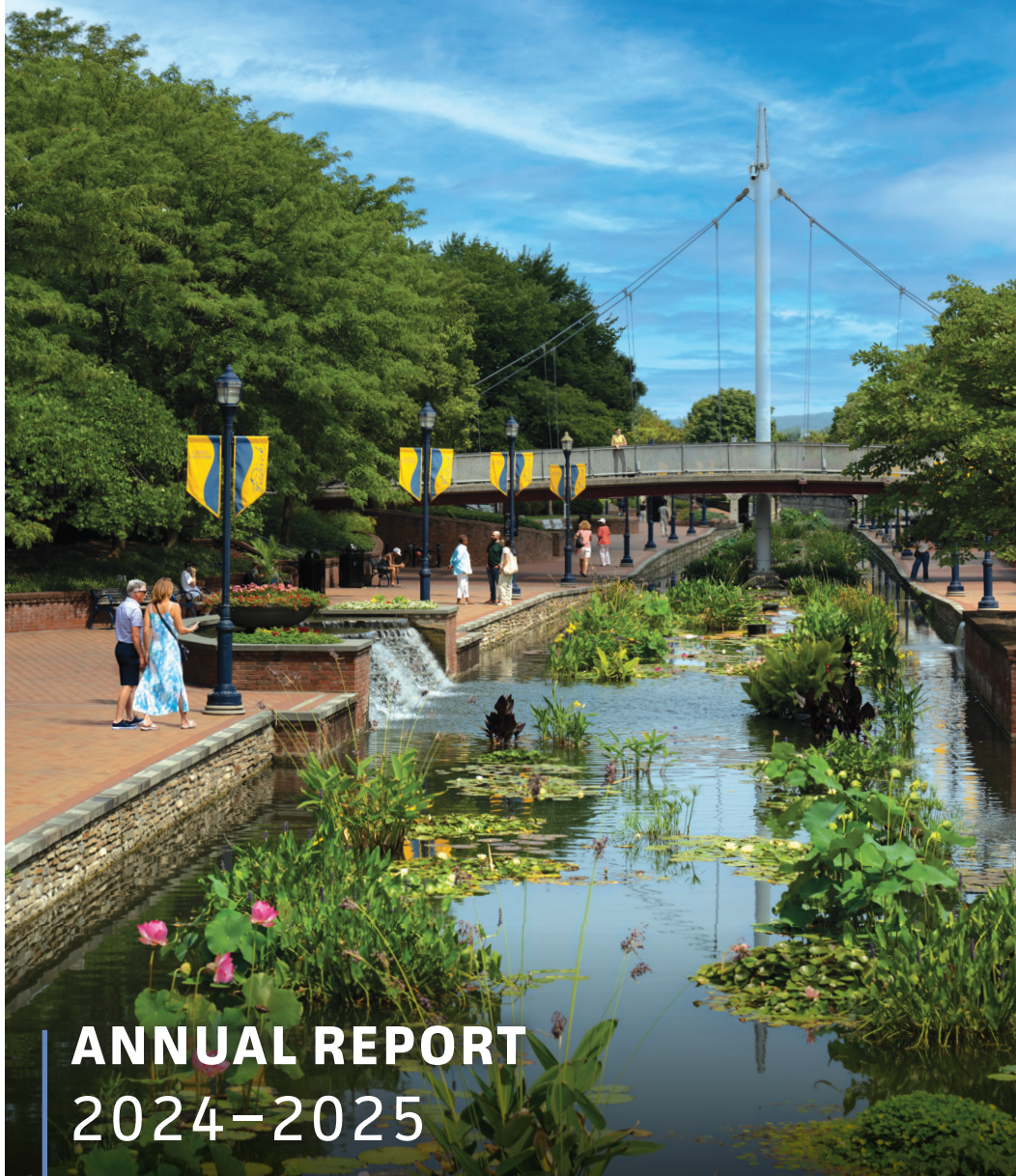


VISIT  
*Frederick*  
CITY & COUNTY



**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2024-2025**



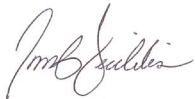
## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### As we reflect upon the achievements of the past year, Visit Frederick is proud to present our Annual Report for FY25.

This report highlights another year of momentum and collaboration, demonstrating how Visit Frederick shares Frederick County's vibrancy and character with a growing audience. In a travel landscape that continues to evolve, we focused on smart marketing, strong partnerships, and exceptional visitor services. The result is measurable progress for our local economy, deeper community engagement, and continued recognition of Frederick County as a premier Maryland destination.

Several milestones defined FY25. In early 2025, we opened the new exhibits at the Frederick Visitor Center. These updates invite guests to explore our history, arts, and outdoor recreation through a new wall mural and accessible design. In December 2024, Downtown Frederick welcomed its first hotel in fifty years, expanding walkable overnight options and strengthening our ability to attract meetings and extended stays. We also launched a comprehensive strategic planning process that will conclude in FY26. This plan will set clear priorities for marketing, product development, and partnership growth. Our Tourism Reinvestment in Promotion & Product (TRIPP) program continued to support visitor-serving projects across the county, ensuring reinvestment keeps pace with demand.

These achievements reflect the dedication of our team and the strength of collaboration with our members, partners, and community leaders. Frederick County's businesses, cultural institutions, and municipalities continue to deliver authentic experiences that inspire travelers and benefit residents. As we look ahead, we will use the insights in this report and the guidance of our strategic plan to advance Frederick County's prominence as a visitor destination. We remain focused on results that strengthen our economy, tell our story, and welcome everyone to experience Frederick County.



**Dave Ziedelis**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



In 2024,  
**2.1 MILLION**  
**PEOPLE VISITED**  
**FREDERICK**  
**COUNTY**



**VISIT**  
*Frederick*  
CITY & COUNTY

Visit Frederick (The Tourism Council of Frederick County) is a public-private partnership dedicated to enhancing the economic benefit of tourism for Frederick County's businesses, attractions, local governments, and residents. Membership is open to businesses and individuals interested in promoting tourism in Frederick County.

**Frederick Visitor Center**  
151 S. East Street • Frederick, Maryland  
301-600-4047 • [visitfrederick.org](http://visitfrederick.org)

   **#visitfrederick**



## Board of Directors

**Rob Judge**  
*President*  
NATIONAL SHRINE OF SAINT  
ELIZABETH ANN SETON

**Elizabeth DeRose**  
*1st Vice President*  
FREDERICK  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Barbara Liccione**  
*2nd Vice President*  
HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS  
& SUITES BRUNSWICK

**Michael Henningsen**  
*Treasurer*  
PLAMONDON  
HOSPITALITY PARTNERS

**Ashly Wright**  
*Secretary*  
PROSPECT PANTRY

**Phil Bowers**  
*Past President*  
FOUNTAIN ROCK MANAGEMENT

**County Executive**  
**Jessica Fitzwater**  
FREDERICK COUNTY  
GOVERNMENT

**Mayor Michael O'Connor**  
CITY OF FREDERICK

**Mayor Nathan Brown**  
CITY OF BRUNSWICK/  
MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

**Abby Brusco**  
SOUTH MOUNTAIN CREAMERY

**Christopher Clemons**  
WOODSBORO BANK

**Mike Irons**  
OLE MINK FARM

**Randy Jones**  
CAFE 611

**Louise Kennelly**  
FREDERICK ARTS COUNCIL

**Monique Pasquale**  
10 CLARKE PLACE

**Monica Pearce**  
TENTH WARD  
DISTILLING COMPANY

**David Price**  
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF  
CIVIL WAR MEDICINE

**Sherif Salem**  
THE MAIN CUP/HOOTCH  
& BANTER

**Amie St. Angelo**  
SPRINGFIELD MANOR

**Scott Wisnom**  
WHISKEY CREEK GOLF CLUB

**Non-Voting  
Community  
Liaisons**

**Robert Black**  
CATOCTIN  
MOUNTAIN ORCHARD

**Stephanie Chaiken**  
WEINBERG CENTER  
FOR THE ARTS

**Kara Norman**  
DOWNTOWN FREDERICK  
PARTNERSHIP

**Rick Slade**  
CATOCTIN MOUNTAIN PARK

## Staff

**Dave Ziedelis**  
Executive Director

**Becky Bickerton**  
Assistant Director

**Katie Reichard**  
Operations Director

**Jake Wynn**  
Senior Marketing and  
Communications Manager

**John Lustrea**  
Visitor Services Manager

**Emily Griffin**  
Marketing and  
Partnership Coordinator

**Noel Samoraj**  
Destination Development  
Coordinator

**Barbara Brewster**  
Contract Accountant

## Visitor Services Specialists

Debbie Ciechoski  
Wendy Duke  
Melissa Gregory  
Maria F. Lane  
Fred Genau  
Randy Gray  
Emma Nanes  
Renate Owen  
Christy Lynch

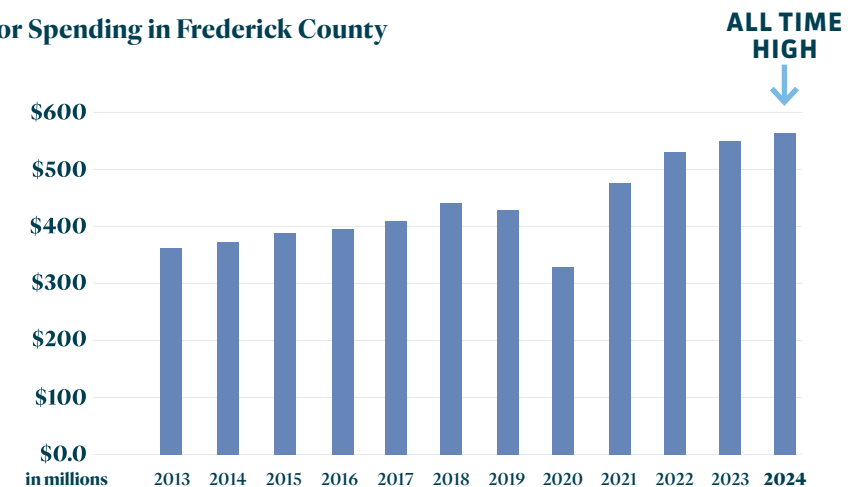
# Visitor Spending in Frederick County

**Visitor spending in Frederick County topped \$500 million for the third straight year in 2024, according to Tourism Economics (August 2025).**

Visitors spent a record \$564.2 million in 2024, a 4.6% increase over 2023. Among Maryland counties, Frederick County ranked seventh in visitor spending.

Since 1998, visitors have spent more than \$8.8 billion in Frederick County, supporting local businesses and strengthening the county's economy.

## Visitor Spending in Frederick County



**\$564 million**

**VISITOR SPENDING IN 2024**

**4.6% ABOVE 2023**



# Visitor Data

## Frederick County visitation rose in 2024, surpassing 2 million travelers.

According to Tourism Economics (August 2025), 2.1 million visitors traveled to Frederick County in 2024, marking a full return to pre-pandemic visitation levels. The last year to exceed 2 million visitors was 2019.

Tourism Economics defines a visitor as someone who travels at least 50 miles to their destination. Over the past two decades, visitation has increased steadily, including a rising share of overnight stays, reflecting the impact of Frederick County's hotel rental tax established in 2004.

**2.1 million**

VISITORS IN 2024

**3.5%**

GROWTH IN VISITORS OVER 2023

**Surpassed**

PRE-PANDEMIC VISITATION NUMBERS,  
SIGNALING FINAL RECOVERY FROM  
COVID-19 DOWNTURN



**792,600**

OVERNIGHT  
VISITORS

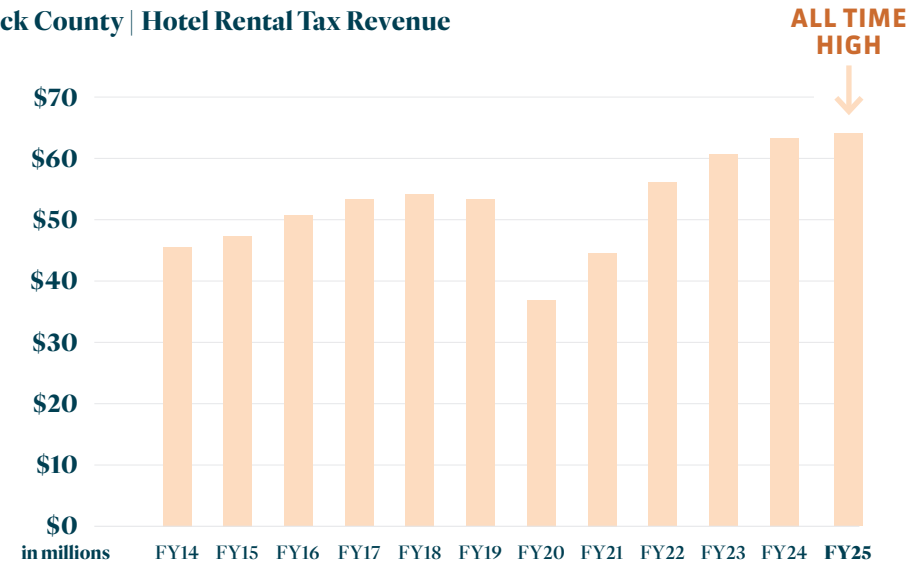


**1.2 million**

DAYTRIP  
VISITORS



## Frederick County | Hotel Rental Tax Revenue



**\$65.5 million**

HOTEL RENTAL TAX REVENUE IN FY25

**7%**

ABOVE FY24

## Hotel Rental Tax Revenue

Hotel rental tax revenues again eclipsed an all-time high in FY25, marking the third time in Frederick County history that hotels reported more than \$60 million in tax revenue.

Frederick County hotel rental tax revenues have steadily increased over the last 20 years. In FY25, hotel rental tax revenues continued with a sizable increase over the previous all-time high recorded in FY24.

Overnight visitors continue to fuel the success of Frederick County as a thriving visitor destination, with hotel tax revenues funding Visit Frederick's marketing efforts to continue the hospitality industry's growth in the region.



# Tourism's Economic Impact

**Tourism remains a crucial driver of Frederick County's economy, with sustained growth in both visitation and visitor spending across the county.**

The economic impact visitors bring is clear: visitor spending supported 6,097 jobs in 2024. In addition to bolstering local businesses and organizations, visitors generate tax revenue that helps fund public services and infrastructure across our region.

As a cornerstone of Frederick County's economic landscape, tourism continues to drive growth and energize our community.



## **JOBS**

**6,097**

**VISITOR  
SUPPORTED JOBS IN  
FREDERICK COUNTY**

**VISITOR SUPPORTED  
JOBS ACCOUNT FOR**

**5.7%**

**OF TOTAL FREDERICK  
COUNTY EMPLOYMENT**



## **SPENDING**



**\$71 million**

**WAS SPENT IN LOCAL  
RETAIL BUSINESSES**



**\$81 million**

**WAS SPENT ON  
RECREATION ACTIVITIES**



**\$170 million**

**WAS SPENT BY VISITORS IN  
LOCAL RESTAURANTS AND  
CRAFT BEVERAGE BUSINESSES**



# Investing in the Future of Frederick County Tourism

**The growth of the tourism industry in Frederick County can be traced to the commitment of a dedicated revenue source—funding from the county hotel rental tax.**

As per a Memorandum of Understanding with Frederick County Government, and after the removal of necessary administrative fees, 10% of our local hotel rental tax is directed towards the bonds and capital improvements of the Frederick Visitor Center.

37.5% is dedicated to three tourism-related initiatives that directly fund nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies: Tourism Reinvestment in Promotion and Product Program (TRIPP), Main Street Communities Cooperative Program, and the Destination Development Fund.

On an annual basis, Visit Frederick directly commits approximately 20% of expenditures to advertising and marketing with the goal to increase out-of-county visitation to Frederick County.



## TRIPP Success in FY25

**Grants through the TRIPP program went to support a variety of Frederick County projects that will continue to benefit tourism attractions and initiatives into the future.**

## TRIPP Program

**The Tourism Reinvestment in Promotion & Product Program (TRIPP) provides an opportunity for Frederick County's nonprofit organizations to apply for advertising awards and development grants.**

The goal of the program is to increase the number of visitors to Frederick County, encouraging them to stay longer, increasing the number of overnight stays in Frederick County hotels, and enhancing the overall marketability of Frederick as a destination. This program provides an opportunity for tourism related nonprofits and government agencies to further their initiatives and create a more vibrant experience for visitors and residents.

**During FY25 the TRIPP program invested over \$500,000 in Frederick County nonprofits and government agencies. The funding supplements local marketing budgets, allowing organizations to reach their target audience in new ways and represent Frederick County in a variety of digital and print media.**

**\$4.6 million**

Invested in  
Frederick County  
NONPROFITS &  
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES  
SINCE 2005

**\$500,000**

Invested in  
Frederick County  
NONPROFITS &  
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES  
DURING FY25

### LEGACY PROJECT

#### Delaplaine Arts Center: Garden Enhancements

New sculpture and wayside exhibit illustrate the Delaplaine's Mountain City Mills history and adaptive reuse, inviting Carroll Creek visitors to explore, learn, and connect.



### DEVELOPMENT GRANT

#### Seton Shrine: 50th Anniversary of Canonization

Grant funded a video documenting decades leading to Elizabeth Ann Seton's canonization, anchoring an exhibit on the path to sainthood.



### LEGACY PROJECT

#### Rose Hill Manor: In Search of Freedom

The permanent exhibit will explore America's evolving fight for freedom, connecting past to present from the American Revolution to today. The exhibit is planned to open in Spring 2026 in time for the nation's 250th commemorations.





# Main Street Communities Cooperative Program

**Frederick County is home to 4 designated Main Streets: Frederick, Brunswick, Middletown, and Thurmont. Emmitsburg and New Market are “Connected Main Streets,” part of the Main Street Maryland program.**

These Main Streets are a testament to the community’s commitment to preserving the charm and character of Frederick County’s historic municipalities. The Frederick County Main Street Communities Cooperative Fund was developed in partnership with Frederick County Government to support the development and promotion of the Main Street program.

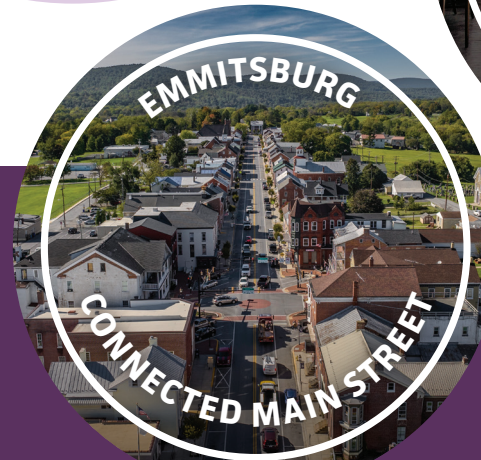
Through this fund, over \$337,000 was distributed to Frederick County’s 4 designated Main Streets in FY25. Since the fund’s inception in 2016, over \$2.1 million has been invested into the Main Streets.

**\$2.1 million**

INVESTED INTO FREDERICK COUNTY’S MAIN STREETS SINCE 2016

**\$337,000**

DISTRIBUTED TO OUR MAIN STREETS IN FY25







# Destination Development in Frederick County

**Destination Development funding provides sponsorship opportunities for outdoor recreation, agritourism, heritage tourism, workforce development, and visitor-oriented events in Frederick County.**

This initiative provides an opportunity to develop, grow, and evolve current visitor experiences to strengthen and support tourism throughout Frederick County. The programs supported are beloved by locals and visitors alike, creating a shared sense of value and community commitment.

**\$318,000**

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT FUNDS DISTRIBUTED IN FY25

**\$2.1 million**

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT FUNDS DISTRIBUTED SINCE PROGRAM'S INCEPTION IN 2017

## Destination Development Successes

**Destination Development funds supported one of Frederick County's new and growing events.**

This year featured the Frederick Hispanic Heritage Festival in Downtown Frederick. Visit Frederick has been an ongoing supporter and is thrilled to see this event grow with family-friendly activities, live music, and showcases of local Hispanic entrepreneurs.



**Destination Development funds supported hosting the Maryland Main Street Conference in Frederick County.**

Frederick proudly hosted the inaugural Maryland Main Street Conference, bringing together Main Street managers and key partners from across the state. The event showcased Maryland's vibrant communities and fostered thought-provoking conversations aimed at shaping a thriving future.





# Destination Marketing

As the designated Destination Marketing Organization for Frederick County, Visit Frederick plays a pivotal role in promoting unique attractions and cultural experiences. By crafting compelling content and strategic campaigns, Visit Frederick drives tourism, supports local businesses, and fosters economic growth. Our marketing team completed key projects in FY25 to enhance the visitor experience for Frederick County.

- Produced a fall/winter and spring **Events Snapshot**
- Produced and printed 150,000 **Frederick Visitor Guides** (2025)
- Updated and reprinted the **Downtown Frederick Walking Tour**
- Used EDA grant funds to develop **Frederick County Scenic Byways** assets including a printed brochure, a new microsite, and commercial
- Coordinated with the **Lafayette in Frederick** committee to produce a rack card and landing page for the multi-day event

In FY25, Visit Frederick collaborated with Postern to develop new ad creative to promote Frederick County in print and digital ads. The new ad design showcases our stunning photography, uses complimentary natural tones to complement the images, and explores new layouts where the text interacts with the photography.



# Destination Advertising

Visit Frederick promotes the county's attractions, events, and cultural experiences to inspire travel and strengthen the local economy. We use data-informed storytelling, integrated campaigns, and strong partner amplification to convert interest into visits.

Visit Frederick placed more than \$700,000 in advertising during FY25, which included a marketing grant from the Maryland Office of Tourism Development in the amount of \$104,823.

## FY25 Advertising Placements\*

AARP  
 Better Homes & Gardens  
 Blue Ridge Outdoors  
 Country Living  
 Expedia  
 Food Network Magazine  
 Garden & Gun Magazine  
 Good Housekeeping  
 Group Tour Magazine  
 New York Family Media  
 Newsday  
 Philadelphia Magazine  
 Pittsburgh Magazine  
 Pioneer Woman Magazine  
 Real Simple Magazine  
 Southern Living Magazine  
 YouTube Video Preroll  
 WXPB Radio

Our  
 Digital Advertising  
 RESULTED IN

8,434

Visitors Clicking Over To  
 VISITFREDERICK.ORG

\*This is not a complete list of FY25 advertising placements.



# Media Relations

We worked with dozens of journalists and media outlets in FY25, including organizing multiple familiarization (FAM) tours that welcomed dozens of writers and creators. These visits helped shape compelling stories and strengthened relationships with key outlets.

Resulting earned coverage highlights the depth of Frederick County's experiences. While signature events like the National Clustered Spires High Wheel Race and the opening of the Visitation Hotel drew strong attention, we also partnered with journalists to showcase dining, shopping, history, the arts, and outdoor recreation across the destination.

In collaboration with the Maryland Office of Tourism Development and Capital Region USA (CRUSA), we targeted European media to expand awareness of Frederick. In March 2025, Jake Wynn joined a CRUSA media tour to the United Kingdom and Ireland, engaging with more than 60 journalists and content creators. These meetings generated new story leads, reinforced Frederick County's brand in priority markets, and positioned our partners for future coverage.

**The following are among the outlets we've worked with in FY25 to share stories about visitor experiences in Frederick County:**

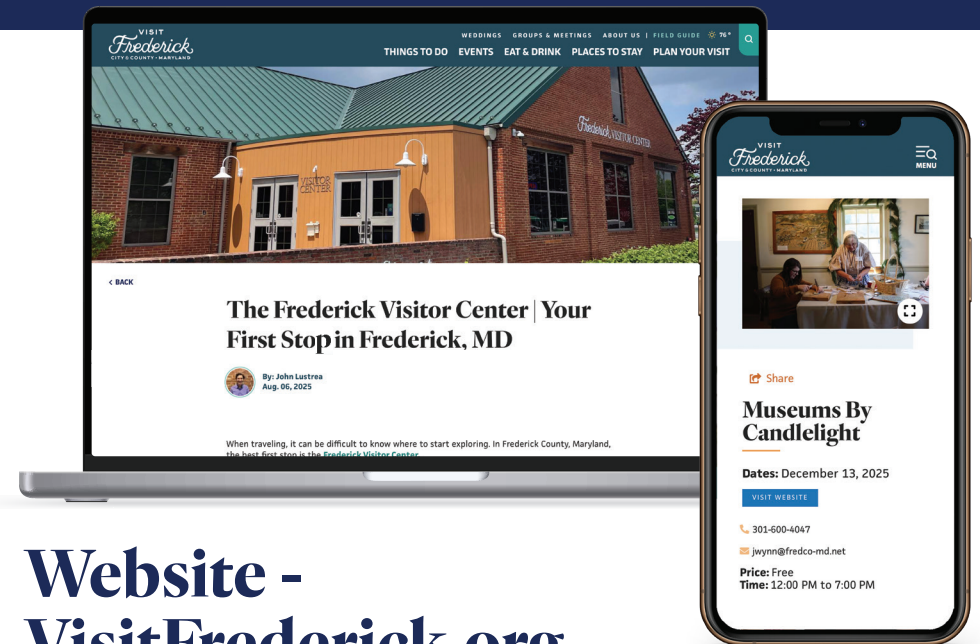
Washington Post  
Washingtonian Magazine  
Baltimore Magazine  
Pittsburgh Magazine  
Philadelphia Magazine  
Washington Business Journal  
NBC4  
FOX5  
WUSA9  
WMAR2  
WDMV  
WTOP  
Southern Living  
New York Family Magazine  
Travel and Leisure

The Local Palate Magazine  
Leisure Group Travel  
Frederick Magazine (Monthly Column)  
Frederick News Post  
Baltimore Banner  
Pink News (United Kingdom)  
DISPLAY Magazine (Switzerland)  
TIP Magazine (Austria)

Members of the Frederick Center stand for a photograph with members of an international Fam tour for journalists focused on LGBTQ+ travel in Frederick County



Visit Frederick hosted a familiarization tour including journalists and tour operators from Austria in October 2024



## Website - VisitFrederick.org

**The Visit Frederick website continues to be our most successful and far-reaching marketing effort.**

In FY25, we strengthened VisitFrederick.org with fresh content and targeted improvements that support trip planning and partner visibility. We published 15 new blog posts that highlight seasonal experiences, neighborhood guides, and local voices. We refreshed high-traffic pages, expanded photography, and continue to embed video content we create through our Destination Frederick County partnership with Frederick County Government (FCG-TV).

We also worked hard to keep pace with rapid changes to organic search traffic and innovations around artificial intelligence (AI). In close collaboration with our website partner, Simpleview, we refined site structure, improved technical SEO, and updated content to remain useful, accurate, and discoverable. We are also working to complete our Scenic Byways microsite in collaboration with Simpleview.

VisitFrederick.org remains a foundation of our marketing strategy and a strong benchmark among mid-sized DMOs for usability, content quality, and partnership integration.

MORE THAN  
**871,000**  
Individual  
Users Accessed  
**VISITFREDERICK.ORG**  
IN FY25\*

VisitFrederick.org  
RECEIVED  
**3.5 million**  
VIEWS IN FY25\*

\*As of June 30, 2025.



## Social Media



**21,025**  
FOLLOWERS



**18,922**  
FOLLOWERS

Combined Social  
Media Reach  
IN FY25

**3.5 million**  
USERS

Combined Social  
Media Engagement  
IN FY25

**290,815**  
ENGAGED USERS



## Conferences & Trade Shows

Visit Frederick staff members attend trade shows throughout the year to promote Frederick County to specific market segments and also attend conferences to pursue professional development opportunities.

BrandUSA Travel Week

Capital Region USA - UK  
Media Mission

Destinations  
International  
Annual Convention

Destinations  
International Marketing  
& Communications  
Summit

ESTO

Global Travel Exchange  
Maryland DNR Outdoor  
Recreation Summit

Maryland Motocoach  
Association Marketplace

Maryland Tourism  
& Travel Summit

Mid-Atlantic Tourism  
Public Relations Alliance  
(MATPRA) Media  
Marketplace

Pennsylvania Bus  
Association Marketplace  
Simpleview Summit



Becky Bickerton representing Visit Frederick at IPW in Chicago in June 2025.





## Visitor Services

In early 2025, we completed the first comprehensive update to the Frederick Visitor Center exhibits since opening at our current location in 2011. The refreshed displays reflect how much Frederick has evolved over the past 14 years, with new photography and concise, current interpretive text that spotlights attractions across the county.

We also partnered with local artist Matt Long to create stylized, mural-sized maps of Frederick County and Downtown Frederick. These vibrant maps, paired with the updated exhibits, help visitors quickly orient, discover experiences, and plan their time in the City of Frederick and throughout Frederick County.

**19,190** | VISITORS TO THE FREDERICK  
VISITOR CENTER IN FY25

## Top 5 Visitor States

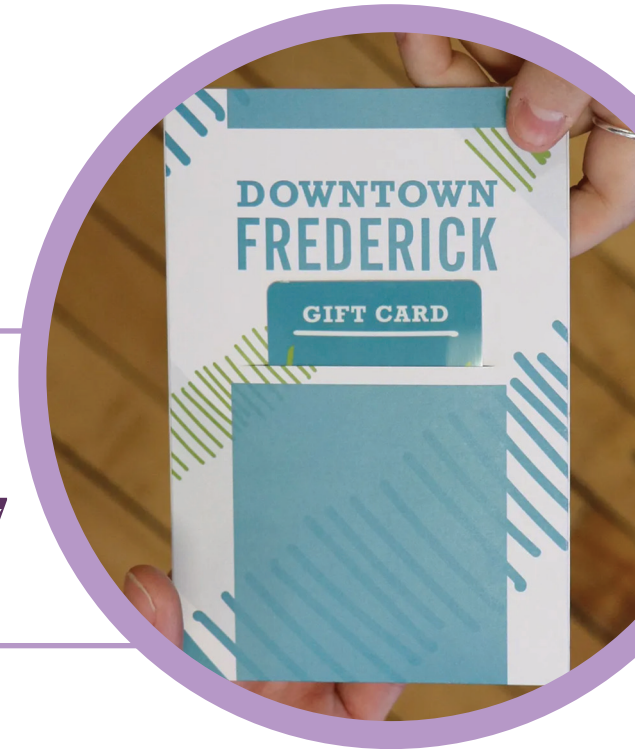


DOWNTOWN FREDERICK  
GIFT CARD SALES IN FY25

**\$327,395**

VISITOR CENTER  
RETAIL SALES IN FY25

**\$20,479.07**



## Top 5 Visitor Countries



CANADA



GERMANY



UNITED  
KINGDOM



NETHERLANDS



FRANCE



# Membership

## Membership Program

Partnering with Visit Frederick is an investment in the future of Frederick County tourism. Membership is open to businesses and individuals who want to promote tourism in a sector that generates hundreds of millions of dollars for the regional economy each year.

Members receive practical, high-visibility benefits that drive visitation and spending. These include custom listings in the official Frederick Visitor Guide and on VisitFrederick.org, access to Marketing Committee meetings and the Destination Insights Newsletter, and brochure and rack card placement at the Frederick Visitor Center. Members are also invited to familiarization tours in Downtown Frederick and throughout the county, building product knowledge and strengthening connections across our tourism community.

Together, we elevate Frederick County's profile, support our partners, and deliver exceptional experiences for visitors and residents alike.

## Membership Events

In October 2024, we held our Annual Membership Breakfast at New Spire Arts in Downtown Frederick. In May 2025, we hosted our Spring Social at The Main Cup in Middletown.



The Downtown Frederick Familiarization Tour took place in May 2025, including a stop at True Standard Distilling Company.

**FY25**  
**TOTAL MEMBERS**  
**401**

## FY25 Members:

**WELCOME VISIT FREDERICK'S  
42 NEW PARTNERS!**

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 7th Sister  | Prospect Pantry                 |
| Agave 137 Tequila Bar & Kitchen                     | Purpose One Realty              |
| Allied Enterprises LLC                              | RAK Brewing Co                  |
| Alora Pure LLC                                      | Sandbox<br>Brewhouse, LLC       |
| Ando Enterprises, LLC                               | Select Event Group              |
| Aya Cultural Arts Studio                            | SilverVox                       |
| Basecamp Frederick                                  | Studio 24E                      |
| Benefactor Events                                   | Swirls of Frederick             |
| Bridgeway Bikes                                     | The Derby<br>Restaurant & Bar   |
| Clemsonville<br>Christmas Tree Farm                 | The Frederick<br>Art Club       |
| Dill Dinkers Frederick                              | The Frederick<br>Floral Bar     |
| Dream Free Art                                      | The Station Market<br>& Cafe    |
| Eyre Bus Service                                    | Thurmont<br>Kountry Kitchen     |
| Frederick Magic<br>Theater & Lounge                 | True Standard<br>Distilling     |
| Inn on Market                                       | Twin Bears Bakery               |
| KMB Property<br>Group, LLC                          | Vault of Visions<br>Art Gallery |
| Lockhouse Gallery                                   | Visitation<br>Hotel Frederick   |
| Lovestrong<br>& Company                             | Whistle Stop<br>Smokehouse      |
| Maple & Rye Bakery                                  | Woodland<br>Creek Farm          |
| Mental Health<br>Association of<br>Frederick County | ZigBone<br>Farm Retreat         |
| Perennial Clay<br>& Garden                          |                                 |
| Potomac River<br>Interiors                          |                                 |