



VISIT  
**alexandria**

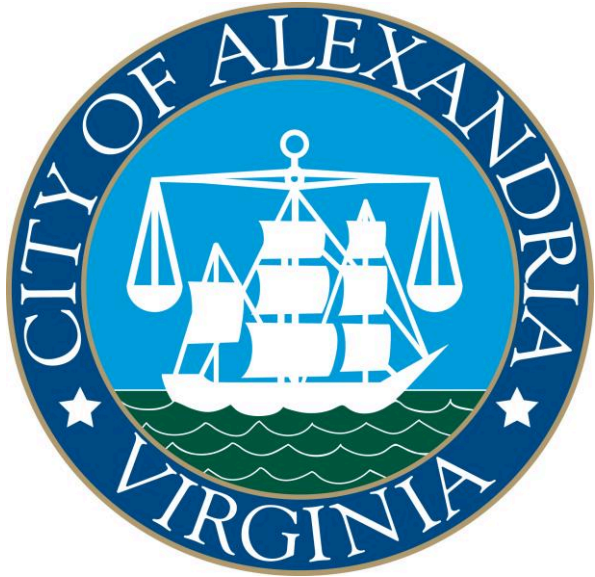
# 2023 ANNUAL MEETING

**Breaking Through, Building Connections**

**October 3, 2023**  
**Westin Alexandria Old Town**



# Thank You to Our Partners



**VIRGINIA  
IS FOR  
LOVERS®**

# Thank You to Our Charter Members



Alexandria Hotel Association

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S  
**MOUNT ★ VERNON**



# Thank You to Our Host



**The Westin  
Alexandria Old Town**







# VISIT alexandria

Remarks from:

**Kate Ellis**  
Board Chair  
Visit Alexandria

**Joseph Collum**  
Executive VP,  
Director of Branch  
& Business Banking  
(See video [here.](#))

**Hon. Justin Wilson**  
Mayor, City of  
Alexandria

**James Parajon**  
Alexandria City  
Manager



# VISIT alexandria

Patricia Washington

President & CEO  
Visit Alexandria





# Breaking Through in FY23

## GOALS

**Awareness**

**Reputation**

**City  
Revenues**

## OUTCOMES

**Record  
Advertising  
Impressions**

**Critical Mass  
of National  
Accolades**

**Record  
Consumption  
Taxes**



# Record Digital Ad Impressions

**186 million (+ 18%)**

- Video
- Digital banners
- Native
- Paid social
- Paid search
- Out-of-home





# Condé Nast Traveler Best U.S. Small Cities

## Six years running!

Condé Nast  
**Traveler**  
THE WORLD'S MOST TRAVELED PEOPLE  
READERS' CHOICE  
AWARDS 2023

Best Small Cities



Courtesy of Visit Alexandria/Sam Kittner

### 3. Alexandria, Virginia

Washingtonians are all in on the secret, but it's no surprise the rest of the world is catching up: Alexandria, Virginia, the charming, historic city just across the Potomac River from [our nation's capital](#), draws travelers and would-be residents alike. Most folks start to imagine moving there immediately after setting foot in Old Town, once they've strolled the red-brick sidewalks, clocking street after street of perfectly preserved rowhouses from the 18th and 19th centuries. When you visit, scope out King Street, packed with boutiques, restaurants, and specialty shops, then land at the waterfront, where you can watch the boats bobbing on the water before touring the Torpedo Factory Art Center, a collective of galleries and artists' studios. End the day at Gadsby's Tavern, where some of our founding fathers used to drink—don't mind the actors in colonial garb.

1. Charleston, SC
2. Santa Fe, NM
3. **Alexandria, VA**
4. Greenville, SC
5. Savannah, GA
6. Aspen, CO
7. St. Augustine, FL
8. Pensacola, FL
9. Annapolis, MD
10. Sedona, AZ



# *Travel + Leisure* Best U.S. Cities



## 2023 Ranking

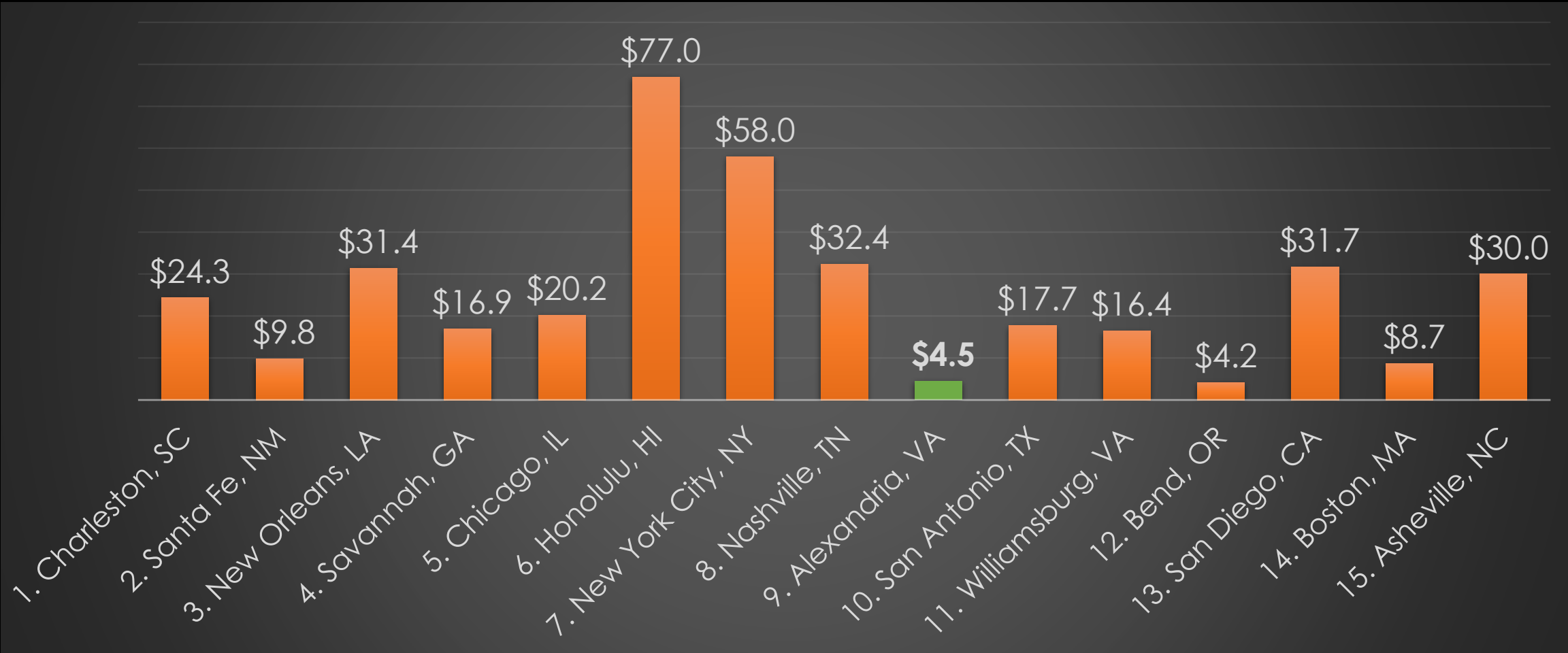
1. Charleston, SC
2. Santa Fe, NM
3. New Orleans, LA
4. Savannah, GA
5. Chicago, IL
6. Honolulu, HI
7. New York City, NY
8. Nashville, TN
- 9. Alexandria, VA**
10. San Antonio, TX
11. Williamsburg, VA
12. Bend, OR
13. San Diego, CA
14. Boston, MA
15. Asheville, NC





# *Travel + Leisure* 2023 Top U.S. Destinations

Tourism Budgets (\$ millions)




Source: IRS Form 990, City Budgets

# 1,000+ Stories, 6 Years in a Row

Condé Nast  
**Traveler**

**TRAVEL+**  
**LEISURE**

*the knot*

 msn

**B B C**  
**TRAVEL**

**Southern Living**

The Washington Post

**BuzzFeed**

**Forbes**

 **WorldAtlas**

**thrillist**

**Money**

**GOOD**  
**HOUSEKEEPING**





# 1,000+ Stories, 6 Years in a Row

## 25+ Media Visits



India FAM on an Old Town walking tour

May 2023



Japan FAM attending Portside Festival

June 2023





# 1,000+ Stories, 6 Years in a Row

## 34% ↑ in National/International Clips

### For Cultural Riches

Alexandria, Virginia



PHOTO: K. SUMMERER FOR VISIT ALEXANDRIA

With postcard-perfect cobblestone streets and quick access to the [wineries of northern Virginia](#), [Alexandria](#) is an easy city to love. But these days, the reason to go is to see how effectively the city is confronting its own history, as destinations across the American South [grapple with the legacy of the Confederacy](#). Alexandria, which was founded as a tobacco

Historic structures report by SmithGroup. It has also set us up for the continuing preservation work that we are going to be doing in the next few years.

**WHAT DO THOSE PLANS INVOLVE?**

We're looking at the brickwork, looking at the windows, looking at the building architecturally. What year do we want to take this building back to?

What you're seeing here currently in our exhibits on our three floors is temporary... [We present] a history about the domestic slave trade... and our local history. [On the third floor are] the paintings of the late Sherry Sanabria, [who captured] what is vanishing from our landscape, these places that housed African Americans during slavery... We'll have input from scholars so that when we take these exhibits down in a few years and reopen with new exhibits, you'll have a very comprehensive story.

We're also looking at what we can learn from slave manifests. As more people are discovering their family history, we're hoping we can get those manifests and have data here for people who are interested or think that there may be a connection for their family to this building. We also hope that we can use this site for discussions about race, equity, and reconciliation.

**WHAT HAS THE VISITOR RESPONSE BEEN SO FAR?**

There's a gamut of emotions. You do get people who are overwhelmed by it all. We keep tissue boxes everywhere because people often cry and often are upset because of the history. Then you have people who are dying to bring family and friends here because they didn't know this was here. [This history] is something we need to be sharing and talking more about.

From top: Audrey P. Davis inside Freedom House Museum, which reopened to the public on Juneteenth of 2022; The Alexandria, Virginia, museum's exterior.

PHOTO: JESSICA L. HARRIS FOR VISIT ALEXANDRIA

WINTER 2023 | [SavingPlaces.org](#) 9



### A CULINARY GETAWAY IN Northern VIRGINIA

From celebrity chefs to creative cocktails and more, dining in Northern Virginia offers endless possibilities.



**TAP THE TRAIL**

Prince William County offers a "taste, learn and savor" trail that includes historic sites, wineries, distilleries, breweries, and tasting rooms with its self-guided experience.

**BY CARA O'DONNELL**

Celebrated as a breakfast 'to go' and it's not just for kids. At The Crutcher, nestled in an unassuming shopping plaza in Northern Virginia and home to a chocolate lab in addition to a full dining menu, Celebrity Chef Kenneth 'Tiger' shows the dessert staple can be infused into any dish at any time of day. The burrito eatery features a house-infused blackberry sauce, and the cover story is on the short rib egg and hash. The restaurant offers the perfect hint of sweetness.

That's just the beginning of what can be a truly delicious culinary outing in Northern Virginia. Located just outside the U.S. capital city of Washington, D.C., Northern Virginia is where you'll find expert chefs and where local culinary minds hone their skills. It's where a growing wine and craft beer scene is developing new flavors and where diners can fully explore the cuisine of the globe without ever leaving the region.



**DID YOU KNOW?**

Local County has its own yeast strain. Major breweries produce more than 100,000 barrels of beer annually in Loudoun for local breweries and restaurants. Loudoun is a growing wine and craft beer scene. From a warehouse food hall to a farm-to-table dining experience, Loudoun is a foodie's dream.

## Dreamscapes

## Travel + Leisure

## Preservation





# Record Broadcast Coverage

## +72% in FY23

See video of broadcast highlights [here](#).



# What Media Are Saying

*"With postcard-perfect cobblestone streets and quick access to the wineries of northern Virginia, **Alexandria is an easy city to love. But these days, the reason to go is to see how effectively the city is confronting its own history...**"*

TRAVEL+  
LEISURE

*"For many travelers, Alexandria serves as a lux jumping-off point for D.C.-area visits, but it's also a top destination in its own right...you'll find charming cobblestone streets lined with lanterns, outdoor cafes, Instagram-worthy murals and trendy bars. There's also a vibrant art community..."*

Money

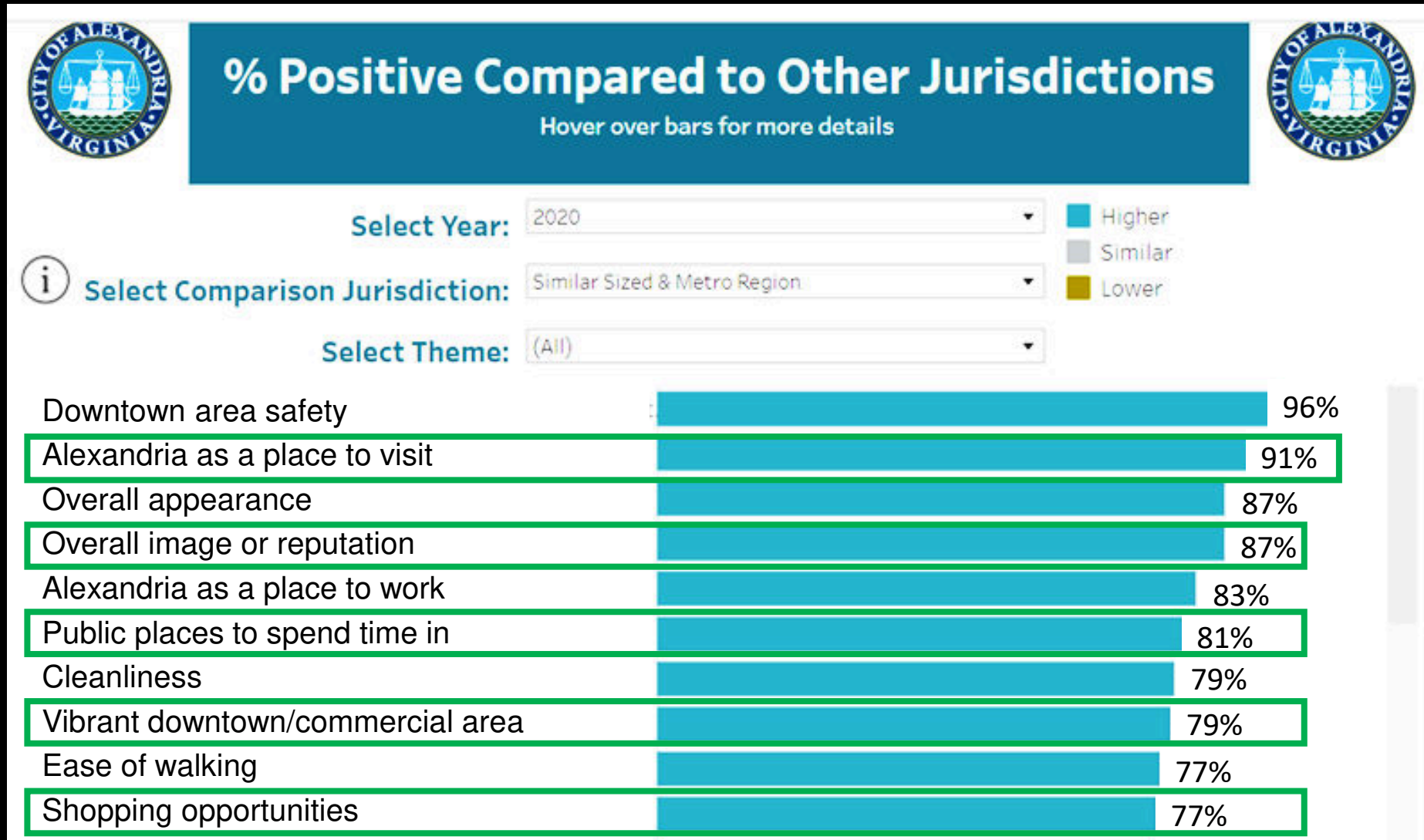
*"Stepping out of D.C.'s shadow, this city uses its small size to big advantage."*

NORTHSTAR  
meetings group.com



# What Residents Are Saying

## Five of Top 10 Attributes Are Tourism Related (of 129)



Source:  
Alexandria  
Office of  
Performance  
Analytics  
n=3000





# Building Connections

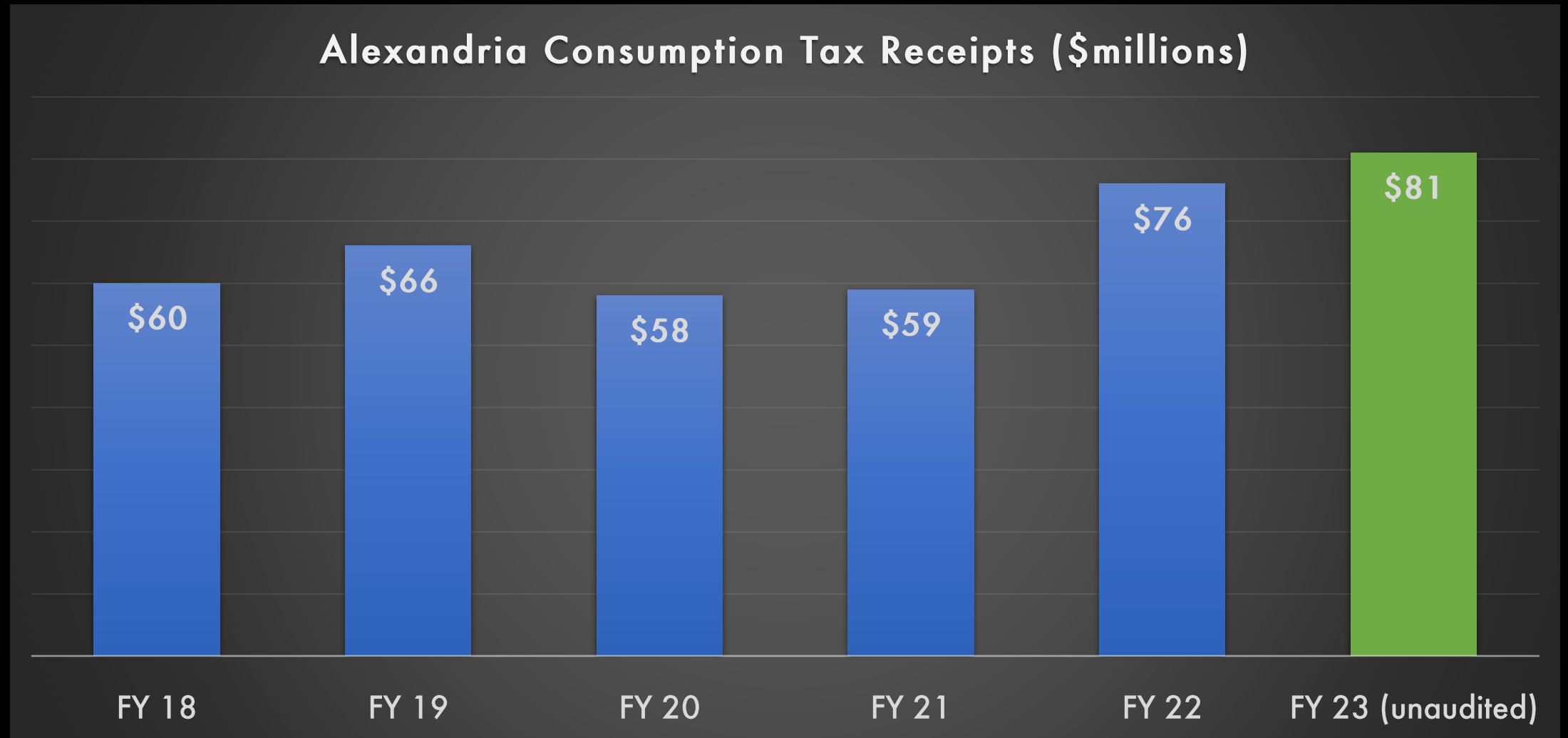
# Building Connections



# Community & Economic Impact



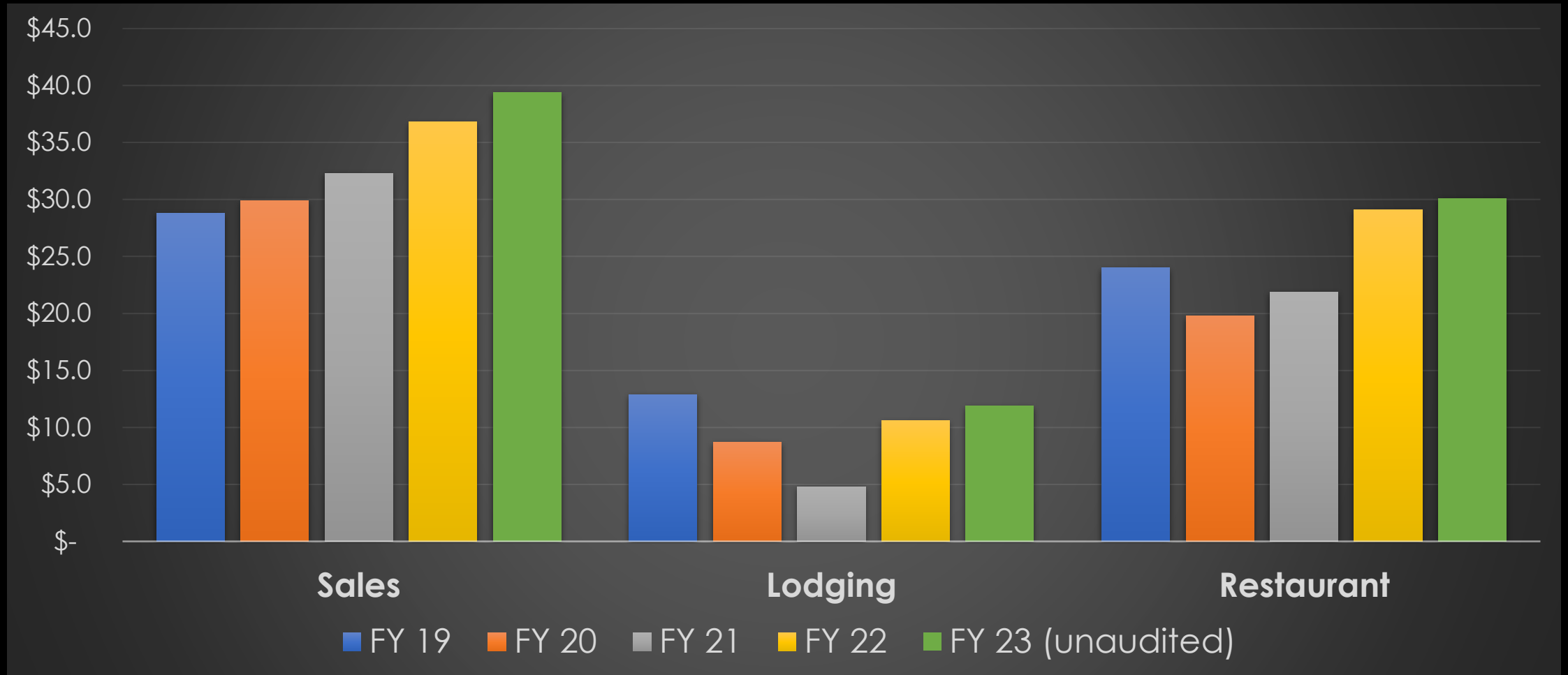
# Sales, Lodging & Restaurant Tax Receipts



Source: City Revenue Dept.

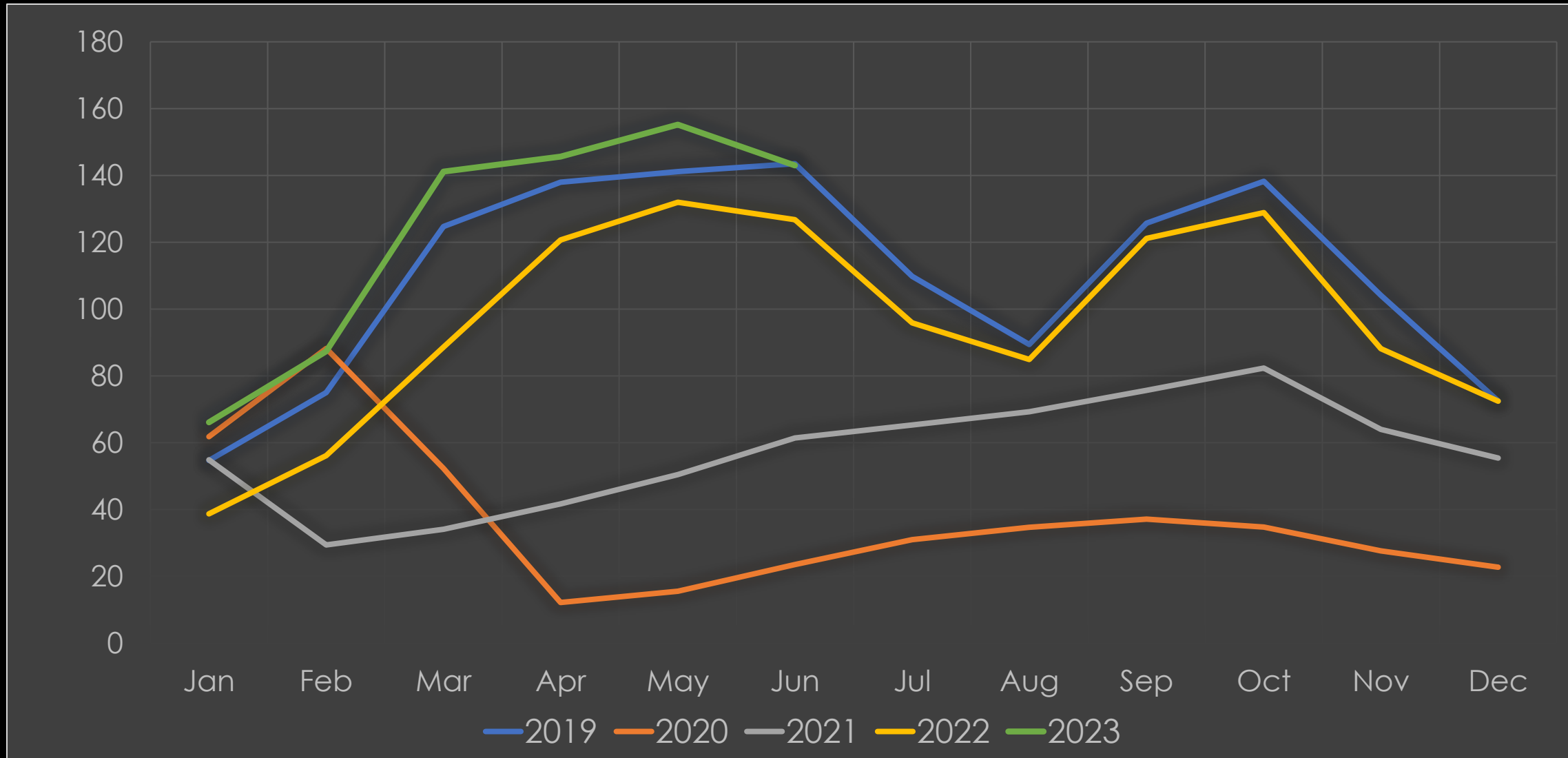
# Sales, Lodging & Restaurant Tax Receipts

(\$ million)



Source: City Revenue Dept.

# Alexandria Revenue Per Available Room



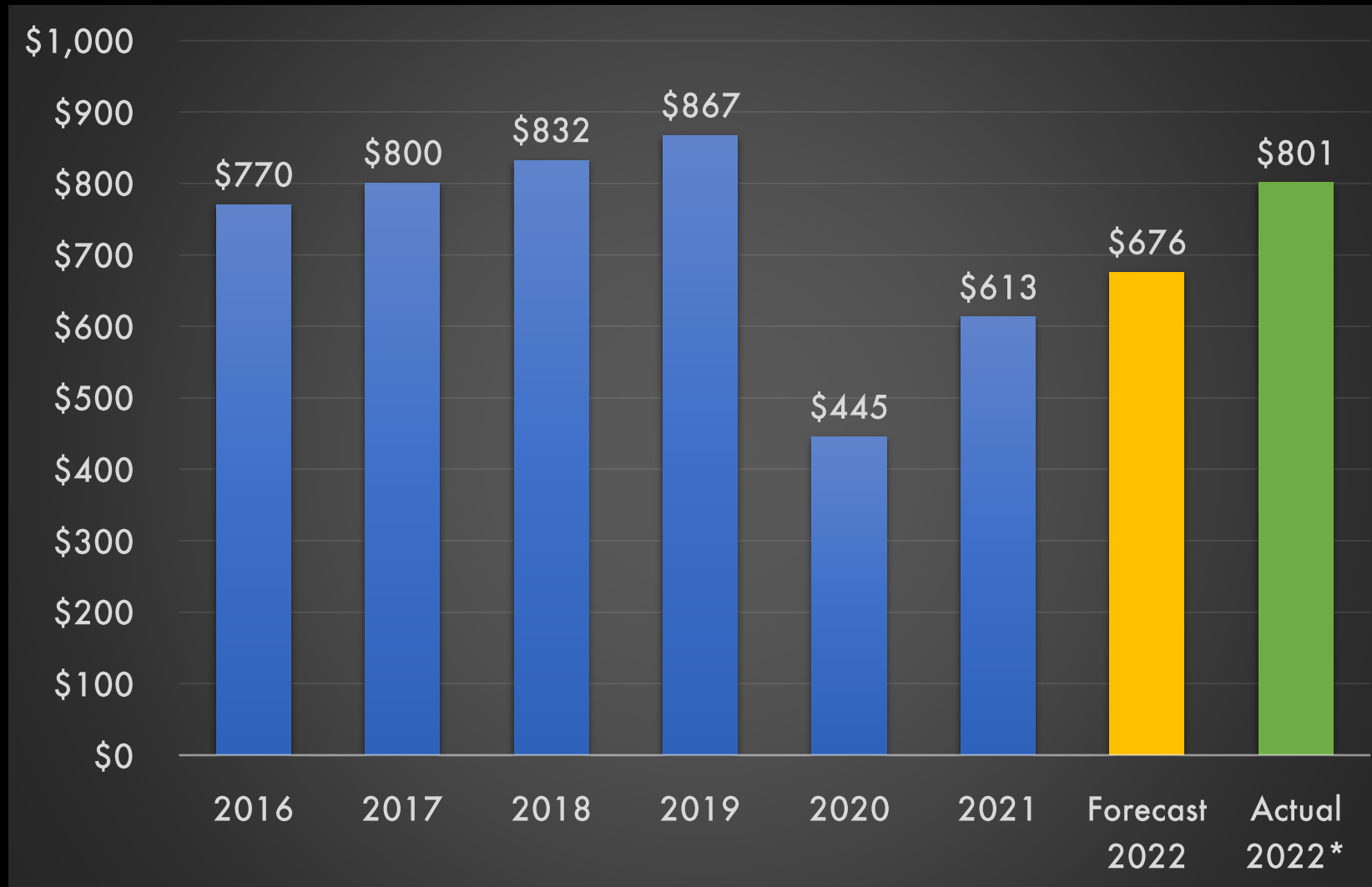
Source: STR





# Spending by Alexandria Visitors

**From 50+ Miles;  
by Calendar  
Year  
(\$ million)**



Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Economic Impact of Domestic Travel, Sept. 2023

# FY23 Initiatives



# Brand Update

alexandria

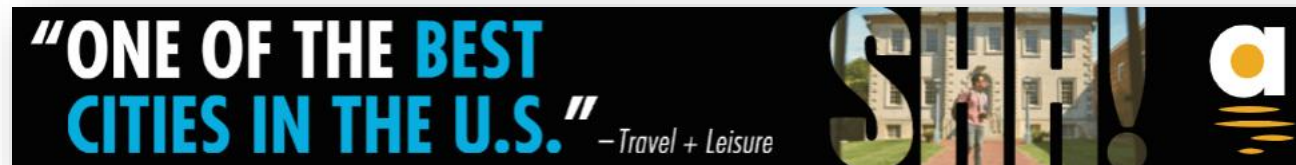
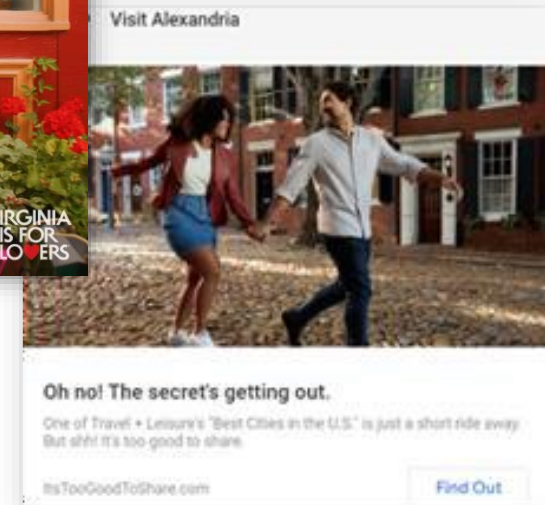
alexandria





# Best Kept Shh! Ad Campaign

See campaign videos [here](#).



# Best Kept Shh! Ad Campaign

- 60+ million digital impressions in this campaign's first 4 months alone
- ↑ 40% cost efficiency in digital banner and video





# Expand Your ALX Neighborhoods Campaign

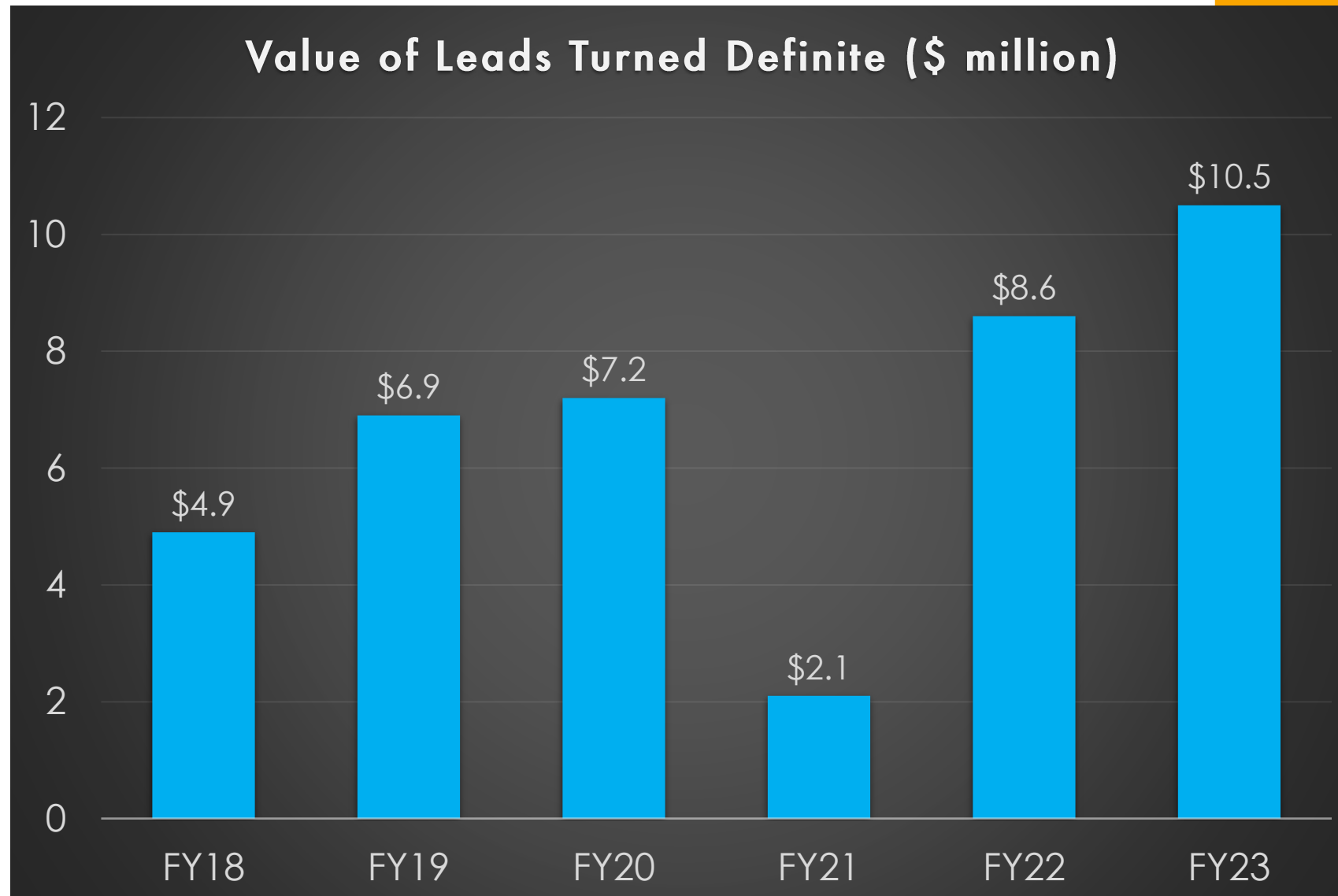


See video ad [here](#).





# Meetings +22%





**alexandria**  
**SALES TEAM**



# TRADESHOWS & INDUSTRY EVENTS







# SIGNATURE EVENT: BREAKFAST & BLOSSOMS





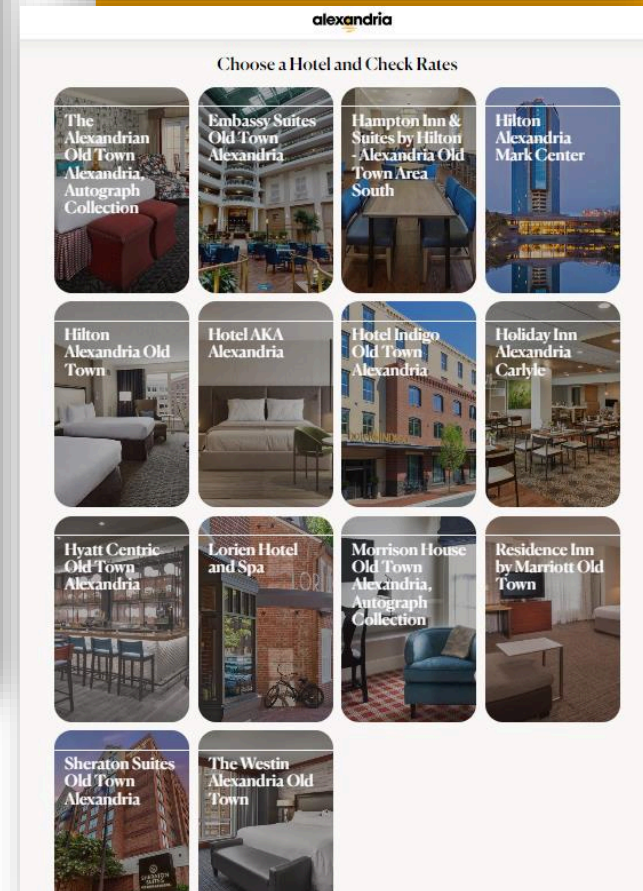
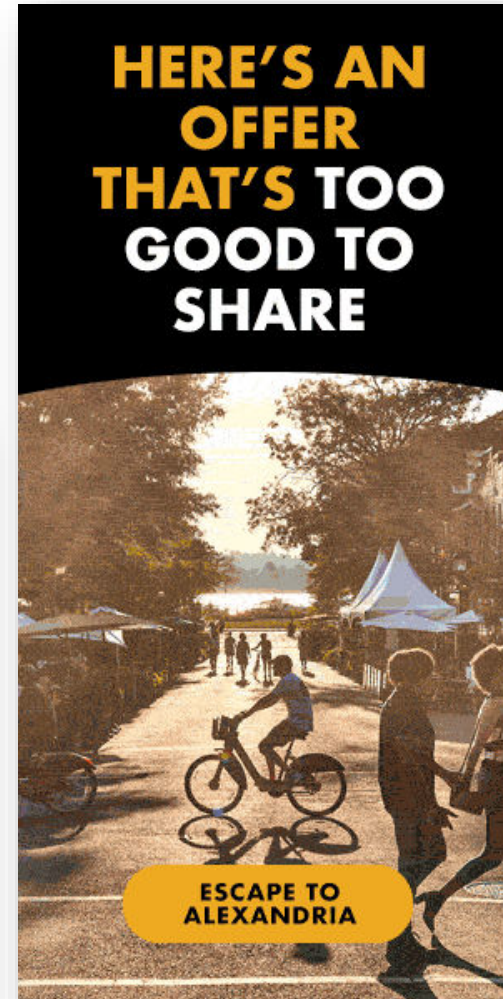
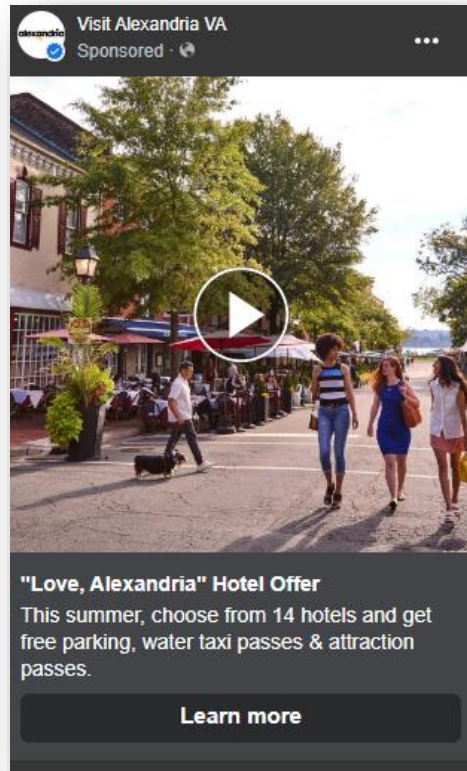
# SIGNATURE EVENT: GINGERBREAD DECORATING CONTEST





# “Love, Alexandria” Hotel Package

- 127,000+ page views
- 7,600+ referrals to hotels



# Holiday Parades: Enhanced Production

- Partnership to sustain Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Parade
  - Visit Alexandria
  - City of Alexandria
  - Campagna Center
- Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights sponsored by Amazon
  - Record attendance
  - Enhanced safety
  - Traffic management
  - Expanded viewing: Canal Center to Jones Point





# Record Attendance at Portside Festival

- Record 23,000 attendance at Portside in Old Town Summer Festival
- New title sponsor: Ting Internet
- Continued partnership with Office of the Arts on ALX Jazz Fest





# City Renovated Visitor Center





# Record 456 Members

## *Thank you!*



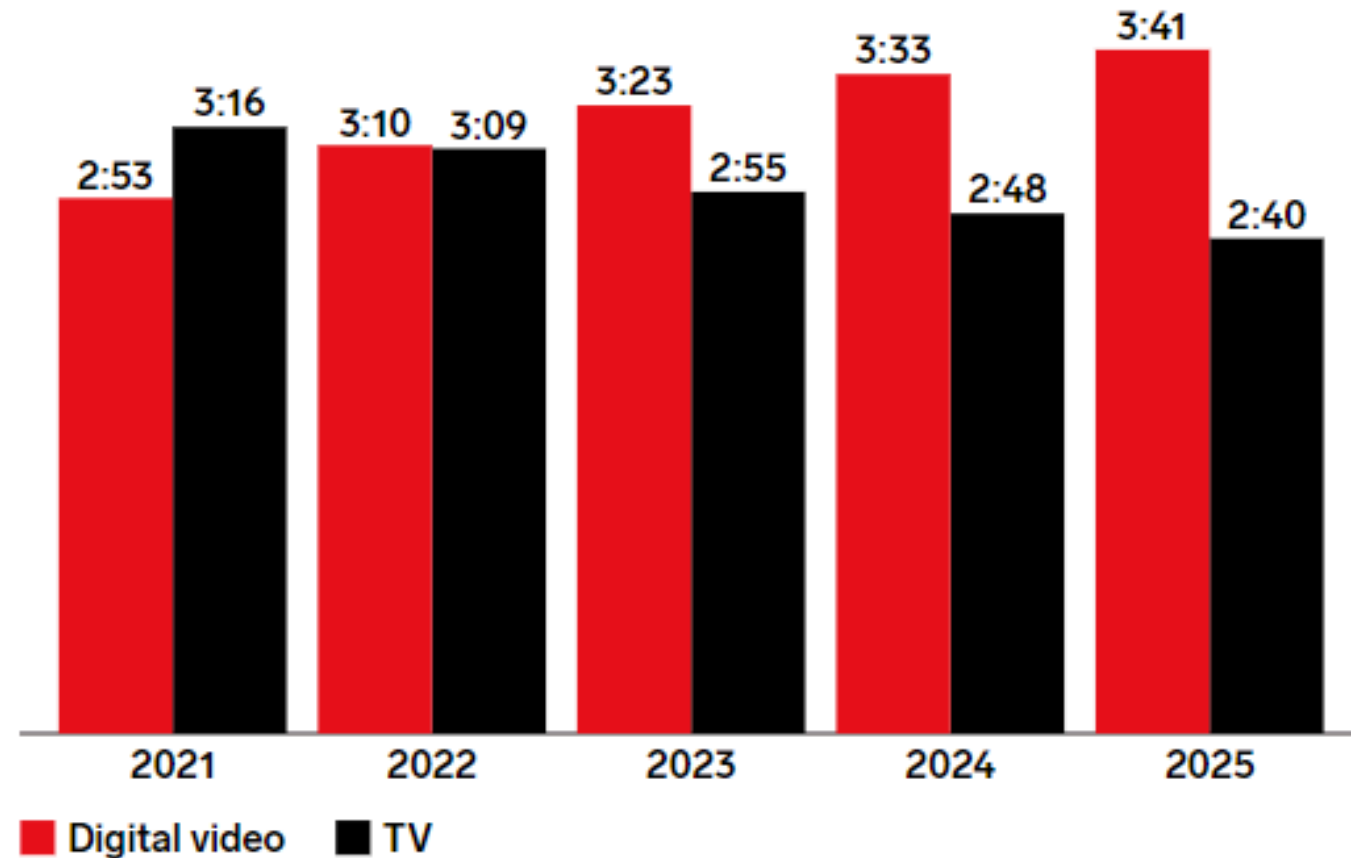
# Key Trends



# Video

## Average Time Spent per Day With Digital Video vs. TV by US Adults, 2021-2025

*hrs:mins*



Source: eMarketer, June 2023

# Value

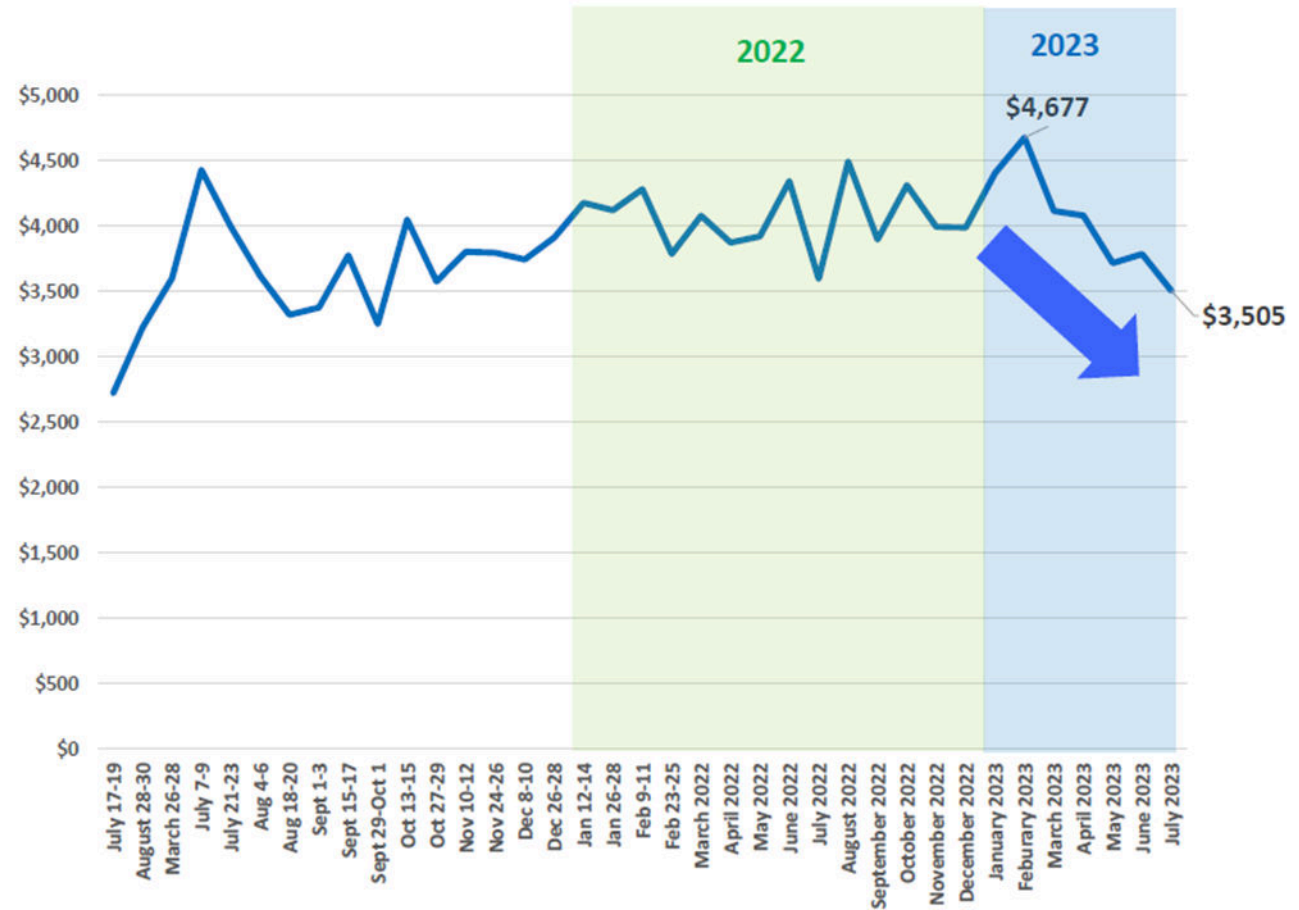
## MAXIMUM TRAVEL SPENDING: NEXT 12 MONTHS—TIME SERIES

**Question:** How much IN TOTAL is the maximum you will spend on leisure travel (including airfare, accommodations and all other trip related spending) during the NEXT 12 MONTHS?

Maximum I would spend on leisure travel (next 12 months):

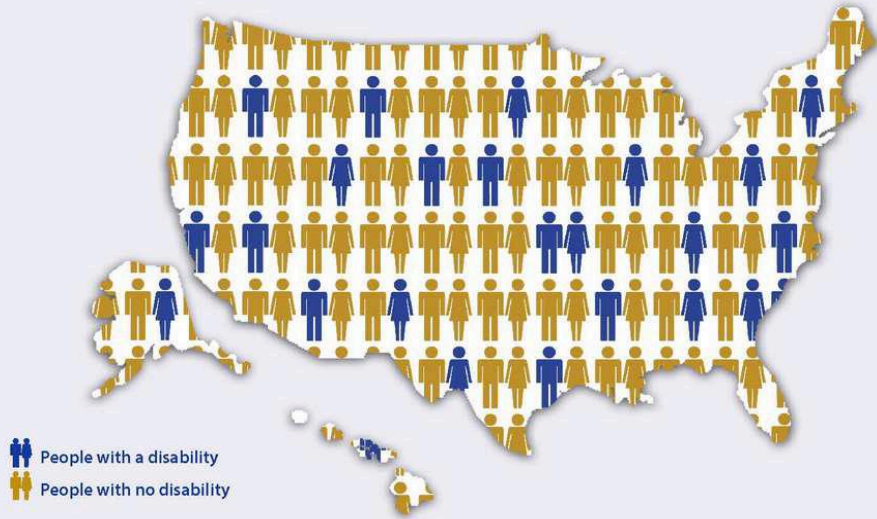
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(Base: All respondents, 1,200+ completed surveys each wave in 2021. 4,000+ completed surveys each wave in 2022 and 2023)



# Accessibility

Up to **1 in 4** adults in the United States have some type of disability (27%)



12.5 Million  
Travelers

2018

33.4 Million  
Travelers  
(Projected)

2028

**\$58.2  
billion**

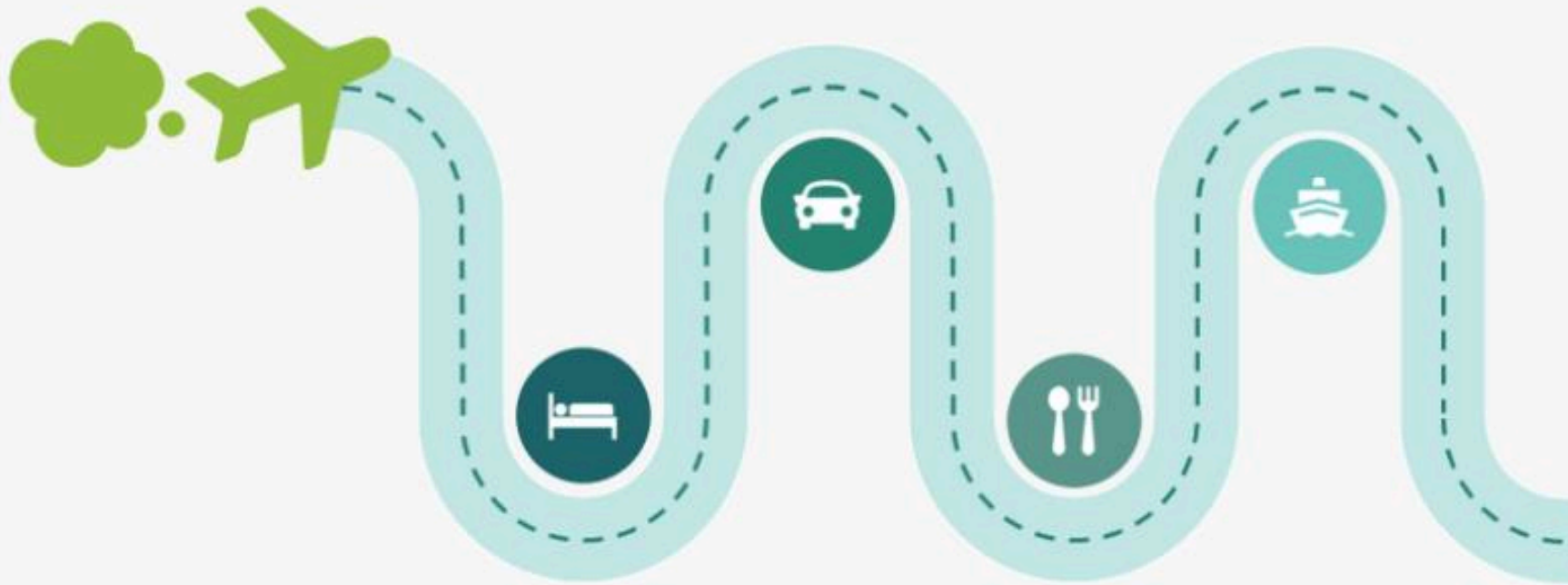
**Annual Spending By  
Travelers with  
Mobility Disabilities**



Sources: CDC.gov; 2022 MMGY Global report, "Portrait of Travelers with Disabilities: Mobility and Accessibility"



# Sustainability



# Authenticity

The New York Times Travel

My Account



Where to Go

How to Fit In

Where to Stay

How to Eat and Be Like a Local

How to Extend Your Stay

## How to Travel Like a Local

# FY24 Plans



# Leveraging those accolades...



Watch the new “Alexandria Accolades:  
The Secret’s Out!” video ad [here](#).

# Media Relations



- National accolades
- Media missions, pitching, press releases
- New stories
- Spanish language and trade media





# Capturing Meetings



UNLOCK ALX PERKS  
FOR YOUR NEXT  
MEETING

**alexandria**  
MEETINGS



ALEXANDRIA, VA  
VOTED  
a Condé Nast Traveler  
**TOP 5**  
SMALL CITY

BEING THE BEST AT BEING SMALL  
IS KIND OF OUR THING.

The best small meetings deserve  
**one of the best small destinations.**  
Here's what you'll find just minutes from DC  
and Ronald Reagan National Airport:

- WALKABILITY**  
Old Town's iconic King Street Mile including  
200+ restaurants, shops and museums
- BOUTIQUE SPACES**  
Award-winning boutique hotels and unique meeting  
spaces best suited for events of under 250 attendees
- LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS**  
One-of-a kind activities such as "Wine and Welding"  
through The Leadership Collection at Alexandria™


Let our destination experts help you  
plan your event where small meetings  
have always been trending.

**alexandria**

**MeetAlexandriaVA.com**  
703-652-5378 | meetings@VisitAlexVA.com

**alexandria**

BEING THE BEST AT BEING  
SMALL IS KIND OF OUR THING

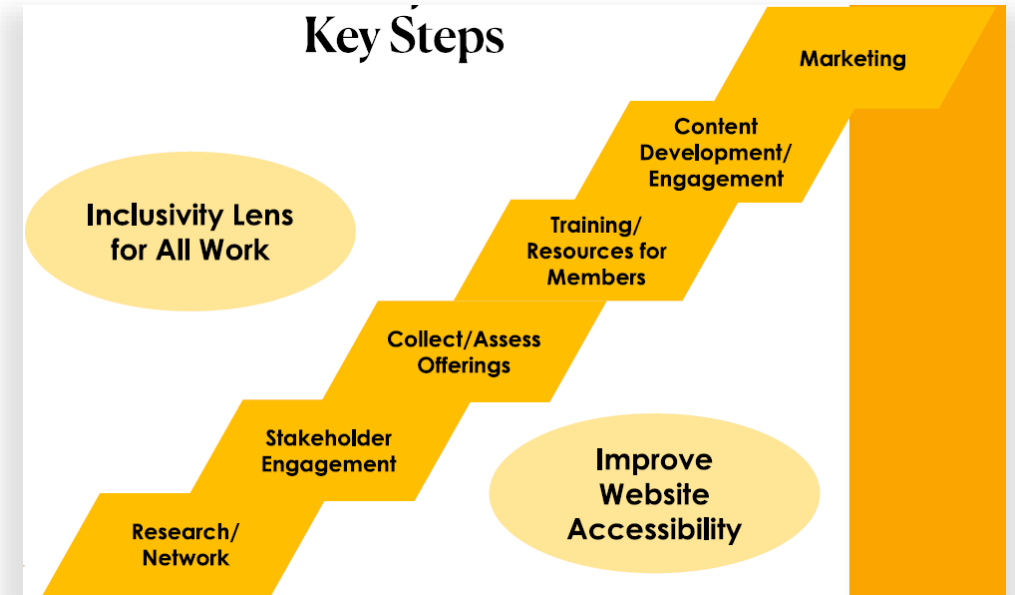


LET'S CONNECT



Watch the “Meet in Alexandria:  
A Top Small City” video ad [here](#).

# Accessibility Initiative



**VIRGINIA  
IS FOR  
LOVERS**

Virginia Tourism Corp.  
Accessibility Committee



**DESTINATIONS  
INTERNATIONAL**

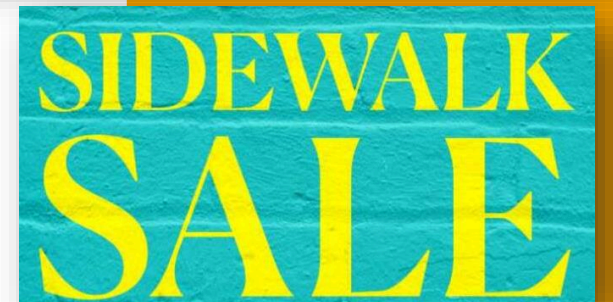
Accessibility Subcommittee





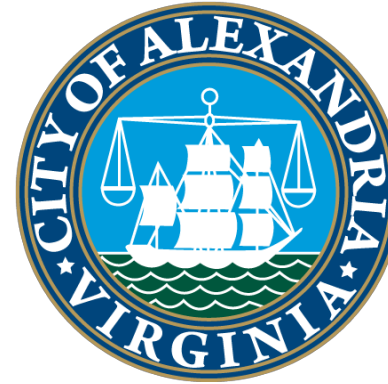
# Events & Promotions

- Visit Alexandria Produced Events
  - Holiday Parades
  - Portside in Old Town Summer Festival
- Visit Alexandria Promotions
  - Alexandria Restaurant Week
  - Alexandria Sidewalk Sale
  - Holiday Retail
  - “Love, Alexandria” Hotel Package
- Destination Events, including:
  - Old Town Festival of Speed & Style
  - Parkway Classic
  - Art on the Avenue



# Partnerships

- Alexandria 275 & VA 250
- Communications
- Media relations
- Sustainable business
- Economic development
- Destination events
- Neighborhood marketing



# Optimizing

- Datafy research tool
- Public relations RFP
- Media buying RFP





# The secret ingredient...



# The secret ingredient...



# Expanded Video Program

## Instagram Reels Development & Promotion

Visit Alexandria's expanded video program includes an increase in short form video, created in-house and in collaboration with influencers.

See the Instagram Reels Recap [here](#) and follow and like us on Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/visitalexva/>



# Expanded Video Program

## Partnerships: Virginia Tourism Corporation's "Heart & Soul"

Visit Alexandria supported Virginia Tourism Corporation's award-winning Heart and Soul campaign for Black travelers by assisting influencer Ime Umoh on his trip to explore Alexandria, Virginia.

See a trailer for the Heart & Soul videos [here](#)  
and watch the full videos at  
<https://www.instagram.com/imeumoh/>.

# Expanded Video Program

## Expand Your ALX Phase 2: “Taste Your Way Through Alexandria’s West End”

Local love aficionado, foodie and outdoor adventurer Nomarama explores the West End in Alexandria, Virginia. From award-winning brews to mouthwatering BBQ, authentic global cuisine and green spaces, [here](#)’s a teaser and :15 second clip of Nomarama’s adventures.

See the full tour at: [www.expandyouralx.com](http://www.expandyouralx.com)

**EXPAND  
YOUR  
ALX**

See the full tour at  
**ExpandYourALX.com**



# Expanded Video Program

## Old Town Weekend Itinerary

The Detour Duo visit Old Town Alexandria for a perfect weekend getaway. Watch the trailer [here](#) and get ready for the full video in spring 2024!

Learn more: <https://visitalexandria.com/old-town/>



Thank You.

**VISIT**

**alexandria**

[VisitAlexandria.com](http://VisitAlexandria.com) | [#visitALX](https://twitter.com/visitALX)