



**VISIT  
MONTGOMERY**  
MARYLAND'S CULTURAL CAPITAL™

# FY2025 MARKETING PLAN



➤ Sugarloaf Mountain Vineyards



➤ Glenstone Museum  
*Split-Rocker, Jeff Koons*



➤ Silver Spring Jazz Festival



➤ Summer House Santa Monica



➤ The Adventure Park



➤ Bethesda Row



# Visit Montgomery Overview

## Organization Mission

The Mission of Visit Montgomery, MD is to market and develop the county and its communities as a preferred destination for group and individual travel thereby fostering economic growth and quality of place through tourism.

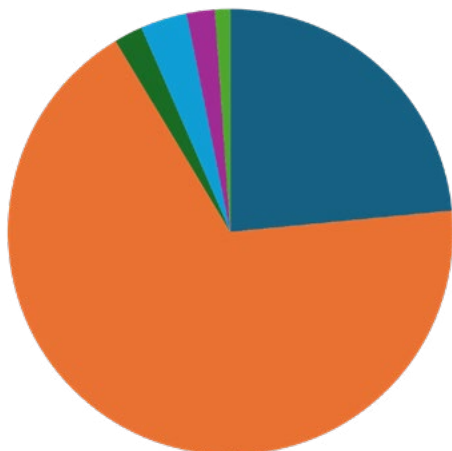
The goal of the Fiscal Year 2025 Marketing Plan is to define the programming goals and implementation plans created to support the hospitality industry and grow tourism.

## Organization Structure and Funding

Visit Montgomery is a 501 (c) 6 non-profit organization with oversight by a volunteer board of directors. The organization celebrated 40 years of service to the community in October 2023. The primary source of funding is direct allocations from hotel taxes collected by Montgomery County, City of Rockville and City of Gaithersburg.

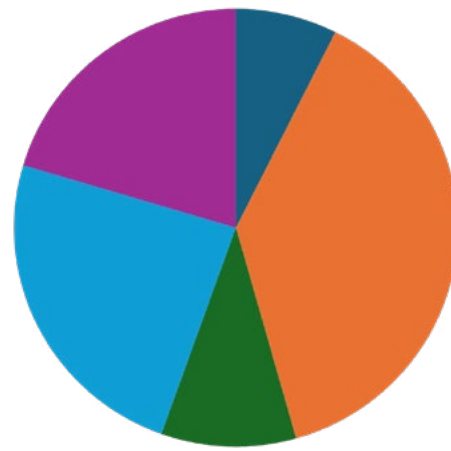
- 7% of hotel occupancy tax collections from Montgomery County
- 3.5% of hotel occupancy tax collections from the City of Rockville
- 4.0% of hotel occupancy tax collections from the City of Gaithersburg
- Other revenue sources include partnership dues, marketing grant from the Maryland Office of Tourism, cooperative advertising, tradeshow partnerships, and events.

**FY25 Budget: Revenues**



- EDA Grants
- Montgomery County Allocation
- Municipal Hotel Tax Allocation
- MD Office of Tourism Marketing Grants
- Partnership Dues
- Other

**FY25 Budget: Expenses**



- Administrative & Operating
- Personnel
- Sales
- Marketing
- Advertising

## ➤ Strategic Goals

### Destination Marketing

Key objective is to attract more visitors to Montgomery County, MD.

- Advertising in print, electronic, radio and billboard media
- Destination sales tradeshow attendance and sales missions
- Leisure travel sales programs and strategies to increase weekend room night generation
- Familiarization tours – event planners, meeting planners and travel writers
- Website development

### Destination Management

Key objective is to develop the destination through community development and outreach.

- Advancements in market research and engagement technology
- Tourism product development that ties comparable themes and programs together into a unified experience
- Community engagement and advisory groups
- Developing social inclusion initiatives

## ➤ Organizational Goals

- Complete a 5-year Strategic Plan for destination tourism and development.
- Develop advertising and sales strategies for specifically generating room night demand through tourism improvement district (TID) funding.
- Participate as a member of the new Sports Tourism Advisory Board.
- Identify grant programs to further assist in marketing the growing alcohol production space and marketing the county's second to none trail system.

## ➤ Destination Marketing Goals

### Top Six Objectives

- Membership Growth/Sponsorships
- Sales Strategies to increase lead generation and bookings by targeting specific key markets
- Grow the "Rural Montgomery" brand through promotion of the Tastemakers Trail
- Develop a new Visitor Services Program that provides outreach to visiting conference and sports event attendees.
- Execute four (4) Economic Development Administration Grants designed to increase tourism in the meetings and consumer segments and expand the Tastemakers Trail and MoCo Eats brands.

# Destination Annalysis

## Domestic Visitors Calendar Year 2023



**1.5 days**  
Avg Length of Stay

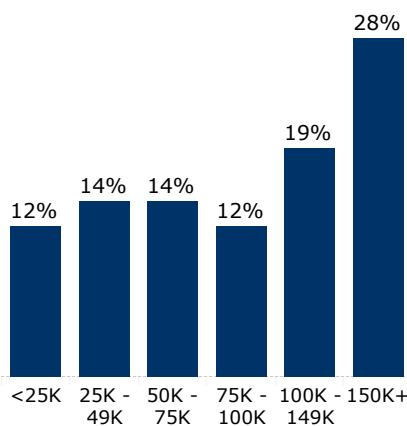


**70.9%**  
Overnight

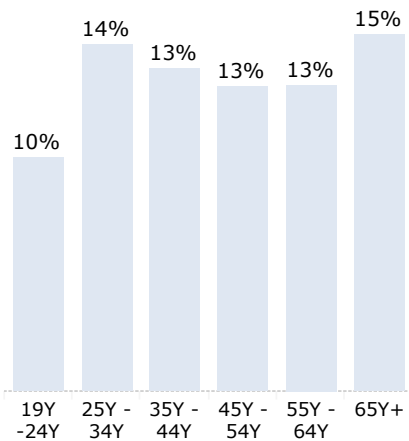


**52.8%**  
Repeat

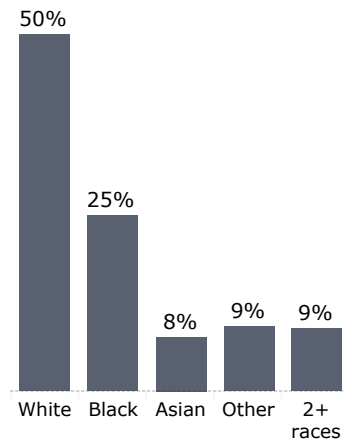
### Household Income Median: \$104.1K



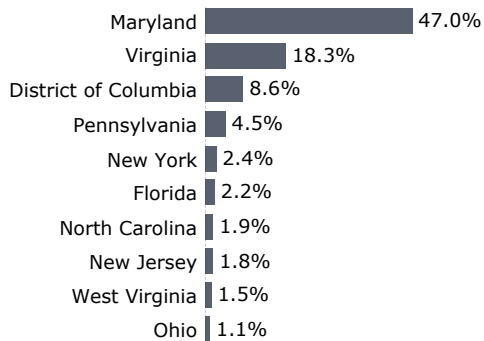
### Age Groups



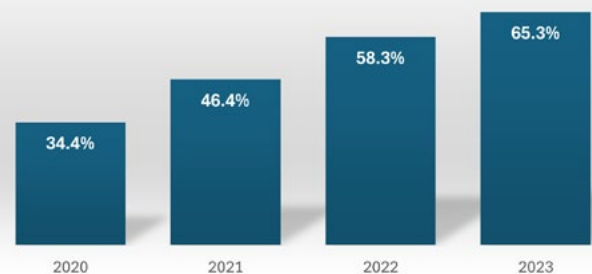
### Race



### Top Visitor Origin States



### Hotel Occupancy Montgomery County



### Hotel Average Daily Rate Montgomery County



### Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR) Montgomery County



# Industry Alliances

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## NATIONAL

**Destinations International** provides an annual international tourism convention for a global perspective on the industry, ongoing access to resources and research, tailored conferences that focus on specific aspects of DMO departments, and the only accreditation program that sets industry specific standards for DMO governance and operations.

**U.S. Travel Association** is the national, non-profit organization representing all components of the travel industry. This organization advocates for policies that will advance and elevate our industry on the national level, and provides tools, research and resources needed to influence change at state and local levels.

## REGIONAL

**Capital Region USA (CRUSA)** is the official regional destination marketing organization promoting Washington, DC, Virginia and Maryland internationally, in partnership with Destination DC, the Virginia Tourism Corporation, the Maryland Office of Tourism Development and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority.

The **Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance (MATPRA)** is a cohesive unit of regional tourism partners encompassing Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington D.C., and West Virginia. The alliance strives to serve travel journalists by offering resources that ignore geographic boundaries, as do travelers. Common threads and regional highlights are identified to offer more stories for journalists that are interested in offering the prospective of Mid-Atlantic destinations as a whole.

### DMO Partnerships and Alliances

Visit Montgomery works closely with surrounding DMOs including Destination DC, Visit Howard County, Visit Frederick, Experience Prince Georges County, Visit Hagerstown and Washington County, and Visit Allegany. Additionally, the organization works with national, regional and local partners including the Arts & Humanities Council, Montgomery County Office of Agriculture, Heritage Montgomery, National Park Service and the C&O Canal Trust.

## STATE

The **Maryland Office of Tourism & Development (OTD)** is part of the Maryland Department of Commerce and serves as the official Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for Maryland. OTD promotes Maryland as a travel destination, the state's attractions, accommodations and events to domestic and international travelers. OTD also administers grant programs on behalf of the 25 state recognized DMOs, including Visit Montgomery.

**Maryland Tourism Coalition (MTC)** works on behalf of its members to affect positive change and defend the industry through direct advocacy, Tourism Day, educational sessions and engagement with elected officials.

**Maryland Hotel Lodging Association (MHLA)** is the unified voice of Maryland's lodging industry, serving members in everything we do. MHLA provides advocacy, information, recognition, and networking opportunities that benefit lodging industry owners, managers, associates, related businesses, and communities in Maryland.

The mission of the **Maryland Sports Commission** is to enhance Maryland's economy, image and quality of life through the attraction, promotion, retention and development of regional, national and international sporting events.

## LOCAL

### Economic Development Collaborations

Recognizing that tourism promotion is an economic development function and an opportunity to promote Montgomery County as a quality place to live, Visit Montgomery works closely with Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC), Rockville Economic Development, Inc. (REDI), Gaithersburg Economic Development, WorkSource Montgomery, Urban Districts and the county's network of Chambers of Commerce.

The **Foundation for Hospitality and Restaurant Management (FHRM)** serves as an advisory board, to Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), the board members include industry professionals, post-secondary educators and community partners focused on providing the skills that students need for management and entrepreneurial opportunities in hospitality, lodging, culinary arts, food and beverage, tourism and travel.

## Symphony

Visit Montgomery has invested in the Tourism Economics research tool The Symphony Intelligence Platform. This platform provides a comprehensive and interactive hub for all of the Visit Montgomery data sources including Airdna, Tourism Economics Annual Economic Impact Report, and Smith Travel Data. This is a comprehensive data analytics platform that will provide data and insights for the organization to better understand the destination's customers and their spending habits as well as the economic impact of travelers in the community's economy.

## Hootsuite

Hootsuite is a social media management platform that assist the Visit Montgomery Communications Coordinator with day-to-day social media management, developing content, scheduling and publishing social media postings and measuring the return on investment.

## Visit Widget/Adventure Planner App

Visit Widget makes it easy to provide curated and engaging experiences to visitors while allowing Visit Montgomery to understand user behavior and preferences. The Visit Montgomery team uses the app to create passports and seasonal itineraries and share deals and events around the county, encouraging visitors to explore more, unlocking rewards, and fostering a deeper connection with Montgomery County. Sending targeted notifications keeps users informed about special events, promotions, and exclusive offerings. Dwell time reports provide insights into visitor behavior, including monitoring high-traffic zones and popular attractions for more strategic destination management.

## Airdna

Visit Montgomery's subscription to Airdna provides competitive insights in the short term rental market, number of rentals in Montgomery County by month, average daily rate, revenue per available room. This helps to measure the impact of the short term rental market and fluctuations in number of listings and occupancy trends.

## Smith Travel Research

Smith Travel Research helps our destination understand performance trends for the hotel industry, develop competitive strategies, identify swings in occupancy during peak times.

## Epsilon Digital Campaigns

Visit Montgomery utilizes Epsilon for year-round digital campaigns. Epsilon is the only digital partner that connects display advertising, online video, and connected TV to the visitation of a real person.

## Ripe

Visit Montgomery will launch a new website with the current brand in July 2024. The website will include a new feature with the hotel booking platform, Ripe. This provides the organization with a mechanism to increase hotel bookings to the lodging partners. This booking widget will be placed strategically throughout the website. The Ripe platform seamlessly integrates the destination's customized booking engine to the Visitmontgomery.com website. The goal of this investment is to drive increased bookings to lodging partners while creating a better experience for travelers and tangible results for the lodging partners.

## Critical Mention

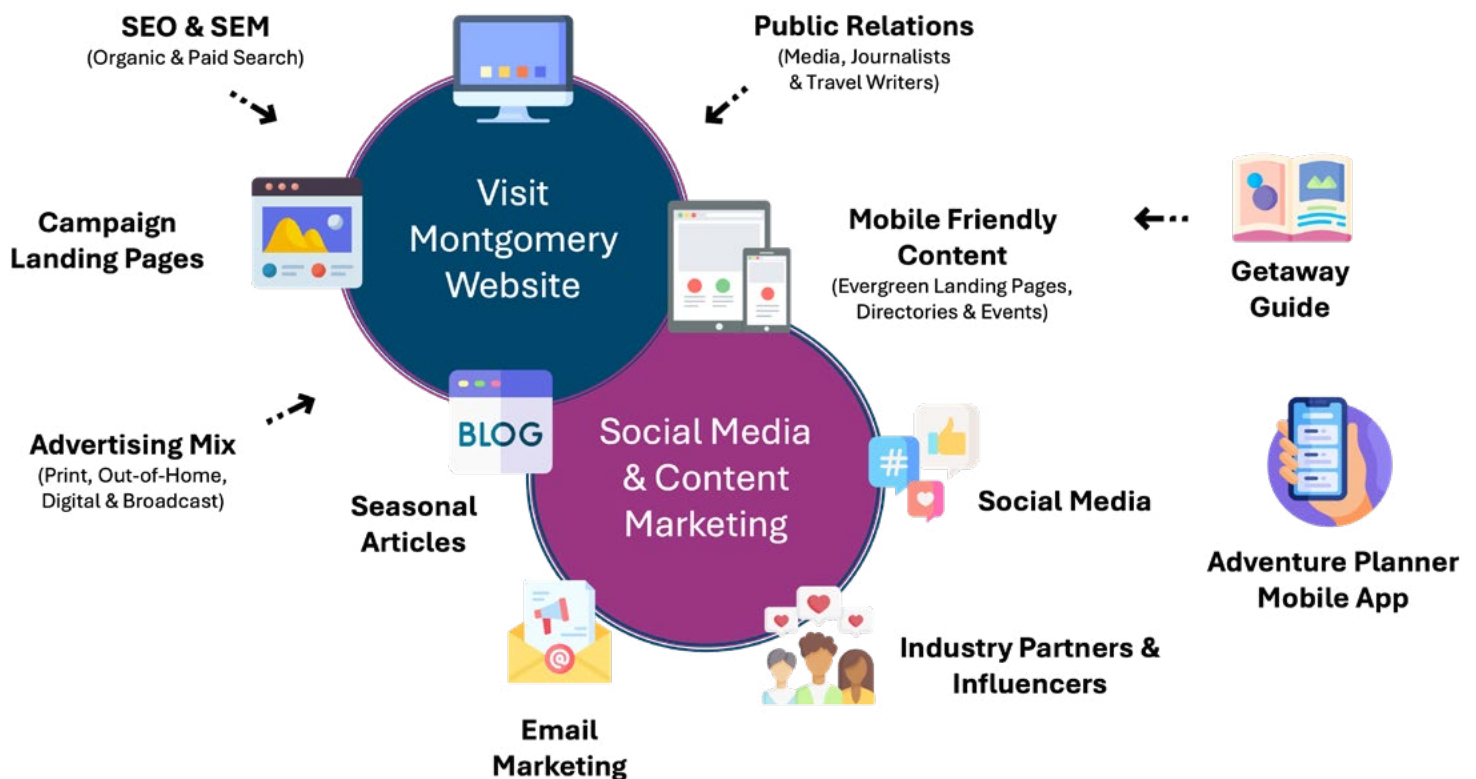
This tool allows for real-time media monitoring to measure the results of Visit Montgomery's communication and marketing strategies.

## Google Analytics

Visit Montgomery uses Google Analytics 4 (GA4) to monitor visitor behavior on VisitMontgomery.com. By analyzing GA4 data, the team can identify trends, such as peak visit times and popular pages, and understand user demographics and interests. They can also track the performance of their SEO efforts to see which keywords and content drive the most traffic. This understanding of visitor behavior allows Visit Montgomery to tailor marketing campaigns more effectively, ensuring they resonate with their target audience and optimize ad spend for maximum return on investment.

# Marketing, Communications and Sales Plan

## Marketing & Communications Strategy



## Marketing Department

The Marketing Department is responsible for the overall brand strategy and marketing to leisure travel segment, as well as within the groups and meetings, and tour and travel markets. The primary goal of the department is to develop and promote key products and programs that facilitate tourism growth, generating hotel and sales tax revenue, and the growth of the local economy overall.

### Brand Development and Positioning

**Approach:** Develop the Visit Montgomery brand, positioning Montgomery County as a destination of choice for weekend leisure travel, meetings, and tour and travel.

#### Methods:

- Evaluate and update marketing assets to align with Visit Montgomery's target demographics and attract new audiences.
- Conduct photo and video shoots as necessary to support campaigns, content development, and programs.
- Ensure assets reflect a diverse audience.
- Encourage visitors to explore more and convert day-trips to overnight stays by leveraging content marketing, social media marketing, the Adventure Planner app, and the Visit Montgomery Getaway Guide.



## Visitor Personas



### Culture Vulture Candace

Candice is a 32-year-old marketing professional from Baltimore. She's well-educated, with an interest in arts, history, and cultural experiences. Candice is a solo traveler who enjoys exploring new destinations to satisfy her intellectual curiosity. She'll balance catching local art with fine dining, craft beverages and a concert at one of the region's favorite performance venues.



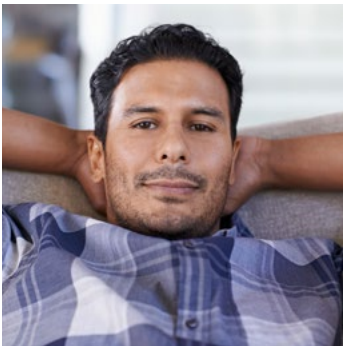
### Foodie Fanatic Felix

Felix is a 45-year-old technology executive who lives in Philadelphia. He is passionate about exploring new culinary experiences and has a taste for craft beer and whiskey from local distilleries. Felix travels regularly with his wife. They love staying in convenient locations within walking distance of public transportation.



### History Buff Hanna

Hanna is a 28-year-old mom from New York who loves history and has even made it her life goal to visit all 50 states. Hanna and her partner love all the can't-miss destinations and famous historical sites, but she also loves to visit lesser-known attractions and museums, while keeping the little ones entertained. She would like to take her family to Washington, DC and is looking to extend the trip in Maryland.



### Adventurous Adam

Adam is a 40-year-old teacher who lives in a bustling suburb of Boston with his husband. He spends as much of his free time as possible outside. An avid jogger and cyclist, Adam loves to explore and hang out in nature. Kayaking on the river, hiking a challenging trail or dancing at a music festival, Adam prioritizes outdoor adventures.



### Retired Rita

Rita is a 65-year-old retiree from Alexandria, Virginia who loves to travel and spend quality time with her family. Rita often travels with her daughter and her grandchildren, seeking destinations that offer a balance of activities that cater to a range of ages and interests, ensuring that everyone in the family can participate and enjoy.





## Advertising

**Approach** Implement an effective advertising strategy incorporating crafted messages, streamlined channels, strong creative, and measured performance to boost awareness and drive visitation to the destination.

### Methods:

#### Seasonal and Themed Campaigns

Drive overnight travel for a 4–6-week period in target markets within a 4-hour driving radius to Montgomery County.

- Summer: Weekend Getaways and Family Travel
- Holiday Campaign
- Montgomery in Bloom: Cherry Blossom Season
- Go MoCo Month and Kick Off to Summer

#### Brand Awareness

Educate consumers about Montgomery County as a tourism destination.

#### Leisure Markets

- Focus on weekend getaway messaging within a 3-4 hour driving radius and aligned with markets of interest by the Maryland Office of Tourism.
- Leverage existing tourism products (Tastemakers Trail, MoCo Eats, etc.) as anchors for weekend getaway messaging and itineraries.

#### Groups & Meetings

- Align advertising with the sales team's tradeshow schedule.
- Focus on an "experience first" strategy where advertising messaging highlights activities and amenities to attract more prospects higher in the marketing funnel.
- Leverage the new Meet in Maryland collaborative initiative to expand Montgomery County as a destination for meetings and conferences.
- Pilot a LinkedIn advertising campaign specifically for the groups and meetings markets.

#### Product Specific Tourism

Build awareness of emerging tourism products, including: Tastemakers Trail, MoCo Eats, Rural Montgomery, and Visit MoCo Adventure Planner App.

## Advertising Continued

### Brand Market Immersion

Target distinctive market segments with immersed messaging about Montgomery County through a mix of advertising tactics to drive significant ROI within that market.

#### Baltimore Market

- Capitalize on the increased interest from Baltimore residents visiting Montgomery County attractions.
- Focus messaging on unique experiences for Baltimore residents that are likely to drive overnight travel, including performance venues, festivals, outdoor activities, and farm breweries and wineries.

#### Philadelphia Market

- Shift marketing messaging from a general “Visit Montgomery County” focus to an attraction or community-specific approach.
- Emphasize outdoor attractions such as C&O Canal National Historical Park and Agricultural Reserve, and highlight urban centers with cultural attractions like Strathmore, Glenstone, The Fillmore, and Olney Theatre Center.
- Enhance advertising creative to communicate a travelers journey from Philly to Montgomery County.

#### New York Market

- Emphasize outdoor attractions such as C&O Canal National Historical Park and Agricultural Reserve.
- Highlight urban centers with cultural attractions such as Strathmore, Glenstone, The Fillmore, and Olney Theatre Center.
- Promote the availability of Amtrak and Vamoose transportation for weekend getaways.



C&O Canal National Historical Park

## Communications

**Approach:** Increase awareness of Montgomery County as a weekend getaway destination, with the goal of reaching our target audiences at every point of the travel purchase funnel. This will be achieved by various tactical approaches, including, in-market activations, marketing partnerships, email marketing, content development and social media.

### Methods:

#### Social Media Strategy

- Primary channels: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn
- Secondary channels: YouTube, Pinterest
- Increase engagement and audience growth through content creation, key demographic targeting, and leveraging User Generated Content (UGC).

#### Website

- Roll out new landing page designs with greater cross-linking to encourage longer time on site and newsletter sign-up conversions.
- Continue robust seasonal content development.

#### Print Guides

- Update the Getaway Guide to ensure relevant information and timely ads. This product supports all markets and is used by a variety of planners, meeting attendees, event guests, and other travelers.
- Evolve the Tastemakers Trail guide to include experiential content to drive website traffic and inspire visitation to craft beverage businesses.

#### Adventure Planner App

- Leverage the app to promote local businesses, restaurants, attractions, and events throughout Montgomery County.
- Continue to integrate with the Visit Montgomery events calendar and promotions pages.
- Develop seasonal itineraries to inspire guests, encouraging longer stays and increased exploration.
- Activate the app throughout the year with digital passports to gamify seasonal campaigns and partner events.

#### Email Marketing

- Send monthly newsletters and evaluate audience segmentation for additional targeted interest-based emails.
- Create a new layout designed to streamline readability of content and increase click-through rates.





## Public Relations

**Approach:** Public relations initiatives include managing all external communications, ranging from media outreach to public awareness. Local outreach will focus on ensuring Visit Montgomery efforts are recognized and supported by industry and county partners. The out-of-market PR strategy will focus on regional media outlets in geo-targeted markets that specialize in travel and tourism coverage, including leisure and group tour markets, as well as international travel through collaboration with CRUSA.

### Methods:

#### Local Market

- Increase brand and product awareness among residents, local consumers, and media.
- Build relationships with local television, print, and online media.
- Enhance relationships with staff and public relations professionals in Montgomery County municipalities and tourism attractions.
- Engage with the local business community to communicate Visit Montgomery's role and value.

#### Out-of-Market

- Generate positive media coverage positioning Montgomery County as a weekend getaway destination and a place for group travel experiences.
- Develop a media list of top 100 outlets and secure coverage in at least 10% of desired outlets.
- Implement an influencer program targeting specific key markets, including foodie experiences and outdoor adventurers.
- Update experience one sheet used to pitch ideas to media.
- Develop an email database and design a media-specific quarterly newsletter.

## ➤ Sales Department

The Sales Department is responsible for expanding brand awareness and generating leads within the group tour, sports, meetings, and conferences market segments. The primary goal of the department is to increase hotel room nights and drive economic growth through tourism by targeting specific market segments and offering tailored incentives and exceptional customer service. By leveraging strategic partnerships, attending key industry events, and utilizing advanced prospecting tools, the Sales Department builds relationships that position Montgomery County as a premier destination for groups and meetings.

### Sales Goals

**Approach:** Expand brand awareness and lead generation in the group tour, sports, and meetings and conferences market segments to increase hotel room nights and stimulate the local economy.

#### Methods:

##### Target Market Segments

- Sell Montgomery County as a premier destination for meetings and events targeting group leisure segments, corporate markets with an emphasis on BIO and Pharma, government, and associations.
- Develop unique selling propositions that appeal to both group tour and meetings markets.
- Highlight the infrastructure of meeting and special event facilities suited for groups.

##### Marketing Campaigns

- Collaborate with the marketing division to design specific marketing campaigns aimed at group tour and meetings markets using printed publications, online platforms, and targeted email campaigns.
- Develop trade show booth collateral and other booth materials that highlight venues and attractions appealing to specific market segments.

##### Trade Show Participation

- Attend six group tour market trade shows, one international group market conference, and twelve meetings market trade shows to promote Montgomery County.
- Coordinate site visits and familiarization tours, inviting decision-makers and influencers to experience the destination firsthand.

##### Customized Packages and Incentives

- Develop customized packages that cater to the specific needs and preferences of group tours and meetings, offering dining, transportation, and other activity options.
- Implement an incentive program designed to attract room nights through partnerships with local hotels.

## Sales Continued

### Customer Service and Follow-Up

- Provide exceptional customer service and support throughout the booking process and during the stay for groups.
- Gather feedback and foster long term relationship following events.

### Lead Generation

- Increase leads generated for the sales division by 10% year-over-year, with a specific emphasis on increasing room nights from the Bio/Pharma markets.
- Attend networking events, including the Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia Chapter Professional Conference Management Association Monthly Networking Events, and Meeting Professional International Monthly Networking Events.
- Attend CVB Reps networking events in the Washington, D.C. market.

### Prospecting with Knowland

Knowland is a web-based software that provides business development products and services to the hospitality industry.

- Monitor trends with market snapshots using the market intelligence dashboard.
- Adjust strategies based on current market data.
- Use the SmartSearch tool to find new accounts that best align with Montgomery County.
- Research sales data points like target account locations, booking preferences, and booking behavior.
- Run reports to identify relevant events and account headquarters for field sales blitzing.
- Use data to strategically plan outreach efforts.
- Review competitor market trends to refine sales strategies.
- Stay competitive by understanding the positioning and activities of other destinations.





## Tradeshow Schedule

### Group Tour Market

Event Name	Estimated # Attendees	#Years Attending	Market Segment	Date	Location
Student Youth Travel Association (SYTA) Annual	1,100	7	Tour	August 8-13, 2024	New York, NY
Capital Region USA (CRUSA) Global Travel Exchange	200	3	Intl Tour	September 16-18, 2024	Charlottesville, VA
Maryland Motorcoach Group Leader Showcase	600	3	Tour	September 23-24, 2024	Hagerstown, MD
National Tour Association (NTA) Travel Exchange	1,200	7	Tour	November 17-20, 2024	Huntsville, AL
American Bus Association (ABA) Marketplace	1,500	7	Tour	February 1-4, 2025	Philadelphia, PA
Pennsylvania Bus Association (PBA)	600	4	Tour	March 24-25, 2025	Lancaster, PA
Pennsylvania Bus Association (PBA) Annual	500	3	Group Tour	June 16-19, 2025	Richmond, VA

### Meetings & Conventions Market

Event Name	Estimated # Attendees	#Years Attending	Market Segment	Date	Location
Connect MarketPlace 2024	1,500	8	Corporate/Association	August 27-29, 2024	Milwaukee, WI
Small Market Meetings	300	3	Corporate/Association	September 25-27, 2024	St. George, UT
Northstar Destinations East	500	1	Corporate/Association	October 21-23, 2024	Niagara Falls, NY
Connect DC	200	4	Corporate/Association	November 20-22, 2024	Washington, DC
Association Forum Holiday Showcase	1,200	1	Association	December 4-5, 2024	Chicago, IL
RCMA	1,000	7	Faith Associations	January 6-8, 2025	Phoenix, AZ
PCMA Convening Leaders	3,000	4	Association	January 12-15, 2025	Houston, TX
Rendezvous South	300	3	Corporate/Association	February 24-27, 2025	Panama City Beach, FL
Christian Meetings & Conventions Association (CMCA)	500	3	Faith Associations	TBD	TBD
Society of Government Meeting Professionals - National Education Conference	1,100	2	Government	May 6-8, 2025	St. Louis, MO
Diversity Express Conference	300	New	Diversity Association	TBD	Toledo, OH
HelmsBriscoe ABC	1,500	3	All	June 28-30, 2025	Toronto, Canada



# Sports Tourism

## Golf

Montgomery County, Maryland is set to host some of the most prestigious golf events by the USGA and PGA from July 2024 to September 2036. Hosting these events provides the community with an incredible opportunity to showcase all the reasons why people choose to live in, visit, and make Montgomery County their home for business.

### Upcoming Montgomery County, MD Hosted Amateur and Professional Golf Events

Event Name	Location	Date
Junior PGA Championship Boys/Girls	Congressional Country Club	July 30-August 2, 2024
Adaptive Open USGA	Woodmont Country Club	July, 2025
Senior PGA Championship	Congressional Country Club	May, 2025 (Memorial Day Weekend)
Adaptive Open USGA	Woodmont Country Club	July, 2026
KPMG Women's PGA Championship	Congressional Country Club	June, 2027
USGA US Senior Women's Amateur	Chevy Chase Country Club	August, 2027
USGA US Junior Amateur	Woodmont Country Club	July, 2028
PGA Professional Championship	Congressional Country Club	June, 2029
PGA Professional Championship	Congressional Country Club	June, 2031
Senior PGA Championship	Congressional Country Club	May, 2033 (Memorial Day Weekend)
Ryder Cup	Congressional Country Club	September, 2036

## Maryland SoccerPlex

Host to events that attract over one million visitors a year, the Maryland SoccerPlex is a premier facility in the region providing indoor and outdoor space for field hockey, soccer, lacrosse, basketball, volleyball and other youth and amateur sports. The Maryland SoccerPlex is also now the home of Old Glory DC RFC, a professional rugby union team that is a member of Major League Rugby. Old Glory was founded in 2018, played some exhibition games in 2019, and began regular-season MLR play in 2020.

Event Name	Dates	Estimated Room Nights
Crossover Hoops	July 5-7, 2024	125
3 Step League Alliance LAX League Summer Championships	July 12-14, 2024	1,000
Pinnacle Lacrosse	July 20-21, 2024	1,100
Discovery Cup Soccer Tournament	October 11-13, 2024	900
Big East Womens Championships	November 5-10, 2024	300
Big East Mens Championships	November 12-17, 2024	300
Bethesda U9-12 Soccer Tournament	November 8-10, 2024	new
Bethesda Girls Soccer Tournament	November 15-17, 2024	3,500
Bethesda Boys Soccer Tournament	November 22-24, 2024	5,000
Potomac Presidents Day Cup	Feb 15-17, 2025	Less than 50
National Collegiate Rugby	April 25-27, 2025	3,000
MLS (Major League Soccer) Next Qualifiers	May 9-13, 2025	3,800
Potomac Memorial Soccer Tournament	May 23-26, 2025	4,300
Mid-Atlantic Cup	June 14-15, 2025	325
IWLCA (Intercollegiate Women's Lacrosse)	June 20-22, 2025	5,000
Naptown Challenge	June 30-July 1, 2025	1,200
Crossover Hoops (Basketball)	July 12-13, 2025	125
3 Step League Alliance LAX League Summer Championships	July 12-13, 2025	1,000,
Pinnacle Lacrosse	July 19-20, 2025	1,100
Discovery Cup Soccer Tournament	October 10-12, 2025	900
Big East Womens Championship	November 4-9, 2025	300
Bethesda U9-12 Soccer Tournament	November 7-9, 2025	300
Big East Mens Championship	November 11-16, 2025	300
Bethesda Girls Soccer Tournament -	November 15-17, 2025	3,500
Bethesda Boys Soccer Tournament	November 22-24, 2025	5,000

## Sports Tourism Task Force

In June 2024 the Montgomery County Council approved a resolution to create the Montgomery County Sports Tourism Task Force. The mission of the task force is to conduct a facility needs assessment, identify sports workforce development needs, improve marketing to event organizers and explore the economic impact of attracting and recruiting additional professional sports franchises to Montgomery County.

Participation in this Task Force will provide the opportunity for Visit Montgomery to connect with other community partners to provide better service to existing events taking place in Montgomery County at the same time increasing awareness of Montgomery County as a sports destination in a collaborative approach. The task force will provide interim reports on its progress at joint Economic Development (ECON) and Education and Culture (EC) Committee work sessions and provide a final report with recommendations to the Council no later than June 2025.



Visit Montgomery

# Partnership & Community Engagement

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**Approach:** Building and strengthening relationships with businesses in the community to maintain our superb quality of life and boost the local economy through increased visitor spending.

## Methods:

### Website

- Add testimonials from partners to the website and partnership materials to build credibility and showcase success stories.

### Partnership Events

- Host five partnership events annually, including:
  - Two educational events to provide partners with valuable insights and training.
  - Two networking events to foster connections and collaboration among local businesses.
  - The MoCo Eats Hospitality Showcase to highlight the county's culinary offerings and connect industry stakeholders.

### Recruitment and Referrals

- Recruit corporate and industry vendor partnerships to expand the network of businesses supporting Visit Montgomery's initiatives.
- Implement a partnership referral program that offers financial incentives to partners who refer new businesses, encouraging active participation and growth.

### Relocation Support

- Develop a comprehensive relocation packet for new residents, visiting contractors, and relocating businesses. This packet will include information about local attractions, dining options, and community resources.

### Event Promotion

- Encourage partners to upload their events to the VisitMontgomery.com and Maryland.org websites to increase visibility and attract more visitors.

### Personalized Service

- Provide personalized service for group requests, connecting Visit Montgomery partners with events and meeting organizers to ensure seamless planning and execution.

### Webinars and Training

- Conduct webinars and targeted training sessions for stakeholders to ensure they understand the marketing tools available to them and how to leverage these tools to increase their sales.

# Visit Montgomery Special Events & Promotions

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**VISIT  
MONTGOMERY**  
MARYLAND'S CULTURAL CAPITAL™

FY2025 Marketing Plan



New to  
the Region in  
2025!

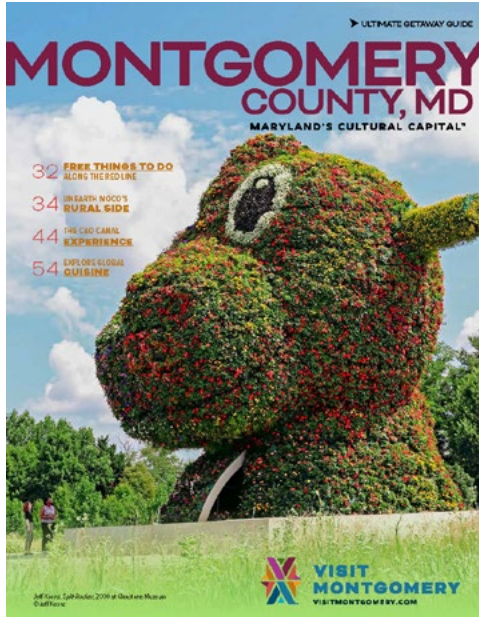


Presidential Inauguration 2025





# Printed Materials



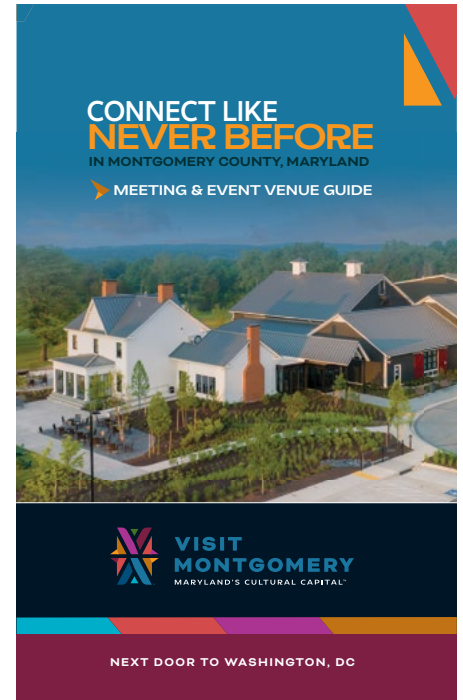
Getaway Guide



Inspiration Guide



Tastemakers Trail Map



Event Venue Guide



Itinerary One Sheet



# Destination Development

## Tastemakers Trail

The Tastemakers Trail is a self-guided tour featuring the wineries, breweries, cideries, meaderies and distilleries located in Montgomery County. In Fiscal Year 2025, the Tastemakers Trail will be expanded to include destination restaurants and inspirational messaging to enhance the overall experience.

## MoCo Eats

The MoCo Eats brand was launched as an online directory during the COVID-19 pandemic. With nearly 900 restaurants offering a wide array of international cuisines, MoCo Eats showcases the county's vibrant food culture. The planned MoCo Eats Hospitality Showcase will further elevate the culinary landscape by bringing together workforce, management, ownership, suppliers, and consumers in a festive two-day event on March 30-31, 2025. This event will feature cooking demonstrations, tastings, and educational opportunities.

## Rural Montgomery

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grant will be implemented in Fiscal Year 2025 to further develop and promote the rural areas of Montgomery County as a unique destination. An agency will be selected to create a vision and strategy, along with new creative messaging and brand identity.



# Economic Development Administration (EDA) One Time Grants

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## Maryland Meetings Market Initiative: \$250,000

**Collaboration Partners:** Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County, Visit Baltimore, Visit Howard County, Visit Montgomery and Experience Prince George's County.

**Project Narrative:**

Business events, conferences, conventions, and meetings of all sizes bring a significant economic impact to Maryland. The collaboration of these 5 destination marketing organizations (DMOs) will help in jointly marketing the Baltimore and Capital Region areas of Maryland as a meetings destination.

This DMO cluster is strategically located in the Mid-Atlantic to serve as an attractive location for small to mid-sized meetings. The proximity of all these destinations in the partnership are strategically located to one of the best airports in the nation, Baltimore-Washington Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI).

**Target Meeting Size:** 10-300 Rooms Peak Night

**Target Geographic Market:** Local Regional and Mid-Atlantic

**Target Markets:** Corporate, Government, Association

## C&O Canal Experiences: \$250,000

**Collaboration Partners:** Visit Allegany County, Visit Frederick, Visit Montgomery, Visit Hagerstown/Washington County

**Project Narrative:**

An independent study commissioned by the Maryland Office of Tourism and conducted by Rockport Analytics in 2021 estimated 25% or 1.31 million people traveled from outside the immediate area for more than fifty miles to a location within the park's boundaries. Total visitor spending because of visiting the park was \$308 million annually. Sixty-one percent (61%) of these visitors stayed overnight, totaling \$102 million. 3,902 jobs were supported (Full & Part-Time) with \$156 million total in wages paid.

The C&O Canal Experience Marketing Alliance goal is to continue the momentum and expand its scope with the goal of driving additional tourism dollars to the communities surrounding the park. The collaboration plans to capitalize on the data collected from the Rockport Analytics study to align messaging with the interests of the core markets and audiences. Marketing strategies will be focused on attracting travelers with interests in cycling, hiking/walking, museums, sightseeing, shopping and pleasure driving.

This initiative aligns with the Maryland Office of Tourism's Trails Second-to-None Program, Civil War Trails, and Maryland's Scenic Byways.

Note: The collaboration was awarded an additional \$50,000 for the initiative above the requested grant application.

## Rural Branding Initiative: \$170,000

### Project Narrative:

Montgomery County's largest hidden gem is its 93,000-acre Agricultural Reserve. In its 40th year, the area is one third of the county's total land mass and has quickly become a destination for both local and regional travelers. Surrounding the Agricultural Reserve are also other agritourism activities and experiences including farm, winery and brewery visits, historical sites, Civil War Trails, Rustics Roads, C&O Canal National Historical Park, and outdoor recreational activities centered around local, and State Park visits and biking and hiking excursions. Additionally, the C&O Canal Maryland Scenic Byway travels through the Agricultural Reserve. The "Ag Reserve" will serve as the anchor for the "Rural Montgomery" proposed new branding and marketing initiative.

The MD Tourism EDA Grant will support three components of a "Rural Montgomery" project:

1. Focus Groups with the agricultural community
2. Research – current visitor volume, visitor origin, visitor demographics and visitor activities of visitors to the "Rural Montgomery" area.
3. Product and Brand Development

The projects outlined in this grant application were identified and are aligned as next steps from the 2019 Agritourism Study release by the Montgomery County Department of Planning.

## MoCo Eats Showcase: \$112,000

### Project Narrative:

In an effort for Visit Montgomery to expand the MoCo Eats brand a grant application was submitted and approved for the creation of a consumer/industry food and beverage expo and industry educational conference.



This 2-day tradeshow and expo will allow restaurant owners and managers, craft beverage makers, food and beverage suppliers and vendors, industry workforce and students, venue owners, event planners, and consumers to connect through networking, sampling, showcasing, and learning. Educational seminars and workshops will be led by industry leaders and offer insight to the various aspects of what it takes for a successful operation, such as marketing, policies, and new trends.

This event will also engage the students in the Montgomery College Hospitality Program and the Montgomery County Public Schools students participating in the Hospitality Program with volunteer work and cooking demonstrations, learning sessions and a cooking contest. The conference agenda will include speakers and panelist, breakout sessions by topic, server training and opportunities for peer-to-peer discussions. The intention of the MoCo Eats Showcase and Conference is to grow into a regional draw, attracting attendees from the Capital Region, Baltimore, and Northern Virginia.

The event is scheduled for March 30 - 31, 2025



# Industry Memberships

## Fiscal Year 2025

Sales Division	FY 2025
CVB Reps	\$ 795
Meeting Professionals International (MPI) - Potomac Chapter	\$ 530
Meeting Professionals International (MPI) - Philadelphia Chapter	\$ 530
Professional Conference Management Association (PCMA)	\$ 485
Professional Conference Management Association (PCMA) - Philadelphia Chapter	\$ 30
Religious Conference Management Association (RCMA)	\$ 195
Society of Government Meeting Professionals (SGMP)	\$ 400
American Bus Association (ABA)	\$ 580
Christian Management Conference Association (CMCA)	\$ 250
Maryland MotorCoach Association (MMA)	\$ 325
National Tour Association (NTA)	\$ 800
Pennsylvania Bus Association (PBA)	\$ 310
Student Youth Travel Association (SYTA)	\$ 998
MD Stadium Authority - MD Sports Marketing Partnership	\$ 2,500
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 8,728</b>
Marketing	FY 2025
Destination DC	\$ 1,050
Mid Atlantic Travel Public Relations Association (MATPRA)	\$ 200
SKAL International	\$ 225
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,475</b>
Professional Associations-ADMIN	FY 2025
Hotel Sales and Marketing Association International DC (HSMAI)	\$ 385
Destinations International (DI)	\$ 2,755
Leadership Montgomery	\$ 200
Maryland Hotel & Lodging Association (MHLA)	\$ 500
Maryland Tourism Coalition (MTC)	\$ 350
Maryland Destination Marketing Organization Association (MD DMO)	\$ 938
U.S. Travel	\$ 1,650
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 6,778</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 16,981</b>



# Visit Montgomery

## Performance Metrics

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### Visitation and Visitor Spending

- Day & Overnight Visitation
- Visitor Spending by Category
- Overall Economic Impact to the Destination
- Hotel Room Tax Collections
- MD Sales & Use Tax Collections in Tourism Sectors

### Sales

- Leads Sourced
- Potential Room Nights
- Potential Attendees
- Prospects generated from trade show attendance
- Overall Leads
- Definite Groups
- Trade Show Leads Booked
- Definite Room Nights
- Definite Booking Attendees
- Booking Growth in Targeted Sectors including Bio/Pharma/Association

### Marketing

- Website Sessions & Page Views
- Time on Website
- Social Media Following
- Social Media Engagement
- Stories Placed
- Adventure Planner App Downloads
- Advertising Equivalency for Editorial
- Advertising Impressions

# Visit Montgomery

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# Visit Montgomery Team Members

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Destination Sales Manager



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