

**Bi-Town Economic Development Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**via Zoom & Deerfield Valley Rescue**  
**Thursday, November 6, 2025**

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Members present: Gretchen Havreluk, Heidi Taylor, Josh DeBottis

Members present via Zoom: Shannon Wheeler, Charlie Foster, Laura Sibia, Lea Gabrielle Potts, Christine Howe, Pam Greene (8:03)

Also present via Zoom: Tim Dolan

**A recording of this meeting can be found here:** <https://youtu.be/9QUwTPcpPBQ>

**Meeting called to order at 8:01 am by Chair Gretchen**

- I. Public Comments: *None*
  - II. Additions or changes to the agenda: *None*
  - III. Approve minutes of September 4th meeting:
    - a. Motion to approve by Heidi seconded by Josh. Motion approved (Laura and Christine abstained)
  - IV. Housing Committee Update:
    - a. Gretchen: no real update as low turnout. Think we need a regroup.
  - V. Marketing Committee Update:
    - a. 2025 Campaign Results [See attached]
    - b. 2026 Proposed Campaign [See attached]
  - VI. Economic Data Reporting:
    - a. Shannon: Received notice this week of a payment from August 6 – November 2 (88 days) of \$101,718.74. Increase of about 10% from last November's payment. Noticed that columns previously labeled 70% of Tax Collected and Minus 70% Fee are now labeled Town Portion of Tax Collected and Town Portion of Fee.
    - b. Gretchen: Less days in the payment, but more overall. Rooms and meals down 1.7% with 3 more claims processed. Sales and use up 3.47%, Overall up 1.86%. CPI increase estimated at 7% showing we're not keeping up with inflation.
    - c. Laura asked we sent an email detailing the column changes.
    - d. Charlie shared while he was as busy as usual, he is down international visitors and rates are down. Tim shares AirDNA shows 8% decrease in August in line with what Charlie is seeing.
  - VII. Other Business:
    - a. Rootstock Racing Event Next June: Coming to the Valley June 22-27. 150 racers in teams of 2-4 navigating by compass and map with satellite trackers and paramedics in biking, hiking, running, swimming, and kayaking activities. Potential for organic influencer coverage.
    - b. January Meeting Date – January meeting scheduled for 1/1, determined moving a week worked for most. Christine will go to DVR and run in person laptop as Gretchen will be away.
  - VIII. Wilmington Update:
    - a. Gretchen: Hoot Toot and Whistle construction encountered deep erosion near planned bridges. ANR consulted to reconfigure. Currently open from bridge in Wilmington to staging area on Fairview Ave. Contractor has returned to work; aim to reopen fully before Thanksgiving. Processing revolving loan applications for mostly new businesses and tax stabilization approvals. Building renovations progressing.
    - b. Charlie: Bridge 31 will remain one lane through Thanksgiving due to additional repairs. AOT presenting bridge replacement scope/recommendations at December 2<sup>nd</sup> SB meeting for 2029 replacement.
- [Scope found here: <https://outside.vermont.gov/agency/vtrans/external/Projects/Structures/22b394> ]

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- c. Laura suggested contacting Windham and Bennington County legislators to attend.
- d. Charlie heard State will not plow after 8pm this Winter. Adopted town insurance plan; updated animal control ordinance. All dogs must be leashed on Wilmington trail system. Changes made to transfer station fee schedule.

**IX. Dover Update:**

- a. Shannon: Budgeting season starting. Technical Assistance Grant applications closed 9/30, approved 7 grants. Lots of signage program applications. Dover Day returned in October; aiming for this to return annually. Hiring an additional maintenance/highway person. Planning to create a recreation manager role. Creating another Bandwango pass for Winter.

**X. Hermitage Club Update:**

- a. Josh: Busy getting ready for season, testing systems. Patrol refresher held. First in state to have all lifts inspected. December 13 opening day. Hosting Warren Miller movie fundraiser for Mount Snow Adaptive on the Saturday of Thanksgiving. Looking forward to snow flying.

**XI. Mount Snow Update:**

- a. Lea: shared a recap of the summer and fall. Harriman's rebrand, lift maintenance team expanded by 75%. Target opening day November 22. Events calendar will be shared to group and Selectboards.

**XII. BDCC Update:**

- a. Laura: CEDS projects ranked, list coming out in next month. Adam working to pull together a business leaders' group with intent of understanding impacts of current climate and how it affects major employers in Windham region.

**XIII. Moover Update:**

- a. Christine: Randy retiring June 30, Christine taking over as CEO. FY26 starting in July, ridership is flat after route adjustments. Seeing Wilmington-Dover area using demand response rides more. Told no major funding adjustments for things like Medicare/Medicaid transfers. Planning in place, don't believe heavily affected by administration for current fiscal year. November 10 starts Stratton service. Mount Snow Thanksgiving and Okemo starts in December. Looking forward to a good winter with lots of snow and riders.

**XIV. Chamber Update:**

- a. Pam: Wine & Harvest Festival was a successful event. Fully staffed with marketing coordinator. Set calendar of events for next year and working on mixers. November 17 community mixer through Grow grant at American Flatbread. BizConnect event on November 19 with BDCC at OSEC.

**XV. Motion to adjourn by Heidi, seconded by Pam at 9:09 am.**

Next meeting January 8th

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Wheeler  
Economic Development, Town of Dover



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# Southern Vermont Deerfield Valley Bi-Town Marketing Update & FY26 Budget

November 6, 2025

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# Google Ads

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# Google Ads

- Increased budget by \$2,100 mostly concentrated in June through mid-October
- Foliage continues to be best performer. 6 week period accounted for ~23% of our total clicks for the year
- Modified strategy in May. Now optimizes for audience most likely to spend more than 30 seconds on site. About 85% of clicks spend >30 seconds since making this change

## TOP SEARCHES



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# Digital Media Campaign

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# Digital Media Channels

Meta ~ 78% of budget

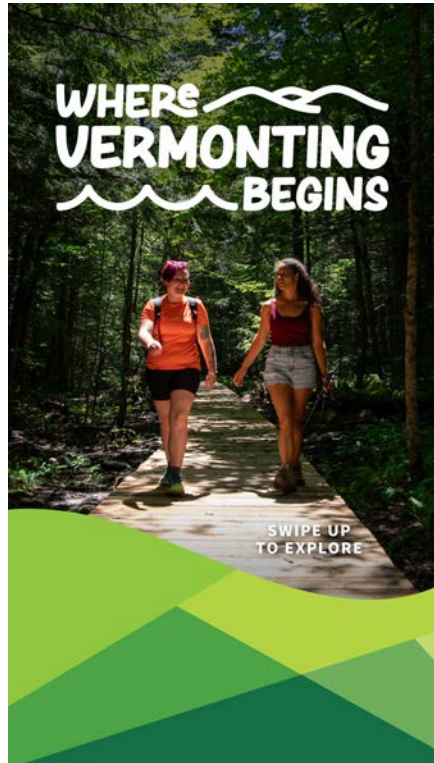
Programmatic Display ~ 22%

TikTok performed well for us the past two years, and we wished to continue with that as our second channel. However with uncertainty swirling around a potential ban, we made the difficult decision to pivot and utilize programmatic display instead.

We know from past experience with display this would most likely result in better impressions, but with a lower click through rate.

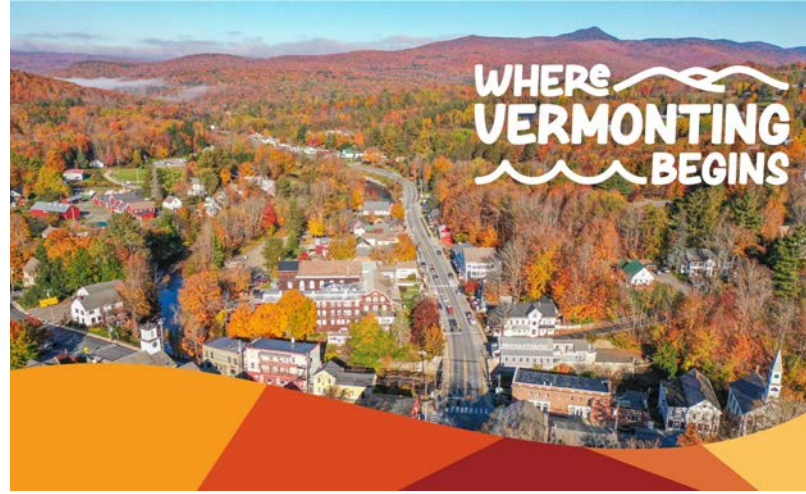


# Ad Examples - Summer

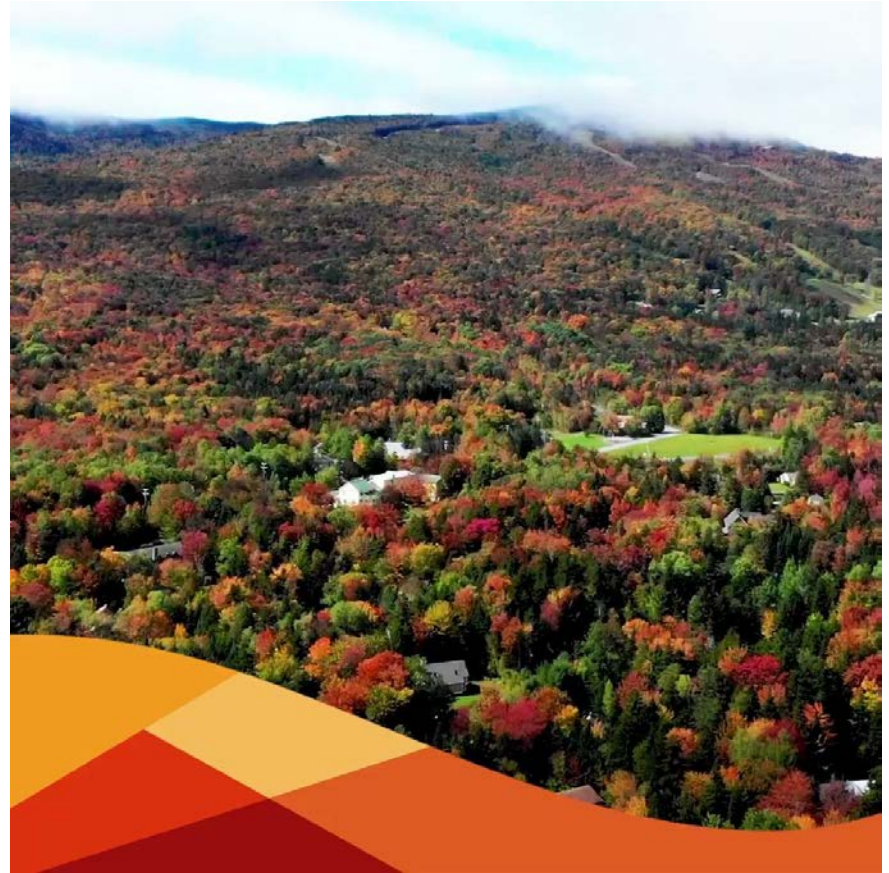




# Ad Examples - Fall



# Ad Examples - Reels



# Media Ad Campaign Results - Total

Meta

22,306,222

50,919

0.23 %

\$1.17



Impressions



Clicks



Click Through Rate



Cost Per Click

Display

2,711,616

2,638

0.10 %

\$8.12

Total

25,017,838

53,557

0.21 %

\$1.78

2024

23,606,689

57,693

0.24 %

\$1.58



# Geofence Footfall Tracking

- Applied to Meta campaign only
- Can track someone who saw an ad for up to 7 days
- Conversion means they entered into the Deerfield Valley within the 7 days of seeing the ad



# Geofence Footfall Tracking

- 1099 people were tracked
- Using AirDNA booking windows, this would translate into **4,220** total visits impacted by one of our Meta ads
  - *26% of people book in the area in a 1-7 day window*
- From this data & research into travel habits, we made the following calculations about the impact of our advertising

	Median	Low
Total # of Visitors	13,988	10,823
Total # of Room Nights	48,963	37,088
Total Revenue Generated	\$14,933,864	\$9,383,154

- *Median uses 3.315 people traveling together, staying 3.5 nights, and spending \$305/person/day*
- *Low uses 2.565 people traveling together, staying 3.43 nights, and spending \$253/person/day*
- *Appendix A shows where data was collected from and how it was utilized in our calculations*

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# Notable Projects

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# Fall Photo/Video Shoot

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- Put out RFP over summer and hired Three Peaks Media out of Jeffersonville
- 14 Hour Day shoot concentrating on Mount Snow summit, Hoot, Toot, & Whistle/Harriman, and White House Inn
- Assets to be used for the next 3 years of fall campaigns
- Big thanks to Mount Snow & the White House Inn!



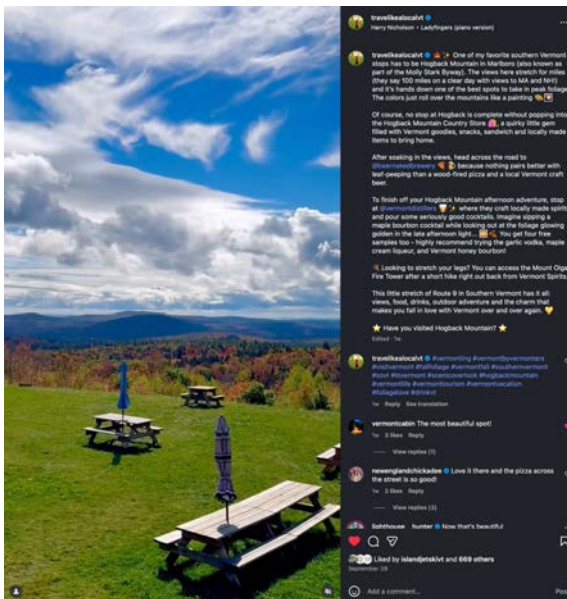
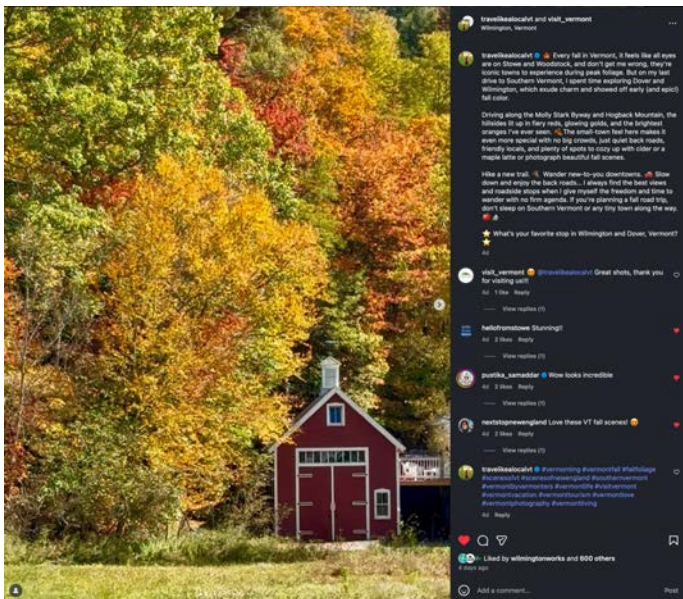
# Fall Photo/Video Shoot





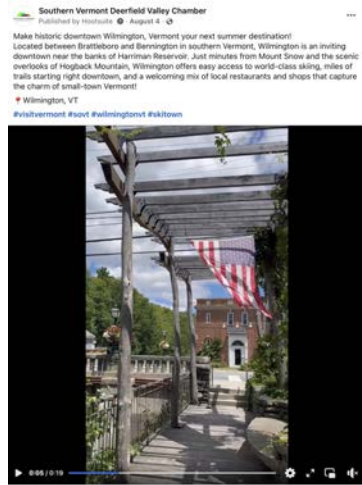
# Influencer Visit @travellikealocalvt

- 4 posts + 3 stories received over 85k views
- Great post engagement with over 2,000 likes, 170, comments, and 377 shares



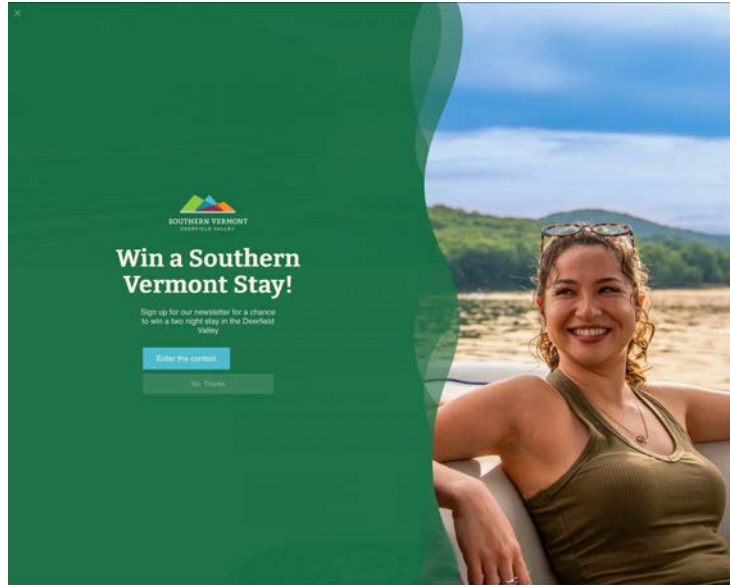
# Organic Social Media

- Gaining strong traction, especially since mid-July on
- Followers increased by 18% so far this year
- Broke our own record for most impressions on a post multiple times this summer
- Posts for Downtown Wilmington, Dover, and Wine & Soup Stroll all received more than 10x our average and helped elevate multiple other attractions to 5x+ the average.
- Recent post on Then & Now of Mt Mills received over 70,000 views!



# Email Signup Contest

- Pop-up after 10 seconds on site for multiple landing pages
- Enter your email address and get entered to win 2-nights lodging at a Dover or Wilmington inn
- 445 new subscribers over the course of August through October
- Gives us an avenue to send emails in the future about events, things to do in the Valley, etc



# GROW Grant Program



Live where the scenery changes, but the magic never fades. Hike, ski, paddle, or simply breathe it all in — Southern Vermont is a place to experience all four seasons in their full glory, surrounded by natural beauty and small-town charm.



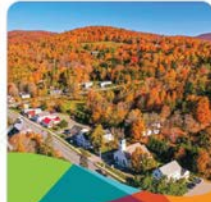
**Breathe In Vermont**  
Hike, Swim, a...  
[Learn more](#)



**Live the Foliage Life**  
Experience Ev...  
[Learn more](#)



**Your Winter Wonderland**  
Winter Magic ...  
[Learn more](#)



**Where Vermonting...**  
Four Seasons...  
[Learn more](#)

[Like](#) [Comment](#) [Share](#)

- Wrapping up the first 2-year grant period
- Very successful ad campaigns & mixers
- Helped pay for our Content Creator over the past two years
- In September we were awarded for the next 2-year cycle, receiving \$51,610 to continue our work
- Funding covers advertising, mixers, Content Creator, and 2027 summer photoshoot



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# FY26 Budget Proposal





# STAFFING

Account	FY25	FY26 PROPOSED
<b>STAFFING</b>	<b>\$58,376</b>	<b>\$72,357</b>
<i>Marketing Director</i>	\$54,636	\$68,295
<i>Travel</i>	\$200	\$800
<i>Content Creator</i>	\$3,540	\$3,262

## Notes:

- Marketing Director to be paid at the same rate as 2025, but increasing workload by 25% (80 to 100 hours per month)
- Increasing travel to include monthly stipend for Content Creator to drive around the Valley
- Content Creator represents 25% of their pay, with 25% from Chamber and 50% from GROW Program

# PROFESSIONAL FEES

PROFESSIONAL FEES	\$30,472	\$26,532
<i>Campaign Creative</i>	\$12,384	\$15,944
<i>Website Redevelopment</i>	\$500	\$4,000
<i>Website Maintenance</i>	\$1,188	\$1,188
<i>Content Gathering</i>	\$12,000	\$1,000
<i>Chamber Admin</i>	\$4,400	\$4,400

## Notes:

- Campaign Creative - 3% COL increase per contract, adding in 25% to create assets for one phase of a retiree audience segment
- Website Redevelopment - Refresh to entire website, last done in 2021. Emphasis on accessibility and load times
- No major photoshoot in 2026
- No change to Chamber Admin as overall budget inline with 2025

# DIGITAL ADVERTISING

DIGITAL ADVERTISING	\$116,000	\$136,000
<i>Media Buy</i>	\$95,000	\$100,000
<i>Organic Social</i>	\$1,000	\$1,000
<i>Influencers</i>	\$2,000	\$10,000
<i>Groups/Weddings</i>	\$0	\$5,000
<i>SEO</i>	\$18,000	\$20,000

## Notes:

- Media Buy - Add in one phase targeting retiree audience
- Influencers - Expand program to attract successful influencers with large audiences
- Groups/Weddings - Exact strategy to be developed with input from stakeholders over the winter, but goal to attract new groups and/or weddings
- Increasing Google Ads where we've seen very good low funnel engagement



# IT

IT	\$31,829	\$4,536
<i>AirDNA</i>	\$576	\$576
<i>Adobe Suite</i>	\$750	\$780
<i>Dropbox</i>	\$144	\$144
<i>Geofencing</i>	\$12,500	\$0
<i>Bandwango</i>	\$15,000	\$0
<i>Email Subscriptions</i>	\$600	\$636
<i>Webcam</i>	\$1,000	\$1,000
<i>Hootsuite</i>	\$1,259	\$1,400

## Notes:

- Geofencing - Recommendation to include this every 3 years
- Bandwango - Did not implement in 2025 and not planning to in 2026
- Slight increase to email (MailChimp) and Hootsuite based on past subscription increases

# PROMOTIONAL PROGRAMS

PROMOTIONAL PROGRAMS	\$6,600	\$6,350
<i>Stakeholder Materials</i>	\$600	\$600
<i>Guilford Welcome Center</i>	\$2,000	\$750
<i>Email Signup Contest</i>	\$1,000	\$1,000
<i>Hiking Guide</i>	\$0	\$4,000
<i>Pole Banners</i>	\$3,000	\$0

## Notes:

- Guilford Welcome Center - Found much better pricing for printing in 2025 leading to the big decrease. Plan to expand to Bennington Welcome Center as well for 2026
- Adding in an area Hiking Guide which will have digital & printed versions available with all trails in the area

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Bandwango	\$15,000	\$0
Email Subscriptions	\$600	\$636
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Hiking Guide	\$0	\$4,000
Pole Banners	\$3,000	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$243,277</b>	<b>\$245,776</b>

# TOTAL BUDGET

- Carryover from 2025 of \$16,250
- Brings total budget needed to \$229,526
- Requesting **\$114,763** from each town

**Note: 5 Year Strategic Plan calls for budget of \$273,610**

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Thank you for your support!



# Appendix A - Footfall Data & Calculations

Average Booking Windows in Region for Summer Months Over Past 3 Years						
0-6	7 to 14	15-30	31-60	61-90	91+	
26.05%	10.32%	14.00%	14.89%	9.33%	25.42%	

	Total Assumed Visits						
	0-6	7 to 14	15-30	31-60	61-90	91+	TOTAL
TOTAL	1099	435.3	590.9	628.3	393.6	1072.5	4219.6

	Median	Low	
Averages			
Avg # of Nights	3.50	3.43	Source: AirDNA: Median=New England, Low=Deerfield Valley
Avg # of Family Together	3.13	3.13	Source: 2020 National Census
Avg # of YA Together	3.5	2	Source: Median is general consensus from various online sources and ChatGPT.
Avg # of Travelers Together	3.315	2.565	Low represents a couple traveling together
Avg Spend/ Person /Day	\$305	\$253	Source: Median is from ChatGPT based on a mid-tier price point vacation. Low is from VT Dept of Tourism research but includes full year data so is influenced by winter day trippers
Assumptions			
Total # of Visitors	13,988	10,823	
Total # of Nights Generated	48,963	37,088	
Total Revenue Generated	\$14,933,864	\$9,383,154	

Based on a total Bi-Town Marketing budget of \$243,182 it cost us \$0.016 in marketing to generate \$1 on the median end, \$0.026 on the low end.