

2023 STATE OF TOURISM
HAMILTON COUNTY, INDIANA



SERVING HAMILTON COUNTY
THROUGH DESTINATION
MARKETING & MANAGEMENT

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SIMPLY THE BEST

Hamilton County Tourism has proven – with more than \$10 million in tourism community support in the past 15 years – that thoughtful investments to projects can make an economic impact and make our community a better place to live, work and visit. Through support from a United States Economic Development Administration grant, Hamilton County Tourism is conducting a community-wide study called

the Business of Entertainment, Sport and Tourism (BEST). It will create a playbook for making wise capital investments with our city and county partners to keep us competitive in the marketplace for years to come. Completion expected Fall 2023.

BEST will support sports, entertainment, public spaces and districts, arts and museum facilities.

As Hamilton County Tourism (HCT) nears completion of its Vision 2025 Plan, it's important to reflect on the past seven years. Between 2016 and 2019, Hamilton County's tourism economy grew at a record pace thanks to the introduction of new product throughout all communities, and HCT worked to support this ever-changing landscape. Between 2020 and 2022 – forever memorialized as the “pandemic period” - HCT focused on stabilizing through recovery and planning efforts. The last three years of the plan, 2023-2025, now focus on adaption and excellence as we continue to support tourism's role in this vibrant county that we call home.

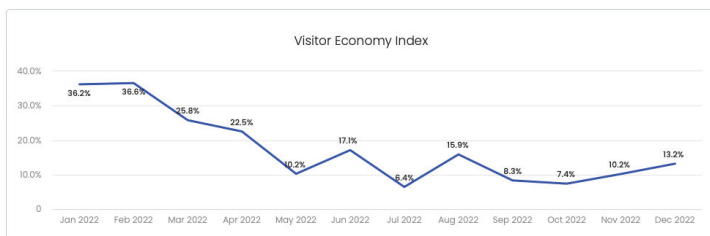
2022 HOTEL INDUSTRY BY THE NUMBERS

OCCUPANCY	61.2%
OCCUPANCY	+12.8%
REVENUE	+30.9
SUPPLY	+2.3%
DEMAND	+14.8%

Source: STR

2022 VISITOR ECONOMY INDEX

This aggregate chart shows monthly overall change across several data sources (geo-location, hotel and vacation rental and visitor spend) for the year. Anything above 0% is growth. Note that summers were at near capacity in 2021, which means the ability to grow is not as available.

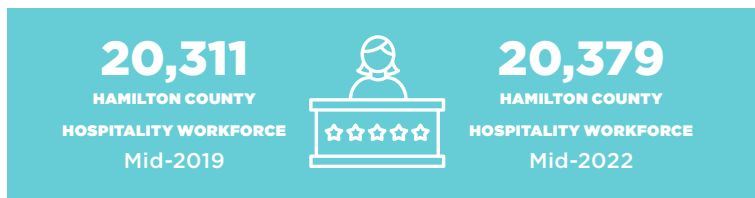


Source: Zartico

HOSPITALITY WORKFORCE

While some segments of the hospitality industry still struggle to find employees, the industry's workforce has leveled off to a degree. By mid-2022, employment levels were equal to the pre-pandemic third quarter peak of 2019 – although it's important to note that many new businesses opened between late 2019 and mid-2022.

Approximately half of these employment numbers are driven by tourism activity.



SOURCE: Zartico/BLS

DESTINATION MARKETING TARGETS SECOND DMA

A look on how travelers are feeling, if they intend to travel and how their travel habits changed has been critical over the last two years. Sending the right message at the right time has never been more important as travelers navigate their changing views on safety, costs and location. One important marketing shift in 2022 was to encourage people to visit Hamilton County during the week rather than wait for the weekend. The strategy capitalized on a flexible workforce that could travel anytime and work from any location. Weekday leisure travel helped fill hospitality businesses waiting for the business traveler to return. The “Why Wait for the Weekend” campaign influenced 134,000 trips to Hamilton County with a healthy ROI of \$259 for each \$1 spent on advertising. HCT will repeat the “Why Wait” campaign in 2023 in Chicago and Cincinnati.



SOURCE: Zartico/BLS

ALMOST \$1 BILLION IS SPENT ANNUALLY BY VISITORS IN HAMILTON COUNTY

Source: Rockport Analytics



ARTS ARE IMPORTANT

With three designated arts districts by the Indiana Arts Commission and a growing art scene, HCT will launch a new arts-focused marketing campaign to the greater central Indiana area, inspiring regional visits to the many experiential, visual and performing arts opportunities.

MEETINGS & EVENT PLANNERS CAN REST EASY



One of the hallmarks of Hamilton County's group sales program is to make the process of meeting and event planning in Hamilton County effortless. This is accomplished through easy bus transportation programs, signage and hospitality efforts and a seamless transition from booking to arriving. In fact, the HCT team received the 2022 Supplier of the Year Award from the Indiana Society of Association Executives. This dedication to service will be on full display with a new video highlighting the county's meeting and event venues, hospitality businesses and service program. And with groups and conferences back to 2019 levels, HCT will attend a full complement of trade shows and conferences this year promoting the area as a destination for small to mid-sized meetings and events.

CELEBRATING
HAMILTON COUNTY'S
200th



\$250,000+

SHARED WITH ORGANIZATIONS
TO SUPPORT EQUITY & DIVERSITY

\$1 MILLION

INVESTED IN TOURISM & SPORTS

IN 2023



HAMILTON COUNTY SPORTS AUTHORITY



In addition to researching the county's sport and entertainment opportunities through the BEST Master Plan project, the Hamilton County Sports Authority will develop a new growth strategy in the e-sports sector. A growing body of research suggests that young gamers want to travel to attend in-person competitions, and leagues are starting to deliver. Also, the Sports Authority will continue to provide financial support for new and emerging events this year, as well as promote the county nationally as a destination for travel sport and tournaments.



TOURISM GIVES

The ecosystem that supports the visitor economy is important to Hamilton County Tourism.

Assisting the hospitality industry as it attracts and retains workers is important. So are those who provide essential services and those who support equity and opportunity.

HCT BELIEVES IN RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AND WILL:

- Invest more than \$1 million in 2023 to support our local tourism and sports partners.
- Elevate its commitment to a sustainable planet through a number of new environmental initiatives.
- Share more than \$250,000 to organizations to tell important stories of equity and diversity and is conducting an accessibility inventory to share with those that need information on affordable, physically or cognitively accessible experiences.
- Celebrate the county's important 200th Bicentennial with partners Hamilton County and Duke Energy as a lead sponsor.
- Partner with Invest Hamilton County to create workforce pathways for a variety of residents to create quality careers in the hospitality industry.
- Collaborate with People for Urban Progress and our hospitality partners to create a program that reuses mesh, vinyl and fabric banners – instead of sending them to landfills.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Hamilton County's work in tourism is managed by two leadership teams that provide fiscal oversight and leadership solutions to the county's destination manager. For more information on the Hamilton County Visitor and Convention Commission and Hamilton County Tourism, Inc. Board of directors go to HamiltonCountyTourism.com. There you will find resources and 2023 business, marketing and destination development plans and other business intelligence.

VISION

Hamilton County will be nationally known as an innovative, diverse, vibrant and attractive tourism destination.

PURPOSE

We maximize the Hamilton County experience through tourism innovation and marketing expertise.

MISSION

We message. We move. We make it fun.

CORE VALUES

We always strive for excellence. We invest in each other and our community. We engage and communicate to cultivate effective collaboration. We are committed to a culture of flexibility. Our strategy for success is informed by data and intelligence.

QUESTIONS?

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tourism together



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