reported in the data if they were later hired in another position using a non-FOTA recruitment process.

Contractors reported data about FOTA at MERC meetings, but it was not aligned with FOTA requirements. The basis of FOTA is that applicants meet two requirements to receive a first opportunity to apply and interview for a position. Currently, neither contractor requires that an applicant lives in the target area or meets income requirements. One of the contractors does not offer a first opportunity to interview. The other contractor only offers a first opportunity to interview for manager positions.

The contractors were required to report FOTA compliance. Their reports focus on the zip codes where employees live. This may be in part due to unclear language in their contracts. One contract defines FOTA as applying only to the geographic boundary while the other contract gives no definition of FOTA at all.

Clarifying the program's reporting requirements would improve the quality of data available to assess performance. Reporting timelines were clear in both contracts and both contractors reported on time. This points to a lack of clarity about the program's income requirements as the cause for inconsistent program reporting. The General Manager of Visitor Venues was identified in one contract as being responsible for defining reporting requirements.

Program performance information was also inconsistent between the two contractors. One contractor reported its purchases from businesses in the target area, but contracting was no longer part of the program. Misalignment between what contractors reported and FOTA's requirements could cause confusion among stakeholders about the program's performance.

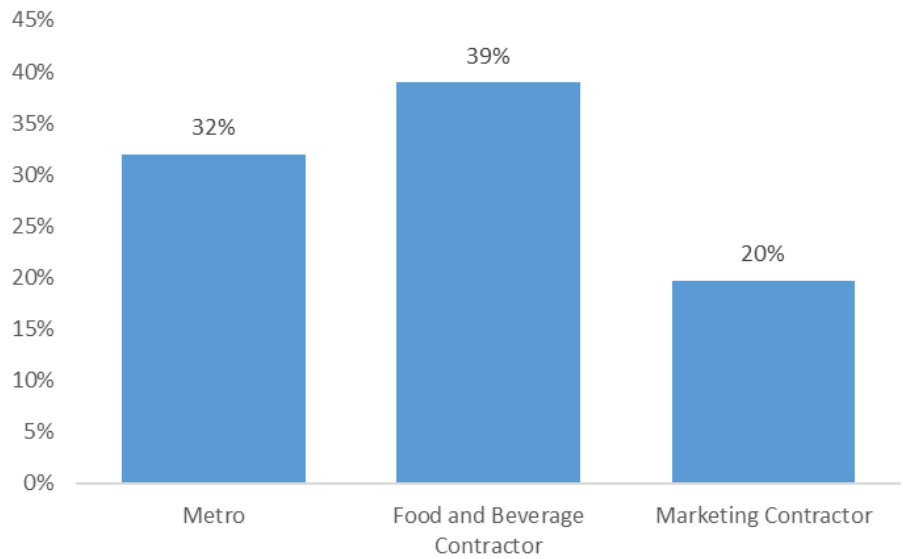
Reporting was ineffective in part because it was unclear what the program was supposed to accomplish. If the purpose of the program were to provide the first opportunity to apply for a job, then data about the number of applicants and number of people hired would be needed. If the desired outcome were to provide economic benefits to economically disadvantaged people, then tracking income growth might make sense. Some of those data points were available for Metro positions, but they would need to be gathered for contractor positions.

Based on Metro's data, about 4% (22 of 501) of venue hires were made through a FOTA recruitment in the last five fiscal years. This data did not include contractor hires. Metro employees hired through a FOTA recruitment attested that they met the income threshold for their household size and lived in the target area. HR did not verify this information.

If the purpose of FOTA is to employ people in the target area generally, then Metro's reporting would need to focus on the number of venue employees living in target area zip codes. In that scenario, Metro's reports would be like the current reports contractors make to MERC.

HR data showed about 32% of Metro’s venue employees lived in the FOTA boundary near the end of FY 2023-24. That was about the same percentage prior to COVID (37%). The two contractors reported 39% and 20% of their employees lived in the target area in 2024.

Exhibit 4 The percentage of employees living in the target area varied among Metro and its contractors



Source: Auditor’s Office analysis of PeopleSoft HR data for 6/23/24; Marketing Contractor 3rd Quarter 2023-24 report; Food and Beverage Contractor employee data as of 12/2/24.

If the purpose of the program were to increase workforce diversity, then performance reports would need to include demographic data. Metro and the two contractors reported information about workforce diversity. However, that information was not connected to the program. For instance, Metro’s website included a dashboard showing the race and ethnicity of all employees as well as the race and ethnicity of venue employees. It did not track demographic data of employees hired through FOTA recruitments.

FOTA was also characterized by some as focusing on providing career opportunities. If that were the program’s purpose, then performance could be assessed based on the career path of employees. In that case, data about part-time and full-time positions, starting and ending pay, job duration, and promotions would be helpful.

The audit found economic opportunity was not defined. This mattered because the program sought to provide economic opportunities for economically disadvantaged residents. A lack of specific desired outcomes can lead to different interpretations of what creates a program benefit. We evaluated the program using different interpretations of desired outcomes and found FOTA provided limited economic opportunities for economically disadvantaged applicants.

Economic opportunities through FOTA were limited

Over the last five fiscal years, FOTA had a limited impact on the number of people hired by Metro at the venues (4%). In addition, the number of positions filled through FOTA recruitments has been declining. In FY 2019-20, the venues hired 13 employees through FOTA recruitments out of 111 total job opportunities (12%). In FY 2023-24 three employees were hired through FOTA out of the 120 job opportunities (2.5%).

Contractors appeared to have more success hiring from the target areas. For instance, 218 of one contractor's employees hired over the last three years lived in the target area. This represented about 40% of the positions that contractors filled during that time. However, those positions were not filled using Metro's FOTA requirements.

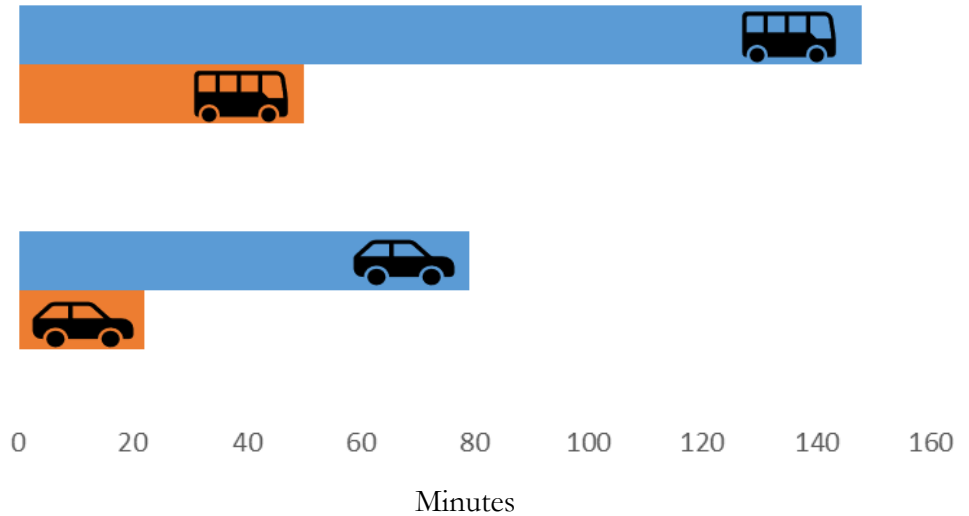
Most FOTA opportunities were limited to part-time and event-based jobs. About 73% of Metro positions filled through FOTA recruitments were part-time, event-based positions. Contractors also hired mostly part-time and event-based positions. In the last five fiscal years, 76% of the people who lived in the target area that were hired by contractors were part-time employees. This was likely the result of the event-based nature of venue positions. However, it reduced the earning potential and benefits for employees in these positions.

The trade-offs between full- and part-time employment should be considered in program planning. Part-time and event-based work may be attractive to people seeking flexibility or those wanting to develop job skills. Some applicants meeting the program's income requirements may qualify to receive income-based financial support. Examples include assistance for paying utility bills or purchasing food. A full-time position could raise their income high enough to make them ineligible for these services.

In some cases, a reduced work schedule may create additional burden that could make the job less desirable. For instance, traveling to and from work for a part-time or event shift may not make sense for some applicants. As the target area boundaries expanded, travel time to get to the venues may have increased.

We compared travel time from six zip codes in the target area to the three venues. The analysis showed target areas added in 2015 increased average round-trip travel time for one of the selected zip codes up to 79 minutes by car and up to 149 minutes by public transportation.

Exhibit 5 Employees living in the **updated target areas** could travel more than employees living in the **original target areas**



Source: Auditor's Office analysis based on a selection of schools in FOTA zip codes, TriMet.org, and Google.com/maps.

Because most positions were event-based, employee benefits were reduced. Some, but not all, part-time employees at Metro were eligible for health benefits. Part-time employees paid more for the benefits. According to Metro's employee benefits handbook, event-based employees were not eligible for Metro's health benefits. They also had less access to some other insurance benefits.

Several employees hired through FOTA recruitments took on additional jobs across the venues. This had the potential to increase their weekly hours. While this type of variety may be attractive to some applicants, others may find the inconsistency and need to travel among the venues unattractive.

Some FOTA opportunities had limited potential for future wage growth. This could matter if the desired program outcome is to provide opportunities for career advancement. At least 27% of the jobs filled at the venues in the past five years paid a fixed hourly wage regardless of experience.

We also heard concerns that FOTA opportunities were low-wage positions. We reviewed the starting wage for employees that Metro's PeopleSoft HR system identified as being hired through a FOTA recruitment. After adjusting for inflation, the average starting wage was about \$22 per hour. This was higher than the regional minimum wage of about \$16 per hour. It was also higher than our current estimate of the index which was about \$19 per hour for a single adult.

**Weak relationships
with community-
based organizations
limited program
recruitment**

Contractors' employees who lived in target area zip codes had varying pay ranges. After adjusting for inflation, the marketing contractor's average hourly pay was about \$41. The food and beverage contractor's average hourly pay was about \$20.

We found that Metro's engagement with CBOs was inconsistent and inadequate to recruit FOTA participants. These relationships were meant to help match potential applicants with job opportunities. Relationships were inadequate due to several factors including differing or unclear expectations, a lack of personal connections between CBO employees and Metro employees, and changes to previous relationship-building practices.

The audit found current relationships between Metro and CBOs were primarily focused on a weekly job opportunity email that was sent to the CBOs. However, the contact list contained some out-of-date information. We attempted to contact organizations on the list that had been identified as high priority partners for FOTA. We also tried to contact CBOs on the list that were based in a FOTA zip code. While most of these contacts were up to date, many did not respond to our inquiries, some were no longer valid, and one of the contacts was not involved in job placement work. We found that one CBO was not receiving emails, two were receiving emails sporadically, and several listed email addresses were no longer in use.

We interviewed seven CBOs from the list of twenty-five. Several mentioned having established relationships with Metro through job fairs. However, two contacts directly involved in connecting clients to job opportunities reported that Metro's past outreach practices had stopped. Those practices included Metro employees visiting CBO offices, speaking with staff and clients to establish expectations, and communicating a clear mission for FOTA.

Several CBOs mentioned that they work directly with the organizations where their clients applied. A barrier in their efforts to recruit FOTA participants was not knowing who to contact at Metro about hiring. These employment specialists often rely on their relationships and networks to support their clients. Some felt that having a person to talk to about available jobs and expectations of positions would be helpful. Relationships may have lapsed in part because of COVID shutdowns and remote work. These findings indicated additional efforts were needed to engage successfully with CBOs.

Effective partnerships also appeared to be more challenging due to unclear responsibility for managing FOTA. There did not seem to be a process in place to keep the email contact list up to date. This was important because it acts as a key piece of communication between Metro and CBOs. Some CBOs we spoke with had positive feelings about Metro and receiving the weekly emails. Several did work with low-income populations who live in the target area, making them good partners for the program.

Past FOTA program evaluations make clear that CBO connections were an important part of success. The 2003 evaluation made recommendations to expand outreach in the communities of North and Northeast Portland. They noted local businesses, community groups, and churches have a natural ability to connect people to opportunities.

The 2015 program evaluation recommended using data-driven approaches to support outreach. Two-way communication would be necessary to ensure accurate information was used by program management. CBOs need to know about the program and its requirements. Metro needs to know which groups and partnerships work best for finding eligible applicants.

Two CBOs mentioned that jobs offered at Metro are desirable and one career specialist noted that their clients may be underqualified for positions. Barriers may exist for clients such as a lack of skills to meet the job's minimum qualifications. Although some of the CBOs we talked to offered training programs, it did not appear to be directly aimed at building qualifications for FOTA positions. This may result in fewer applicants connecting to FOTA opportunities. Stronger relationships between Metro and CBOs could help reduce some of those barriers by providing training for CBO staff and trainings at CBOs for potential applicants

Recommendations

To clarify the FOTA policy direction in Resolution 2015-22a, Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission and the General Manager of Visitor Venues should:

1. Change the criteria used to annually update the program's income thresholds.
2. Create a process to determine whether the program's geographic boundary will be updated every five years.

To improve program administration, the General Manager of Visitor Venues in consultation with Human Resources, should:

3. Establish consistent performance reporting standards for contractors and internal operations.
4. Publish performance reports periodically to inform the public, policy makers, and management about FOTA's outcomes.
5. Strengthen relationships with community-based organizations to connect community members with job opportunities.

To ensure alignment between FOTA and other workforce diversity efforts, the General Manager of Visitor Venues in consultation with Human Resources, and Diversity Equity and Inclusion should:

6. Update FOTA to align with any changes to SPARED I or other workforce diversity goals and strategies.

Scope and methodology

The purpose of this audit was to evaluate how administration of the First Opportunity Target Area (FOTA) impacted program performance. Our objectives were to:

- Determine the status of the 2015 FOTA program review recommendations.
- Determine if differences in how Metro and partners administer FOTA impacted program performance.
- Identify opportunities to increase program performance.

The scope of analysis included Metro and contractor FOTA reporting from fiscal year (FY) 2019-20 through FY 2023-24 and employees hired by Metro through FOTA beginning in 2016. To develop our audit objectives, we reviewed prior Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC) meeting minutes, recruitment for MERC applicants, and partner contracts and agreements. We consulted best practices from NeoGov, the Government Accountability Office, and the Government Alliance on Race and Equity. We also reviewed Metro resolutions and FOTA evaluations dating back to 1989.

We interviewed Metro staff and leadership as well as MERC commissioners to familiarize ourselves with the history, objectives, and implementation of FOTA. We conducted preliminary analyses of program data retrieved from Metro's recruiting software program and PeopleSoft HR.

To complete our audit objectives, we reviewed FOTA program requirements outlined in MERC Resolution 2015-22a and determined if the program was up to date. We conducted interviews with a judgmental sample of seven community-based organizations (CBOs). We used a judgmental sample to identify the most relevant partners on Metro's email list. As a result, findings cannot be generalized to the population as a whole. The sample population was based on having a zip code in the FOTA boundary or being identified by Metro as being a high priority organization in prior MERC FOTA discussions.

We evaluated data from Metro's recruiting software to identify MERC venue hires made through FOTA, internal, and general recruitment between FY 2019-20 and FY 2023-24. We used Metro's classification and compensation website as of 10/24/2024 to determine the compensation range for venue hires. We also reviewed PeopleSoft HR data to identify starting hourly wages for people documented as being hired through FOTA recruitments. We adjusted hourly wages to 2024 values. Due to the incomplete nature of this data set, audit findings cannot be generalized to the population as a whole.

We interviewed two of Metro's contractors, Levy and Travel Portland, to better understand how they administered and reported on Metro's FOTA program. We obtained and analyzed hiring data from these contractors to understand how their efforts impacted program performance.

In October 2024, we notified management about an error in the way FOTA opportunities were listed in Metro's weekly job opportunities email. Management stated that they implemented corrective actions later that month in response.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. This audit was included in the FY 2024-25 audit schedule.

Management response



Memo

Date: April 4, 2025
To: Brian Evans, Metro Auditor
From: Marissa Madrigal, Chief Operating Officer
Craig Stroud, General Manager of Visitor Venues
Holly Calhoun, Deputy Chief Operating Officer
Subject: First Opportunity Target Area Audit-Management Response

Introduction

Auditor Evans,

Thank you for the thoughtful review of the First Opportunity Target Area (FOTA) program and the recommendations for improving administration of the current program and incorporating previous findings and commitments (“First Opportunity Target Area Program Study” February 2015, and “MERC Resolution 15-22a” January 2016).

FOTA was implemented 36 years ago as a *“first opportunity for available jobs to economically disadvantaged residents living in economically distressed neighborhoods in the immediate vicinity of the Convention Center site.”* At its core, this program was an attempt to acknowledge discriminatory practices and displacement that had disproportionately impacted communities of color, most significantly the African American community.

As the audit points out, the actual economic advancements or reconciliation of historical injustices that can be tied to the program are less notable. While there may be a range of reasons *why* this is the case, the lack of reliable data and unclear roles and responsibilities must first be addressed. Reliable program data will be critical when providing program performance outcomes to key stakeholders, including policy decision-makers. Changes to this program, including clarifying scope and desired outcomes, will be equally reliant on solid baseline data and qualitative feedback.

Management’s responses to the audit recommendations focus on stabilizing the program by fulfilling the requirements outlined in MERC Resolution 15-22a. Immediate actions include clarifying roles and responsibilities, updating income thresholds, improving data collection and reporting, and deepening relationships with Community-Based Organizations. Assessing outcomes after stabilizing the program will allow the public, policy makers, and management to identify if changes are desired. Please note in our overall timeline that stakeholder engagement, including engaging with policy makers about programmatic changes, is not proposed until after a program stabilization period.

As communities across the nation experience backlash against social justice programs, it’s more important than ever that Metro keeps its commitments and stands by its values, particularly those related to diversity, equity and inclusion. That doesn’t always look like bold moves and loud actions.

Sometimes it just means doing what we said we would, following through, and fulfilling commitments made.

And in the case of the FOTA program, that's what we intend to do. While there's a compelling case to be made that the program isn't fulfilling the commitments it originally sought to, this position minimizes the commitments management made and didn't adequately keep 10 years ago. By starting with a focus on rightsizing programmatic needs and resources instead of focusing on why the program should be changed, we can more effectively equip policy makers with the necessary data to meaningfully explore FOTAs purpose, outcomes and responsiveness to the cultural and economic disparities which the program originally sought to address.

Audit Recommendations - updated March 19th

Recommendation

To clarify the FOTA policy direction in Resolution 2015-22a, MERC and the General Manager of Visitor Venues should:

1. Change the criteria used to annually update the program's income thresholds.

Management Response: Management agrees with the recommendation. As noted by the audit, the University of Washington (UW) Self-Sufficiency Index, identified in Resolution 2015-22a was published about every three years. Given the resolution's requirement to update the income thresholds annually, either a new index or revised approach must be identified to support annual changes.

The UW Self-Sufficiency Index published an Oregon 2024 index. To expedite an income threshold adjustment that will immediately increase the number of applicants residing in the existing FOTA boundary that qualify for the program's first opportunity, the General Manager of Visitor Venues will bring forth to MERC a resolution to update the income thresholds using the Oregon 2024 index no later than August 2025.

Adjusting the income thresholds for years that fall between updates to the UW Self-Sufficiency Index will require additional research and direction from MERC.

Proposed Plan: The General Manager of Visitor Venues will work with Metro's Planning, Development and Research department's data and research professionals to identify alternative self-sufficiency indexes which provide similar income and self-sufficiency data. Should no reliable replacement indexes exist, the General Manager of Visitor Venues will identify an annual inflation adjustment process that can be applied to the UW Self-Sufficiency Index to allow annual adjustments.

Timeline: Either a new index or an annual inflation adjustment process will be provided to MERC for consideration no later than January 2026.

2. Create a process to determine whether the program's geographic boundary will be updated every five years.

Management Response: Management agrees with this recommendation. In addition to this recommendation, the audit's other recommendations include updating program income thresholds, improving data and reporting, and reestablishing CBO partnerships. Management believes it is important to stabilize the program by implementing those recommendations and establishing

two years of program performance data before attempting to assess whether the program’s boundaries require change.

The previous time the geographic boundaries were updated (2015), significant resources were dedicated to the process including a consultant, a cross-agency workgroup, a stakeholder task force, and sophisticated data analysis. Additionally, as the audit noted, the last boundary change created unintended barriers, like significant increases in commute times, particularly when using public transportation.

Because the need for a boundary change necessitates such a commitment, resources, and agency capacity, it is important that decisions are influenced by accurate data analysis to help determine if a boundary change is critical to the program’s success. Two years of performance data will likely provide MERC the information necessary to determine if a change should be considered and we expect to bring this question to MERC in late 2027 or early 2028.

Proposed Plan: Management commits to the following actions to stabilize the program prior to reassessing the programs geographic boundaries:

Income Thresholds: Management will recommend MERC update program income thresholds using a 2024 UW Self-Sufficiency Index report for Oregon by August 2025. In addition, the General Manager of Visitor Venues will recommend either a new income threshold index or an annual inflation adjustment process for future annual updates for MERCs consideration and approval by January 2026. More information on this is provided in response to recommendation one.

Reporting: Clearly establishing reporting requirements for Metro’s Human Resources processes and MERC contractor processes will support consistent reporting and improve accountability and data integrity. Management commits to updating reporting requirements by August 2025 but notes that the timeline may be extended if the updated requirements necessitate any system updates to effectively capture and report performance data. More information on this is provided in response to recommendation three.

CBO Partnerships: Management appreciates the audit report’s language around CBOs and their importance to program success. Deepening existing and establishing new relationships with CBO’s that support job placements, ensuring the relevant CBOs know about the FOTA mission, requirements, expectations, and opportunities, and defining specific roles and responsibilities so that the CBOs know who to contact about hiring are important actions. More information on this is provided in response to recommendation five.

Timeline: We anticipate bringing the question of updating the geographic boundaries to MERC in late 2027 or early 2028.

Recommendation

To improve program administration, the General Manager of Visitor Venues in consultation with Human Resources, should:

3. Establish consistent performance reporting standards for contractors and internal operations.

Management Response: Management agrees with the recommendation. The original FOTA program required the MERC venues directly and through its partners pursue a policy of providing a first opportunity of jobs to economically disadvantaged residents living in economically distressed neighborhoods near the Oregon Convention Center. MERC Resolution 2015-22a affirmed that the basis of FOTA is that applicants meet two

requirements (living within the established geographic boundary and meeting income eligibility thresholds) to receive a first opportunity to apply for and interview for a MERC venue job. As communicated in response to recommendation two, management intends to establish performance reporting standards using the resolution's eligibility requirements.

Proposed Plan: To develop consistent performance reporting standards the General Manager of Visitor Venues will collaborate with Human Resources to define specific recruiting, interviewing, job offer, and job acceptance metrics to specifically track the number of applicants and hires that meet both the FOTA income threshold and FOTA boundary resident requirements.

Timeline: Management commits to establishing metrics with Human Resources by August 2025. That said, should any identified metrics require creating and/or updating systems, the timeline to implement those additional reporting standards may be extended (Metro is actively researching new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems and enhanced data analytics and reporting capabilities are key priorities in that assessment).

The General Manager of Visitor Venues will engage contract partners to clarify the FOTA mission requirements, and expectations. It is expected that the mechanics of their hiring processes will be similar and include recruiting, interviewing, job offer, and job acceptance steps. Upon confirmation, the performance reporting standards will be documented with partners so they can capture the same metrics as internal operations. Management believes this can be accomplished by August 2025.

4. Publish performance reports periodically to inform the public, policy makers, and management about FOTA's outcomes.

Management Response: Management agrees with this recommendation. To implement, management will need to define the FOTA income, residency, and recruitment/hiring performance reporting standards and capture data for internal operations and contractors as stated in audit recommendation three, above. The Metro HR system captures much of this data; therefore, performance reporting to MERC, the public, and management will commence after six months of data is collected (assumed data collection start of August 2025).

Similarly, the General Manager of Visitor Venues will need to engage contract partners about the specific and consistent data points required for their performance reporting. Depending upon their HR system capabilities and the data currently captured, reporting that is consistent with internal operations will commence as quickly as practicable.

Proposed Plan: Management commits to the following actions to establish a program report update schedule:

Internal Reporting: The audit cites that Metro Human Resources provided FOTA performance data for Fiscal Year 2022-23 and Fiscal Year 2023-24. To the extent that data provides information about the FOTA income, residency, and recruitment/hiring performance metrics, the General Manager of Visitor Venues will present that data, along with an analysis and recommendation of possible additional data that would be helpful to MERC in their oversight role, at a MERC meeting in the first quarter of 2026. Management will then report FOTA program hiring performance data to MERC twice annually at a regularly scheduled commission meeting.

MERC Contractor Reporting: The General Manager of Visitor Venues will engage contract partners to clarify the FOTA mission, requirements, and expectations, particularly the income threshold and target area residency requirements, as well as the expectation that their recruitment process includes data capture for

recruiting, interviewing, job offer, and job acceptance steps. The contractors will then be required to incorporate the updated data into regular reporting to MERC.

Timeline: Management estimates this action can be completed by April 2026 with regular reporting thereafter.

5. Strengthen relationships with community-based organizations to connect community members with job opportunities.

Management Response: Management agrees with this recommendation. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) have historically been and remain critical to the success of the FOTA program. Deepening existing and establishing new relationships with CBO's that support job placements, ensuring the relevant CBOs know about the FOTA mission, requirements, expectations, and opportunities, and defining specific roles and responsibilities so that the CBOs know who to contact about hiring are important actions.

Proposed Plan: Management commits to the following actions to strengthen relationships with community-based organizations:

Outreach and update to CBO contact list: Metro Human Resources will contact existing CBOs to affirm their desire to remain connected to and supportive of the FOTA program (this will include providing each CBO the FOTA applicant eligibility requirements to ensure CBO/program fit). Human Resources will inquire of these CBOs, and other connected community partners active in the program's target areas, if they are either interested or can refer other CBOs who are interested in matching their clients to FOTA jobs. This action is expected to be completed by June 2025.

FOTA Program Education, Roles and Responsibilities: For the updated listing of interested CBOs, the General Manager of Visitor Venues will work with the MERC venues and Metro Human Resources to provide one or more engagements on the mission, requirements, expectations, and opportunities of FOTA, as well as specific roles, responsibilities, and contacts. These engagements will seek to understand from these organizations the training they and their clients need to use the program's offerings, as well as the frequency that such engagements would be helpful. This action is expected to be completed by January 2026.

Contract Partner and CBO alignment: The General Manager of Visitor Venues will engage the two venue contract partners to share the importance of CBOs to the program and for collaborative, as well as independent, relationship building between the parties. The General Manager of Visitor Venues will ensure the MERC contract partners are provided with the updated listing of CBOs for their use, as well as inclusion in the engagements to provide CBOs the specific information about their jobs and opportunities. This action will be completed in tandem with the above actions.

Timeline: Timelines for proposed actions listed above.

Recommendation

To ensure alignment between FOTA and other workforce diversity efforts, the General Manager of Visitor Venues in consultation with Human Resources and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, should:

6. Update FOTA to align with any changes to SPAREDI or other workforce diversity goals and strategies.

Management Response: Management agrees to bring this recommendation to policy-makers for consideration as part of updates to Metro’s Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. As stated in the audit, the FOTA program’s alignment with Metro’s workforce diversity and other equity goals and strategies has been a question since at least the February 2015 FOTA program study. That study noted that the relationship between FOTA and other Metro diversity and equity goals is ambiguous, stating, “This is especially true as Metro has taken steps to deepen its commitment toward diversity and equity, for example through its recent Diversity Action Plan.”

The Diversity Action Plan evolved and in 2016 Metro published its Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (SPAREDI). The strategic plan focuses on removing barriers for people of color and improving equity outcomes for these communities by improving how Metro works internally and with partners around the Portland region. At that time, MERC sent a letter to Metro Council expressing, “..., the Metropolitan Exposition and Recreation Commission wishes to express its strong support for Metro's Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and urges Metro Council to adopt and implement it.”

These two contemporaneous actions, MERC’s FOTA Resolution 2015-22a and Metro Council’s adoption of its SPAREDI, indicate that the governance bodies likely understood the ambiguity, yet moved forward with the FOTA program and the SPAREDI as written. While future public engagement and subsequent direction from MERC and/or Metro Council may result in closer alignment and/or small to large scope program modifications, FOTA in its initial and current form was intended to provide “first opportunity for available jobs to economically disadvantaged residents living in economically distressed neighborhoods in the immediate vicinity of the Convention Center site.” While management asserts that the FOTA program is a strategy that aligns with the overarching principles of the SPAREDI (leading with a racial equity focus, eliminating disparities that people of color experience, and generating solutions that address the needs of historically marginalized groups), with a specific tie to SPAREDI Goal C (‘through training and hiring practices that break down barriers for applicants of color, Metro achieves a racially diverse workforce’), the misalignment described in the audit may be in reference to the FOTA program’s narrowed geographic focus as opposed to the SPAREDI’s regionwide lens.

Examples where Metro’s equity actions intersect with the February 2015 FOTA program study includes the Metro initiated Construction Career Pathways Regional Framework. That project, often referred to as C2P2, has resulted in 9 public agencies adopting the framework, which uses a regional approach to recruiting, training, and retaining women and people of color in the construction trades. All Metro departments, including the MERC venues, are required to integrate the essential framework points into construction projects. Another example is the outcomes of the 2019 Oregon Convention Center renovation project. The renovation construction contractor proposal process resulted in the largest Oregon public works contract being awarded to a BIPOC prime contractor at that point in time. Metro’s procurement process used typical contractor selection criteria and to increase opportunities to non-established general contractors emphasized the value of diversity and inclusion by integrating State of Oregon Certification Office for Business Inclusion and Diversity (COBID) criteria which supported the firm’s ability to submit a responsive proposal. The construction contract set project expectations and goals for workforce diversity and financial commitments. Renovation highlights include that 51% of total contract dollars were awarded to COBID registered minority and women-owned businesses, 40% of hours worked were completed by people of color, and of total dollars paid to subcontractors, 54% were awarded to majority Black-owned businesses.

Proposed Plan: As described in the above commitments, management intends to strengthen its oversight of the FOTA program before proposing any significant changes to policy decision-makers. In addition, the audit cites that stakeholders had varying responses to what they believed FOTAs purpose

and outcomes were. The actions identified in management's responses to recommendations one through five include documenting and communicating FOTA requirements to help clarify the FOTA program and its current alignment with SPAREDI Goal C.

Timeline: Following the two-year program stabilization period described in the above responses, management agrees to engage with policy makers (MERC Commission and Metro Council) to obtain direction regarding the alignment between SPAREDI, FOTA and other workforce diversity goals and strategies.



Office of the Metro Auditor
600 NE Grand Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232
503-797-1892
www.oregonmetro.gov

TRAVEL
PORTLAND

2ND QUARTER 2024-25 REPORT

Highlights:

Executive Summary – Page 3



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Megan Conway	President and CEO
James Jessie.....	Chief Sales Officer
Greg Newland	Chief Marketing Officer
Yang Yang.....	Chief Financial Officer



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- For the 2nd Quarter, OCC realized more than \$4.8 million in revenue from Travel Portland booked business. Community impact ROI from all future bookings was 62.7 to 1.
- 19 new and 3 repeat OCC conventions were booked for future years worth more than \$8.6 million in OCC revenue and community economic impact more than \$51.6 million. Total Travel Portland bookings, including single hotel will result in more than \$82 million of economic impact.
- Across media outlets, Portland was included in 5,656 placements with a total impression of more than 106 billion that could potentially influence Portland as a business and leisure travel destination.
- The Travel Portland Convention Sales Team closed the mid-year period booking 220 future conventions and meetings, representing over 164,000 hotel room nights for future dates.
- Strategic communications pre-work around elections and potential demonstrations paid off in the city and hospitality community feeling better prepared than ever before. Our work with EMC continues to cement our leadership role with elected offices and local partners, which will be valuable as we engage with newly elected city and county officials in 2025.

TRENDS, SUCCESSES, OBSTACLES

- Total combined TLT/TID collection in FY25 YTD is \$12.3M, representing -3% year-over-year change, largely due to soft Spring collection, which were partially offset by strong Summer tourism.
- One group was lost due to safety and perception concerns which would have totaled 4,091 room nights with an estimated community economic impact of more than \$2.7 million.
- After a successful opening in 2023, the 5-star review Travel Portland Visitor Center has expanded to seven days a week and branded pop-up visitor services at large events and conventions. The team of four full time and two part time employees has connected with more than 25,000 visitors in person since opening, \$34% of whom are international.
- From July-December, Travel Portland advertising investments with online travel agencies – Expedia, Priceline, Booking.com – generated over 104,000 incremental room nights in Portland.
- From April through early December -- a period of 33 weeks -- Portland's transient occupancy saw an increase compared to the same week last year, according to STR.

MERC CONTRACT TARGETS

TARGET #	TARGET DESCRIPTION	YEAR TO DATE ACTUAL	ANNUAL TARGET
1	OCC revenue target	\$8,570,215	\$17 Million
2	ROI on future OCC business	4.1	3.1
3	Lead conversion	14%	17%
4	Services performance survey	3.9	3.8
5	Public relations/media	17	25
6	Community economic impact	34.8	10.7

CITY CONTRACT GOALS

OBJECTIVE #	GOAL DESCRIPTION	YEAR TO DATE ACTUAL	ANNUAL GOAL
1	Convention Sales and Marketing Economic Impact ROI	22.7	21.0
5	International visitors against comp set	-15.0%	Within 20%
7	Total Media Placements	190	250
7	Total Media Engagements for Minority-Owned Businesses	1,375	825
8	Services Performance Survey	17	6/Year

****See International Tourism page for further explanation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AD ACCOUNTABILITY: INCREMENTAL VISITOR SPENDING GENERATED BY ADVERTISING

Spring/Summer 2024 (source: Phocuswright)	\$38.1 million
--	----------------

HOTEL DEMAND

COMPETITIVE SET COMPARISON

Smith Travel Research Central Business Districts			
	Occupancy (%)	ADR (\$)	RevPar (\$)
Portland Central City +	58.8%	\$ 149.83	\$ 88.02
Denver	68.2%	\$ 209.61	\$ 142.91
Seattle	72.1%	\$ 228.20	\$ 164.59
Salt Lake City	70.3%	\$ 169.06	\$ 118.85
Nashville	75.5%	\$ 283.00	\$ 213.72
Austin	66.0%	\$ 251.53	\$ 166.06
Minneapolis	55.8%	\$ 180.78	\$ 100.79
San Francisco	57.9%	\$ 233.92	\$ 135.37

**Smith Travel Report is on a calendar basis, not Travel Portland's Fiscal Year*

Smith Travel Research - Region*

	Occupancy		ADR		RevPar		Demand	
	This Year	Change	This Year	Change	This Year	Change	This Year	Change
	Downtown	58.8%	5.8%	\$ 149.83	-7.3%	\$ 88.02	-1.9%	2,156,625
Airport	65.1%	5.2%	\$ 134.82	-0.8%	\$ 87.82	4.3%	781,553	4.5%
Eastside	63.2%	1.4%	\$ 107.05	4.7%	\$ 67.63	6.2%	113,223	1.4%
Jantzen Beach	57.7%	2.6%	\$ 117.70	-0.5%	\$ 67.95	2.1%	305,753	2.6%
City of Portland +	60.2%	5.2%	\$ 141.96	-5.0%	\$ 85.42	-0.1%	3,357,154	5.1%

**Smith Travel Report is on a calendar basis, not Travel Portland's Fiscal Year*

LODGING TAX COLLECTIONS*

QUARTER 2

REGION	TLT/TID			
	FY25 (\$)	FY25 (% of TLT)	CHANGE FY24 to FY25 (\$)	CHANGE FY24 to FY25 (%)
Central City	\$6,633,984	54%	(\$79,277)	-1%
Airport	\$1,853,114	15%	(\$611,256)	-25%
Eastside	\$121,528	1%	\$31,741	35%
Jantzen Beach	\$666,241	5%	(\$71,105)	-10%
Subtotal	\$9,274,867	75%	(\$729,897)	-7%
Online Travel Agency	\$1,561,564	13%	\$445,925	40%
Short Term Rental	\$1,431,185	12%	(\$115,156)	-7%
Other	\$46,805	0%	(\$9,356)	-17%
Subtotal	\$3,039,554	25%	\$321,413	12%
Grand Total	\$12,314,421	100%	(\$408,484)	-3%

**Data provided by the City of Portland Revenue Division.*



CONVENTION SALES

OREGON CONVENTION CENTER BOOKING REVENUE FROM TRAVEL PORTLAND BOOKINGS			
	OCC Revenue	Annuals	Total Potential Future Business
FY 24/25	\$ 17,140,800	\$ -	\$ 17,140,800
FY 25/26	\$ 11,632,142	\$ 1,735,670	\$ 13,367,812
FY 26/27	\$ 7,606,489	\$ 2,438,100	\$ 10,044,589
FY 27/28	\$ 3,515,964	\$ 2,265,747	\$ 5,781,711
FY 28/29	\$ 3,732,626	\$ 2,438,100	\$ 6,170,726
FY 29/30	\$ 2,323,713	\$ 2,265,747	\$ 4,589,460
FY 30/31	\$ 393,477	\$ 2,438,100	\$ 2,831,577
FY 31/32	\$ -	\$ 2,265,747	\$ 2,265,747
FY 32/33	\$ -	\$ 2,438,100	\$ 2,438,100
FY 33/34	\$ 727,661	\$ 2,265,747	\$ 2,993,408
FY 34/35	\$ 1,369,209	\$ 2,438,100	\$ 3,807,309
TOTAL	\$ 48,442,081	\$ 22,989,158	\$ 71,431,239

**FY 24/25 OCC Revenue includes the following meetings that occurred during quarter 4 of FY 23/24 at OCC, but had not settled in OCC's accounting software (USI) at the time of reporting: American Society for Engineering Education and United National Indian Tribal Youth.*

OREGON CONVENTION CENTER PROJECTED FUTURE REVENUE			
Total Travel Portland Contract:	QTR	YTD	Target
New OCC Bookings	19	31	
Repeat OCC Bookings	3	4	
Total OCC Bookings	22	35	
Room Nights from OCC Bookings	58,328	83,027	
Future OCC Revenue Booked during FY 2024/25	\$ 8,648,469	\$ 13,021,780	
ROI OCC Bookings	\$ 6.6	\$ 4.1	3.1 to 1
Community Economic Impact from OCC Bookings	\$ 51,666,566	\$ 72,301,486	
Total Room Nights Booked	120,489	164,774	
Total Community Economic Impact from Bookings	\$ 82,019,452	\$ 111,647,506	
ROI on Total Community Economic Impact	\$ 62.7	\$ 34.8	10.7 to 1
OCC Revenue Realized During FY 2024/25*	\$ 4,820,648	\$ 8,570,215	\$17 Million

**OCC Revenue Realized includes the following meetings that occurred during quarter 1 at OCC, but the group had not settled in OCC's accounting software (USI) at the time of reporting. They are included in quarter 2 OCC revenue realized - Word Press, Northwest Human Resource Management Association, Portland Retro Gaming Expo, and Christian Community Development Association.*



CONVENTION SALES

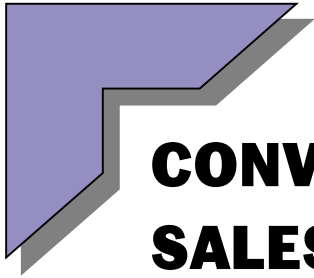
OCC LEAD CONVERSION	
	As of January 1, 2025
Lead Conversion Percentage	14%
Benchmark / Annual Target -17%	

OREGON CONVENTION CENTER FUTURE GROUP BOOKINGS					
AS OF JANUARY 1, 2025					
	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28	FY 2028-29 and beyond
Current	50	31	14	7	13
4 Year Average (FY 21/22-24/25)	Current 47	1 yr. out 33	2 yrs. out 19	3 yrs. out 9	Beyond 3 yrs. 9

OREGON CONVENTION CENTER REVENUE		
THREE YEAR AVERAGE		
	Total Contract	
	Quarter	YTD
OCC Revenue Generated (3 yr. average)	\$ 3,846,763	\$ 7,380,787
Travel Portland Contract Costs*	\$ 1,308,063	\$ 3,204,135
ROI (Revenue / Costs)	2.9	2.3

*Quarter 1 has been trued up and is reflected in the YTD

2ND QUARTER - OREGON CONVENTION CENTER LOST BUSINESS					
Account	Groups	Total Room Nights	Attendees	Lost OCC Revenue	Lost Community Economic Impact
Total	39	160,582	95,480	\$ 24,756,950	\$ 111,219,633



CONVENTION SALES

DIVERSE GROUPS/MINORITY PROJECTED FUTURE REVENUE		
Total Travel Portland Contract	2nd Quarter	YTD
New Minority Bookings	8	8
Total Minority Bookings	8	8
Room Nights from Minority Bookings	21,186	21,186
Minority Leads	8	14
Minority Lost Leads	5	7

For the second quarter of FY 2024/25, minority bookings created an estimated economic impact to the greater metro Portland community of approximately \$20 million. Booked groups included the following:

National Indian Child Welfare Association	\$ 14,360
Union of North American Vietnamese Student Associations	\$ 24,373
National Disability Rights Network	\$ 20,843
Links, Inc	\$ 19,121
Association of People Supporting Employment First	\$ 137,042
AISES	\$ 3,955,789
Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science - 2028	\$ 7,269,023
Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science - 2034	\$ 9,140,283

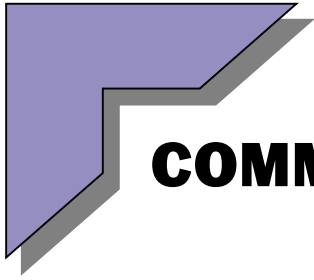
2ND QUARTER - OREGON CONVENTION CENTER CANCELLATIONS							
Account Name	Groups	Reason	Total Room Nights	Attendees	Lost OCC Revenue	Lost Community Economic Impact	Arrival Date
Total OCC Cancellations	0	N/A	0	0	\$ -	\$ -	N/A



CONVENTION SERVICES

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	2ND QUARTER	YTD
OCC groups occurring during the quarter	9	22
Pre-convention attendance building - Site tours	10	24

TRAVEL PORTLAND POST CONVENTION SURVEY							
Overall impression of the following:							
Answer Options	Excellent= 4	Good= 3	Fair= 2	Poor= 1	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
Travel Portland sales staff	9	1	0	0	0	3.9	10
Travel Portland convention services staff	9	1	0	0	0	3.9	10
Travel Portland collateral/promotional materials	9	1	0	0	0	3.9	10
Quality and user-friendliness of the Travel Portland website	10	0	0	0	0	4.0	10
Average rating for the quarter						3.9	
Average rating YTD						3.9	
Target						3.8	
In planning your event from start to finish, how would you describe your relationship with your Sales Manager and/or Services Manager?							
VERY SUPPORTIVE							
Thank you to the Travel Portland team. They were so helpful and has taken care of us like no other city ever has.							
Kim and Alenna were FABULOUS!							
Travel Portland staff knocked it out of the park. They were so friendly and provided great services to our staff and attendees.							
The support we received from Travel Portland was top notch. Crista Kocher was there for us each step of the way and every ask we made of her she quickly helped us with. She went above and beyond for our group. Again, in my 14 years of event planning, this has been one of the best experiences I've had with a CVB and the support and tools we received were outstanding.							
Spectacular. Christa was very responsive and engaged in a lot of the ideation we were doing to enhance the attendee experience. The site visit in July was well worth the time and we came back with a lot of notes we applied to the conference.							
Beth was incredible! She had the best recommendations and solutions for the challenges we faced. Easily the best support I have received in any city we have been in.							
They were always there when I asked them to be and great at answering specific questions. I'd love a slightly more proactive approach in helping me take advantage of all the team has to offer.							
Outstanding help from Travel Portland - THANK YOU! We got a great write-up on the TP [Travel Portland] site, great support with hotels, with BabbleBuy, with brochures (all of which were used), with TriMet passes, etc. - all super helpful!							
Completed Group Survey:							
American Translators Association				National Hydropower Association			
American Association of Mechanical Engineers				Association for Learning Environments			
Northwest Human Resource Management Association				Christian Community Development Association			
American Evaluation Association (x2)				Portland Retro Gaming Expo			
Out in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, Inc.							



COMMUNICATION & PR

TOTAL MEDIA NARRATIVE	Q2	YTD
Placements	5,656	12,783
Impressions	106,088,290,569	231,382,677,277

Traditional media mentions captured across print and online that may influence consumer perception of Portland as a business and leisure travel destination.

MERC-RELATED MEDIA PLACEMENTS	Q2	YTD
Placements	13	22
Impressions	276,366	577,837

Earned media placements generated by Travel Portland public relations efforts that mention the Oregon Convention Center or cover industry topics related to Portland as a meeting destination.

TARGETED MEDIA NARRATIVE	Q2	YTD	Target Goal
Placements	93	190	250
Impressions	2,142,057,373	4,899,758,007	

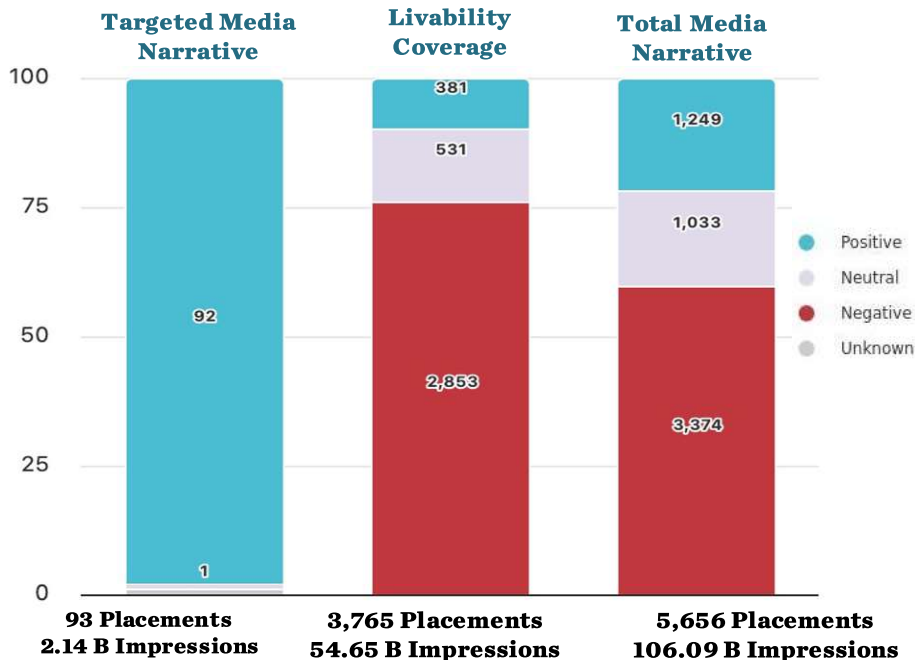
Print and online media outlets strategically targeted by Travel Portland's public relations efforts because they are most influential to potential visitors.

TARGETED INTERNATIONAL MEDIA*	Q2	YTD
Placements	0	0
Impressions	0	0

International print and online media outlets strategically targeted by Travel Portland's public relations efforts in international markets, including, but not limited to: United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Oceania and Canada.

*International media results on hold for FY 24-25

2ND QUARTER MEDIA SENTIMENTS



MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS FOR MINORITY-OWNED	Q2	YTD	Target Goal
Engagements	758	1,375	825

A media engagement is defined as an interaction with media regarding

COMMUNICATION & PR

2ND QUARTER

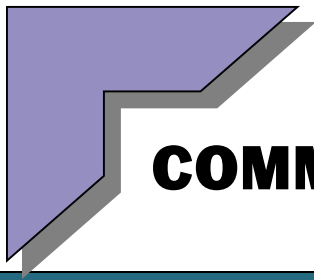
KEY MESSAGES PLACEMENTS & IMPRESSIONS

TOTAL MEDIA NARRATIVE

Key Message	Articles	Unique Outlets	Average UVM
Q2FY25TotalMediaNarrative <small>Base term</small>	5,656	1,246	18,500,463
Neighborhoods	106	99	21,199,152
Culinary	81	62	22,394,452
Family-friendly	61	50	39,193,521
hotels & Lodging	57	43	571,704
Shopping	51	39	70,567,198
Diversity	50	36	45,075,472
Outdoors	18	18	60,052,192
Arts & Culture	13	10	39,475,347
Festivals and events	7	4	60,804,902
Activities and Attractions	4	2	26,068,552

NEGATIVE LIVABILITY ISSUES

Key Message	Articles	Unique Outlets	Average UVM
Q2Negativelivability.Final <small>Base term</small>	3,765	1,071	14,488,762
Crime	1,268	668	15,113,308
Safety	397	290	22,643,962
Fentanyl	384	254	12,431,127
Protest	334	241	11,297,112
Drug use	245	224	8,027,795
Homelessness	190	112	33,189,758
travel	165	126	22,245,864
garbage	150	113	23,829,885
Camping	103	64	27,903,883
graffiti	2	2	550,063



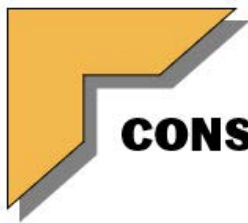
COMMUNICATION & PR

ARTICLES			MERC		
Publication Date	Outlet	Headline	Medium	Total Circulation	Placements
October 2024	Smart Meetings	Smart Moves at Seattle Convention Center, Atlantis Resorts and More	Online	10,409	1
November 2024	The Meetings Magazine	Fresh Territory: Consider These Northwest Gems for Your Next Event	Online	4,466	1
December 2024	Smart Meetings	2024 Platinum Choice Awards	Print	44,000	1
December 2024	Smart Meetings	2024 Platinum Choice Awards	Online	10,409	1
December 2024	Meetings Today	MPI Announces 2025 International Board of Directors	Online	11,539	1
December 2024	Prevue	Prevue Visionary Awards	Online	7,779	1
December 2024	Prevue	MPI Announces 2025 Int'l Board of Directors	Online	7,779	1
December 2024	Smart Meetings	Travel Portland Names Megan Conway New President and CEO	Online	10,409	1
December 2024	Skift	Travel Portland Joins Growing Roster of Women-Led Destination Management Companies	Online	24,040	1
December 2024	Northstar Meetings Group	Travel Portland Names New President and CEO	Online	39,287	1
December 2024	Facilities & Destinations	Travel Portland Names Megan Conway President, CEO	Online	15,000	1
December 2024	USAE News	Travel Portland Names Megan Conway New President and CEO	Print	58,000	1
December 2024	PCMA Convene	People on the Move	Online	33,249	1
Total				276,366	13

**Entries that appear to be duplicate articles represent different media placements, i.e. print, online and broadcast.*

TRAVEL PORTLAND SPONSORED ARTICLES			MERC	
Publication Date	Outlet	Headline	Medium	Total Circulation
October 2024	Smart Meetings	Portland Is An Award-Winning Foodie Destination	Online	10,409
November 2024	Business Insider	4 reasons Portland, Oregon deserves a spot on your travel list	Online	51,387,472
December 2024	PCMA	Why Portland Is One of America's Top Accessible Cities	Online	33,249
Total				51,431,130

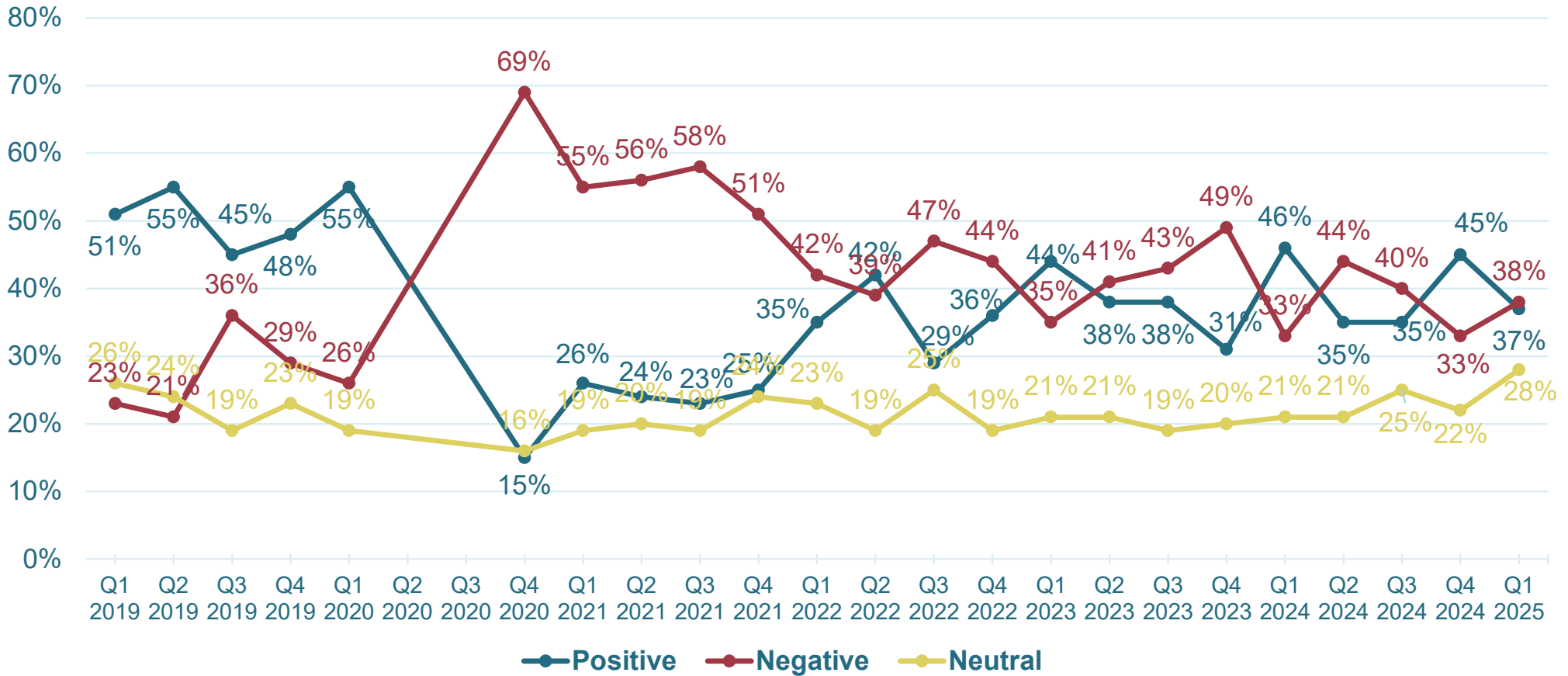
PITCHES DELIVERED	
1	Invited + Facilitated Malik Anderson's (Smart Meetings) participation in MERC Winter FAM
2	Jon Hixon appointment announcement
3	Pitched Meetings Today ahead of their Oregon destination spotlight, including messaging on the city's sustainability efforts, airport revitalization, Literary Arts HQ, and no sales tax
4	Most Sustainable Convention Centers story
5	Emotional Support Llamas are the Latest Meeting & Events Amenity in Portland
6	Megan Conway CEO Announcement
7	Cascada Opening as new Wellness Destination for Groups and Meeting Planners
8	James Jessie Joins MPI Board of Directors
9	The Z: Literary Arts HQ, Therapy Llamas, and EDI touchpoints make Portland the perfect place to host a meeting for a GenZ team
Target Goal: Deliver 6-7 meetings-related pitches to industry media on a quarterly basis. Twenty-five total over the fiscal year.	



CONSUMER SENTIMENT

PORTLAND CONSUMER RESEARCH

Q: Would you consider the general tone of media coverage you saw or heard about Portland to be:

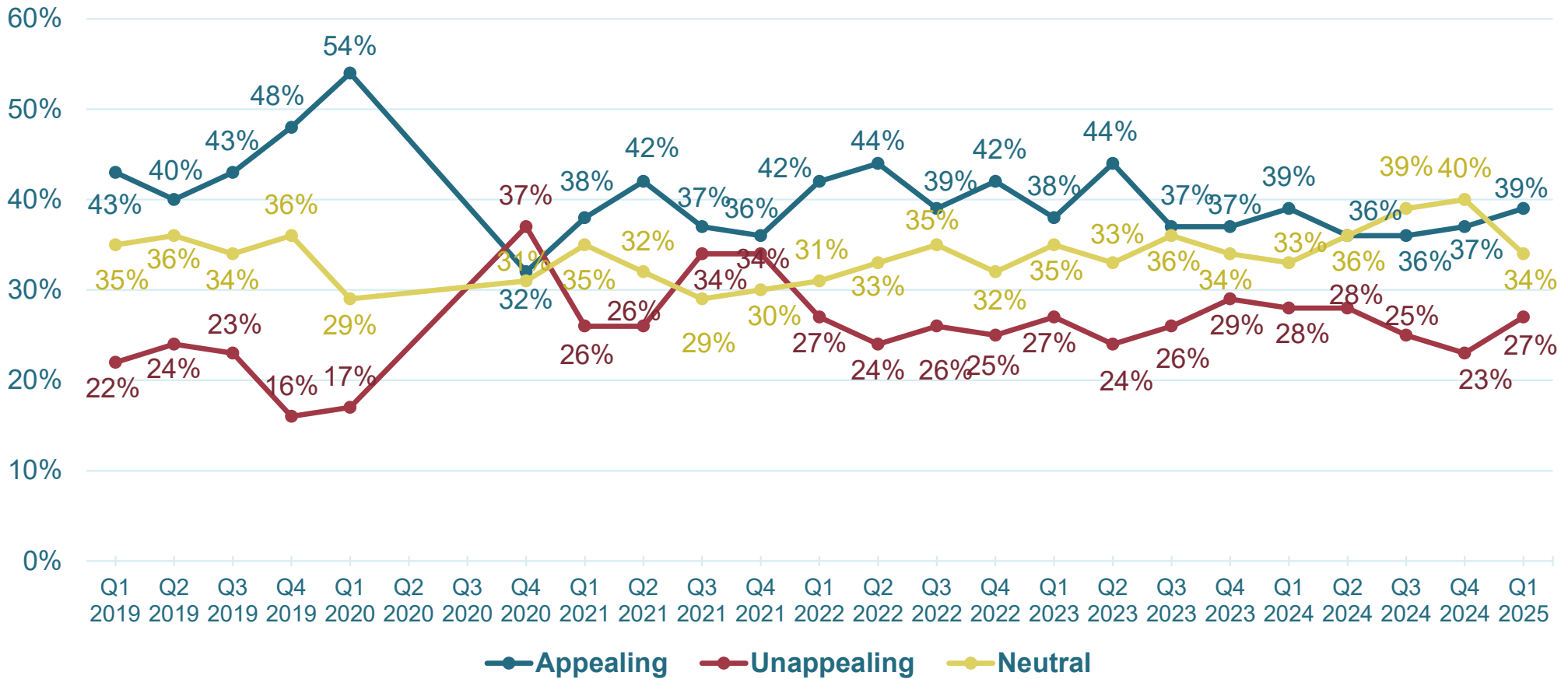


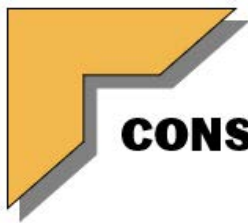


CONSUMER SENTIMENT

PORTLAND CONSUMER RESEARCH

Q: How appealing is Portland as a potential vacation destination to you?



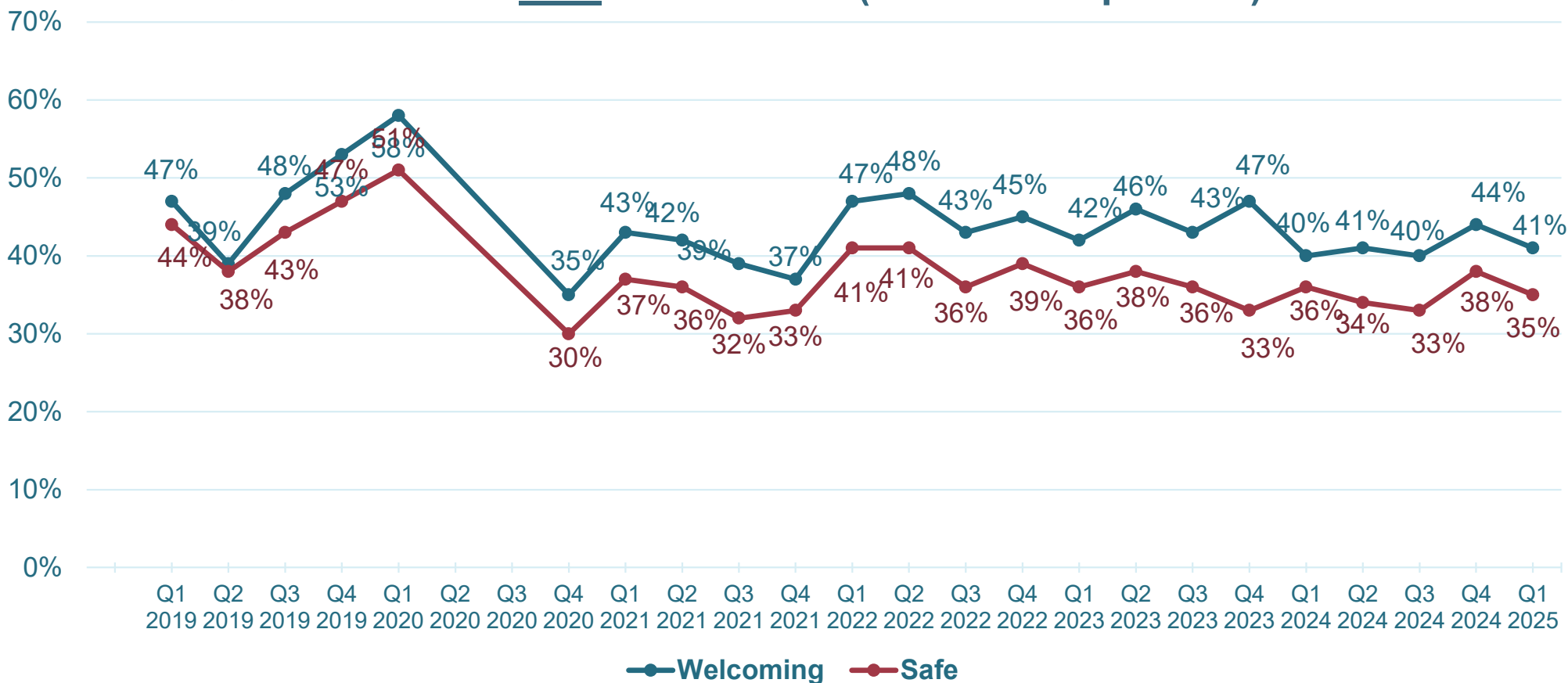


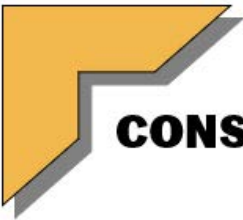
CONSUMER SENTIMENT

PORTLAND CONSUMER RESEARCH

Q: Portland is a welcoming destination. (AGREE - Top 2 Box)

Q: Portland is a safe destination. (AGREE - Top 2 Box)

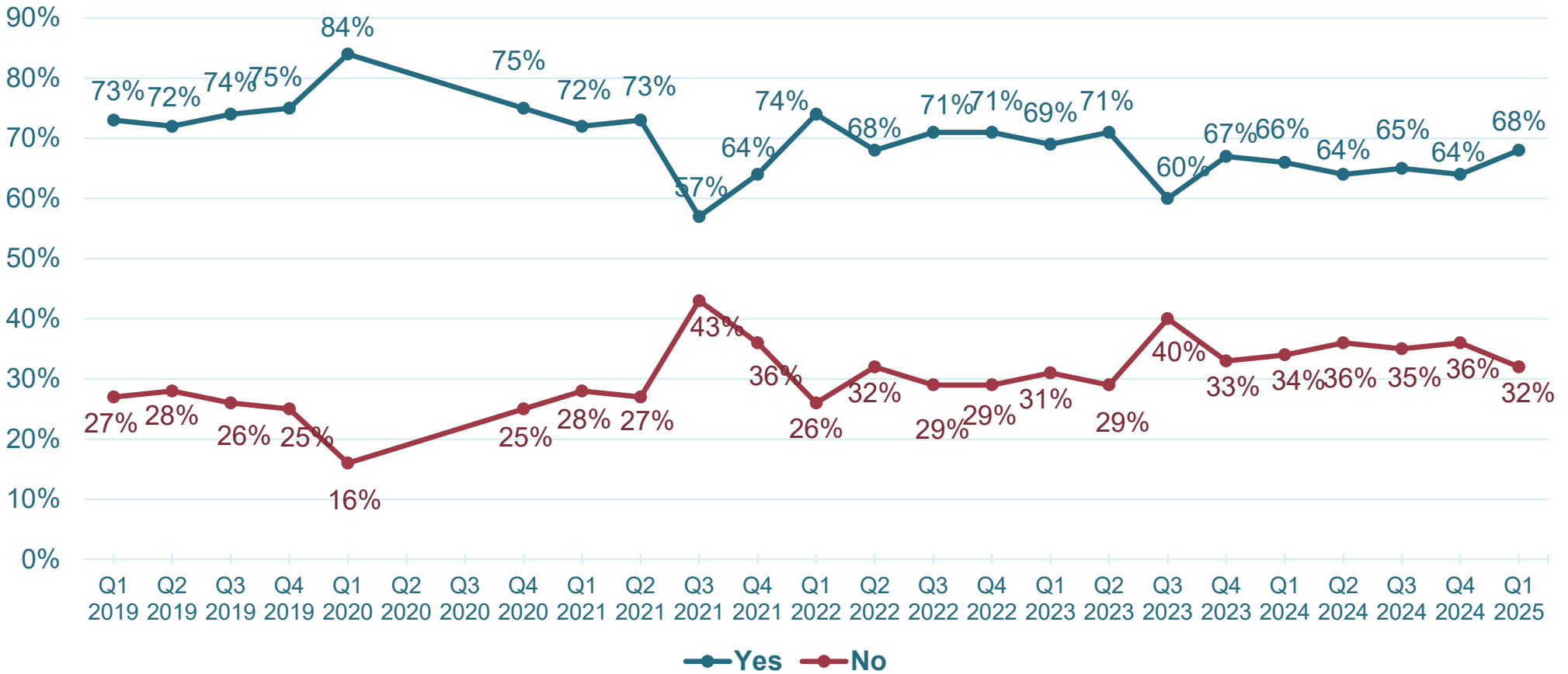


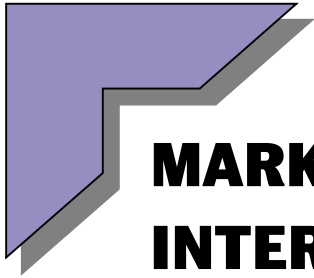


CONSUMER SENTIMENT

PORTLAND CONSUMER RESEARCH

Q: If you have visited Portland before, are you likely to visit again?





MARKETING & INTERNATIONAL TOURISM

MARKETING		
TravelPortland.com	2nd Quarter	YTD
Visits	1,253,618	2,821,810
International Visits	61,642	159,342
Referrals	185,259	394,809
Business and Event Detail Views	629,234	1,281,865
TravelPortland.com/meetings		
Venue Finder Page Views	2,542	3,515

Source: Google Analytics

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM		
International Visits/Arrivals*	2nd Quarter	4th Quarter
Portland**	-15.0%	N/A
Competitive Set***	-13.0%	N/A

*Source: Tourism Economics - An Oxford Economics Company reports twice during the calendar year.

**Be within 20% of our competitive sets' performance for overall visits/arrivals (5 year rolling basis).

***Competitive set = Denver, Salt Lake City, Minneapolis

****This will be a re-building goal for 5 years.



DIVERSITY EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS 2024-25					
TRAVEL PORTLAND GOALS AND OBJECTIVES BY JOB CATEGORIES					
	December 31, 2024		Second Quarter		
Job Category	Category Number	Total	Actual Percentage	Goal Percentage	Objective
	Number of Females	Number of Staff			
Executive/Senior Level	5	13	38%	40-60%	Improve
First/Mid Level Manager	8	11	73%	40-60%	Monitor
Professionals	16	22	73%	40-60%	Monitor
Sales Workers	8	9	89%	40-60%	Monitor
Admin Support Workers	14	19	74%	40-60%	Monitor
Total	51	74	69%	40-60%	Monitor
	Number of Minorities	Number of Staff			
Executive/Senior Level	4	13	31%	15-33%	Monitor
First/Mid Level Manager	2	11	18%	15-33%	Monitor
Professionals	7	22	32%	15-33%	Monitor
Sales Workers	4	9	44%	15-33%	Monitor
Admin Support Workers	11	19	58%	15-33%	Monitor
Total	28	74	38%	15-33%	Monitor
This report is based on current full and part-time staff.					



FIRST OPPORTUNITY TARGET AREA (FOTA) 2ND QUARTER 2024-25

HIRING			
Job Posting Locations	The Skanner	El Hispanic News	Hispanic Chamber
	WorkplaceDiversity.com	Urban League	Monster.com
	VeteransConnect.com	Mosaic Metier	PDX Pipeline
	HispanicDiversity.com	Partners in Diversity	AllDiversity.com
	DisabilityConnect.com	Indeed	LinkedIn
	OutandEqual.com	Destinations International	Travel Portland website
	LGBTConnect.com	H-Careers	PDX Women in Tech
Black Travel Alliance	Mac's List	Oregon Destination Assn	
Current Employees residing in MERC FOTA		15	

PURCHASING (YTD)	
Travel Portland expenditure with MERC FOTA area businesses	\$1,787,767

PARTNERSHIP			
Total Partners	Within FOTA	Diverse Partners/Minority (Self-Identified)	Women-Owned
1730	342	279	335

MWESB PURCHASING PARTICIPATION FY 2024-25 (YTD)			
	MWESB Expended	Total Expended	Percentage of Total Spend on MWESB Expended
COBID or Other State Certified	\$249,780	\$3,251,766	8%
Self-Reported	\$480,936	\$3,251,766	15%
Total	\$730,716	\$3,251,766	22%

For the last 36 years Travel Portland has implemented a voluntary MBE/DBE/WBE purchasing program that strives to ensure a high level of participation with certified minority-owned, disadvantaged or women-owned businesses when securing services and supplies that are purchased using lodging tax dollars.

OCC SALES AND MARKETING BUDGET

Annual Budget	MERC QTR Ending 12-31-24	TID/TLT QTR Ending 12-31-24	Subtotal QTR Ending 12-31-24	Sum MERC YTD 06-30-25	Sum TID/TLT YTD 06-30-25	Sum of YTD 06-30-25	Percent	
Expenses								
<u>MERC Supported - Professional Services</u>								
Professional Services								
<u>Convention Sales</u>								
<u>Direct Sales:</u>								
Subtotal - Convention Sales Professional Services	1,859,725	529,414	57,672	587,086	1,029,853	89,472	1,119,325	60.19%
<u>Program Support</u>								
Subtotal - Program Support	278,959	69,740	0	69,740	139,480	0	139,480	50.00%
<u>Research</u>								
Subtotal - Reserach Professional Services	88,725	37,196	0	37,196	73,369	0	73,369	82.69%
<u>Convention Services</u>								
Subtotal - Convention Services Professional Services	268,025	78,829	10,905	89,734	161,719	10,905	172,624	64.41%
<u>Other Contractual Professional Services</u>								
Subtotal - Other Contractual Professional Services	333,825	78,538	37,842	116,380	208,884	50,345	259,229	77.65%
<i>Total - MERC Supported - Professional Services</i>	<i>2,829,259</i>	<i>793,717</i>	<i>106,419</i>	<i>900,136</i>	<i>1,613,304</i>	<i>150,722</i>	<i>1,764,026</i>	<i>62.35%</i>
<u>Other Non-Contractual Professional Services</u>								
<i>Total - Other Non-Contractual Professional Services</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>45,908</i>	<i>45,908</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>97,672</i>	<i>97,672</i>	<i>0.00%</i>
<u>Convention Sales - MERC Supported Program of Work</u>								
<u>Sales Calls, Trips and Missions</u>								
Subtotal - Sales Calls, Trips and Missions	220,000	529	0	529	6,069	0	6,069	2.76%
<u>Multicultural Sales Efforts</u>								
Subtotal - Multicultural Sales Efforts	120,000	14,198	305	14,503	68,984	305	69,289	57.74%
<u>Trade Shows and Industry Events</u>								
Subtotal - Industry Trade Shows and Events	865,500	244,667	14,366	259,033	515,533	14,366	529,899	61.22%
<u>Familiarization Tours & Site Visits</u>								
Subtotal - Familiarization Tours	440,000	117,056	0	117,056	206,554	0	206,554	46.94%
<u>Other Programs</u>								
Subtotal - Other Programs	244,000	23,582	0	23,582	134,994	0	134,994	55.33%
<i>Total Convention Sales MERC Supported Program of Work</i>	<i>1,889,500</i>	<i>400,032</i>	<i>14,671</i>	<i>414,703</i>	<i>932,134</i>	<i>14,671</i>	<i>946,805</i>	<i>50.11%</i>
Other Departments - MERC Supported POW								
<u>Convention Services - Other Programs</u>								
Subtotal - Con Svcs - Other Programs	125,000	47,874	30,263	78,137	100,887	30,263	131,150	104.92%
<u>Research - Other Programs</u>								
Subtotal - Research - Other Programs	100,000	0	44,640	44,640	100,000	55,433	155,433	155.43%
<u>DEI - Other Programs</u>								
Subtotal - DEI - Other Programs	125,000	14,362	0	14,362	84,360	0	84,360	67.49%
<u>Communications/PR</u>								
Subtotal - Comm/PR - Other Programs	125,000	52,079	7,666	59,745	90,209	7,666	97,875	78.30%
<u>Marketing</u>								
Subtotal - Marketing - Other Programs	283,241	0	302,712	302,712	283,241	553,443	836,684	295.40%
<i>Total Other Depts MERC Supported Program of Work</i>	<i>758,241</i>	<i>114,314</i>	<i>385,281</i>	<i>499,596</i>	<i>658,697</i>	<i>646,805</i>	<i>1,305,502</i>	<i>172.18%</i>
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>5,477,000</i>	<i>1,308,063</i>	<i>552,279</i>	<i>1,860,342</i>	<i>3,204,135</i>	<i>909,870</i>	<i>4,114,004</i>	<i>75.11%</i>

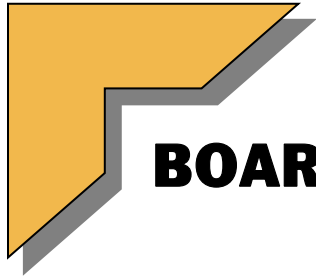
**Quarter 1 spending has been trued up.

Travel Portland
Income Statement
(Statement of Financial Activities)

	Actual (Prior Year) YTD 12/31/2023 Column A	Actual YTD 12/31/2024 Column B	Budget YTD 12/31/2024 Column C	Actual (Prior Year) Full Year 6/30/2023 Column D	Approved Budget Full Year 6/30/2024 Column E
Revenue					
City/County Lodging Tax (1%)	3,136,291	2,929,945	3,210,659	5,400,785	5,627,408
Tourism Improvement District (TID = 2% + 1%)	9,937,245	9,861,023	10,025,118	17,525,506	17,908,639
MERC (OCC Contract)	2,682,250	2,738,500	2,722,224	5,364,500	5,444,448
Partnership Dues	129,350	92,106	0	210,742	0
Fees Earned & Other Income	689,702	360,912	426,510	1,269,640	853,020
EDA Grant	163,033	0	0	385,550	0
Trade-Out/In-Kind	0	0	0	0	0
Cooperative Programs	6,700	3,000	0	-2,225	0
Regional RCTP (from Travel Oregon)	1,077,189	1,195,446	1,028,604	2,003,027	2,057,208
Travel Oregon Grant	0	277,000	250,002	100,000	500,004
Cultural Tourism	116,205	123,591	136,878	253,458	273,756
Visitor Development Fund (VDF)	0	0	0	0	0
Total Revenue	17,937,965	17,581,523	17,799,995	32,510,983	32,664,483
Expenses					
Convention Sales	3,920,407	3,825,573	3,431,520	7,011,095	6,863,032
Research	207,468	256,923	346,734	477,426	693,467
Marketing	4,247,713	5,529,082	5,444,118	11,239,184	10,888,232
Convention Services	470,619	577,053	568,188	995,812	1,136,376
Events	174,547	138,616	309,696	580,390	619,392
International Tourism	681,833	764,437	899,826	1,726,047	1,799,652
Communications/PR	638,835	682,338	480,672	1,252,347	961,344
Regional RCTP (from Travel Oregon)	1,119,483	1,197,584	1,028,616	2,003,027	2,057,232
Community Engagement	495,286	252,361	309,894	1,396,318	619,788
Destination Affairs	0	753,828	958,440	0	1,916,880
Visitor Services	257,790	389,682	330,546	581,906	661,092
Equity Diversity Inclusion (EDI)	308,988	277,868	302,508	593,755	605,016
Program Support	2,153,137	3,312,578	2,664,888	4,204,727	5,329,771
Total Expenses	14,676,107	17,957,921	17,075,646	32,062,033	34,151,274
<i>Net Surplus/(Deficit)</i>	<i>3,261,858</i>	<i>-376,399</i>	<i>724,349</i>	<i>448,949</i>	<i>-1,486,791</i>

Travel Portland
Balance Sheet
(Statement of Financial Position)

	Actual Prior Period YTD 11/30/2024 Column A	Actual Current YTD 12/31/2024 Column B	Change MTM Percentage Column C	Actual Prior YTD 12/31/2023 Column D	Change YOY Percentage Column E
Assets					
Cash and Cash Equivalents	6,910,273	4,643,794	-49%	10,030,195	-54%
Investments	5,889,683	5,860,247	-1%	5,276,956	11%
Accounts Receivable	1,733,397	3,541,593	51%	744,914	375%
Prepaid Assets	1,506,561	1,511,578	0%	1,225,951	23%
Fixed Assets, net	1,387,762	1,353,337	-3%	1,789,777	-24%
Other Assets	3,236,196	3,236,710	0%	3,850,456	-16%
Total Assets	20,663,873	20,147,258	-3%	22,918,249	-12%
Liabilities and Net Assets					
Liabilities					
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	4,044,019	4,368,039	7%	4,769,308	-8%
Accrued Personnel	3,294,088	3,400,418	3%	2,471,500	38%
Deferred Revenue	17,538	-1,317	1431%	26,942	-105%
Other Fiduciary Liabilities - RCTP/RRSF	1,023,398	900,276	-14%	981,350	-8%
Loan Liability	0	0	0%	0	0%
Total Liabilities	8,379,043	8,667,416	3%	8,249,100	5%
Net Assets					
Undesignated	7,903,496	7,098,510	-11%	10,287,817	-31%
Board Designated - Operating Reserve	4,381,333	4,381,333	0%	4,381,333	0%
Total Net Assets	12,284,829	11,479,843	-7%	14,669,150	-22%
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	20,663,873	20,147,258	-3%	22,918,249	-12%



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	COMPANY	OFFICERS	COMMITTEE CHAIR
Andrejic	Dragan	The Nines Hotel		
Boss	Dani	Holiday Inn Portland-Columbia Riverfront		
Bramlett	Tiquette	Our Legacy Harvested		
Brown	Jeff	Hotel Eastlund		
Browne	Marie	The Ritz-Carlton Portland		
Burnett	Becky	Host2Host/Hive Hospitality		
Cairo	Michelle	Olympia Provisions		
Daley	Mike	Sheraton Portland Airport Hotel		
Davis	Heather	Portland Timbers		
Faustin	Bertony	Abbey Creek Vineyard		
Hasan	Naim	Naim Hasan Photography @ N2H Media Group		Multicultural Tourism Advisory Committee
Hawkins	Rick	Geffen Mesher	Treasurer	Budget and Finance Committee
Huffman	Kurt	ChefStable	Chair-elect	
Lang	Brian	Hyatt Regency Portland at the Oregon Convention Center	Vice Chair	
Liu	Michael	Fubonn Shopping Center		
Lopuszynski	Ziggy	Crowne Plaza Portland - Downtown Convention Center		
Martinez	Martin	Orox Leather Co.		
McAllister	Martin	Portland Marriott Downtown Waterfront	Past Chair	Tourism Improvement District Committee
McCarey	Heather	Explore Washington Park		
McLeod	Mike	Hilton Portland Downtown & The Duniway		
Patel	Ash	Canterbury Group, Inc.		
Patel	Katen	K10 Hotels, LLC	Chair	
Rubio	Carmen	City of Portland		
Simpson	Ashton	Metro		
Tigner	Ryan	iTrip Vacations Northwest		
Vega Pederson	Jessica	Multnomah County		
Weston	David	Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Portland		Convention Sales Steering Committee
Weston	Linda	Rapporto		Nominating Committee, Partner Services Committee

Expo Future MERC Update

April 1 to 25, 2025



Phase 3 major activities, as resolved by MERC and Metro Council

Representation & memorialization of histories and cultures at the site	Sports pivot and redevelopment
<p>H1. Assess feasibility of HSMC’s recommendations</p> <p>H2. Develop implementation strategy for feasible recommendations</p> <p>H3. Conduct a cultural resources assessment</p> <p>H4. Conduct engineering study of Hall A’s integrity, reuse capacity</p> <p>H5. Discuss engineering findings with community and develop recommendations for future use of Hall A</p> <p>H6. Engage with interested Tribes re: memorialization and representation in partnership with Tribal Affairs</p> <p>H6. Identify approach to governance and engagement for development of site interpretive plan</p> <p>H7. Develop site interpretive plan</p>	<p>S1. Continued analysis and refinement of preferred sports scenario</p> <p>S2. Propose interim investment in sports equipment for Halls D & E</p> <p>S3. Develop and present criteria for solicitation of public-private partnership by June 30, 2025</p> <p>S4. Ensure that the pursuit of sports uses at Expo supports R & M recommendations and does not commodify or harm involved partners and communities</p> <p>S5. Make every effort to pursue sports events at Expo (specific to Expo Center staff)</p>

Work completed in this reporting period

Representation & memorialization activities	Sports pivot and redevelopment activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expo cultural resources assessment: work on a research-only assessment to identify known and potential archaeological and historic resources is underway and will be completed by June 30, 2025. Work to draft scope for Hall A engineering study continues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivered April 3 workshop on public-private partnerships with Assoc. for Improvement of American Infrastructure (AIAI). Eighty-four people attended. Staff attended AIAI conference, received valuable project input from experienced P3 developers. Work to draft scope for engineering study for Halls D&# sports equipment retrofit continues Launched “development” section on Expo Future website, completed development fact sheet.
<h3>Administrative activities</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY 25-26 workplan updated in accordance with COO budget, elimination of project manager position April newsletter written, distributed 	

Key work planned for the next quarter

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor’s completion of Expo cultural resources assessment Secure engineer(s) for initial assessment of Hall A and Halls D&E Update remaining sections of project website and project fact sheet Finalize project governance structure Complete Tribal engagement planning with Tribal Affairs staff Provide MERC, Council with draft criteria for selection of private development partner
