

# MOBILE TOURISM IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

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## Why TID? Four Years in Review

The logo for the Mobile Area Lodging Corporation (MA LC) features the letters 'MA' stacked above 'LC' in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font. The letters are contained within a white square frame that is centered on a dark green background.

MOBILE AREA  
LODGING  
CORPORATION



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High level metrics for the total spend and economic impact by the Mobile Tourism Improvement District since its inception in 2020.

## 6 Sales & Marketing Initiatives

An overview of the key wins from marketing initiatives from 2020 to date. All marketing program elements must be provided directly to and focused entirely on assessed lodging businesses to increase overnight stays, and may include a multitude of marketing campaigns across print and digital platforms, along with sales and convention marketing and familiarization trips to the destination. \*All reporting runs no later than April 2024.

## 12 Capital Improvements

An overview of all capital improvement projects that the Mobile Area Lodging Corporation has backed to date, along with any funds committed that have not yet been spent. The capital improvement budget is designed to fund studies, consultation, and improvements that will create a visitor experience that will bring repeat visits to assessed lodging businesses.

## 14 Special Projects

The Mobile Area Lodging Corporation has facilitated multiple special projects to increase safety, improve hotel ratings, and enhance the visitor experience here in Mobile, made possible entirely by the Tourism Improvement District assessment.

## 16 District Management Plan

The District Management Plan is a document created at the start of each new term for the Mobile Tourism Improvement District. It provides direction and regulations for district operations. The Mobile Tourism Improvement District District Plan was published March 9, 2020. A new District Plan will be written and sent to all business owners within the Mobile Tourism Improvement District ahead of the 2025 renewal and will disclose any proposed changes to the district's operations.

## 17 What's Next?

As the 2020-2025 District Management Plan comes to the end of its term, the renewal process is underway.





THE  
*BATTLE HOUSE*  
A RENAISSANCE HOTEL

THE  
*BATTLE HOUSE*  
A RENAISSANCE HOTEL

THE  
*BATTLE HOUSE*  
A RENAISSANCE HOTEL

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CLAYTON PLAZA









# Tourism By The Numbers

*June 2020 - April 2024*

## SPEND

Since the start of the Mobile Tourism Improvement District in 2020, hotels have assessed themselves

**\$4.8 million**

to be spent on improving and enhancing the visitor experience and lodging metrics.

**\$3.36 million**

has been spent on digital, print, and convention marketing,

**\$336,629**

has been allocated towards Capital Improvement projects. This public-private partnership has generated millions in economic impact.

## IMPACT

**1.1 million**

overnight visits since 2021.

**74 million**

impressions through digital display advertising, 2021 to date.

**\$12.5 million**

in direct revenue from 2021-2023 Epsilon and Expedia campaigns alone.

\*Direct impact from measurable results does not include indirect spend, bookings or impact of these efforts that has benefitted Mobile lodging.





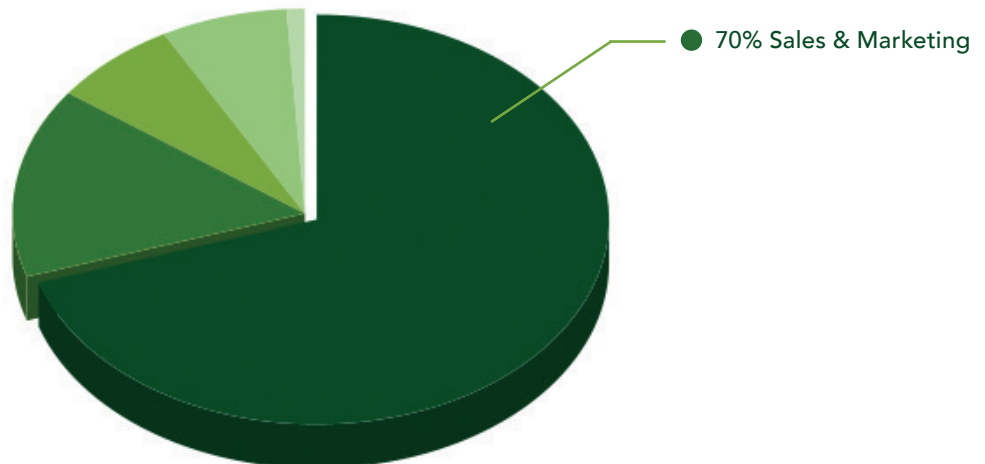
Left: "Clotilda" The Exhibition  
Right: MOT Mardi Gras Parade



Destination Research | Strategic Digital Display Ads | Online Travel Agencies  
Global Distribution Systems | Photography/Videography | Connected TV (CTV)  
Over the Top (OTT) Commercials | Print Advertising | Convention Marketing  
Billboards | Search Engine Marketing | Social Media Campaigns

**The majority of the Annual Budget (70%) is allocated towards sales and marketing.** The sales and marketing programs are aimed at promoting the assessed lodging businesses in Mobile as tourist, event, and recreation destinations. All program elements will be provided directly to and focused entirely on assessed lodging businesses to increase overnight stays within the district. For the purposes of this report, all campaign metrics run no later than April 2024.

- 1% City Fee
- 7% Contingency/Reserve
- 7% Administration
- 15% Capital Improvements





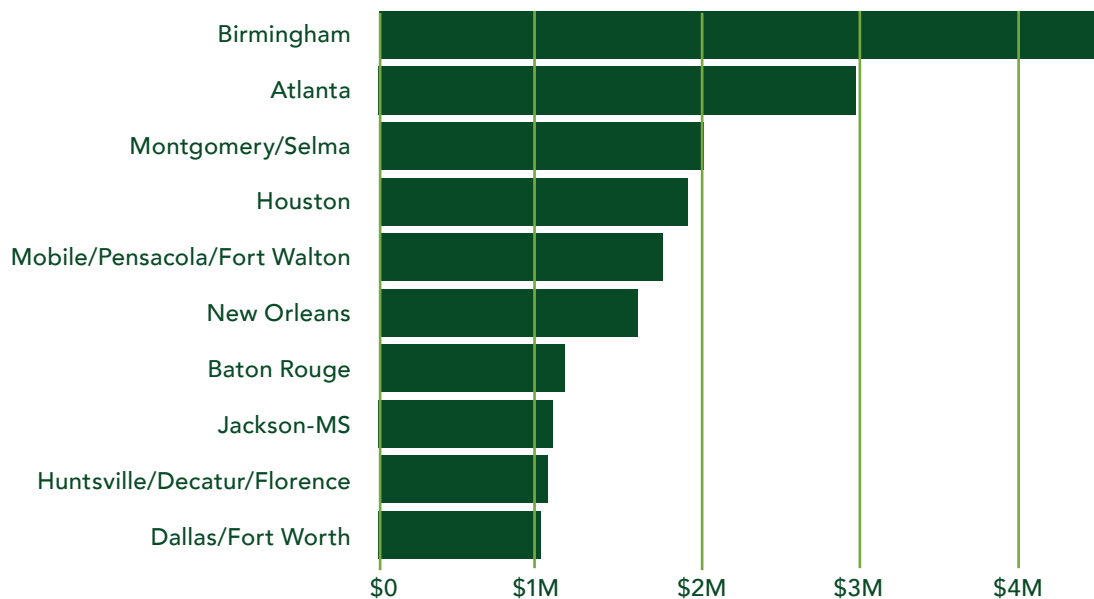


# Sales & Marketing

*Key wins from 2020-2024*

**Destination Research 2020-2024** - In order to successfully market Mobile as a destination to travelers, it helps to know who is most likely to travel here. Conducting destination research through Arrivalist and analyzing traveler trends helps us to do that. Arrivalist tracks data from individuals who book travel to Mobile and visit points of interest within the area. This helps us both validate that current campaigns are being sent to the correct markets and develop data-informed messaging campaigns to new markets.

## TOP ORIGIN MARKETS BY REVENUE past 12 months





# TID DISPLAY CAMPAIGN - ECONOMIC IMPACT

Measurement Window: October 14, 2021 - December 31, 2022



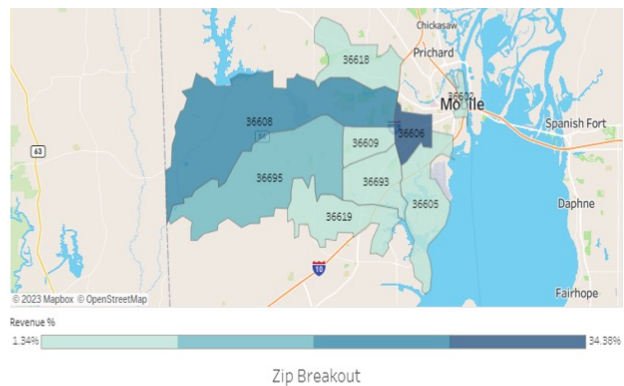
# TID DISPLAY CAMPAIGN- ECONOMIC IMPACT

Measurement Window: October 7, 2022 - September 30, 2023



## VISITATION AND SPEND BY ZIP CODE

ZIP	FEATURES	VISITOR SPEND	VISITORS	% TOTAL VISITOR SPEND	YIELD PER VISITOR
36606	Mobile	\$2,226,277	7,436	34.4%	\$299
36608	Mobile	\$1,541,817	6,554	23.8%	\$235
36602	Mobile	\$1,015,358	4,145	15.7%	\$245
36619	Mobile, Theodore	\$505,737	2,956	7.8%	\$171
36695	Mobile	\$397,596	2,215	6.1%	\$180
36609	Mobile	\$364,571	1,899	5.6%	\$192
36693	Mobile	\$203,331	1,200	3.1%	\$169
36618	Mobile	\$134,043	1,167	2.1%	\$115
36605	Mobile	\$86,772	606	1.3%	\$143



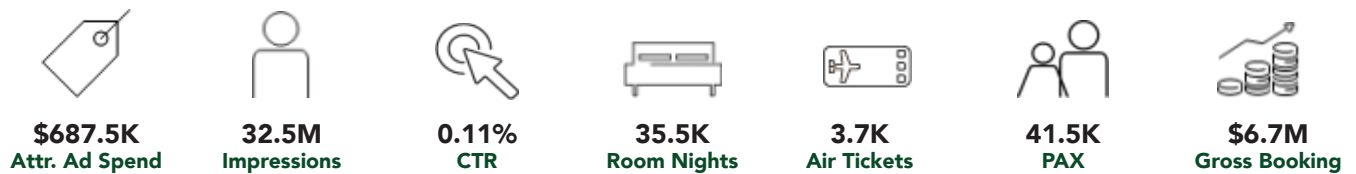
- **34%** of measured visitor spend in Mobile occurred within the 36606 ZIP code. That measured visitor spend was driven by **7.4K** visitors
- **36606** ZIP code also drove the highest yield per visitor at \$299



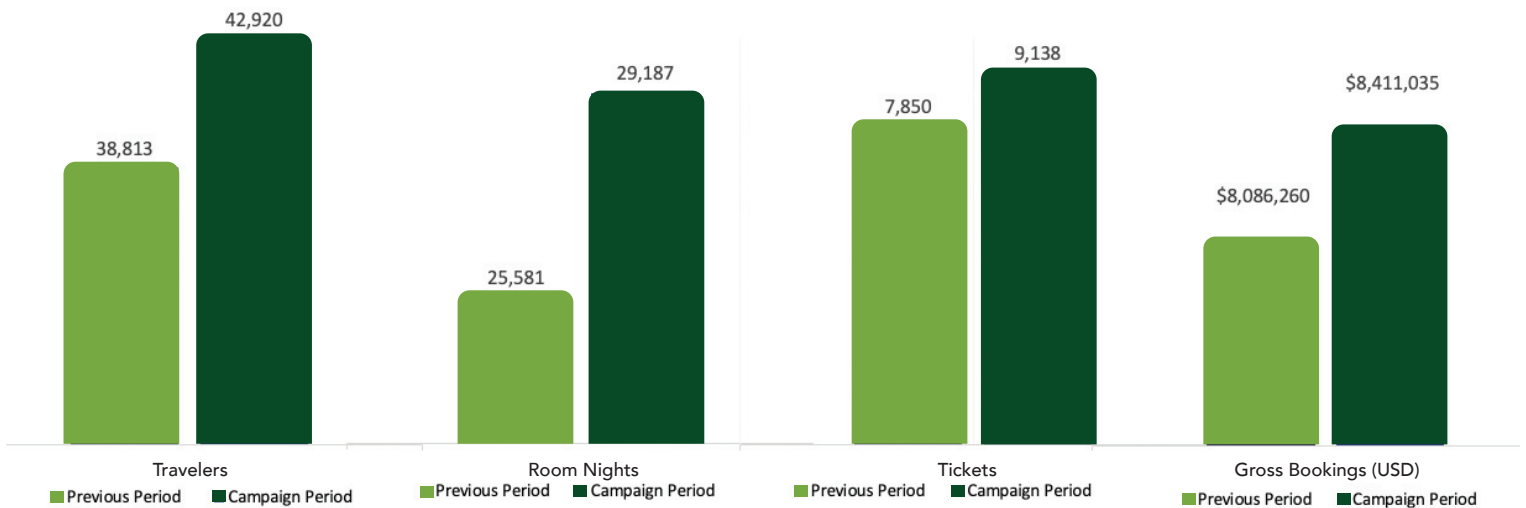


**Online Travel Agency (OTA) Campaigns (2020-2024)** - Booking trips through Online Travel Agencies, like Expedia, Hotels.com, and others, has become increasingly popular and provides platforms with travel-minded users to advertise our destination to. **MALC's Expedia campaigns provide trackable revenue per hotel property.** For the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year campaign, with a total spend of \$222,900, 85% of properties in the Tourism Improvement District received direct revenue by opening rooms up to Expedia. Out of 63 hotels in the district, 20 properties saw over \$20,000 in direct revenue from this campaign alone.

### Expedia All-Campaign Totals (2020-2024 YTD)



### Expedia Overall Bookings Year-Over-Year (FY23 vs Current Period)



**Hotelbeds (2021-2024)** is an international online travel agency site that has had great success with two consecutive campaigns at a cost of \$16,000 per year to lead advertisements to a landing page featuring all Mobile Tourism Improvement District hotels. The 2023-2024 campaign saw \$296,718 in total revenue.

	2022/23 (Oct - Apr)				
	Canada	Germany	UK	USA	Total
Mobile - AL RN	191	10	50	1,253	1,504
ADR	\$85	\$99	\$121	\$115	\$111
Revenue	\$16,235	\$993	\$6,033	\$144,095	\$167,357

	2023/24 (Oct - Apr)					YOY
	Canada	Germany	UK	USA	Total	
	473	31	84	1,933	2,521	68%
	\$99	\$124	\$108	\$123	\$118	6%
	\$46,669	\$3,834	\$9,100	\$237,115	\$296,718	77%



**Connected TV (CTV) and Over the Top (OTT) Streaming Commercials (2023-2024)** - If you're watching your favorite shows at home, odds are you're watching them on a streaming service. We are able to purchase commercial spots on streaming services and target them by zip code in areas where we see travel patterns to Mobile. These commercial videos are of the highest quality and show off our destination's pillars.



Current campaign October 2023-May 2024



**Digital Display Advertising (2021-2024)** - We live in the digital age! Digital promotions receive the highest spend allocated by MALC, and for good reason. In the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year, digital display ads from MALC campaigns were seen by 2.9M unique individuals. These ads run on a wide variety of websites and are tailored to our target audience. They promote Mobile as a destination and lead to easy booking links to hotel properties in the district.



Current campaign October 2023-May 2024

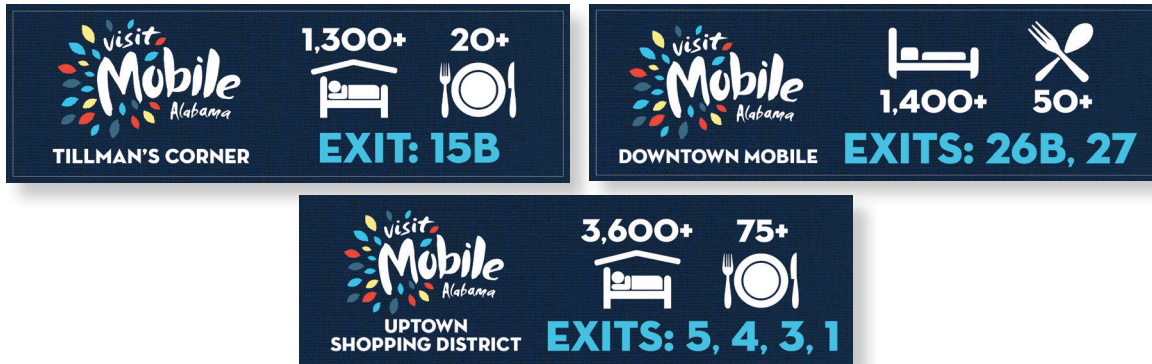
**Global Distribution Systems (GDS) Campaigns (2024)**- Travel agents keep their finger on the pulse of leisure travel and also play a heavy role in booking business travel worldwide. Through a new 2024 campaign with TravelClick, MALC had the opportunity to integrate digital ads targeted towards travel agents on the world's top three GDS systems, Amadeus, Galileo, and Sabre. This campaign raises brand awareness and can be targeted towards agents with a history of booking in choice areas across the country.

Month	PCC Count	Bookings	Room Nights	Revenue	ROAS
May-24	134	241	1,042	\$125,521	109.9
Apr-24	126	260	1,041	\$133,526	113.9
Mar-24	118	249	1,103	\$146,429	128.0
Feb-24	23	38	155	\$21,345	94.2



**Search Engine Marketing** - Through keyword optimization, we are able to not only know what people are searching for when booking travel, but how to make sure Mobile is showing up in their results. Our search engine marketing campaigns prioritize conversions from search terms having to do with booking travel to our destination. The campaign conversion rate (30.88% as of April 2024) is currently performing over 600% higher than the industry average for tourism.

**Billboard Advertising** - To entice the passers-through, Mobile Area Lodging Corporation placed three billboards at the entrances to each of our three district areas, Tillman’s Corner, West Mobile, and the Downtown area. These billboards reached an average total of 350,000 drivers per week.



**Print Advertising and Media** - Even in today’s digital world, print advertising is still the go-to source of travel inspiration for many. Travel magazines are a great way to tell Mobile’s story in an expansive editorial style or an enticing advertisement. Mobile Area Lodging Corporation has been able to place advertisements in a variety of print publications, many of which also come with digital packages.

- Good Grit
- USA Today
- Alabama Magazine
- Louisiana Life
- Food and Travel Magazine
- Bham Now, Bama Buzz, and Hville Blast
- Fall Travel Planner
- Alabama Vacation Guide
- Group Tour Magazine
- Group Travel Leader



and more...

**Convention Marketing (2022-2024)** - In order to provide equal promotion to all property areas with the assessed funds available, the Mobile Area Lodging Corporation focused on efforts outside of convention marketing for the first two years following the establishment of the TID. Since 2022, MALC has allocated approximately \$140,000 on convention marketing. That spend has stretched between advertising in popular convention planning publications and sponsoring elements of large trade shows.





Mobile Tennis Center

# Capital Improvements

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Total contributions from 2020-2024

**Tillman's Corner Beautification - \$56,054** - When entering Tillman's Corner, visitors by the Fall of 2024 will see native-to-Mobile palm trees and colorful crape myrtles welcoming them to the area. This landscaping project and annual maintenance is provided by MALC.

**Basketball/Volleyball Courts - \$74,000** - In lieu of renting courts for each athletic tournament and event hosted by Mobile Sports Authority, TID funds were used to purchase courts of their own. This not only saves money for hosting large sporting events, but increases Mobile's availability to host these events without the burden of relying on a rental being available.

**Africatown Heritage House Landscaping - \$75,000** - The opening of Africatown Heritage House is first and foremost an amazing value-add to our community. On top of that feat, *Clotilda: The Exhibition* it is an opportunity for visitors to immerse themselves in the history and culture of Africatown and leave with an impactful and educational experience. TID funds were used for the landscaping and materials needed to open Africatown Heritage House.

**Visit Mobile Interactive Kiosks - \$53,575** - Visitors will now be able to access information for their trip at their fingertips. These state-of-the-art interactive kiosks are placed in high-traffic locations across our city to enhance the visitor experience and allow them to search for places to stay, browse things to do, build itineraries, and even snap a selfie.

**Indoor Tennis Courts - \$68,000** - Tennis alone brings \$18.7M annually to the City of Mobile. The Mobile Tennis Center is one of the largest tennis facilities in the world. MALC has committed \$68,000 towards indoor tennis courts for the tennis center.

**Wayfinding Signage - \$10,000** - MALC has committed money towards wayfinding signage into the downtown Mobile area. This signage will make for an easier visitor experience.





*Africatown Heritage House*

The capital improvements program is designated to fund studies, consultation, and the initial set-up of capital improvements to create a visitor experience that will bring repeat visits to assessed lodging businesses.

**Mobile Area Lodging Corporation allocates 15% of the Annual Budget towards capital improvement.**

The capital improvements made thus far by way of MTID funding have made significant impact on Mobile's hospitality industry. The Mobile Area Lodging Corporation Board of Directors plan to increase the number of capital improvement projects upon renewal of the MTID in 2025 to include opportunities for projects such as airport development and promotion of the newly remodeled Mobile Civic Center.

Inquiries and requests for a capital improvement can be made to the Board of Directors at any Board Meeting, which are open meetings unless otherwise specified.

Upcoming meetings can be found online.

The capital improvements budget shall not be used for non-tourism related projects, including but not limited to, sidewalks and road improvements. Capital improvements may include, for example:

- Sporting facility improvements
- Gateway enhancements to attract visitors
- Comprehensive and integrated wayfinding signage system
- Transportation program connecting hotels with downtown and other attractions
- Art and cultural projects, to attract overnight visitors
- Purchase of real property
- Enhancements to environmental experiences that attract overnight visitors.



# Special Projects

**Travel Media Group: Reputation Management Program (\$17,500)** - Encouraging guests who have had a positive experience at your property to leave a review can make all the difference when future travelers are looking for a place to stay. This program sent emails encouraging guests to leave reviews after their stay if their experience was positive, or to answer a survey if their experience could have been improved. **Properties who participated in the program captured a total of 662 positive experiences in just six months.**

**THANK YOU**

**Hampton**  
by HILTON

(251) 660-9202

Dear Edwin,

Thank you for choosing Hampton Inn Mobile I-10 / Bellingrath Gardens for your recent stay. We appreciate your business and would love for you to take a brief moment to let us know how we did.

**Did you enjoy your stay?**

**YES** **NO**

Please select Yes or No

Sincerely,  
Hampton Inn Mobile I-10 / Bellingrath Gardens

**THANK YOU**

**Hampton**  
by HILTON

(251) 660-9202

Hampton Inn Mobile I-10 / Bellingrath Gardens  
5478 Inn Rd, Mobile, AL 36619-1953

Please rate the location of the property.  
★★★★★

Please rate the friendliness and courtesy of our staff.  
★★★★★

Please rate the cleanliness of your room upon check-in.  
★★★★★

Based on your experience, would you recommend us to your family & friends?  
Yes  No

Please rate your overall experience at Hampton Inn Mobile I-10 / Bellingrath Gardens.  
★★★★★

Comments

Submit

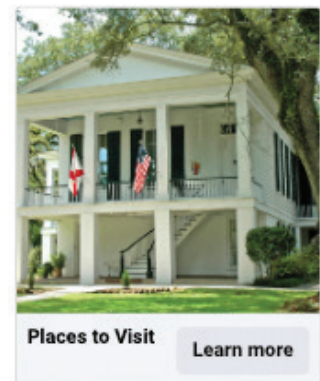
Managed Privately Offline

TripAdvisor

Google My Business

**Night Hawk Security (\$78,000)**- Increased levels of security can not only improve visitor experience, but provide peace of mind to our hospitality workers. An investment in added security measures during late night hours at 32 hotels in Tillman’s Corner and the I-65 Service Road area was made in 2023. The 12 months of overnight service so far have been extremely well received by properties receiving service.

**Mobile Attractions Campaign (\$1,100)**- By promoting and aiding our local attractions, we give our audience further reason to stay and even extend their trip to experience all that Mobile has to offer. In order to assist our local attractions Mobile Area Lodging Corporation funded a META **paid social media advertising** campaign for three months focused on promoting attractions, which linked directly to the attractions listing page on Mobile.org.





Mobile International Airport Rendering

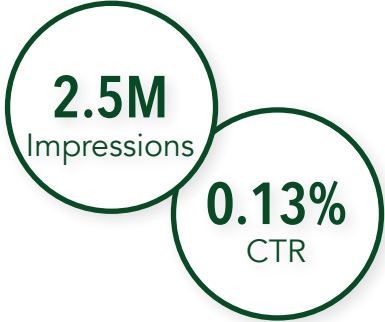
**Air Service Promotions (\$80,000)** - Mobile’s airports are expanding, and TID funds have been put to good use to advertise to those outside of our popular drive markets. By marketing our new air service carriers and routes, we not only encourage the success of existing carriers but also encourage heightened interest in new carriers to bring their services to Mobile. TID funds have been used to run **search engine marketing** campaigns based on popular key search terms in order to push Mobile to the top of travelers’ search results. Campaigns have also been run on META through **social media ads** targeted in the areas where new routes have opened up, such as Orlando, Fl., and Washington D.C.



**Cruising from Mobile Promotions (\$150,000)** - Overnight stays have greatly increased since the return of Carnival Cruise ships to Mobile’s port. According to Smith Travel Research, there has been an increase in lodging room nights associated with cruisers from the 2022 cruising season to the 2023/2024 cruising season. For the most recent cruise season, Arrivalist data has tracked approximately 14,226 room nights attributed to cruisers. Using **dynamic display advertising, META social media campaigns, and search engine marketing**, TID funds have driven interested travelers within a six-hour drive radius to cruise out of Mobile.



Current Year Cruise Display Campaign





# District Plan

## *A brief overview of the 2020–2025 Mobile Tourism Improvement District Management Plan*

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The Mobile Tourism Improvement District (MTID) follows all guidelines set forth in the Mobile Tourism Improvement District Plan, prepared pursuant to the Self-Help Business Improvement Districts in Class 2 Municipalities Law, Ala. Code 11-54B-40 et seq.

The District Plan outlines impetus, improvement and activity plan, boundary, assessment, governance, assessed lodging businesses, law, and the Mobile Area Lodging Corporation bylaws. The full plan for 2020-2025 can be found on the Mobile Area Lodging Corporation website. For the purposes of this report, the following summary of the District Plan includes the main objectives and information found particularly necessary by the Board of Directors when reviewing this report.

The MTID includes all lodging businesses with 40 rooms or more located within the boundaries of the City of Mobile. It is designed to provide benefits directly to assessed lodging businesses, marketing assessed lodging businesses as tourist, meeting and event destinations, thereby increasing room night sales and revenue therefrom.

The annual assessment rate of the initial five-year term of the MTID is \$1.00 per occupied room per night, with exceptions for continuous stays of 31 days or more, stays at camps, conference centers, or similar nonprofit-operated facilities, stays at corporate housing facilities, and complimentary room stays provided by the lodging business owner to a guest.

The MTID has a five (5) year life, beginning June 1, 2020 through May 31, 2025. The MTID is eligible for renewal at the end of the five year term, with the approval of the lodging business owners or their representatives, in addition to the approval of Mobile City Council.

**The annual budget of the MTID is made up of the following components: Sales and Marketing (70%), Capital Improvements (15%), Administration/Audits (7%), Contingency/Reserve (7%), and City Fee (1%).**

The assessment is levied upon and is a direct obligation of the assessed lodging business. However, the assessed lodging business may, at its discretion, pass the assessment on to transients. The amount of the assessment, if passed on to each transient, shall be disclosed in advance and separate from any applicable taxes. Failure to pay the assessment may result in penalties.

All marketing and promotions activities are to be carried out by Visit Mobile. Per the District Plan, the baseline level of funding for tourism promotion services provided by the City shall maintain verifiable “baseline” levels for the duration of the Mobile Tourism Improvement District’s term.



**Renewing the MTID**

1. Evaluate the 2020-2025 District Management Plan and propose necessary or beneficial changes.
2. Communicate any proposed changes to all TID property owners.
3. Hold Public Hearing and City Council Meeting.
4. 2020-2025 District Management Plan sunsets and 2025-2030 District Management Plan begins following a positive vote.



*Left: The Admiral; Above: Mobile Marriott*

# What's Next?

*District Plan  
Renewal 2025*

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The original Mobile Tourism Improvement District Plan runs for a 5-year term. As the plan approaches its sunset period, MALC has the opportunity to renew the plan as it currently stands or make some potential changes.

Any changes proposed by MALC to the District Management Plan will be sent to all TID property stakeholders following the processes laid out in SB112.

In order to pass for another term, Mobile City Council must vote to approve the new district management plan and there must be no negative petitions brought against the new plan. If major changes to the existing

plan are made, a petition in favor of the new plan may be required.

If passed, the next Mobile Tourism Improvement District Plan will run from 2025-2030. Five more years of this assessment programming would open doors for projects such as air service development, promotion of the new Civic Center, expansion of current projects, etc.

With the speed at which our city is growing, we hope the MTID will continue to grow and support tourism. This program opens doors to tell Mobile's story and increase visitorship like never before.









## Board of Directors

*The board would like to thank the City of Mobile along with each of the 65 properties within the Tourism Improvement District for supporting this innovative and extremely important public/private partnership.*



A Representative - Kent Blackinton, President  
Downtown - Margo Gilbert, Vice President  
Downtown - Ken Patel  
West Mobile - Duncan Millar, Secretary  
West Mobile - Aaron Watz  
Tillman's Corner - Pinal Patel, Treasurer  
Tillman's Corner - Raj Desai  
Attractions - Judi Gullede  
Restaurants - Hunter Omainsky  
City of Mobile - Councilman Cory Penn, Non-Voting  
Visit Mobile - David Clark, Non-Voting



