



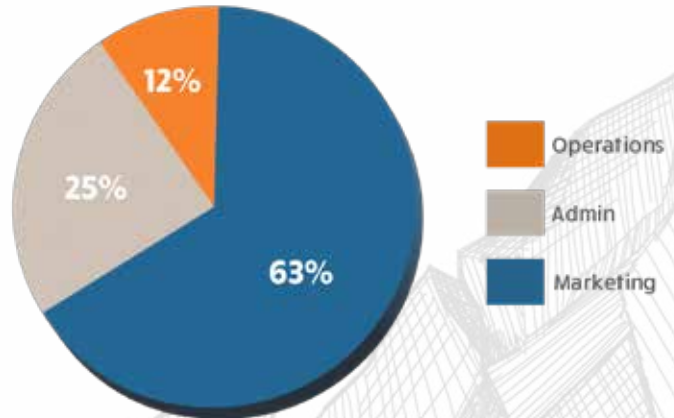
# 2023-24 Annual Report

## Budget Overview

### Albany County Lodging Tax Revenue:

**\$1,406,354**

9.3%↑ YOY



The Albany County Tourism Board is funded by the 4% county-wide lodging tax. The tax is paid by visitors who stay in paid accommodations excluding campgrounds. Activity outfitters also pay the lodging tax.

## Lodging Overview

### Digital Marketing

**f** Total Reach: Over 2.1 Million in 2023

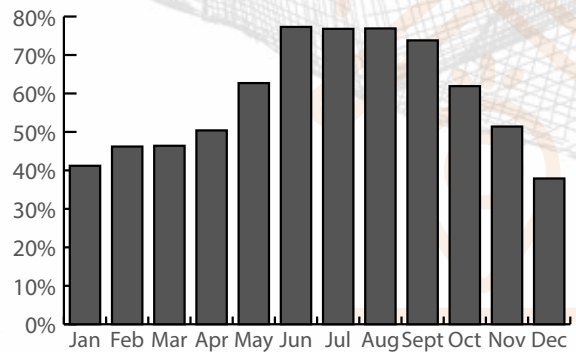
**e** Email Reach: Nearly 1 Million Readers

### Website Traffic

Total Pageviews: 1,362,866, Avg. 113,000/Month

Bookdirect Hotel Referrals: 15,773, 15%↑ YOY

### 2023 Hotel Occupancy Rates



## Economic Overview

### Information Distribution

- Total Visitor Guides & Brochures: Over 60K
- Visitor Center Inquiries: 14%↑ YOY
- Visitor Center Foot Traffic: 27%↑ YOY

In July 2021, the Laramie Area Visitor Center moved to a new location at 800 S. 3rd Street. Foot traffic increased again by 27% YOY in year three.

### Top Out-of-State Visitors

1. Colorado
2. Nebraska
3. Utah



## Travel Impact in 2023

- Albany County welcomed roughly **1,000,000 visitors**, of which approximately 729,400 spent the night for an average length of stay of 2.6 nights.
- Travel spending supported **1,710 jobs** in Albany County.
- Direct travel spending in Albany County was \$205.7 million, which generated \$11.9 million in tax revenue. Of that revenue, **\$5 million remained in Albany County**, and without it, the average household would have paid \$672 more annually in taxes for existing government services.
- Of the total sales tax collected in Albany County, **18% was paid for by travelers**.

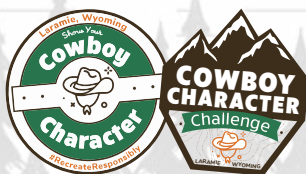
## Marketing Overview

### Media Tactics

The Visit Laramie team executed a range of strategic marketing tactics throughout the year to reach customers in strategic growth markets. This included paid media campaigns as well as additional campaigns managed internally. Our mixed media tactics included but were not limited to things like **digital, print, out-of-home, TV, radio, hosting travel writers, co-ops with the Wyoming Office of Tourism, and more**. Whenever possible, local partners and vendors were chosen to support these efforts.

### Destination Management

In 2023, the Albany County Tourism Board continued to improve upon our innovative approach to crowd dispersion and informing responsible recreation. This work builds on our **Cowboy Character** campaign and expands the marketing reach to implement real-life strategies to incentivize crowd dispersion in the National Forest using a mobile trails pass. This all centered around the 2021 Cowboy Character campaign, blending **Leave No Trace Ethics** and the **Cowboy Code of the West**. In 2022, a winter version of the Cowboy Code was launched with messaging based around winter safety and those efforts have continued to grow in 2023. This campaign alongside the Cowboy Character Challenge has been able to reach millions of people, and our goal is to continue to develop these efforts while promoting but protecting outdoor recreation amenities in Albany County.



### Market Segments

In 2023, Visit Laramie continued to focus on some of our key geographic markets including the **Midwest** and other areas of the **Rocky Mountain West**. Specifically, marketing focused on growth opportunities created by shifts in the travel market during the post-pandemic era of travel. This included targeted marketing to **Chicago, Kansas City, and the Lincoln and Omaha areas**. Many of these markets continue to do very well even a few years after the pandemic due to increased marketing, and of these areas, Chicago has seen the strongest growth and ROI from our marketing investment. Marketing campaigns continue in **Colorado**, using a targeted approach to focus on attracting the ideal traveler. New for 2023, our team decided to lean into the **Salt Lake City** market. These marketing campaigns resulted in a nearly 3x increase in visitors from the SLC area, bolstering our tourism economy. Additionally, the **Dallas-Fort Worth area** was targeted for a second year, nearly doubling visitation from this market from year one.



## Grants & Events Overview

Cowboy Picklebrawl  
Cowboy Turf Wars  
Laramie Jubilee Days  
Laramie Range Epic Bike Race  
Laramie Regulators Baseball Tournament  
Outlaw Trail Dinner & Show  
Pilot Hill 25K

Taste of Laradise  
WACTE  
Western Research Institute  
Wyoming Business Alliance  
Wyoming FBLA  
WY High School Football Championship Tournament  
Wyoming Women's Business Center

**Total Granted to Albany County Events:  
Over \$107,000+**



## Partnership Programs

New for 2023, Visit Laramie partnered with **UW's Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Management program (ORTM)** to create a new internship. This opportunity will afford one student each summer to work in the **Centennial Visitor Center** with other local and regional partners, offering them hands-on experience in the industry. Things went so well last year that another intern was hired for summer 2024. This program continues to maintain a strong partnership with UW's tourism degree program, supporting the development of Wyoming's frontline hospitality workforce.



Visit Laramie launched the **Certified Destination Expert Program** in partnership with **UW's ORTM program** after working on the development of the program in 2022. This program, dubbed CDX for short, is designed for front-line staff members who interact with visitors across Albany County to help them build and share their knowledge about everything there is to offer in the area. The course includes information on hospitality and customer service, outdoor recreation, sports and education, art and cultural attractions, history and Western life, special events, food and beverage options, and lodging.



## Destination Development

Building on last year's momentum, the Albany County Tourism Board was able to benefit from **Destination Development Funding** provided by the **Wyoming Office of Tourism**. This money is a benefit that originates from the statewide lodging tax that was introduced in 2020, and each lodging tax board in Wyoming is eligible for a certain amount based on criteria established by the state. Albany County applied for the full \$300,000 available to be placed toward tourism and infrastructure-related projects. **In the past biennium these projects included:**

- The new Outlaw Trail & Dinner Show event
- Support for murals at Vedauwoo and the Snowy Range in partnership with USFS and LPAC
- Staffing the Centennial Visitor Center for the summer, fall, and winter seasons through partnerships with USFS, Common Outdoor Ground, and the University of Wyoming
- Purchasing credit card data for improved analysis of visitor spending behavior and economic impacts to Albany County
- Updating our website to include new web accessibility and inclusivity standards
- Adding community wayfinding signage throughout the City of Laramie for improved navigation, increased awareness of attractions, and beautifying our corridors and interstate exits

Future projects include working towards improved transit service for visitors to Albany County, support for new and existing winter events, and improving support for historic tours and signage for self-guided tours throughout Albany County.

## Annual Retreat Overview

Each year, Visit Laramie's staff sets aside time to determine what the individual and team goals are for the next fiscal year. During the 2024 annual retreat, Visit Laramie continued to build upon its vision statement, mission statement, and core values.

### Mission Statement

Visit Laramie's mission is to create sustainable economic growth through tourism that helps our businesses and communities thrive together.

### Vision Statement

Visit Laramie is the driving force combining the success of travel and tourism with community quality of life throughout all of Albany County.

### Core Values

#### 1. Innovation

Think Big. Think Often. Think Outside the Box.  
Challenge the status quo as a proactive leader.  
Take calculated risks.

#### 2. Purposefulness

Be representative of all that Albany County is.  
Take accountability for our tourism impacts.  
Be efficient. Be persistent. Be effective.

#### 3. Collaboration

Ask for and provide help.  
Leverage strengths to seek win-win solutions.  
Build and value lasting relationships.

#### 4. Sustainability

Prioritize long-term benefit over short-term gain.  
Intentionally define growth by market.  
Focus on and educate the ideal traveler.

