

Sept 12, 2019

City of Madison  
Room Tax Commission

Dear Commission Members,

The Board of Directors of Destination Madison is appreciative of the support and continued honoring of the agreement our organization has with the City of Madison. The work Destination Madison does on behalf of our community is essential for keeping thousands of workers on the job, supporting traffic into and out of our airport, driving visitors to retail, restaurant and service businesses and generating room tax for important programs the City supports.

As the City's investment has increased for our work, so too have the results of our organization. Since increasing the percentage of room taxes from our multi-year agreement, our organization has been able to invest in attracting events like the Reebok CrossFit Games to Madison, generating thousands of room nights and attracting thousands of visitors from around the globe. Our ongoing efforts have also brought new conventions to Monona Terrace, such as the American Astronomical Society and American Society for Animal Science, and new livestock and other events to the Alliant Energy Center.

Beyond that, we have expanded our resources to help grow awareness of Madison as a great place to live, work and visit. We have been able to add more than a dozen new conventions to attend and showcase Madison as a convention, sports and travel destination and launch regional, targeted consumer-facing marketing campaigns. This additional, external marketing has increased the destination's visibility and put Madison in a more competitive position than ever. The recent DestinationNEXT assessment results show strong evidence that the increased investment in Destination Madison has paid off with a substantial growth in the strength of the destination and community support.

Our relationships with the City and Monona Terrace are excellent. We collaborate on many fronts and look forward to continuing to support priorities of the city and the hospitality industry. We are ready to provide insights and data to help determine where visitors are coming from to our community, how we can help grow the workforce for our industry, participate in conversations on the Public Market and BRT and provide support for events such as the DNC 2020 and other special activities that may arise.

We take our role very seriously and stand on our reputation as an organization that can be trusted to responsibly – and creatively – grow visitation and amplify the great things Madison has to offer.

As you review and make decisions on distribution of the room taxes in 2020, we ask you to continue to fund Destination Madison at our contracted level of 28% of the 2019 total room tax collections. In turn, we commit to continuing to operate at optimum levels while lifting the City's reputation as a desirable place to live, work and visit.

Respectfully,

  
Greg Frank  
Chair, Board of Directors