

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau Announces 2017 Visitor Impact

Visitor Spending, Tax Revenue and Jobs Throughout DuPage County Continue to Grow

OAK BROOK, IL — Beth Marchetti, executive director of the DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau (DuPage CVB) today announced 2017 visitation throughout DuPage County resulted in increases in visitor spending, state and local tax revenue and jobs. Marchetti first revealed the 2017 visitor data to the Economic Development Committee of the DuPage County Board last week. As a county-wide CVB, the organization's sales and marketing strategies impact hundreds of businesses, contribute to resident quality of life, and to the County's economy.

The growth in 2017 visitation contributed to a 3% increase in visitor spending to \$2.6 billion; 9% increase in state tax revenue to \$160 million; 3% increase in local tax revenue to \$46 million and a 1.7% increase in tourism-related employment over the previous year, respectively. During the last five years increases in the key performance indicators – spending, tax revenue and jobs – has exhibited between a 1.5 – 6.1 percentage change. The growth represents a savings of approximately \$1,300 per year in taxes for the average DuPage County household, according to the Illinois Office of Tourism.

"While tourism in DuPage is growing, so too is the competition," said Marchetti. "The County's million residents and the more than 23,000 employed in the industry that rely on tourism as a vibrant industry remain central to our decision-making. It is imperative that we must collaborate internally in order to compete externally. At the end of the day, what we do to attract visitors is economic development."

While DuPage ranks second only to Cook County in tourism expenditures, new product and facility development throughout the Chicago area and greater Illinois is increasingly drawing the attention of planners, events rights holders and the leisure traveler. In response to this growing competition, the DuPage CVB continues to share market analysis reports with key stakeholders as it works to identify potential areas for growth. Central to the DuPage CVB's core mission is creating demand for overnight stays at the 115 hotels which represent 16,000 rooms throughout the County. Immediate initiatives to support hotel bookings include a data-driven, cooperative advertising campaign to targeted meeting planners.

"Tourism is an essential part of a healthy economy for DuPage County, including our residents and business community," said Tonia Khouri, Chair, DuPage County Board Economic Development Committee. "We are committed to working in partnership with Beth and the Board of Directors as they work to further strengthen the County's position for meetings, conventions, events and leisure travel."

The DuPage CVB has engaged leading industry experts to discuss trends and implications for DuPage tourism at its upcoming annual meeting in September. Speakers will include Ted Mandigo of TR Mandigo & Co, Mitch Nichols of Nichols Tourism Group, and Michael Jacobson, the newly appointed president and CEO of the Illinois Hotel & Lodging Association (IHLA).

The DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau is the official sales and marketing organization for DuPage County. The DCVB was formed to attract business and leisure travelers to DuPage County's 38 communities and is responsible for generating billions of dollars in revenue every year in the form of hotel nights, tourist attractions, meals and more. The DuPage CVB is the only Illinois State certified not-for-profit organization authorized to represent DuPage County's tourism and convention business.

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Marchetti remains vocal in reiterating the importance of tourism to the County's economy. "We are connectors and catalysts for action, protecting and advancing community interests. We are a conduit between business, government and residents. And we are at a critical junction where what we do – or do not do – collectively, will determine whether tourism remains economically competitive in DuPage."

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