



MARYLAND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT BOARD

QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES

Approved on 05.11.26

January 9, 2026 | 9:00 AM- 11:00 PM

Visitation Hotel, 211 Church St, Frederick, MD 21701

MEMBERS PRESENT

Robert Arthur, The Ivy Hotel
Todd Burbage, Blue Water
Ashley Chenault, Charles County Tourism
Dave Ferraro, Friends of Patapsco Valley State Park
Andrew Frank, Capex Advisory
Del. Wayne Hartman, Maryland House of Delegates
Melonie Johnson, MGM National Harbor

Leverne McElveen, Leverne McElveen & Associates, LLC
Chris Riehl, Rent-A-Tour
Ben Seidel, Real Hospitality Group
Sandy Turner, Cecil County Tourism
Cassandra Vanhooser, Talbot County Department of Economic Development and Tourism

MEMBERS ABSENT

Tonya Fitzpatrick, Esq., World Footprints, LLC
Senator Nancy King, Maryland State Senate
Juan Carlos Linares, Federal Realty Investment Trust
Gerardo Martinez, Wild Kid Acres, LLC

James Mathias, University of MD Eastern Shore
Senator Johnny Mautz, Maryland State Senate
Al Spence, A.S. Midway Tours
Shelonda Stokes, Downtown Partnership
Del. Melissa Wells, Maryland House of Delegates

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS

Janna Howley, Cultivate & Craft
Amy Rohrer, Maryland Hotel and Lodging Association

Ruth Toomey, Maryland Tourism Coalition

DESTINATION MARYLAND ORGANIZATIONS (DMO)

Kelly Groff, Visit Montgomery County
Jodi Marschhauser, Harford County Department of Economic Development
Trish McClean, Visit Baltimore

Dan Spedden, Visit Hagerstown, Washington County CVB
Tom Yorke, Baltimore County Tourism and Promotion
Dave Ziedelis, Visit Frederick

GUESTS

Dawn Gordon, Fingerboard Farm
Rob Levine, Marriner Communications

Tiffany Lewis, Fingerboard Farm
Matt Libber, Maryland Soccerplex
Delegate Jesse T. Pippy (District 4 Frederick County)

COMMERCE OTD STAFF

Flo Brant, Visitor and Business Support Services/I70s Welcome Centers
Brandon Chan, Visitor and Business Support Services/Mason Dixon Welcome Center
Lisa Hansen Terhune, Destination Development

Brian Lawrence, Advertising and Content
Cindy Miller, Strategic Partnerships
Marc Ross, Acting Managing Director, Office of Tourism and Film; Acting Executive Director, MTDB
Leslie Troy, PR & Social
Rianna Wan, Research

I. Welcome and Call Meeting to Order

Chair Ben Seidel called the meeting of Friday, January 9, 2026, to order, welcoming attendees. Dave Ziedelis, Executive Director of Visit Frederick, introduced the Visitation Hotel, Frederick County's newest property. Ziedelis highlighted Frederick as the state's second-largest city and gave a brief history of the Visitation Hotel, mentioning its 200-room Marriott, conference space, retail, and rooftop lounge, built with funds from the city of Frederick, the State of Maryland, and Visit Frederick.

Seidel thanked developers Jim O'Hare and Lance Jaccard, along with General Manager Derrick Erwee, before asking board members and all attendees to introduce themselves. Mr. Erwee welcomed everyone and expressed gratitude for the tremendous success thus far and all who helped spread the word.

Seidel then read the Open Meetings Act statement.

II. Approval of September 19, 2025 Minutes

Vote Taken: Chair Ben Seidel asked if all had read the November 17, 2025, board meeting minutes and subsequently, called for a motion to accept the minutes. Cassandra Vanhooser made the motion to approve, and it was seconded by Sandy Turner; Seidel asked for discussion and hearing none, asked for a roll call for all in favor: "For" Arthur, Burbage, Ferraro, Frank, Hartman, Johnson, McElveen Riehl, Seidel, Turner, Vanhooser; all were in favor with no abstentions, so the motion carried. Note, Ashley Chenault arrived at the meeting shortly after the vote.

III. Chair Updates

BALTIMORE CONVENTION & TOURISM REDEVELOPMENT AND OPERATING AUTHORITY TASK FORCE

- 12/15/25 - Second report submitted to the City who will soon send to the Office of the Governor and General Assembly for review




photo credit: Visit Baltimore

Chair Ben Seidel reported on the Baltimore Convention & Tourism Redevelopment and Operating Authority Task Force's second meeting on December 15th. The Task Force submitted its preliminary report to the City of Baltimore for comments; the City will forward it to the Governor's Office and General Assembly for review. Seidel stressed the convention center and its expansion's importance to the state's economy. Members discussed the review process, potential report scenarios, and public input.

Action Item: Ross said she will check the statute to clarify the public input process.

BOARD APPOINTMENT UPDATES

- 2026 Board Member Re-appointments
 - submitted to Governor's Appointments Office for terms ending 06/30/2026 and eligible:
 - Martinez / Arthur / Linaros / Chenault / McElveen
 - If approved, reappointment effective 07/01/2026
- Tourism Board Member Serving on MHAA (update)
 - Sandy Turner to continue as the MDTB representative on the board of Maryland Heritage Areas Authority
 - If approved, reappointment effective 10/01/2026

Seidel thanked Dave Ferraro for two terms of service; a formal acknowledgment is planned for the June meeting. Frank asked about attendance requirements for gubernatorial appointees and Seidel confirmed they must attend 50% of meetings. This requirement does not apply to legislative appointees.

Chair Seidel then asked for the Board Committees' reports.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Marketing
Legislative/Education
Elections/Nominations
Strategic Planning

MARKETING COMMITTEE

- **Background and Objectives**
 - Provide clear advisory input to guide Murriner's strategic direction
 - Offer recommendations that inform statewide marketing budget decisions
 - Help ensure Maryland's tourism marketing remains competitive with peer states
- **Activities and Next Steps**
 - Dec 16 - Met virtually to formalize co-chairs
 - Jan 8 - Received agency's proposal for Spring/Summer '26 advertising plan
 - mid-Jan - Agency will present the proposed campaign to the committee, after which we will provide advisory feedback
 - Ongoing - Set a consistent meeting cadence to ensure steady guidance and timely input

Marketing Committee Co-chair Cassandra Vanhooser (nominated as co-chair at December meeting) reviewed recent activities including a plan to meet virtually in January to review the Spring/Summer 2026 advertising plan proposal. Vanhooser shared that Trish McClean with Visit Baltimore will serve as co-chair.

Vanhooser then introduced Chris Riehl, Co-Chair of the Legislative/Education Committee.

LEGISLATIVE/EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- **2026 Session: Lobbying & Testimony Regarding Administration and/or Departmental Bills:**
 - **SUPPORTING:** May lobby/testify under the MTDB moniker if supporting
 - **OPPOSING/CHANGING:** May lobby/testify as members of the industry and under individual professional capacity



LEGISLATIVE/EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- **Message Concept (draft) -** Increasing the MTDB budget generates greater spending by visitors, resulting in higher tax revenue that fuels State quality of life programs and services.
- **Methodology:** Real stories by real people delivered repeatedly to individual legislators and to legislative delegations, sub-committees, committees, Speaker and President, etc.



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LEGISLATIVE/EDUCATION COMMITTEE

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Commerce Budget - House Education and Economic Development Subcommittee (Appropriations Committee)</p> <p>DATE: 03/04/26 TIME: 1 - 4 PM LOCATION: 120 House Office Building, Annapolis</p> | <p>Commerce Budget - Senate Education, Business, and Administration Subcommittee (Budget & Taxation Committee)</p> <p>DATE: 03/05/26 TIME: 1 - 4 PM LOCATION: 3 W Miller Senate Office Building, Annapolis</p> |
|--|---|

LEGISLATIVE/EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- **2027 Session Prep: Commerce must submit all legislative requests by 9/1/2026**
- **Timeline**
 - Late April/May:
 - Commerce begins legislative discussions right after Sine Die
 - MTDB to meet with Commerce Secretary for initial discussion
 - MTDB to meet with Budget Secretary
 - June 12 - MTDB approves changes to statute, if any
 - July - Commerce reviews recommended changes
 - September 1 - Commerce sends legislative changes to Office of the Governor

Riehl noted the LEC plans to strategize on future tourism budget messaging. Riehl reiterated board members should not oppose the governor’s budget; if they elect to do so they must act in their capacity as business owners or on behalf of their own organization.

The committee's short-term approach focuses on the upcoming budget release. Matt Libber stressed everyone needs to show up to tourism day, on hearing dates and directly with their individual representatives.

Chair Seidel related statistics on lower hotel bookings and "revpar" for 2025, discussing the impact of less tax revenue and job losses, noting that Marshall at RAM is going to provide him with restaurant statistics soon. Delegate Hartman requested comparative state budgets. Seidel warned that competitors know Maryland's budget and are actively trying to draw visitors away. A key takeaway from the discussion was the need to focus messaging on the lost revenue in Maryland and the competitive budget imbalance.

Action Item: The board emphasized the need for more research discussion on cause and effect (Smith Travel), restaurant data, and requested a standing agenda item to compare Maryland's budget with neighboring states.

Riehl met with Commerce's legislative director to learn about the process for reevaluating and introducing change requests to the board statute in the future. The committee will meet several times over the next few months.

ELECTIONS/NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Current Executive Committee

- **Chair**
 - Ben Seidel, Real Hospitality Group (RHG)
- **Vice Chair / Attraction**
 - Dave Ferraro, Friends of Patapsco Valley State Park*
- **Vice Chair / Transportation**
 - Al Spence, A.S. Midway Tours
- **Vice Chair / Retail**
 - Juan Carlos Linares, Federal Realty Investment Trust

ELECTIONS/NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Vacancies as per Bylaws

- **Vice Chair / Attractions***
- **Vice Chair / Food**
- **Vice Chair / Lodging**
- **Secretary/Treasurer**

(a) **Executive Committee** There is an Executive Committee which consists of the Chair, the five Vice Chairs and the Secretary-Treasurer. The Executive Committee shall meet as determined by the Chair and the Executive Director. The Executive Committee shall have and may exercise the powers of the Board. The Board may disband the Executive Committee by the affirmative vote of a majority of all of the voting members of the Board.



ELECTIONS/NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Committee Timeline

- **January / February**
 - Contact existing officers
 - Email Board Members about openings
 - Request response from interested Board Members
- **April/May** - Ballot of proposed slate of Officers distributed to Board Members
- **June 12** - Board Members Vote

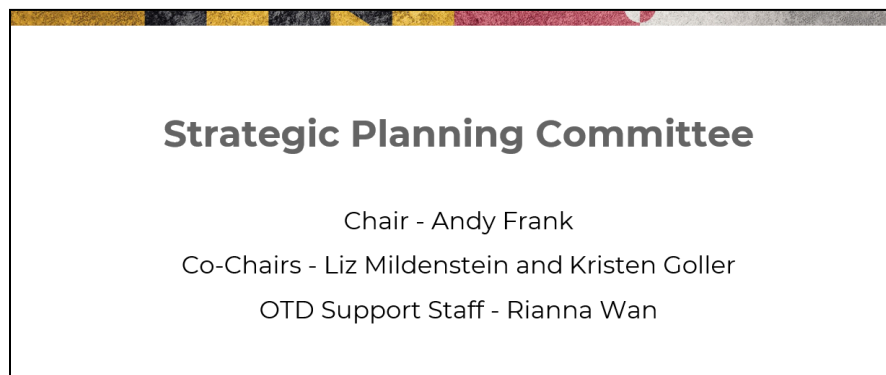
Riehl passed the floor to Sandy Turner who reported about the Election/Nominations Committee. With co-chair Dave Ferraro, and committee member Ashley Chenault, Turner shared that they recently met with Cindy Miller, staff coordinator from OTD, to discuss activating the committee with its objectives and planning steps. Turner indicated there are four officers in place and four more will need to be filled at the next election. Ferraro shared the timeline.

Riehl inquired about the defined role of the Secretary/Treasurer, which is briefly described in the Bylaws. Ferraro suggested the positions might be addressed during strategic planning.

A question was raised about board appointments. Ross explained the process between the managing director of the board and prospective candidates with recommendations to the Department of Commerce's Office of Strategic Engagement and the Secretary. If accepted, the recommendation is forwarded to the Governor's appointments office who walks candidates through the application and nomination process. The Governor submits the appointees to the Senate for approval during session. Appointments made outside of session are formalized at the next session.

Action Item: Staff to create a flow chart that shows this process and share at next meeting

Riehl questioned if appointments by the Senate President and House Speaker are processed identically; Ross said they are not. Hartman noted the newly named Speaker of the House has brought in all new staff.



Strategic Planning Committee

Chair - Andy Frank

Co-Chairs - Liz Mildenstein and Kristen Goller

OTD Support Staff - Rianna Wan

Turner passed the floor to Andy Frank, Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, who, in turn, thanked Liz Middlestein (not present) and Kristen Goller (not present) for their roles as co-chairs and acknowledged the staff.

**STRATEGIC PLAN CONSULTANT
DRAFT SCOPE OF WORK**

Purpose of the Strategic Plan

- Develop a comprehensive 5-year Strategic Plan for MTDB.
- Review and, if needed, recommend changes to MTDB mission, vision, and organizational structure.
- Evaluate and prioritize MTDB statutory powers and duties for current relevance.
- Provide a clear action plan/"roadmap" with goals, objectives, funding levels, and performance measures aligned with competitive destinations.

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**STRATEGIC PLAN CONSULTANT
DRAFT SCOPE OF WORK**

Situational Analysis

- Analyze existing tourism research (e.g., OTD, Tourism Economics, CoStar, U.S. Travel).
- Conduct a high-level landscape scan of Maryland's tourism ecosystem and key organizations.
- Evaluate current Board performance, capacity, and tools and resources.
- Conduct SWOT analysis on MTDB structure, funding authority, and long-term sustainability.
- Assess MTDB's competitive positioning versus nearby states and other major destinations.

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**STRATEGIC PLAN CONSULTANT
DRAFT SCOPE OF WORK**

Stakeholder Engagement

- In-person kick-off with MTDB/Strategic Planning Committee within 4 weeks of contract execution.
- Regular check-ins with MTDB staff and/or committee leadership.
- Facilitate stakeholder focus groups, interviews, and surveys (DMOs, industry, government, partners).
- In-person final meeting by mid-May 2026 to present draft strategic plan.

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**STRATEGIC PLAN CONSULTANT
DRAFT SCOPE OF WORK**

Action Plan & Metrics

- Develop initial high-level 5-year goal categories for MTDB approval.
- Present phased action plan with objectives, steps, timelines, and responsibilities.
- Recommend KPIs to track implementation success.
- Provide scalable funding recommendations benchmarked against peer states and competitive destinations.

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Frank shared that the committee's focus since the last board meeting was getting the drafted scope of work finalized. Frank summarized the plan's purpose and further detail stating the process would yield a five-year strategic plan with annual board reviews. The Board discussed factoring in discussion of transportation's effect on tourism, noting budget, scope and time limits.

**STRATEGIC PLAN CONSULTANT
DRAFT SCOPE OF WORK**

Key Deliverables

- Leadership briefings and presentations throughout the process.
- Analysis and synthesis of Strategic Planning Committee, MTDB, and stakeholder feedback.
- Comprehensive electronic final report:
 - 5-Year Strategic Plan
 - Stakeholder input and market research summary
 - Actionable implementation plan

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STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS TIMELINE

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Dec 4, 2025 | SP Committee (SPC) Kick-off Mtg |
| Jan 6, 2026 | MTDB input deadline |
| Jan 9, 2026 | SPC Report |
| Jan 14, 2026 | MTDB comments due to SPC |
| Mid-End Jan 2026 | SPC and Marriner* finalize SOW |
| Early Feb 2026 | Marriner Solicits Requests for Proposals |
| Late March 2026 | SPC Selects Vendor |
| April-May 2026 | Vendor's Implementation Period |
| June 1, 2026 | SPC submits Strategic Plan Draft to MTDB |
| June 12, 2026 | MTDB Approval |

*Marriner Marketing Communications is OTD's contracted agency of record and is tasked with procuring the selected vendor.

Finally, Frank outlined the planned timeline for the process.

IV. Acting Executive Director's Update

Strategic Approach: More visitors staying multiple nights in accommodations paying state and local hotel taxes.

Maryland Visitor Volumes, by segment

Millions of visitors, \$ millions, and spend per visitor

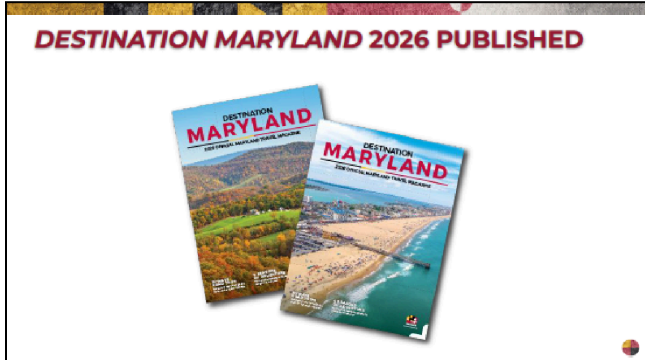
| | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2024 Growth |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Total visitors | 24.7 | 35.2 | 43.5 | 45.1 | 45.8 | 1.5% |
| Day | 13.2 | 19.8 | 25.9 | 26.8 | 27.5 | 2.4% |
| Overnight | 11.5 | 15.3 | 17.6 | 18.3 | 18.3 | 0.1% |
| Total visitor spending | \$11,619 | \$16,391 | \$19,402 | \$20,507 | \$21,165 | 3.2% |
| Day | \$1,758 | \$3,667 | \$4,695 | \$4,967 | \$5,132 | 3.3% |
| Overnight | \$9,861 | \$12,725 | \$14,707 | \$15,540 | \$16,034 | 3.2% |
| Per visitor spending | \$470 | \$466 | \$446 | \$455 | \$463 | 1.7% |
| Day | \$133 | \$185 | \$181 | \$185 | \$187 | 0.9% |
| Overnight | \$855 | \$830 | \$836 | \$850 | \$876 | 3.1% |

Source: Tourism Economics



Marci Ross, Acting Executive Director of the Maryland Tourism Development Board and Acting Managing Director of the Offices of Tourism, reminded all that the board's focus is on implementing the statute to bring more multi-night visitors to the state, as they significantly impact tourism tax codes.

DESTINATION MARYLAND 2026 PUBLISHED



Ross announced the 2026 Destination Maryland has been published and copies are available in bulk through VisitMaryland.org.

DMO GRANT PROGRAM UPDATE

FY25: Closed

FY26:

11/1/25: Vendors began reach-out to DMOs for sales of the spring opportunities

1/7/26: Advertising Co-op Program - approximately 80% of DMO participation matching dollars are claimed; sales period ends on 5/20/26

1/7/26: 23 Application kits are fully executed; two (2) Application kits are in the Commerce signature process

12/31/25: End of the July-December spending period

1/31/26: Due date - Last day to submit reimbursement requests for July - Dec 2025

2/28/26: Due date - Last day to submit CY25 Qualifying Expenditure Reports

Ross reported that the FY25 DMO Grant Program is closed, all reports have been submitted, and both the board and OTD are compliant with the program's requirements for the last fiscal cycle. Regarding future initiatives, the DMO FY26 advertising cooperative opportunity plan is progressing and is being managed by each advertising outlet, alongside Brian Lawrence and Mariner Communications. Finally, Ross updated the board on the number of FY26 grant application kits received to date.

Ross then asked Rianna Wan to provide a research update.

FYTD 2026 SALES AND USE TAX COLLECTIONS ATTRIBUTABLE TO TOURISM

| SALES TAX CODE & CATEGORY (Millions) | FY2026 Total 4 Months | FY2025 Total 4 Months | YOY Total % Change | Factor | Adjusted FY2026 4 Months | Adjusted FY2025 4 Months | YOY Adjusted Total % Change |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 108 Restaurants, Lunchrooms, Delicatessens - WQ/BWL | \$189.2 | \$198.6 | -4.7% | 33.3% | \$63.1 | \$66.2 | -4.7% |
| 111 Hotels, Motels Selling Food - W/BWL | \$10.4 | \$12.7 | -18.2% | 100% | \$10.4 | \$12.7 | -18.2% |
| 112 Restaurants and Nite Clubs - W/BWL | \$111.4 | \$113.3 | -1.7% | 33.3% | \$37.1 | \$37.8 | -1.7% |
| 306 General Merchandise | \$361.3 | \$336.2 | 7.5% | 5% | \$18.1 | \$16.8 | 7.5% |
| 407 Automobile, Bus and Truck Rentals | \$33.3 | \$36.2 | -7.8% | 90% | \$30.0 | \$32.5 | -7.8% |
| 706 Airlines - Commercial | \$0.1 | \$0.2 | -39.9% | 50% | \$0.1 | \$0.1 | -39.9% |
| 901 Hotels, Motels, Apartments, Cottages | \$64.2 | \$66.0 | -2.7% | 100% | \$64.2 | \$66.0 | -2.7% |
| 925 Recreation and Amusement Places | \$4.2 | \$3.6 | 15.3% | 50% | \$2.1 | \$1.8 | 15.3% |
| Tourism Tax Categories Subtotal | \$774.1 | \$766.7 | 1.0% | | \$225.0 | \$233.9 | -3.8% |
| Lodging Subtotal (Code 111 + 901) | \$74.5 | \$78.7 | -5.2% | 100% | \$74.5 | \$78.7 | -5.2% |
| Restaurant Subtotal (Code 108 + 112) | \$300.6 | \$311.9 | -3.6% | 33.3% | \$100.2 | \$104.0 | -3.6% |

Adjusted (Factor): As required by Senate bill 459 Chapter 181 of the 2008 session of the general assembly, the Comptroller's Office uses the total of adjusted tax codes to report the qualifying tourism tax increment for each fiscal year. This analysis relies on the sales tax industry codes reflecting revenue generated from tourism and tourism-related activities, as determined jointly by the Comptroller's Office and the Department of Business and Economic Development.

Tourism Sales and Use Tax Revenue

FY2026 (Jul-Oct 25)
Tourism Sales and Use Tax

- Total = \$774m, a 1% increase YOY.
- Lodging = 10% of the total (\$74.5m)
- Restaurants = 39% (\$300m)

Total Adjusted (Factor) tax revenue had a 3.8 % decrease for the first 4 months in FY26 compared to FY25's same period.

Wan reported that the comptroller's office has been providing regular state tax collections reports since October, after a prior delay. She shared fiscal year-to-date tax collections statistics. Wan explained that the "factor" column is the 2008 agreed-upon percentage of tax attributed to tourism for those tax codes.

Further explanation followed regarding Smith Travel Research reports (hotels only) vs. the Comptroller's tax reports (including hotels and home shares). The conversation also covered increases and decreases in select tax categories, such as general merchandise and recreation/amusement, and a brief discussion related to gaming tax collection and the state of the gaming industry.

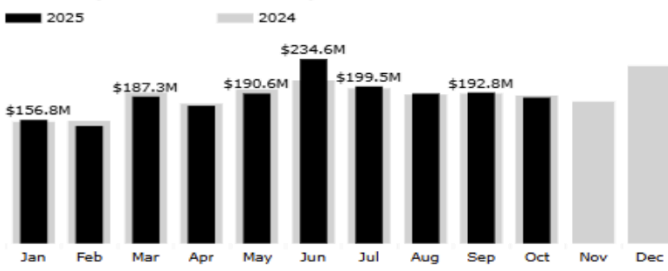
TOURISM INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

Sales Tax Receipts

October 2025
\$186.3M
-1.2% YOY

Jan - Oct 2025
\$1.9B
+0.7% YOY

Monthly Sales Tax Receipts



Powered by Symphony | Tourism Economics

Tourism Sales Tax Receipts CALENDAR YEAR (CY) 2025

In October 2025: Tourism sales taxes generated **\$186m, a 1.2% decrease (YOY)**.

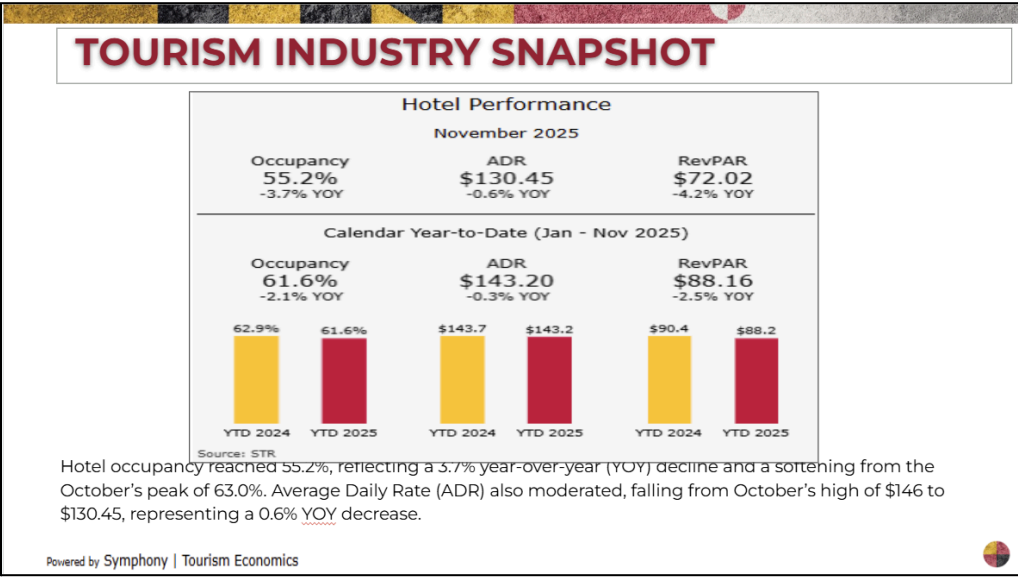
Tourism Sales Tax Receipts Jan to October 2025

- Total = **\$1.9 billion, a 0.7% increase (YOY)**

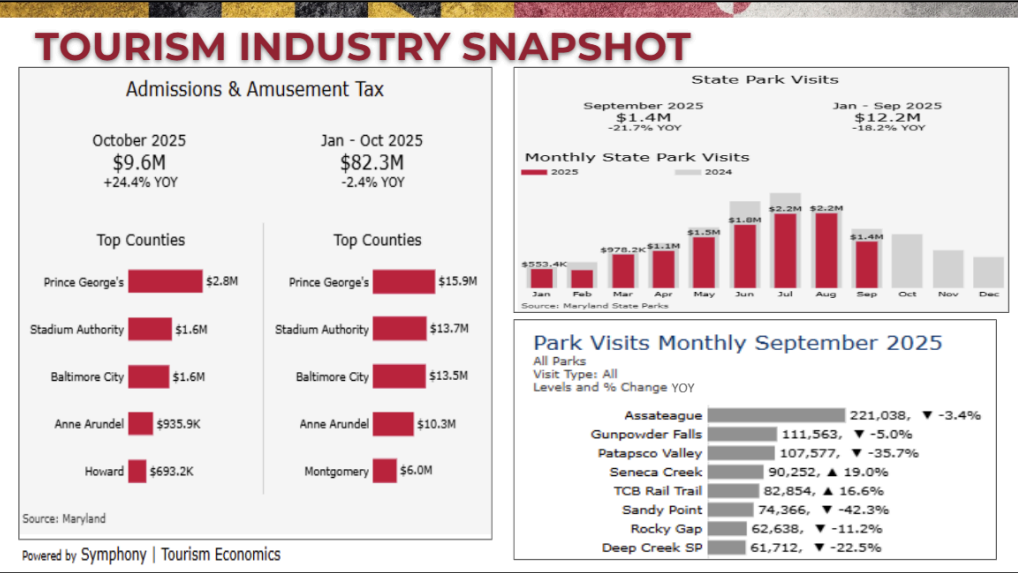
*Total Adjusted (Factor) = **\$549.6m, 0.15% slight decline** (\$550.4m during the first ten months of CY2024)

*not on chart

Wan presented another view on sales tax with calendar year-to-date figures, which showed a slight decrease.



Wan presented a look at the state of the industry through the hotel performance data.



Wan shared a final look at the state of the industry through admission & amusement tax and park visit data.

Next, Brian Lawrence presented marketing updates.

MARKETING MD250



Celebrate America's 250th.
Discover Maryland's best.

Scale 250 MARYLAND

YOU'RE WELCOME

Welcome Center Posters



250 MARYLAND

Our Role in America's Story

From the Atlantic shores of the east to mountainous beauty in the west, Maryland invites you to explore its diverse beauty during the 250th anniversary of the United States.

DMM Insert / Welcome Center Handout



Celebrate America's 250th. Celebrate Maryland.

O Sky, Can You See How Maryland Shaped Our Nation's History?


VisitMaryland.org
250th Web page

Lawrence showed samples of promotions for America's 250 in Maryland including posters to be displayed at the welcome centers, an insert/rack card that was placed in the Destination Maryland and in welcome centers. The QR code goes to the 250th themed page on VisitMaryland.org, which contains events and more for the 250th. Some advertising through the spring/summer campaign will promote this theme too.

MARYLAND SCENIC BYWAYS CAMPAIGN

NOTE: This campaign was NOT funded by Tourism Board dollars. It was funded through a federal grant with specific spending provisions.

- Media budget:** \$1,871,500
- Markets:** Baltimore, DC, Philly, NYC Metro
- Timing:** 7/28/25 thru 9/29/25
- Call to action:** Drive Awareness, Explore Byways, Plan a Trip
- Platforms:** OOH (35%), Broadcast TV (22%), Digital (36%), Local print (2%)
- Impact:** 167MM impressions, \$666,164 in attributable revenue



Lawrence summarized results from the Maryland Scenic Byways Campaign, which was produced through a federally funded grant program.

SPRING/SUMMER '26 CAMPAIGN

- Marriner Marketing presented the Spring/Summer advertising plan recommendation on 1/8/26
 - Budget:
 - 2026 **\$3,000,000**
 - 2025 \$4,025,500
- Marketing Committee will now review it and make recommendation to the board in the near future.



Lawrence said Marriner Marketing presented the Spring/Summer Campaign recommendation to OTD and shared it with the Marketing Committee who will review and make recommendations.

PR & SOCIAL MEDIA EFFORTS

Audacy via Marriner Marketing (\$76K)

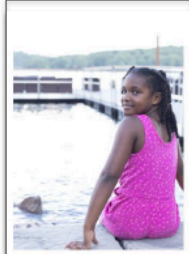
- [Jessica Dutra](#) - Content Creator & Media Personality from Baltimore's MIX106.5's Morning Show
- In-Destination Visits (6-8 total)
 - Kent County (Jan 16-18, 2026)
 - Prince George's County (Feb 13-15, 2026)
- Digital Deliverables
- Week-long Daily Radio Endorsements
- Digital Ad Campaign in 4 Key Drive Markets



Leslie Troy shared PR & Social updates – the first being about the new social media content creator on contract – Jess Dutra who will be activating her engaging content (videos, photos, text) over the next 8 weeks in Kent and Prince George’s counties. Troy indicated Dutra will continue with the in-destination visits through July with activities mainly centered around lodging and aligned with other concurrent promotions.

PR & SOCIAL MEDIA EFFORTS

- Independent Content Creators via Marriner Marketing (\$50K)
 - Family Fun/Spring Break
 - Outdoor/Water-based Activities
 - Culinary/Seafood
 - Historical and Heritage
 - Accessible and Inclusive
 - Unique Accommodations
- CrowdRiff via MOJO (\$47K)
 - Creators by CrowdRiff (themes from above)
 - Manage/Curate User-Generated Content (UGC) and usage
 - Digital Assets - Press Room, Asset Sharing, Web Galleries
- Meta Advertising (\$17K)
- Contract/Service Renewals (\$10K)




Maryland has been my home for more than 20 years, but I was surprised to learn that there's a mountainous area on the western side of the state. I initially learned about the Deep Creek Lake area while attending a travel conference. I was intrigued and started to do a bit of digging. During my research, I found that this area is popular with snow sports enthusiasts. Each winter, people come to the area to...

Troy highlighted additional PR & Social projects as well. Ross commented that is the first year the board has invested in this type of marketing and the PR Team is doing a great job vetting content creators and aligning them with the varied product experiences in Maryland.

STAFFING UPDATE

- **Youghiogheny Welcome Center:**
Supervisor - Interviews concluded;
HR finalizing selection process
Sales Associates - recruitment phase
- **Advertising & Content Administrative Assistant:**
Interviews planned for week of 1/19
- **Managing Director:** Applications under review by HR and OSec



Ross provided a staffing update related to three positions. She reminded the OTD Staff reports were in the board packet. Ross concluded with remarks of appreciation for the board, the industry and the staff noting everyone’s incredible work over the last year. Accolades were returned to Ms. Ross for her leadership role.

V. Other Business

Seidel thanked Sandy Turner for offering to serve another term as tourism board representative on the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Board.

Ross shared reminders to save these dates:



Join us for
Tourism Day
IN ANNAPOLIS

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2026

8:30 • Networking & Refreshments
Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County Visitor Center • 26 West Street, Annapolis

9:00 • Meetings with Delegations and Legislators

11:30 • Maryland Tourism Day Program & Lunch
Rams Head On Stage • 33 West Street, Annapolis

JOIN IN TOURISM DAY > BOARD MEMBERS REGISTER thru Lisa - Complete Form to RSVP by 01/24/26



MTDB REGISTRATION - MARYLAND TOURISM DAY



VI. Board Member Updates

- Del Hartman introduced and thanked Delegate Jesse Pippy, District 4, Frederick County for attending and acknowledged his support of the industry.
 - **Action Item:** The board recommended that the DMO should include the local delegation when sending invitations for all subsequent meetings occurring in their county.
- Chris Riehl announced he will be portraying Brooks Robinson in Dan Roderick's play, March 11-15.

VII. Reports from the Industry

- Trish McClean (Visit Baltimore) shared news about the exhibit by Amy Sherald at the Baltimore Museum of Art and the upcoming CIAA Basketball Tournament.
- Janna Howley (Maryland Wineries Association) invited board members to attend the breweries, wineries and distilleries reception on February 17th in Annapolis.
- Ruth Toomey (Maryland Tourism Coalition) reminded all about the upcoming Maryland Tourism Day.
- Amy Rohrer (Maryland Hotel Motel Lodging Association) shared that the session is quite busy for them and they are preparing for their "Stars of the Industry" event in April.

VIII. Adjournment

Vote Taken: Seidel requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Hartman made the motion. The motion to adjourn was seconded by Chenault and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.