



PRESS RELEASE

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VISITORS SPENT MORE THAN \$148 MILLION IN MANISTEE COUNTY IN 2017, UP 4 PERCENT FROM 2016 AND 10 PERCENT FROM FIVE YEARS AGO

Manistee County Experienced Increased Visitor Spending in All Categories plus 5 Percent Increase in Total Labor Income at \$28.97 Million, According to New MEDC Tourism Economics Report

MANISTEE, Mich., Nov. 30, 2018 – Tourism is not only a leading industry in Michigan, but in Manistee County as well – as vital to the regional economy as manufacturing and agricultural industries. In fact, visitors spent \$148.8 million in Manistee County in 2017 – up 4 percent from 2016 and 10 percent from five years ago. That represents an additional \$5.7 million spent in the county in the last year.

The [Manistee County Visitors Bureau \(MCVB\)](#) is sharing these and other Manistee County tourism impact figures from a new [2017 Tourism Economics Report](#) recently issued by the [Michigan Economic Development Corporation \(MEDC\)](#) that breaks up statewide tourism figures by county. On a statewide level, 122 million visitors (up 2.9 percent from 2016) spent \$25 billion in Michigan (up 4 percent from 2016) in 2017.

“Tourism is a vital component to the economy of Manistee County, as these figures attest,” said Kathryn Kenny, executive director of the Manistee County Visitors Bureau. “And as the tourism industry grows, so does the visitors bureau’s marketing budget, which allows us to reach more people who are looking for a northern Michigan destination. As outlined in our three-year strategic plan, we are shifting more marketing dollars to larger markets like Chicago and Detroit where we know we attract visitors. That marketing is paying off.”

2017 Tourism Economics Report – Manistee County Findings*

The [2017 Tourism Economic Impact Region and County Report](#) lists Manistee County among 10 Michigan counties considered the Northwest Region, coming in fourth in that subset in overall visitor spending in 2017, only behind Grand Traverse, Emmet and Charlevoix Counties. Highlights for Manistee County include:

- **Visitor spending increased year-over-year and over five-year span** – Overall visitor spending in Manistee County in 2017 was \$148.88 million, increasing 4 percent from 2016 (\$143.1 million) and 5.3 percent from 2015 (\$141.36 million). Visitor spending also increased 10 percent compared to five years ago (\$134.31 million).
- **Visitor spending increased in all categories** – The five categories of visitor spending (listed below in order by percent increase): all experienced year-over-year increases, with the largest increase in lodging that brought in an additional \$1.78 million in 2017:
 - *Lodging* – Increased 9.5 percent from 2016 at \$20.4 million in 2017
 - *Food & Beverage* – Increased 5.7 percent from 2016 at \$17 million in 2017
 - *Transportation* – Increased 5.1 percent from 2016 at \$22.65 million in 2017
 - *Retail* – Increased 3.2 percent from 2016 at \$10.12 million in 2017
 - *Recreation* (includes casino gaming) – Increased 2.2 percent from 2016 at \$78.72 million in 2017

- **Employment figures and labor income increased** – Visitor spending directly supported 695 county jobs and, indirectly, 990 jobs, contributing \$18.48 million in direct annual wages, with a total of \$28.97 million impact on working families. Total 2017 labor income increased by \$1.6 million from 2016 (a 5.84 percent increase).

“We are fortunate to have such a robust, thriving industry that drives population growth, business growth and job growth while increasing our quality of life and community pride,” said Kenny. “Tourism brings new money into the local economy, and it's one industry that cannot be outsourced – it can only come from within. It is here to stay, and it generates income and jobs for our residents.

**NOTE: Report infographic available upon request.*

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About the Manistee County Visitors Bureau

Incorporated in 1997, the Manistee County Visitors Bureau is the official travel and tourism organization to promote Manistee County as a travel destination and build the local tourism economy through overnight visits. The visitors bureau is a partner in the Pure Michigan campaign and member of the West Michigan Tourist Association, Michigan Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus, Check In Michigan (formerly the Michigan Lodging & Tourism Association), Manistee Area Chamber of Commerce, and Michigan's Great Outdoors. More information is available at VisitManisteeCounty.com.