



WELCOME

Madison Common Council
September 2025

destination
madison

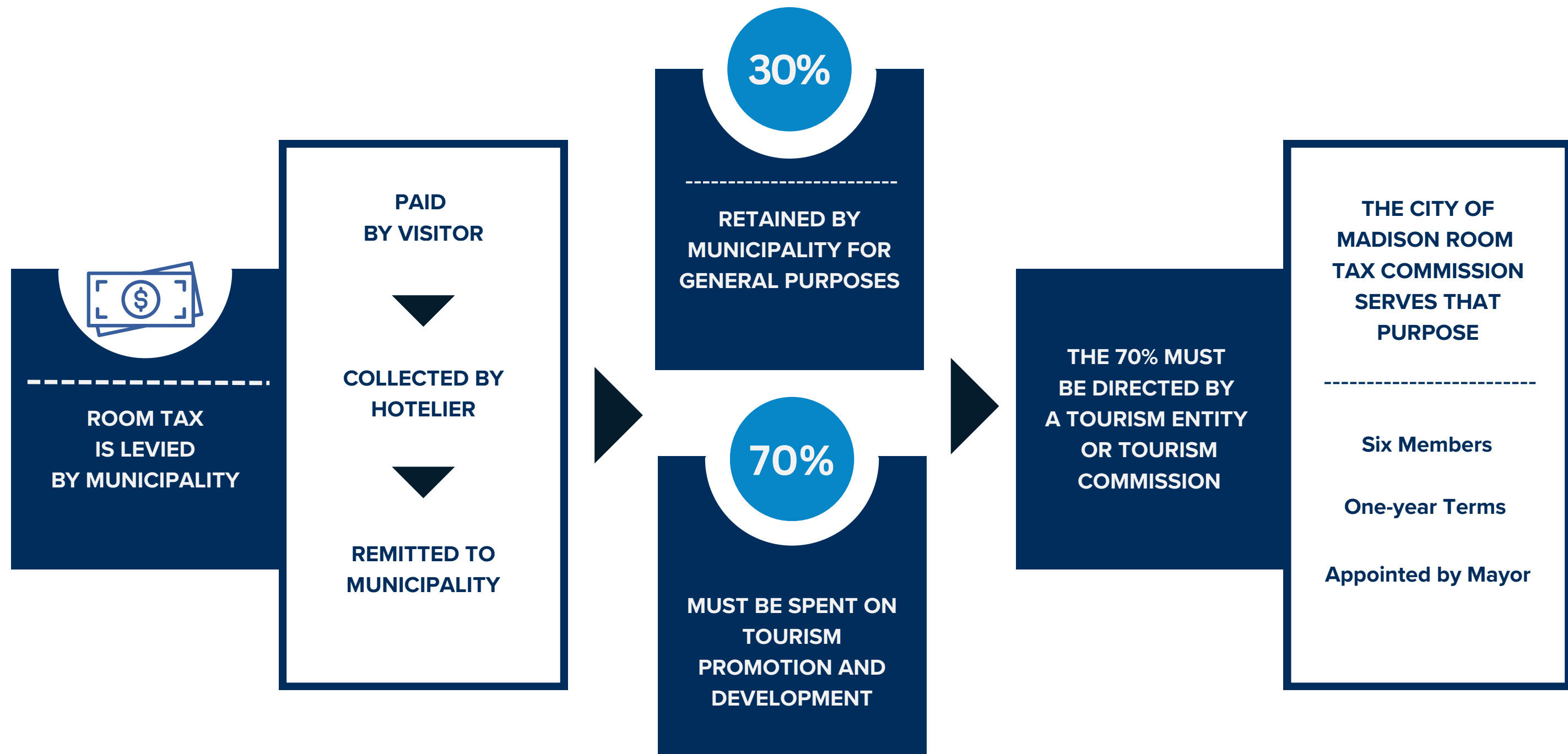
**destination
madison™ exists to create
economic impact by driving
visitors to our local community,
and to our businesses.**



HOW WE ARE GOVERNED



HOW WE'RE FUNDED



According to the Wisconsin STATUTE on room tax

DESTINATION MADISON'S PURPOSE

**Promote Madison
to new and
repeat visitors**

**Attract new and
repeat conventions,
sports tournaments/
championships and
events to
the community**

**Provide expert
service and support
for conventions,
events and leisure
travelers**

**Connect with
and strengthen
Madison's community
through meaningful
partnerships, advocacy
and placemaking work**

**Grow our local
economy**

**Conduct and analyze
tourism research**

A vertical dashed line on the left side of the slide, with a solid black arrow pointing to the right towards the word 'ECONOMIC'.

2024 ECONOMIC IMPACT

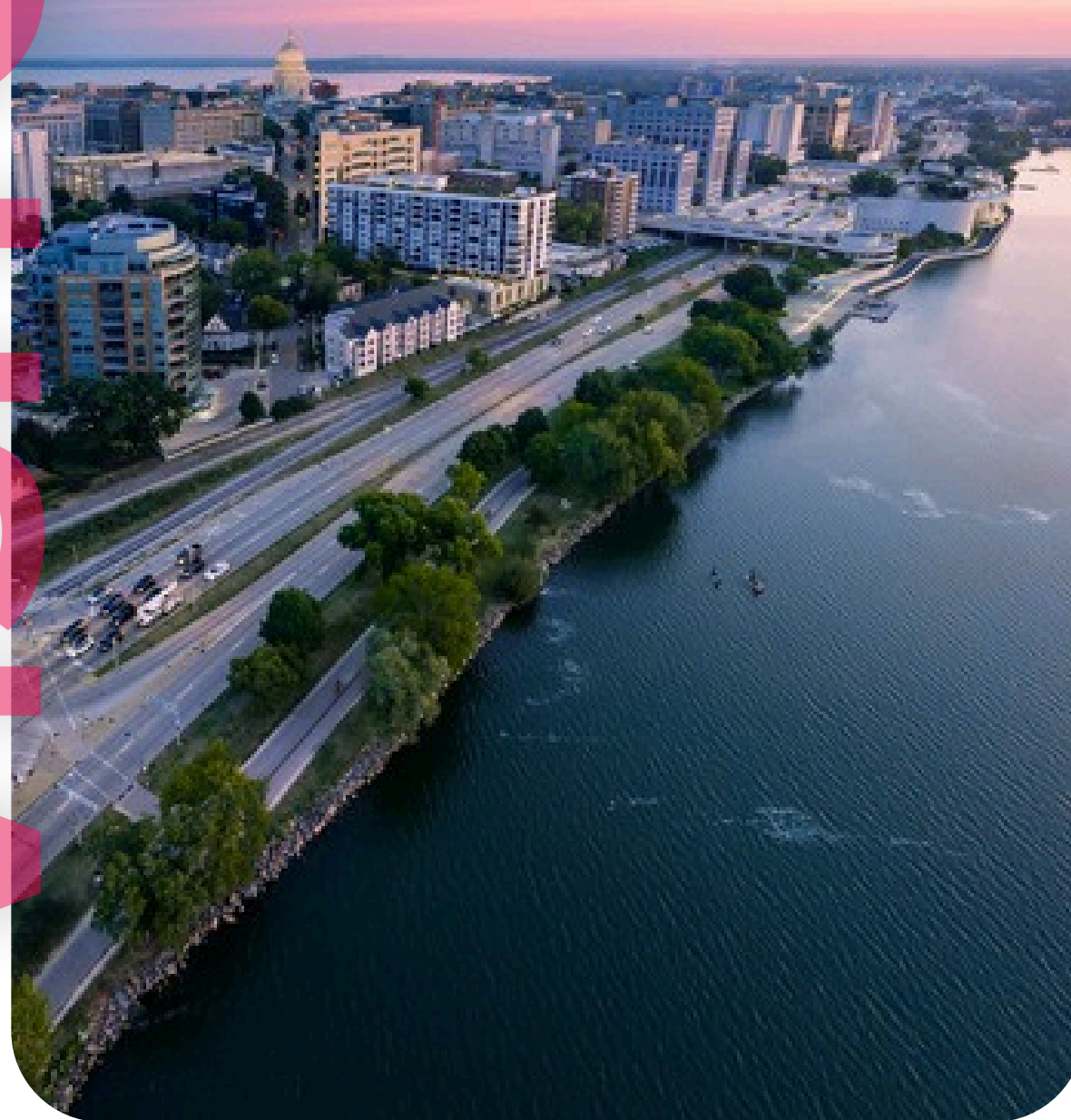
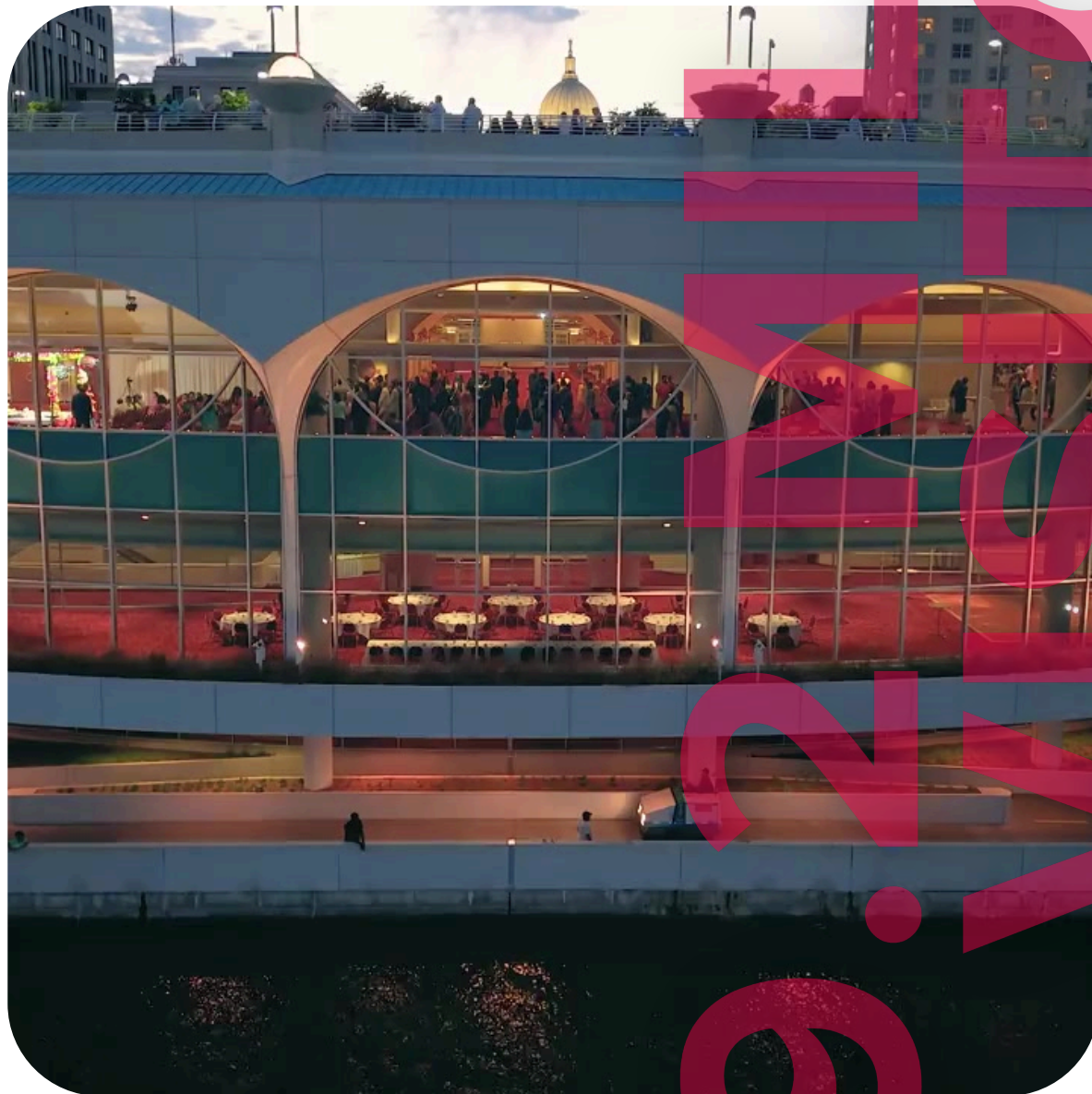


Tourism supported
19,337 jobs
in Madison & Dane
County



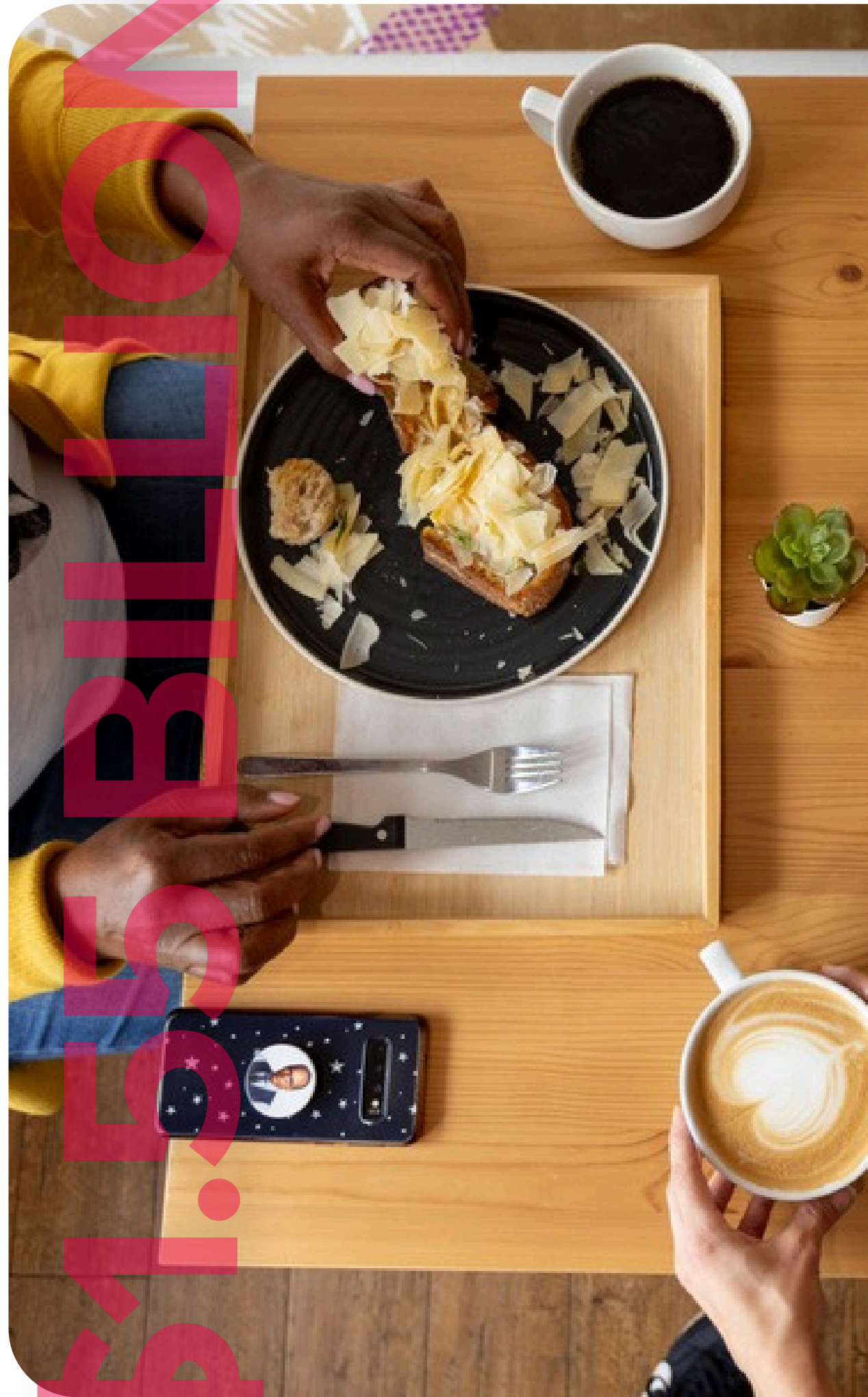


In 2024, we welcomed
9.2 million visitors
to Madison & Dane
County



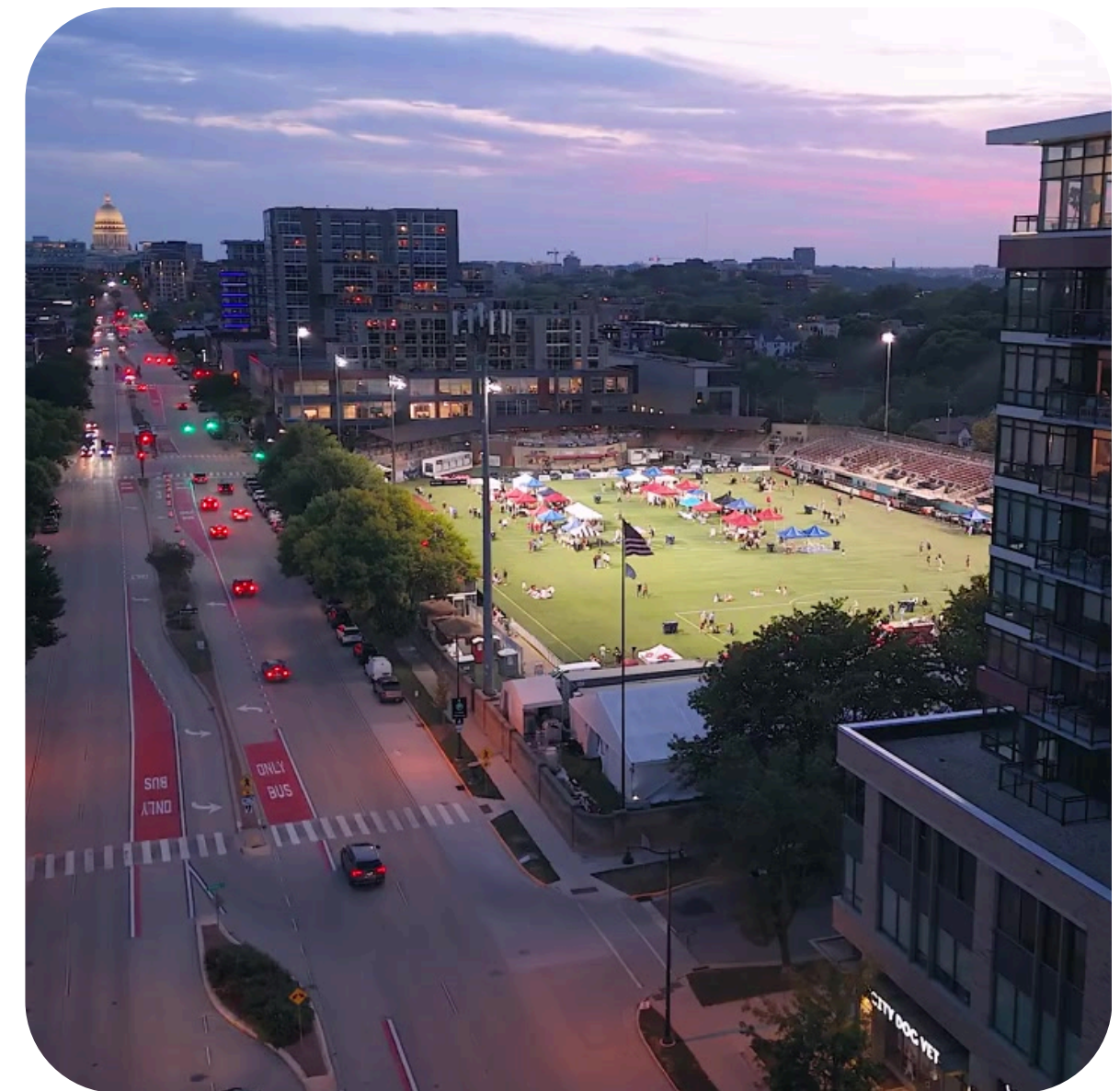


Those visitors spent
\$1.55 billion
in our community`





That equates to
\$4.2 million per day



**Food +
Beverage**
\$450 million

Accommodations
\$376 million

Retail
\$319 million

Transportation
\$212 million

**Recreation/
Entertainment**
\$193 million



destination
madisonTM **sales and marketing**
efforts DROVE these results and
generated revenue for city government,
local businesses and our community.





2025 YTD

GOALS +

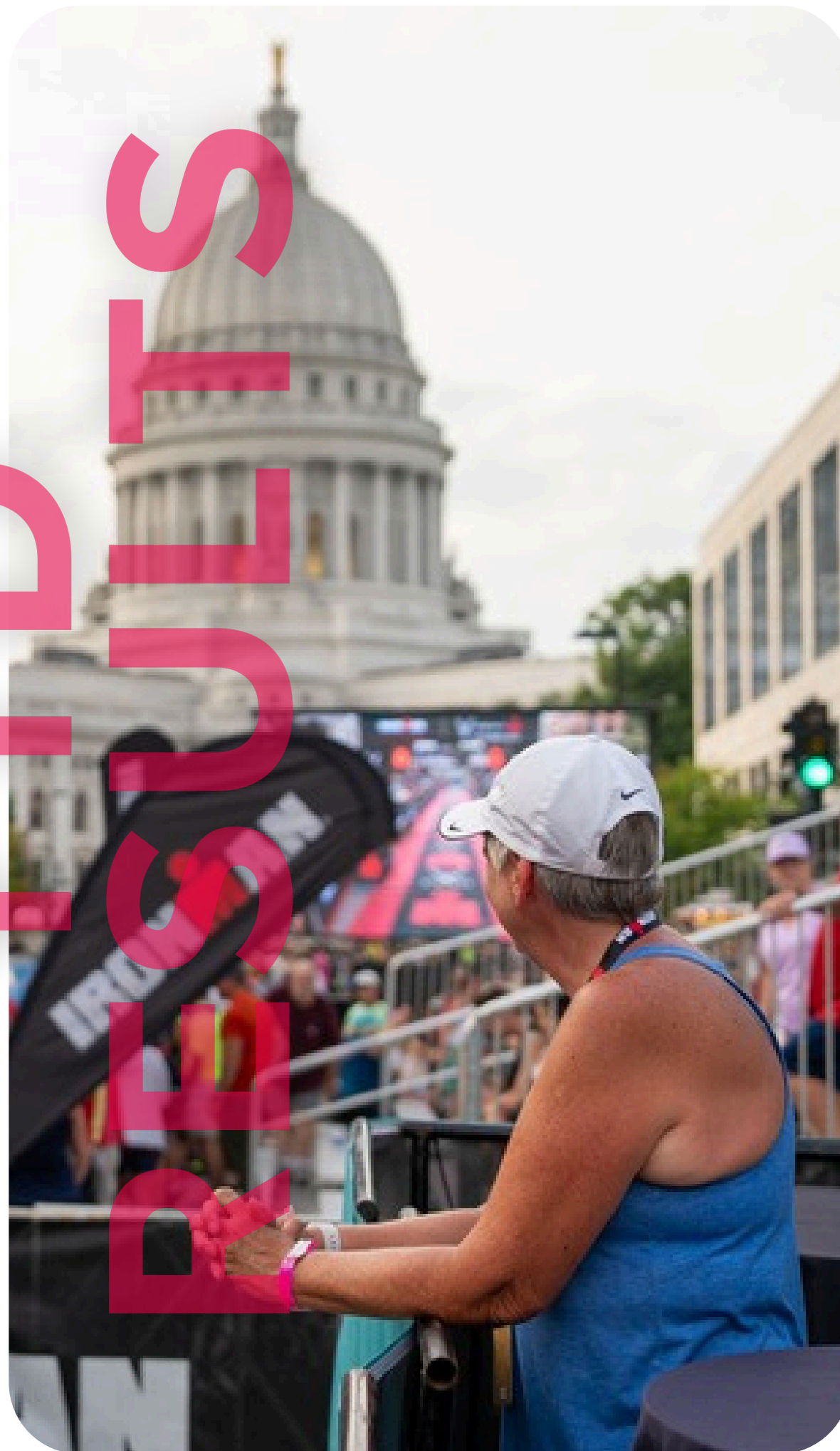
OBJECTIVES



**DIRECT ROOM
NIGHT
GROWTH**



- 1 Target Off-Season Conferences & Events
- 2 Optimize Facilities
- 3 Secure City-Wide Event



Through July 2025, we've booked:

- 109,337 hotel room nights for future years.
- 83 events, including sports and conventions, with an estimated economic impact of \$58.5 Million for future years.
- The number of event & sports bookings is up 30.4% over 2024. The national average for bookings is down -1.5%
- We've expanded into growth markets, including Black and LGBTQ+ Meeting Planners

Event Economic Impact

\$2.3M | American Truck Historical Society

\$1.2M | USA Gymnastics

\$1.08M | Health Physics Society

\$993K | National Rural Electric Cooperative Assoc.

\$902K | American Trails

\$889K | Wisconsin Music Educators Assoc.

\$751K | Wisconsin Cheesemakers Assoc.

\$3.6M | IRONMAN WI



► **For every \$1 invested**
in group sales (conventions
/sports/events), we drove
\$24 in visitor spend.

“Tourists are helping to fill the revenue void left downtown by the pandemic, and they are arriving with impressive impact. They are here to spend, looking to maximize their experiences, and eager to take in all that Madison has to offer.

Destination Madison efforts actively create the conditions that allow businesses like mine to thrive, while positioning Madison as a destination with staying power and authenticity. Without Destination Madison’s leadership, our ability to attract and retain visitors would be diminished.”

-Josh Berkson

Rule No. One Hospitality Group

Member, Destination Madison Partner Committee

► **64% of residents** would like to see more tourists coming to our area.

Compared to 51% of Midwest residents and 52% for the US norm.



**BRAND
AWARENESS +
VISITOR
CONVERSION**



- 1 Execute infinite consumer journeys to move key audiences from discovery to conversion
- 2 Evolve brand strategy, signature stories + develop campaign toolkits
- 3 Assess Madison's visitor sentiment to move forward destination branding work

WE'RE
WEIRDER
THAN YOU THINK

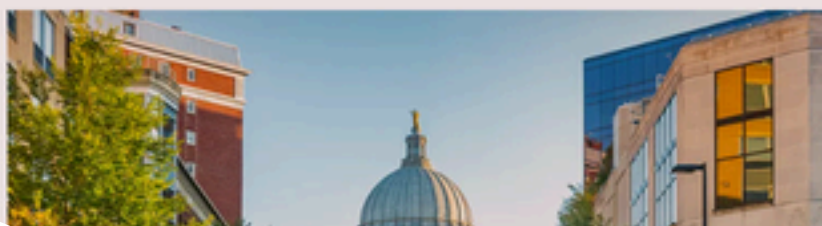


TRAVEL+ LEISURE

This Underrated Midwestern City Is a Top Trending Destination for Summer—and It Has Legendary Cheeses, Award-winning Restaurants, and 2 Stunning Lakes

Frank Lloyd Wright sites, international eats, and access to five lakes—need we say more?

By Rachel Chang | Published on April 8, 2025



Drive Market Focus:
Chicago & Minneapolis
Web sessions are up 5%

Our social media reach
is trending ahead of our
record-setting 2024

Launched an LGBTQ+
Advisory Committee to assist
with sales & marketing efforts
to attract LGBTQ+ travelers to
Madison.

PR media wins have surpassed
our 110 million audience reach
goal for 2025

► For every \$1 invested
in leisure marketing,
we drove \$22
in visitor spend.

“ Destination Madison supports small businesses by connecting us with journalists, influencers, and content creators from across the country. These opportunities allow shops like Fromagination to be seen, shared, and celebrated far beyond our storefront. This kind of exposure is not just helpful—it’s essential. Their efforts amplify our voice and help us tell our story to audiences we could never reach on our own.”

- Ken Monteleone
Owner, Fromagination
Member, Destination Madison LGBTQ+ Advisory Board



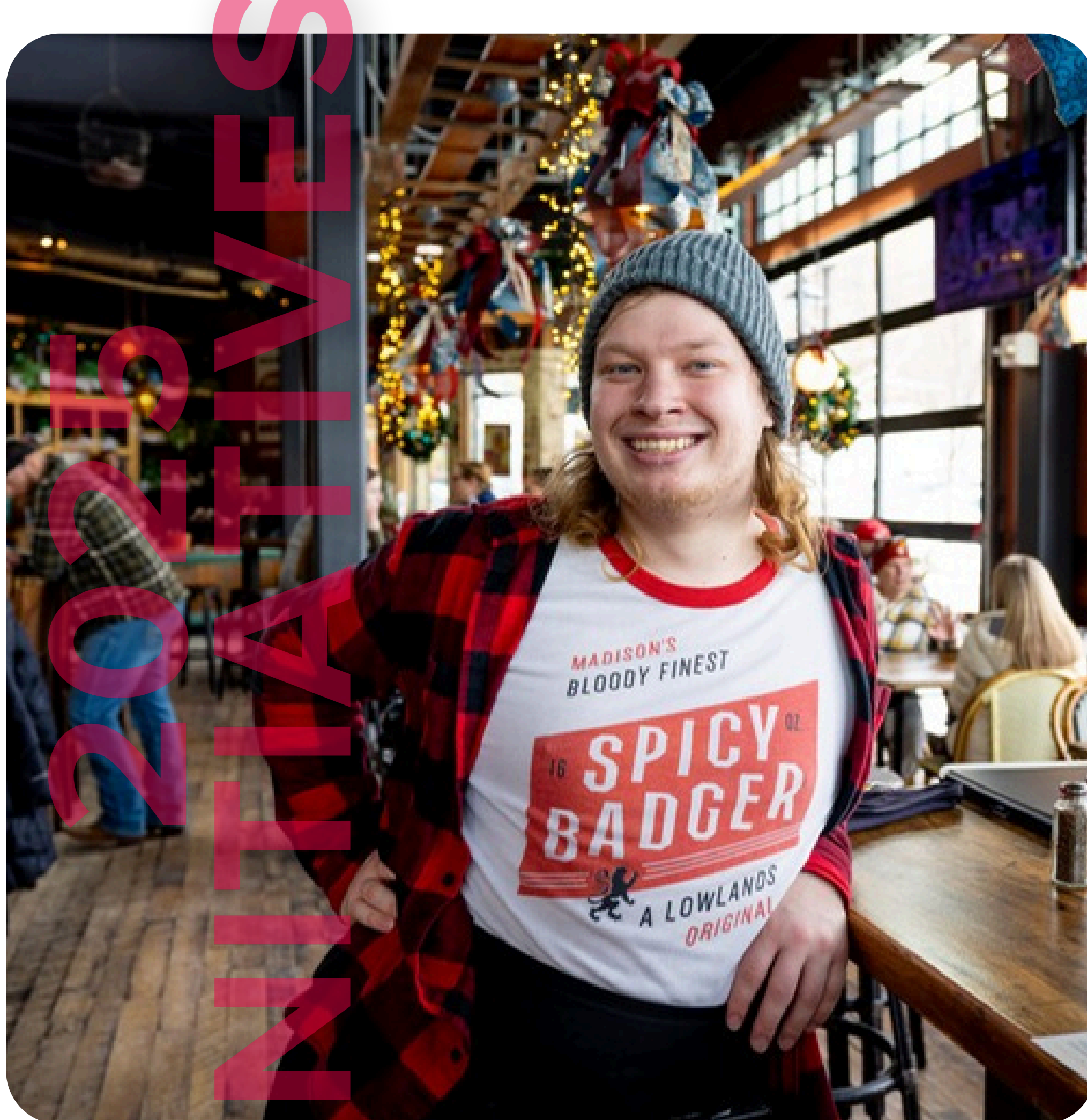
70% of residents like
the way local tourism
advertising represents
their home.

Compared to 46% of Midwest residents and 49% for the US norm.

RESIDENT SENTIMENT SURVEY, LONGWOODS INTERNATIONAL



PARTNERSHIPS + COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



- 1 Grow Partnerships
- 2 Strengthen Engagement
- 3 Increase Job Board Participation



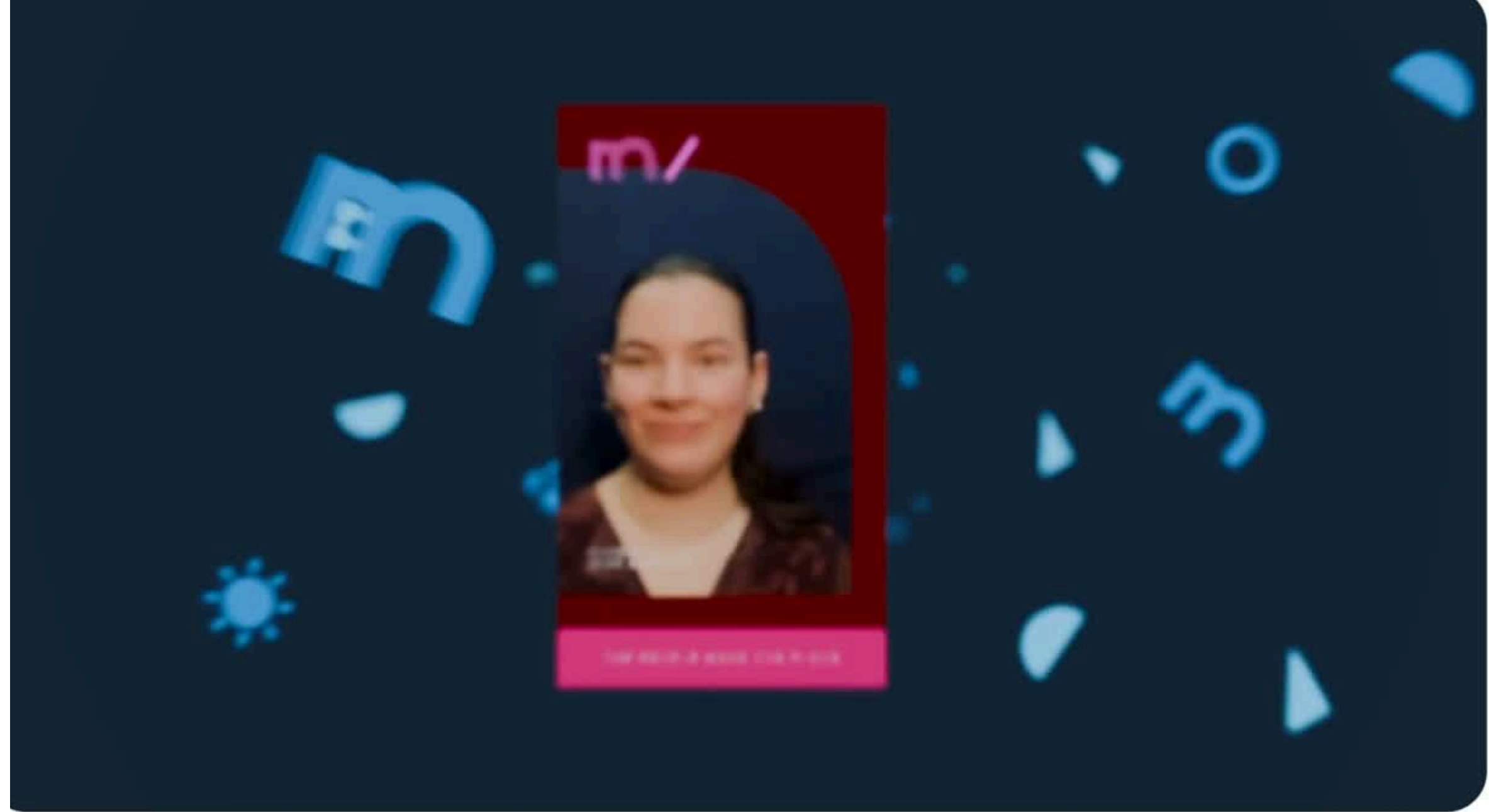
Grew the partnership base to more than 920 partners.

Held or planned more than a dozen start up, pop up, and workshop events to educate and connect our partners and enhance their investment.

Hosted an Immigration Webinar with experts to help local businesses understand their rights and resources.

Workforce Initiatives

- We strengthened the hospitality workforce by celebrating and promoting the industry through targeted recruitment efforts at schools and career fairs, and by launching a dedicated hospitality job board
- Held Destination Madison Awards to honor workers and businesses in the local hospitality industry



“Destination Madison has shown up as more than a "travel bureau" and more of a local business booster. They have brought together resources, relationships, and expertise that I cannot afford and don't have access to, and offered it to its member businesses to help us gain exposure, forge partnerships, and bring in visitors beyond Madison.

Their PR is top tier in terms of quality, messaging, and media relations. Over the years, this directly supported Kosa's growth beyond what I could do on my own. When it comes down to it, small business owners are receiving incredible benefits that are helping our businesses grow, allowing us to connect with our communities, and supporting our dreams.”

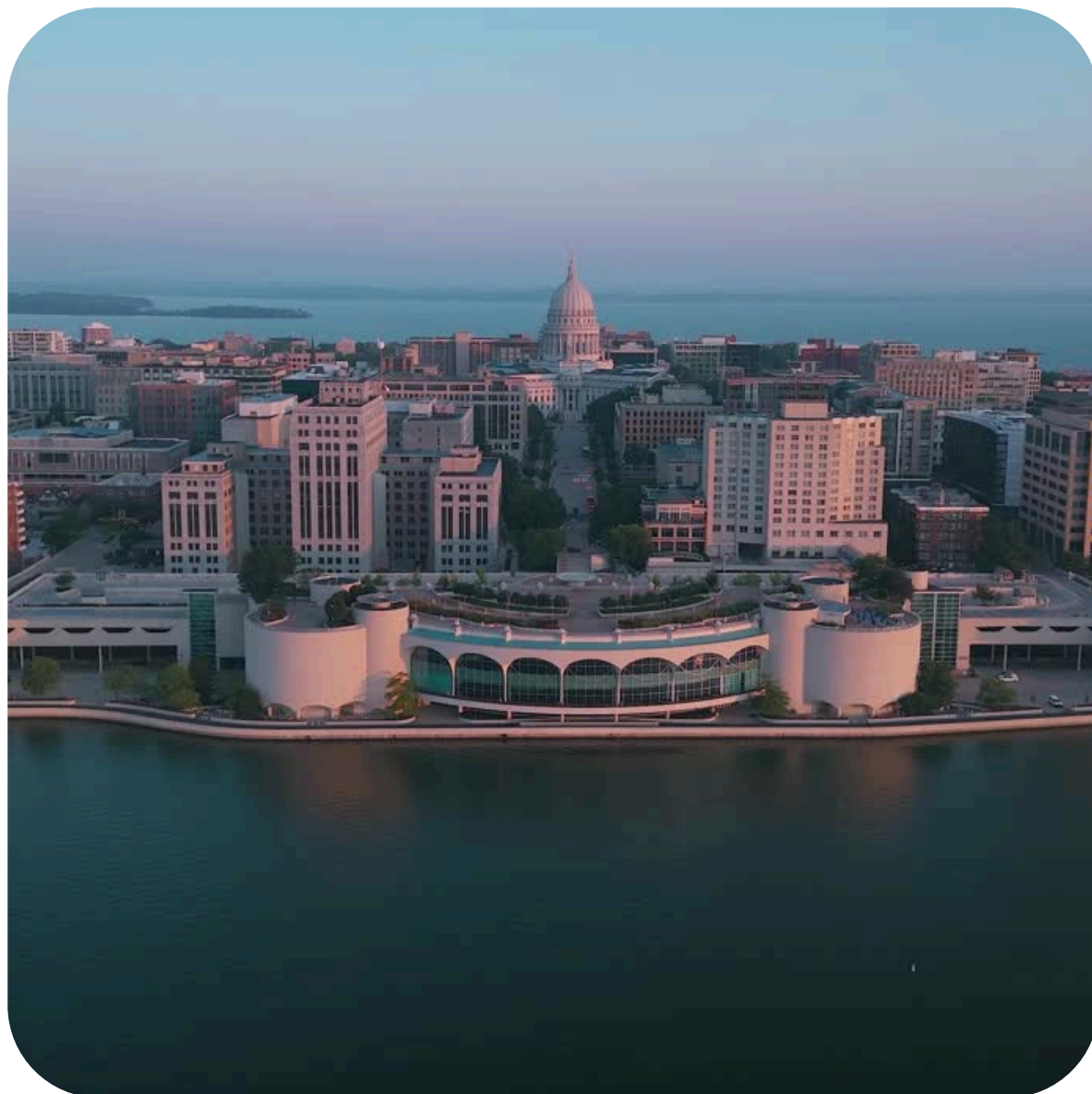
- Shilpa Sankaran
Owner, Kosa Spa



**74% of residents
believe tourism
encourages investment
in our local economy.**

Compared to 53% of Midwest residents and 53% for the US norm.

RESIDENT SENTIMENT SURVEY, LONGWOODS INTERNATIONAL



PLACEMAKING



1

Complete destination branding research + build future outline

2

Complete visitor center research + build future outline

3

Complete outline for DM's Sustainability Plan to be used for 2026 – 2028 strategic plan



COMMUNITY IMPACT

destination
madisonTM
FOUNDATION





Last year, the Madison Area Sports Commission Youth Grant awarded over \$60,000 to programs that support everything from practice space and coaching compensation to equipment and expanding locations so more kids can participate.

Since 2011, this program has awarded a total of \$520,000 to 92 local organizations



Foundation Grantees

- Down Syndrome Association of South Central Wisconsin
- Goodman Waves Swim and Dive
- Higher Dimensions Youth Basketball
- Millenium Soccer Club
- Madison Starlings Volleyball Club
- Lake View Community School
- Imagine Academy Corporation
- Zinovae Foundation





2026 OUTLOOK

SUSTAINED ECONOMIC GROWTH & SUPPORT

**Grow room nights
through group travel**

**Grow room nights
through leisure travel**

**Build organizational
momentum through
funding and collabor-
ative relationships that
fuel action.**

VALUES-BASED BRANDING

Organizational Brand + Impact

Destination Madison's organizational brand is clearly defined and visibly aligned, conveying how our work connects to our core mission and impacts our community.

Branding Madison

Build the foundation of a brand for Madison that unites locals, community, businesses, and visitors to elevate the unique elements and values of Madison.

Storytelling

Expand authentic storytelling to ensure representation of Madison's diversity, neighborhoods, and communities to promote visitation and unique experiences.

PARTNER RESILIENCY + GROWTH

Partner Experience

Empower a diverse and resilient partner ecosystem by expanding networks, deepening support, and driving inclusive growth to sustain a vibrant tourism economy.

Industry Collaboration

Create a connected tourism community by aligning regional efforts and uplifting and growing the hospitality workforce.


DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

Destination Development

Be the connector to facilitate and improve destination development that drives tourism for economic growth.

Visitor Experience

Curate and foster a positive experience for group and leisure visitors throughout the travel journey/start to finish.



THANK YOU

destination
madison