



# ON THE HORIZON

A review of an unprecedented  
year in Evansville tourism.

*Visit*  
**Evansville**  
INDIANA

*2020 Annual Report*

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## ABOUT VISIT EVANSVILLE

### Visit Evansville Vision

Visit Evansville's vision is to become a preeminent sales and marketing organization focusing on the meetings, conventions, sporting events, and leisure travel markets.

### Visit Evansville Mission

The mission of Visit Evansville is to create enhanced visitor spending and economic impact through attracting meetings, conventions, sporting events, and leisure travel to Evansville & Vanderburgh County.



## Board of Commissioners

### Joseph Kiefer, II – President

Appointed by: Mayor  
Term Ends: 12/31/2021

Evansville Teachers Credit Union  
4401 Theater Drive  
Evansville, Indiana 47715  
(812) 431-2305  
jkiefer@etfcu.org

### Mackenzie Black – Vice President

Appointed by: County Commissioners  
Term Ends: 12/31/2021

Dunn Hospitality  
300 SE Riverside Drive, Suite 100  
Evansville, Indiana 47713  
(812) 483-3298  
mblack@dunnhospitality.com

### Alexis Berggren – Treasurer

Appointed by: County Commissioners  
Term Ends: 12/31/2021

Old National Events Plaza  
715 Locust Street  
Evansville, Indiana 47708  
(812) 437-8283  
aberggren@oldnationaleventsplaza.com

### Joshua Armstrong – Secretary

Appointed by: County Council  
Term Ends: 12/31/2021

Downtown Evansville —  
Economic Improvement District  
318 Main Street, Suite 401  
Evansville, Indiana 47708  
(812) 499-9173  
josh@downtownevansville.com

### Wendy White

Appointed by: Mayor  
Term Ends: 12/31/2021

Doubletree by Hilton  
601 Walnut Street  
Evansville, Indiana 47708  
(816) 888-9250  
wendy.white2@hilton.com

### Rita Patel

Appointed by: County Council  
Term Ends: 12/31/2021

LaQuinta Inn & Suites  
8015 E Division Street  
Evansville, Indiana 47715  
(812) 453-3518  
ritahie@outlook.com

### Ali Hashemy

Appointing Body: Mayor  
Term Ends: 12/31/2021

Tropicana  
421 NW Riverside Drive  
Evansville, Indiana 47708  
(812) 483-6515  
ahashemy@tropevansville.com

### Legal Counsel

#### G. Michael Schopmeyer

Kahn, Dees, Donavan, and Kahn, LLP  
501 Main Street, Suite 305  
Evansville, Indiana 47708  
(812) 423-3183  
mschopmeyer@kddk.com

## Committees

### Administration

Reviews and approves all operational contracts, oversees policy revisions and personnel matters.

### Mackenzie Black – Chair

Joseph Kiefer, II  
Joshua Armstrong

### Finance

Reviews, and reports on the monthly and annual operating statements to the board. Makes recommendations and approves the annual budget including all Total Capital Investment (TCI) funding requests.

### Alexis Berggren – Chair

Mackenzie Black  
Rita Patel

### Marketing

Makes recommendations to and approves the Visit Evansville annual marketing plan including the annual goals and objectives.

### Joshua Armstrong – Chair

Ali Hashemy  
Wendy White



The year 2020 will live in infamy as the tourism industry and the rest of the world felt the impact of COVID-19. By mid-March, businesses were closed, travel plans canceled, and workers were either furloughed or sent home to continue working. We know that these figures from 2020 will tell a very different story of Evansville's tourism economy than we're used to, but we're working tirelessly toward a post-COVID recovery so that we can see tourism thrive here again.

Meetings and conventions planned for 2020 were rescheduled or canceled, except the Ohio Valley Conference. The sudden halt in travel affected Visit Evansville since we receive 2.5% of hotel bed tax as part of our revenue.

We finished the year down 38% in hotel bed tax revenue compared to 2019.

This is on trend

nationally as its predicted that the United States saw a 31% decrease in travel spending through June 2020.<sup>1</sup>

Additionally, Visit Evansville closed its Visitor Information Center in late March for the health and safety of our staff and community. We reopened it in July but continue to restrict the number of individuals inside.

With the announcement of Governor Holcomb's Back on Track stages to reopening, Evansville Sports Complex was able to host several outdoor tournaments. The Deaconess Sports Park staff and management rose to the occasion. We

overcame the challenge of implementing social distancing guidelines for the remaining games and we successfully hosted several tournaments without incident. We are fortunate that Evansville could lean on our strong outdoor youth sports market during this time.

Light use of indoor facilities also resumed, with the Old National Events Plaza utilized by the local government as a meeting space and voting site, despite being unable to host conventions.

Youth sports will return in 2021, barring any governmental restrictions related to COVID-19. We remain hopeful that in the summer of 2021, we will see the leisure and corporate travelers return as well as the slow but steady recovery of the meetings and convention market.

While our work toward post-COVID recovery will require a new kind of determination, the team remains focused on Visit Evansville's 2021 sales and marketing plan. We welcome your support—and your engagement in various initiatives—to make that happen.

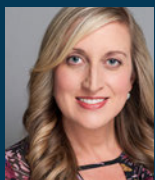
*We remain hopeful... we will see the leisure and corporate travelers return...*

Jim Wood  
President & CEO



1. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1109533/coronavirus-travel-spending-impact-us/>

## VISIT EVANSVILLE TEAM



**Megan Heronemus**  
Director of Sales



**Laura Peck**  
Senior Sales Manager



**Morgan Locher**  
Sales Manager



**Hailey Reynolds**  
Marketing & Communications Manager



**Tim Fulton**  
Evansville Sports Complex Director of Sports Facilities



**Cate Simon**  
Evansville Sports Complex Program & Events Manager



**Angela Statz**  
Visitors Center Manager



**Julia Pillow**  
Director of Administration

Evansville Sports Complex continues to thrive in 2020.

# A GRAND SLAM

The ability to host outdoor youth sports at the Evansville Sports Complex gave Visit Evansville and the Evansville tourism sector a welcome boost over the typically busy summer months. While down from years prior, we hosted

21 tournaments and 929 teams with an economic impact of nearly \$10.3 million. Our strength in sports set us apart from other communities during the pandemic response.

## EVANSVILLE SPORTS COMPLEX



**ECONOMIC IMPACT**  
**\$8,973,190**

**TOURNAMENTS**  
**19**

**TEAMS**  
**829**

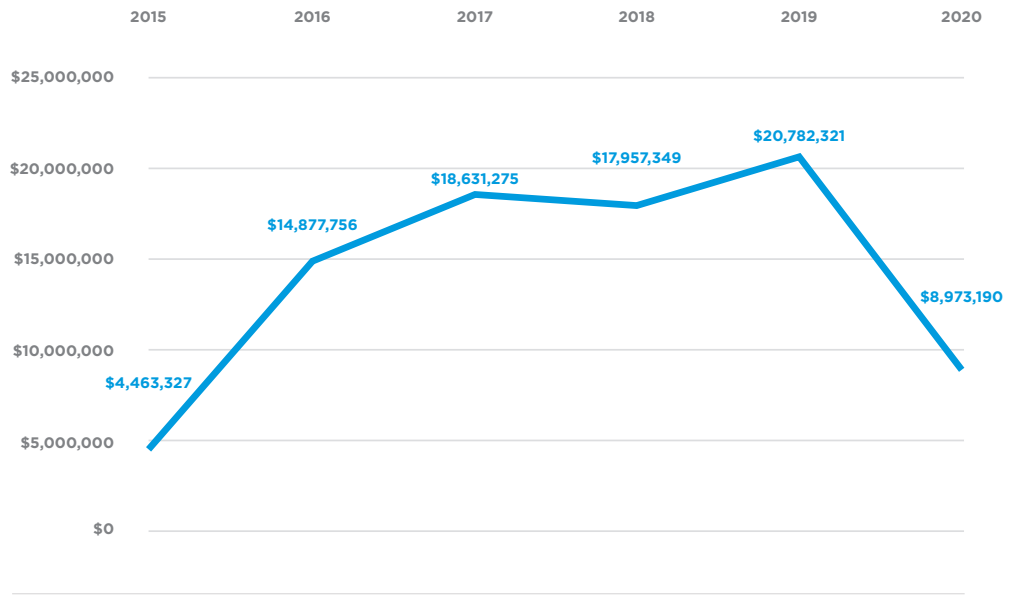


**ECONOMIC IMPACT**  
**\$1,324,080**

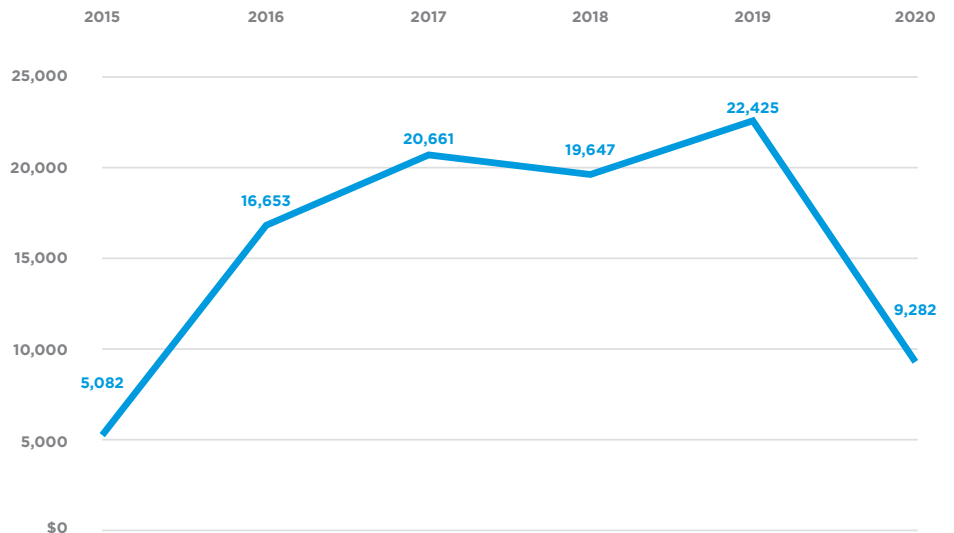
**TOURNAMENTS**  
**2**

**TEAMS**  
**100**

### DEACONESS SPORTS PARK ECONOMIC IMPACT (2015-2020)



### DEACONESS SPORTS PARK ROOM NIGHTS GENERATED (2015-2020)



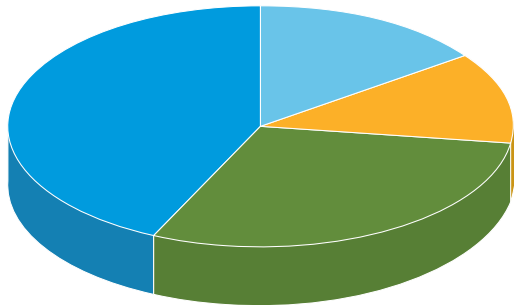
# 2020 FINANCIALS

2020 was a very challenging year in forecasting and managing a budget that needed to remain fluid throughout the year. Due to COVID-19, Visit Evansville reduced its overall operating budget from \$1,800,000 to \$1,200,000.

Visit Evansville submitted and received assistance from the Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) and chose not to fill several full-time positions to provide some budget relief. With the addition of PPP support, our budget was augmented to \$1,370,305.

## BUDGET OVERVIEW

An overview of Visit Evansville’s budget allocation is shown below.



Administration	\$586,763.96
Sports	\$407,972.46
Meetings and Conventions	\$209,052.64
Marketing	\$166,516.30

## FURTHER DETAILS

Find more detail regarding Visit Evansville financial statements by clicking the buttons below or visiting [VisitEvansville.com/2020](http://VisitEvansville.com/2020).

[Visitors Center Corporation Financials](#)

[Evansville Sports Complex Financials](#)

## DETAIL

### CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

Revenue	\$1,261,571.63
Expenses	\$1,370,305.34
Change in Net Assets	(\$108,733.71)
Net Assets Beginning	\$783,955.36
Encumbrances Released	\$1,087.66
Net Assets Ending	\$676,309.31
PPP Funds Received	\$138,900.00

Reported in Financials - Modified Cash Basis

### EVANSVILLE SPORTS PARK - DEACONESS SPORTS PARK

Revenues	\$377,704.64
Expenses*	\$602,514.50
Change in Net Assets from Operating Activities	(\$202,809.86)
CVB Contribution for Capital Improvements	\$92,492.33
CVB Operating Subsidy	\$194,027.16
Change in Net Assets	\$83,709.21
Net Assets Beginning	\$55,303.21
Net Assets Ending	\$139,012.84
PPP Funds Received	\$70,975.35

\*\$3,716.93 of that is Depreciation

### EVANSVILLE SPORTS PARK - GOEBEL SPORTS PARK

Revenues	\$75,570.84
Expenses**	\$376,717.58
Change in Net Assets from Operating Activities	(\$301,146.74)
CVB Contribution for Goebel Improvements	(\$78,560.73)
Goebel/City Management Agreement	\$157,437.92
Change in Net Assets	(\$222,269.55)
Net Assets Beginning	\$2,228,423.00
Net Assets Ending	\$2,006,153.45

\*\*\$91,665.45 of that is Depreciation

### EVANSVILLE VISITORS CENTER

Revenues	\$43,941.29
Expenses	\$90,644.29
Change in Net Assets	(\$46,703.00)
Net Assets Beginning	\$52,608.78
Net Assets Ending	\$5,905.78

# BY THE NUMBERS

The staff at Visit Evansville worked diligently to both maintain and move the needle forward. We surpassed the industry average in multiple data points as well as stayed

on par with and even outperformed other cities in our compset. We're optimistic that the time invested in building relationships in 2020 will be fruitful in the future.

## WE MADE A FEW CALLS

# 9,800+

Meeting and event planners received direct mail, email blasts, calls, and one-on-one emails.



## WE OUTPERFORMED

# +21.6%

2020 Evansville Hotel Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR) = \$36.41. 2020 US Hotel RevPAR = \$29.94. Evansville outperformed the industry average by \$6.47.



## NOT TOO DOWN

# -\$10.40



Average Daily Rate (ADR) declined in 2020 by -10.8% from 2019. Evansville's ADR finished just under the national average by -\$10.40 but placed 3rd for the year versus the compset.

The Evansville, IN compset includes the following eight cities: Ft. Wayne, IN; Terre Haute, IN; South Bend-Mishawaka, IN-MI; Indianapolis, IN; Bowling Green, KY; Louisville, KY; Owensboro, KY; Springfield, IL.

## ZOOM ZOOM ZOOM

# 203



We had a lot of Zoom meetings. Ranging from one-on-ones, appointments, and group presentations.

We made a few backgrounds too!



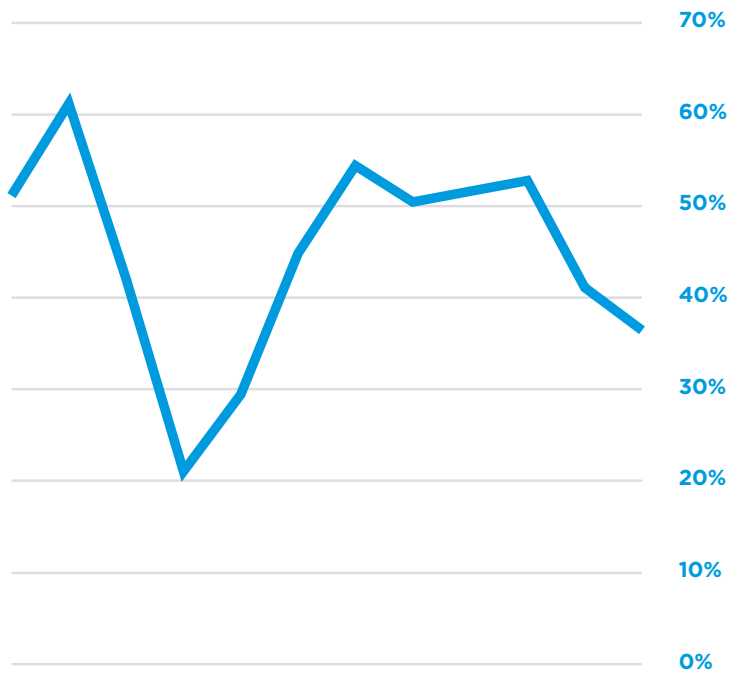


**WE OUTPERFORMED  
(AGAIN)**

**+12.1%**

2020 Evansville Hotel Occupancy = 44.6%. 2020 US Hotel Occupancy = 32.5%. Evansville outperformed the industry average by 12.1%.

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC



2020 Evansville Occupancy exceeded Indianapolis by 4.8% and Louisville by 8.9%.



In April of 2020, Visit Evansville added four Zoom backgrounds to the website. Check them out and promote the Evansville Region on your next call: [VisitEvansville.com/zoom](http://VisitEvansville.com/zoom)





# BOOKING FOR THE FUTURE

COVID had a significant impact on our meeting and convention business in 2020. From late March through the end of 2020, we saw 37 meetings and conventions cancel. (30,269 room nights and an estimated economic impact of \$22,163,799)

Before the spread of COVID-19, the tourism and travel industry contributed over \$700 million annually to the Evansville/Vanderburgh economy, including \$200 million in tax revenue support for over 7,000 jobs.

## CURRENT FUTURES TOTALS

### ECONOMIC IMPACT

\$16,191,232

### ROOM NIGHTS

28,155

### ATTENDEES

4,445

### MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

34



## USA Softball Girls 14UA National Championship

DATES

**July 19-24, 2022**

ROOM NIGHTS

**3,900**

ECONOMIC IMPACT

**\$1,700,000**





2



## Ohio Valley Conference Tournament Mens & Womens Basketball

2021  
March 3-7

DATES  
2022  
March 2-6

2023  
February 28-March 4

ROOM NIGHTS  
**3,000**  
FOR ALL 3 YEARS

ECONOMIC IMPACT  
**\$1,492,083**



3



## International Jugglers Association Festival

DATES  
July 13-19, 2025

ROOM NIGHTS  
**1,000**

ECONOMIC IMPACT  
**\$1,299,899**



4



### National Beta Club Indiana State Convention

DATES  
November 18-20, 2021

ROOM NIGHTS  
**1,005**

ECONOMIC IMPACT  
**\$675,675**



5



### Massey Expo of North American — Indiana

DATES  
June 9-13, 2021

ROOM NIGHTS  
**540**

ECONOMIC IMPACT  
**\$483,588**



6



### PKC Super Stakes Coon Hound Competition

DATES  
April 5-10, 2021

ROOM NIGHTS  
**500**

ECONOMIC IMPACT  
**\$432,853**



7

### Indiana League of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers

DATES  
June 5-10, 2021

ROOM NIGHTS  
**965**

ECONOMIC IMPACT  
**\$352,758**



8

### Illinois Oil & Gas Convention

DATES  
October 20-22, 2021

ROOM NIGHTS  
**550**

ECONOMIC IMPACT  
**\$329,487**



9

### Kentucky High School Hockey League

DATES  
February 28-30, 2020

ROOM NIGHTS  
**300**

ECONOMIC IMPACT  
**\$194,243**



10

### Psi Iota Xi National Convention

DATES  
June 23-25, 2023

ROOM NIGHTS  
**250**

ECONOMIC IMPACT  
**\$168,659**



A few highlights of the past year.

# A LOOK BACK & ONWARD

## CALL TO ACTION

Evansville Convention & Visitors Bureau rebranded its name to Visit Evansville, a call to action and synonymous with the hospitality industry,



2012-2020



2020



## WE HAVE LIFT-OFF

Launched a 10-year Tourism and Destination Management Master Plan study. Completion date set for March 2021.

Mark your calendars



## TARGET MARKETING

Visit Evansville rebranded several sales markets to be more in line with the changing landscape of our industry—Tour Evansville, Film Evansville, and Visit Evansville Sports.



## TIME TO SHINE

Visit Evansville was awarded the 2020 Supplier of the Year Star Award by the Indiana Society Association Executives



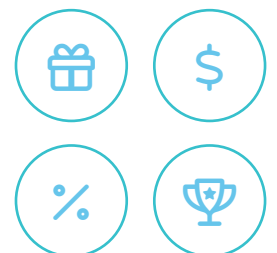
## TO THOSE THAT SERVED

Developed a direct mail campaign to attract planners within the Military reunion market.



## NEW INCENTIVE

Created an incentive plan to attract new convention business from 2021-2025 to Old National Events Plaza.



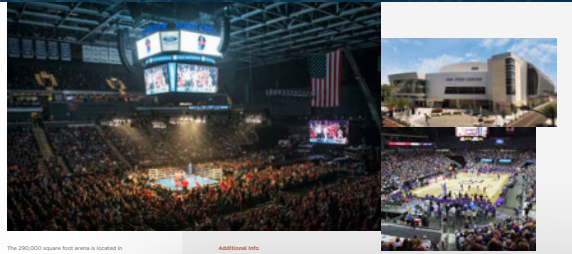


**MULTI-PURPOSE VENUES**

Beautiful architecture and design make this Certified LEED Silver multi-purpose facility unique. It features flexible floor space suitable for basketball, hockey, gymnastics, or any indoor event.

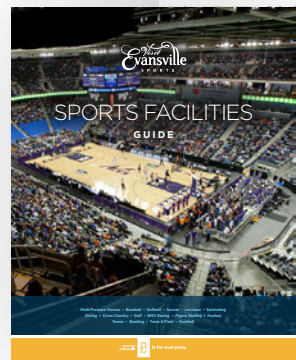
**Ford Center**

FordCenter.com  
1 St. Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Evansville, IN 47708



## LET'S PLAY BALL

Developed a new Sports Facilities Guide to highlight venues and services available.



Center is a 100,000-sq-ft arena located in Downtown Evansville, Indiana. The arena features a flexible floor space suitable for basketball, hockey, gymnastics, or any indoor event. The arena is a 100,000-sq-ft arena located in Downtown Evansville at the corner of Main Street and Martin Luther King Boulevard. It is the home of the Evansville Thunderbolts, our professional hockey team, and the University of Evansville men's and women's basketball programs. It attracts major exhibitions, sporting events, and conferences.



**Deaconess Sports Park**

DeaconessSportsPark.com  
1000 West Washington Street, Evansville, IN 47710

The Deaconess Sports Park is a multi-use facility located in Downtown Evansville, Indiana. The park features a baseball field, softball field, and tennis courts. It is the home of the Evansville Otis Softball Team and the Evansville Otis Baseball Team. The park is a multi-use facility located in Downtown Evansville, Indiana. It features a baseball field, softball field, and tennis courts. It is the home of the Evansville Otis Softball Team and the Evansville Otis Baseball Team.



**Deaconess Aquatic Center**

DeaconessAquaticCenter.com  
1000 West Washington Street, Evansville, IN 47710

The Deaconess Aquatic Center is a multi-use facility located in Downtown Evansville, Indiana. The center features an indoor pool, outdoor pool, and tennis courts. It is the home of the Evansville Otis Aquatic Club. The center is a multi-use facility located in Downtown Evansville, Indiana. It features an indoor pool, outdoor pool, and tennis courts. It is the home of the Evansville Otis Aquatic Club.



## FIVE MORE YEARS

5-year extension to manage the Goebel Soccer Complex through 2026.



## ON THE LOOKOUT

Contracted with SiteSearch, LLC to manage our future hotel housing requirements.

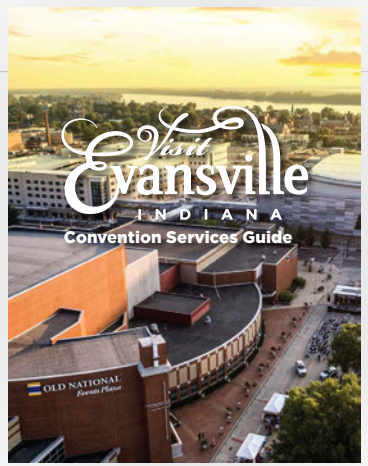


## MAKING A STATEMENT

A new brand standard manual was created for our new name and rebranded market segments.

## READY TO BE OF SERVICE

Launched a Convention Services Guide to provide guidance to event and meeting planners.



# TOP ATTRACTIONS TO WATCH

*While the pandemic created a loss in attendance for Evansville's top attractions, watch for them to come back big in 2021.*

The opening of Deaconess Aquatic Center and Penguins of Patagonia at Mesker Park Zoo & Botanic Garden will bring even more excitement this year as well as the return of some signature Evansville-area events.

**3,849**

2020 VISITORS

ANGEL MOUNDS  
5,213 Visitors in 2019. 26% decline.



**5,081**

2020 VISITORS

EVANSVILLE MUSEUM OF ARTS, HISTORY, & SCIENCE  
21,843 Visitors in 2019. 77% decline.



TROPICANA  
30% reduction in tax revenue in 2020.



EVANSVILLE WARTIME MUSEUM  
The Wartime Museum welcomed home a wartime hero. A fully-functional P-47 built in Evansville during World War II was brought back home for permanent display.

**47,364**

2020 VISITORS

KOCH FAMILY CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF EVANSVILLE (CMOE)  
83,046 Visitors in 2019. 43% decline.



**89,063**

2020 VISITORS

MESKER PARK ZOO & BOTANIC GARDEN  
173,820 Visitors in 2019. 49% decline.



**939**

2020 VISITORS

REITZ HOME MUSEUM  
4,312 Visitors in 2019.  
78% decline.



**160,000**

2020 VISITORS

BURDETTE PARK &  
AQUATIC CENTER  
260,000 Visitors in 2019.  
38% decline.



**4,647**

2020 VISITORS

LST-325 MUSEUM  
8,721 Visitors in 2019.  
47% decline.



EVANSVILLE AFRICAN

EVANSVILLE AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM  
Visitors not available at time of publication.



**0**

2020 VISITORS

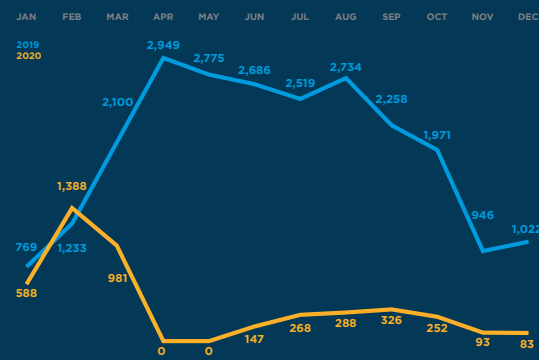
BOSSE FIELD - HOME OF THE EVANSVILLE OTTERS  
100,051 Visitors in 2019. 100% decline.



WESSELMAN WOODS & NATURE PLAYScape  
Visitors not available at time of publication.

# VISITORS CENTER TRAFFIC

The upward trend in traffic halted in early 2020 and was restricted for the rest of the year. In an effort to emphasize efficiencies, we elected to reuse our 2020 Visitors Guides in 2021.



**4,414**

Visitors to  
Visitors Center  
23,962 2019 visitors.  
81.57% reduction.

**6,775**

Visitors Guides  
delivered to partner  
convention and  
visitors bureaus.

**335**

Guides request online  
2,904 2019 requests.  
88.46% reduction.



# DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

Exploring Visit Evansville's online reach.

Visit Evansville's online presence keeps us top-of-mind, especially in a year when it was easier to visit us digitally. In 2020, we were able to get fresh eyes on our brand, like 81% new visitors to the site and a new TikTok averaging over 1,000 views per post.

## TOP 10 PAGES

Most of our top pages fall under 'things to do'. Sports tournaments drove a lot of traffic in 2020.

1	Home	26,143
2	Attractions	24,682
3	Events	19,152
4	Restaurants	9,922
5	Deaconess Sports Park	8,190
6	Ritzly's Fantasy of Lights	8,159
7	One Life Studio Suites	7,982
8	Accommodations	7,362
9	Deaconess Sports Park Tournaments	7,164
10	Instagram (Blog Post)	4,498

## TOP 10 GEOGRAPHY (U.S.A.)

Five of the top 10 states were outside the Midwest and only three are contiguous to Indiana.

1	Indiana	60,805
2	Kentucky	15,127
3	Georgia	14,817
4	Illinois	11,498
5	Tennessee	6,230
6	Ohio	4,420
7	Missouri	4,087
8	Texas	1,741
9	North Carolina	1,678
10	California	1,523

## WHAT IS A GOOD STAT?

We want to maintain a lower bounce rate, so an 18% decrease is positive. An 81% increase in new visitors, as well as a 2% uptick in pages per session, indicates people are engaging with content on the site.

# 368,796

Pageviews

818,947 pageviews in 2019.  
Decrease of 54.97%.



# 116,093

Users

287,444 users in 2019.  
Decrease of 59.61%.



# 2.60

Pages / Session

2.19 pages/session in 2019.  
Increase of 2.19%.



# 49.40%

Bounce Rate

60.70% bounce rate in 2019.  
Decrease of 18.62%.



# 81.2%

New Visitors

76% new visitors in 2019.  
Increase of 6.84%.



# 63.96%

Mobile

71.37% mobile in 2019.  
Decrease of 10.38%.



# 2,179

Instagram Followers

We are noticing significant increases in engagement and impressions in 2021.



# 22,122

Facebook Followers

Slight decrease from 22,191 in 2019.  
Decrease likely due to the suspension of the digital program.



# 1,067

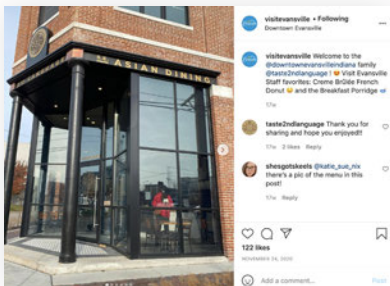
Average TikTok Views per Post

In 2020, we launched our TikTok channel!  
We currently have 102 followers.



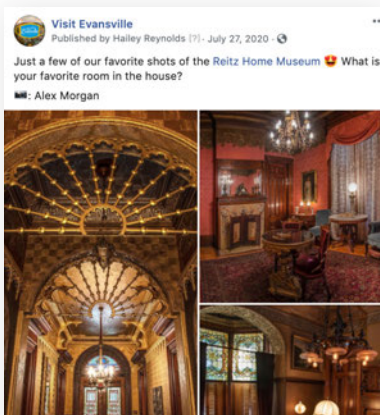
### TOP 3 POSTS

- 1 2nd Language Opening
- 2 River City Wings promotion
- 3 Self.e Alley promotion



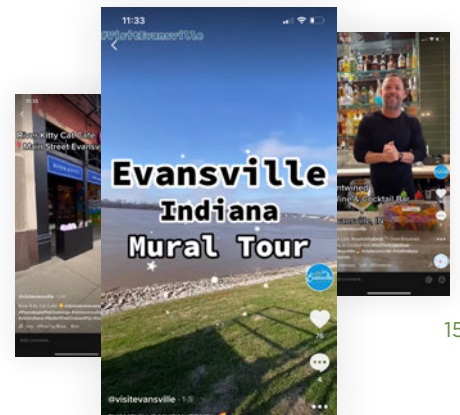
### TOP 3 POSTS

- 1 Reitz Home Museum promotion
- 2 River City Wings promotion
- 3 Evansville's 208th Birthday



### TOP 3 POSTS

- 1 Evansville Mural Tour
- 2 River Kitty Cat Cafe feature
- 3 Entwined Bar feature



# ON THE HORIZON



## 2020 Annual Report

401 SE Riverside Drive  
Evansville, Indiana 47713  
(800) 433-3025

[VisitEvansville.com](http://VisitEvansville.com)

