

**Council of the District of Columbia**  
**COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
**PERFORMANCE OVERSIGHT HEARING**  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004

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January 19, 2021

Mr. Elliott Ferguson  
President & CEO  
Destination DC  
901 7<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Mr. Ferguson:

The Committee on Business and Economic Development (“Committee”) will hold performance oversight hearings on agencies under its purview between February 8, 2021, and March 10, 2021. Destination DC’s (“DDC”) hearing will be held on **Monday, February 8, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. via a virtual platform**. In addition to your attendance at the hearing, I would like to request that the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Destination DC attend as well, and I would also welcome any other board members to attend. In preparation for your hearing, the Committee is sending the following questions for your response.

Please submit your responses by no later than **Noon Monday, February 1, 2021**, in Word or Excel format, as applicable, and minimize the use of attachments. If you need to discuss any of the questions, please contact Alicia DiFazio, Committee Director, at [adifazio@dccouncil.us](mailto:adifazio@dccouncil.us) or (202) 374-4221.

**General Questions**

- 1. Please provide a list of DDC’s current board members and executive board. For each member, please provide the following:**

This information is provided in a separate worksheet (tab Q1).

- a. Name;
- b. Seat type;
- c. Whether the member is a District resident and if so, the Ward they live in;
- d. Whether the member is also a member of the executive board;
- e. When the member’s term started and expires;
- f. Who the member replaced in the event they are a recent appointee; and
- g. Attendance record for calendar year 2020 and 2021, to date.

- 2. What, if any, are the consequences for board and/or executive members who do not attend their respective meetings or have an overall poor attendance record?**

This information is provided in a separate worksheet (tab Q2).

- 3. Please provide the following information for all contracts entered into by DDC during fiscal years 2020 and 2021, to date:**

This information is provided in a separate worksheet (tab Q3).

- a. Name of Vendor;
- b. Indicate whether the vendor is a Certified Business Enterprise;
- c. Indicate whether the vendor is a District-based business;
- d. Purpose of the contract, including consulting purposes;
- e. Agency employee responsible for monitoring the contract;
- f. Contract term;
- g. Contract cost, including budgeted amount and actual spent;
- h. Funding source; and
- i. Whether the contract was competitively bid.

- 4. Please provide a list of the board's meeting dates, times, and locations for fiscal years 2020 and 2021.**

This information is provided in a separate worksheet (tab Q4).

- 5. Please provide the following information regarding DDC's members and signature partners for fiscal years 2020 and 2021, to date, and note any variations from this time last year:**

This information is provided in a separate worksheet (tab Q5 a-b, c, and d).

- a. Name of member and signature partner;
- b. Member location (i.e. DC, Maryland, etc.);
- c. Member events calendar for fiscal years 2020 and 2021; and
- d. Which, if any, event location has closed or no longer exists.

Please see enclosed lists:

- 1,008 member accounts as of Jan. 25, 2021.
  - 743 are DC-based businesses, including the monuments, memorials and federal museums.
  - 65 of members are "Free Trial" members
    - 40 of these are DC-based businesses.
- 93 organizations canceled membership in the 2020 calendar year.

- At least 37 of those businesses have closed permanently.

**6. Please provide a current DDC organizational chart and current Schedule A, or its equivalent, which identifies all employees by name, title/position, position status, program/division, salary, and fringe benefits. This submission should also include:**

This information is provided in a separate worksheet (tab Q6) and attachment #1 and #2.

- a. The date the employee began in the position;
- b. The number of vacant, frozen, or furloughed positions; and
- c. An explanation of any organizational changes made during the previous year.

*Please list this information by program and activity.*

- DDC made major changes in FY2020 due to budget. Of 92 active positions in March 2020, over 50 positions were furloughed for a period during the fiscal year.
- In July 2020, DDC began a gradual return to full-time work. As of January 2021, 65 positions are active with 13 furloughed full-time employees and 14 vacant positions.
- In addition, all Redcoat part-time staff remain furloughed based on demand of work. Redcoat positions support registration services, convention services and administrative staff members.

**7. How many of DDC's employees (full and part-time) are District residents?**

Out of 214 employees, 94 employees live in DC, or 44%.

**8. Please provide the following and be sure to note any variations from this time last year:**

This information is provided in a separate worksheet (tab Q8).

- a. A list of all vehicles (year, make, model) owned, leased, or otherwise used by the organization and to whom the vehicle is assigned.
  - i. Please include the lease amount(s), if applicable, and date the lease(s) expires;
- b. A list of employee bonuses or special award pay granted in fiscal years 2020 and 2021, to date;
- c. A list of travel expenses by employee; and

- d. A list of total overtime and worker's compensation payments paid in fiscal years 2020 and 2021, to date.

**9. According to Attachment 4 from last year's Performance Oversight responses entitled, "Destination DC FY19 Travel Expenses by Department," the organization reported a total of \$1,044,751 in travel expenses for staff. For this information, please provide the following:**

This information is provided in a separate worksheet (tab Q9).

- a. The nature of travel;
- b. The return of investment ("ROI") DDC realized as a direct result;
- c. Specific examples of new and/or repeat business bookings as a direct result of staff attendance at industry conferences, tradeshow, and sales and media missions; and
- d. Where the industry conferences, tradeshow, and sales and media missions occurred.

**10. Please provide DDC's fiscal years 2020 and 2021 travel expenses by department and discuss how these expenses vary from fiscal year 2019. For this information, please provide the following:**

This information is provided in a separate worksheet (tab Q10-1 and Q10-2).

- a. The nature of travel;
- b. The return of investment ("ROI") DDC realized as a direct result;
- c. Specific examples of new and/or repeat business bookings as a direct result of staff attendance at industry conferences, tradeshow, and sales and media missions; and
- d. Where the industry conferences, tradeshow, and sales and media missions occurred.

**11. Please provide budget information showing your agency's approved budget and actual spending, by division, for fiscal years 2020 and 2021, to date. How has this changed from fiscal year 2019? Please describe any variance between fiscal year appropriations and actual expenditures.**

This information is provided in a separate worksheet (tab Q11-1 and Q11-2).

**12. Please describe in detail DDC's funding sources by providing a complete budget and plan (including specific projects) for DDC's revenue stream(s), including amount received in fiscal years 2019, 2020 and 2021, to date, and**

**amount projected for the remainder of the year. In particular, please also provide the following:**

This information is provided in a separate worksheet (tab Q12).

- a. A discussion of any change in partnerships, donations, and revenue when compared to this time last year; and
- b. A discussion of the status of DDC's routine seasonal partnerships.

Routine seasonal partners that produce public programming, such as Enchant Christmas, the Washington Nationals and the National Cherry Blossom Festival, have obviously been very compromised.

DDC continues to engage and support these partners with exposure online, data resources and by sharing updates and plans. We anticipate these important celebrations and partnerships will resume when it is safe to do so.

**13. According to Attachment 4 (Tab Q8) from last year's Performance Oversight responses entitled, "Statement of Financial Activities (Profit & Loss) Year to Date As of September 30, 2019 (Final)", DDC reported a 30 percent decline in sponsorship revenue. Please discuss the reason for that loss and whether DDC has experienced similar losses for fiscal years 2020 and 2021.**

In 2019, DDC lost American Express as a signature partner when they withdrew all destination marketing support from all cities.

We have seen a decline in cash sponsorship in 2020, and are anticipating the same for 2021. No cash sponsors have been able to renew their partnerships. We are actively stewarding these relationships and are supporting each other through in-kind trade agreements.

DDC experienced other sponsorship losses from Big Bus and Madame Tussauds due to the pandemic.

**14. Please provide a breakdown of business and leisure visits (actual or anticipated) for 2020 and 2021, and any information regarding group visits (business or pleasure, if available). For that information, please also discuss the following:**

- a. DDC's top overseas and domestic visitor markets;
- b. The specific decrease in visitor count and visitor spending; and
- c. The overall impact meetings and conventions had on the city's and DDC's revenues in fiscal years 2020 and 2021, to date, when compared to fiscal year 2019.

- The most recent year for which DDC has visitor data is calendar year 2019. Washington, DC welcomed 24.6 million visitors (domestic and overseas) in 2019. Visitation was up 3.4% over 2018, when DC welcomed 23.8 million visitors. DDC does not have a breakdown of the number of group versus individual tourists, but we can share some insight into business and leisure visitors.
- In 2019, business visitors made up 37% of our total domestic visitation, while leisure made up 63%. We do not have projections on the breakdown of business vs. leisure visitors for calendar years 2020 or 2021 currently. Based on industry research, we can estimate that the share of visitors through the U.S. traveling for leisure has increased compared to the share of business travelers, as conventions have been canceled and many companies are not allowing business travel during this time out of concern about liability. However, the precautions taken by the District government to discourage the spread of COVID-19 likely led to fewer leisure visitors to choose to visit Washington, DC in 2020 compared to other destinations. Additionally, the presence of the federal government meant that that District retained small amounts of essential business travel.

Washington, DC's top overseas visitor markets in 2019 were:

1. China
2. UK
3. India
4. Germany
5. South Korea
6. France
7. Australia
8. Italy
9. Brazil
10. Spain

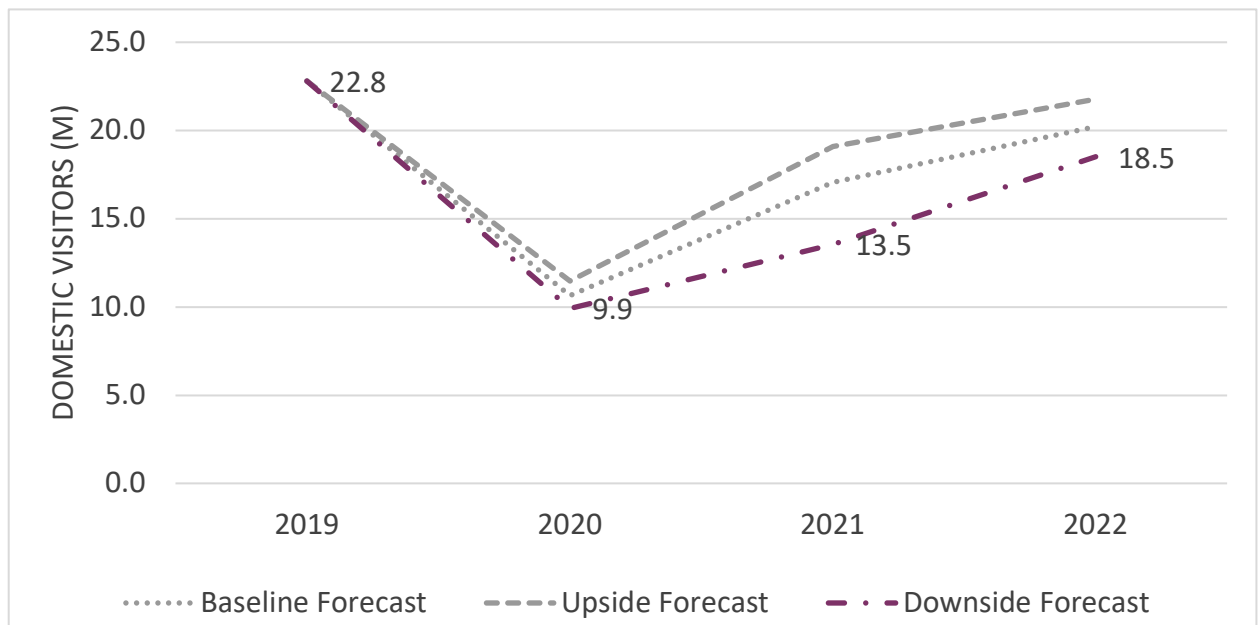
Washington, DC's top domestic visitor markets in 2019 were:

1. New York, NY
2. Boston, MA
3. Philadelphia, PA
4. Los Angeles, CA
5. San Francisco, CA
6. Chicago, IL
7. Seattle, WA
8. Atlanta, GA
9. Virginia Beach, VA
10. Dallas, TX

- As travel recovers, industry research suggests that leisure travel will begin to return before business travel. Transient travel (those traveling in a small groups that would require fewer than 10 hotel rooms per night) will begin to recover before group travel (conventions, meetings, tour groups and others who require

10 or more hotel rooms per night). Domestic travel will begin to recover before international travel, and within domestic, it will begin with local and regional visitors who can drive to the destination before extending to those who will need to fly. Therefore, we expect that our 2020 markets were much closer to the city than we've seen in the past. We expect to see this as the recovery begins, and so we plan to adjust our marketing to target these closer, road-trip visitors until visitation patterns return to normal, likely some time in 2022.

- While we do not have final visitation data for 2020, we can share some estimates from Tourism Economics, a well-respected industry research partner. In 2020, domestic visitation to the District was estimated to be down 57% over 2019. This estimate is based on research commissioned in summer 2020, which broke out the forecast into the baseline, upside and downside scenarios. Based on hotel revenue returns in the last months of 2020, DDC is currently employing the downside forecast scenario. In 2021, the forecast estimates that the District will likely see 14 million domestic visitors, down 41% from 2019.



- Tourism Economics worked with the U.S. Travel Association to provide estimated visitor spending losses by state, including the District of Columbia. In 2020, TE estimated that the District lost 59% in visitor spending compared to 2019, equating a loss of \$4.8 billion.
- Domestic visitation is calculated by DK Shifflet. DKS has a panel of more than 50,000 Americans, of whom they ask a quarterly survey about their travel in the last three months (destination, reason, length, spending, etc.). DKS then uses the data to determine the number of visitors who come to DC each year, as well as the breakdown between business and leisure travel. Overseas travelers are calculated by Travel Market Insights, which uses data from the Survey of

International Air Travelers, conducted by the U.S. Department of Commerce. The survey is distributed to overseas residents (which does not include residents of Canada or Mexico) as they leave on the U.S. on their return flight home, and asks them about their current trip (destination, reason, length, spending, etc.). From this data, they are able to calculate the number of visitors who came to the U.S. from overseas, regardless of whether they flew into local airports. Visitation from Canada is calculated by XBorder Canada, which conducts a survey of Canadians who have recently visited the U.S. and asks about their trip (destination, reason, length, spending, etc.). Visitation data from Mexico is not available.

- In calendar year 2020, DDC actualized the following citywide and miniwide meeting and convention business. Please note, this does not include individual hotel bookings or anything under 1,350 peak room nights in the convention center.

Citywide:

- 4 groups
- 55,769 total room nights
- \$64,877,528 estimated economic impact

Miniwide:

- 3 groups
- 17,182 total room nights
- \$16,637,925 estimated economic impact

- Remaining business to actualize in calendar year 2021 includes the following citywide and miniwide meeting and convention business. Please note, these numbers do not include individual hotel bookings or anything under 1,350 peak room nights in the convention center. In addition, it does not consider any reduction in attendees or room nights. Our meeting planner community is working diligently to understand where their attendee confidence may be, but much of that is still to be determined.

Citywides:

- 7 groups
- 122,175 total estimated room nights
- \$97,246,854 estimated economic impact

Miniwides:

- 1 group
- 8,525 total estimated room nights
- \$10,648,341 estimated economic impact

- By comparison, we benefited from the following impact from calendar year 2019



Citywides:

- 22 groups
- 370,427 total room nights
- \$345,275,864 estimated economic impact

Miniwides:

- 11 groups
- 56,667 total room nights
- \$55,759,060 in estimated economic impact

TOURISM ROOM NIGHT NUMBERS			
2019 Actual	2020 Goal	2020 Actual	2021 Goal
509,190	512,129	18,261	*64,000

- Goals will be adjusted on a quarterly bases depending on COVID-19 vs. travel opportunities.
- Goals include international FIT, domestic group and sporting events.

**TOP OVERSEAS MARKETS:**

- The following represents the top overseas markets to Washington, DC. These markets represent 9% of visitation and 27% of spending in the District.
- DDC contracts offices in the key markets below by country. These offices assist with marketing, sales and communications efforts.
- In addition to the offices, Washington, DC has a cooperative marketing partnership with the states of Maryland and Virginia to promote travel between the three destinations to overseas visitors, called Capital Region USA (CRUSA). The partnership provides specific representation for public relations, sales and marketing efforts in the countries as noted below.
- Countries below are listed in order of highest visitation:

**COUNTRY**

1. China
2. UK
3. India
4. Germany
5. Brazil
6. Australia
7. France
8. Italy
9. S. Korea
10. Spain

**REPRESENTATION**

- DDC, CRUSA  
DDC, CRUSA  
DDC  
CRUSA  
N/A – project basis only  
DDC  
CRUSA  
N/A  
N/A  
N/A

## **DECREASE IN VISITATION/SPEND**

The following is a situational analysis of the challenges the destination experienced in 2020 that affected the dramatic halt of the travel industry in Washington, DC. These challenges continue in 2021.

- Air travel worldwide is suspended with a slow recovery. Domestic air travel is slowly returning and will come before international air, which is currently suspended with a target return date in Q3 of 2021.
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) restricted travel from all Asia/Middle East/EU countries/Canada/Mexico, with a projected gradual restart in spring 2021.
- DC/U.S.: Travel bans and mandatory COVID-19 testing require a negative test prior to boarding all international flights for visitors coming from outlined countries.
- DC had 39 states on the high-risk list until October 2020, then moved to a negative testing requirement prior to arrival.
- Resurgence of the virus across fall 2020 into winter 2021
- Inconsistent health and safety requirements from city/state/U.S./country perspective
- Schools suspended, leading to cancelling or postponing all school trips and group tours through winter 2021
- Mass gathering restrictions for in-person meetings, conventions, groups tours and sporting events
- Professional sports implemented shortened seasons with no spectators
- Sponsorship reductions pressuring the smaller/unique events that rely on them for execution
- Racial injustice
- Recession affecting domestic and U.S.-based companies, specific to hotels and airlines
- Political and social instability, trade wars, inflammatory rhetoric including the “China virus”
- U.S. elections
- U.S. Capitol insurrection
- Barriers to traveler confidence

### **Domestic Group Tour:**

- Pre-COVID-19 bookings to Washington, DC showed the strongest student group tour season for many of our customers. However, all 2020 group tour programs were canceled with no future bookings on the 2020 calendar.
- 2021
  - Q1 – full cancellations of museums due to museums and restaurants closing
  - Q2 – tour operators wanted to return on a limited basis, depending

- on the museum's safety mechanisms and capacity restrictions
- Q3/Q4 – revised group tour itineraries to reflect more walking and outdoor programming as DC can be successful with a hybrid version of previous curriculum programming.

- **Sports:**

- Sporting events are the greatest opportunity to return to the city faster than other types of programming. This is due predominately to the outdoor opportunities that DC hosts, as well as larger venues that can support the capacity restrictions and bring spectators in through virtual platforms.
- All 2020 sporting events were canceled for the remainder of the calendar year, with the exception a few smaller events that could meet the DC phase requirements.
- 2021
  - Q1 – all sporting events canceled
  - Q2 – currently have the return of a few sporting events that meet the current safety requirements and are supported through virtual streaming opportunities.

**15. What are the business and leisure visit projections for the remainder of fiscal year 2021 and for fiscal year 2022? In your responses, please discuss the following:**

- a. What measurements are used to track each type of visit;
  - b. How the numbers for fiscal years 2020, 2021 and 2022 compare to DDC's earlier projections; and
  - c. The reason for (and impact of) any variances in detail.
- In calendar year 2019, business visitors made up 37% of our total domestic visitation, while leisure made up 63%. We do not have projections on the breakdown of business vs. leisure visitors for calendar years 2020 or 2021 currently. Based on industry research, we can estimate that the share of visitors through the U.S. traveling for leisure has increased compared to the share of business travelers, as conventions have been canceled and many companies are not allowing business travel during this time out of concern about liability. However, the precautions taken by the District government to discourage the spread of COVID-19 likely led to fewer leisure visitors to choose to visit Washington, DC in calendar year 2020 compared to other destinations.
  - Additionally, the presence of the federal government meant that the District retained small amounts of essential business travel.
  - Domestic visitation is calculated by DK Shifflet. DKS has a panel of more than 50,000 Americans, of whom they ask a quarterly survey about their travel in the last

three months (destination, reason, length, spending, etc.). DKS then uses that data to determine the number of visitors who come to DC each year, as well as the breakdown between business and leisure travel. Overseas travelers are calculated by Travel Market Insights, which uses data from the Survey of International Air Travelers, conducted by the U.S. Department of Commerce. The survey is distributed to overseas residents (which does not include residents of Canada or Mexico) as they leave on the U.S. on their return flight home, and asks them about their current trip (destination, reason, length, spending, etc.). From this data they are able to calculate the number of visitors who came to the U.S. from overseas, regardless of whether they flew into local airports. Visitation from Canada is calculated by XBorder Canada, who conduct a survey of Canadians who have recently visited the U.S. and ask about their trip (destination, reason, length, spending, etc.). Visitation data from Mexico is not available.

- IHS Markit has historically forecasted DC's annual visitation. The last projection for total visitors for calendar year 2019 (received in August 2019) was 24.7 million. The actual total visitation for 2019 was 24.6 million, so we received 0.1 million fewer visitors than the projection. In this same data, the forecast for 2020 was 25.3 million total visitors, and for 2021, 26.2 million total visitors. At this point, DDC estimates that 2020 visitation was down at least 60% compared to the previous estimate, and that 2021 will be down 50% compared to the estimate.
- The decline in visitation in 2020-2022 compared to 2019 (and earlier projections for this year) comes primarily from COVID-19 and the resulting economic crisis. Full recovery will require (in roughly this order): the end of the health crisis, the recovery of the U.S. economy, the reopening of borders and the return of traveler confidence in their own safety while away from home.
- Currently projected to actualize in calendar year 2022 are the following citywide and miniwide meeting and convention business. Please note, this does not include individual hotel bookings or anything under 1,350 peak room nights in the convention center. In addition, it does not consider any reduction in attendees or room nights. Our meeting planner community is working diligently to understand where its attendee confidence may be but much of that is still to be determined.

**Citywides:**

- 22 groups
- 422,676 total estimated room nights
- \$382,526,340 estimated economic impact

**Miniwides:**

- 6 groups
- 38,898 total estimated room nights
- \$29,340,150 estimated economic impact

	Projected Count	Actualized Count	Projected Total Room Nights	Actualized Total Room Nights	Projected Economic Impact	Actualized Economic Impact
2020 Citywide	22	4	488,596	55,769	\$451,558,284	\$64,877,528
2020 Miniwide	14	3	92,205	17,182	\$101,077,152	\$16,637,925
2021 Citywide	24	7 (to date)	456,867		\$97,246,854	
2021 Miniwide	4	1 (to date)	29,125		\$10,648,341	
2022 Citywide	22		422,676		\$382,526,340	
2022 Miniwide	6		38,898		\$29,340,150	

#### Group Tour:

- 2021
  - Q1 – full cancellations with museums and restaurants closed.
  - Q2 – tour operators want to return on a very limited basis, depending on museum capacity.
  - Q3/Q4 – revising group tour itineraries to reflect more walking and outdoor programming with an emphasis on DC facilitating a successful hybrid version of their programming. There is demand from schools to return to optional group tours.
- 2022
  - Looking for a strong recovery, but it will be contingent on DC's reopening status.

#### Sports:

- As mentioned, sporting events show the greatest opportunity to return in 2021 and 2022. DC's sporting event community is working to understand how events will be executed, depending on its characteristics. Recent bookings estimate the following number of events:

2021	Sporting Events	Total Room Nights
	12	39,743

2022	Sporting Events	Total Room Nights
	10	53,084

## Marketing & Communications

- DDC halted advertising in mid-March, however, in previous years we've used advertising as a means to track demographic and geographic location of the potential visitors we've targeted through paid media. This is accomplished through highly targeted media placements that follow the potential visitors from the first ad served, all the way through to their booking a trip to the District. We use this data to consistently refine and evolve our advertising campaigns to optimize performance.
- One of the ways we're tracking growth and recovery on washington.org in FY2021 is by analyzing the unique visits to the site month over month. In April 2020, washington.org reached a low point of 221,792 unique visitors to the website due to travel restrictions and the city's shutdown, which compares to 1,049,086 unique visitors in April 2019, or an 88.9% decrease compared to a usual travel year. As outdoor activities picked up in May and due to the Phase One reopening on May 29, users to the site increased each month until November, after a rise in COVID-19 cases and as Phase Two adjustments were enacted on Nov. 25. By December, the upward trend in unique visitors returned, as 489,405 unique visitors came to the website that month. For the remainder of FY2021, DDC anticipates 3% growth in unique visitors each month, ending in 6.4 million unique visitors to the site in total. This figure represents a 38.5% decrease in unique visitors to the site compared to the last full year of usual travel, FY2019, which generated 10.4 million unique visitors.

**16. Discuss your research that explores the types of people most likely to travel to DC and the associated reasons. In your response, please discuss the following:**

- a. Who the visitors are (by demographic group or persona);**
  - b. Why they travel to DC; and**
  - c. How DDC has incorporated that research into its strategic planning.**
- During the first quarter of 2020, DDC utilized proprietary data collected from visitor profile research to identify the individuals most likely to travel to the District. Profiles were identified as:
    - Primary (Tier One):
      - **Eclectic Cultural Travelers:** Travelers looking to experience the essence of a destination through arts and culture.
      - **Family Travelers:** Travelers seeking educational and fun experiences for the whole family.
    - Primary (Tier Two):
      - **The Cool Crowd:** Travelers to whom others look for ideas and advice, and who are looking for trendy destinations with social media "buzz."
      - **African American History Buffs:** Travelers of any background looking for destinations that celebrate the African American experience.
      - **Political Junkies:** Travelers who are interested in destinations with political significance and where history is made. [Note: not partisan]

- **Sports Fanatics:** Travelers who are excited about a destination with world-class sports.
- Niche/Opportunity:
  - **LGBTQ+ Travelers:** Travelers who identify as LGBTQ+ and for whom an LGBTQ+-friendly destination is extremely important.
  - **Foodies:** Travelers who are looking for a unique and diverse food scene with notable restaurants and celebrity chefs.
- Once COVID-19 hit, DDC shifted its potential visitor set to include data that considered the effects the pandemic would have on travel planning. Using data collected by Destination Analysts, a research company in the tourism and destination marketing industry, DDC was able to identify new consideration sets to influence visitation. These are:

#### **During Phase One Opening:**

- **Local Market – Individuals in the DMV area**  
Invite these potential visitors to safely explore the District. While they may not be able to go away for the weekend, Washington, DC has so much to offer locals to create a staycation in their own backyard.

#### **During Phase Two Opening:**

- **Drive Market – Individuals within a 4-hour drive of DC**  
Showcase the central location of Washington, DC on the East Coast, highlighting it as an easy drive destination for millions. Identify safe activities and speak to consumer comfort levels throughout advertising creative.
- **National Market – Markets Vary**  
Utilizing paid media to reach individuals outside of the local or drive markets, but who are showing an interest in traveling to the District.
- **Sporting Events:** Group encompasses athletes, spectators, fans and the local community
  - Travel Reasons: Attending a sporting event, volunteering for an event or the organizer/team
- **Student/Senior groups:** Group encompasses domestic and international student travel as well as the domestic/international Boomer travel
  - Travel Reasons: Educational travel for all student groups. Type of tour is based on the curriculum of the school. For the Boomer or senior travel, the focus is more cultural, arts and entertainment.
- **International FIT:** Demographic includes all individual, leisure travelers coming from an overseas market. Note the previously shared (Question 14) top 10 overseas markets.
  - Travel Reasons: purely leisure travelers coming to the United States to explore the diversity of the country. Visitors from each

country travel for different reasons, however, the District offers something for everyone including culture, nightlife, history and dining. In addition, the complement of our proximity to New York is a bonus, as many international travelers visit 2-3 cities during their trip.

- DDC uses data from multiple sources to direct spending on international promotions, including Travel Market Insights, VisaVue Travel and Brand USA. They provide valuable insight on visitor volume, spending and behavior. Data on booking patterns by country help to identify how and where to promote visitation to Washington, DC.

**17. How have the results of this analysis changed, if at all, between fiscal years 2019, 2020, and 2021? For this response, please also discuss the following:**

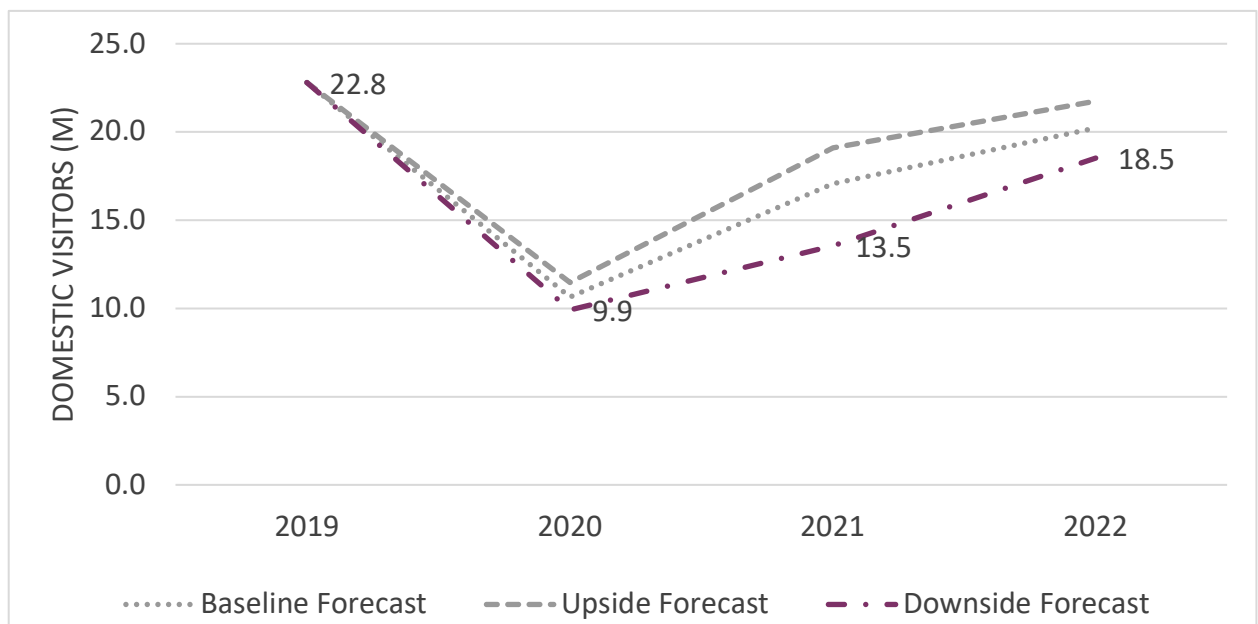
- a. Which of the eight personas discussed in last year's performance oversight responses have been most and least impacted by the pandemic;**
  - b. What lessons DDC learned; and**
  - c. How DDC plans to adapt or pivot its business model and marketing approach.**
- **Most impacted:**
    - **Sports Fanatics:** With no in-person sporting events to attend since March, there were very small and few opportunities for this group to travel for sports.
    - **Families:** With safety top of mind for parents, nearly 75% of families said they would likely wait to take a family vacation until kids are vaccinated.
    - **Eclectic Cultural Travelers:** Many cultural institutes including theater, music venues, museums and art galleries were forced to closed at some point during the pandemic.
    - **Foodies:** Limited capacity and options at local restaurants, as well as the increased risk of dining indoors, prevented this group from booking travel.
  - **Least Impacted:**
    - **African-American History Buffs:** Outdoor monuments and memorials were still open, as well as indoor options, including the National Museum of African American History and Culture, were open at some point during the pandemic.
    - **Political Junkies:** Given the increased rhetoric surrounding the election and inauguration, Washington, DC is still an attractive option for travel.
    - **The Cool Crowd:** This group tends to be younger and open to more risk, including with travel.
    - **LGBTQ Travelers:** No specific impediments to this group's travel decisions.
  - DDC has utilized resources from partners and industry experts to expand our access to available and timely research. We've added consumer sentiment surveys to our data consideration sets, which account for changes occurring throughout the pandemic. DDC is now not only using our personas to make marketing decisions, but also data regarding how consumers feel about travel and other activities.



- Specifics on our adapted plans for 2020 and 2021 are outlined in Question 25. Virtual assets have become our most important tool for inspiration, education and relationship building. We have shifted strategy from in-person, travel trade efforts to a more creative, virtual platform to engage customers through sales missions, familiarization tours, destination training programs and one-on-one appointments. These efforts will continue into 2021 when travel will resume. In addition, the team has shifted the marketing focus to be more PR and communications driven through storytelling and social media engagement.

**18. How many visitors came to DC in fiscal years 2019, 2020, and 2021? What is the specific breakdown by domestic and international visitors?**

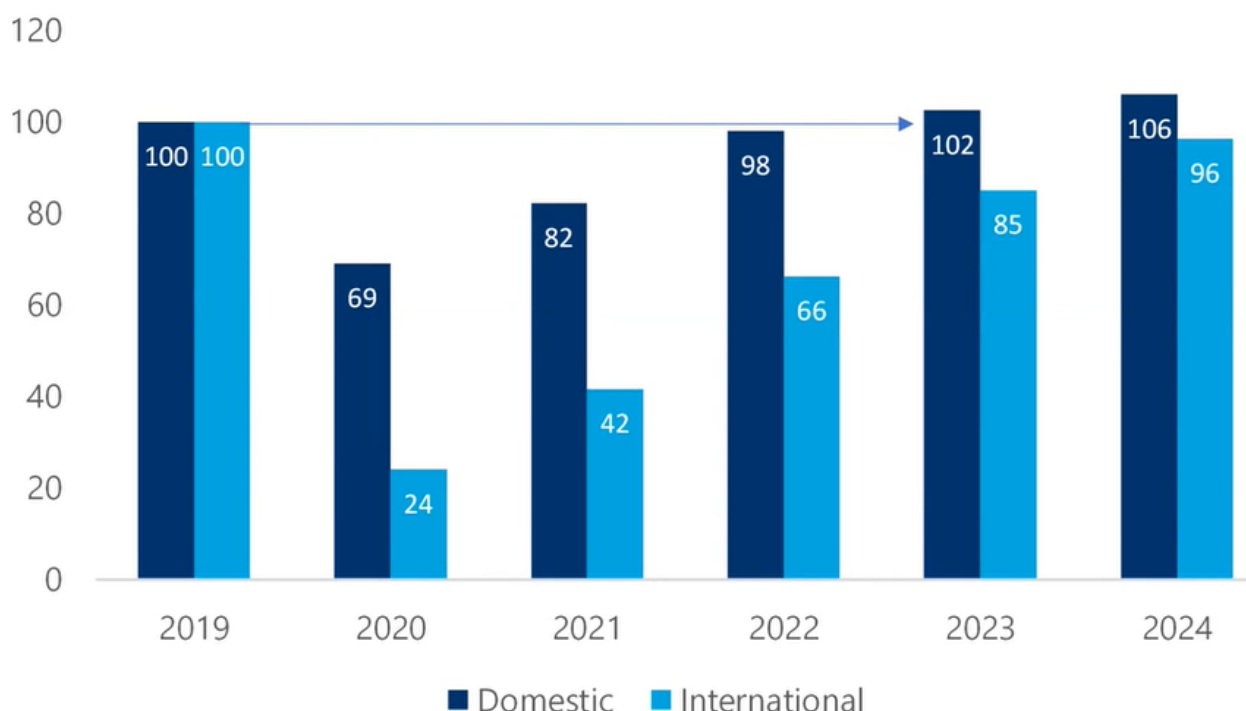
- The most recent year for which DDC has visitor data is calendar year 2019. Washington, DC welcomed 24.6 million visitors (domestic and overseas) in 2019. Visitation was up 3.4% over 2018, when DC welcomed 23.8 million visitors.
- While we do not have final visitation data for 2020, we can share some estimates from Tourism Economics, a well-respected industry partner. In 2020, domestic visitation to the District was estimated to be down 57% over 2019. This estimate is based on research commissioned in summer 2020, which broke out the forecast into the baseline, upside and downside scenarios. Based on hotel revenue returns in the last months of 2020, DDC is currently employing the downside forecast scenario. In 2021, the forecast estimates that the District will likely see 14 million domestic visitors, down 41% from 2019.



- DDC does not have a forecast for the recovery of international visitation to the District, but according to Tourism Economics, it will take until at least 2025 for the U.S. to recover its total international visitation back to the levels seen in 2019:

## Domestic and international trips

Index (2019=100)



Source: U.S. Travel Association, Tourism Economics

**19. During last year's testimony, President Ferguson noted that "Washington, DC is only the 8<sup>th</sup> most visited U.S. destination for overseas visitors." Has the city retained its ranking? What is DC's domestic travel ranking? Has this rank changed over the years?**

- Washington, DC retained its ranking as the 8<sup>th</sup> most visited U.S. destination for overseas visitors in 2019.
- Comparisons are difficult to make for domestic visitation, as cities define visitors differently (some count overnight only, some include day visitors; some include only the city, others include the county; some do not report domestic vs. international, but focus on day vs. overnight visitors); some use different external vendors to determine their number, others use a combination of different sources and calculate it internally. DDC counts day and overnight visitors to the District of Columbia only, without including commuters to work or school.

- Washington, DC ranks 14th out of this list of 20 destinations in terms of domestic visitation in 2019. DC's ranking has been consistent for the past three years.

1. Orlando, FL: 69.3 million
2. Chicago, IL: 59.4 million
3. Atlanta, GA: not publicly released
4. New York, NY: 53.1 million
5. Greater Philadelphia, PA: 44.4 million
6. Los Angeles, CA: 43.3 million
7. Seattle/King County, WA: 39.1 million
8. Las Vegas, NV: 36.9 million
9. Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN: not publicly released
10. Denver, CO: 31.9 million
11. San Diego County, CA: not publicly released
12. Dallas, TX: not publicly released
13. San Francisco, CA: 25.9 million
14. Washington, DC: 22.8 million
15. Houston, TX: 21.5 million (preliminary)
16. Anaheim, CA: 21.3 million
17. Boston, MA: 19.9 million
18. New Orleans, LA: 19.8 million
19. Greater Miami and the Beaches, FL: 17.3 million
20. Nashville, TN: not publicly released

**20. At the beginning of calendar year 2019, DDC launched the “Discover the Real DC” advertising campaign. What is the status of this initiative? Please also describe any milestones and/or challenges with this initiative, particularly as it relates to the pandemic.**

- With the COVID-19 pandemic, our *Discover the Real DC* campaign creative pivoted to reflect the changing priorities of our city and travelers. By tapping into the expertise of local hospitality industry partners on DDC's marketing committee, and analyzing Destination Analysts' bi-weekly Coronavirus Traveler Sentiment Index, we identified four key messaging points: health and safety, free things to do, outdoor recreation and family-friendly activities. This tailored messaging is reflected visually with a new “masked” Washington, DC logo, a written safety disclaimer driving to washington.org, and COVID-appropriate imagery - i.e. outdoor experiences, no crowds.
- In its first year, prior to the pandemic, *Discover the Real DC* saw an increase in recall rate over our 2018 campaign, growing from an average 40.5% to between 44% and 57%, depending on the traveler persona targeted. The campaign also produced a positive ROI for the District: \$3.03 in taxes for every \$1 spent on the

campaign, compared to \$2.90 in 2018, the highest ROI since beginning to conduct it annually.

- In 2020, our Discover the Real DC campaign was awarded two Telly Awards for promotional branded content and online commercial: travel/tourism, and an Addy Award for campaign photography.

**21. At last year's Performance Oversight hearing, a Hospitality High School testified about her experience working with DDC. Please share the following:**

- a. DDC's past involvement with Hospitality High School;**
  - b. How DDC's involvement has evolved, if at all, during the pandemic; and**
  - c. Any plans for DDC's increased and/or continued involvement moving forward.**
- Makayla Cruz, the student who testified at last year's oversight hearing, was a member of the Academy of Hospitality and Tourism at Columbia Heights Educational Campus. She is currently a freshman at North Carolina A&T University.
  - Hospitality and tourism education at the high school level in the District happens at the four Academies of Hospitality and Tourism at Ballou High School (DCPS), Columbia Heights Educational Campus (DCPS), Wilson High School (DCPS), and Maya Angelou Public Charter High School, as well as Academies of Culinary Arts at Ballou High School (DCPS) and Roosevelt High School (DCPS). (The Hospitality High School closed in 2016.)
  - **DDC is involved with these Academies through our affiliated 501(c)(3) non-profit, the American Experience Foundation (AEF).**
  - AEF invests in District students through inspirational travel experiences and educational opportunities to cultivate the next generation of hospitality industry professionals and support their college and career readiness.
  - Since 2015, AEF has awarded \$75,000 in scholarships to District students interested in the hospitality and tourism industry.
  - Pre-COVID-19, AEF provided learning opportunities for Academy students, including both field trip experiences and work-based learning.
  - The pandemic all but eliminated summer internship opportunities for students. In the true spirit of hospitality, DDC and AEF worked with the Career Ready Internships program to offer 72 high school students a virtual summer internship.

- While learning all about the hospitality and tourism industry, interns were asked to imagine how the industry can recover from the devastation of COVID-19 while working to make it more equitable.
- Over 50 guest speakers and 30 project judges participated in weekly presentations.
- The program was made possible by a \$24,000 subgrant of federal Perkins IV funding from DC Public Schools.
- AEF continued the success of these internships into a weekly Wednesday Hospitality Club, which features guest speakers and college- and career-readiness skill workshops. This Club will return at the beginning of the semester in February and run through May.
- AEF is also partnering with the DCPS Office of Career Preparation to create a spring hospitality and tourism bootcamp (March-May) for the Career Bridge Program.
  - The DCPS Career Bridge Program provides the opportunity for DCPS seniors seeking apprenticeship, career education, military, employment, and 2-year pathways to participate in professional skill building and internship opportunities, so students, ultimately, secure a post-secondary plan.
  - The bootcamp will run for eight weeks and will focus on career skill building and exposure to employers in the hospitality and tourism field.
- Both the Career Ready Internships (under the Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program) and Career Bridge Program are financed by the DC Department of Employment Services. District students are lucky to have this funding mechanism and both DDC and the American Experience Foundation strongly support its continued support by the DC Council.
- Both DDC and the American Experience Foundation are dedicated to serving students in the District. As stated above, we will continue to provide work-based learning opportunities, both digitally while under the pandemic and in-person when it safe to resume, and connecting these students with professionals in the hospitality and tourism industry.

**22. During last year's Performance Oversight hearing, it was mentioned that the "CNN effect" impacts DC's ability to capture a larger share of the tourism market. How have recent social and political demonstrations held in DC further impacted its image and ability to grow its tourism market? What efforts, including DDC's "Discover the Real DC" campaign, can better position the city to improve its image and grow its tourism market?**

- The insurrection of the U.S. Capitol was broadcast around the world. Unfortunately, a lot of the damage that was done beyond hurting America's democracy is that Washington, DC is at the center of it. It's a narrative that we've always challenged – emphasizing the difference between DC and “Washington.” It's clear after the events that have transpired, we will have to work even harder to combat it. However, we remain optimistic as we witnessed the peaceful transition of power during inauguration, which was also broadcast around the world. DDC will reinforce Washington, DC as a place for peaceful protest tourism, experiencing history and exercising your First Amendment rights. And we'll remain steadfast in promoting DC's local culture, diverse neighborhoods, free things to do, arts and theater, nightlife, music scene, small businesses and more.
- Recent social and political demonstrations – necessitating military, law enforcement and National Guard forces to secure the city – have led to safety concerns about visiting Washington, DC. With homeland security experts warning the public about the rise of right-wing extremism, a Democratic president and majority in congress enhances those concerns. Colorado congresswoman Rep. Lauren Boebert remains resolute in carrying a Glock in the Capitol, which continues to ferment Second Amendment activism, triggering the potential for gun violence on and around Capitol Hill. Couple that with a rise in gun violence in the District for a third consecutive year in 2020, and domestic and international visitors will continue to fear the potential for gun violence within the District.
- According to a website survey run by Destination Analysts on [washington.org](http://washington.org), safety and security remains the top concern for potential visitors. While the survey was focused on the COVID-19 crisis, the enduring message was that consumers want to feel safe and reassured about traveling to the destination. Respondents wanted to know the latest travel and safety information, and the requirements and safety procedures at museums and attractions that were open. As DDC works to attract consumers back to the destination with its marketing, safety messaging and access to safety information will continue to be featured prominently.
- Thinking of DTRDC, the recent demonstrations and all the political activity directly speak to our “political junkie” persona – one that we struggled to speak to in the first year of the campaign. The city's role in the current “historical” events seems like a great selling point from a protest tourism perspective.
- We know from past research that the political climate can impact interest in visiting Washington, DC for leisure. Based on a national survey of typical travelers from Destination Analysts from Jan. 22-24 (just after inauguration), about 17% of travelers surveyed said that the “current political climate” made them feel less safe or more reluctant to travel domestically. In total, 4.7% of all respondents said that they would avoid travel to DC in 2021 “specifically due to political considerations.” This is likely to decline in the coming months as new stories are front and center, but demonstrates the headwind that DDC faces at this time.

**23. Will the naming of Go-Go as the official music of DC or the forthcoming placement of eight commemorative works on public space honoring native Washingtonians who made significant contributions to American culture or history help generate tourism and activate the hospitality industry?**

- As the official music of the city, Go-Go features prominently on washington.org and in DDC marketing. The homegrown artform is explained through two local, modern-day musicians in a video entitled *Go-Go: The Official Music of Washington, DC*. The website also features the article *Keep on Groovin': An Intro to Go-Go Music in Washington, DC*, in which Go-Go music's roots, rise and resistance are explained.
- DDC is committed to promoting Go-Go, especially as potential visitors return to the District. With plans for a Go-Go Museum in DC, DDC members like Go-Go Symphony and a cadre of local bands who continue the genre's legacy, Go-Go will continue to play a central role in how visitors can experience DC's Black history and culture with each visit.
- Additionally, yes, the measure that will honor female and minority native Washingtonians with statues in each Ward of the District will benefit tourism. Washington, DC has numerous public monuments and memorials that are free and open to the public. Adding native Washingtonians to DC's roster of memorials shows that this city continues to be a foundation for everyone's history lesson. The addition of these statues will help us tell lesser-known stories and connect to the District's rich culture and Black history. It's an opportunity to highlight forgotten changemakers and leaders from DC.

**24. How many visitors (business/leisure) should we expect to see in the District each year? What is the goal? How does this compare to visitors to other major metropolitan areas?**

- DDC works to attract visitors to the city each year and provide value to leisure visitors, both domestic and international, convention visitors, school groups and business visitors. We saw growth in our total visitation every year from 2006-2019, and continue to work to attract visitors from around the country and the world. Leisure visitors typically balance business visitors, allowing the city to sell rooms on the weekend as well as during the week. During the times of year outside the busiest convention seasons (which are spring and fall), leisure visitors use scheduled school breaks and traditional vacation times to come to the city and generate visitor spending, influencing short-term local economic impact. With lower hotel occupancy and room rates during these off-peak times, there is continued opportunity to attract additional visitors to enjoy DC and spend money in local restaurants, attractions, shops and other businesses.
- Comparisons are difficult to make for total visitation, as cities define visitors differently (some count overnight only, some include day visitors; some include only

the city, others include the county; some include domestic only, some do or do not include Canada; some use different external vendors to determine their number, others use a combination of different sources and calculate it internally). DDC counts day and overnight visitors to the District of Columbia only (without including commuters to work or school). Below are the visitation counts that each jurisdiction released for 2019:

1. Orlando, FL: 75.8 million
2. New York, NY: 66.6 million
3. Chicago, IL: 60.8 million
4. Atlanta, GA: not publicly released
5. Los Angeles, CA: 50.7 million
6. Greater Philadelphia, PA: 46 million
7. Las Vegas, NV: 42.5 million
8. Seattle/King County, WA: 41.9 million
9. San Diego County, CA: 35.1 million
10. Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN: 34.6 million
11. Denver, CO: 32.5 million
12. Dallas, TX: not publicly released
13. San Francisco, CA: 26.2 million
14. Houston, TX: 24.9 (preliminary)
15. Washington, DC: 24.6 million
16. Anaheim, CA: 24.2 million
17. Greater Miami and the Beaches, FL: 24.2 million
18. Boston, MA: 22.7 million
19. New Orleans, LA: 19.8 million
20. Nashville, TN: 16.1 million

25. Please provide a copy of your 2021 marketing plan and marketing outlook presentation. Also, please provide a summary highlight of what is new for 2021.

- **2021 Annual Plan:** [Link](#)

#### **Convention Sales and Services:**

- **'CONNECTED' STRATEGY**

While many destinations have a hybrid solution now, the “Connected” marketing approach positions the local innovation and global leadership found only in the nation’s capital. The messaging ensures that DC stands out for customers because of the valuable knowledge and access to the global community of industry experts and policy makers based here.

- **DC AS A HYBRID HUB**



While the Connected positioning sets DC apart, world-class technology is also crucial for meeting success, which will likely have a virtual component in FY2021. DDC will work closely with Events DC to promote its virtual venue, Studio 801, to customers. The hybrid capacity allows groups to have limited in-person attendance and seamless capability to broadcast content to attendees around the world.

In another effort to provide value for customers, DC will act as a hub and partner with destinations across the U.S. to facilitate small in-person subsections of conferences at various locations. Debuting in early 2021, the hub-and-spoke approach will allow planners to hold safer small gatherings closer to home while benefiting from face-to-face interaction and the shared content broadcast from each partner satellite destination.

- **VIRTUAL SALES EFFORTS**

As business continues virtually, creative pivots engage customers online. The team holds sales blitzes with a lively DC touch, including sharing the latest status of DC attractions or showcasing a craft DC cocktail.

- **IN-HOUSE FOCUS**

The in-house sales team leverages every angle to impact short-term business. DDC is holding appointments with high-volume third party associates, such as Helms Briscoe and Conference Direct, and leveraging relationships with sales counterparts at associations to reach customers together. Continuing education, training and networking opportunities allow for more connection with customers.

- **SUPPORT OF THE WALTER E. WASHINGTON CONVENTION CENTER**

To get “Back to Business,” the WEWCC has state-of-the-art sanitation and hygiene measures in place to bring peace of mind to customers ready to meet in person. The center was the first in the Northeast to secure GBAC STAR™ facility accreditation from the Global Biorisk Advisory Council. In addition to enforcing social distancing and masks, new protocols include:

- Touchless thermal scanners at all designated entrances that provide instant feedback
- Cutting-edge disinfection technology, including a partnership with SurfaceGuard, and NanoSeptic lightpowered, self-cleaning surface products on high-traffic touch points
- New digital signage to communicate security and prevention measures
- Continuous cleaning of all high-contact surfaces and new hand sanitizer stations throughout the building
- Revised food and beverage services, including increasing packaged grab-and-go options, eliminating reusable cups, removing self-serve condiments and utensils and increased cleaning

- **SERVING CLIENTS**

Convention services provides the expert service that clients expect, helping groups understand the virtual and hybrid options available while adhering to social

distancing and other CDC guidelines. Site visits still take on the aura of Washington, DC, with novel ideas and use of video, virtual tours and local businesses. From simulated tours of the Walter E. Washington Convention Center to deliveries of homegrown products and food, the team ensures that customers can envision their meeting in the nation's capital from afar.

- **CREATING DESTINATION AWARENESS FOR VIRTUAL MEETINGS**

Convention services is working to create a toolkit of options that event strategists can use to showcase Washington, DC for their virtual meetings. These assets include go-go music to introduce a keynote, virtual booth space, and video to enhance virtual coffee breaks and networking.

### **Tourism, Sports and Visitor Services:**

- **Virtual Assets:** Virtual platforms have become our most important tool for inspiration, education and relationship building. We have shifted from our in-person, travel trade efforts to a more creative, virtual platform to engage customers through sales missions, familiarization tours, destination training programs and one-on-one appointments. These efforts will continue into 2021 when travel will resume. In addition, the team has shifted the marketing focus to be more PR/communications driven through storytelling and social media engagement.
- **Travel Agent Training:** Launched in 2020, the Washington, DC Special Agent Academy is a virtual program designed to train travel agents and tour operators on the destination. The training module educates and inspires travel to the destination and provides in-depth training on the "Real DC." This program was launched in English and will be launched in Spanish and Mandarin in 2021.
- **New Itinerary Platform Development**  
While the team has been developing new itineraries for group travel, 2021 will provide the gateway to execution of these new programs with our customers. This year, tours will be less "lets do it all" in one week and more targeted as we help our customers take a deeper dive into their education curriculum. Our focus is on the expansion of itineraries into Black history, sustainability and racial justice.
- **Sporting Experiences**  
We see professional sports adjusting to "play" with limited or no fans, amateur and collegiate events are doing the same. We are taking advantage of the outdoor opportunities presented in our vast landscape such as outdoor sports fields, the National Mall, parks, waterfronts, and more, to highlight the diversity of sports that can still take place in a safe environment.

### **Membership:**

- The pandemic suspended operations of half of Washington, DC's hotels; the ones that remained open operated at diminished capacity. The full extent of business loss

and failures of restaurants, attractions and convention service providers is not yet known.

- In response, DDC provided financial relief in the form of waived membership dues for a total of three months to hotels, and six months to other businesses. DDC recognizes how hard the pandemic troubled our membership and beyond, therefore an important element of our recovery plan is to help the broader community recover by offering a free membership trial to first-time, non-accommodation businesses in the hospitality industry, introducing DDC's community and member benefits. They will be able to participate in DDC's recovery programs prior to any financial commitment.
- More than 60 new members have been onboarded under this program. Now, DDC is focused on the steps to guide businesses recovery, educating and preparing them to capitalize their investment into future business opportunities as consumer confidence rebuilds. Therefore, DDC is offering free marketing consultations to any business in the DMV hospitality industry, reviewing and analyzing their current sales and marketing strategies, to provide advice and direction on how to align and utilize DDC's messaging and campaigns to their own financial prosperity, starting at the local in-bound level, moving on to out-of-region, then international travel, when that time comes.

#### **Marketing and Communications:**

- After working for more than a year and a half of preparation, DDC launched a newly redesigned website on Jan. 5, 2021. The website features a mobile-first design and delivers an immersive experience for users while maintaining its status as a go-to hub to discover Washington, DC neighborhoods, art, culture, shopping, sports, theaters, museums, hotels, deals and up-to-date information about the city. Developer MMGY Global provided expertise on the website.
- Visitors to the revamped [washington.org](http://washington.org) will experience optimized navigation and search, and up-to-date information about the city, including the latest travel status and safety measures in place at travel-related businesses. New long-format stories, photography and video create interactive experiences on the site and should lead to increased engagement. For the convention audience, business event strategists find enhanced meetings and convention tools. Hotels, dining and attraction deals are tailored to visitors. Journalists will easily find story inspiration in the revamped press room. Group tour operators can prepare before visiting with virtual itineraries and, in the future, take advantage of additional educational content.

#### **26. Are there updates to DDC's ROI study, or any activities underway as a result of that study, that the Committee ought to be aware?**

- Given the lack of advertising in the second half of FY2020, there was not an ROI study conducted. Once there is a return to advertising, the ROI research on the campaign is expected to continue annually.

**27. Please provide an update to your 2020 marketing plan including successes of the communications strategy, convention sales and services strategy, and the tourism and visitor services strategy.**

**Communications Strategy:**

- Updates to the communications strategy in 2020 focused on the economic impact of the pandemic on the local economy and communicating changes to DC's phased opening approach based on the status of restaurants, museums, attractions and more.
- A key focus over summer 2020 was racial injustice and DC as a place to express First Amendment rights peacefully, especially with Mayor Bowser's creation of Black Lives Matter Plaza. DDC's Elliott Ferguson thoughtfully discussed these topics with media, and he was featured in a cover story in *Meetings & Conventions* ("Addressing Racism") and the subject of a *Washington Post Magazine* feature titled "Just Asking." Across the second half of DDC's FY2020, Elliott was included in 20 articles valued at about \$2.6 million in advertising equivalency value.
- Looking ahead, DDC will pitch DC's phased reopening as travel begins to resume. It will be key to set DC apart as competition for destination media coverage will remain high. The communications team will concentrate on several themes, including but not limited to:
  - DC's vast green and outdoor space
  - Free things to do
  - New development and hotels
  - Dining, including creative pivots, pop-ups and bakeries
  - Recent openings that may have closed during the pandemic before they could be widely experienced, such as the National Children's Museum and Planet Word
  - Anniversaries, including the Smithsonian Institution 175<sup>th</sup>, DC Public Library system 125<sup>th</sup>, Phillips Collection 100<sup>th</sup>, Amtrak 50<sup>th</sup> and Kennedy Center 50<sup>th</sup>.

**2020 CSS Strategy Updates:**

- **ENGAGING KEY MARKET SEGMENTS**  
Keeping Washington, DC top of mind is critical. DDC will leverage global representation in key regions and lead interactive virtual roadshows to highlight the city for meeting professionals. Additionally, CSS will engage customers who are now open to meeting in the U.S. and Washington, DC given a change in the administration.
- **EXTENDING GLOBAL REACH**  
To leverage all available resources, DDC maximizes relationships with partners including Events DC marketing partners, the Global Association Hubs Partnership

with Brussels, Dubai and Singapore, as well as agencies of record in top overseas markets. DDC will also work with destinations throughout the Northeast to position the region positively for MICE groups.

- **LEVERAGING CONNECTED POSITIONING**

Connected content highlights DC's knowledge economy across top industries and with subject matter experts. These resources, exclusive to DC, will be shared throughout [washington.org/meetings](http://washington.org/meetings), editorial coverage and key advertorial and reimagined sponsored opportunities in reputable trade publications.

- **WORKING WITH INDUSTRY CHAMPIONS**

DDC will leverage its Ambassador Circle, which consists of subject matter experts in their fields that help customers understand why DC excels in their respective industries to help attract future international congresses. DDC will also engage its International Business Events Council, or IBEC, to understand the latest industry challenges, recommendations and opportunities to rethink how business is conducted.

- **INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS**

Until overseas travel resumes, DDC has been working with its international offices on two top priorities:

- **Travel Agent Training**

Launched in 2020, the Washington, DC Special Agent Academy is a virtual program designed to train and engage travel agents in the U.S. and around the world who are interested in becoming Washington, DC experts. As a DC Special Agent, travel professionals will be better prepared to sell the nation's capital to their customers. The program is available now in Spanish. In January 2021, it will be translated to Mandarin. To date, more than 590 agents from nearly 40 countries have been trained.

- **PR/Communications**

DDC works with our international offices to understand the latest market conditions and keep Washington, DC top of mind through public relations and social media efforts. The tourism and communications teams deliver creative virtual content and messages directed toward trade and consumer audiences on the latest in DC to help maintain market share when borders open.

- **GROUP TOUR**

Student groups make up over one million visitors to this city annually. We have had great success this year with the group tour companies that have been selling DC for many years. They have had the same itineraries due to the limited time to work on new content. We have taken advantage of this time to create new content and themed itineraries for these companies and complemented it with training workshops on how to explore the city differently.

- **ESPORTS**

Primed for the virtual environment, DDC is working with Events DC to continue attracting major esports events to Washington, DC, as well as events surrounding local teams and watch parties as regulations allow.

**28. Please provide a copy of your fiscal year 2021 goals presentation, including a copy of the fiscal year 2020 goals. How is DDC performing compared to fiscal year 2020 goals?**

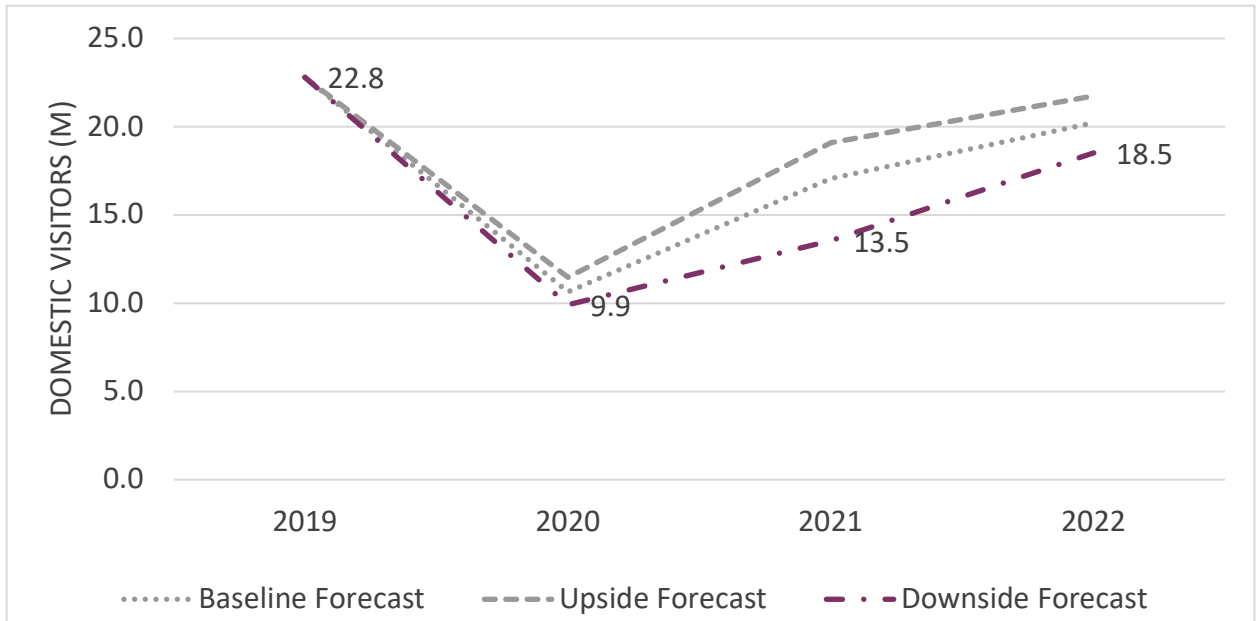
This information is provided in attachment #3.

**29. In calendar year 2020, how many citywide conventions and special events were hosted? How many total room nights did this generate? Please discuss the overall impact of tourism to the city.**

- a. **When compared to calendar year 2019, how many visitors did the city receive in calendar years 2020 and 2021, to date?**
- b. **How much money did visitors spend in calendar years 2019, 2020, and 2021, to date?**
- c. **For the same three years, how much money did those visitors generate in local taxes?**

See previous questions 14 and 15 in terms of Convention Sales and Services numbers.

- The most recent year for which DDC has visitor data is calendar year 2019. Washington, DC welcomed 24.6 million visitors (domestic and overseas) in 2019. Visitation was up 3.4% over 2018, when DC welcomed 23.8 million visitors.
- While we do not have final visitation data for 2020, we can share some estimates from Tourism Economics, a well-respected industry research partner. In 2020, domestic visitation to the District was estimated to be down 57% over 2019. This estimate is based on research commissioned in summer 2020, which broke out the forecast into the baseline, upside and downside scenarios. Based on hotel revenue returns in the last months of 2020, DDC is currently employing the downside forecast scenario. In 2021, the forecast estimates that the District will likely see 14 million domestic visitors, down 41% from 2019.



- According to IHS Markit, visitors to the District spent \$8.2 billion in the city in 2019. Tourism Economics worked with the U.S. Travel Association to provide estimated visitor spending losses by state, including the District of Columbia. In 2020, TE estimated that the District lost 59% in visitor spending compared to 2019, equaling a loss of \$4.8 billion. According to the downside forecast from TE, spending will likely still be down more than 50% in 2021 compared to 2019.
- According to IHS Markit, visitor spending resulted in \$896 million in taxes to the District in 2019. TE estimates that local tax collections from visitor spending were down 41% in 2020. Estimates for 2021 are not available.

### 30. What are DDC's current efforts related to its Strategic Plan goals and strategies?

See previous questions 25 and 27 in terms of Convention Sales and Services numbers.

- International: redirect
  - PR – travel trade
  - Social Media - consumer
  - Travel Trade Training – tour agencies/operators
- Group tour:
  - New itinerary development
  - Destination Training
  - Travel Agent Training program
- Sports:

- Re-booking lost business from 2020 and 2021 to future years
- Qualify new opportunities for new events
- Based on the DDC Five (5) Year Strategic Plan, the following are opportunities for advancement:
  - Maximizing the contribution tourism makes to the city's economy and resident's quality of life.
    - Membership: Creating engaging programs aligned with the needs of its members and the demands of the industry.
    - Partnership: Include local businesses that want access to our local community but may not fit standard membership.
  - Unifying the DC tourism community.
    - Membership: Focus on recruiting and retaining minority-owned businesses.
    - Partnership: Focus on exposing/promoting minority focused events such as PRIDE, Black Lives Matter, Immigrants, etc.
  - Advocating for tourism throughout the city.
    - Membership: Recruit and promote CBE businesses, work with BIDs, Main Streets and DC Department of Small & Local Business Development (DSLBD) to enlist their trusted peer: peer referrals of neighborhood businesses to Destination DC.
    - Partnership: Work hand in hand with seasonal and temporary cultural and tourism attractions to produce content marketing and social media engagement.
- **Events:**
  - In relation to the Strategic Plan, the Partnerships & Alliances team at DDC will continue to offer virtual programs. As health and safety guidelines permit, we'll move forward with safe, socially distant in-person and hybrid events as well. We're focusing our efforts on providing virtual social engagements and high level executive conversations with powerful leaders.
- **Partnerships and memberships:**
  - Currently, DDC is actively stewarding all current partner relationships, including our relationships with major airlines and sports teams. We are strategizing the best ways to work with partners to revitalize the city.
  - We are also working to forge new relationships with potential future partners by positioning DDC as a vital part of DC's recovery. Partner buy-in will ensure they're a part of our industry's comeback.



**31. What are the financial benefits (ROI, etc.) to DC for any advertising promotions on social media or otherwise by Destination DC for events, attractions or locations not within the District of Columbia?**

- Although we don't have a definitive ROI on how DDC's advertising may impact experiences outside of Washington, DC, consumers who are choosing to visit DC are often interested in visiting other destinations in the region. DDC works with CRUSA (a partnership with Virginia Tourism Corporation and Maryland Office of Tourism) to promote the DC region internationally. International visitors stay longer and spend more than their domestic counterparts, and thus, the entire region stands to gain additional economic impact from extended visitation in the region focused on experiences throughout the DMV.

**32. Aside from membership fees, what revenue does DDC receive from any entity outside of the District of Columbia. Please provide descriptions and amounts along with an example.**

- Sponsorship from MWAA (Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority) – DDC has been receiving \$150,000/year in the past years except FY2020 due to the pandemic
- Publication revenue from Miles Media – \$100,000/year plus performance incentive (revenue share)

**33. When is the DC Cherry Blossom Festival anticipated to return?**

- The National Cherry Blossom Festival is organized by a separate nonprofit organization ([nationalcherryblossomfestival.org](http://nationalcherryblossomfestival.org)). The organization has announced it will be conducted in individual group/interactive/virtual format in 2021, from March 20-April 11, 2021. They will continue to celebrate the gift of the trees and the blooming of the trees through several virtual and individual celebrations.
- The return of the festival in full is scheduled for spring of 2022 with the first day of the three week festival to begin on March 20, 2022.

**34. What plans and budget efforts are underway for the Cherry Blossom Festival's return? Is it anticipated that the historic level of in-kind contributions and sponsorships will remain the same?**

- The National Cherry Blossom Festival organizers have shared that it will be a hybrid of in-person and virtual programming that will honor the traditions of the festival while prioritizing the health and safety of participants amidst the coronavirus pandemic.
- They have announced many pivots to this year's festival, including the "Petal Porch Parade." Instead of gathering crowds to watch the festival's traditional parade, a Petal Procession will visit various neighborhoods in DC to celebrate areas that have

decorated for the arrival of springtime. DDC will support and amplify this messaging through our rich neighborhood content on washington.org and on our various social media channels.

- DDC will continue our strong partnership with the NCBF despite the redirection of programming in 2021 through a virtual and small group experience. We will promote their events through all our social and media platforms. Moving into 2022, we will resume our partnership, in hopes for a live festival, by:
  - Creating springtime hotel deals/packages to complement their activities
  - Push out all special events on our events page of washington.org
  - Complement all PR/communications strategies in-line with their activities
  - Include NCBF in our digital/print marketing
- Each year, washington.org sees a spike in traffic ahead of the National Cherry Blossom Festival. The festival is featured prominently across the site in a preview of National Cherry Blossom Festival events, Things to Know About the Blossoms, Guide to the National Cherry Blossom Festival and Free Things to Do in springtime. Specific festival events are also shared across timely pieces of content like things to do this weekend and things to do this month, and blossom- and spring-related deals and discounts at local businesses, hotels and attractions also live on the website.
- This year, web content will lead off with safety messaging to ensure the safety of locals and travelers alike, while content will cover the best ways to experience the festival both virtually and outdoors. For example, the Opening Ceremony (March 20), Blossom Kite Fly (March 22), Pink Tie Party (March 27) and the National Cherry Blossom Festival Celebration Show presented by Events DC (April 10) will all be part of new virtual programming this year, while the Art in Bloom (March 20) outdoor sculpture exhibit and the neighborhood-friendly Petal Porch Parade Tour (March 20-April 11) will welcome walkers and visitors in cars.

**35. Please provide a copy of your bylaws.**

This information is provided in attachment #4.

**36. Please provide an update on your contract with Events DC. Please also provide the following:**

This information is provided separately in a folder (Q36 EDC).

- A highlight or summary of activities conducted pursuant to this contract in fiscal years 2020 and 2021, to date;
- A list and copies of all reports, plans, presentations, or analysis DDC provided as a part of the contract for fiscal year 2020 and 2021, to date;
- A copy of approved budgets for fiscal years 2020 and 2021; This information is provided separately in a worksheet (Q11-3) and

- A copy of any addendums or updates made within the last year.

**37. Please describe any pending litigation of which DDC is a party.**

Not applicable.

**38. Please list and describe any ongoing investigations, audits, or reports on DDC or any DDC employee.**

Not applicable.

**39. Please list and describe any investigations, studies, audits, or reports on DDC or any DDC employee that were completed during fiscal years 2020 and 2021, to date.**

Not applicable.

**40. Please list all settlements entered into by DDC or by the District on behalf of DDC in fiscal years 2020 and 2021, to date. For this response, please include the following:**

Not applicable.

- a. The parties' names;
- b. The amount of the settlement;
- c. If related to litigation, the case name and a brief description of the case; and
- d. If unrelated to litigation, a description of the underlying issue or reason for the settlement (e.g. administrative complaint, etc).

**41. Please describe DDC's procedures for investigating allegations of sexual harassment or misconduct committed by or against its employees. List and describe any allegations DDC received in fiscal years 2020 and 2021, to date, whether or not those allegations were resolved.**

Not applicable.

**42. Please list the administrative complaints or grievances DDC received in fiscal years 2020 and 2021, to date, broken down by source. As part of your response, please also include the following:**

Not applicable.

- a. A description of the process utilized to respond to any complaints and grievances received;

- b. A description of any changes to DDC policies or procedures as a direct result of the complaints or grievances received;
- c. A description of how all complaints or grievances filed in fiscal years 2020 and 2020, to date, were resolved.

**43. What efforts are underway to recruit other organizations or events that would have a significant impact on tourism spending? Please also include an update on your Asset Intelligence Project.**

- The Asset Intelligence Project has morphed into the Connected Capital campaign. The intent is still the same, to connect local subject matter experts with industry-focused meetings and conventions with the expectation that a group can enhance its experience in the city because of our knowledge economy and industry specific infrastructure.
- We have taken extensive measure to continue to evolve this program to ensure it stays relevant for our meetings effort. One massive advancement has been to enhance our Ambassador Circle (AC). The AC was developed to create a pool of subject matter experts who would assist DDC in identifying and supplying support during the bid process. We have been fortunate to add marketing resources from industry organizations like BioHealth Innovation, Amazon and Children's Hospital. Find out more at [washington.org](http://washington.org).
- Due to our advancements in our Connected strategy and AC, we've been successful in submitting bids for:
  - Lions Clubs International Convention
    - Definite for July 2027
    - Estimating 25,000 attendees and 27,750 total room nights
    - Partnered on the bid with local Lions Multiple District 22
    - Featured the work of Serve DC – Mayor's Office on Volunteerism & Partnerships and DC core values of diversity, equity and inclusion
  - World Congress on Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering
    - Tentative for July 2028
    - Estimating 6,000 attendees and 15,820 total room nights
    - Partnered on the bid with American Association of Physicists in Medicine and American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering
    - Featured access to National Academies of Sciences, National Institutes of Health, Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority, Sheikh Zayed Institute for Pediatric Surgical Innovation, MedStar Washington Hospital Center and other local medical centers, hospitals and universities
- **Tourism:**

- Domestic/international partnerships have been part of our DNA for many years. In these times, we need one another more than ever. We have been collaborating on programs/communication and engagement with many of our partners:
  - **CRUSA:** DDC will continue our partnership with CRUSA as we promote Washington, DC, Maryland and Virginia to international visitors
  - **EastCoast USA:** As the international airways open, we will target specific international markets and partner with New York on a campaign to “Return to the U.S. by starting with the East Coast first.”
  - **MWAA:** Work closely on marketing and communications with the IAD/DCA airports as new and existing service expands in both domestic and international gateways
  - **Airlines:** In addition to working with MWAA, we are working directly with the airlines on building a marketing strategy to launch once international travel/open borders return
  - **Events DC:** As we look to be the Capital of Sports, we will continue to work in lock step with Events DC on an aligned strategy to host professional, collegiate and amateur sports as well as support the festival and special events as they come back into the city.

**44. Please list any awards or accolades DDC has received or been nominated for in the past year.**

- The Walter E. Washington Convention Center was the first convention center in the northeast region to gain Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC) certification: <https://gbac.issa.com/>
- **2020 ADDY, Best Black & White/Color/Digitally Enhanced Photography: Campaign,** Discover the Real DC advertising images
- **2020 TELLY AWARD, Best Online Commercials General-Travel/Tourism,** Discover the Real DC :30s commercial spot
- **2020 TELLY AWARD, Best Branded Content Campaign-Campaign: Promotional,** 5-video Discover the Real DC docuseries
- Media remain receptive about Washington, DC as a travel destination. Among recent honors, DC is:
  - #1 on The Best Destinations in the World: The 2021 Gold List, *Conde Nast Traveler*
  - Among The 12 hottest destinations of 2021, The Points Guy
  - Included in 16 Truly Interesting Places In The US That Belong On Your Post-Pandemic Travel List, BuzzFeed
  - On Best Places 2021: Great Authors on Our America, *Frommer's*
- AEF and DDC recently presented 10 member businesses with PandA Awards in celebration of industry partnerships. These are not awards given to DDC, but rather a way that we recognized other businesses.

- AEF Forever Friend: District Experience - Lori Chalk
- Perfect Hospitality (AEF): Marriott Marquis - Satinder Palta
- Ice Breaker: International Spy Museum - Tamara Christian
- Ice Breaker: Museum of the Bible - Kelly Martin
- Virtual Social Butterfly: Bialek's Music - Ray Bialek
- Virtual Social Butterfly: IconsDC - Doug Abbey
- Extranet Expert: AC Hotel National Harbor
- Do the Hustle: ARTECHOUSE - Josh Feldman
- Rookie of the Year: HalfSmoke - Julie Andre
- DDC Team Spirit: Fiat Luxe Tours DC - Andrew Rawls