

THE STATE OF DARE COUNTY TOURISM

DECEMBER 2022

2022 AT A GLANCE

Tourism is built on hospitality – welcoming guests and sharing this special place with them. In exchange, visitors have spent billions of dollars, supporting our businesses and livelihoods for generations. The last two years witnessed unprecedented increases in business as visitors sought safer vacation alternatives during Covid and as the internationally distributed “Outer Banks” Netflix series garnered new interest for the destination. Prior to this boom, tourism was characterized by its steady growth and by the resilience of the industry, bouncing back quickly from natural disasters and other challenges. The charts below reflect just how unusual the last two years were.

DARE COUNTY TOURISM SNAPSHOT

Visitor Spending

\$1.83 Billion

State Rank

#4

Tourism-Related Jobs

12,295

State Tax Revenue from Tourism

\$67.6 Million

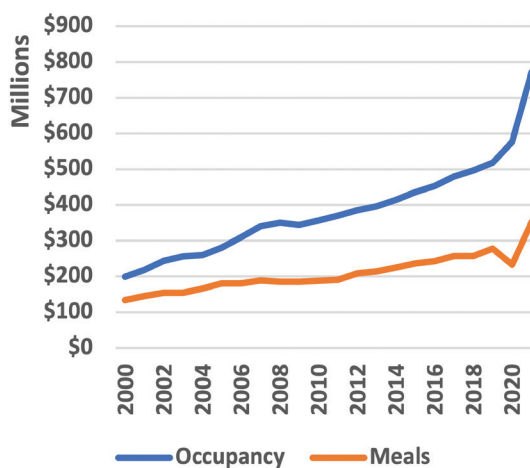
Local Tax Revenue from Tourism

\$79.2 Million

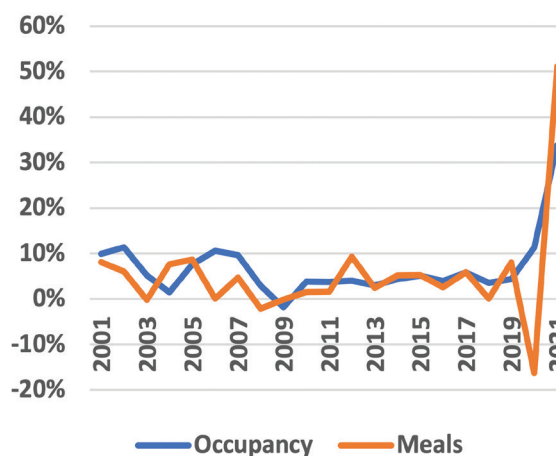
Tax Savings/County Resident

\$3,930

Tax Collections



YOY % Change



DCTB MEMBERS

TIM CAFFERTY

Chair, Member at Large

MONICA THIBODEAU

Vice Chair, Town of Duck

JAMIE CHISHOLM

Secretary, Outer Banks Hotel/Motel Association

ERVIN BATEMAN

Treasurer, Dare County Commissioners

IVY INGRAM

Asst. Treasurer, Town of Kill Devil Hills

DENNIS ROBINSON

Personnel Committee Chair, Hatteras Island at Large

LEO HOLLAND

Town of Southern Shores

DAVID HINES

Town of Kitty Hawk

MIKE SIERS

Town of Nags Head

BOBBY OWENS

Town of Manteo

BAMBOS CHARALAMBOUS

Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce

GRAY BERRYMAN

Outer Banks Association of Realtors

MARK BALLOG

Outer Banks Restaurant Association



One Visitors Center Circle
Manteo, NC 27954
phone: 252-473-2138
fax: 252-473-5777
e-mail: information@outerbanks.org

OBVB STAFF

Lee Nettles, Executive Director

Diane Bognich, Director of Administration

Aaron Tuell, Public Relations & Social Media Manager

Lorrie Love, Tourism Sales & Events Manager

Amy Wood, Administrative Specialist & Board Clerk

Cheryl Hannant, Welcome Center Manager

Allison Wyant, Website & Database Manager

Matt Dubec, IT Manager & Graphic Designer

Curt DeYoung, Facilities Manager

Stephanie Hall, Senior Content Coordinator

Katie Stone, Tourism Services Coordinator

Robin Gard, Telephone Services Supervisor

Faye Lewis, Telephone Services Supervisor

ABOUT US

DARE COUNTY TOURISM BOARD

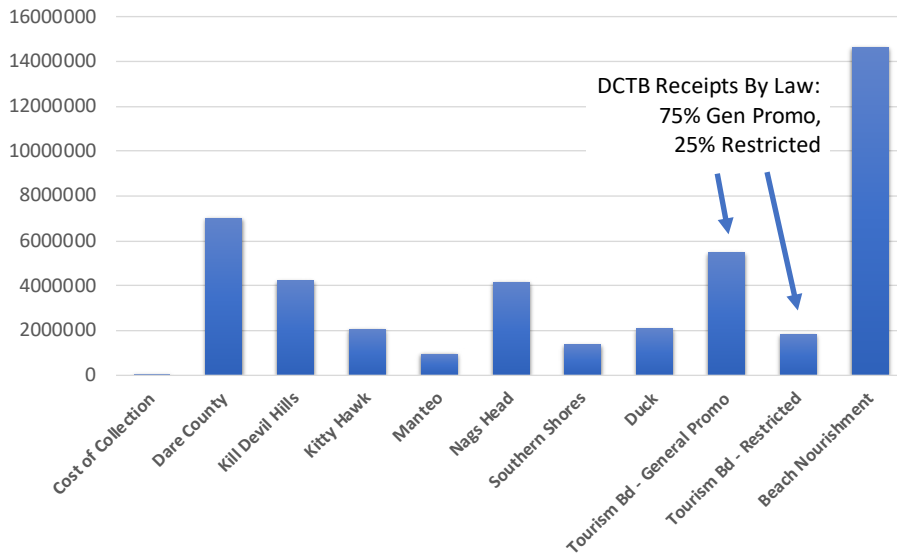
The Dare County Tourism Board (DCTB), doing business as the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau, is a 13-member governing board with the mission to increase overnight visitation of leisure, business, and other travel to Dare County's Outer Banks in the less-than-peak months. Tourism Board members represent various constituent groups throughout Dare County as set forth by the enabling legislation. Members are appointed by the Dare County Commissioners and serve two-year terms and are eligible for a 2nd two-year term.

THE OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU

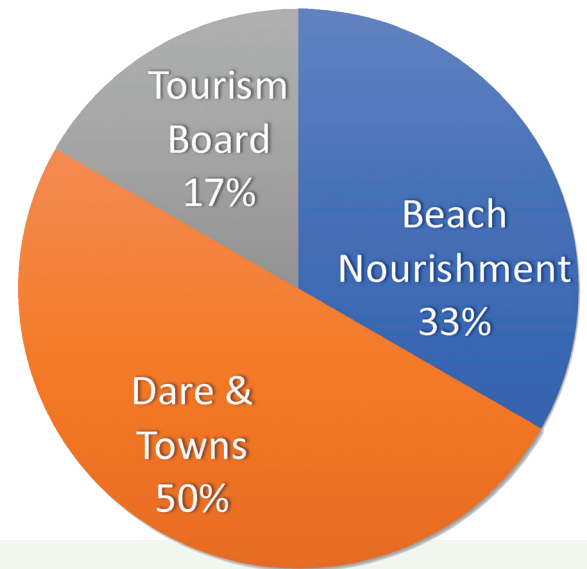
The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau (OBVB) is the official Destination Marketing Organization for Dare County's Outer Banks. The OBVB is funded by a 1% tax on overnight accommodations and a 1% prepared meals tax. While the largest portion of the Bureau's annual budget goes toward marketing the destination, 25% of the funds received are dedicated to programs and services needed due to the impact of tourism. These dollars have funded numerous projects throughout the County, including multi-use paths, beach accesses and improvements to key cultural and historic attractions.

OCCUPANCY & MEALS TAX COLLECTIONS

Dare County Occupancy Tax Distributions
Fiscal Year '20-21



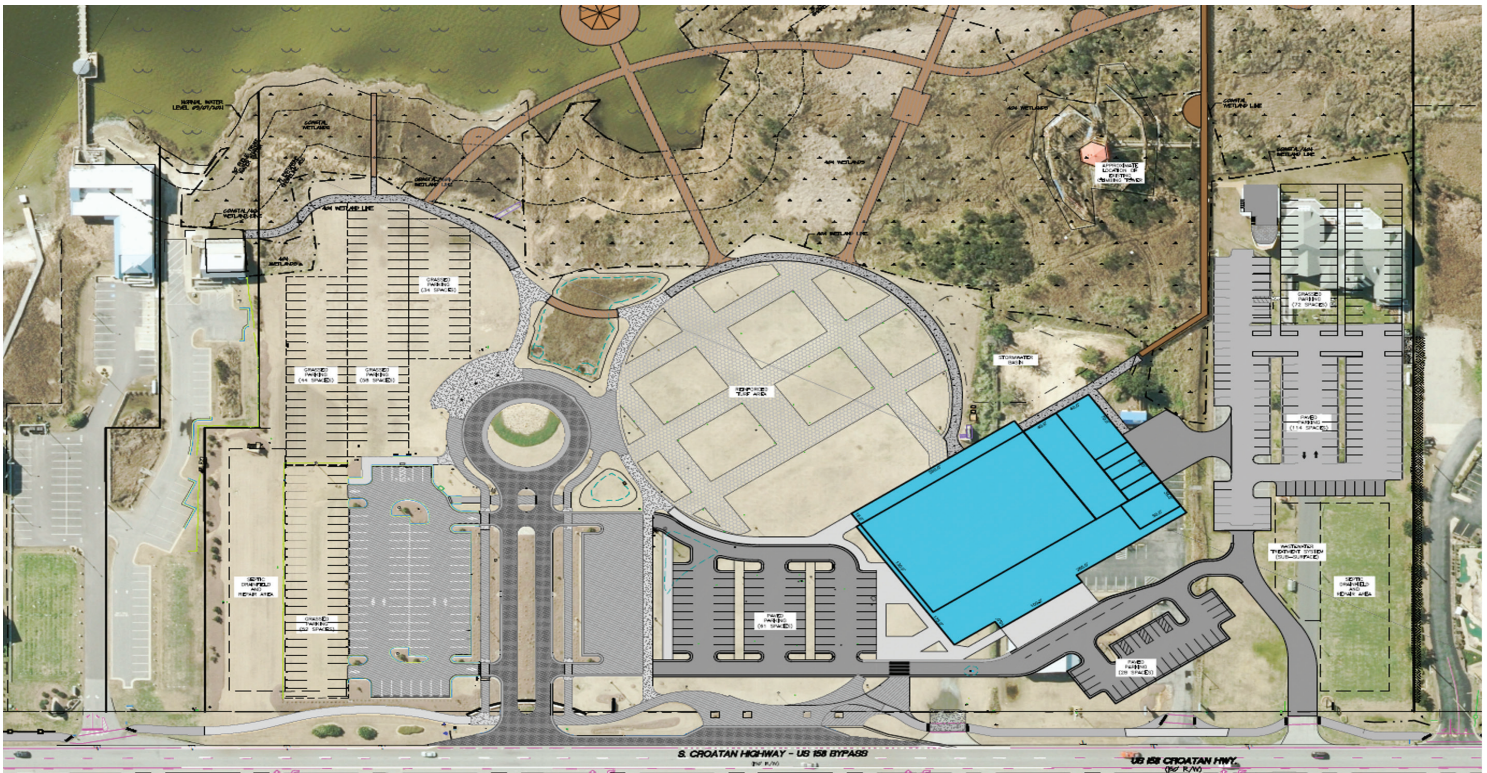
The two charts show how occupancy tax collections are distributed, by law, to various local entities and efforts. The Tourism Board also receives a 1% Prepared Meals tax.



EVENT GRANTS

One way that we promote non-summer travel and a year-round tourism economy is through our work with events. Every year, the Board offers two Event Grant windows where Dare County non-profits and governmental entities can apply for funds to offset expenses related to those non-peak season events. Because events often serve as main fundraisers for the non-profit, the Board's support creates a win-win for our community – the NPO raises more revenue to continue its fine work year-round, and the Board satisfies its legislated mission of promoting visitation to Dare County during non-summer months. We have a 2nd grant window in February, the 1st window grant awards are below. Go to outerbanks.org/grants and look for the link to past awards to see investments made throughout the years.

2022-2023 Events		
Beach Food Pantry	2023 Outer Banks Rum Festival	\$ 5,000
Dare County Arts Council	2023 Artrageous Kids Festival	\$ 4,500
Dare County Arts Council	Rock the Cape 2023	\$ 6,000
Dare County Motorsports Charity Group	Spring OB Bike Week South	\$ 11,500
Dare County Restaurant Assoc.	2023 Taste of the Beach	\$ 20,000
Eastern Surfing Assoc.	2023 Mid-Atlantic Reg. Championships	\$ 12,500
Elizabethan Gardens	2022 WinterLights	\$ 20,000
First Flight Foundation	Future of Electric Flight Expo	\$ 15,000
Garage Band Charities	2023 OBX Rod & Custom Festival	\$ 10,000
Hatteras Island Youth Foundation	'23 Shore Break 5K-Tide Pool Fun Run	\$ 5,000
Manteo Preservation Trust	2022 Holiday Tour of Homes	\$ 2,500
Outer Banks Conservationists	2023 Sheep Shear Day & Spring Fest.	\$ 1,000
Outer Banks SPCA	2023 Bark in the Park	\$ 1,000
Outer Banks Sporting Events	2023 Flying Pirate Half Marathon	\$ 12,500
Outer Banks Sporting Events	2023 Outer Banks Triathlon	\$ 12,500
Roanoke Island Historical Association	2023 Lost Colony Wine, Beer & Culinary Festival	\$ 3,250
Town of Manteo	2022 Midnight Magic in Manteo - NYE	\$ 20,000
Town of Nags Head	2023 St. Patrick's Parade	\$ 3,500



EVENT CENTER UPDATES

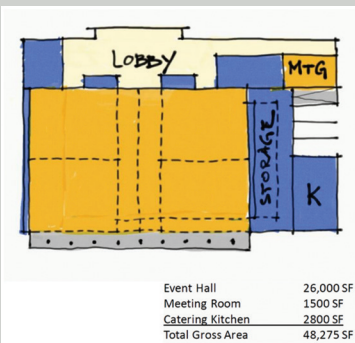
You may have heard that the Tourism Board has been sharing a concept for a 48,275 sq. ft. Event Center it wants to build on The Soundside Event Site property in Nags Head. The vision for the Center is the culmination of several years of discussion and planning. An Advisory Committee of community leaders and residents crystalized the vision into the concept shown. For reference, this building size is close to the size of the Nags Head Food Lion and less than half the size of the new Target in Kill Devil Hills.

Great care was taken to "right size" the Center, that is, to design it based on the needs of the specific use types we hope to satisfy, like sports tournaments, concerts, galas & consumer shows. Approaching the project in this way allows us to manage the risks and costs associated with construction and operation. It also allows the Board to preserve green space and highlight the natural amenities of the site, a key planning consideration.

Another planning priority was to keep the inside layout as flexible as possible to accommodate a variety of uses.

The Advisory Committee & the Board have worked hard to plan the Center not just for visitor use but also for the community's long-term enjoyment (for example, sports, concerts, galas and banquets, and the culinary training facility that's envisioned for the kitchen service area). Separate but related, the Board is getting closer to final design and construction of a soundside boardwalk that will allow people to understand & connect with that area's natural environment in a variety of ways.

Referencing the Event Center project, Tourism Board Chairman, Tim Cafferty, states, "This is the single most significant step the Tourism Board can take to promote a more stable year-round tourism economy; one that doesn't rely on 70% of its revenue to come from three months of the year." You can find out more at outerbanks.org/FAQ.



Annually, the Indoor Event Center and Event Lawn are projected to generate and/or support:

- \$25,150,000 in new spending
- Facility operating deficit of \$312,000
- More than 14,000 new room nights
- \$1,171,000 in new tax revenue
- 191 new jobs (9 FTE at Event Center; model projection includes government workers)

Header Image

Rough design, note that the Event Hall and Lobby areas (pictured within inset) have been flipped on the site layout.



CONCEPTUAL BOARDWALK

6813 S. CROATAN HIGHWAY
NAGS HEAD, NC



BEACON
ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN, P.L.L.C.



RESTRICTED FUNDS

In addition to the Event Grants described earlier, the Tourism Board offers other funding opportunities to local non-profits and governmental entities through its Restricted Fund grants. These are for programs or services needed due to the impact of tourism. The most recent grant awards are shown below. More information is available at outerbanks.org/Grants.

The Board's grants have reinvested approximately \$15 million back into our community through important infrastructure projects that literally span from one end of Dare County to the other and all points in between.

2022-2023 Tourism Impact Grants (TIGs)

County of Dare	Frisco-Buxton Pathway	\$ 200,000
Town of Duck	Ocean Crest Bicycle and Ped. Improvements	\$ 78,000
Town of Kill Devil Hills	Sidewalk in Front of Wright Memorial	\$ 177,000
Town of Nags Head	Whalebone Park Restrooms	\$ 112,000
Outer Banks Forever	Historic Weather Bureau Signal Replacement	\$ 34,595
Outer Banks Forever	Cape Hatteras Lighthouse Pathway	\$ 132,000
Town of Southern Shores	Walkng Path on E. Highway 12	\$ 150,000
Southern Shores Civic Assoc.	Accessible Access 96A Ocean Boulevard Access	\$ 25,000

2021-2022 Long-Term Unappropriated

County of Dare	Buxton-Frisco Pathway	\$ 200,000
Friends of the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum	Museum Exhibits	\$ 250,000

2021-2022 Fireworks

Town of Nags Head	\$ 12,500
Town of Manteo	\$ 15,300
Town of Kill Devil Hills	\$ 12,200
Avon Property Owners Association	\$ 15,000

GRANTS AT WORK IN THE COMMUNITY



ESA Easterns Surfing Championships

The largest amateur surfing organization in the world hosts the season's "grand finale" at Jennette's Pier in Nags Head every September. The primary purpose of the Event Grant Program is to make it easier for Dare County based groups to create & hold events that drive overnight visitation during less than peak months.



Cape Hatteras Lighthouse Pathway

The OBVB awarded tourism impact grants to Outer Banks Forever to replace the weather signal tower at the Weather Bureau Station on Hatteras Island and create the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse Pathway, part of Outer Banks Forever's larger "Pathways to Your National Parks" project. Photo: Jeffrey O'Neil, REAL Watersports



Manteo Fireworks

Dare County Tourism Board's Fireworks Grant program was established from short-term unappropriated funds to financially assist Dare County Governmental Units and other Non-profit Organizations within Dare County with firework shows for the Fourth of July holiday celebrations. Photo: Wes Snyder

OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU INITIATIVES

LRTMP

LONG RANGE TOURISM MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Visitors Bureau sees signs that business is cooling off, at least compared to the past two record-setting years. Still, we recognize the need – and the opportunity -- to create a Long-

Range Tourism Management Plan (LRTMP) looking 10-15 years into the future. The LRTMP strives to create a strategic vision for the future of Dare County's visitor economy, ensuring its economic

sustainability while preserving quality of place and quality of life for residents. The process involves several opportunities for you to offer input. To learn more please visit outerbanks.org/LRTMP.

CBC

CAREERS BEYOND THE COUNTER

Another new Visitors Bureau initiative strives to better connect the tourism industry with our local schools. Similar to the non-profit initiative, the CBC initiative has the potential to provide greater workforce without adding to housing strains. But the program is bigger in its scope.

Every year, hundreds of high school students work at summer jobs locally, most of which are tourism related. Understandably, that's their perspective of the travel industry, but in reality, travel and tourism includes an incredibly wide range of career paths, from web design to accounting, from horticulture to data analytics, sales to social media, and so on.

CBC aligns the tourism industry with local high school Careers & Technical Education programs so that students can have more direct and meaningful experiences with tourism through in-class speaker programs and internships. Tourism careers are often upwardly mobile, moving employees to greater pay and responsibilities. While four-year degrees aren't necessarily prerequisites for these careers, tourism jobs beyond the counter can also provide the student with hands-on experiences that can guide future studies at a community college or four-year university.

2023 CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

Just before the start of 2023, the Visitors Bureau released two long-format videos and a series of shorter cuts under the campaign theme "Raw OBX." The messaging represents a couple of significant firsts – the first time the Bureau has used long-form video, and the first dedicated effort to tell the story of the OBX through the eyes of enthusiast audiences, in the case of these two videos, through the eyes of surfers and fishermen. The videos feature local surfers and fisherfolk.

As Executive Director Lee Nettles states, "The Outer Banks has always had a way of unlocking people's passions, whether it's surfing and fishing, or other pursuits like history, aviation, birdwatching, photography, kiteboarding, windsurfing, diving, and the list goes on." Nettles shared why the enthusiasts make sense from a marketing perspective, "The enthusiasts are happy to travel to the OBX whenever their thing is happening and usually that's during non-summer months. By sharing their dedication to the activities they love, we're not only able to boost non-summer travel, but also highlight how special the Outer Banks truly is."

A companion piece to this campaign will connect visitors with some of the groups related to these pastimes and who are devoted to keeping the OBX OBX. The long-form videos will appear before targeted audiences on Hulu and YouTube in several key feeder states east of the Mississippi. Shorter versions will appear in those same states via streaming television and a Connected Television (CTV) buy. You can take a look at the videos by going to RawOBX.com

RAWOBX
.COM



N P O

NON-PROFIT VOLUNTOURISM

While the Board's support of local non-profits through its Event and Restricted Fund grants is significant and well established, a recent initiative launched this winter by the Visitors Bureau looks to do even more.

The Visitors Bureau has created a non-profit section on its website to raise visitor awareness for the local groups, the important work they are doing within our community and how visitors can become involved. As Director Nettles puts it, "We want visitors to recognize that the Outer Banks isn't special by accident. It's the result of a lot of people working hard to take care of the place and our community."

By connecting the hundreds of thousands of visitors the Bureau reaches more directly with local non-profit organizations, the visitor comes away with a deeper appreciation for the islands and greater sense of responsibility. The Visitors Bureau intends to share "voluntourism" opportunities with visitors, that is, opportunities for the visitor to volunteer at non-profit events, attractions or at projects like beach clean-ups etc being led by the non-profit. The non-profit gets an extra set of hands and the visitor has a more fulfilling vacation. The initiative provides temporary workers without adding to our housing challenges.



VOLUNTEERS PLANTING SEA OATS,
PHOTO: OBX FOREVER

TOURISM FOR GOOD

Bringing it all together.

Each of the programs and initiatives described within this newsletter have a common thread – they all are directed at using the power of tourism to do more good in our community. The Dare County Tourism Board and Outer Banks Visitors Bureau are committed to these efforts and welcome your involvement and input. Please contact us at info@outerbanks.org or 473-2138 with any questions or comments you may have.

2023 TRAVEL GUIDE AD



THE FUTURE OF TOURISM

Looking ahead.

Currently, the country is seeing a much needed drop in inflation rates. Inflation and higher prices have caused great strain on personal finances, but the effects on tourism have been minimal as consumers have continued to place a high priority on travel. Tourism economists predict a small recession for the beginning of 2023, but expect the impacts to be short-lived and relatively inconsequential. Meanwhile, the country and our destination continue to face challenges related to infrastructure, limited workforce and a lack of affordable housing. Destinations like the Outer Banks are taking proactive steps to develop long-range plans for how best to manage the positive and negative impacts of tourism moving forward.



OBX is for the Birds

You bet it is! Hosting annual flyovers of hundreds of bird species, the Outer Banks is a natural for birding enthusiasts. BestBirding.us



WELCOME CENTERS

AYCOCK BROWN WELCOME CENTER

5230 N Croatan Hwy, Kitty Hawk, NC 27949. (877) 629-4386

SARAH OWENS WELCOME CENTER

One Visitors Center Circle, Manteo, NC 27954. (252) 473-2138

WHALEBONE WELCOME CENTER

Cape Hatteras National Park Rd, Nags Head, NC 27959. (877) 629-4386

U.S. WEATHER BUREAU STATION/HATTERAS WELCOME CENTER

57190 Kohler Road, Hatteras Village, NC 27943. (252) 986-2203

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