



# EXPLORE YORK FACT SHEET

York County's Official Tourist Promotion Agency

## Tourism Impact in York County

Explore York, York County's Tourist Promotion Agency, significantly benefits area businesses and residents through our tourism promotion efforts. The tourism sector is vital to our economy, generating revenue, creating job opportunities, and paving the way for reinvestment in projects and events to continue the cycle. The impact of tourism is felt through visitor spending across retail, entertainment, food & beverage, transportation, and lodging segments as visitors spend more than \$1 billion in York County annually. In addition, York County employs more than 8,200 people in the travel & tourism industry and our tourism economy generated \$62 million in state and local taxes, providing direct tax relief for York County residents.

**Mission:** Explore York's Mission is to maximize tourism expenditures and their economic impact in York County, PA, through its comprehensive tourism sales and marketing programs.

**Vision:** Explore York's Vision is for a York County where tourism is recognized for the value of its economic impact and its role in raising the profile of York County as a sought-after destination.

**Strategic Focus:** Explore York promotes York County as a top destination by boosting brand visibility; encouraging overnight stays; maximizing economic impact; fostering community engagement; enhancing visitor experiences; and by building strong local and industry partnerships.

**Designations:** Explore York is designated by municipalities representing more than 50% of the county's population and the York County Commissioners as the Official Tourist Promotion Agency for York County and is a member of Destinations International (DI).

**Operation:** Explore York follows a July 1–June 30 fiscal year. The Board of Directors approves the annual budget by June and is audited annually by an independent accounting firm.

**Budget & Structure:** Explore York is a private not-for-profit 501(c)6 organization with a budget of \$4 million.

**Population:** York County, PA, has a population of 471,240 based on July 2024 data from census.gov.

### Board of Directors

**Immediate Past Chair:** Dan Johnson  
*Advanced Industrial Services*

**Chair:** Glenn Smith  
*Brewery Tours*

**Vice Chair:** Jason Schultz  
*High Hotels Corporation*

**Treasurer:** Robert Berkebile

**Secretary:** Leah Reasinger  
*Historic Ashland*

Patrick Ball  
*York Expo Center*

Meagan Hess Given  
*The Pretzel Company*

Mike Jones  
*PA House of Representatives  
93rd District*

David Melugin  
*The Yorktowne Hotel*

Marci Paniagua  
*Hampton Inn & Suites York South*

Jada Richardson  
*Molly Sauder  
York College of Pennsylvania*

Sagar Shah  
*Best Western Plus Heritage Rail  
Inn & Suites*

Sam Terroso  
*South County Brewing*

Laura Wagner  
*Explore York*

Seth Weeber  
*The Wankawala Organization*

Julie Wheeler  
*York County President  
Commissioner*

Ashley Zimmerman  
*Northern Central Railway of York*

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### York County Tourism Grant Program Committee

**Chair:** Bryan Tate  
*York County Register of Wills*

Elaine Bonneau  
*Bonneau & Associates*

Ophelia Chambliss  
*Ophelia's Making Agency*

Tyler Chronister  
*County of York, Pennsylvania*

Scott A. Deisley, Ed.D.  
*CAY History and Culture Center*

Katie Mahoney  
*YCEA & Downtown Inc*

Christina McCullough  
*Stewart & Tate*

Jacob Taylor  
*Hanover Area Chamber of Commerce*

Carmen Witmer  
*Senator Dawn Keefer's Office*



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## Explore York Timeline Highlights

- 2025** ● Explore York celebrates its 60th Anniversary in April 2025.
- 2024** ● New website, YorkPA.org, launched.
  - Eclipsed the \$5 million mark in projects funded through the Tourism Grant Program.
  - Reached the \$4 million revenue mark in room tax for the first time.
- 2023** ● Celebrated 50 Years of Women in Sports at a first-of-its kind Title IX Anniversary event at Historic Ashland.
- 2022** ● Explore York was awarded a \$450,000 grant from the York County Tourism Grant Program for place based marketing, brand adoption efforts, and implementation.
- 2021** ● The Good Libations Trails digital passport was launched.
- 2019** ● The organization was rebranded to embrace the destination brand for York County tourism.
  - The YCCVB announced they will now do business as "Explore York."
- 2018** ● Laura Wagner was appointed president of the York County CVB.
  - The YCCVB was awarded the Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP) seal of accreditation by Destinations International for its commitment to industry excellence and meeting the industry standard for performance and accountability of destination organizations around the world. This certification was initially awarded to the York County CVB in 2008, making it only the fifth CVB in PA at the time to achieve this designation.
- 2017** ● Laura Wagner attained the designation of Certified Destination Management Executive from Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI).
  - The York County Convention & Visitors Bureau (YCCVB) and the York County Commissioners established a matching grant program aimed at boosting tourism visitation in York County.

Explore York was originally called "The Colonial York Tourist Bureau" when founded in **1965**.

