



Annual Report

2023-2024





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Par-Mar Stores / WVRC Media

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Sleep Inn / MainStay Suites

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Executive Summary

While pulling together the visitor stats for this report, I am so pleased to be able to share good news for another year. Visitation to Putnam County remains strong. Vacation rental inventory is at an all-time high, and hotel occupancy remains steady and strong. And despite revenue being at an all-time high, Putnam County remains an affordable leisure destination.

With recent growth, access to critical data for destination management, changes to our visitor profile, and new attractions, our board recognized the need for planning ahead. So at this year's annual retreat, the board participated in a strategic planning session to help the organization set priorities for the years ahead.

I'm looking forward working with our board and CVB team implementing these areas of focus in the upcoming year, and am so proud of what we've accomplished this past year.



Kelli Steele,
Executive Director



Financial Overview

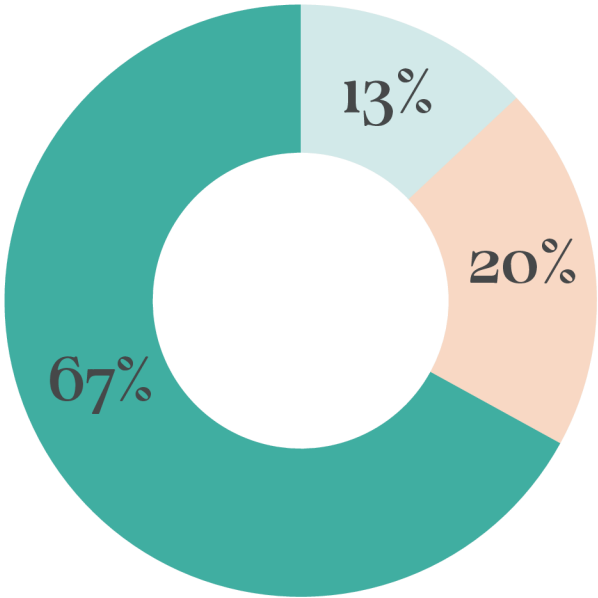
Budget Summary

The purpose of a CVB is to attract visitors to the area, to increase the economic impact of those visitors while in market, and to ultimately improve the quality of life through stewardship of the visitor economy.

State code requires our budget to allocate a minimum of 40% of the occupancy tax revenue we receive directly on marketing expenses, a maximum of 40% toward personnel, and a maximum of 20% toward overhead.

*A large portion of CVB staff time is allocated toward marketing initiatives, which would have otherwise gone to a marketing agency or outside vendors. When accounting for that portion of personnel expenses, it brings the total amount invested in marketing to 67%.

Overhead Personnel* Marketing



Record occupancy tax revenue in FY2024

Revenue	
Occupancy Tax Revenue	\$237,250
Total Revenue	\$238,285
Expenses	
Overhead	\$33,456
Personnel (Administrative)	\$51,715
Personnel (Marketing)	\$32,400
Marketing	\$136,251
Total Expenditures	\$252,751

Hotel / motel occupancy is up 5% over last fiscal year

Occupancy tax collections are up 7.7% over last fiscal year

Marketing Highlights



Award Winning Campaign

Our spring outdoor recreation campaign from the earned us a 2024 Zartico Data Hero Award. We were up against destination marketing organizations from across the country, and other category winners included destinations such as Tampa Bay, Lake Tahoe, and Myrtle Beach.

Visitor Kiosks

We implemented and expanded our visitor kiosks. There are now three kiosks located in areas of high visitation. These provide info about events, local shopping, and restaurants to help increase visitor spending throughout the county.



Selfie spot!



Almost Heaven Swing

We partnered with the West Virginia Department of Tourism and Putnam County Parks to bring the first Almost Heaven swing to Putnam County. Since its installation, it has had more than 1,000 views on Google Maps, and will bring countless visitors to the area for the photo opportunity.

42%

increase in website visitation in FY2024, and a 39% increase in new visitors.



Visitor Impact

Visitation Means Business

Most folks aren't thinking about their economic impact while on a vacation. But whether it's a leisure or business trip, visitation has a significant impact on a community by injecting new money into the local economy. When visitors spend money on lodging, dining, entertainment, and other services, this revenue supports local businesses, creates jobs, and generates tax revenue that can be reinvested into community projects and infrastructure.

Unlike residents, who may spend money within the community but often circulate existing funds, visitors bring in external money, enhancing the community's overall financial health. As a result, tourism can help diversify the economy, reduce unemployment, and increase the quality of life for local residents.

Impressive stats, with plenty of room for growth.

83%

of all **lodging**
spend was from
visitors

11%

of all **attraction**
spend was from
visitors

8%

of all **retail**
spend was
from visitors

11%

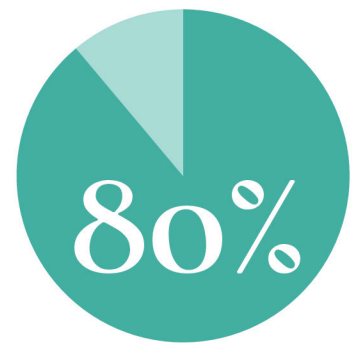
of all **food**
spend was
from visitors



Visitor Profile

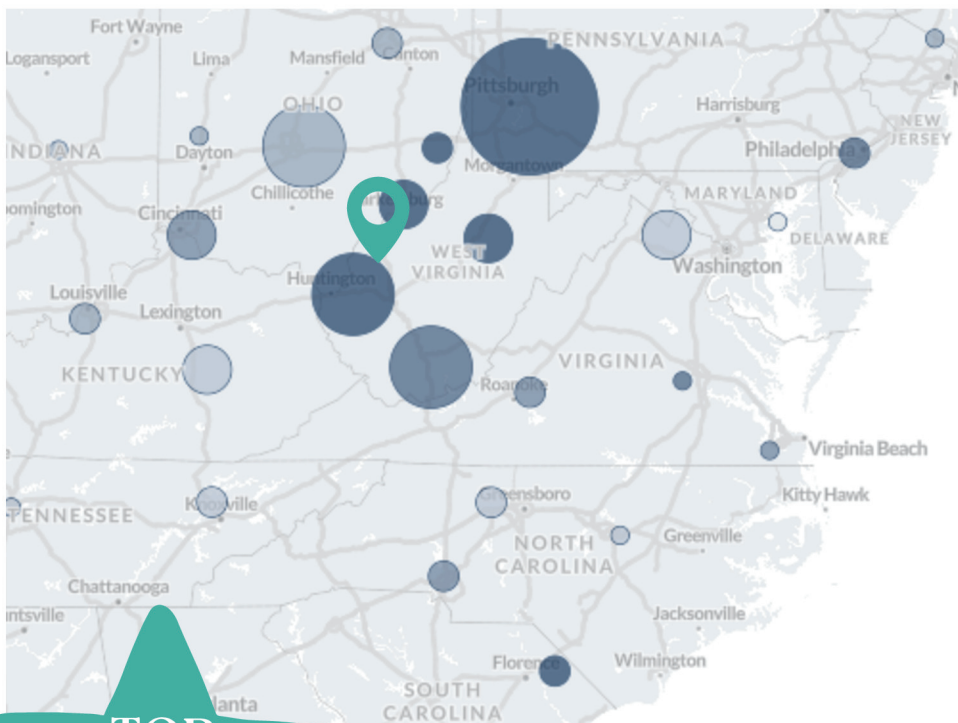
Who's here?

We have more data than ever about who is visiting Putnam County. This information helps us market far more efficiently, and understand what visitors have the potential to make the biggest economic impact.



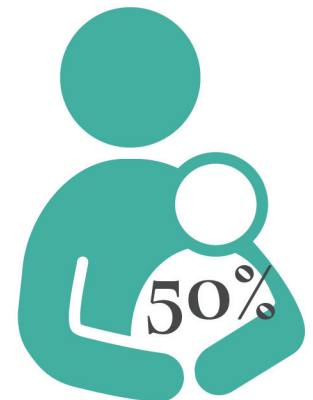
80% of overnight visitors are from out of state!

Markets of origin



out of state markets observed at accommodations

1. Pittsburgh, PA
2. Columbus, OH
3. Lexington, KY
4. Washington, DC / Hagerstown, MD
5. Cincinnati, OH



50% of visitors have children in their household



20% of visitors go to an outdoor recreation POI



Pittsburgh folks have a higher visitor spend than average, too!



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