

[DISCOVER KALISPELL MONTANA]

Destination Marketing Organization | JANUARY 2026



2025 Annual Report

DISCOVER
Kalispell
MT

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A message for you

FROM DISCOVER KALISPELL AND THE TOURISM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

As we reflect on the past year and look ahead, we are grateful for the continued partnership and support of our business community, Board of Directors, and the City of Kalispell. Together, we are shaping a destination that is welcoming to visitors and a vibrant place to live, work, and do business.

In 2025, tourism remained a key driver of Kalispell's economy. Strategic investments by the TBID—including the increased nightly room assessment—allowed Discover Kalispell to expand its marketing reach, grow visitation during shoulder seasons, and strengthen our focus on group business, sports tourism, and destination events. These efforts helped to move us closer to a stable, year-round tourism economy.

Looking to 2026, our focus remains on sustainable growth and long-term community vitality. Through thoughtful destination marketing, stewardship of our natural and community assets, and close collaboration with local partners, we are committed to ensuring tourism continues to benefit residents and businesses alike.

Thank you to our Board, members, partners, and the Discover Kalispell team for your dedication and leadership—we look forward to another year of progress and shared success.

Diane Medler

Diane Medler

Executive Director

Bryce Baker

Bryce Baker

TBID Board Chair



Meet the crew

Discover Kalispell team members [pictured at left]:

- Diane Medler** Executive Director
- Meche Ek** Visitor Services Coordinator
- Ben Gould** Group Sales Manager
- Annie Young** Marketing Communications Manager

TBID Board Members:

- Bryce Baker** Board Chair | General Manager, My Place
- Robert Hall** Vice Chair | General Manager, Holiday Inn Express
- Zac Ford** Treasurer | General Manager, Hampton Inn Kalispell
- Britta Joy** Board Member | Assistant General Manager, Marriott SpringHill Suites
- Skyler Reike** Board Member | Best Western Plus Flathead Lake Inn & Suites
- Nathan Black** Board Member | General Manager, Hilton Garden Inn
- Haley Wilson** Board Member | General Manager, Super 8

Strategic priorities

Destination promotion is a catalyst for community vitality, driving what is needed for a community to become a destination where people want to visit, live, and work.

COMMUNITY

At Discover Kalispell, we are deeply committed to the success of our community. As a branch of the Chamber of Commerce, empowering local businesses lies at the heart of our mission. We believe that by showcasing the unique charm and breathtaking landscapes of our corner of Montana, we not only attract visitors but also create opportunities for the residents of the Flathead Valley to thrive. Our work fosters a vibrant local economy, ensuring that both our community and its businesses flourish together.



Creating a balanced tourism economy

Stewardship means creating a tourism experience that benefits both visitors and residents today and for generations to come. It focuses on aligning economic growth with sustainability and community well-being. Destination organizations serve as stewards by ensuring tourism strengthens the local economy while protecting natural resources, preserving community character, and enhancing quality of life for all who call the destination home.



2025 travel trends and market conditions

FAVORABLE ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS:

Above-average snowfall during the winter of 2024–2025 drove a record number of Discover Kalispell Ski Package redemptions. Summer 2025 was free of wildfires that could have impacted Glacier National Park or other key recreation areas.

NEW LODGING INVENTORY:

The 107-room Home2 Suites by Hilton opened in June 2025, expanding Kalispell’s lodging options and capacity.

AIR SERVICE GROWTH:

Glacier Park International Airport recorded a **11.6%** increase in passenger traffic in 2025, welcoming travelers through its newly completed main terminal remodel.

CANADIAN VISITATION DECLINE:

Canada is projected to fall behind Mexico as the top U.S. inbound international market (U.S. Travel Association). Kalispell saw a **36%** year-to-date decline in Canadian credit card spending through November 2025.

SEASONAL VISITATION SHIFTS:

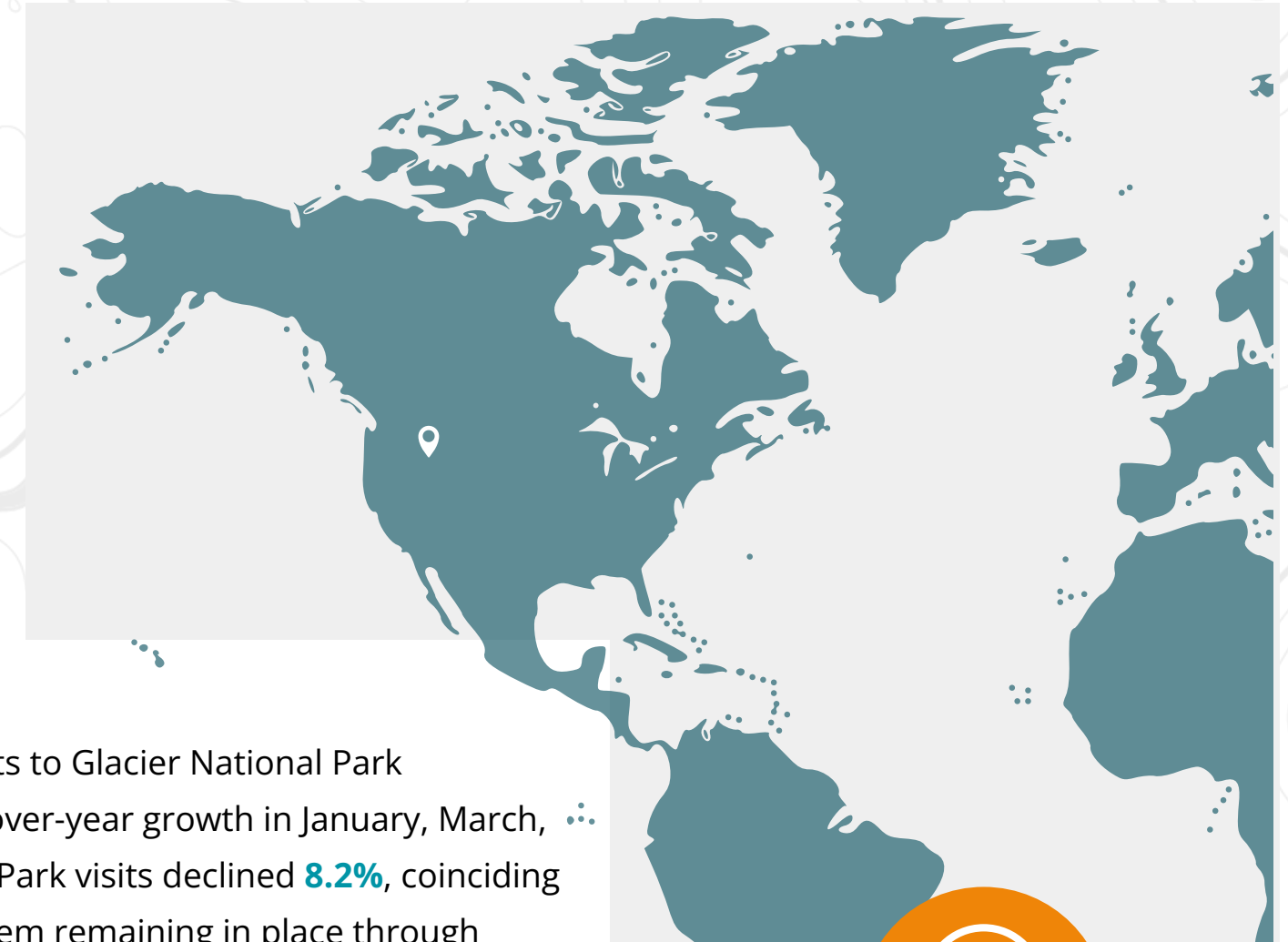
Winter and shoulder season visits to Glacier National Park increased with the largest year-over-year growth in January, March, April, May and June. September Park visits declined **8.2%**, coinciding with the vehicle reservation system remaining in place through September 28, 2025.

DELAYED INTERNATIONAL TOURISM RECOVERY:

International visitation to the U.S. was expected to return to pre-pandemic levels in 2025; however, the U.S. Travel Association now projects a year-over-year decline for the first time since 2020, with full recovery pushed to 2029 (New York Times).

CHANGING TRAVELER SEGMENTS:

Higher-income U.S. travelers continued to drive visitation and spending, while other segments reduced travel due to financial concerns.



Lodging performance

Overall lodging performance in 2025 was steady with modest revenue growth for Kalispell hotels and short-term rentals. Hotel occupancy remained flat while a 1.0% increase in average daily rate helped drive a 3.1% gain in total lodging revenue. Short-term rentals saw incremental growth in available listings and average daily rates increased 2.6%, reflecting stable demand alongside expanding supply.

KALISPELL HOTELS

55.5% +0.0% YOY
OCCUPANCY

\$162.55 +1.0% YOY
AVERAGE DAILY RATE

\$90.17 +1.8% YOY
REVPAR

\$54,430,047 +3.1% YOY
LODGING REVENUE

334,859 +1.2% YOY
DEMAND

603,645 +1.2% YOY
SUPPLY

Kalispell Hotels (Co-Star) 2025 Year End



KALISPELL SHORT TERM RENTALS

3.1% Growth in Available Listings

0.1% Increase in Occupancy Rate

2.6% Increase in ADR

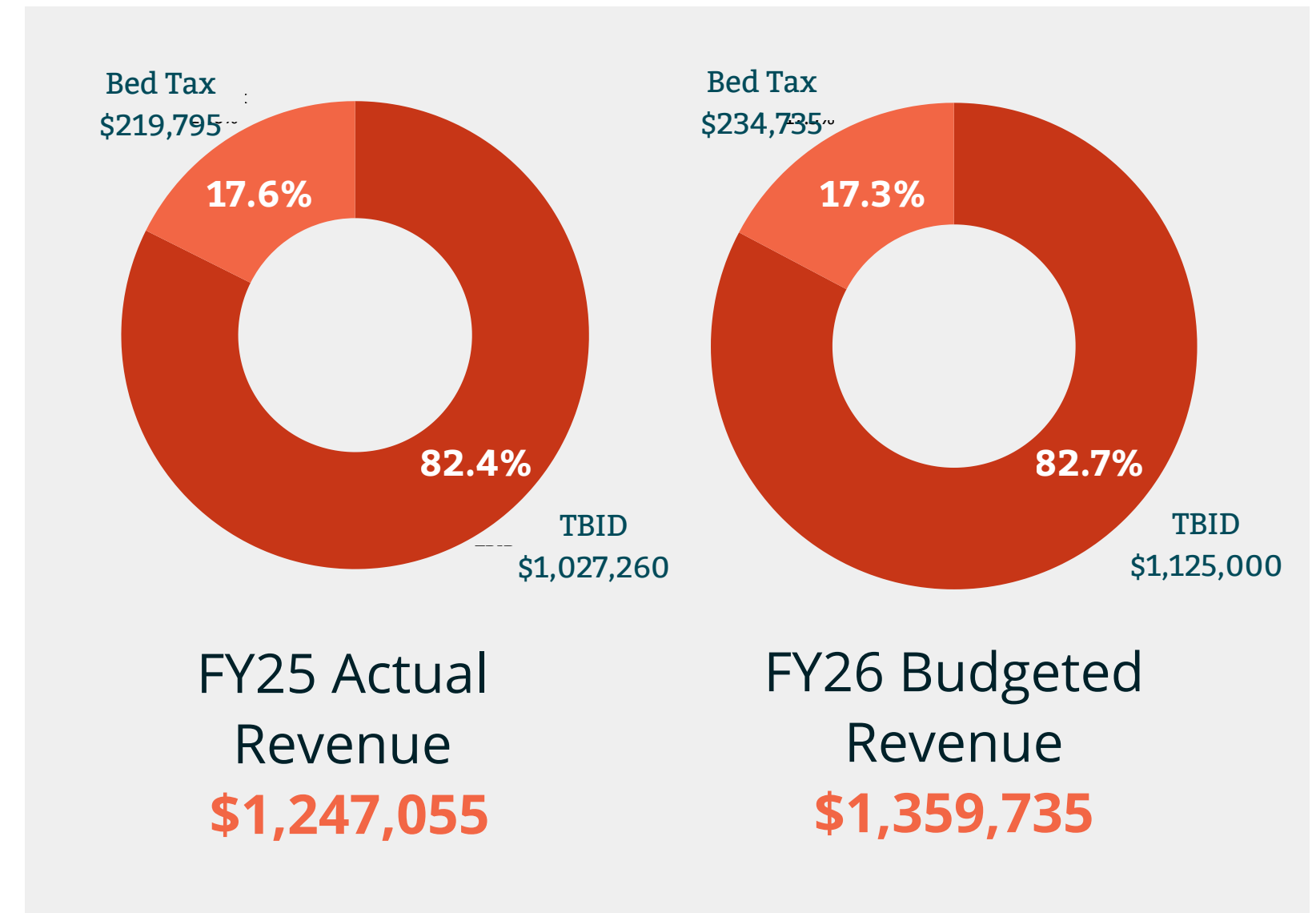
(AirDNA) 2025 Year End



Financial overview

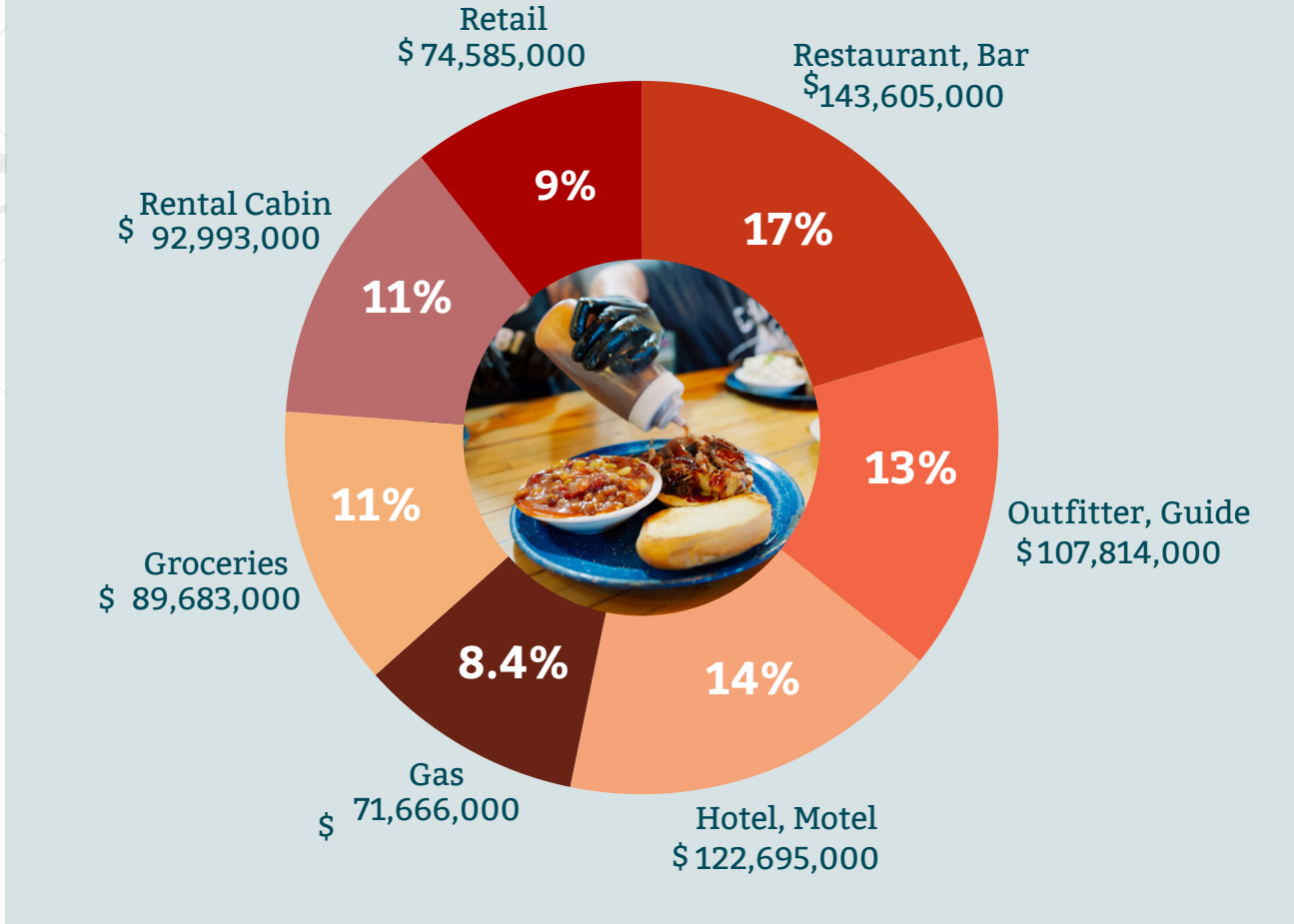
BED TAX AND TBID REVENUE FUND THE ANNUAL DISCOVER KALISPELL DESTINATION MARKETING PLAN.

Discover Kalispell is funded by the 4% Lodging Facility Use Tax (Bed Tax) and the Kalispell Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) assessment. The annual Destination Plan outlines a strategy to boost economic vitality through tourism while prioritizing community stewardship and sustainable destination development.





**NON-RESIDENT VISITORS
SPENT \$850M IN FLATHEAD
COUNTY (2024)
TOP SPENDING CATEGORIES**



Source: ITRR, Non-resident Visitor spending in Flathead County

Economic impact of tourism

VISITOR SPENDING IN KALISPELL

- Of all visitor devices observed in Kalispell **69%** are from out of state.
- **33%** of all restaurant spend in Kalispell is by visitors 50+ miles away.
- **25%** of all retail spend in Kalispell is by visitors 50+ miles away.
- Top spend categories by visitors: food & beverage, retail, accommodations, gas & service stations and transportation.

Source: Zartico

Economic Impact of Tourism

Visitor credit card spending

YTD THROUGH DECEMBER IN KALISPELL

Domestic:

- Total spend: **\$225.6M**, 3.5% increase YoY
- Top markets: Missoula, Seattle, Los Angeles, Portland, Helena, San Diego
- ▲ **9.3%** YoY – Restaurants & dining
- ▲ **0.6%** YoY – Hotels & lodging
- ▲ **8.6%** YoY – Retail
- ▲ **2.1%** YoY – Other market segments

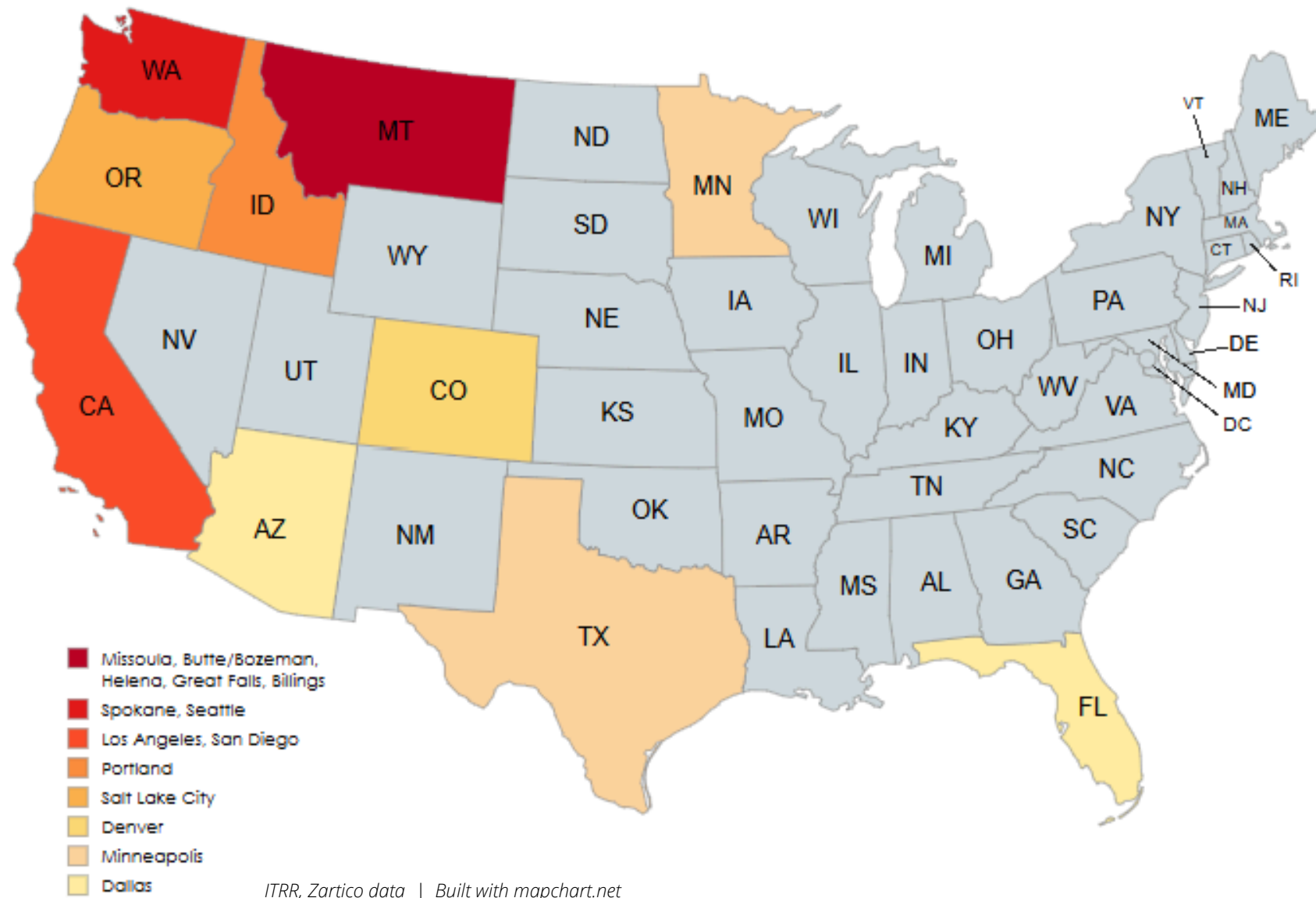
International:

- Total spend: **\$12.1M**, 31% decrease YoY
- Top markets: Canada, China, Germany, Australia, United Kingdom, France
 - Canada: **36%** decline in 2025
- ▼ **31.5%** YoY – Restaurants & dining
- ▼ **47.9%** YoY – Lodging
- ▼ **29.0%** YoY – Other market segments



Visa Destination Insights

Top domestic visitor markets





Group Sales initiatives

Discover Kalispell's Group Sales initiatives work to directly contribute to overnight visitation and economic impact on Kalispell. With a focus on shoulder season business and sporting events, we define our efforts as **driving purpose-driven tourism.**

- 2025 RFPs and RFQs netted **1,252** total room nights (actualized)
- Lodging revenue from groups and additional pickup was approximately **\$264,520**
- Approximately **43** groups served:
 - Lodging and information request assistance
 - Group transportation and activities
 - Entertainment and venue selection
 - Group dining experiences
 - Grant program consultation

Grant program

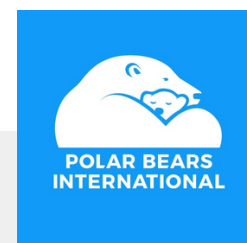
Discover Kalispell is proud to support sports for the youth and adults in our area, while continuing to promote Kalispell as a premier sporting destination.

\$182,000 of financial assistance awarded in 2025 to support and expand local sports and community events in 2025 and 2026.

56% of Americans feel that hosting youth and/or amateur sporting events **improves the quality of life in their communities**

60% of Americans feel that hosting youth and/or amateur sporting events **benefits their local economy**

(Sports ETA, Longwoods International)





CUSTOM CONTENT

Nature calls in Kalispell, Montana

BY VICKIE MITCHELL

In Kalispell, Montana, the Great Outdoors cannot be ignored. The heart of the Flathead Valley, Kalispell is a town of 31,000. It's here, with every turn of the head, a different mountain range comes into view: Salish to the west, Whitefish to the north, Swan to the east and Mission to the south-east, with national forests and public lands surrounding the valley. Plus, just 10 miles south sits Flathead Lake, a slice of dazzling blue, the largest natural freshwater lake west of the Mississippi.

Montana Must-Dos

Given the landscapes, it's no surprise group tours based in Kalispell spend a lot of time outdoors. At the top of the "must-do" list is Glacier National Park, 32 miles northeast of downtown Kalispell. Here, among glacial-carved terrain, visitors can hike with a guide or take a scenic tour in vintage red buses past lakes, hanging valleys and rushing waterfalls on curvy mountain roads, with a chance to see wildlife along the way. For adventures outside the park, Swan Mountain Outfitters does llama treks, where hikers can lead llamas that

carry the supplies for a picnic in July through mid-October, grow wild and land in all kinds of ways. Finding the best spots to pick to eat is a challenge. Flathead Lake is another middle through its clear, cold water to relax and drink in the scenery. To arrange private cruises or group events, either way, Far West's Harborside location before or after the event. Travelers like to experience Kalispell is rodeo. Located in town types. Nearby, Brash Rodeo, weekly rodeos with bull riding, roping

Art and Animals Workshops

Before an evening at the restaurant might be in order. Its selection of dishes to choose from. After some serious for burgers, milkshakes, sundae, cantile Steakhouse or reminiscent of the past. And although it can be hard to find reasons to visit Kalispell's through Montana through the eyes of the town's early days and its historical artifacts, the Northwest Montana colorful past.



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Marketing: Group Sales

Discover Kalispell's group marketing strategy focuses on attracting group tours, small meetings, and sporting tournaments during non-peak times to optimize occupancy at our TBID hotels.

THE GROUP TRAVEL LEADER

sports

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT
Essential Planning & Location Strategies for Sports Event Organizers

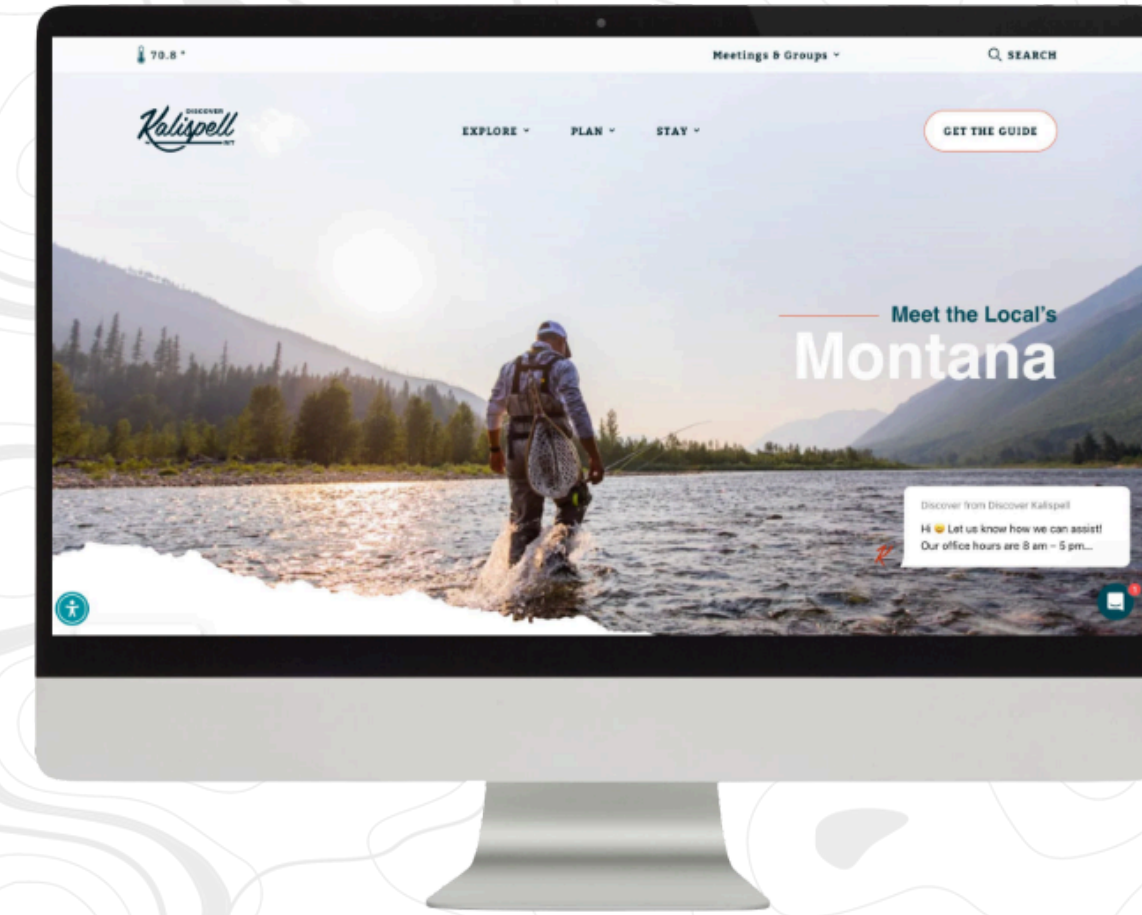


Marketing highlights

Discover Kalispell's marketing efforts focused on turning inspiration into action in 2025—driving stronger engagement, higher-quality leads and measurable results. Through a mix of digital advertising, seasonal campaigns, public relations and targeted outreach in key flight and drive markets, we increased visibility, strengthen brand perception, and helped drive demand for lodging and visitation.

Focus on results helped ensure that marketing dollars translated into real impact for the local economy.

- Evergreen campaign saw decrease in average cost per click of **23%** and average CPM decreased **18%**.
- Page views on discoverkalispell.com rose 72% and saw a **79.1%** increase in new users and an **87.7%** increase in active users.
- Total website views were **793,903**.
- Consumer eNewsletters averaged a **42% open rate**, performing 7% better than industry average.
- **3.675%** engagement on Instagram above industry standard of 1.9%.



FY25 EVERGREEN
22,389,151
IMPRESSIONS



2024-25 SKI SEASON
**SKI PACKAGE
MARKETS**

- Seattle-Tacoma
- Spokane
- Great Falls
- Missoula
- Salt Lake City
- Chicago
- Minneapolis
- Dallas
- Denver
- San Francisco
- Los Angeles
- Phoenix

212
ROOM NIGHTS
98
RESERVATIONS



583 **389**
USERS REDEMPTIONS

Marketing promotions

SKI PACKAGE

The **Ski for FREE in Montana** promotion invites winter visitors to enjoy Kalispell's snow season by offering two complimentary adult lift tickets to Blacktail Mountain Ski Area with a minimum two-night hotel stay. This initiative drives winter lodging demand, supports local businesses, and showcases Kalispell as an accessible, value-rich winter destination.

HUCKLEBERRY TREAT TRAIL

The **Huckleberry Treat Trail** leverages the beloved huckleberry to create a themed visitor experience that supports local businesses. This mobile passport encourages exploration, repeat visits, and increased spending at participating eateries, retailers, and attractions. By blending storytelling with incentives, the program strengthens both visitor engagement and the local economy.

Marketing promotions

SUMMER ROAD TRIP

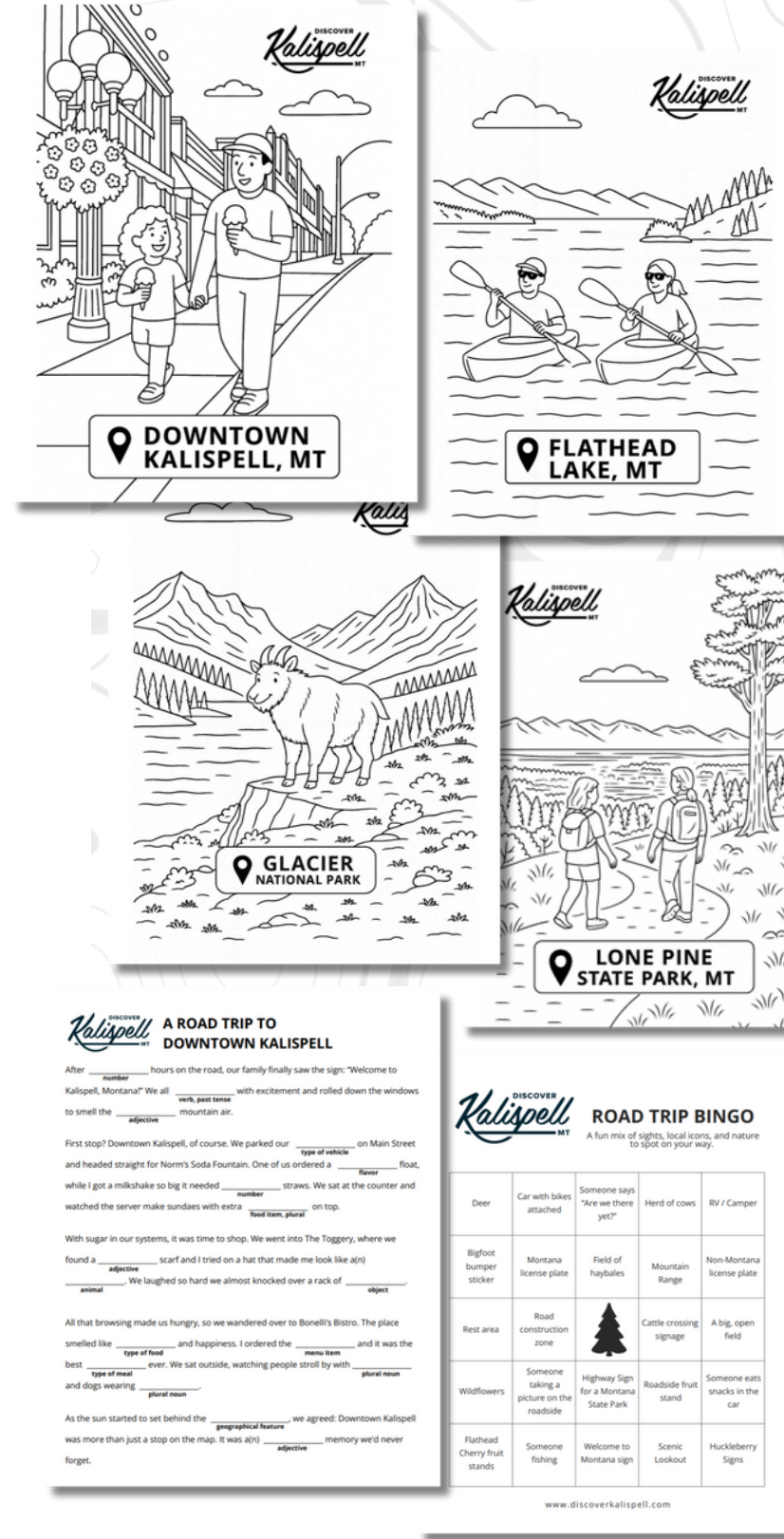
The Summer Road Trip promotion invited visitors to “Make the Most of Summer in Montana” by offering a free summer adventure kit with itinerary ideas and travel games when they signed up by email. And those that booked a two-night stay were entered to win a Winter getaway to support lodging.

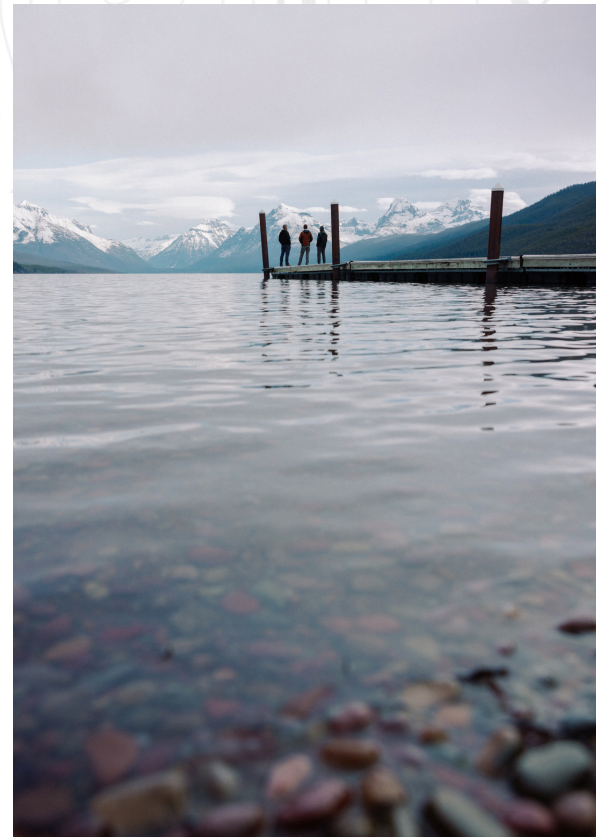
2025 APPROACH & PERFORMANCE:

- Geotarget drive markets (Montana, Spokane, Seattle)
- Channels: Meta & Google Display

1,257,098
IMPRESSIONS

22,274
CLICKS





Marketing: Rediscovering Kalispell

WITH FORREST MANKINS

As part of a continued partnership with local photographer and director Forrest Mankins, viewers are 'Re-Discovering Kalispell' through his lens. With paid media and organic social elements of the plan, Rediscovering Kalispell efforts have increased engagement, impressions and web traffic (with increase in traffic from organic social up **145%** overall).

2025 SHOOTS:

- Blacktail Mountain Ski Area
- Sacred Waters Brewing Co.
- Tour Glacier
- Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation
- Desoto Grill
- Longview Lavender Farm

PAID MEDIA

3,219,488

IMPRESSIONS

ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA

37,000+

REEL VIEWS ON IG

Marketing promotions

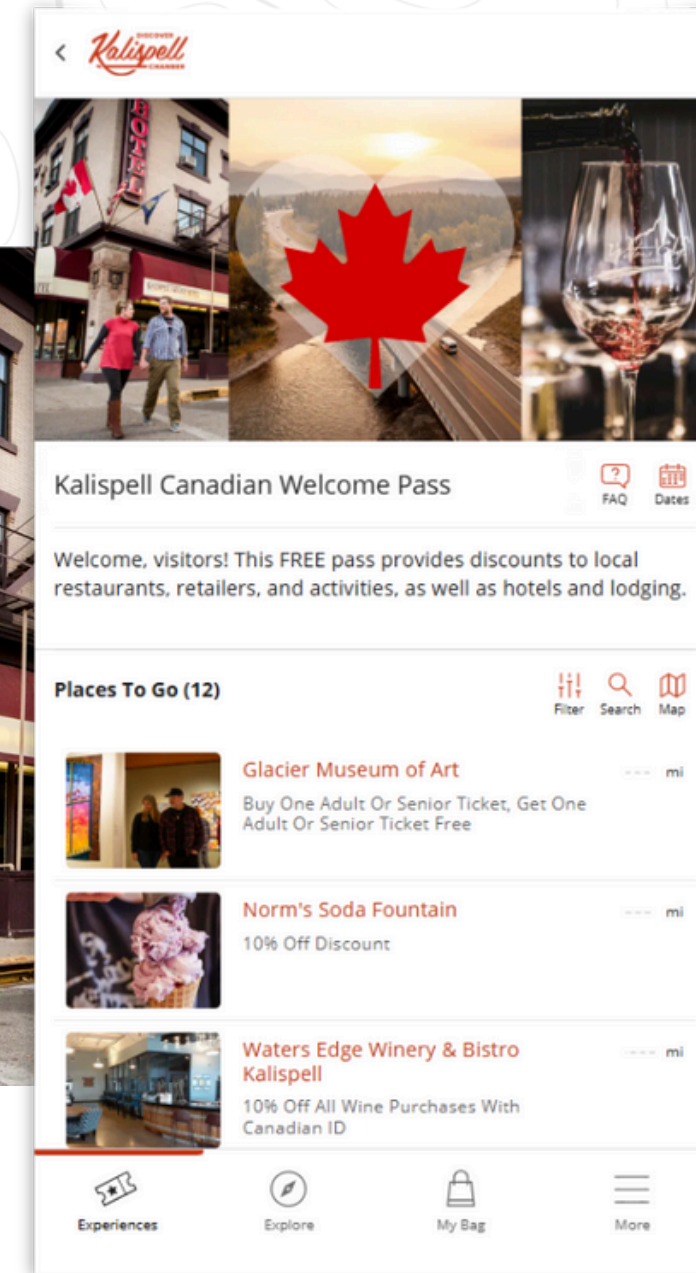
KALISPELL CANADIAN WELCOME PASS

The Kalispell Canadian Welcome Pass is a community-driven effort to reconnect with our Canadian neighbors who have long been an important part of Kalispell. The Pass offers discounts from **22** local businesses. A gesture of friendship and appreciation for those that are comfortable visiting at this time. This promotion focuses on the importance of connections between people and places and shows that at the community level we have the ability to build goodwill even during difficult times. We're keeping our welcome mat out!

1,740
USERS

195
REDEMPTIONS

208M+
REACH

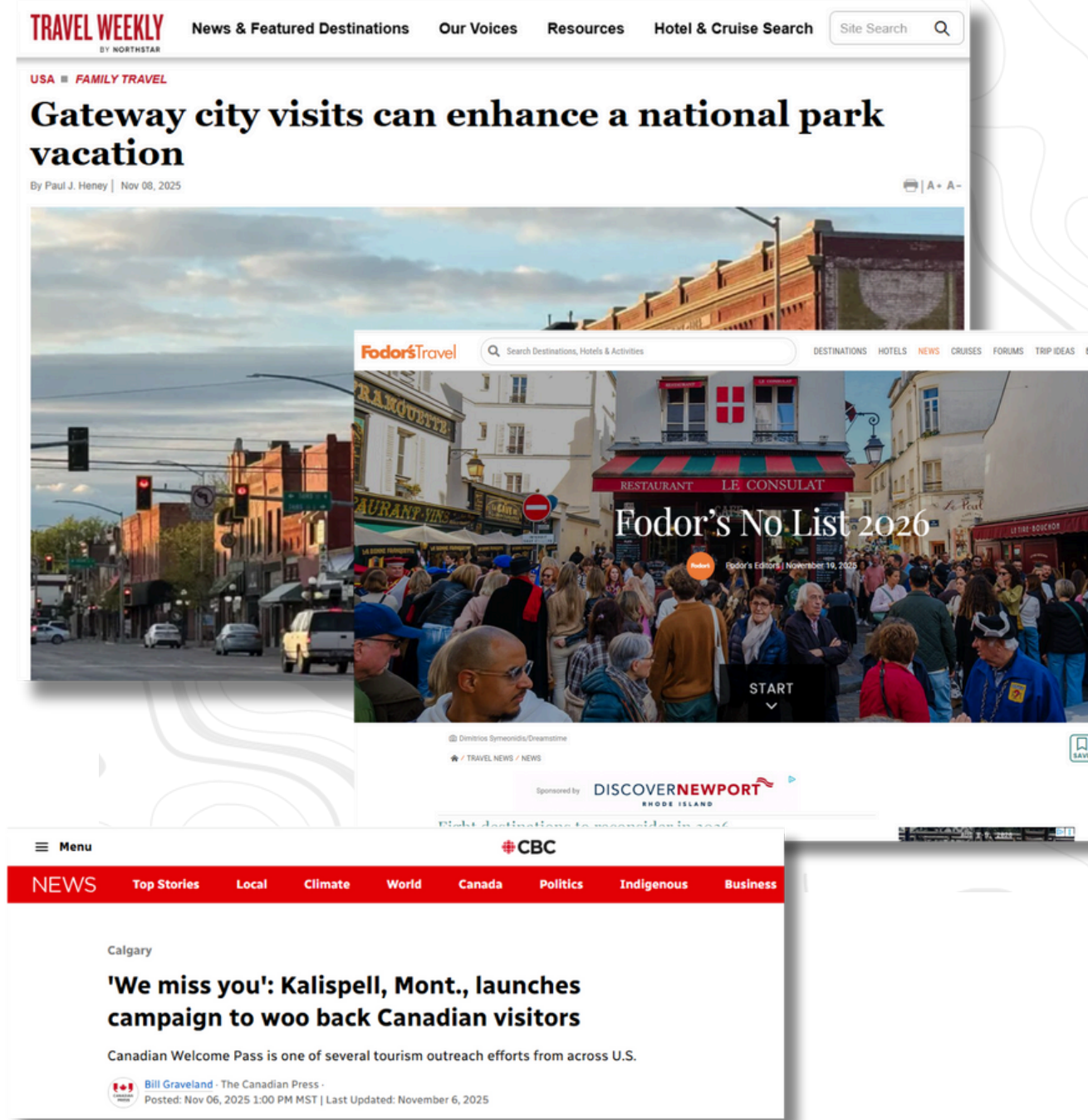


Public Relations

Discover Kalispell partners with Lightning Bug Public Relations to generate editorial coverage for Kalispell through strategic media pitching, news releases, and hosted media and influencer visits. In 2025, these efforts resulted in more than 2.6 billion in editorial reach across major national and international publications.

2,640,424,850
EDITORIAL REACH

Editorial reach represents the estimated number of people who had the opportunity to see stories about Kalispell in trusted media outlets. This coverage is "earned," meaning it is not paid advertising, but authentic editorial content.



TRAVEL+
LEISURE



AOL



Forbes



Visitor engagement

ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

- Overall visitor engagement increased **5.11%** year-over-year, with 10,569 total interactions in 2025, up from 10,055 in 2024.
- Digital engagement drove growth, reflecting how visitors increasingly seek trip planning support online and before arrival.

KEY TRENDS & HIGHLIGHTS

- Email inquiries (CVB) increased **22.39%**, totaling 4,755 interactions, driven in part by the Summer Road Trip campaign and Kalispell Canadian Welcome Pass in the second half of 2025.
- Web chat (Intercom) usage grew **21.92%**, rising to 712 interactions, reinforcing the value of real-time, on-demand visitor support during trip planning.
- Visitor Guide (printed) requests remained strong at **3,380**, holding steady year-over-year and signaling continued interest in bundled trip experiences.
- Walk-in and phone inquiries continue to decline (-17% and -23% respectively), reflecting the **50%** decline in international visitors, a broader shift toward digital-first visitor engagement and pre-arrival planning.



WALK-INS BY STATE

1. Montana
2. Texas
3. Washington
4. California
5. Florida/Oregon
6. Ohio
7. Arizona/Colorado/ Illinois/North Carolina
8. Georgia
9. Wisconsin
10. Michigan

INTERNATIONAL

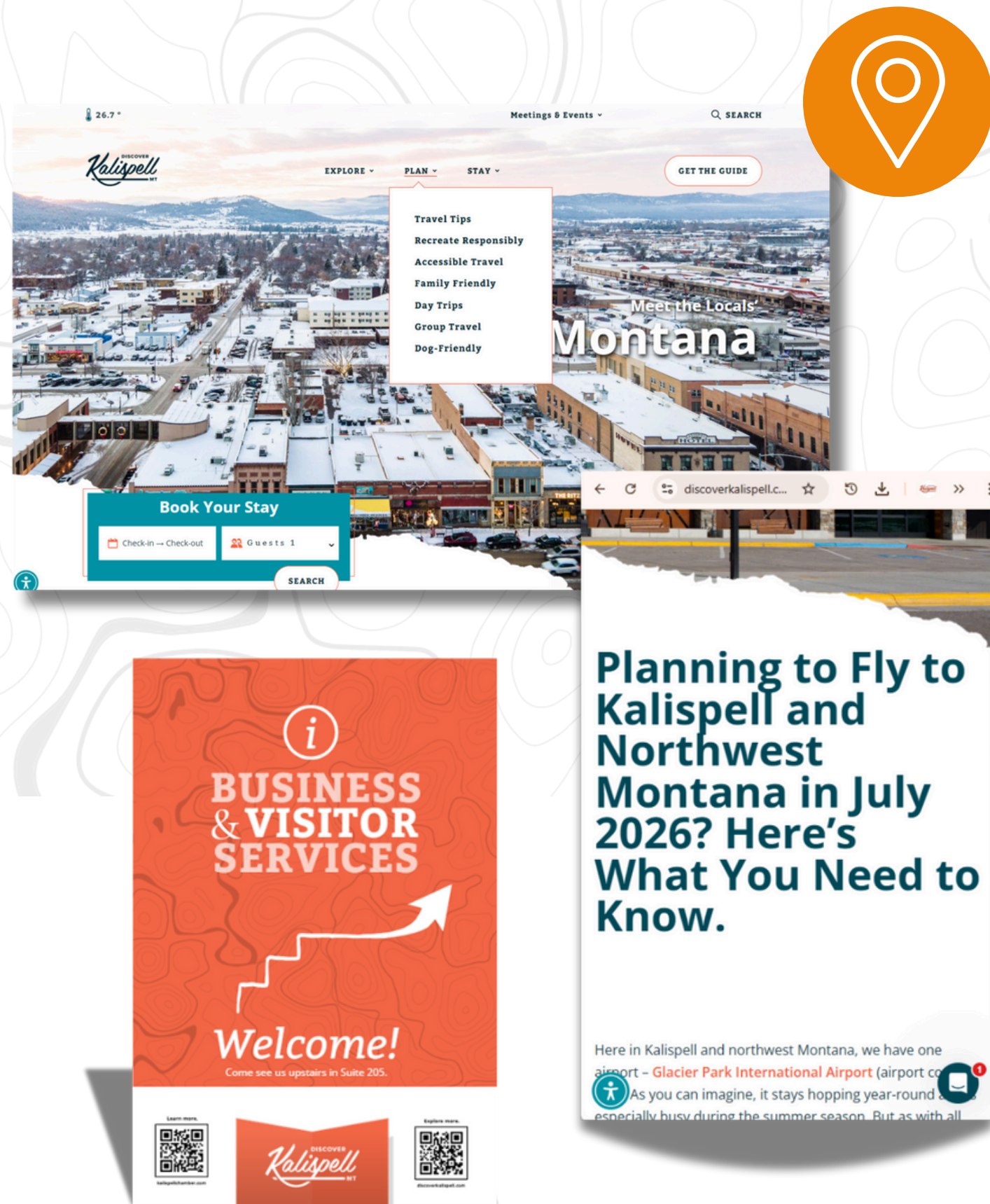
1. Canada, AB
2. France
3. New Zealand
4. Canada, BC



VISITOR GUIDE FY25

5,590,773
IMPRESSIONS

45,269
CLICKS



Visitor engagement

LOOKING FORWARD

2025 showed that visitors are increasingly planning ahead and engaging digitally before they arrive. Investments in online tools and targeted campaigns are meeting travelers where they are and driving meaningful engagement.

In 2026, we will encounter several challenges, including the airport closure in July, Glacier National Park's rollout of a new vehicle management system and increase in foreign visitor fees. To navigate these hurdles successfully, we must strategically optimize the distribution of our **digital and physical resources** throughout the travel season, provide resources to local businesses to **educate visitors on current travel logistics**, as well as **enhance the VIC space** for maximum visitor engagement.



FY26 Marketing Plan highlights

FY26 July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

DESTINATION MARKETING

- Expand year-round and off-season visitation through targeted storytelling, digital campaigns, and creative partnerships.
- Increase engagement and trip planning activity across website, social media, and user-generated content.
- Integrate stewardship messaging to encourage responsible travel and community connection.

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

- Recruit and support high-yield events, meetings, and group travel to drive room nights and economic impact.
- Grow off-season demand through themed travel packages and lodging incentive campaigns.
- Strengthen collaboration with the City and community partners to support sustainable destination growth.

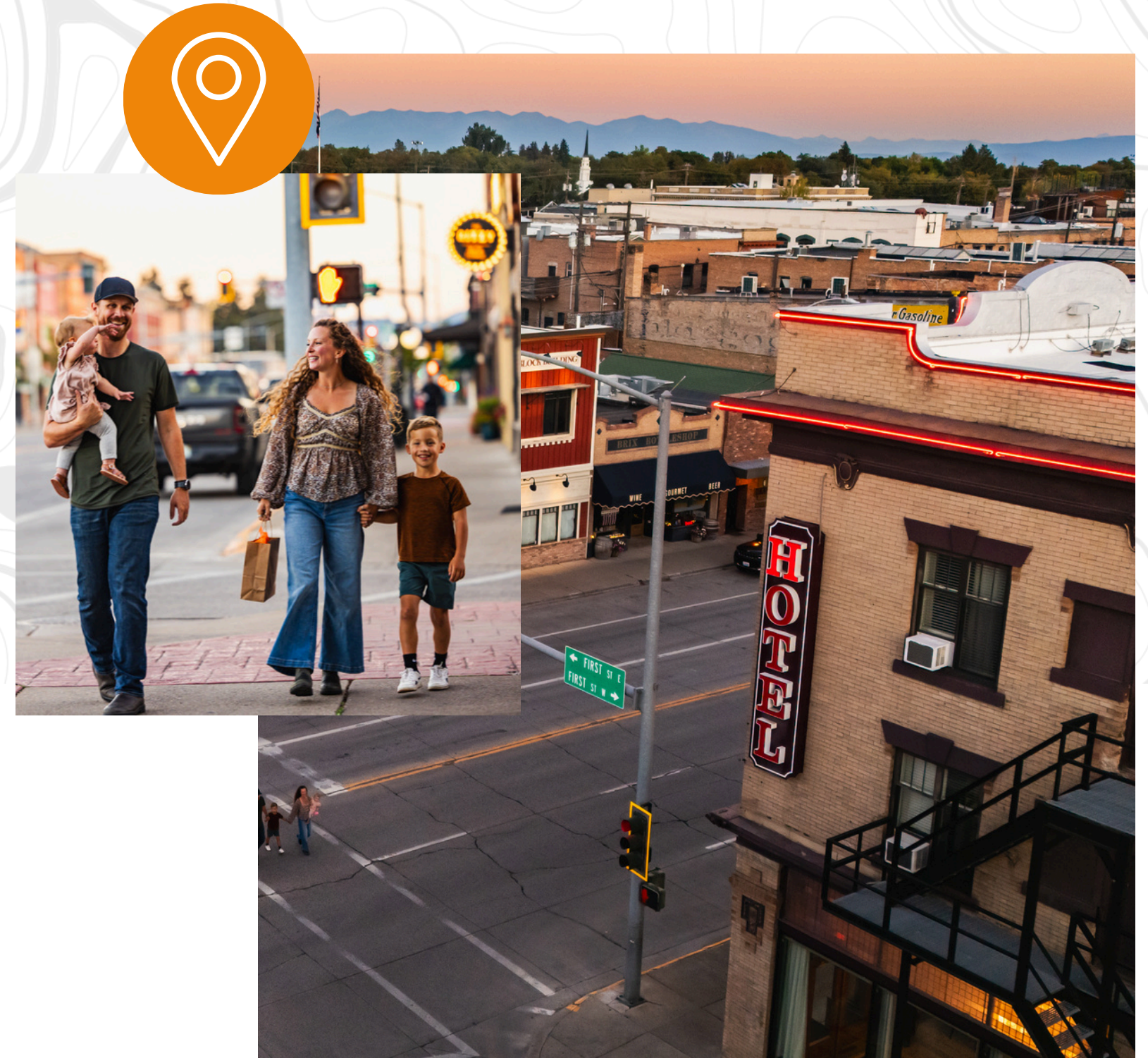
FY26 Marketing Plan highlights

DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP & MANAGEMENT

- Advance community engagement through volunteerism, support of local projects, and transparent communication of tourism value.
- Support environmental sustainability initiatives in partnership with local nonprofits.
- Enhance visitor services and destination management through improved Visitor Information Center (VIC) experiences and engagement tracking.

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT & VISITOR SERVICES

- Expand visitor resource distribution and enhance the Kalispell VIC.
- Improve web chat functionality to facilitate timely conversations with users.
- Put out timely visitor information through multi-faceted platforms.





Trends we're watching in 2026

- **July 2026** weekday airport closure at GPIA for runway resurfacing project.
- Increased fees for international visitors at Glacier National Park.
- Multiple national publications (for example, Fodor's) have listed Glacier National Park as 'do not visit in 2026' due to **overcrowding**.
- Economic issues impacting **American traveler sentiment** and **spending trends**.
- Increased capacity of **winter flights** (SFO, LAX, ORD, PDX) and new summer routes (Austin, Phoenix, Newark).
- 115 room Hyatt Studio property opening in early 2026.
- Return of the **Montana Spartan Race, May 9-10, 2026**.
- Discover Kalispell grant funding awarded to support the expansion of local events showcasing top level talent in **high school** and **collegiate sports**.



DISCOVER
Kalispell
MT

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