

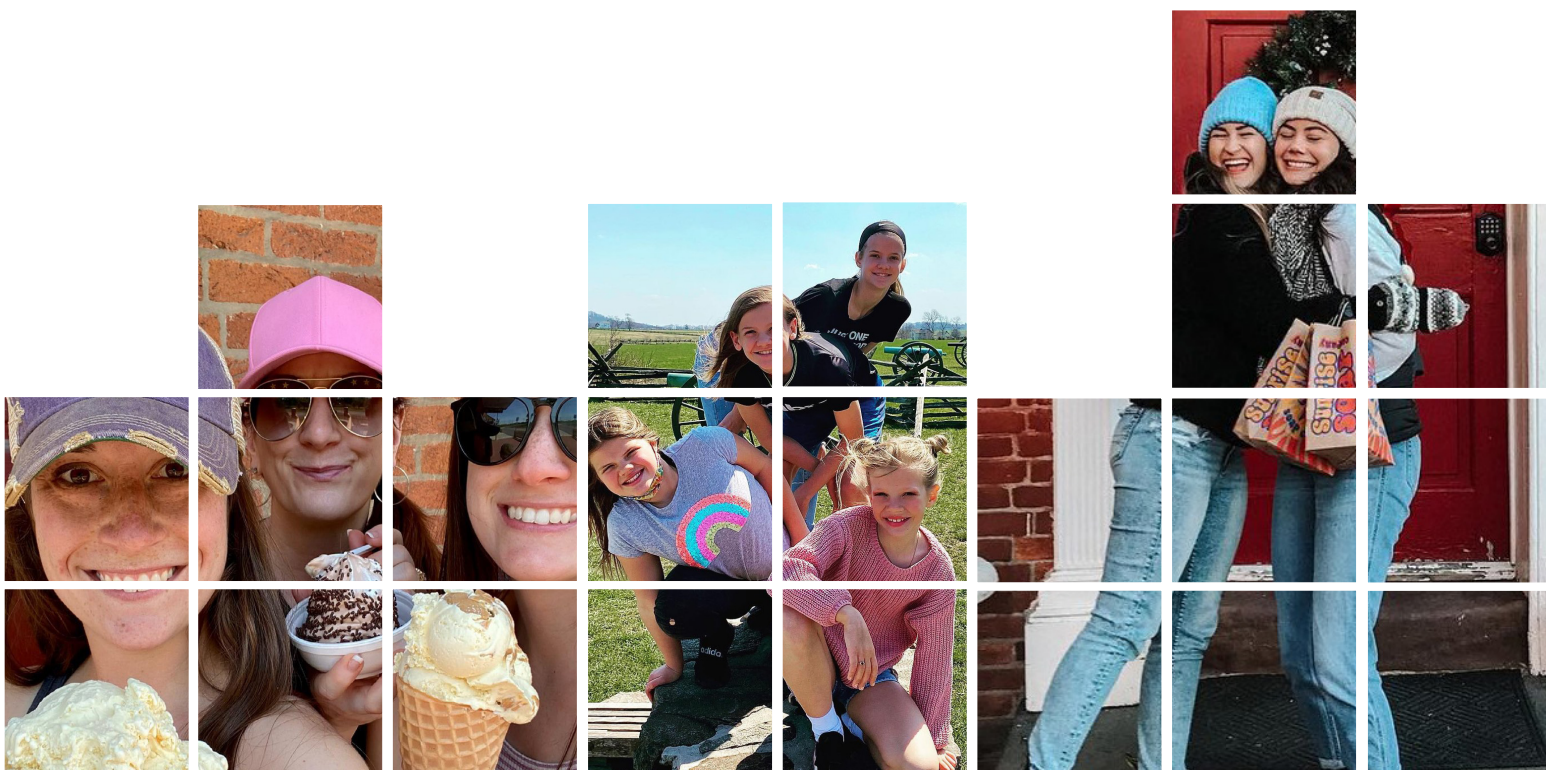
DESTINATION

Gettysburg!

ADAMS COUNTY, PA

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021

# A YEAR OF CHANGE & RECOVERY



# A YEAR OF CHANGE AND RECOVERY

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ON THE COVER: Pictured are three groups of visitors enjoying the unique variety of experiences that Adams County has to offer. (Used with permission.)







## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Nobody really knew what to expect going into 2021. We were optimistic but cautious, as the ebbs and flows of the virus kept businesses only able to plan one day at a time.

As businesses reopened, Gettysburg found itself as the ideal location for thousands looking for a safe and engaging destination without the commitment of booking a flight.

Destination Gettysburg's messaging to visitors helped to make Gettysburg an easy choice. While the challenges we faced last year aren't totally behind us, I can say with certainty that the hard-earned successes of 2021 are a testament to the resilient hospitality professionals who dedicate themselves to our destination.

The outlook for 2022 is bright. We know our relevancy as a destination has never wavered and with traveler's comfort levels increasing, I would expect to see the momentum of 2021 to continue. Your bright, eager, and dynamic staff at Destination Gettysburg continue to stay in front of marketing trends, working to shine a national spotlight on our area.

I encourage you to take full advantage of the great opportunities within your membership. Throughout the coming year, you will learn about new and exciting programs, and member benefits that are designed to educate and cultivate new ideas to entice first time visitors and repeat visitors alike.

Thank you to the hard-working staff, board of directors, and committee members who have committed their time and efforts to assure a bright 2022 for Gettysburg and Adams County.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Max L. Felty'.

**Max Felty, 2022 Chairman**

Board of Directors

Destination Gettysburg



## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Rick Beamer, 2021 Chairman**  
Gettystown Inn

**Max Felty, Chair-Elect**  
Gettysburg Group Reservations

**Timbrel Wallace, Treasurer**  
Lark - A Modern Marketplace

**Wade Leedy, Secretary**  
Tommy's Pizza

**Andrea Proulx, Immediate Past Chair**  
Gettysburg Hotel

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Maggie Baldwin**  
Land of Little Horses

**Nicole Bucher**  
Mister Ed's Elephant Museum

**Andrew Larson**  
Director Emeritus

**Nathan Mares**  
Gettysburg Best Western

**Peter Monahan**  
Federal Pointe Inn

**Tammy Myers\***  
Gettysburg Heritage Center

**Matthew Sheads**  
Hockley & O'Donnell

**Jacqueline White**  
Dobbin House Tavern

**Tracy Wolf-Stroyny**  
Wolf's Bus Lines

**Karl Pietrzak**  
President & CEO - Ex-Officio

**Jim Martin**  
Adams County Commissioner

\*On December 1, 2021, Tammy Myers resigned her seat on the board of directors and assumed a staff position with Destination Gettysburg as its Director of Partnership.



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Our Annual Report recounts the accomplishments of 2021, but putting that into proper perspective requires that we reflect briefly on how we got here.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a sudden and devastating impact on every corner of the globe and on all industries. Amid such turmoil, travel and tourism endured incredible disruption.

The impact on visitation to Adams County was evidenced by a 40-percent reduction in hotel occupancy in 2020, and a 53-percent loss in hotel lodging revenue. Factor in losses sustained by restaurants, attractions and other businesses, and the impact is even more staggering.

Fortunately, in Spring 2021, our region and the nation began to see some light at the end of the COVID tunnel. The easing of travel restrictions was the catalyst that spurred visitors to return to Gettysburg in greater numbers than we could have hoped a year ago.

Visitation to Gettysburg and Adams County virtually equaled pre-COVID levels in terms of lodging performance. Leisure travelers eager to hit the road flocked to Gettysburg, and we saw those familiar crowded streets, restaurants and shops last Spring, Summer, and Fall.

Destination Gettysburg spent 2021 bouncing back, as well. Our organization changed leadership, as I took the baton from Norris Flowers. We refocused



**Karl Pietrzak, President & CEO**  
Destination Gettysburg

our marketing efforts and instituted programs to attract travelers back to our destination, including launching the popular new agritourism trail, the Adams County Crop Hop, in May 2021. We also welcomed several new staff members aboard.

Challenges still exist, but the outlook is positively optimistic as we embark on a new tourism season.

As I celebrate my one-year anniversary at Destination Gettysburg, I want to thank our hospitality partners, and everyone in the community for welcoming me and supporting the good work done by our dedicated staff.



## OUR MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

### MISSION

Destination Gettysburg, the official destination marketing organization of Adams County, markets Gettysburg-Adams County as a premier travel destination producing a positive economic impact.

### VISION

Destination Gettysburg is a partnership organization that aggressively promotes the tourism products of Adams County, generating measurable increases in visitation, fostering genuine community-wide hospitality and appreciation of tourism, striving to be one of the best destination marketing organizations in the state.

### VALUES

The key core values that guide the organization are that our decisions are good for the visitor, our partners, our county and produce a positive economic impact.

## THE DESTINATION GETTYSBURG TEAM

**Karl Pietrzak**  
President & CEO

**Carl Whitehill**  
Vice-President

**Bonnie Walters**  
Director - Finance/HR

**Rick Kennis**  
Director of Marketing

**Lindsay Methlie**  
Director of Sales

**Tammy Myers**  
Director of Partnership

**Brenda Staub**  
Visitor Services

**Barb Edwards**  
Visitor Services



# A CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP

After 15 years as President & CEO of Destination Gettysburg, Norris Flowers turned over the reigns of the organization to Karl Pietrzak on April 1, 2021.

Karl has worked the past 27 years in the tourism industry, including 17 years at VisitPittsburgh, the official destination marketing organization for Allegheny County, Pa. Prior to his work in convention and group sales at VisitPittsburgh, he spent 10 years in hotel sales in Pittsburgh and Cincinnati.

Karl, who grew up in Adams County, Pa., is excited to return to a community he came to love as a child and young adult before heading off to college at Penn State.



Karl arrived as the tourism industry was rebounding from the COVID pandemic that devastated travel throughout 2020 and into early 2021.

His work in 2021 largely focused on planning and executing the tourism community's COVID recovery efforts, as well as building relationships among partners and community leaders.

Karl also leads the tourism advocacy efforts for Adams County on the regional, state and national levels.

Meanwhile, Norris Flowers is enjoying his retirement with ambitions of splitting his time between Florida and Pennsylvania.

In addition to introducing a new president in 2021, Destination Gettysburg welcomed back **Carl Whitehill** as Vice President in October 2021. Carl previously worked as Destination Gettysburg's Media Relations Manager and Director of Communications for nearly 11 years before leaving in 2018.

Carl has been instrumental in building out the remainder of Destination Gettysburg's team of directors - including the hiring of **Tammy Myers**, a long-time

museum manager in Gettysburg, as Partnership Director; **Rick Kennis** who has spent his career in promotions and advertising, as Director of Marketing; and **Lindsay Methlie**, who worked in hotels throughout Central Pennsylvania, as our Director of Sales.

The team is focused on the travel industry's recovery from COVID, as well as re-engaging with partners, community leaders and visitors to make tourism a strong economic driver in Adams County.

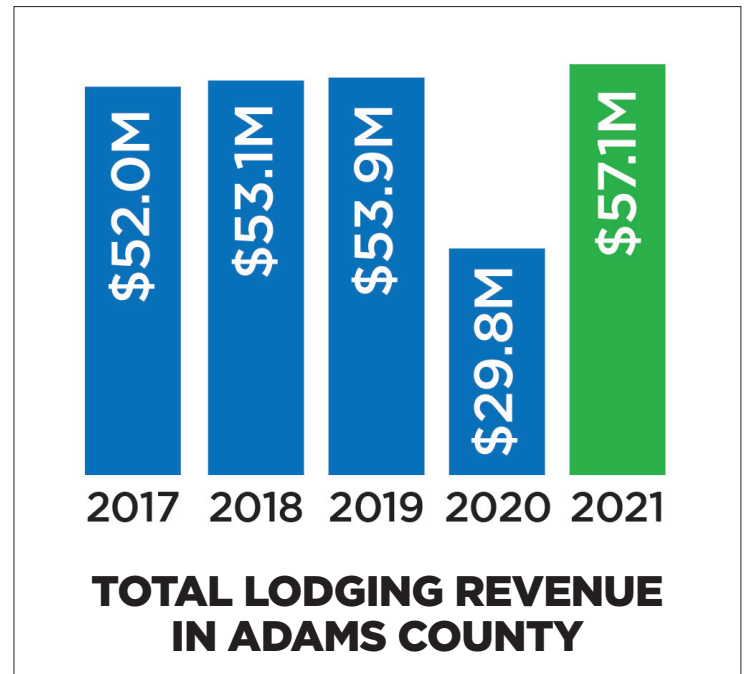


# LODGING TOPS PRE-COVID LEVELS IN ADAMS COUNTY

While the tourism industry's full recovery from the COVID pandemic is still months (maybe years) away, leisure visitors began returning to Adams County in 2021 - signifying that a rebound is in the works.

The county's overall lodging revenue of \$57.1 million - a strong barometer for tourism's strength in the destination - exceeded pre-COVID levels reported in 2019. That revenue marks an all-time high for Adams County, helped in part by an increased average daily rate offered among hotels who participate in the Smith Travel Research report.

The lodging tax collected on those overnight stays (\$2.63 million) also topped 2019 numbers - a sign that tourism's positive impact on the local



economy is coming back, supporting county and local municipalities throughout Adams County, Pa.

## SOME CHALLENGES REMAIN

Data from 2021 shows that leisure travel recovered strongly in Adams County, but three categories of travelers important to tourism's success are slower to return from the COVID pandemic.

Group travelers - mostly those who visit by motorcoach or bus - as well as meeting/conference groups and international

visitors are not quite as quick to rebound.

Tour operators and meeting planners, however, are beginning to gain confidence nationally that it's becoming safer to travel and are putting some plans in place for later into 2022 and 2023. It may take years before a full recovery is felt in the group, meetings and international markets.

## 2021 - A YEAR OF CHANGE & RECOVERY

# ADVERTISING ADAMS COUNTY

In 2021, Destination Gettysburg's advertising budget of more than \$800,000 was used to create and place print, digital, billboard and social media display advertising in media outlets around the country. These are a few examples of those ads.



### TOP PRINT PLACEMENTS

- Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
- Edible Philly
- Mid-Atlantic Media
- Travel, Taste, and Tour
- Edible Jersey
- USA Today Northeast
- Teach & Travel
- Baltimore Magazine
- Table Magazine
- AAA World





# 2021 - A YEAR OF CHANGE & RECOVERY



## 2021 - A YEAR OF CHANGE & RECOVERY

# DESTINATIONGETTYSBURG.COM

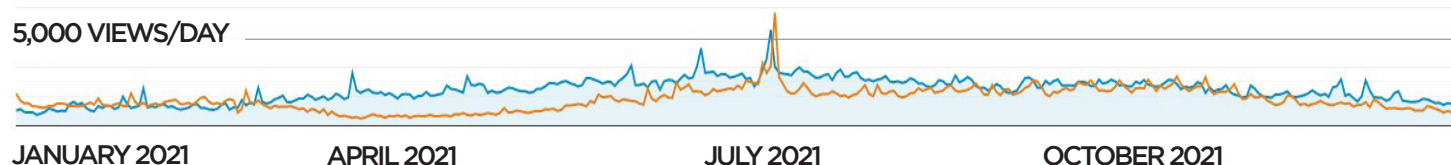
Destination Gettysburg's website remains a strong hub for potential visitors to find information about business partners, events, itineraries, blogs and more. On the site, users can plan their upcoming visits - including lodging, dining, entertainment and shopping. In 2021, DestinationGettysburg.com saw an increase of almost 35 percent in users. The top search that brings users to the site: "Things to do in Gettysburg, PA."

### WEBSITE TRAFFIC - 2021

- Unique Users: 601,120
- Percentage of New Users: 16.9%
- Number of Sessions: 825,844
- Sessions Per User: 1.37
- Pages Per Session: 2.68
- Page Views: 2,217,171
- Average Duration: 2 min, 33 sec.

2021 ■  
2020 ■

5,000 VIEWS/DAY



## DIGITAL MARKETING

Through our long-term relationship with Essex Digital Platform, Destination Gettysburg has the online capacity to reach targeted individuals at the right time in the right place - and can then track those impressions to see if these potential visitors took action to learn more or who later visited designated locations in our community after seeing the digital display ads and video content.

DISPLAY AD  
IMPRESSIONS:  
**28,280,690**

CONNECTED TV  
IMPRESSIONS  
**1,150,708**

TOTAL VIDEO  
IMPRESSIONS:  
**1,401,527**



Through the use of Google AdWords, Essex is able to help Destination Gettysburg reach targeted search engine users who are looking for similar travel information using a set of keywords and online behaviors.

In 2021, Destination Gettysburg reached 990,032 individuals through Google AdWords resulting in 69,566 clicks to the Destination Gettysburg website.





# SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Destination Gettysburg used its social media channels to remain engaged with its audiences, letting our visitors know that when they were ready to travel, we would welcome them back. In 2021, those same channels showed our audience that Gettysburg was indeed, open for business again.

## DESTINATION GETTYSBURG CHANNELS

### FACEBOOK

TOTAL FOLLOWERS: 42,868  
NEW FOLLOWERS: 1,967  
REACH: 543,060  
PAGE VISITS: 13,488

### INSTAGRAM

TOTAL FOLLOWERS: 8,178  
NEW FOLLOWERS: 882  
REACH: 139,440  
PAGE VISITS: 9,124

### TWITTER

TOTAL FOLLOWERS: 7,390  
TWEETS: 8,567 (+267)  
REACH: 84,000

### TIKTOK

TOTAL VIDEOS: 63  
NEW FOLLOWERS: 1,916  
ENGAGEMENT: 24,101



A FEW OF OUR FACEBOOK FRIENDS IN 2021

## ADAMS COUNTY POUR TOUR CHANNELS

### FACEBOOK

TOTAL FOLLOWERS: 1,472  
NEW FOLLOWERS: 269  
REACH: 17,240  
PAGE VISITS: 802

### INSTAGRAM

TOTAL FOLLOWERS: 1,046  
NEW FOLLOWERS: 80  
REACH: 10,238  
PAGE VISITS: 693

## 2021 - A YEAR OF CHANGE & RECOVERY

# ADAMS COUNTY POUR TOUR

The Adams County Pour Tour continues to be at the centerpiece of the region's amazing craft beverage scene.

Bringing together wineries, cideries, breweries, distilleries and one "meadery," the trail wrapped up 2021 with nearly 10,000 stamps issued, thousands of visits to the Pour Tour website, and hundreds of prizes distributed.

The Adams County Pour Tour finished the year with 18 total stops with an opportunity for participants to earn 39 different stamps along the way.

The trail remains a highlight for visitors and local residents alike who are looking for experiences beyond Civil War history, and the trail is a great opportunity for agriculture and tourism to work together.



### PROMOTING THE POUR TOUR

UNIQUE VISITS TO POUR TOUR HOMEPAGE

23,462

94.95%  
OVER 2020



# ADAMS COUNTY CROP HOP

Launched as part of National Travel & Tourism Week in May 2021, the new Adams County Crop Hop brought together a variety of farms, markets, butchers, cooking classes, hands-on experiences and more through a digital passport program aimed at encouraging visitors to explore the riches of our countryside.

Along the trail, participants can earn a variety of prizes and receive discounts at more than 20 agritourism locations across Adams County.

In just the first eight months, more than 720 people from 26 states began their Adams County Crop Hop journey, and started redeeming stops and stamping their digital passports along the way.



In addition to paid marketing, the Crop Hop was promoted through media relations, social media and website content.

The Adams County Crop Hop was, in part, supported through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.



# MEDIA RELATIONS

As expected, the COVID pandemic had a significant impact on travel journalism and writers' capacity to visit destinations like Gettysburg. While Destination Gettysburg hosted a fraction of the journalists compared to a typical year, the marketing team worked hard to secure coverage throughout the country - including stories that focused on the new Adams County Crop Hop.

But 2021 was the year for lists, and Destination Gettysburg is proud to have been included in a variety of "top destination" lists - none better than U.S. News & World Report's best vacation rankings, which listed Gettysburg as No. 3 in the United States.



# GROUP/MEETINGS MARKET

The group travel and meetings markets have been significantly slower to return to normal after the peak of the COVID pandemic.

In 2021, Destination Gettysburg's sales team focused on rebuilding relationships with tour operators and meeting planners in addition to attending industry events to best position the destination as a top consideration when group travel and meetings return.

## MARKETPLACES ATTENDED

- Pennsylvania Bus Association
- Maryland Motorcoach Association
- Greater New Jersey Motorcoach
- American Bus Association (Online)
- National Tour Association
- Ontario Motorcoach Assoc. (Online)
- Student & Youth Travel Assoc. (Online)

An estimated 2,000 motorcoach groups visited Adams County in 2021.



## 2021 - A YEAR OF CHANGE & RECOVERY

# PARTNERSHIP



Throughout 2021, business partners around Adams County were beginning to see a recovery from the COVID pandemic in sight, but employment challenges made it difficult for partners to resume normal business hours.

The year prior in 2020, as the COVID pandemic was in its peak, 78 businesses made the tough decision to not renew their partnership with Destination Gettysburg. Many of those businesses pledged to return when business bounced back.



In 2021, businesses began to see opportunity and gain confidence in a rebound from the pandemic. Over the course of the year, 15 businesses joined or rejoined as Destination Gettysburg partners. Partnership totaled 261 businesses at the end of 2021.

Destination Gettysburg continued to provide partners with marketing, education and industry support as visitors began returning to our destination.

## WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS - 2021

- Ally Charter Bus Washington DC
- Blue Coat Cottage
- DC Charter Bus Company
- Food 101
- George's at the Swope
- Gettysburg Olive Oil Company
- Gettysburg Picnics
- Gettysburg Academy B&B
- The Lomas Center
- Marketplace at Gettysburg
- Middle Creek Manor
- Middle Creek Retreat Center
- Oh Man!
- Quay House Dillsburg
- Vespa of Gettysburg Rentals

## FUNDING AND EXPENSES

	2021	2020	2019
<b>SOURCES OF FUNDING</b>			
Lodging Tax	\$1,851,680	\$926,308	\$1,846,346
Grant Revenue	\$101,472	\$310,000	
Partner Dues	\$152,687	\$135,050	\$189,576
Other Income	\$14,556	\$16,990	\$20,572
Investment Income	\$42,711	\$41,756	\$78,031
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$2,162,729</b>	<b>\$1,430,104</b>	<b>\$2,134,525</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Marketing	\$895,117	\$926,061	\$993,609
Communications	\$96,460	\$135,665	\$250,727
Group/Meeting Sales	\$137,105	\$145,172	\$241,127
Partnership/Events	\$104,451	\$124,139	\$268,234
Visitor Services	\$51,078	\$48,791	\$101,506
Research	\$5,145	\$4,483	\$18,352
Education	\$9,920	\$4,083	\$16,194
Donations	\$35,685	\$23,964	\$75,520
Operations/Management	\$235,524	\$222,012	\$256,829
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,570,485</b>	<b>\$1,634,369</b>	<b>\$2,222,098</b>



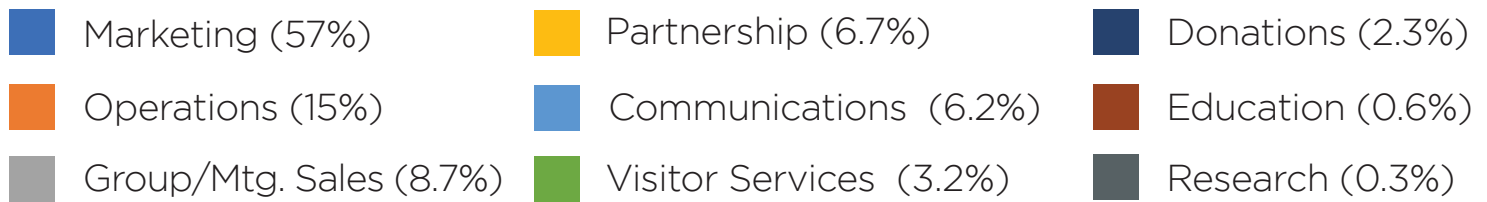
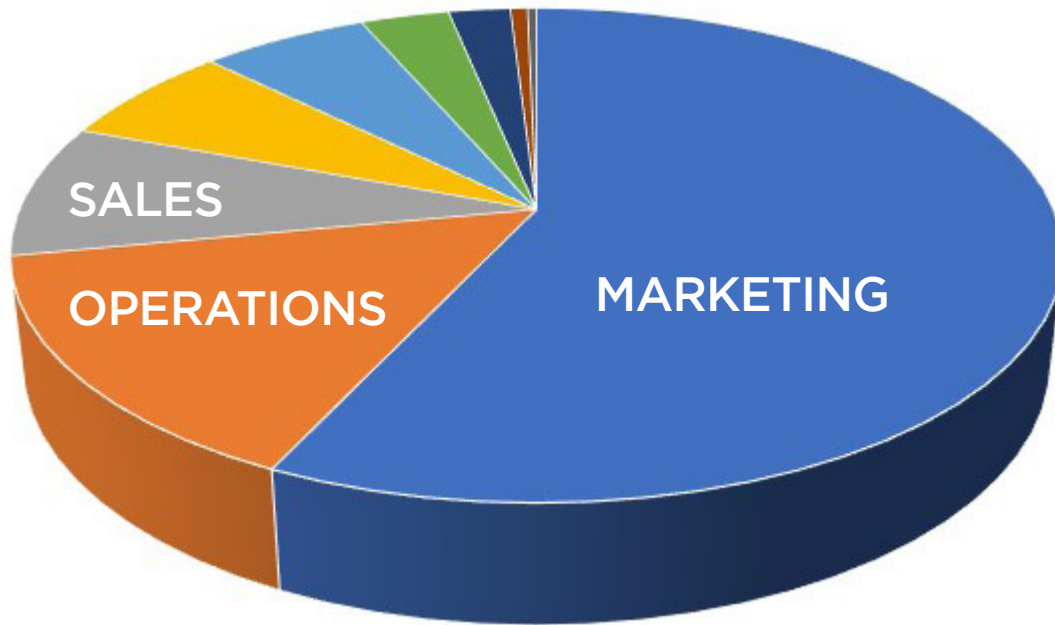
Every year, Destination Gettysburg supports other local non-profit organizations and special projects to better the community. In 2021, the organization donated \$35,685 in community investment funds. A few of these recipients and projects are listed below:

Fourth of July Fireworks  
Main Street Gettysburg  
Adams County Arts Council  
Gettysburg Garden Club

Lincoln Fellowship of PA  
Gettysburg Halloween Parade  
Memorial Day Parade  
Historic Gettysburg-Adams Co.



# TOURISM MARKETING EXPENSES



85%

In 2021, 85 percent of Destination Gettysburg's budget was spent on program services.



# DESTINATION Gettysburg!

ADAMS COUNTY, PA

Destination Gettysburg, the official destination marketing organization of Adams County, markets Gettysburg-Adams County as a premier travel destination producing a positive economic impact.