



Visit Longmont

# 2023 Final Report





# Outline: Deliverables – Target Goals

The following goals, objectives, and metrics were developed under these categories, specifically for Visit Longmont in 2023:

- Organizational Direction
- Marketing & Branding
- Creating Economic Opportunities
- Hospitality & Asset Management

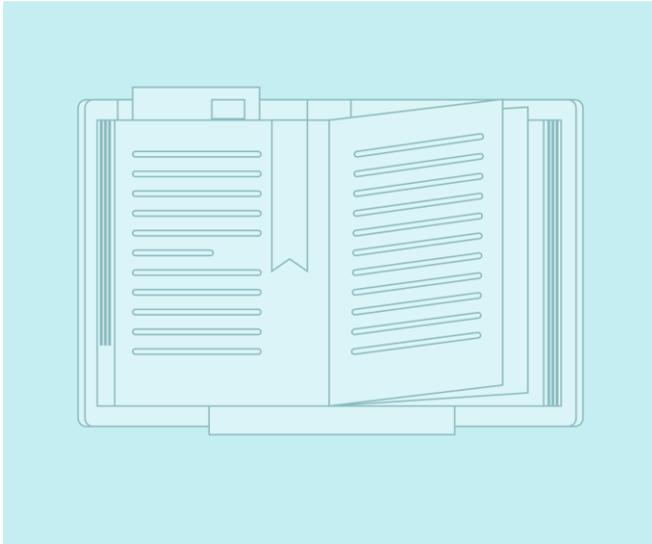


# 1. Organizational Direction

The two objectives included under Organizational Direction were:

- 1. Establish a Short-term Strategic Plan with metrics, taking into consideration resident sentiment and findings from the \*Reimagine Destinations Report**
- 2. Review board Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws; recruit a diverse board of directors to help grow tourism; and, deliver amended bylaws and updated policies**

\*Appendix A: Visit Longmont Short-term Strategic Plan in partnership with the Colorado Tourism Office Reimagine Destinations Report



# Bylaws & Policies

Visit Longmont’s CEO researched and recommended updated association bylaws, including signatory and board development policy language\*. The board approved signatory bylaw language authorizes the Visit Longmont CEO to manage day-to-day operations, including executing documents and have signing authority over checks and payments.

The Visit Longmont Board of Directors also approved new operating reserve and purchasing policies. The operating reserve policy established a savings CD in the amount of \$250,000 with the purpose “to ensure the stability of the mission, programs, employment, and ongoing operations of the nonprofit organization.” The board approved purchasing policy established spending thresholds and a more clearly defined procurement process to acquire “high quality goods and services at a competitive price and delivered on an approved timeline.”

Visit Longmont’s CEO is in the process of developing updated policies around substance abuse, leave, technology and equipment and conflict of interest.

\*Appendices B & C: Amended Visit Longmont Bylaws, Dec. 2023 | Visit Longmont Operating Reserve Policy | Visit Longmont Purchasing Policy



# Organizational Direction – short term strategic plan

The Reimagine Destinations Grant, through the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO), included two short-term strategic efforts to develop strategies to increase off-peak visitation and to champion the value of tourism. The objectives from this short-term strategic plan included:

- Develop a group sales plan, budget, and job description to diversify tourism growth opportunities for Longmont (off-peak visitation growth).
- Launch a tourism campaign targeted to residents, building awareness of Visit Longmont and inspiring support about Visit Longmont and its visitor industry.

## What's Next? Leads & Proposals

- Visit Longmont provided a lead to local hotel property for the NCCPS Facilitators “Unconference”, February 15-17, 2024 (est. 100 attendees)
- Visit Longmont submitted proposal to host the MPI Rocky Mountain Chapter Mid-Year Board Retreat, February 22-25 2024 (20 attendees) (pending)
- Visit Longmont established coordinating committee role in support of the Ice Climbing World Cup, February 25 2025 in partnership with Longmont Climbing Collective (est. 1,500-5,000 athletes and families)

## Group Sales Efforts in 2023

- Visit Longmont hosted two networking events with hoteliers and community partners to share strategies for capturing group tourism. These were hosted at Left Hand Brewing Company in May and at Roots at the Dickens in October.
- Visit Longmont has dedicated up to 50 percent of staff time toward developing a group, meetings, and events strategy, establishing goals and KPIs, and a two-year implementation budget.
- The Visit Longmont team compiled an inventory of available venues for group sales (meetings, conventions, sports, and cultural events) and established a comprehensive list of existing events in Longmont. The team also invested in software (SimpleView) to capture group and meeting space inventory information.
- The Visit Longmont team helped bring two events to the community in 2023:
  - Mate Rove (Robotics) World Championship, June 22-24, attracting 1,100 participants and their families.
  - Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) Stewardship Workshop, October 23, with 50 participants.



# Champion the value of Tourism Campaign

The second focus of the Reimagine Destinations report prepared for Visit Longmont by the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO), was to establish a short-term strategic plan. As part of this plan, Visit Longmont developed a “Champion the Value of Tourism” campaign. The goal of the plan was to increase stakeholder engagement and understanding of the tourism opportunity in Longmont.

The campaign approach included inclusive messaging connecting with the community to promote and raise awareness about the benefits tourism brings to the Longmont area. Digital and print collateral was designed to reach community residents through local media, social media groups, businesses and community partners like the *Longmont Times-Call*, the *Longmont Leader*, Longmont Public Media, Longmont Downtown Development Authority (LDDA), Longmont Economic Development Partnership (LEDP), the Latino Chamber of Commerce in Boulder County, the Longmont Chamber of Commerce, local business partners, and the Longmont City Council.

In the first phase of the campaign, Visit Longmont created messaging focused on economic and quality of life benefits of the tourism sector. Short videos and images were gathered from local business owners, which supported media placements through social channels, targeted digital placements and owned channel distribution. Messaging was distributed through these channels:

- Print: *Longmont Magazine* and *Longmont Times-Call* ads, posters, stickers
- Digital: LongmontTimesCall.com, LTC eNewsletter, LTC social ads (in-feed posts)
- LongmontLeader.com, e-newsletter, spotlight article
- Social Media: Facebook / Instagram videos, promoted posts, single images
- Website landing page: [www.visitlongmont.org/inmotion](http://www.visitlongmont.org/inmotion)

(L): A printed poster, including campaign logo, QR code directing back to website landing page, was distributed at local businesses and organizations throughout Longmont.

## TOURISM IS ESSENTIAL FOR KEEPING LONGMONT RUNNING!

EL TURISMO ES **ESENCIAL** PARA QUE LONGMONT SIGA FUNCIONANDO

1 out of every 13 jobs in Longmont is related to tourism and hospitality.



1 de cada 13 trabajos en Longmont está relacionado con el turismo y la hospitalidad.

In a year, visitors spend more than \$200 million in Longmont.



En un año, los visitantes gastan más de \$200 millones en Longmont.

Visitor spending helps support your favorite restaurants, breweries, museums and more.



El gasto de los visitantes ayuda a mantener sus restaurantes, cervecerías, museos favoritos y más.

VISIT  
LONGMONT



LEARN  
MORE

DESCUBRE  
MÁS

[visitlongmont.org/inmotion](http://visitlongmont.org/inmotion)





## Campaign Results

Overall engagement for the Champion the Value of Tourism campaign generated 380,122 total impressions, with paid social media creating the most impressions.

Campaign click through rates (CTR) met or were above industry average in all tactics.

### Overall Performance: September – December 2023

Tactic	Impressions	Clicks	CTR
Paid Social - Video	196,475	754	0.40%
L. Times-Call Banners	74,501	86	0.13%
L. Times-Call Email	7,447	12	0.16%
L. Leader Banners	77,032	171	0.20%
L. Leader Email	24,667	17	0.07%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>380,122</b>	<b>1,040</b>	<b>0.19%</b>

\*Industry average CTR: Display 0.07%; Social 0.9%

### 2023 Community Awareness & Mascot Campaign: Reporting

### Community Awareness

### Overall Performance: September – December 2023

Tactic	Reads	Avg. Time
L. Leader Spotlight Article	431	2:01

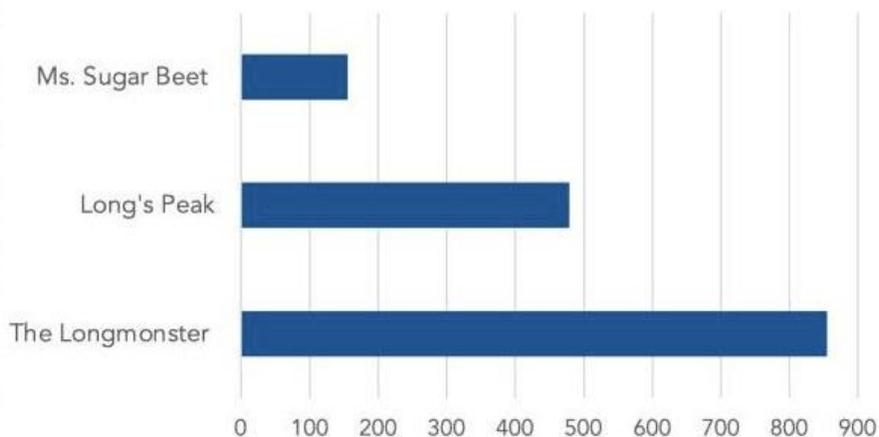
[Travel and tourism mean business in Longmont - The Longmont Leader – Spotlight article](#)

Thank you Longmont, for choosing our next mascot:

## **MONTY, THE LONGMONSTER**

See your final voting results below:

Visit Longmont Mascot Poll Results



# Mascot Contest

- The second phase of the Champion the Value of Tourism campaign was a Visit Longmont mascot contest. The contest asked for any community resident to submit mascot ideas and descriptions. The Longmont community submitted over 70 mascot ideas.
- An internal committee selected the top 10 and the Visit Longmont board of directors voted on their top three mascot choices. Visit Longmont asked the community to then vote for their favorite from the top three: Ms. Sugar Beet, Long's Peak or The Longmonster.
- The top community vote was Monty the Longmonster!

## **What's Next? Monty, the Longmonster**

Visit Longmont is working with a local artist to design the final sketch to customize a mascot costume to use in community and special events. The Visit Longmont team plans to host a "mascot reveal" event in 2024.

# Marketing & Branding

Objective: Market tourism options and assets to a national, regional and local audience to increase overnight stays and day trips



## METRICS

**i. Increase by 5% visitor guide distribution:** Visit Longmont distributed 7919 visitor guides requested online in 2023. This is an almost 12% increase from 2022. Digital guide visits totaled 6,750 (Google Analytics changed reporting systems to GA4). Additionally, guides were distributed to Colorado Welcome Centers, hotels, Visitor Centers throughout the state, area businesses, and short-term rentals.

**ii. Exceed 35% open rate of e-newsletter:** In 2023, Visit Longmont maintained a 35% open rate of e-newsletter. This is significantly higher than industry average of 20.69% (Source: <https://evokad.com/destination-marketing-email-strategies/>).

**iii. Updated website with increase in users by 10%:** Visit Longmont developed a request for proposal (RFP) with a proposed budget amount of \$300,000. After receiving and reviewing multiple potential bids, Visit Longmont awarded a contract in December of 2023 to overhaul the Visit Longmont website. The goal is to launch a new website in 2024.

**iv. Exceed 2022 engagements by 5% on social media:** In 2023 Visit Longmont saw a dip in social engagement (total likes or reactions, shares, and comments) during a transition of staff and partner resources around maintaining the organization's social and digital media presence. In October of 2023, Visit Longmont hired a Digital Content Manager dedicated to social and digital media content and strategy. Additionally, while engagement was down, Visit Longmont's followers increased. Visit Longmont attracted 117,577 total Facebook followers and almost 144,000 Instagram followers, an increase from 2022 (112,392 and 135,138 respectively).

**v. Updated brand templates:** Visit Longmont's RFP will also address the organization's brand, provide updated email templates, and other branded collateral as needed.

# Marketing & Branding

## Tactics

i. Produce printed, high-quality Visitor Guide with an accompanying digital guide. Distribute to Colorado Welcome Centers, Colorado destinations, hotels and short-term rentals (STRs).

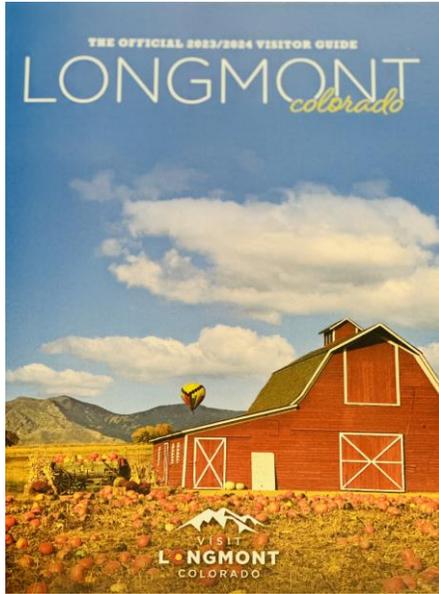
ii. Convert those requesting information to potential travelers with strategic approach and follow-up through seasonal email outreach

iii. Produce and maintain a comprehensive website advancing tourism goals, encouraging and connecting travelers to lodging, promoting local attractions and featuring events.

iv. Keep an active social profiles and partner or connect with CTO opportunities as they arise

v. Update and create needed assets to have a complete branding package and templates embracing Visit Longmont's updated brand

# Marketing Tactics & Metrics



## 2023/2024 Visitor Guide

Visit Longmont produced and continues to fulfill requests for the printed and digital version of the Official Longmont Visitor Guide.

As part of the Scope of Work for Visit Longmont's Website redesign and marketing effort, a new Visitor Guide will be produced in the fall of 2024.



## Maintain Website

Visit Longmont maintained the main traveler website at [www.VisitLongmont.org](http://www.VisitLongmont.org)

In 2023, the website had increased visitor engagement overall. Website sessions were almost 270,000, with over 481,000 page views. This engagement was up from the previous year (232,400 and 402,300 respectively).



## Active Social Media

Visit Longmont attracted 117,577 total Facebook followers and almost 144,000 Instagram followers. This social media activity is an increase from 2022 (112,392 and 135,138 respectively).



## Updated Brand

As part of the website redesign and digital advertising effort, is a review and assessment of the brand, including logo and tagline.

Visit Longmont's branding and strategies will also include shared opportunities for collaboration among groups like Advance Longmont.

# Fall Visitor Marketing Campaigns

- Visit Longmont launched a seasonal visitor marketing campaign in August of 2023 to attract potential visitors seeking to travel to Longmont and the surrounding areas.
- The campaign included various digital tactics and leveraged qualified traffic on Colorado.com to help drive messaging to an audience already interested in visiting the state. The campaign also included social media placements using short videos capturing Longmont's scenery and outdoor activities.
- During the same time period (August through November) Visit Longmont also placed a half-page ad in Colorado Life magazine and hosted a travel journalist Kellee Edwards, KelleeSetGo, resulting in three to five Instagram frames and posts branded @VisitLongmont.

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/CzKL1hspVDi/?igshid=YjVjNjZkNmFjNg%3D%3D>  
KelleeSetGo



Top L to R: Colorado Life magazine ad; KelleeSetGo; social media ad example

## Fall Visitor Marketing Campaign

# What did we learn?

Overall performance from August through October generated over 2.4 million impressions. Programmatic Display ads generated over 1.2 million impressions alone. The highest click through rate (CTR) was in the paid social media ads at 1.48 percent compared to an industry average of .9 percent indicating potential **travelers are increasingly using social media and video platforms in their trip planning and research.**

Following the fall visitor campaign, Longmont's "Visitor Economy" as measured by Zartico's geolocation and spend data, shows a slight improvement in November's performance (.4 percent) ahead of the previous year. November was the only positive month throughout 2023 that showed better economic activity than in 2022. **Strategic marketing can boost awareness and overall economic activity for a destination.**

The table to the right shows the overall performance of the fall paid social media campaign, which ran August through October 2023. Industry average for click through rate (CTR): Display = 0.07% | Social = .9%

With media in the marketplace beginning in August, 2023, Longmont's overall visitor economy showed improvement through November.

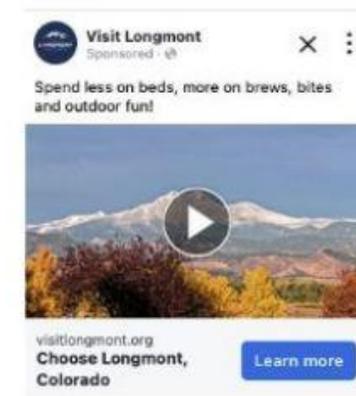


### Overall Performance: August – October 2023

Tactic	Impressions	Clicks	CTR
Programmatic Display	1,237,298	2,224	0.18%
Programmatic Pre-Roll	470,605	198	0.04%
Colorado.com Native	100,002	232	0.23%
Colorado.com Display	100,000	139	0.14%
Paid Social Media	545,041	8,478	1.48%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,452,946</b>	<b>11,271</b>	<b>0.41%</b>

\*Industry average CTR: Display 0.07%; Social 0.9%

The Visitor Economy Index measures the year-over-year percent change across several data sources and combines them to give you a clearer view of how your destination's tourism economy is doing compared to the same month in the previous year. Anything above 0% means that month's performance is ahead of the previous year. Anything below 0% indicates that month's performance is below the previous year.



Colorado.com Display & Native Creative

Paid Social Media Creative

# Create Economic Opportunities for Tourism-Related Businesses

Visit Longmont hosted two networking events with hoteliers to brainstorm ways to partner to promote the community during low seasons and support group sales efforts. The first Longmont Hoteliers Reception was held at Left Hand Brewery on May 17 with about 20 partners and board of directors attending. The second networking event was held as an “End of Summer Season” Reception on October 18 at the Roots at the Dickens Hotel, bringing together hotel partners, board members, and community partners.

Visit Longmont continued to distribute monthly e-newsletters highlighting upcoming events reaching potential travelers along with community members.

As part of the new campaign and branding efforts in 2024, Visit Longmont will be developing updated e-newsletter templates to distribute to a business partner audience, separately from the monthly community and traveler e-newsletter.

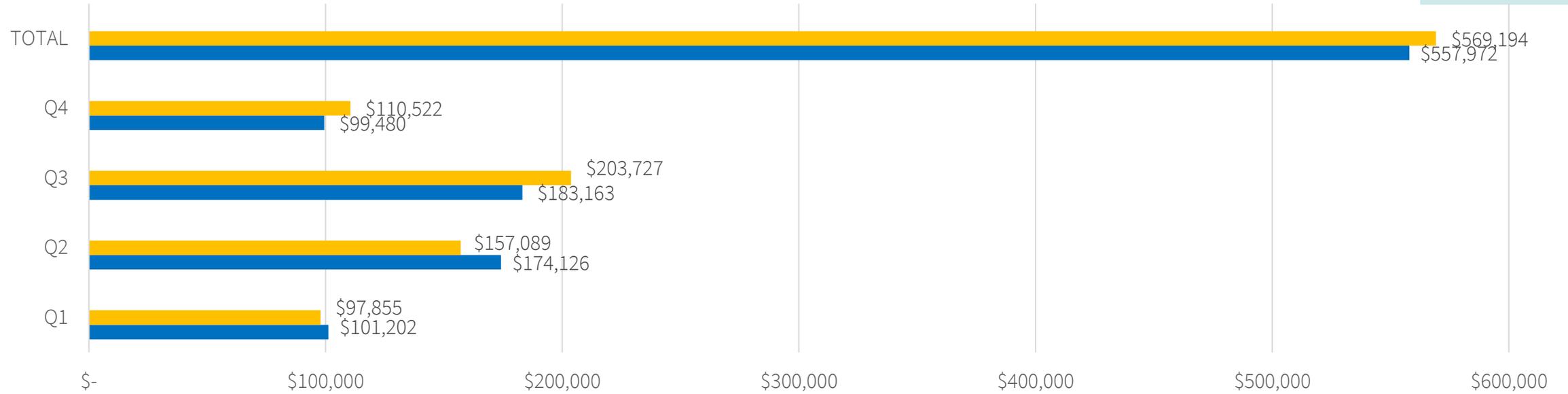
## METRIC:

Increase lodging tax collections by 5%

In general, while destination marketing does support accommodations sales and activities, it is challenging to directly tie back inspirational marketing campaigns and spending at hotels or short-term rentals. When a destination marketing organization like Visit Longmont can provide specific group, event, and meeting sales leads to hotel and accommodation partners, these activities more directly impact lodging tax revenue.



# QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE: Lodgers Tax Revenue



	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
Lodgers Tax					
2022 Revenue	\$97,855	\$157,089	\$203,727	\$110,522	\$569,194
2023 Revenue	\$101,202	\$174,126	\$183,163	\$99,480	\$557,972

■ 2022 Revenue ■ 2023 Revenue

2023 total lodgers tax revenue collected was \$557,972, a -2 % difference from the previous year. This total was \$47,972 over the projected and budgeted amount of \$510,000.

The next graph (p.16) shows average daily rate (ADR) and occupancy rates were flat year over year (YOY).

Short term rentals (STRs) paid \$80,818 or 14.5% of lodgers tax collected overall.

# Lodgers Tax Revenue (YOY)

- Longmont’s ADR fluctuated by season, showing the highest average rate of \$128 during the summer months.
- Year over year occupancy per season was slightly higher in 2023 vs 2022.
- Overall Lodgers’ Tax Revenue was flat between 2023 and 2022.

	Ave. Daily Rate (ADR) 2023	Ave. Daily Rate (ADR) 2022	2023 Occupancy %	2022 Occupancy %
Q1: Jan - March	\$95.89	\$99.12	57.4%	55.1%
Q2: April-June	\$125	\$125	69.2%	66.4%
Q3: July-Sept	\$128	\$128	71.8%	68.7%
Q4: Oct - Dec	\$123.69	\$124.5	69%	66.6%

\*Average Daily Rate (ADR) | \*\* Revenue Per Available Rooms (RevPAR) |

Source: Rocky Mt. Lodger’s Report



# Economic Activity | Longmont Tourism

In 2023, Visit Longmont invested in high level research (Zartico) incorporating geolocation data, spend data, and credit card information. The Visit Longmont information can be pulled from several categories or modules including visitor economic data, visitor origin market and behaviors, travelers and resident movement in destination, visitor spending and website, social media and google analytics data.

Example DASHBOARD DATA POINTS:

## Most Visited Regions

### Visitors observed . . .

Almost 48% of all travelers to Longmont visited the Southwest region near the Village of the Peaks mall. Visitors also were observed in the Northwest (13.4%), the Northeast (12.6%), Southeast (11.8%) and, in Downtown Longmont (9.3%).

Visitors can be observed in more than one region.

## Top Activities

### Visitors observed . . .

Of all travelers to Longmont, 26.6% visited outdoor recreation sites. 19% of visitors shopped at retail stores and stayed in Longmont accommodations. Food (12.6%) and Sports (5.8%) filled out the top five categories for 2023.

## Direct Employment

**21,524** highest pre COVID (Oct 19)

**12,058** lowest in COVID (May 20)

**21,623** highest post COVID (June 22)

Leisure & hospitality sector jobs seemed to have mostly recovered from the highs of over 21,000 direct employment pre-COVID. In June of 2022, direct employment increased by 200. In January 2023, jobs had dipped to 19,500 jobs (Bureau of Labor Statistics data has a 9+ month lag).

## Ave. Visitor Spend

**\$155**

**+7% change**  
(\$145 prev. year)

This represents the total spend / total cardholders.

## Out of State Visitation vs In-state Visitors

**77%-85%**

Out of State visitors to Longmont make up between 77%-85% of visits throughout the year. In-state visitation ranges from 14.8% to 23+%. Visitors are defined as those with devices traveling more than 50 miles from their home location.

# Hospitality & Asset Management

## Trip Planning | Visitor Center

i. Visit Longmont maintained a visitor center providing community and regional information, maps, and brochures

The Visitor Center received 2,235 total guests, a decrease overall from the previous year (2,672 total guests in 2022). Last year, Visit Longmont saw more travelers visiting from Colorado: 1,176 in 2022 versus 986 in 2023; and from other states: 1,329 in 2022 versus 1,145 this year. International visits remained mostly the same: 104 in 2023 versus 107 in 2022.

## Marketing

ii. Visit Longmont paused on creating any new brochures, during the RFP process, with the goal to consolidate marketing campaign and collateral efforts with any updates to the overall brand.

After posting an RFP for reimagining the main traveler consumer website and marketing efforts, Visit Longmont reviewed several potential bidders' proposals. A board approved review committee selected Miles Partnership and SimpleView to partner with in 2024 to re-do [www.VisitLongmont.org](http://www.VisitLongmont.org), enhance the brand, and create new marketing campaigns.

## Community Engagement

Visit Longmont reallocated resources to successfully launch a grassroots approach to grow tourism through the "Champion the Value of Tourism" campaign. The *Tourism Keeps Longmont Running* tagline was created and shared on stickers, posters, digital ads and social posts.

To engage various business stakeholders, "running" was interchanged with: "creating", "brewing", "growing", "in motion", "in business" and translated to Spanish: "en movimiento."

# Looking Ahead to 2024



# MEET OUR TEAM: Staff



**Sarah Leonard**

CEO & Chief Destination Stewardship  
Officer



**Gera Sivak-Salva**

Tourism Manager



**Kristen Garland**

Digital Content Manager



**Michelle Visser**

Visitor Center & Office Coordinator

# MEET OUR TEAM: 2023 Board of Directors



**Kimberlee McKee, LDDA**  
Chair / Economic Development rep



**Dave Fluegge, Fluegge Consulting**  
Vice Chair / AT-LARGE



**Stacy Litwin Rapp**  
Treasurer / Short-term rental rep



**Katherine Inskeep**  
Director / AT-LARGE



**Jennifer Ferguson, Bricks Retail, Wonder Tours**  
Director / Tourism Business



**Lee Reissig, Aim Hospitality Group**  
Director / Accommodation rep



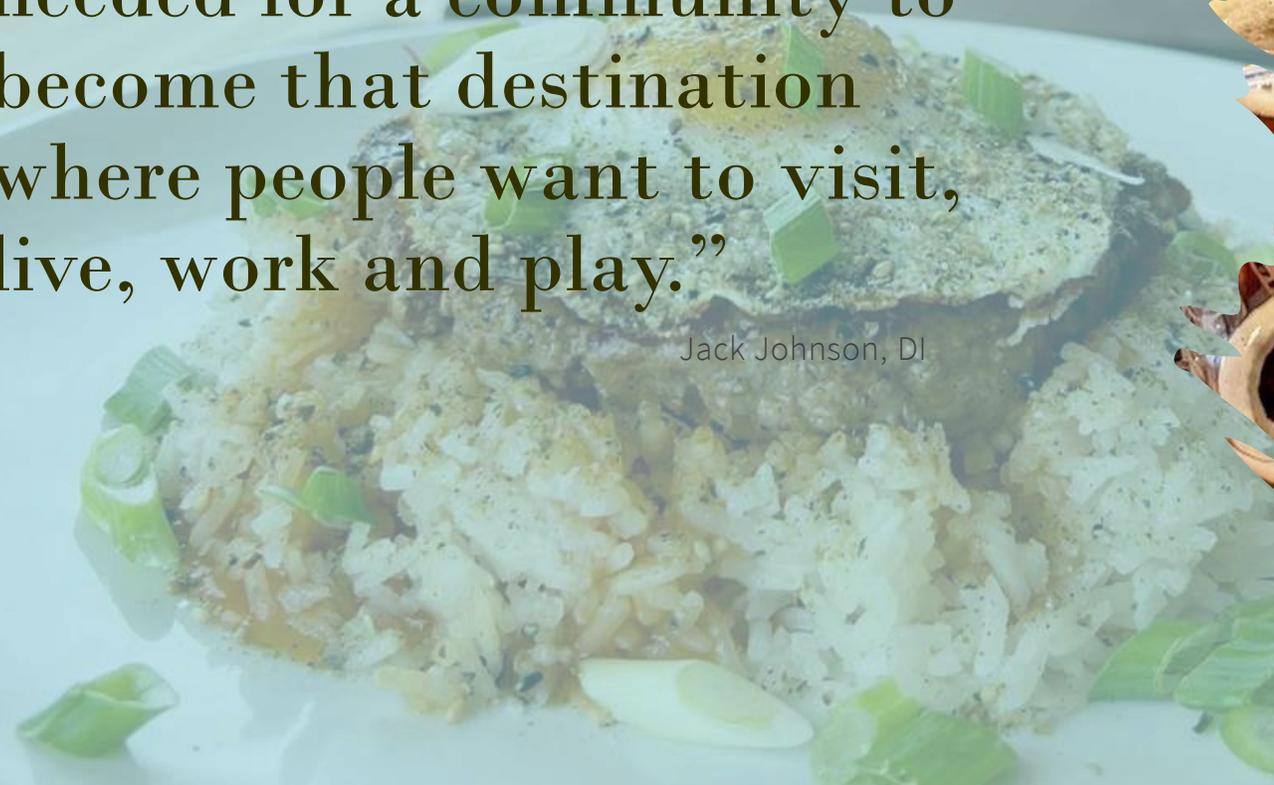
**Carla Colin, Latino Chamber of Commerce**  
Director / AT-LARGE



**Tim Waters, City Council**  
Longmont City Council Member

“Destination promotion is a catalyst for community vitality. It drives what is needed for a community to become that destination where people want to visit, live, work and play.”

Jack Johnson, DI





2023 Visit Longmont Board of Directors and team

# THANK YOU!

Sarah Leonard, CEO  
sleonard@visitlongmont.org  
www.visitlongmont.org



# Appendices

Appendix A: Visit Longmont Short-term Strategic Plan in partnership with the Colorado Tourism Office Reimagine Destinations Report

Appendices B & C: Amended Visit Longmont Bylaws, Dec. 2023 | Visit Longmont Operating Reserve Policy | Visit Longmont Purchasing Policy