

putnam  
county  
tourism

# Annual Report

2024-2025



## Board of Directors

**David Allen Gilpin**, President  
Par-Mar Stores / WVRC Media

**Angela Harding**, Vice President  
Sleep Inn / MainStay Suites

**Megan Tarbett**, Treasurer  
Putnam County Libraries

**Kathie Hess Crouse**  
West Virginia House of Delegates

**Alexandra Pfost**  
Gritt's Farm

**Amanda Ramey**  
City of Hurricane / Putnam Co. Commission  
Representative

**Rob Sydenstricker**  
FireSide Grille

**Joe Stevens**  
Nitro CVB / WV Ski Association

**Maggie Parsons**  
Putnam County Fair Representative

**Rebekah Withrow**  
Nucor Steel West Virginia

# Executive Summary

At Putnam County Tourism, like many destination marketing organizations, we balance a full slate of projects, events, and deadlines while remaining focused on managing the public's investment with care and accountability. As soon as one event or project is completed we move on to the next challenge, rarely taking a moment to celebrate any success or calculate impact.

That's why compiling the annual report is such a rewarding endeavor. It allows us the opportunity to pause to reflect on accomplishments of the previous year, and preview initiatives for the year ahead.

I am incredibly proud of the amount we are able to accomplish here with a small (but mighty!) team and budget. Not only are we able to have a positive economic impact on the county by attracting visitors, but those visitors are experiencing the best our communities have to offer while making memories with friends and family. With hard work, careful strategy, creative problem solving, and a little luck, those impacts will continue to grow and pay dividends for years to come.

With gratitude,



## Staff

**Kelli Steele**

Executive Director

**Angie Barthelmess**

Office Manager & Community Liaison

**Khloe Smith**

Content Coordinator

# Financial Overview

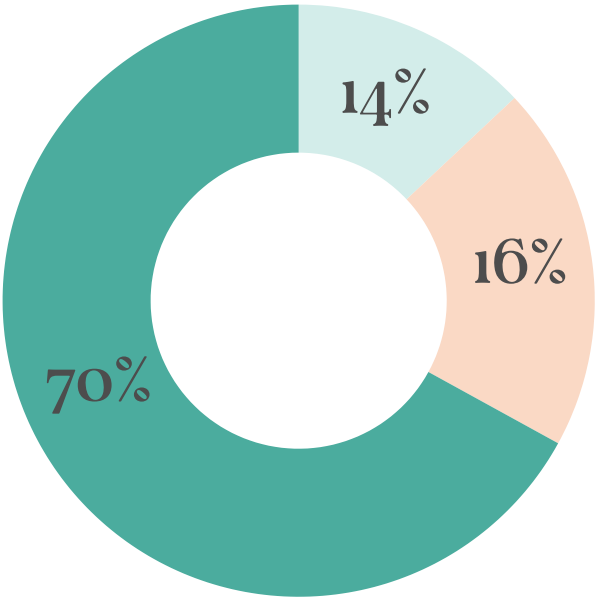
## Budget Summary

The purpose of a destination marketing organization 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	\$263,000
Total Revenue	\$265,465
Expenses	
Overhead	\$33,786
Personnel (Administrative)	\$38,196
Personnel (Marketing)	\$32,233
Marketing	\$138,313
Total Expenditures	\$242,528

Hotel / motel occupancy is up 3% over last fiscal year

Occupancy tax collections are up 10.8% over last fiscal year



# Organizational Highlights

## New Name, Same Mission

As part of our strategic plan and with guidance from our Board of Directors, we changed our name to Putnam County Tourism to more clearly differentiate us from other local organizations and provide clarity about what we do.



## Award Winning Video

Our “Building Meeks Mountain Trail” video, produced by Ben Saw This, LLC, won a People’s Silver Telly Award in the General Promotion Category. The Telly Awards recognize video and television work across all platforms, and include entrants from all 50 states and across the world.

## Content Creator Visits

We partnered with three different content creators on four visits to Putnam County to capture unique, authentic, user-generated content. This helps us promote the area on social media and in digital campaigns. We plan to continue investment in content.



DESTINATION  
*Metro Valley*  
BUILDING REGIONAL TOURISM

We partnered with DMOs across the Metro Valley to host a regional tourism conference. With participation from the WV Dept. of Tourism and six CVBs in the region, we hosted nearly 100 participants to learn about marketing, partnerships, creativity, and collaboration.

90%

increase in website  
visitation in FY2025, and a 99%  
increase in new users.



# Visitor Impact

## Visitation Means Business

Most folks aren't thinking about their economic impact when visiting another area. But whether it's a leisure, business, or day 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.

*Spending statistics here include local visitors in addition to those coming from 50+ miles away*

# 40%

of **all** spend was from visitors

# 94%

of all **lodging** spend was from visitors

# 34%

of all **retail** spend was from visitors

# 36%

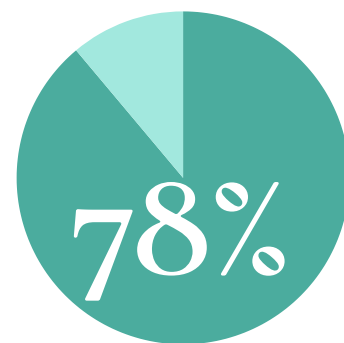
of all **restaurant** spend was from visitors



# Visitor Profile

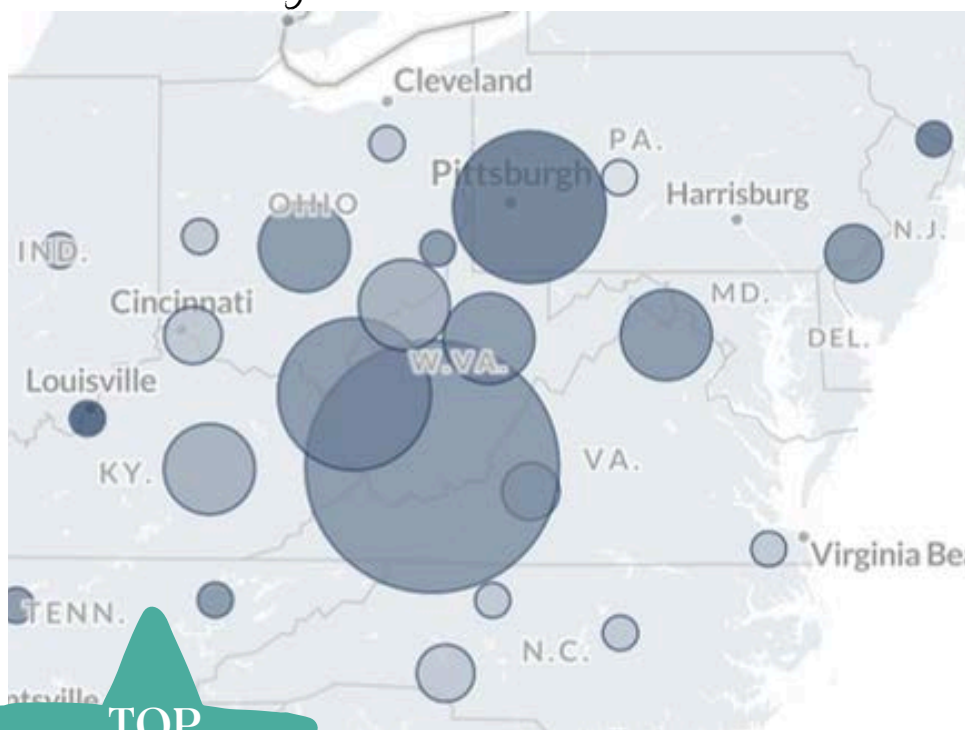
## Who's visiting?

The data we have about visitors provides an incalculable advantage to our organization and partners. This information helps us market far more efficiently, understand which visitors have the potential to make the biggest economic impact, and advocate for our industry when opportunities arise.



*of overnight visitors  
are from out of state!*

## *Markets of origin*

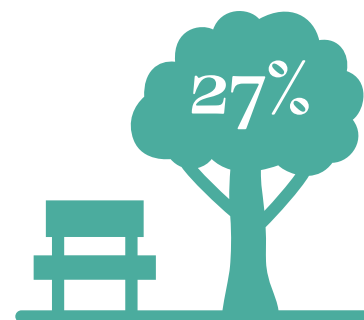


out of state markets observed  
at accommodations

1. Pittsburgh, PA
2. Columbus, OH
3. Lexington, KY
4. Washington, DC /  
Hagerstown, MD
5. Roanoke-  
Lynchburg, VA



*of visitors have children  
in their household*



*of visitors go to an  
outdoor recreation POI*

*Columbus folks had the  
highest visitor spend!*





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[VisitPutnamWV.com](http://VisitPutnamWV.com)  
304-757-7282