

A photograph of the Arkansas State Capitol building in Little Rock, Arkansas. The building is a grand, classical-style structure with a large, white, domed roof topped with a golden finial. The facade features a portico with several tall, white columns. In the foreground, there is a well-maintained green lawn and a paved walkway. To the right, an American flag and another flag are visible on tall poles. The sky is a clear, bright blue with a few wispy clouds.

Little Rock[®]

CONVENTION &
VISITORS BUREAU

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

CONTENTS

3	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
5	ORGANIZATION & LEADERSHIP
6	LRCVB RECOGNITION
8	VALUE OF TOURISM
9	2024 BY THE NUMBERS
10	LITTLE ROCK STATISTICS
12	FINANCES
16	DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT
18	LEADING THE WAY
20	A LOOK INSIDE OUR FACILITIES
26	SELLING LITTLE ROCK
28	MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS
30	ALL EYES ON LITTLE ROCK
32	ECLIPSING EXPECTATIONS
34	A LOOK AHEAD
36	BUSINESS PLAN



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2024 was a year of change, progress, and preparation for the Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau (LRCVB). After multiple years of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the LRCVB spent much of 2024 honing its processes and practices to make sure that it was more prepared than ever to meet the ever-changing demands of the dynamic tourism industry.

In 2023, the LRCVB launched a new **Tourism Master Plan** that would serve as a strategic roadmap for the tourism industry's growth in Little Rock over the next decade. The LRCVB uses that plan as an organizational north star, as it informs the bureau's daily work and long term strategic decision-making.

The year was marked by the **Great American Eclipse** in April, a once-in-a-generation event that saw Little Rock draw global attention as the moon's shadow passed overhead. The LRCVB acted as a clearinghouse of information related to the event, both for visitors and locals alike.

The **Marketing & Communications Division** continued to grow the new **LittleRock.com**, becoming a central tool in promoting Little Rock and engaging audiences on a national scale. The website demonstrated significant growth across all performance metrics, showcasing its effectiveness in connecting with visitors and encouraging deeper exploration of the destination. Through a combination of strategic marketing initiatives, impactful search engine optimization efforts, and high-quality content, the site attracted a larger and more engaged audience than ever before.

The **Operations Division** celebrated the **85th anniversary of Robinson Center** as well as budgeted and executed **capital projects** to upgrade LRCVB facilities, ensuring they stay competitive in the marketplace. Upgrades included new audio-visual and information technology enhancements, new LED walls, flooring upgrades, and new restrooms.

The **Sales & Services Division** reached new levels of activity and engagement in 2024. Together, they traveled more than 19,410 miles to attend 19 trade shows, booking 213 future pieces of business, representing more than \$44 million future economic impact. The services team took on an even more visible role in the community with the launch of **Pebbles**, the LRCVB's new mobile marketing vehicle. Complete with swag, information about the city, and fun activations, Pebbles brought Big on Little Rock style to events across the city, state, and region.

The LRCVB now enters 2025 equipped with better data, technology, and resources than ever before as it guides Little Rock's tourism industry into its next era of growth.



Gina Gemberling
President & CEO
Gina Gemberling, CDME
Little Rock Convention &
Visitors Bureau

**BIG ON
LITTLE ROCK®**

Little Rock

CONVENTION &
VISITORS BUREAU

MISSION

Improve the quality of life and the local economy in Little Rock by bringing visitors, meetings, conventions, and events to the city; Responsibly manage public funds in its charge; Efficiently operate the facilities it manages; Serve customers, visitors, and delegates with courtesy, knowledge, and skill.

CORE VALUES

BE THE PLEASANT SURPRISE

A mix of both personality and remarkable customer service.

MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE EVERY DAY

Be present in every moment and aware that even the smallest actions can make the biggest impact.

ALWAYS ENGAGE

Sincerely engage in the guest experience.

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Treat others better than they expect to be treated.

BE EXTRAORDINARY

Anticipate customer needs and deliver personalized service that exceeds expectations.

TAKE OWNERSHIP

Produce a result that you can be proud of and take pride in the outcome.



ORGANIZATION & LEADERSHIP

LITTLE ROCK CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

The Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau (LRCVB) is the official destination marketing organization for the City of Little Rock, charged with promoting the city for convention and leisure travel. The LRCVB also operates the Statehouse Convention Center, Robinson Center, Cromwell Building, River Market (Ottenheimer Hall, First Security Amphitheater, and the pavilions) and multiple parking facilities. The LRCVB is primarily funded by a lodging and prepared food tax. The organization is divided into four primary divisions: Finance & Administration, Sales & Services, Marketing & Communications, and Operations.

LITTLE ROCK ADVERTISING & PROMOTION COMMISSION

The Little Rock Advertising & Promotion Commission (A&P) is the governing body for the Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau. It is a volunteer board consisting of seven members – two City of Little Rock elected officials, four business owners within the Little Rock hospitality industry and one at-large position.



Jim Keet, Chair



Mayor Frank Scott, Jr.



**Nick Roye,
Finance Committee Chair**



**City Director
Antwan Phillips**



Yogesh Asudani



Rajesh Mehta



Pamela Smith

THE LITTLE ROCK CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU LEADERSHIP TEAM

Gina Gemberling – President & CEO

Brian Oaks – Senior Vice President of Operations & COO

Chris Phillips – Senior Vice President of Finance & Administration & CFO

Adam Berrios – Vice President of Sales & Services

Ryan Callison – Vice President of Marketing & Communications

Laura Bayba – Senior Executive Assistant to President & CEO

Christin 'Byrdie' Byrd – Director of Creative Services

Jonathan Chandler – Director of Technical Services

James 'Doc' Doolittle – Senior Director of Facility Maintenance & Engineering

Jennifer Garner – Senior Director of Event Operations

Bobby Green – Safety Security Director

Bliss Krucas – Director of Destination Services

Kitty Lane – Director of Events

Melissa Lattin – Director of Box Office Operations

Libby Doss Lloyd – Director of Communications

Matt Mills – Controller

Kim Sanders – Director of Human Resources

Brian Stagers – Senior Director of Information Technology

Michael Stocker – Senior Director of Facility Operations

Lisa Spence – Director of Tax Revenue

Olumide Yerokun – Director of Marketing

LRCVB RECOGNITION

BUREAU-WIDE AWARDS

TOURISM ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR AWARD
LITTLE ROCK CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
TOURISM MASTER PLAN
Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage & Tourism

BRONZE ADRIAN AWARD
LITTLE ROCK BIG ADVANTAGE SALES CAMPAIGN
Hospitality Sales and Marketing International (HSMIAI)

READERS' CHOICE AWARD
LITTLE ROCK CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
ConventionSouth Magazine

NATURAL STATE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AWARD
EXPERIENCE LITTLE ROCK IN COLOR CAMPAIGN
Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage & Tourism

IMPACT COMMUNICATIONS AWARD
EXPERIENCE LITTLE ROCK IN COLOR CAMPAIGN
PRNews

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY & DIVERSITY AWARD
EXPERIENCE LITTLE ROCK IN COLOR CAMPAIGN
Ragan Communications

SILVER TELLY AWARD
EXPERIENCE LITTLE ROCK IN COLOR CAMPAIGN
The Telly Awards

EMPLOYEE AWARDS

GINA GEMBERLING
2024 Ballet Arkansas "Above the Barre" recipient
CHRISTIN 'BYRDIE' BYRD
Arkansas Money & Politics Future Icons recipient

EMPLOYEE CERTIFICATIONS

JAMIA EVANS
PDM (Professional in Destination Management)

DESTYN FLANAGAN
PDM (Professional in Destination Management)

SAVANA HOLLAND
PDM (Professional in Destination Management)

TORI ROGERS
PDM (Professional in Destination Management)

BRIAN STAGGERS
ITILv4 Foundation and Dell Generative AI

OLUMIDE YEROKUN
PDM (Professional in Destination Management)

RYAN WILLIAMS
PDM (Professional in Destination Management)

LRCVB COMPLETED
Little Rock Tourism Ambassador Program

20+ YEAR EMPLOYEES

SHIRLEY WITHERS
Receptionist | 36 years

JOHNNY LONEY
Auxiliary Services Manager | 35 years

DEEJAY RUSSELL
Parking Assistant Manager | 34 years

JAMES WILLIAMS
Part-time Safety Security Officer | 30 years

KEITH WINFREY
Custodian | 30 years

KATINA BROWN
Event Manager | 27 years

SHERYL COLCLOUGH
Part-time Receptionist | 26 years

MICA FARMER
Executive Assistant to Senior VP of
Operations/COO | 25 years

LEE COULTER
Safety Security Officer | 25 years

JOY COGSHELL
Part-time Receptionist | 25 years

MARVIN TAYLOR
Part-time Safety Security Officer | 24 years

PENNY NAGEL
Destination Services Specialist | 23 years

PAM MOORE
Receptionist | 20 years

2024 RETIREES

DARIA ALDRIDGE
Booking Coordinator | 16 years



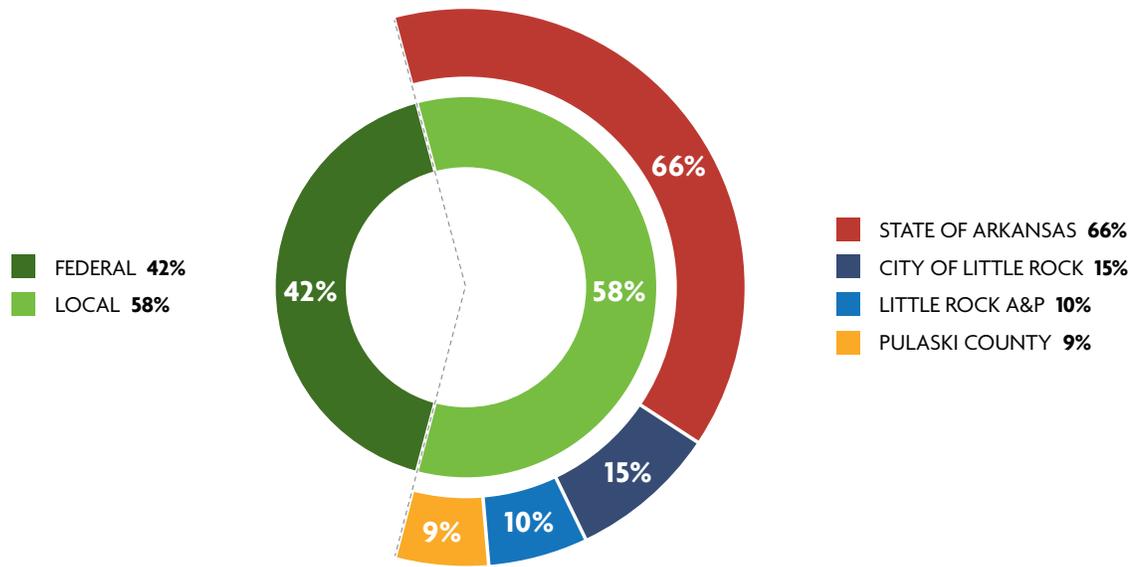
VALUE OF TOURISM

2023 TOURISM IMPACT IN LITTLE ROCK

Visitor Spending	\$1,500,000,000
Income (Wages)	\$337,600,000
State Tax	\$63,500,000
County Tax	\$8,400,000
City of Little Rock and A&P	\$24,600,000
Employment (Jobs Generated)	8,565

Source: Economic Impact of Visitors in Little Rock 2023 (Tourism Economics)

2023 TAX REVENUE



2024 BY THE NUMBERS



\$1.5 BILLION
VISITOR SPENDING



8,565
DIRECT JOBS GENERATED



\$96.5 MILLION
DIRECT STATE &
LOCAL TAXES GENERATED



362 EVENTS
HELD IN LRCVB
MANAGED FACILITIES



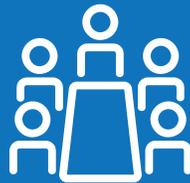
547,981 ATTENDEES
IN LRCVB MANAGED FACILITIES



219
MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS
AND SPORTING EVENTS SERVICED
IN 2024 ATTRACTED
214,410 ATTENDEES
AND GENERATED



\$44,260,043
IN DIRECT SPENDING



213
FUTURE MEETINGS,
CONVENTIONS AND SPORTING
EVENTS SECURED REPRESENTING
75,116 ROOM NIGHTS AND 255,986
ATTENDEES WITH AN ESTIMATED



\$50,856,319
IN DIRECT SPENDING

35
SITE TOURS



19
TRADE SHOWS
ATTENDED

6
JOURNALISTS, WRITERS
AND INFLUENCERS
HOSTED/ASSISTED



1,364,938
WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS



1,065,035
UNIQUE WEBSITE VISITORS

69%



INCREASE IN
E-NEWSLETTER
SIGNUPS



11,038
NEW SOCIAL MEDIA FANS
AND FOLLOWERS



40 MILLION
IMPRESSIONS ACROSS
DIGITAL MEDIA NETWORKS

LITTLE ROCK STATISTICS

2024 HOTEL DATA

	Occupancy %	Average Daily Rate	Revenue Per Available Room
Little Rock	54.70	106.63	58.32
Downtown Convention District	66.30	14.69	93.99
Downtown Little Rock	67.10	136.97	91.88
Little Rock Airport Area	50.40	92.88	46.80

Source: STR



BILL AND HILLARY
CLINTON NATIONAL AIRPORT
LITTLE ROCK

TOTAL PASSENGERS

2021
1,695,061

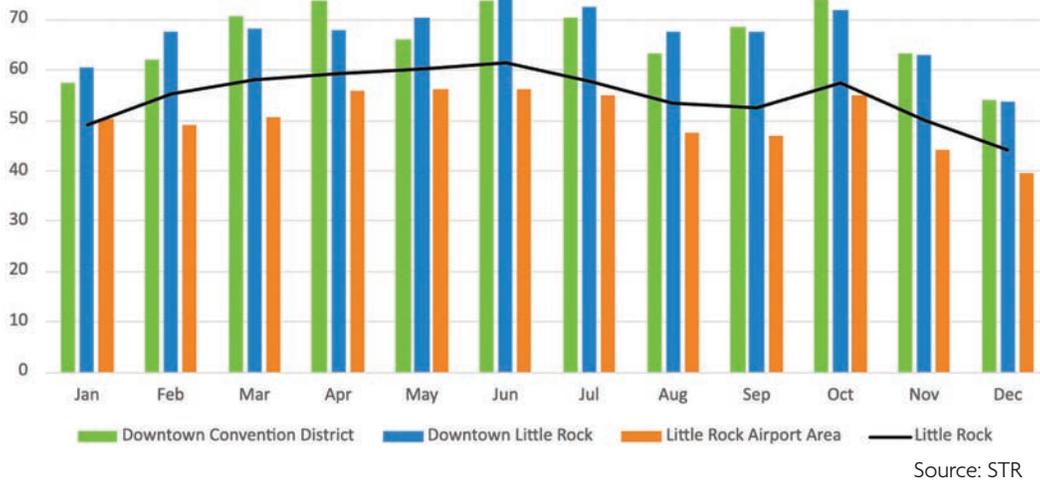
2022
2,021,040

2023
2,237,309

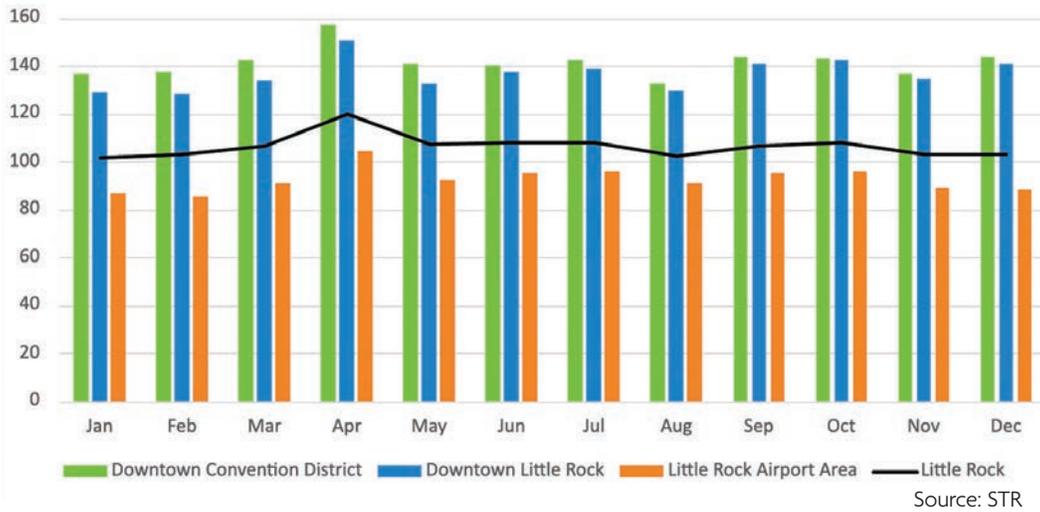
2024
2,346,456



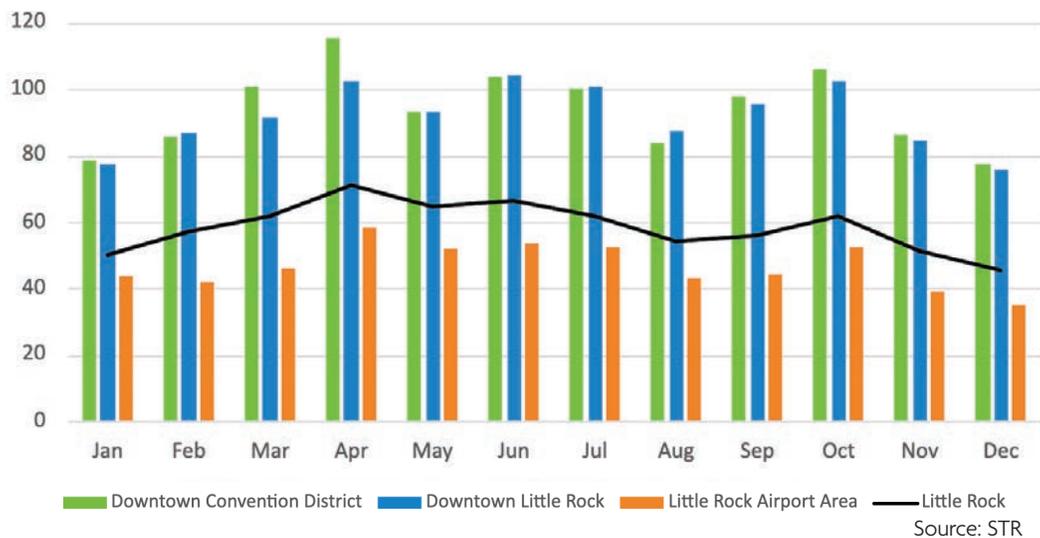
2024 LITTLE ROCK HOTEL OCCUPANCY



2024 LITTLE ROCK HOTEL AVERAGE DAILY RATE

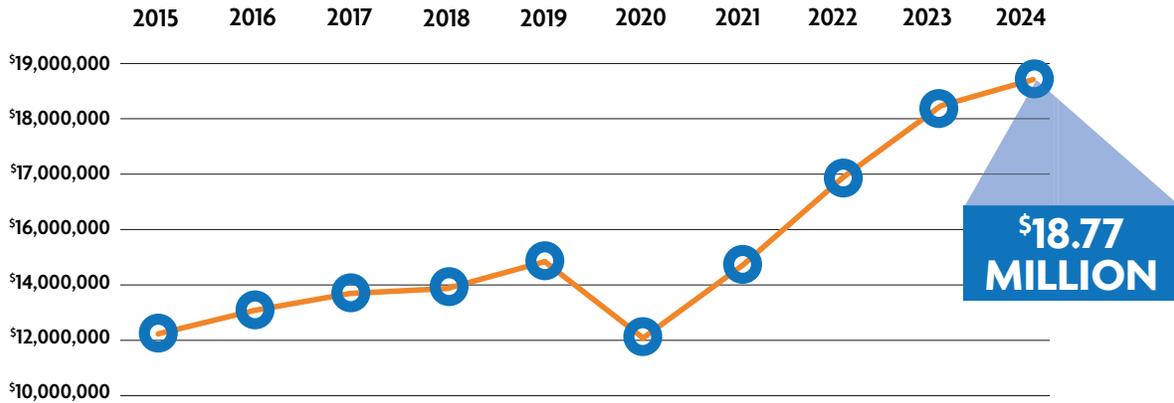


2024 LITTLE ROCK HOTEL REVENUE PER AVAILABLE ROOM



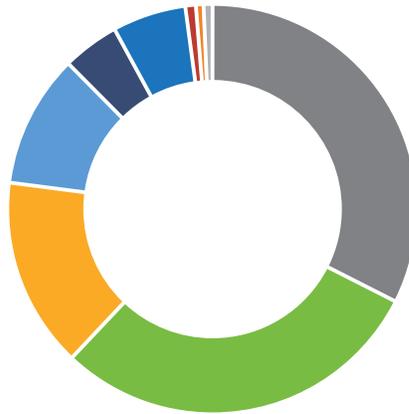
FINANCES

2% A&P TAX COLLECTIONS 2015-2024



TAX COLLECTIONS BY BUSINESS TYPE

- FULL SERVICE RESTAURANT **32.3%**
- FAST FOOD/LIMITED SERVICE **29.7%**
- LODGING WITH FOOD SALES **15.3%**
- LODGING **10.4%**
- FACILITATING PLATFORM* **5.8%**
- CONCESSIONAIRE **4.5%**
- CATERER **0.8%**
- FOOD TRUCK **0.7%**
- PRIVATE CLUB **0.5%**

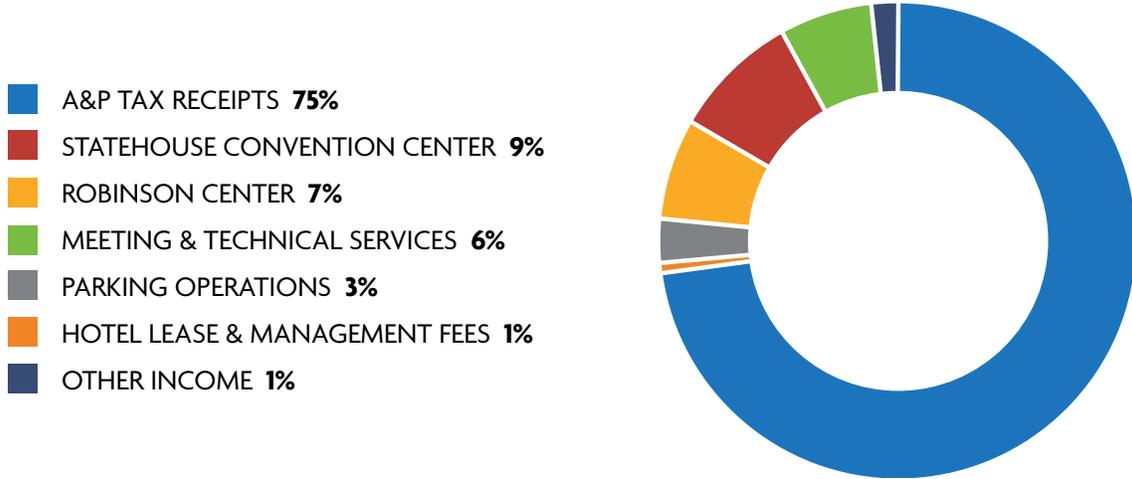


*Facilitating platform includes online purveyors such as Airbnb, Priceline/Agoda, Bite Squad, Grubhub, etc.

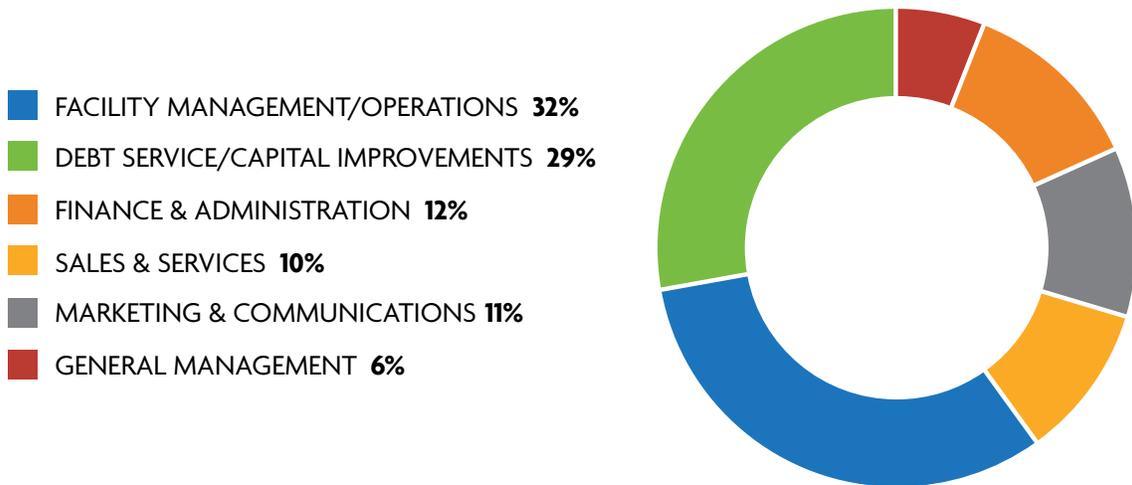


2024 TOTAL REVENUE

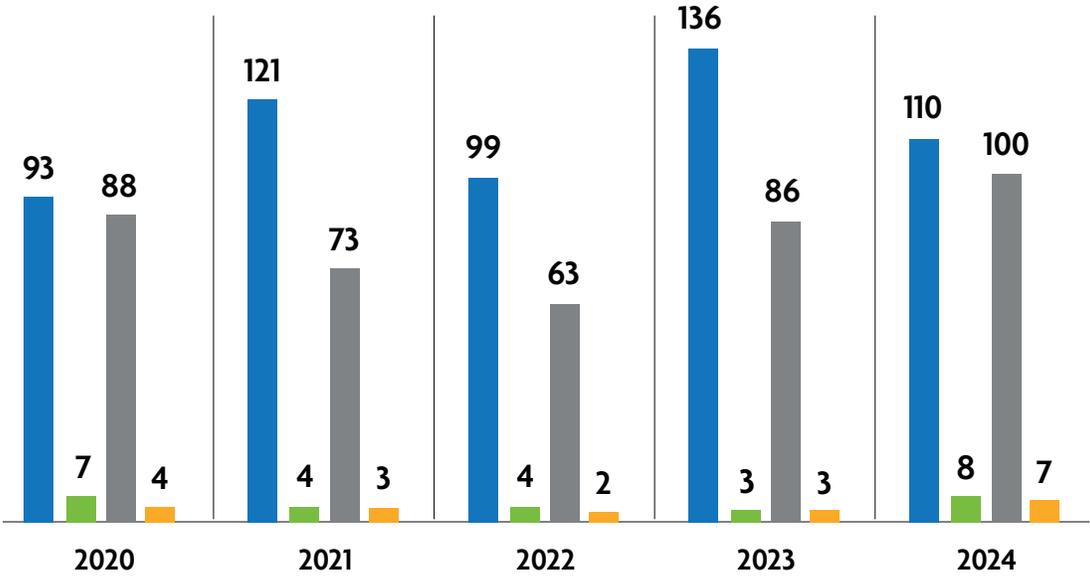
\$25.9 MILLION



2024 TOTAL EXPENDITURES



2020-2024 NEW AND CLOSED PERMITS



*Includes changes in ownership

- NEW PREPARED FOOD PERMITS
- CLOSED PREPARED FOOD PERMITS
- NEW LODGING PERMITS
- CLOSED LODGING PERMITS





DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

Throughout the year, Little Rock's array of dynamic attractions was renewed by revitalization efforts across the city.

In Downtown Little Rock, the multi-year construction project to widen the **Interstate 30 crossing** over the Arkansas River was completed, ushering in a new traffic pattern and easing congestion. Elsewhere downtown, iconic Little Rock attractions the **Museum of Discovery** and the **Mosaic Templars Cultural Center** expanded their offerings with new, exciting exhibits. The city's most historic homes were showcased in a new **Quapaw Quarter Historic Homes Tour** brochure, produced by the LRCVB in partnership with the Quapaw Quarter Association.

In November, the **William J. Clinton Presidential Library & Museum** celebrated its 20th anniversary, marking two decades since its opening kicked off a generation of redevelopment in the heart of Downtown. Across the street, the **Arkansas Symphony Orchestra** opened its first permanent headquarters, the Stella Boyle Smith Music Center, a 20,000-square-foot building with state-of-the-art educational, rehearsal, and performance spaces.

The **Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts (AMFA)** continued to draw massive crowds in its second year of its reimagined building and grounds. AMFA's programming and exhibitions reached all ages, diversifying and growing its base. Of the many highlights, AMFA hosted **Action/Abstraction Redefined**, the first major traveling exhibition to highlight modern Native American art through the lens of 20th century Abstract Expressionism, Color Field, and Hard-Edge Painting.

In Midtown, the **Little Rock Zoo's Over-the-Jumps carousel** reopened after a painstaking restoration effort

in time to celebrate its 100th anniversary, and the new **Home2 Suites by Hilton** opened, adding to Little Rock's ever-growing stock of hotels.

In August, the LRCVB organized the **River Market Entertainment District Birthday Bash**, celebrating the 5 year anniversary of Little Rock's first legal entertainment district. Since its 2019 launch, the River Market Entertainment District has become a hub for fun activity and downtown nightlife, creating a vibrant scene for locals and visitors to enjoy some of Little Rock's best culinary, cultural and live-music offerings.

In October, Little Rock welcomed some of the world's legendary golfers to the Pleasant Valley Country Club for the inaugural **Simmons Bank Championship**, a new PGA TOUR Champions tournament. The event will take place over the next five years and will serve as the second round of PGA TOUR Champions' annual Charles Schwab Cup playoffs.

The LRCVB continued its slate of programming including **Jazz in the Park** at the **River Market Pavilions** and **First Security Amphitheater**, back for its 50th anniversary season, the **Little Rock Farmers Market**. Programming expanded with the free event series **River Market Live!** and the return of **The BIG Little Rock Holiday Parade**.

The LRCVB also conducted a **Sports Facilities Feasibility Study** to provide critical insights into infrastructure needs and economic impacts, helping Little Rock embrace the potential growth of the expanding sports tourism industry through community education and increased opportunities.





LEADING THE WAY

The LRCVB isn't just Little Rock's destination marketing organization, it's the steward of the city's entire tourism industry. With this in mind, the LRCVB created the **Little Rock Tourism Ambassador Program** to create a city-wide network of hospitality professionals that would uplift the visitor experience. Crafted with the front-line tourism worker in mind, the LRCVB ended 2024 with a 100% certification completion among its team members.

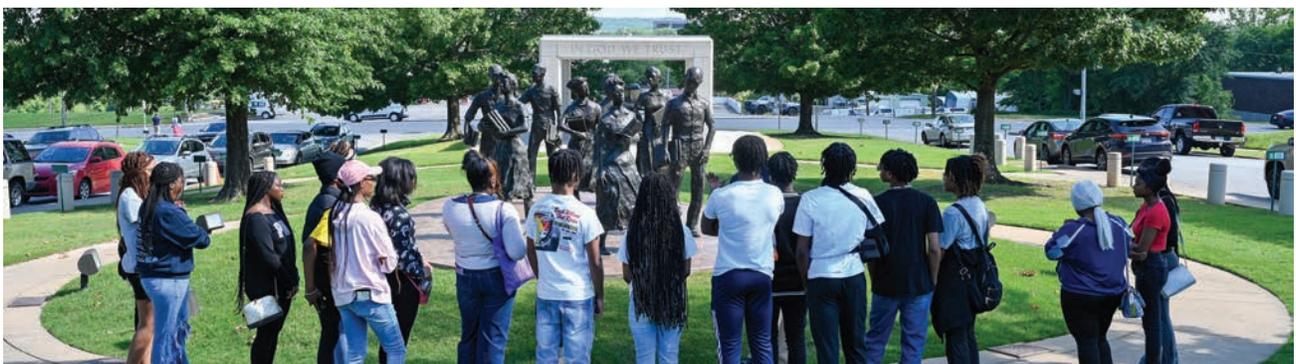
Staff education remained a priority for the LRCVB with **social inclusion training and customer service training** for every level of LRCVB employees, ensuring that every interaction with LRCVB staff is a positive experience, whether for out-of-town visitors or those who call Little Rock home.

To ensure Little Rock's tourism workforce continued to grow at pace with the industry, the LRCVB partnered with

Academies of Central Arkansas for **High School Tourism Day**, an initiative that showcased careers in the tourism industry to students across Central Arkansas.

In February, the LRCVB hosted **Sip, See, and Savor: Celebrating Black History in Little Rock** at the **Mosaic Templars Cultural Center**. This tourism industry event showcased feature Black-owned businesses, restaurants, and live entertainment.

The LRCVB also partnered with **Central Arkansas Food Bank** to promote **Central Arkansas Restaurant Weeks** in September. The campaign invited diners to "Eat Local and Fight Hunger" at any of dozens of participating restaurants throughout the city.





LITTLE ROCK CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL



A LOOK INSIDE OUR FACILITIES

The LRCVB is charged with the operation of the Statehouse Convention Center, Robinson Center, Cromwell Building, River Market (Ottenheimer Market Hall, First Security Amphitheater, and the pavilions), and multiple parking facilities.

Robinson Center celebrated its 85th anniversary since opening in 1939 and set record attendance levels for a third consecutive year. **At the Statehouse Convention Center, two new LED walls became exciting elements**, adding new possibilities for events in the building's atrium.

The LRCVB's facilities also received **technology upgrades and capital improvements**, including the purchase of state-of-the-art robotic maintenance equipment to increase efficiency and maintain refreshed spaces. A new audio-visual and information technology package for groups was developed to better leverage assets and generate higher return on investment on equipment purchases. Additional updates include Statehouse Convention Center restrooms, new atrium flooring, lighting and paint upgrades, and airwalls in the Wally Allen Ballroom.

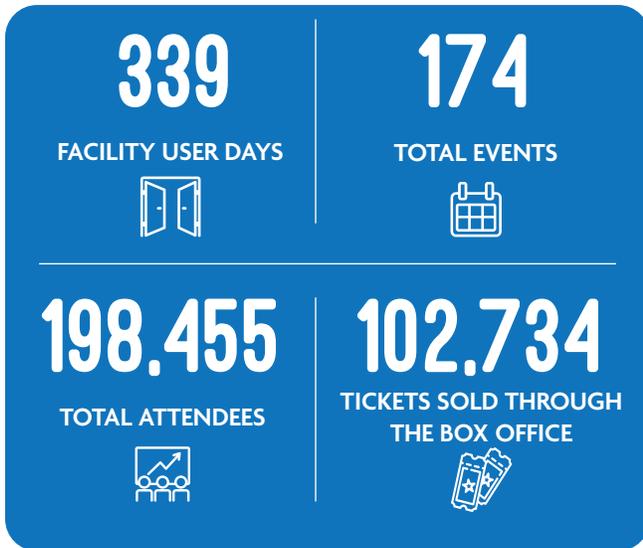
In the River Market, the **Little Rock Farmers Market celebrated its 50th anniversary** in 2024, while **River Market Live!**, a new monthly series of free public events, gave residents and visitors alike ample reason to visit the area. The **First Security Amphitheater** continued to be one of

Little Rock's most iconic concert venues with performances by Koe Wetzel, Steel Pulse, and the Turnpike Troubadours among others.

The **LRCVB's facility guides** also got a refresh in 2024. These important documents are key promotional tools in helping LRCVB staff showcase our buildings to meetings and event planners.



ROBINSON CENTER

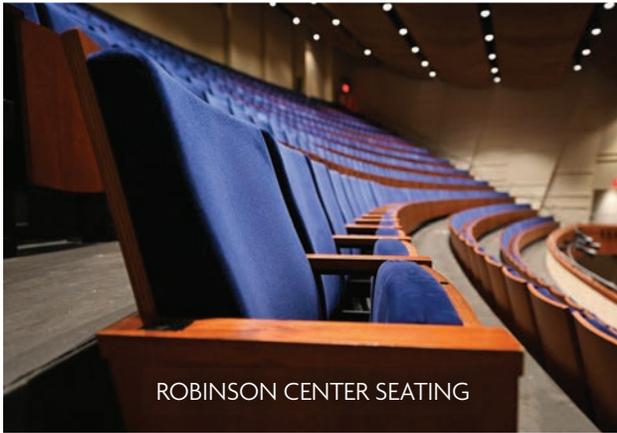


TOP 5 EVENTS

- MISS ARKANSAS PAGEANT
11,927
- DR. SEUSS' HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS!
THE MUSICAL
10,737
- BALLET ARKANSAS' "NUTCRACKER SPECTACULAR"
WITH ARKANSAS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
8,365
- MEAN GIRLS
8,580
- PETER PAN
6,429

Total attendance

ROBINSON CENTER UPGRADES



ROBINSON CENTER SEATING



BEFORE



AFTER



ROBINSON CENTER LANDSCAPING BEFORE



ROBINSON CENTER LANDSCAPING AFTER

RIVER MARKET



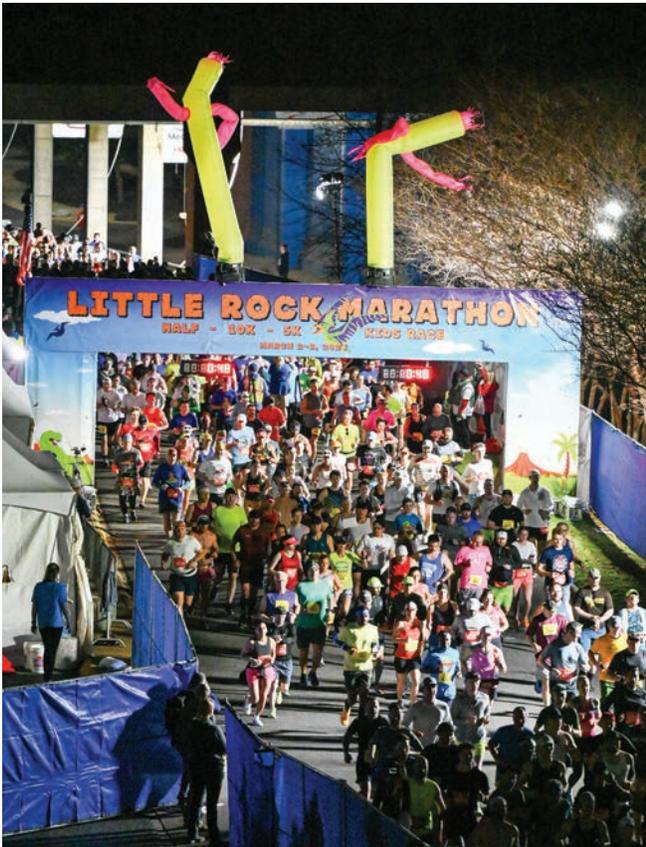
STATEHOUSE CONVENTION CENTER



TOP 10 EVENTS

- 2024 LITTLE ROCK MARATHON
24,000
- 2024 ARKANSAS COMIC CON
21,999
- 2024 VOLLEY IN THE ROCK
18,392
- 2024 WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH EXECUTIVE BOARD WINTER MEETING
8,100
- 2024 FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA STATE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
8,000
- 2024 HOLIDAY HOUSE
7,500
- 2024 LITTLE ROCK ANIME FESTIVAL
6,500
- ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS SUMMER CONFERENCE 2024
4,500
- 2024 SHOWDOWN IN THE ROCK
4,500
- 2024 LADS TO LEADERS ANNUAL CONFERENCE
4,500

Total attendance



STATEHOUSE CONVENTION CENTER UPGRADES



LED WALL BEFORE



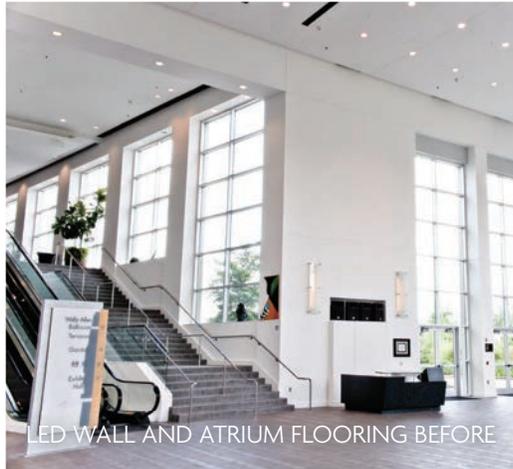
LED WALL AFTER



MARRIOTT DRIVEWAY BEFORE



MARRIOTT DRIVEWAY AFTER



LED WALL AND ATRIUM FLOORING BEFORE



LED WALL AND ATRIUM FLOORING AFTER



MEETING ROOM FLOORING BEFORE



MEETING ROOM FLOORING AFTER



WALLY ALLEN BALLROOM RESTROOM BEFORE



WALLY ALLEN BALLROOM RESTROOM AFTER



SIDEWALK AFTER



VESTIBULES BEFORE



VESTIBULES AFTER



	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
FACILITY USER DAYS	26	32	28	41	31	37	18	17	28	37	15	29
TOTAL EVENTS	15	13	17	21	19	10	10	10	15	18	10	16
TOTAL ATTENDANCE	8,018	26,076	22,654	23,058	13,407	18,682	6,120	11,015	14,153	16,595	17,474	21,203



STATEHOUSE CONVENTION CENTER

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
FACILITY USER DAYS	29	53	35	35	24	24	17	17	28	42	20	23
TOTAL EVENTS	9	17	8	14	14	7	5	6	13	19	6	9
TOTAL ATTENDANCE	17,853	48,097	26,418	22,041	16,295	21,550	18,050	4,896	29,323	16,931	15,990	13,248

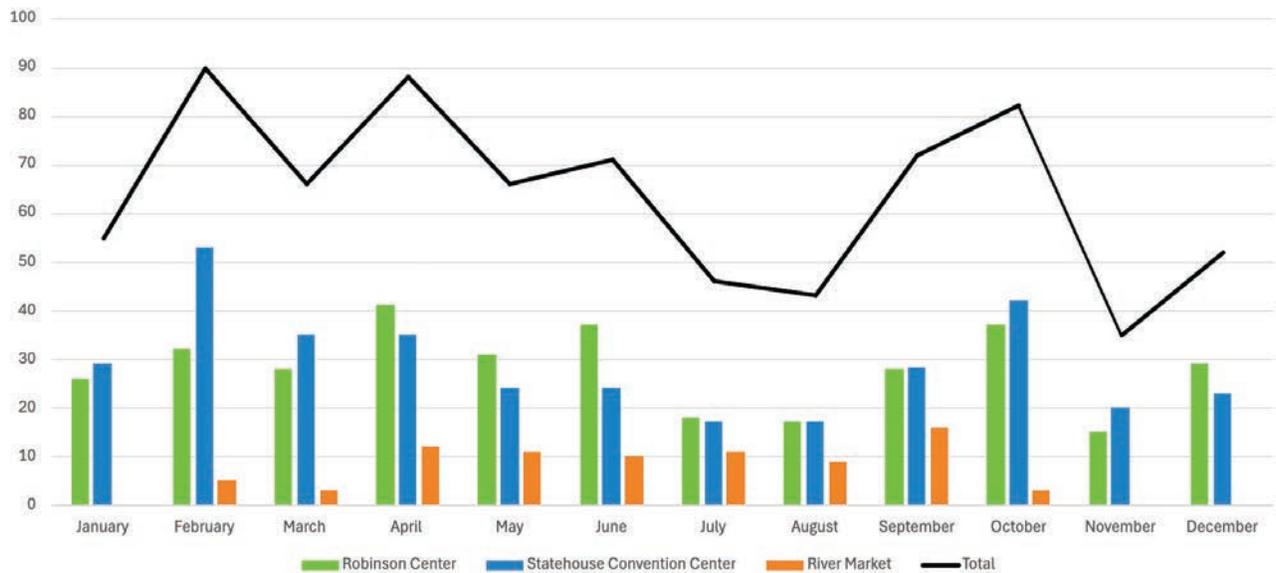


RIVER MARKET

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
FACILITY USER DAYS	0	5	3	12	11	10	11	9	16	3	0	0
TOTAL EVENTS	0	1	3	7	11	8	9	7	12	3	0	0
TOTAL ATTENDANCE	0	0	650	11,750	12,894	12,950	29,200	13,337	15,353	2,700	0	0



2024 FACILITY USER DAYS



SELLING LITTLE ROCK

The LRCVB sales team traveled more than **19,410 miles** to attend **19 trade shows** selling Little Rock to meeting planners.

All of that travel resulted in major wins for Little Rock, with **213 pieces of business booked** across the city. These meetings, events, and conventions represent more than a **\$44 million future economic impact**.

These sales efforts were unified under “**Little Rock, Big Advantage**,” a targeted, multi-layered marketing campaign that focused on the LRCVB’s greatest strengths: the “one-stop shop” nature of the organization. The fact that the LRCVB manages its own facilities and has an in-house event planning team makes it unique in the industry. The campaign was awarded a bronze **Adrian Award** by **Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International**.

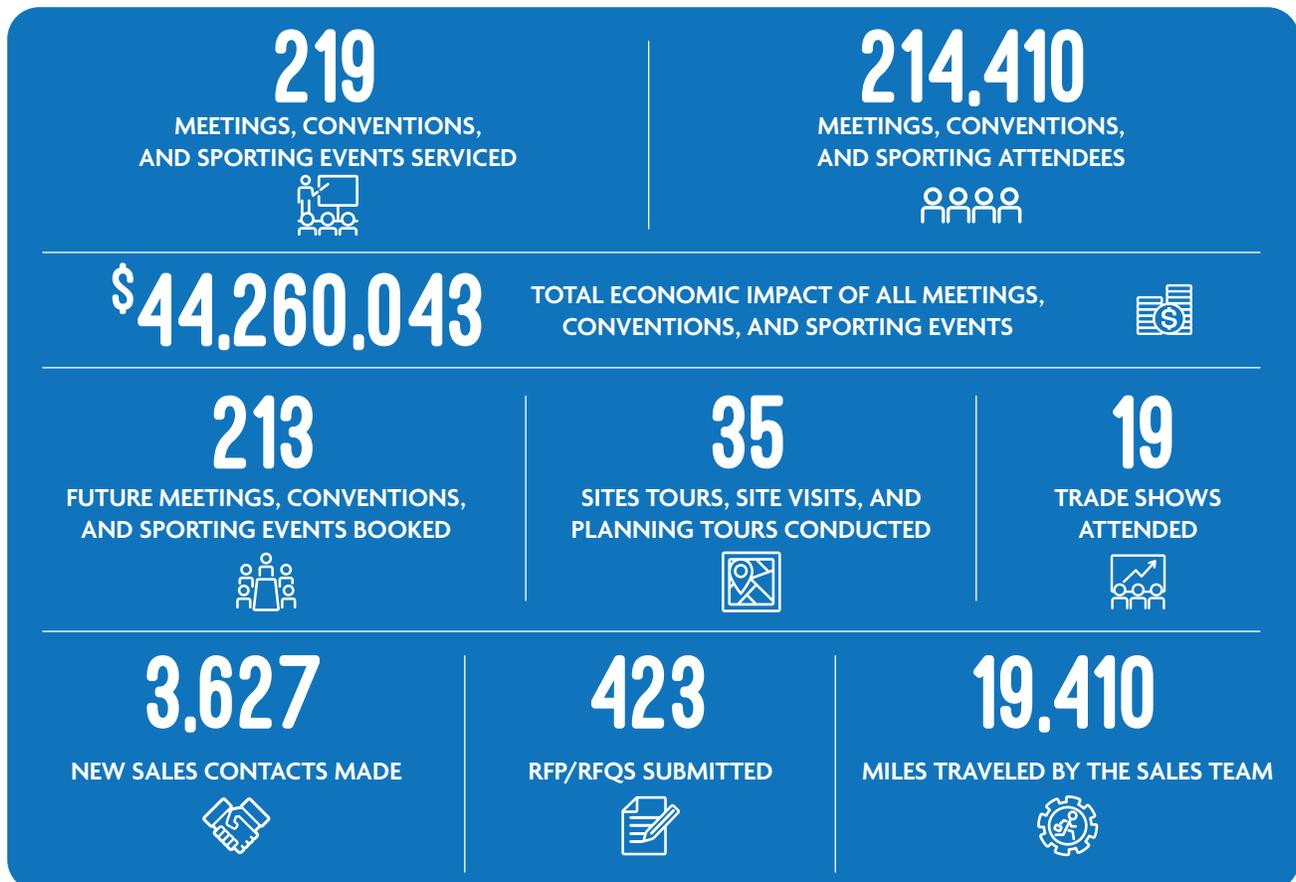
The sales team explored new marketing tactics in 2024, including a partnership with **Carvertise**. This activation targeted the HPN Global Partner Conference in Houston, Texas, and turned Uber and Lyft vehicles into mobile billboards for Little Rock through branded wrapping.

While the sales team was busy acquiring new clients, the LRCVB’s services team members were helping current

clients deliver flawless events. The services team acts as a meeting planner’s local contact and guide to all things local, assisting with everything from hotel and venue reservations to arranging entertainment and registration services. Their work is essential to garnering repeat business.

The services team took on an even more visible role in the community with the launch of the LRCVB’s new mobile marketing vehicle, **Pebbles**. Complete with swag, information about the city, and fun activations, Pebbles brought Big on Little Rock style to events across the city, state, and region, with even more events to come in 2025. Its activations included a **True Omni kiosk**, which helped to connect visitor data and enhance the visitor experience.

In March, Little Rock hosted **Southeast Tourism Society’s (STS) Domestic Showcase** trade show. This regional appointment-style marketplace offered a unique platform for tourism professionals to engage directly with group tour professionals and southeastern suppliers, fostering discussions geared towards enhancing tourism across the Southeast. A key highlight of the event includes the Public Relations Media Marketplace. STS member destinations and attractions met with highly credentialed travel journalists to generate earned media results.



Little Rock

BIG ADVANTAGE.

If you're looking for the perfect meeting location, nobody offers bigger advantages than Little Rock. From one-call planning assistance to exceptional values on hotels and venues, we're ready to make you Big on Little Rock. Start now at LITTLEROCK.COM/MEETINGS-EVENTS




NEW REGIONAL & NATIONAL CONVENTIONS HOSTED IN 2024

CONVENTIONS	ATTENDEES
USA RICE	750
ACADEMIC LANGUAGE THERAPY ASSOCIATION	720
BREWERY COLLECTIBLE CLUB OF AMERICA	525
SOUTHERN CHAPTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF ARBORICULTURE	500
SOUTHEAST TOURISM SOCIETY	458
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY FOOD CONFERENCE	350
CHI ETA PHI SORORITY, INC-MID SOUTH REGION	300
FARM EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION	265
SOUTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATORS	250
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL OFFICE PROFESSIONALS	230

ANNUAL CONVENTIONS HOSTED IN 2024

CONVENTIONS	ATTENDEES
ARKANSAS FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA	3,000
LADS TO LEADERS	2,500
ARKANSAS ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS	1,500
MISS ARKANSAS SCHOLARSHIP PAGEANT	1,300
MISS HIGH SCHOOL AMERICA PAGEANT	1,000
ARKANSAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE SUMMER CONVENTION	925
ARKANSAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE WINTER CONFERENCE	715
MISS GAY AMERICA	500



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

In May, the LRCVB participated in a **Chicago-specific activation** with Arkansas Tourism, Northwest Arkansas and Jonesboro industry partners. The purpose of the multi-day event was to connect with local influencers and outdoor enthusiasts and showcase The Natural State's outdoor adventure offerings and culinary gems, and tout Arkansas as a premier travel destination.

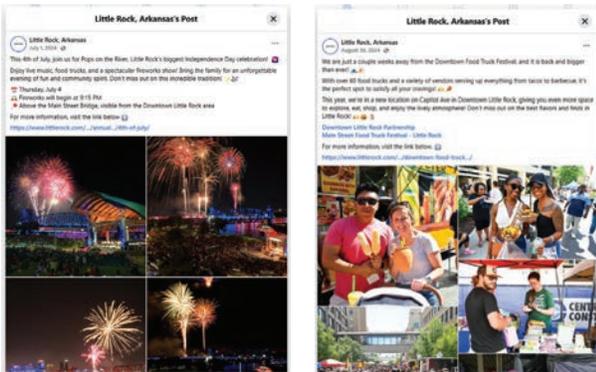
In December, the LRCVB partnered with Arkansas Tourism and attended the **2024 Travel South International Showcase**. The bureau met with more than 30 tour operators from around the world and promoted Little Rock as an exciting travel opportunity for their clients.

NATIONAL PAID DIGITAL MEDIA

Little Rock's 2024 national digital paid media strategy showcased a well-executed approach to reaching target audiences and driving measurable results. By leveraging a mix of platforms and optimizing for engagement, the campaign consistently outperformed industry benchmarks.

DIGITAL CAMPAIGNS

- Generated 19,172,576 impressions and 160,852 clicks, achieving an average click-through rate (CTR) of 0.76% and an average video completion rate (VCR) of 82%.
- Both metrics significantly outperformed industry averages (CTR: 0.08%, VCR: 70%).



PAID SOCIAL

- Delivered 11,824,223 impressions and 115,031 clicks across platforms, with standout performance on Meta:
 - Meta achieved a 3.50% CTR, far exceeding the industry benchmark of 0.90%.
 - Pinterest CTR was 0.92% (benchmark: 0.30%), and LinkedIn CTR was 0.25% (benchmark: 0.44%).

PAID SEARCH

- Garnered 96,747 impressions and 16,421 clicks, achieving an impressive CTR of 16.97% and a low average cost-per-click (CPC) of \$0.49, outperforming industry benchmarks (CTR: 4%, CPC: \$1.34).

This strong performance underscores the effectiveness of Little Rock's targeted, platform-specific strategies, delivering impactful visibility, and engagement while exceeding industry standards across key metrics.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

In 2024, Little Rock's public relations (PR) efforts played a vital role in amplifying the city's image, solidifying its reputation as a vibrant, must-visit destination, and highlighting its unique culture and history. The strategic initiatives and extensive media outreach led to extraordinary coverage, significant milestones, and widespread recognition, underscoring the importance of public relations in shaping and promoting the city's narrative.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Massive Media Impressions: The public relations team achieved an estimated 681 million impressions, showcasing the far-reaching visibility of their efforts.

Valuable Media Exposure: With an estimated ad value of \$2.88 million, the coverage demonstrated immense return on investment.

Broad Media Coverage: Secured 63 press hits, including high-profile features in renowned outlets like Time, Garden & Gun, Southern Living, TravelPulse, and Terrain Magazine.



BIG ON *Little Rock* FLAVOR.



To share your Little Rock experience,
tag us with **#BigOnLittleRock**
LITTLEROCK.COM



ALL EYES ON LITTLE ROCK

In its first full year, the new LittleRock.com achieved remarkable success, becoming a central tool in promoting Little Rock and engaging audiences on a national scale. The website demonstrated significant growth across all performance metrics, showcasing its effectiveness in connecting with visitors and encouraging deeper exploration of the destination. Through a combination of strategic marketing initiatives, impactful search engine optimization (SEO) efforts, and high-quality content, the site attracted a larger and more engaged audience than ever before.

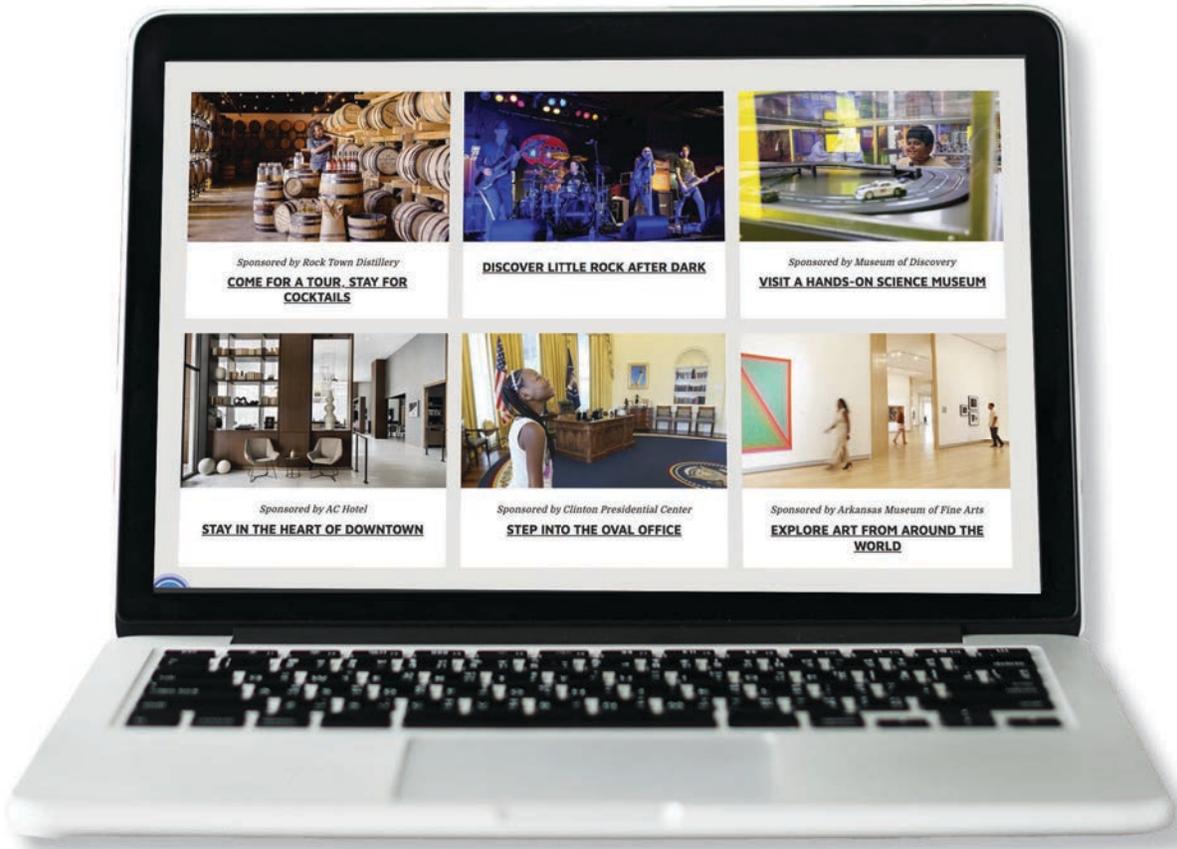
This success was further evidenced by stronger user interactions and higher retention rates, which highlight the site's ability to captivate its visitors and deliver meaningful, relevant experiences. By prioritizing both organic and paid strategies, LittleRock.com effectively broadened its reach and visibility while maintaining high standards of user engagement.

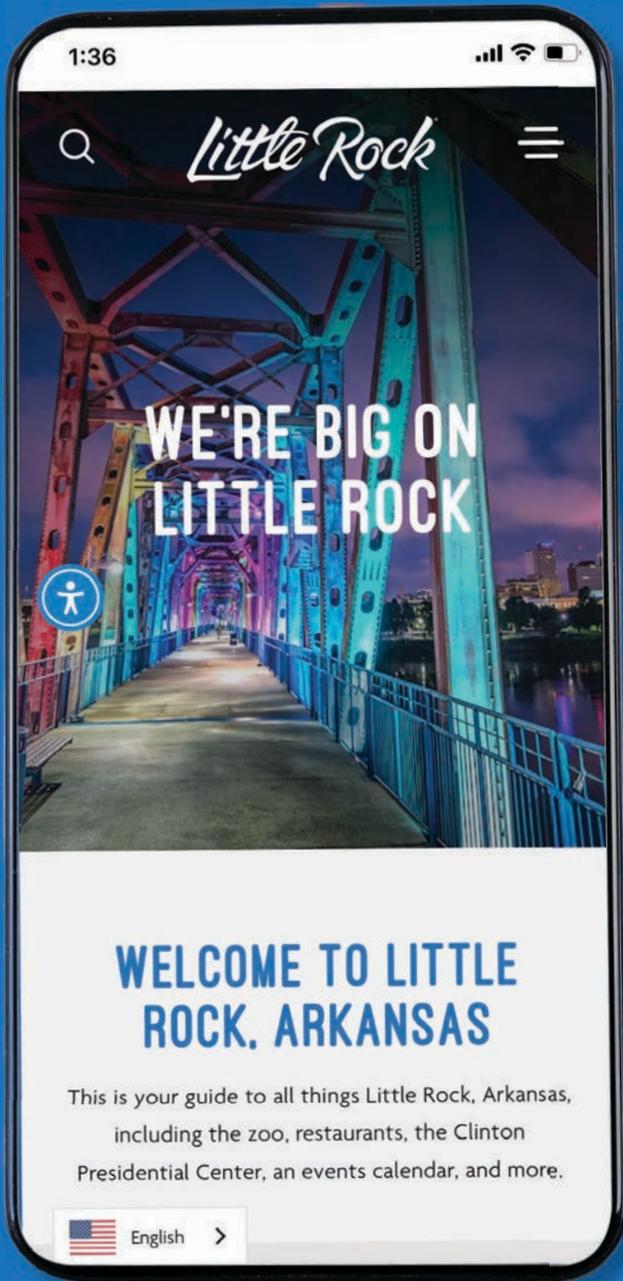
- Website Visits surged to 1,364,938, marking a remarkable 37% year-over-year (YOY) increase.
- Organic Traffic outpaced expectations with 887,899 visits, a 53% YOY growth, highlighting the success of SEO and content strategies.

- Total Users reached 1,065,035, up 41% YOY, with more visitors actively exploring the site.
- Page Views climbed to 2,732,157, a robust 39% YOY rise, showcasing enhanced user interaction.
- Average Engagement time per session improved by 8% YOY to 51 seconds, and engaged sessions grew to 833,557 (+4% YOY), signaling better content resonance.

The Engagement Rate rose to 61.07%, reflecting a 4% YOY improvement in audience retention.

In 2024, the **Destination Signals program** proved its impact by delivering over 2.1 million impressions to our partners, showcasing its ability to drive meaningful visibility and engagement. This program offers an unparalleled opportunity for local businesses and partners to amplify their presence on LittleRock.com, positioning themselves as essential contributors to our shared community narrative.





Little Rock.com

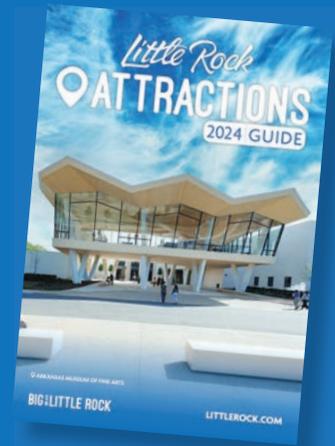
3,196
E-NEWSLETTER SIGNUPS



1,056
DIGITAL VACATION
PLANNING GUIDE
DOWNLOADS

3,672
VACATION PLANNING
GUIDE REQUEST
SUBMISSIONS

REQUEST YOURS!



TOP SESSIONS BY CITY

LITTLE ROCK	159,512
DALLAS	129,866
CHICAGO	56,853
NORTH LITTLE ROCK	19,668
MEMPHIS	18,046
KANSAS CITY	17,048
CONWAY	9,946
ATLANTA	8,730
NEW YORK	8,574
DENVER	7,908

SENT **109,823**
VISITORS TO OUR
PARTNERS' DIGITAL ACCOUNTS

198
REQUEST FOR
PROPOSAL (RFP)
SUBMISSIONS

ECLIPSING EXPECTATIONS

On Monday, April 8, Little Rock experienced more than two minutes of totality during the **Great American Eclipse**, a truly one-in-a-generation event.

The LRCVB acted as a clearinghouse of information related to the event, both for visitors and locals alike. With blog posts and helpful social media feeds, the LRCVB encouraged visitors to explore the city before and after the eclipse and offered tips and tricks to help make their Little Rock visit even more out-of-this-world.

Tourists flocked from around the world to experience the darkness, and Little Rock businesses met them with a fanfare of cosmic proportions. Many local restaurants and bars created eclipse-themed food and drink specials while many local attractions hosted eclipse-related programming to mark the occasion. Even after the

eclipse, many attractions reported increased visitation by tourists who decided to prolong their stays in Little Rock. Downtown's Museum of Discovery reported a more than **125% increase in attendance** compared with the same dates in 2023, noting visitors from **27 states in a single day**.

At **Riverfront Park's First Security Amphitheater**, the LRCVB organized a three-day lineup of musical acts to serve as an anchor event for festivities across the city.

At 1:51 PM, the moon began to overtake the sun and the entire city paused and looked up, finding itself bathed in the dim shadow of the eclipse. Two minutes later the moon moved, the skies began to brighten, and the LRCVB began to look ahead at the eclipse to pass over the city on **August 12, 2045**.



ECLIPSE CONCERT SERIES

FIRST SECURITY AMPITHEATER

RODNEY BLOCK & FRIENDS SATURDAY, APRIL 6 6 - 8 PM	WARD DAVIS SUNDAY, APRIL 7 7 - 9:30 PM	THE MACHINE PERFORMS PINK FLOYD MONDAY, APRIL 8 12:40 - 3 PM
--	---	---

TOTALITY BIG Little Rock 4.8.2024

FREE ADMISSION APRIL 6 - 8, 2024

Little Rock CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

LITTLEROCK.COM/ECLIPSE



HOME | ECLIPSE 2024

FEATURED ACTIVITIES | VIEW ALL SOLAR ECLIPSE EVENTS | ECLIPSE STORE | SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES | SUBMIT AN EVENT | WHERE TO WATCH

TOTALITY BIG Little Rock 4.8.2024

ECLIPSE 2024

Mark your calendar for the April 8, 2024, eclipse in Little Rock!

Once it's done, and save the date, Little Rock will be the place to be during what has been dubbed the Great North American Eclipse. To experience complete darkness, guests must be in the narrow path of totality, which will cut through the center of the Natural State from southwest to northeast. Little Rock is located within that narrow swath of totality.

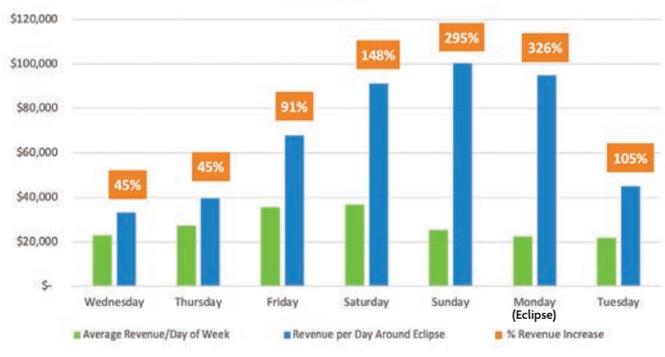
More details about the subscription surrounding with the eclipse will be released soon, but for now, make plans to be in Little Rock on April 8, 2024!

SOLAR ECLIPSE

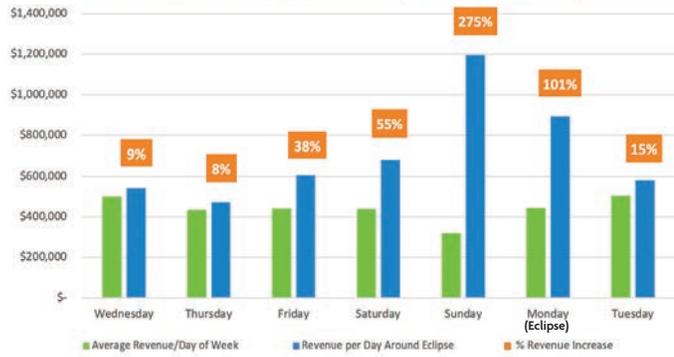
ON APRIL 8, 2024, A TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE WILL OCCUR IN LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS.

DATE	TIME	MIN	SEC
10	7	42	03

SHORT-TERM RENTAL REVENUE: 2024 DAY OF WEEK AVERAGE VS. DAY AROUND ECLIPSE



HOTEL REVENUE: 2024 DAY OF WEEK AVERAGE VS. DAY AROUND ECLIPSE



WHERE TO STAY
From world-class luxury to budget-friendly, Little Rock offers the ultimate best when it comes to staying in the lap of southern comfort.

EXPERIENCE LITTLE ROCK
Whether it's a day trip to Little Rock or you're here on a longer getaway, there is a wealth of things to do, and many of them are free...

FOOD & DRINK
Nothing defines a city quite like its food, and Little Rock requires some of southern cuisine, local restaurants, craft breweries, bars and cafes is what makes up the dining capital of Arkansas.

OUR SPONSORS & PARTNERS

FORTINET City Parks Parks & Recreation

EVENTS

Submit an Event

FUN FACT #1
The first total solar eclipse viewed from Little Rock again for 26 years (1978) during sunset on 4/8/2024.

Looking Up - Total Solar Eclipse April 8, 2024

OLD STATE HOUSE MUSEUM Little Rock

ESSE

MAKE A WEEKEND OF IT
Need the most of your visit to Little Rock? By spending your time and money around a carefully selected list of participating businesses, you'll have adventures and unforgettable experiences.

START PLANNING

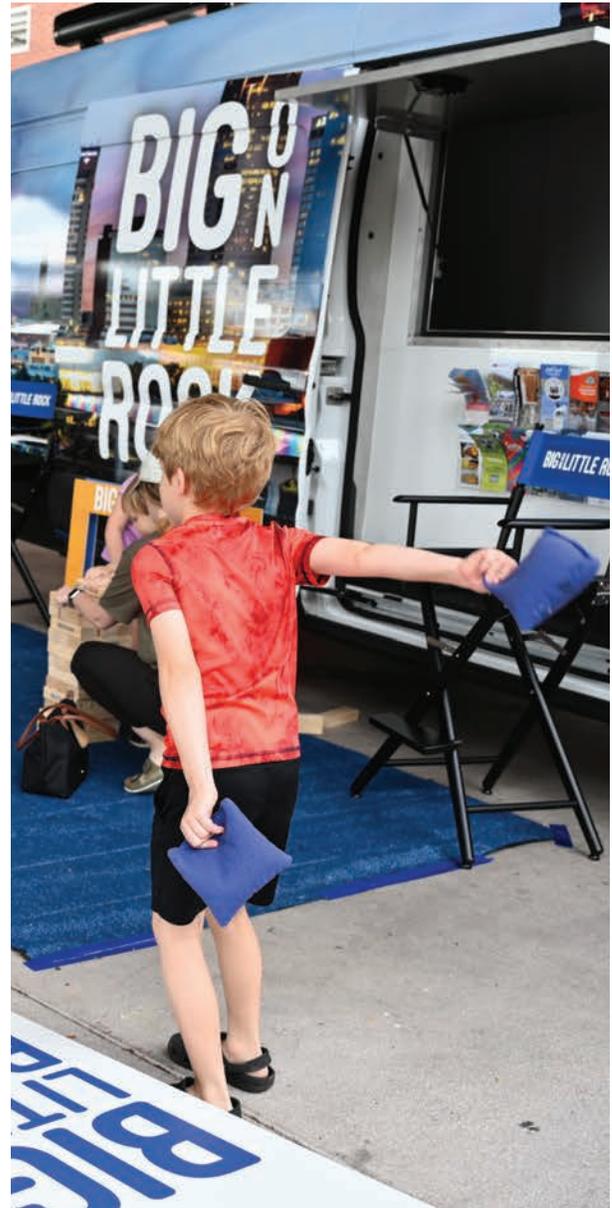
A LOOK AHEAD

2025 will be an exciting year for tourism in Little Rock.

The LRCVB has begun a multi-phase renovation of the **B. Finley Vinson Plaza** located in front of the DoubleTree Hotel by Hilton. The project aims to reimagine the public space with modernizations to its existing structures and deliver a more open concept to create an engaging, communal space for hosting visitors and residents. The plaza will boast fresh green space, public seating, and space for hosting live music and entertainment. The development aligns with the LRCVB's 10-year tourism master plan which outlines a strategic roadmap for growing Little Rock's economy through the tourism industry.

Research will play an even larger role in the LRCVB's work in 2025 as it embarks on both a **resident sentiment study** and

a **visitor profile study**, each designed to provide a deeper understanding of the city's evolving tourism landscape. These studies will offer valuable insights into how residents perceive the impact of tourism, as well as detailed data on visitor demographics, behaviors, and preferences. By analyzing these findings, LRCVB will be better equipped to develop strategies that enhance the visitor experience, foster community engagement, and ensure that tourism growth aligns with the needs and expectations of both visitors and those who call Little Rock home. The results will help shape future marketing efforts, infrastructure development, and partnership opportunities, ensuring a thriving and sustainable tourism industry for years to come.





BUSINESS PLAN

In 2023, the LRCVB released its Tourism Master Plan. This plan was – and still is – both a vision for and a roadmap to a thriving tourism industry that benefits all of Little Rock’s residents.

This 10-year plan guides all aspects of the LRCVB’s work by outlining seven strategic organizational goals. Each year the LRCVB publishes an official Business Plan with key objectives and strategies that bring the bureau closer to achieving each strategic goal. The accomplishments listed in this section reflect the progress achieved via the 2024 Business Plan in support of the Tourism Master Plan, and, though not comprehensive of all the success achieved by the LRCVB in 2024, they represent the steady progress made toward the fulfillment of the Tourism Master Plan’s ultimate vision for Little Rock.

GOAL 1

Identify a sustainable and equitable pathway for the growth of the local tourism industry that will positively impact Little Rock residents economically and elevate the destination to visitors.

Growth in Little Rock’s tourism economy has a direct positive impact on the quality of life that all residents enjoy. This idea is foundational to the LRCVB’s mission and guides the goals, objectives, and strategies in this document. After unveiling a Tourism Master Plan in 2023, this business plan serves as a roadmap for accomplishing the plan’s goals and objectives.



2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Hosted 363 events in LRCVB-managed facilities, welcoming more than 547,000 guests and a direct spend of \$44,260,043.
- Booked 213 future events with an estimated direct spend of \$50,856,319.
- Aggregated more than 40 million digital impressions for Little Rock digital media networks.
- Engaged a consulting firm to further a Sports Facilities Feasibility Study.
- Continued to be an active participant in the Downtown Master Plan Executive Steering Committee.
- Leveraged and budgeted LRCVB funds to take on several Tourism Master Plan-related projects.
- Implemented new budget module in procurement software to better optimize resource allocation.
- Established and implemented new investment policy to generate returns to support tourism needs.
- Purchased two new LED walls and several other audio-visual items for customer rental.
- Partnered with the City of Little Rock to reimagine the River Market Hall.
- Collaborated with the City of Little Rock, City of North Little Rock, Pulaski County, and North Little Rock Tourism to determine the future of the bridge lights.

GOAL 2

Utilize a broad-spectrum, multi-channel sales and marketing approach to position Little Rock as a leading destination for leisure and group travel.

Little Rock is a vibrant community, a great place to call home, and an attractive destination for leisure and group travel. Sharing that message with the world is at the core of everything we do. From digital footprints and public relations to sales pipelines and service retention strategies, everything the LRCVB does is to elevate the city’s brand as a hospitable and welcoming destination. When we’re successful in that mission, the entire city benefits and the economic impact of our industry ripples out across our community.



2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Evolved the “Big on Little Rock” campaign for both the local and visitor audiences.
- Deployed True Omni kiosks to enhance the visitor experience and increase visitor spending.
- Introduced and deployed the LRCVB’s mobile marketing vehicle (Pebbles), with both in-and-out-of-market activations, including a True Omni kiosk.
- Streamlined branding of all LRCVB assets and responsibilities.
- Created and introduced the “Little Rock BIG Advantage” campaign to the meetings and conventions audiences.
- Continued the marketing partnership program with local attractions and tourism-focused events to attract visitors to Little Rock.
- Utilized social media influencers to achieve key engagement and reach metrics among core audiences.
- Expanded the Zartico subscription to support strategic marketing decisions.

GOAL 3

Optimize the utilization of all LRCVB-managed facilities and identify potential new revenue sources that allow for maximized potential income.

The LRCVB's managed facilities – Statehouse Convention Center, Robinson Center, Cromwell Building, the River Market (including the Market Hall, First Security Amphitheater, and the pavilions), and multiple parking facilities – are a major asset and source of greater revenue development. Capitalizing on these assets' potential will allow the LRCVB to achieve a more stable financial position.



2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Created new Definite sales booking goals.
- Established schedule to refresh pricing bi-annually.
- Purchased state of the art robotic maintenance equipment to increase efficiency and maintain refreshed spaces.
- Updated monthly, quarterly, and annual reports based on stakeholder audiences.
- Purchased a suite of new technology upgrades across LRCVB-owned facilities.
- Researched and developed new audio-visual and information technology package offerings for groups to better leverage assets and generate higher return on investment on equipment purchases.
- Continued to prioritize Tourism Master Plan-related projects in the capital budget.
- Budgeted and executed capital projects to upgrade LRCVB managed facilities to ensure they stay competitive in the marketplace (Statehouse Convention Center restrooms, two new LED walls, atrium flooring, lighting and paint upgrades, Wally Allen air walls, information technology infrastructure refresh, etc.).
- Monitored and reported monthly on Statehouse Convention Center optimization progress.

GOAL 4

Refine a service-centric approach by building brand loyalty to elevate the customer experience encouraging repeat stays and positive word of mouth.

By transforming our customers into our advocates, the LRCVB can harness the power of repeat business and word of mouth marketing to position itself as an even more favorable destination for group and leisure travel.



2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Reenvisioned the pre-conference process, including site visits and pre-con meetings.
- Designed a comprehensive activation strategy for LRCVB's mobile marketing vehicle (Pebbles) that includes interactive experiences, giveaways, memorabilia, and other branded collateral.
- Launched the Little Rock Tourism Ambassador program and achieved 100% completion of the certification program for all LRCVB team members.
- Offered employee training to ensure up-to-date knowledge among the workforce, including CPR, first aid, and other relevant training.
- Prioritized Guidepost's security and technology recommendations (camera and door lock integration, multi-factor authentication, SASE Firewalls, Intune device management, vSOC, Windows Hello, cloud-based email filter, enhanced high-density Wi-Fi, phishing e-mail testing and training).
- Created a process for customized site visits.
- Successfully aligned the schedule of the downtown ambassadors with events in LRCVB-owned facilities.
- Hosted a year's worth of LRCVB-owned events and activations including The 2024 Great American Eclipse, adopt-a-street clean-up initiatives, 50th Anniversary of the Farmers Market, High School Tourism Day, Jazz in the Park, River Market Live!, The BIG Little Rock Holiday Parade, Sip, See & Savor: Celebrating Black History in Little Rock, River Market Entertainment District's Birthday Bash, Hispanic Heritage Celebration, and more.
- Implemented new in-facility wayfinding systems in accordance with new LRCVB branding.
- Researched potential locations for a new visitor experience center in the River Market Entertainment District.
- Launched the True Omni kiosks to enhance the visitor experience.
- Integrated camera systems with the City of Little Rock's Real Time Crime Center.
- Continued funding, monitoring compliance, and support of the Downtown Ambassador program in collaboration with the City of Little Rock and Downtown Little Rock Partnership.

GOAL 5

Use advocacy and inclusion to raise the community's awareness of the role tourism plays in the local economy and as a catalyst for local pride.

The LRCVB's success is everyone's success. When our residents feel seen and valued by our brand, we ensure that everyone feels seen, connected to, and invested in our success. We won't rest until everyone in Little Rock shares our Big on Little Rock spirit.

2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Strengthened the rapport with adjacent hotels by implementing a new group text system and conducting weekly meetings with hotel staff.
- Successfully pitched and garnered media coverage for three conventions and an announcement for a high-profile 2026 conference in partnership with the Little Rock Regional Chamber and Metro Little Rock Alliance.
- Secured an Arkansas Democrat-Gazette guest opinion editorial in honor of National Travel & Tourism Week that was bylined by LRCVB President & CEO, Gina Gemberling.
- Developed and executed a media strategy for both the roll-out and the naming of the LRCVB's first-ever mobile marketing vehicle (Pebbles).
- Hosted a mobile marketing vehicle (Pebbles) launch event for community and local media.
- Created a new partnership with Academies of Central Arkansas to strengthen awareness of the tourism industry as a career path.
- Partnered with the Arkansas Hospitality Association (AHA) and with Academies of Central Arkansas to present the Little Rock Tourism Ambassador Program at the AHA's regional meeting.
- Supported the Arkansas Foodbank to develop a Central Little Rock Restaurant Week campaign with outreach to restaurants and promotional marketing.
- Successfully hosted a year of owned events across the community and industry including: The 2024 Great American Eclipse, adopt-a-street clean-up initiatives, 50th Anniversary of the Farmers Market, High School Tourism Day, Jazz in the Park, River Market Live!, The BIG Little Rock Holiday Parade, Sip, See & Savor: Celebrating Black History in Little Rock, River Market Entertainment District's Birthday Bash, Hispanic Heritage Celebration, and more.
- Served as the central hub for all information related to the 2024 Eclipse, with LRCVB's website serving as a clearinghouse for attractions and local businesses to share their events and activities.
- Participated in several job fairs and awareness events.
- Continued internship and youth summer work programs exposing students to hospitality career opportunities.
- Partnered with Global Ties Arkansas to host a professional fellow as part of the Young Transatlantic Innovation Leaders Initiative Program (YTILI).

GOAL 6

Utilize current research methodologies as well as new data tools to devise comprehensive organizational key performance indicators and create a schedule for departmental benchmarking and strategic recalibrations.

Informed decisions are the best decisions, and that's why we equip ourselves with the best data and data analysis tools possible. Aligning our work to current industry-standard best practices and benchmarks ensures that we're always acting in the best interest of our goals and Little Rock at large.

2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Launched a Visitor Profile Study to gain an understanding of Little Rock's visitor demographics, behaviors, and motivations to help guide future development priorities.
- Conducted a Sports Facilities Feasibility Study to provide critical insights into infrastructure needs and economic impacts, helping to strategically position Little Rock to capitalize on the growing sports tourism industry.
- Completed a Tourism Impact Study to provide the economic implications of tourism in Little Rock.
- Continued to conduct market research on destination standards and best practices for accessibility.

GOAL 7

Use a strong data-driven approach to create an internal culture that puts social inclusion initiatives at the forefront while dismantling internal barriers to interdepartmental communications and ensuring employee retention.

For us to be most successful, the principles of social inclusion have to be centered in our work, our culture, and our outcomes. Little Rock's diversity is one of its strongest assets, and we must not only lean into that diversity but reflect it both internally and outwardly to the world.

2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Hosted an annual social inclusion training.
- Ensured supervisory roles had adequate training on good management practices.
- Successfully participated in the City of Little Rock's Summer Youth program.
- Developed customer service training centered around the organization's core values.
- Achieved 100% completion of the Little Rock Tourism Ambassador Program by all LRCVB team members.
- Researched best practices in accessibility in the tourism industry.
- Implemented KPI tracking of spend with disadvantaged vendors.



Little Rock[®]

CONVENTION &
VISITORS BUREAU

LittleRock.com

(501) 376-4781 | info@LittleRock.com



[@LittleRockCVB](https://www.instagram.com/LittleRockCVB)