

An aerial photograph of a large outdoor festival at sunset. The sky is filled with dramatic, orange and pink clouds. Below the sky, a dense crowd of people is gathered in a large open area, likely a park or festival grounds. Several buildings are visible in the background, including a large white building on the left and a modern multi-story building on the right. The overall scene is vibrant and festive.

Howard County Tourism Council FY18

# Annual Report

Sources of information contained in this report: Longwoods International  
Howard County 2016/2017 Visitor Research Topline Report; Tourism  
Economics The Economic Impact of Tourism in Maryland Tourism Satellite  
Account Calendar Year 2017.

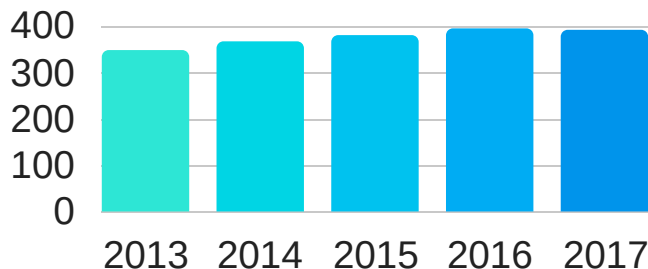


# Tourism by the Numbers in Howard County

Tourism labor income

**\$391.1M**

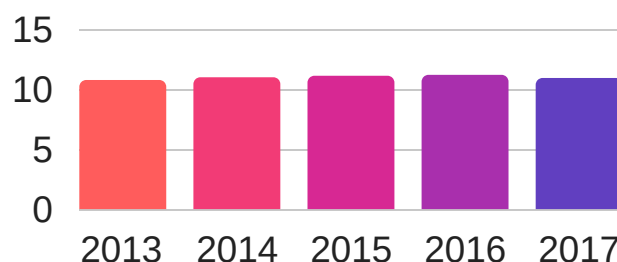
+12.5% 5-year growth



Full time jobs supported

**10.93K**

+2% 5-year growth



Tourism industry sales

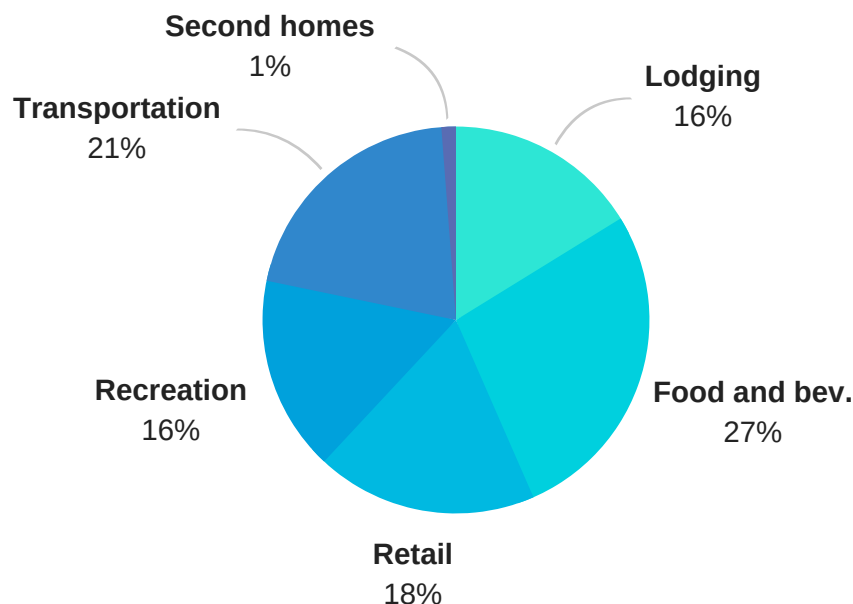
**\$628.8M**

Food & beverage, recreation, and retail sales are higher in Howard County than the MD average:

MD F&B: 21.8%

MD retail: 14.2%

MD recreation: 8.9%



State and local taxes

**\$97M**

Tax revenue generated by tourism supports the quality of living in Howard County by contributing to education, safety and services.

Total visitors

**2.94M**

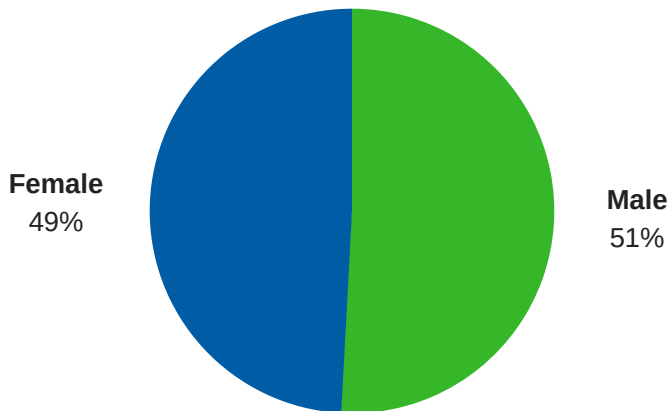
1.21M overnight / 1.72M day trips

The average number of visitors to a Maryland county is 2.01M. More visitors come to Howard County than most other counties in Maryland.

# The Howard County Overnight Visitor Profile

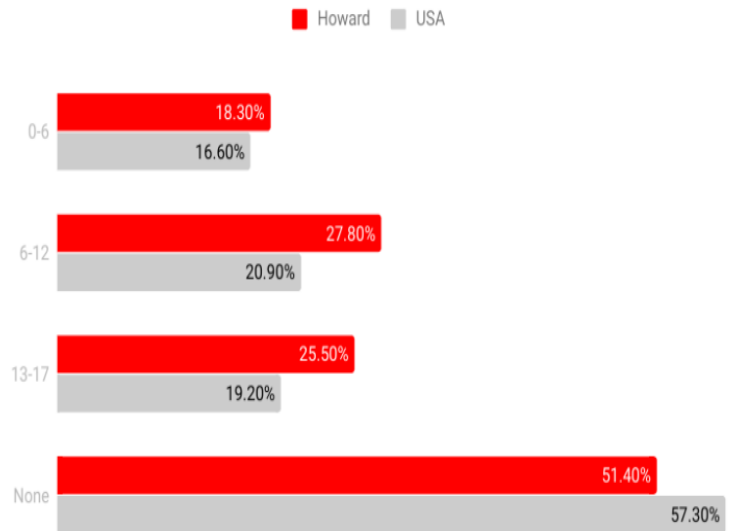
## Visitor gender

Howard County's average visitor is similar to the USA destination average, which is split 50.9 male, 49.2 female.



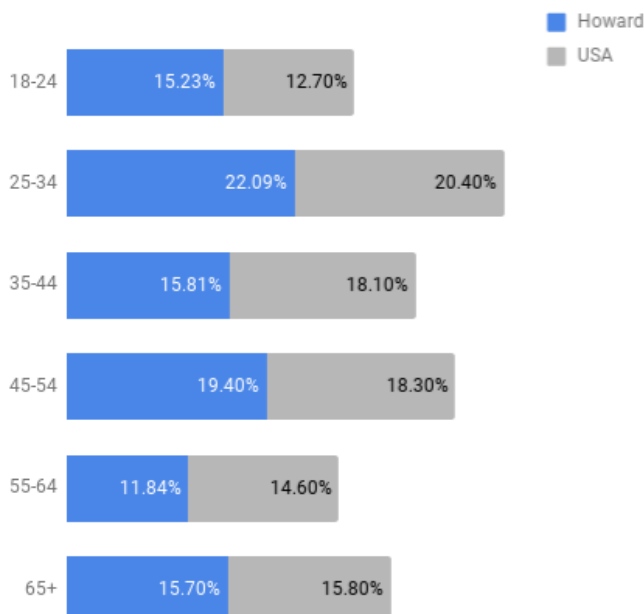
## Children in household

Howard County visitors are more likely to have children of any age in their household than those visiting the average USA destination.

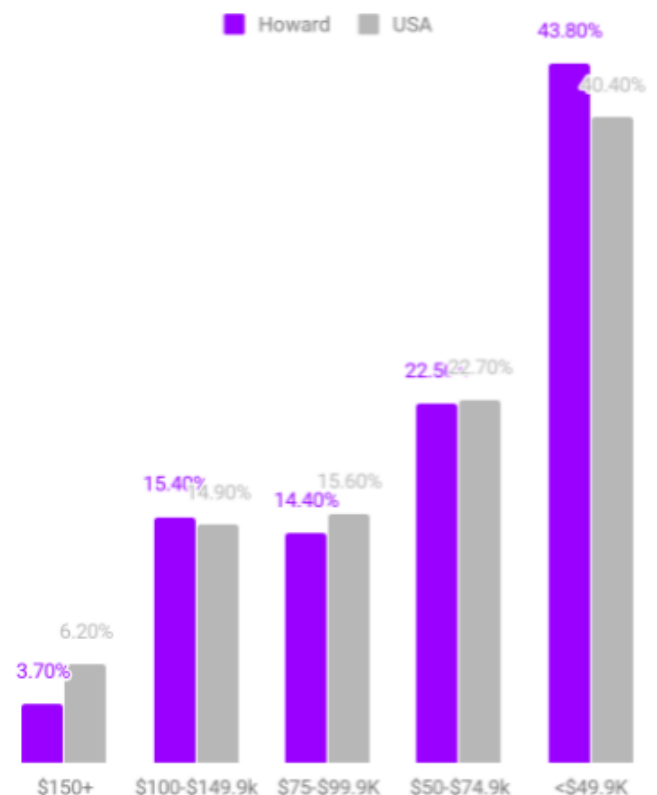


## Average visitor age

Howard County is visited more by 18-24 and 45-54 age travelers than the average USA destination.

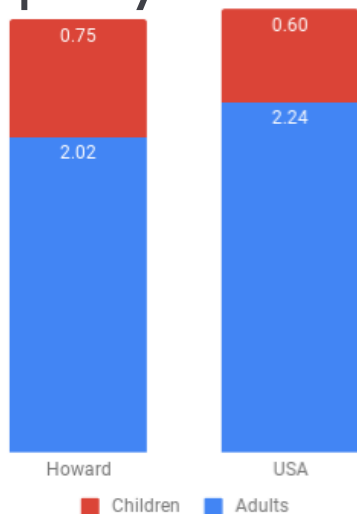


## Household Income

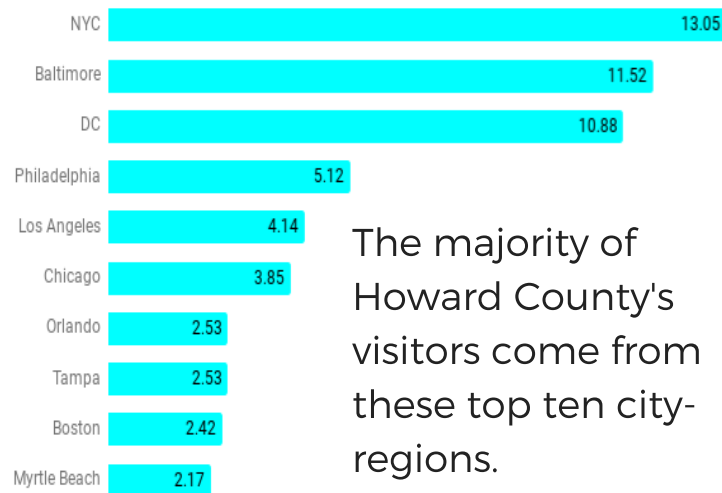


# Howard County Overnight Trip Characteristics

## Size of party



## Origin (DMA) of trip



The majority of Howard County's visitors come from these top ten city-regions.

## Trip satisfaction

Trip satisfaction is the percentage of survey respondents who were satisfied with their experience. This data indicates opportunities for Howard County.

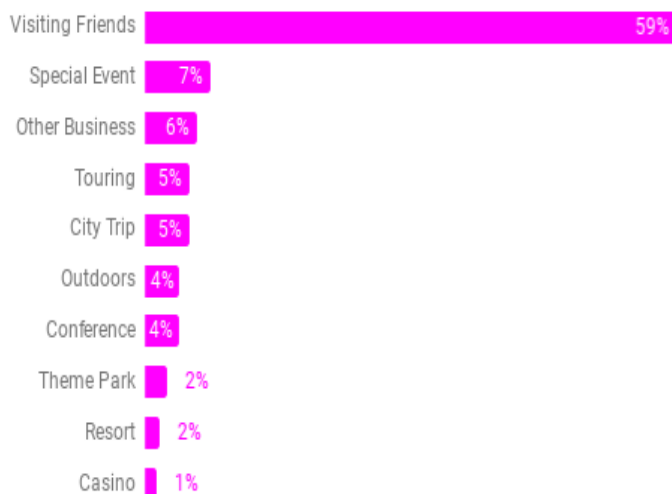


## Social media use

The number of Howard County and USA visitors that use Social Media during their trip.



## Trip purpose

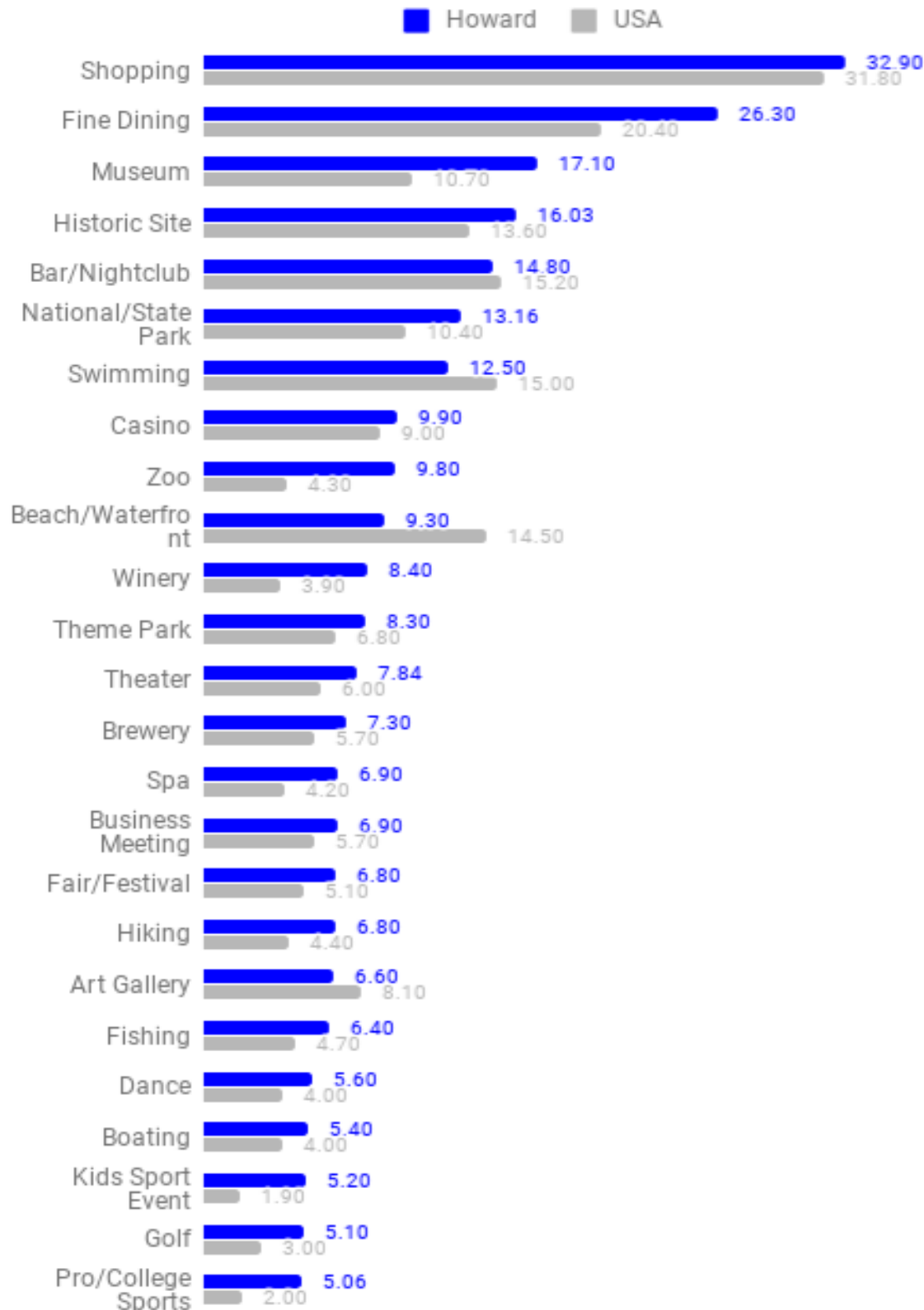




# Howard County Overnight Trip Characteristics (con't)

## Activities and experiences

Survey respondents who spent at least one night in Howard County indicated they participated in the following activities. Visitors to Howard County enjoy the amenities of Howard County, but also visit experiences within the surrounding region during their overnight travel.



# Visit Howard County Marketing Highlights

## Total marketing impressions 20M

Visit Howard County aggressively markets the activities that make Howard County an exciting place to live and visit. Social is proving to be an exceptional method for getting in front of qualified audiences. Other advertising include estimates of views for campaigns launched in Recreation News, Edible DC, AAA, Southern Living, CBS/Entercom Radio, Maryland Golf Guide, and Roadrunner Magazine.



Impressions are an important measurement showing the number of potential customers that are served our message.

## Site users 285K

**+48.78%** fy17 to fy18

Better qualified advertising leads to more people clicking on links to the website.

## Site pageviews 884K

**+41.12%** fy17 to fy18

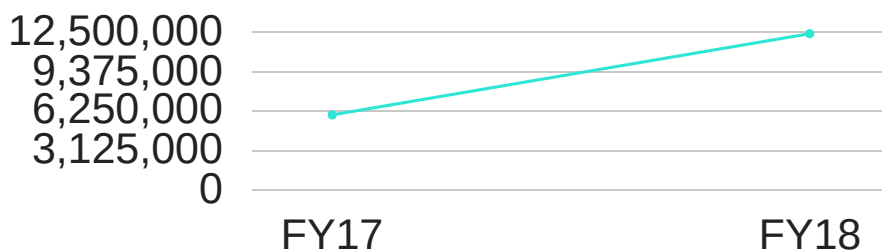
Better qualified advertising leads to longer times spent researching things to do.

## Social impressions 12.3M

**+106.33%** fy17 to fy18

79% of online adults actively use Facebook (Pew 2016) and 80% of visitors use social media to plan their trips.

Visit Howard County is more actively using social media to target qualified visitors and residents to share knowledge of the activities that make Howard County a great place to visit and live.





# Visit Howard County Special Initiatives and Projects

## Strategic Plan

Completed year one of a three year strategic plan with input from the Board of Directors and community partners that aspire to take our organization and community to the next level.

## Marketing Initiatives

Launched the new Maryland's Korean Way website, introduced a new visitor guide format, published the second annual Harvest Howard County magazine; ran a robust HowardOnTap craft beer campaign that led to the launch of the Maryland Brewery Tours, helped develop the Patuxent Challenge in partnership with Patuxent River Commission to promote recreational opportunities along the Patuxent River in Howard and other counties, celebrated the 10th Anniversary of Howard County Restaurant Weeks which is our most successful campaign to date, and launched a three-year winter holidays campaign.

## Leisure Events and Attractions

Visit Howard County supports spending at shopping, restaurants, attractions and hotels throughout the County by advertising to visitors, potential and current residents.

Provided marketing and/or financial support through our Tourism Event Support Program to new and growing events including The Maryland Golf Show at Turf Valley Resort, The Preakness Balloon Festival, The Columbia Festival of the Arts, The 40th Annual Korean Festival, Symphony of Lights, the Annual Bollman Bridge Lighting, Historic Savage Mill 201st Celebration, and CarnEvil.

Supported the recovery of Old Ellicott City through marketing of events, direct grants, and creating signage to spread attention to re-opening businesses and Saturday morning farmers and pop-up shop markets, as well as promote the various fundraisers for Old Ellicott City. Promoted Columbia's 50th celebration events and Columbia's #1 place to live award.

## Media

Hosted travel writers at attractions across Howard County, produced stories, and pitched group tour itineraries of Howard County's group attractions with motorcoach and youth travel planners.

## Tournaments

Provided resources and services to tournaments generating thousands of room nights including the National High School Lacrosse Showcase, Elite Tournaments' numerous events, USSSA tournaments, events produced by Recreation and Parks, and more. Hosted US Quidditch for a site visit to win a bid for their 2018 Mid-Atlantic Regional Championship.

## Brand Howard County

Continued efforts to bring together some of the largest organizations in Howard County to continue to discussions towards branding our organizations alike to promote Howard County in a unified voice.

## Community Outreach

Hosted eight educational and networking events for members including workshops like Howard County 101 & Beyond Networking, Digital Marketing 101, ECP Businesses Membership Visits Blitz - How to Make the Most of Your Membership and New Businesses Meet & Greet in Partnership with the Howard County Chamber of Commerce and Howard County Economic Development Authority. Presented at local organizations' meetings including the Sunrise Rotary Club of Ellicott City, Rotary Club of Columbia, Long and Foster Real Estate Columbia, Ellicott City Partnership Business Owners Meeting, Historic Savage Mills Merchants' Meeting, and numerous others.



# Visit Howard County Media Placements

PEOPLE SAVING PLACES

## preservation

The magazine of the National Trust for Historic Preservation

America's Historic Downtown: Howard County & Historic Savage Mill

## Student GROUP TOUR

5 Stops in Howard County



Merriment in Maryland

## Medium

Family-Friendly Places in Maryland to Ring in the New Year

## THE BALTIMORE SUN

Korean Way on Route 40 Blossoming into Culture



Exploring New Places with Howard County Restaurant Weeks

## STAINED *with* Style

Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Lib's Grill and Restaurant Week!

## Howard County Times

Howard Restaurants Offering a Chance to Wow You During Winter Promotion

## Recreation NEWS

Exploring the Delights along Howard County's Korean Way

## The Business Monthly

Maryland Korean Way Opening Cultural Doors



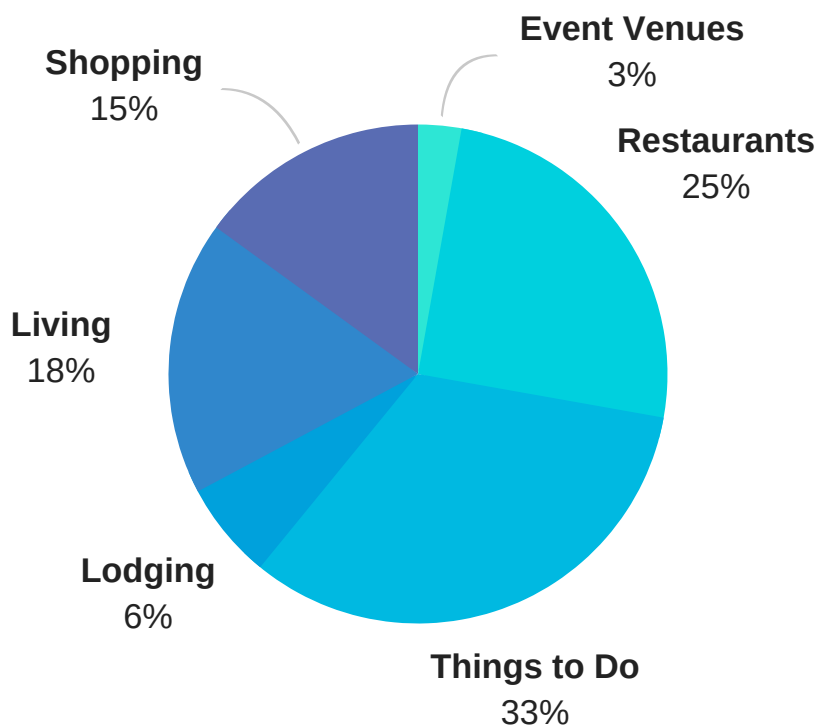
# Visit Howard County Membership Data

## Tourism council membership

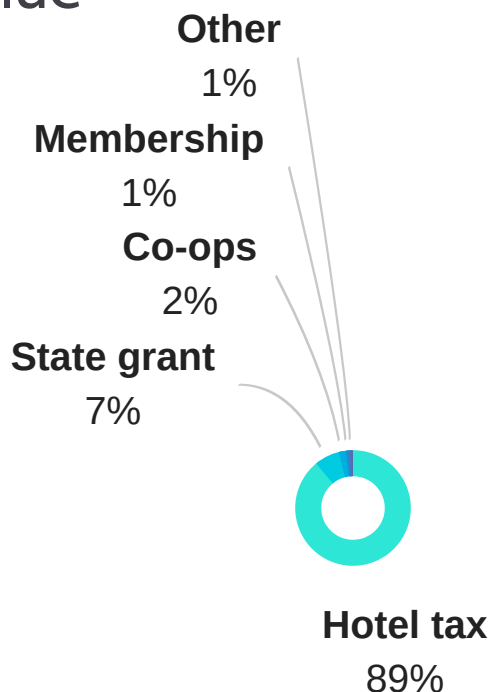
# 274 Voting Members

Visit Howard County's membership brings the hospitality community together through educational seminars, promotion efforts, and cooperative marketing.

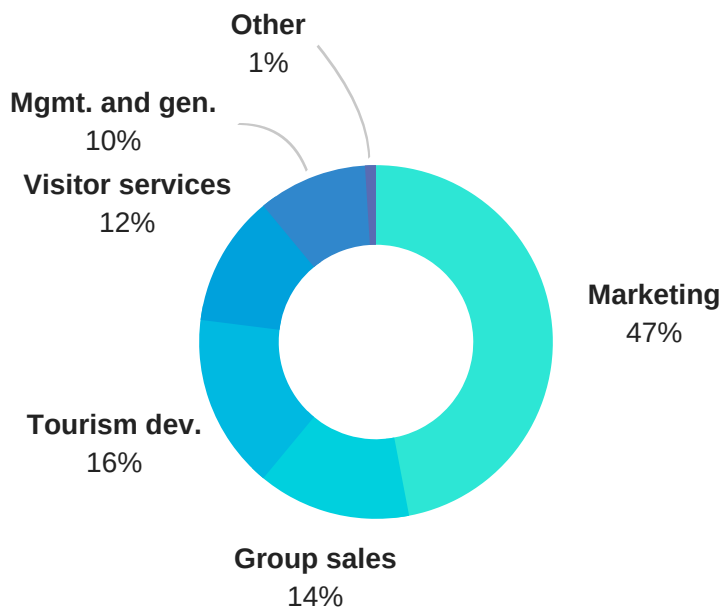
By empowering this community to work together, get engaged, and remain informed Visit Howard County is able to better promote our community and provide for an improved tourist experience.



## Revenue



## Expenses





# Visit Howard County Staff, Board, and Awards

## Staff:

Amanda Hof, Interim Executive Director  
Bridget Graham, Director of Operations & Visitor Services  
Crystal Abrom, Marketing Manager  
Molly Evola, Membership Assistant

## Officers/ Executive Committee:

Chuck Chandler, Vice President, Hampton Inn and Suites Columbia/South & Springhill Suites Columbia  
\*David Balderson, President, The Wayside Inn Bed & Breakfast  
Martha Clark, Nomination Chair, Clark's Elioak Farm  
Mike Libber, Partnership Chair, Elite Tournaments  
Barbara Nicklas, Vice President-Elect, Mall in Columbia  
Pete Mangione, Treasurer, Finance Chair, Turf Valley  
Becky Mangus, Marketing Chair, The Business Monthly

## Board Members:

\*Valerie Barnard, Columbia Association  
\*Kevin Kelehan, Carney, Kelehan, Bresler, Bennett and Scherr  
Ian Kennedy, Downtown Columbia Arts & Cultural Commision  
Aimee Troglio, Historic Savage Mill  
Katie Turner, Howard Community College  
Julia Mattis, ReMax Advantage Realty  
Tori Buscher, Victoria Gastro Pub

## Ex-Officio Board Members:

The Honorable Gail Bate, Maryland Senate  
The Honorable Eric Ebersole, Maryland House of Delegates  
Al Harden, Howard County Dept. of Recreation & Parks  
Terry Hasseltine, Maryland Sports / Maryland Stadium Authority  
\*Karen Besson, Ellicott City Partnership  
Diane Wilson, Howard County Government, Chief of Staff, Howard County Executive Allan Kittleman  
Kathy Johnson, Howard County Economic Development Authority

\*We thank our outgoing board members for their service.

## Visit Howard County 2018 Industry Awards

### Tourism Partner of the Year



Steve Wecker  
Vince Culotta



Steve Wecker  
Rob Wecker  
Lee Marziale  
Nate Hynson

### Tourism Ambassador of the Year



Pete Mangione



### Sgt. Eddison Alexander Hermond- Hospitality Employee of the Year Award



Sgt. Eddison Alexander  
Hermond

Visit Howard County is pleased to announce a new award category that will premiere at its 37th Annual Meeting. This honorable new award is named after Sgt. Eddison Alexander Hermond who served his country, most recently as a member of the National Guard, and worked 11 years for the Victoria Restaurant Group. Sgt. Hermond tragically lost his life in an attempt to help others in the May 27, 2018 Ellicott City Flood. He will forever be remembered as a true hero. The selected nominee will be recognized for his or her exceptional job in the performance of their duties.