

# 2020

## ANNUAL REPORT



On Wednesday, May 6, 2020 the Green Bay bridges were lit in purple, hospitality's symbolic color during National Travel & Tourism Week.





## Dear Community & Tourism Industry Stakeholders,

The Greater Green Bay Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) Board of Directors, management and staff would like to provide you with our 2020 Annual Report. The global tourism and hospitality industry experienced unimaginable challenges and anguish in 2020. As travel ground to a near halt and our industry slid into a depression, the world was reminded of the critical economic role tourism plays, employing thousands in our community and generating millions in critical tax revenue used to pay for local amenities and services that support our quality of life.

As you peruse our report, you will learn about the many ways the CVB responded to support our tourism industry, our community and our staff. Although we were forced to slash our budget, our focus remained on supporting our clients, marketing and selling our community and assisting our tourism industry partners.

The CVB Board of Directors saw the management through five budget revisions and ended the year with a balanced budget. This process included a combination of budget cuts (primarily travel and programming), staff wage reductions (entire staff) and furloughs (entire staff rotated). One position has been eliminated until our recovery is complete.

Our community opened the spectacular new Resch Expo Center in January and our exposition and sports clients are loving what they see! With 125,000 square feet of pillar-free space, it is a fabulous asset that will serve our community for many years to come.

2020 was a year filled with unprecedented challenges. As we begin to rebuild our tattered tourism industry, we are extremely grateful for the resilient tourism professionals that will bring tourism back stronger than ever.



*Steve Ninham*

Steve Ninham,  
CVB Board Chair



*Brad Toll*

Brad Toll,  
CVB President & CEO

## MISSION Statement

The Greater Green Bay Convention & Visitors Bureau is the regional destination marketing organization committed to improving the visitor experience, and increasing the economic impact of tourism for its communities to enhance the quality of life for all residents.

We use these values and guiding principles to deliver on customer promises.

- Professionalism
- Accountability
- Community-based
- Partnership-oriented
- Innovation
- Dedication
- Effectiveness
- High Ethics



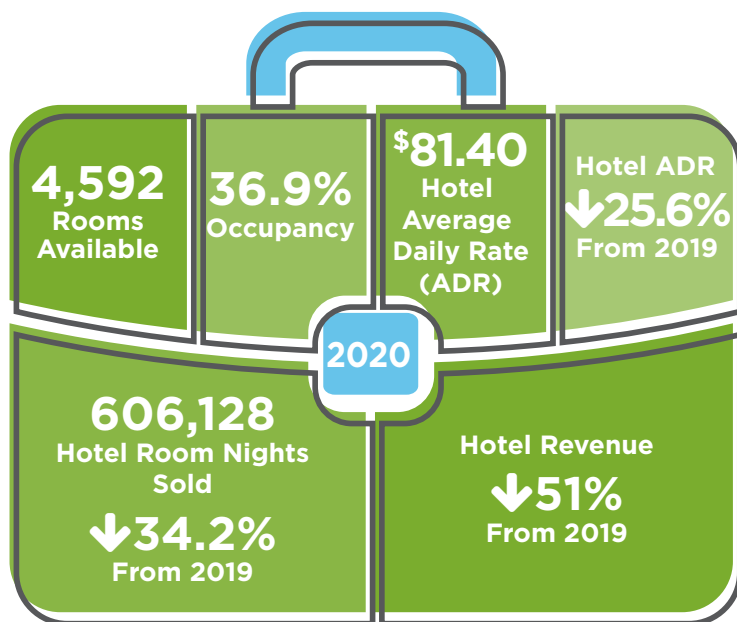
We are internationally accredited by Destinations International, the world's largest tourism trade association.



# 2020 LODGING INDUSTRY



While the lodging industry was decimated by the COVID-19 pandemic, Green Bay's MSA occupancy consistently ranked in the top three in Wisconsin throughout 2020. The My Place Hotel located on Holmgren Way in Ashwaubenon brought 64 new hotel rooms to our inventory in December, growing our total to 4,592.



CVB STAFF  
HOLDS **15**  
positions on Boards

CVB HOLDS  
MEMBERSHIP  
with Industry Associations  
and Local Organizations

**16** National  
**14** State  
**11** Local

## 6 TOURISM ISSUES

- Visitor Center Funding Support
- Opposition of changing September 1 school start date
- Technical changes to room tax collection from marketplaces
- Support American Recovery Act funding for tourism via State
- Increase state tourism marketing funds
- Maintain Room Tax Law

## Advocacy

The global tourism industry was devastated by the pandemic in 2020, and Brown County tourism was not immune. As our Annual Report indicates, our numbers dropped tragically to record lows. The CVB turned its focus on our own community to do all we could to help our industry survive.

The Governor's "Safer at Home" order on March 25, closed many tourism businesses for at least four weeks. The CVB worked with state and local officials to sort out which businesses were considered essential and allowed to operate. It was important to communicate which businesses were open to our residents, as well as visitors coming to our community. Our website was a leading source of local information, with social and digital media directing people to the site.

Through our partnerships with the U.S. Travel Association and Destinations International, we immediately began advocating for federal assistance to help tourism businesses including lodging, restaurants, attractions/entertainment venues, retail and transportation. Our partnerships department sent weekly emails providing details on grant programs and provided links to application forms and fact sheets. We wrote hundreds of letters of support for partners requesting grants from various sources.

We worked with Destinations Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Department of Tourism to develop grant programs to distribute CARES Act funds funneled through the State of Wisconsin to aid numerous facets of the tourism industry.

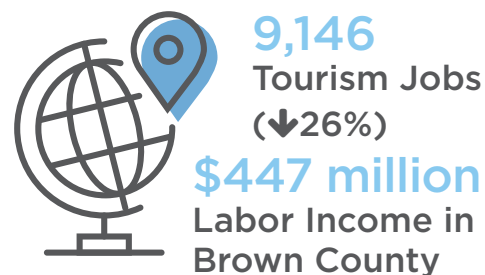
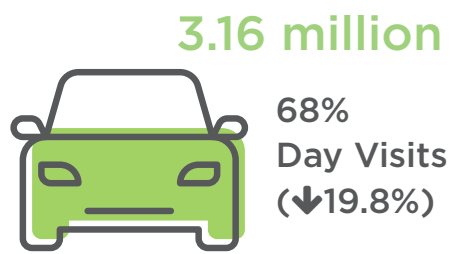
We worked with the Brown County Health Department and our lodging partners to define new protocols for meeting and gathering safely. This included moving away from a random number restriction (no more than 25 people at one time) to basing the maximum number on the capacity of the room and ability to follow protocols. This allowed our meeting/event venues to host larger gatherings with social distancing.

We worked with local craft breweries to grant the profits from a charitable brewing project called, "All Together" to eight local tourism businesses who needed a lift during the pandemic. Special thanks to our friends at Badger State Brewing Company and Noble Roots Brewing Company for giving back when they were struggling themselves.



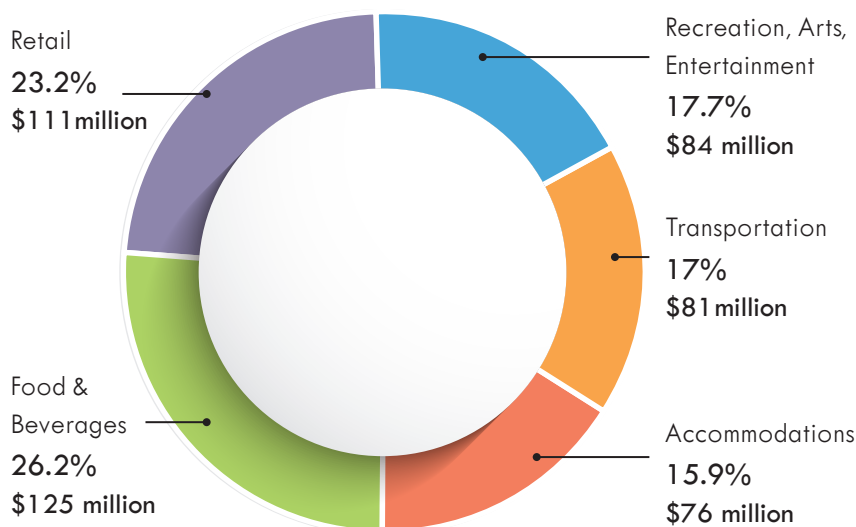
# 2020 TOURISM IMPACT

**4.7 Million** people visited Brown County



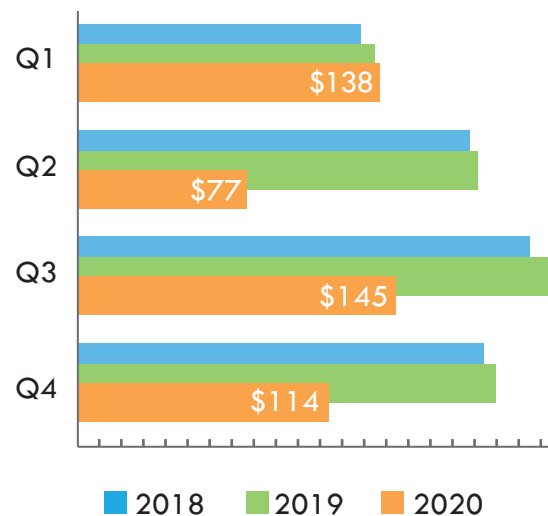
Brown County tourism generated **\$37.8 million** in local taxes.

**\$476 Million** (↓34%)  
Brown County Visitor Expenditures



Direct Visitor Spending includes hotels, retailers, restaurants, attractions, transportation services and other businesses, and supports jobs in Brown County.

**Brown County Visitor Spending by Season**  
\$ Millions



Brown County ranks **#5** for visitor spending in Wisconsin following Milwaukee, Sauk, Dane, and Waukesha counties.

Without taxes generated by tourism, each Brown County household would need to pay **\$485** to maintain the current level of government services.

greater  
**green bay**  
convention & visitors bureau

2020 Research Provided by Tourism Economics,  
Wayne, Pennsylvania.



# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

TOTAL NUMBER  
OF PARTNERS **311**

## Membership by Category

	Culinary	34%
	Attractions & Entertainment	38%
	Accommodations	16%
	Shopping & Retail	11%
	Nightlife	1%

The CVB is a membership-based organization. Businesses that join the CVB want to promote themselves to out-of-town guests. We provide business referrals, sales leads, media recognition, networking and education opportunities. Our staff keeps tourism partners in front of the traveling public by featuring them in advertising, local and national media stories, promotional materials and [www.GreenBay.com](http://www.GreenBay.com).

But the days of typical activities like recruiting new partners, hosting networking events, and hospitality training like the Tourism Insider Program came to a drastic halt. This department made a pivot to partner advocacy and support. Seeking out grant opportunities, attending virtual meetings with local health officials, and exploring ways of promoting our partners in the safest way possible for both locals and visitors became the norm.

## Restaurant Take-out Dining Directory

We recognized our restaurant partners were transitioning to take out and delivery only. Their hours of operation were adjusting based on the availability of staff and their exposure to Covid-19. Our team scoured Facebook and websites to compile a comprehensive list of options for diners and created a page on [www.GreenBay.com](http://www.GreenBay.com).

## CVB Face Book Group

With the ever-changing health and safety guidelines, communication with our tourism businesses was essential. The CVB created a Facebook Group where we can easily share information, and local hospitality networking can occur. This tool has proven to be very helpful for sharing grant opportunities, publicity and industry hot topics.

## Grant Letters

One of the many steps to receiving state and federal pandemic relief grant dollars was through an acknowledgement letter from an organization such as the CVB. This was an opportunity for us to speak to the value and talent of each business and business owner. Hundreds of these letters were crafted benefitting the many partners who were awarded money.

## Green Bay Restaurant Week

The 8th Annual Green Bay Restaurant Week was held in September instead of July to allow everyone extra time for preparation. We also wanted our visitors and the community to feel dining out was safe and readily available. We added options like "take out" and "outdoor dining" to [www.GBRestaurantWeek.com](http://www.GBRestaurantWeek.com). With 40 restaurants participating, 24,000 meals were sold with \$525,000 in economic impact.



## All Together Hospitality & Tourism Grant

CVB partners, Badger State Brewing and Noble Roots Brewing joined a global effort to brew an open-source beer recipe. All proceeds were distributed to local tourism businesses that needed assistance during the pandemic. We were able to grant \$1,000 to eight businesses. There was a total of 50 applicants.





# MARKETING

The CVB marketing team is responsible for promoting tourism businesses throughout Brown County and heightening the awareness of our destination. The markets we work in are leisure travel, convention sales, sports events, group travel, cruising and international leisure tourism. We create promotional materials, secure paid advertising, oversee several websites, analyze data and manage social media channels.

Marketing plans were set aside after realizing the longevity of the pandemic. There were several budget adjustments throughout the year and changes in availability of contracted media had us redirecting available funds to online initiatives. Our advertising acted as travel inspiration for all those who were dreaming of their next vacation or event location. Targeted campaigns ran throughout the year using video storytelling, contests, visuals featuring outdoor recreation and safe travel ideas.



## E-Newsletter



### Plan Now, Meet Later with a Virtual FAM Tour of Greater Green Bay

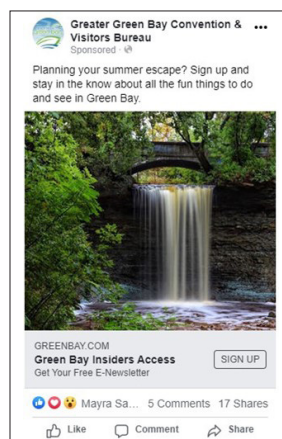
Since we can't meet in person right now, we want to remind you that we are here to assist you as you plan your future meetings and conventions in 2021 and beyond. When you are ready to meet again, we'll be ready to welcome you to Green Bay with open arms.

Our e-newsletters were an excellent way to stay in regular contact with leisure travelers, meeting planners, sports planners, motorcoach operators and CVB partners. The content had very little sales messaging, but included safety and cleanliness information, inspirational photography, self-guided and virtual activities and updates about tourism businesses. Our lists have a total of 123,131 recipients.

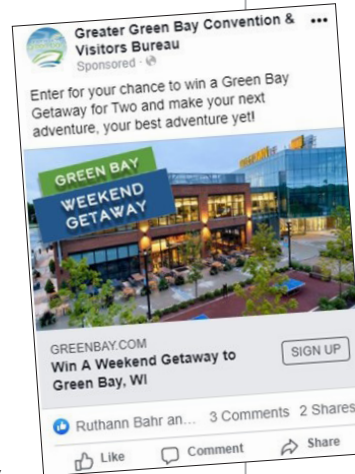
## Experience Greater Green Bay From Home



Take a [virtual tour](#) through Greater Green Bay with this video for a taste of all the things to do and see. We can always dream now and travel later.



## Online Engagement



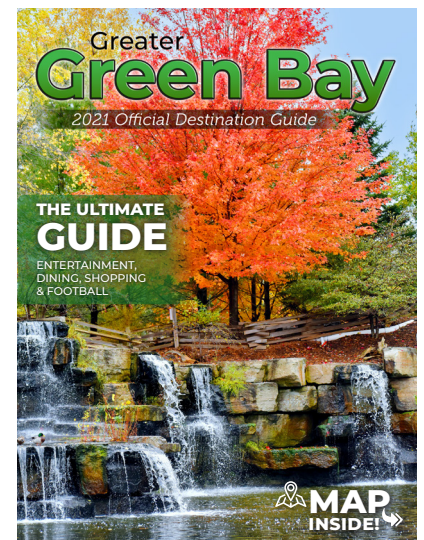
**8.1 Million**  
SOCIAL MEDIA  
IMPRESSIONS

**↑56%**



TOTAL  
WEBSITE VISITORS  
**406,001**  
**↓19%**

WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS  
**1,273,974**  
**↓38%**



The Green Bay Destination Guide is the main fulfillment piece for inquiries. While distribution of our guide to outlying market display racks slowed, online and print advertising boosted requests for the guide to be mailed direct to homes.



# COMMUNICATIONS

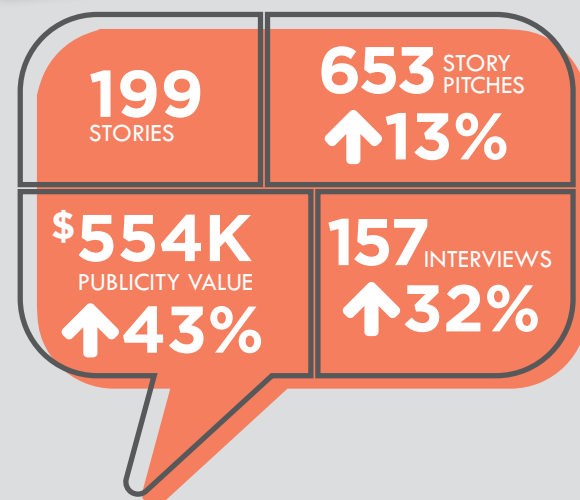
With very few writers traveling, we rallied around the relationships we had and secured stories in several publications. We distributed the Green Bay Destination Guide to 525 journalists who previously visited or inquired about our destination. We wanted to remind them of our attractions as they were writing stories from home. They were interested in topics like hotel cleanliness best practices, virtual programming, to-go cocktail kits and outdoor recreation. We were able to host six journalists in person in the second half of the year on individual research trips.



Locally, the Green Bay and Milwaukee media outlets checked in regularly to report on losses of economic impact and local tourism industry struggles. While many of these stories were hard reporting and necessary communications, we did have the opportunity to promote positive impact stories.

The press covered all of the innovative programming that the CVB worked on including Go 920, the Virtual Tailgate Facebook group, the self-guided Green Bay Mystery Field Trip and the Greater Green Bay Scavenger Hunt. Additionally, interest was high for annual events like The Big Bundle Up and Green Bay Restaurant Week.

Our messaging on social media evolved throughout the year, taking into consideration traveler sentiment and the status of the pandemic. Outdoor recreation, patio dining, local health guidelines and socially distanced safe events played a key role in keeping us connected with our online followers. We also took advantage of messaging ideas shared by the U.S. Travel Association.





# CONVENTION SALES

Our sales staff travels throughout the state and nationally searching for business that is a good match for our destination. Before the sales shows began in 2020, they were cancelled along with any event that gathered people. It is estimated that lost meetings and conventions business to Greater Green Bay topped \$100 million. The pandemic brought uncertainty to planners. Wellness and safety of their participants were in the forefront with very little eagerness to rebook events until a vaccine was approved. To stay engaged with our clients, we created these tools:



On December 9, 2020 a press conference was held at Resch Expo to announce that the Great Lakes Timber Professionals would hold their Logging & Heavy Equipment Expo in September 2022 and 2024 at Resch Expo after a 10-year Green Bay hiatus. The event brings 6,000 attendees.

## Covid-19 Toolbox

The sales and marketing team worked together on a Covid-19 Toolbox, a website landing page of resources for meeting and event planners. This page included updated information on policies and procedures in Brown County, as well as information from our hotel brands on their safety procedures. The webpage continued to be updated with safe travel practices, cleanliness standards and information from Green Bay Austin Straubel International Airport. In addition, we used this opportunity to promote bringing your meeting home and hosting in your own backyard, reducing travel and health risks for staff and attendees. This go-to resource was included in social media posts, targeted e-newsletters and sent in direct emails from our sales team.



### COVID-19 TOOLKIT

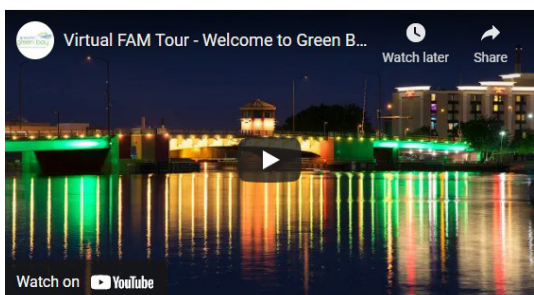
Plan your next meeting or event in Green Bay worry-free with these tools and resources to keep your staff, attendees and guests safe and healthy.

[LEARN MORE](#)

## Virtual Familiarization Tours

Since we couldn't attend shows and meet planners in person, or host planner visits, we created virtual tours. We interviewed and took video at our hotels with meeting spaces. We also did a video walk-through of the almost-completed, Resch Expo. This was an opportunity for the hotels to show their space, as well as talk about health and safety measures they implemented. These FAM tours allowed planners to select specific properties to see...or view them all. We sent this out

to our e-newsletter database and also showcased each of the properties that participated on our LinkedIn page over several weeks. We received great feedback from the planners who were looking for information, but weren't able to travel.



## 2020 Convention Highlights

### Forest Lakes District – Evangelical Free Church of America

3,800 people  
2,300 room nights  
\$2 Million Economic Impact

### Wisconsin Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs Association

400 people  
835 room nights  
\$429,000 Economic Impact

### Wisconsin Arborist Association

700 people  
650 room nights  
\$337,000 Economic Impact



69,783 Room Night confirmed for future years, generating economic impact of \$49.7 million

Total impact of conventions held in 2020 was \$19.9 million



Leads sent have the potential economic impact of \$41.3 million



# SPORTS SALES

Greater Green Bay was ready to host the WIAA Girls State Basketball Tournament in early March. Hotel welcome signs were in place and the boulevard banners were on display. The first four teams competed in the Division 3 and 4 semi-finals. The event was abruptly cancelled in what would be the first of many events to be cancelled or postponed.

With many cities and counties closing event facilities, venues in Brown County established safety and cleanliness guidelines, so events could be held. Cornerstone Community Center worked to bring displaced events to Green Bay. They hosted events that were originally slated for Pittsburgh and Chicago, with protocols in place to ensure the health and safety of players, coaches, officials and spectators. Additionally, Capital Credit Union Park established health and safety guidelines of their own and welcomed various Milwaukee-based events displaced from their event spaces. This brought additional activity to the ballpark over several summer weekends.



ROOM NIGHTS **52,940**  
Confirmed for future years

GENERATING **\$23** MILLION  
ECONOMIC IMPACT

TOTAL IMPACT **\$13.1** MILLION  
of sports events held in 2020

LEADS SENT **\$16.1** MILLION  
have the potential economic impact of

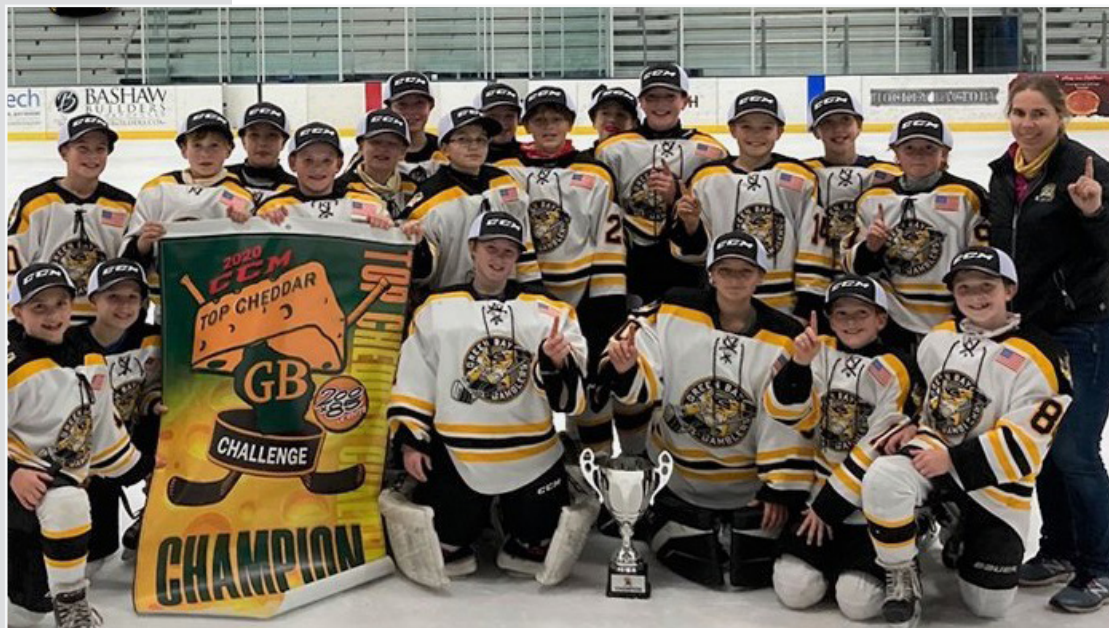
## 2020 Sports Highlights

**United States Hockey League Summer Combine**  
July 23-26  
430 players

**United States Hockey League Fall Classic**  
October 30 – November 1  
30 teams - Moved from Pittsburgh  
\$750,000+ Economic Impact

**CCM Top Cheddar Challenge**  
November 6-8  
88 teams – Moved from Chicago  
\$1.1 Million Economic Impact

**Green Bay Area Youth Hockey Association**  
George Heimbuch Tundra Tussle  
1,670 people  
1,000 Room Nights  
\$431,000 Economic Impact





# DESTINATION EXPERIENCE



Whether visiting for a convention or on a family vacation, our staff offers travel assistance and shares local knowledge with visitors to make their experience memorable. Helping convention planners, sports event organizers and the traveling public is all in a day's work for the CVB team.

The CVB's Destination Experience department offers travel assistance and shares local knowledge with visitors to make their stay in Green Bay memorable. However, 2020 saw a halt to most convention and group travel business. Some leisure travel and sports events still occurred in our destination, but the need for services was drastically reduced. Brochure distribution halted in mid-March and didn't resume until later in June.

On the flip side, people were thinking about the future and what they wanted to do when it became safe to travel again. Requests for destination guides surpassed the previous year.

We were able to attend Arti Gras February 29-March 1, with 261 visitors being assisted at this event. We exhibited at the very popular Chicago Travel & Adventure Show in February with a record-setting attendance of 26,000 people.

## DESTINATION GUIDE REQUESTS



**27,490**  
**↑11%**

## VISITOR INQUIRIES (Phone, Online, Email, Walk-ins)

**6,453**  
**↓75%**



## BROCHURES DISTRIBUTED



**206,808**  
**↓57%**



## Motor Coach Tours

While motor coach tours halted in mid-March, along with the rest of the tourism industry, the CVB did attend the American Bus Association Conference in Omaha, NE in January, and participated in the Travel Alliance Partners virtual event in June. Between the two shows, the CVB had 44 "speed dating" appointments to sell the tour operators on Green Bay and all the community has to offer. While many companies cancelled the remainder of their 2020 bus trips, Green Bay still hosted five group tours in the Fall. Many that cancelled did reschedule for 2021 or 2022.



# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The majority of the CVB's revenue typically comes from a tax added to hotel room stays. In 2020, the CVB executed five budget revisions which included program cuts, wage cuts, furloughs and a job elimination. A loss of approximately \$500,000 was expected. The State of Wisconsin provided a TRAVEL Grant\* (Tourism Relief to Accelerate Vitality and Economic Lift) which eliminated our budget deficit. It positioned us to build a deficit budget for 2021 focused on our community's tourism industry recovery efforts.

## FY2020 Revenue

	2020 BUDGET	2020 ACTUAL
Room Tax	\$2,125,950	\$864,559
Grants		\$611,500*
Online Housing Sales	\$10,000	\$6,861
Advertising Sales	\$136,450	\$79,120
Restaurant Week	\$20,500	\$4,600
Partnerships	\$72,000	\$69,168
Fees & Services	\$15,500	\$6,081
Miscellaneous	\$5,100	\$6,456
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$2,385,500</b>	<b>\$1,648,385</b>

## FY2020 Expenses

	2020 BUDGET	2020 ACTUAL
Sales & Services	\$738,776	\$505,640
Marketing	\$657,140	\$481,740
Tourism Sales	\$496,895	\$370,869
Partnerships	\$155,426	\$114,760
Operations	\$309,459	\$139,646
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,357,696</b>	<b>\$1,612,655</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$27,804</b>	<b>\$23,336</b>



CVB staff toured Resch Expo during its early construction January 2, 2020.

## Board of Directors

Ron Antonneau

*Retired Executive*

Susan Garot

*Executive Director*

*Green Bay Botanical Garden*

Charles Guthrie

*Athletic Director*

*University of Wisconsin – Green Bay*

Jason Hagar

*General Manager*

*Tundra Lodge Resort & Conference Center*

Tom Olson

*Retired Executive*

Ed Policy

*Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel*

*Green Bay Packers*

Kay Smith

*Executive Director*

*Algoma Chamber of Commerce*

Michelle Tressler

*Vice President*

*Hinterland Brewery*

## Executive Committee

### CHAIR

Steve Ninham

*General Manager*

*Radisson Hotel & Conference Center*

### IMMEDIATE PAST-CHAIR

Pat Olejniczak

*Hotel Manager*

*Kress Inn – St. Norbert College*

### VICE CHAIR

Kristine Hall

*General Manager, Hyatt Regency Hotel*

*– KI Convention Center*

### SECRETARY

Carol Van Vreede

*CEO, Skyline Exhibit Resource*

### TREASURER

Debbie Bukouricz

*Principal, CLA (CliftonLarsonAllen LLP)*

### AT LARGE

Geoff Lacy

*Partner, Strang, Patterson, Renning,*

*Lewis & Lacy*

## Staff

### ADMINISTRATION

Brad Toll, President / CEO

Laurie Long, Office Coordinator

Ashley French, Business Operations Administrator

### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Toni Jaeckels, Director of Partnerships & Community Engagement

### MARKETING & COMMUNICATION

Brenda Krainik, Director of Marketing & Communications

Amanda Schmidt, Marketing Manager

### SALES AND SERVICES

Beth Ulatowski, Director of Destination Sales

Denise Humphrey, Senior Destination Sales Manager

Joel Everts, Destination Sports Manager

Patti Drabes, Destination Services Manager

### VISITOR EXPERIENCES

Julie Gerczak, Director of Visitor Experiences

Cameron Teske, Visitor Center Director

Sally Graham, Visitor Experiences Coordinator

Jeremy O'Hearn, Visitor Services Assistant

Randy Breecher, Brochure Distribution



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REPRESENTING ALGOMA, ALLOUEZ, ASHWAUBENON, BELLEVUE, DE PERE, GREEN BAY, HOWARD, ONEIDA NATION, PULASKI AND SUAMICO.