

2025

Economic Impact of Sports Tourism in Wisconsin

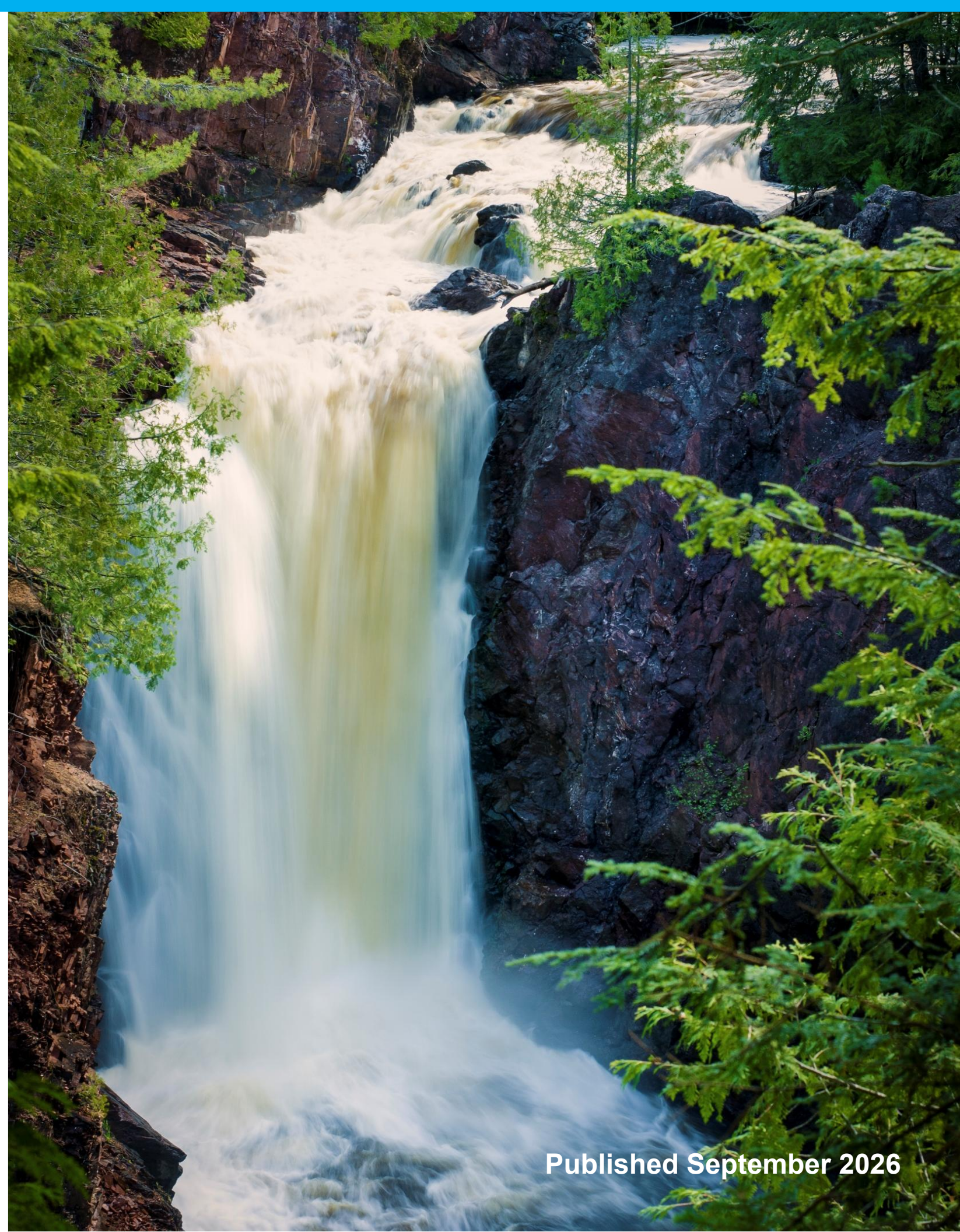
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Introduction

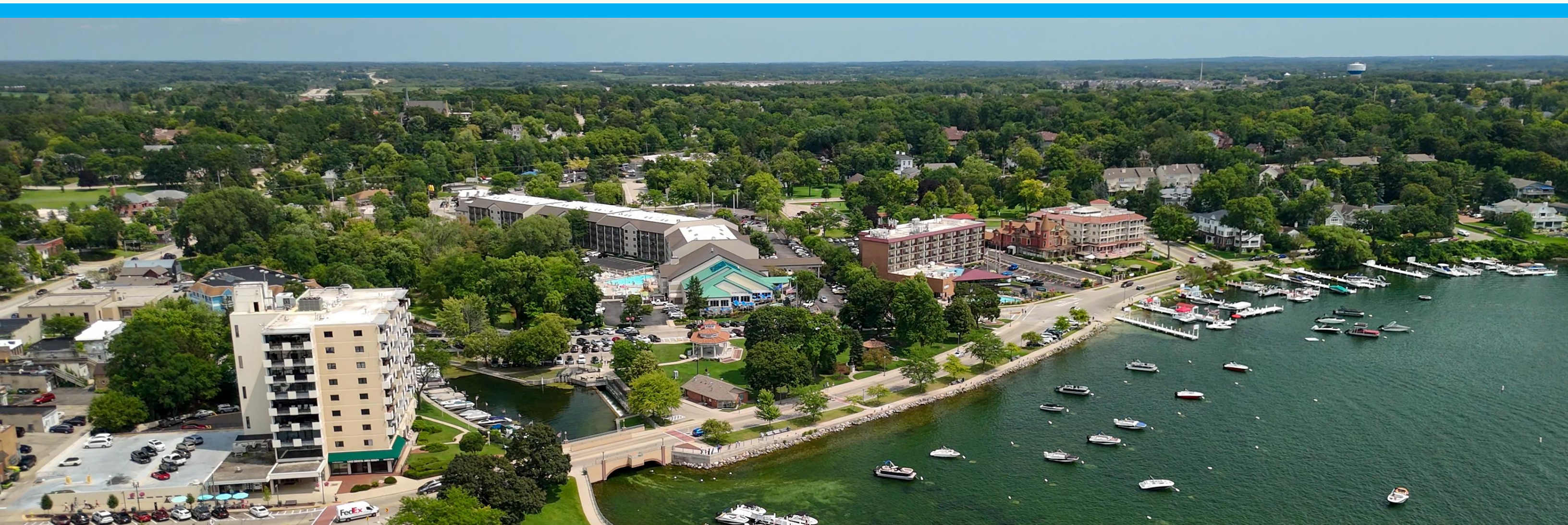
The travel sector is an integral part of the Wisconsin economy. Visitors generate significant economic benefits to households, businesses, and government alike and represent a critical driver of the state's future.

Travel Wisconsin commissioned Tourism Economics to measure the economic value of sports tourism for the State of Wisconsin in 2025.

To quantify the economic significance of sports tourism in Wisconsin, Tourism Economics prepared a comprehensive model for each segment using multiple primary and secondary data sources.

Impact modeling was based on an IMPLAN Input-Output (I-O) model for the State of Wisconsin economy. The results of this study show the scope of sport tourism's impact in terms of direct visitor spending and operations, as well as total economic impacts, including employment, household income, and fiscal (tax) impacts.

KEY FINDINGS





Direct Impacts: Sports Tourism

Summary Direct Spending

The sports tourism sector generated significant economic impacts in the State of Wisconsin as event rights holders and sports venues spent money to sustain tournament operations, including spending on payroll, event operations, and general and administrative expenses.

In addition, travelers that attended a sports event – either as a participant or spectator – spent money while at the sports event and at off-site establishments during their stay in Wisconsin, including at local restaurants, hotels, retailers, and recreation/entertainment venues.

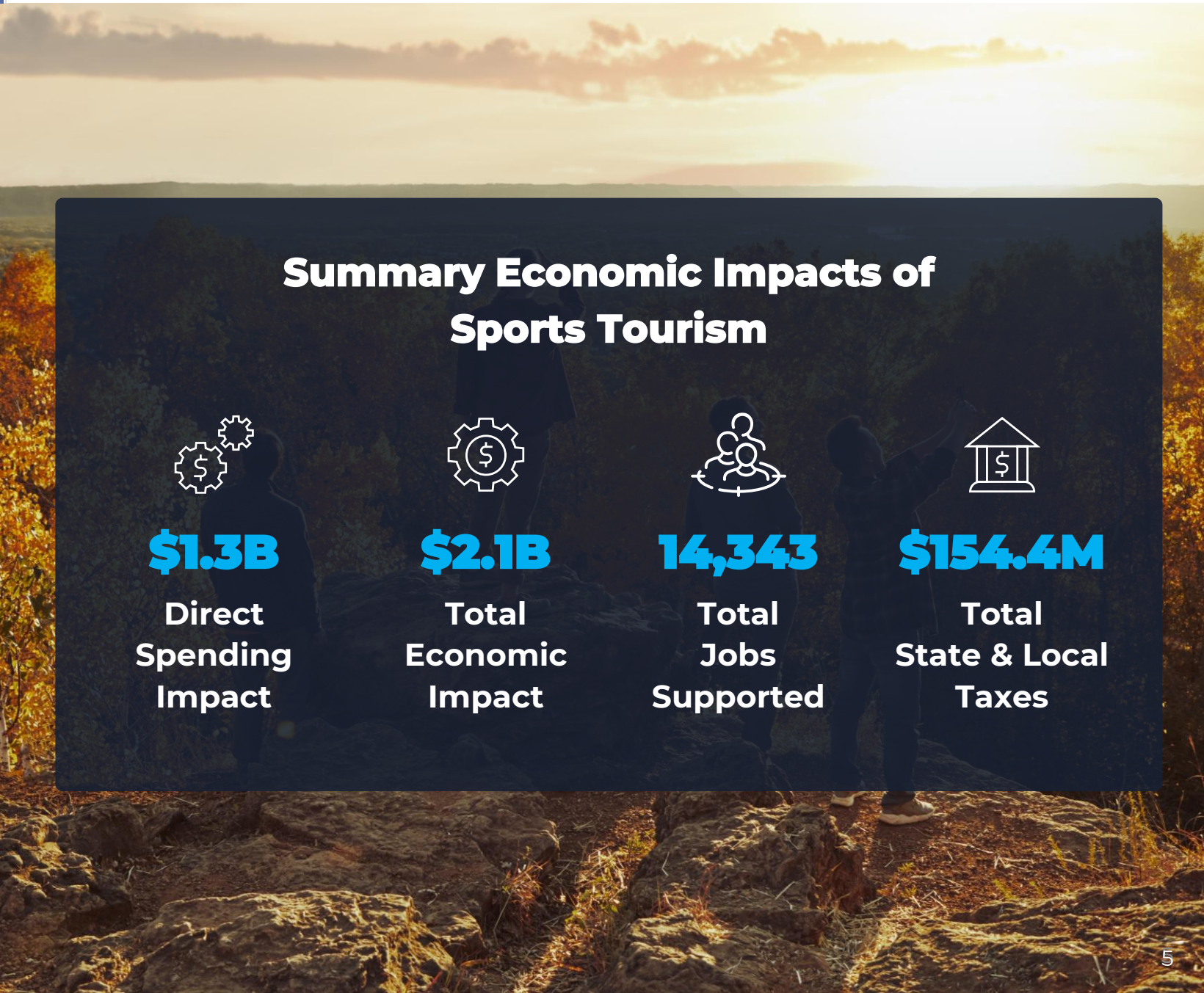
Total direct spending associated with the sports tourism sector amounted to \$1.3 billion in 2025.



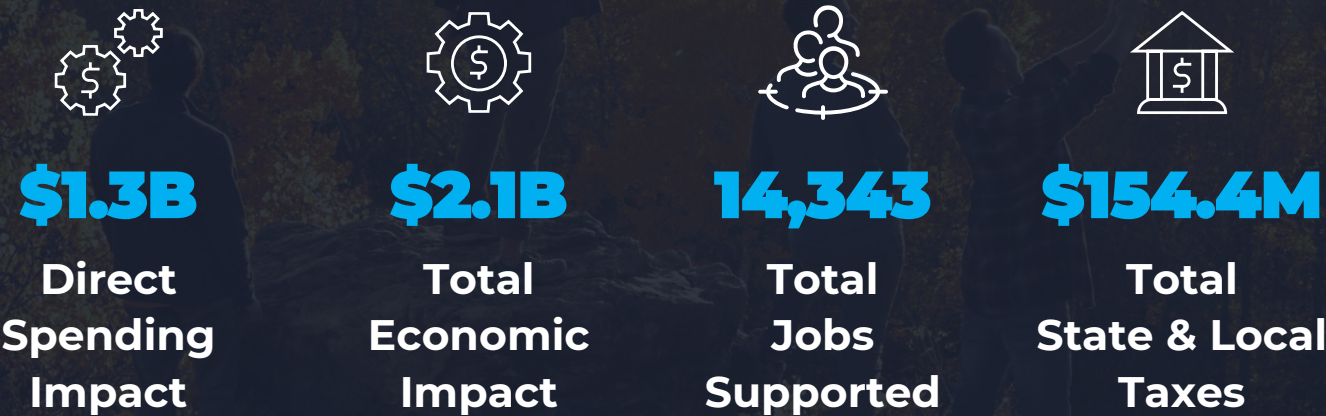
Note: totals may not sum due to rounding.

Total Economic Impact

The sports tourism sector’s direct spending impact of \$1.3 billion generated a total economic impact of \$2.1 billion in Wisconsin’s economy, which supported 14,343 part-time and full-time jobs and generated \$154.4 million in state and local taxes.



Summary Economic Impacts of Sports Tourism



DIRECT IMPACTS





Direct Impacts: Sport Tourism

The sports tourism sector generated \$1.3 billion in direct spending impacts in the State of Wisconsin in 2025.

This section outlines the sports tourism sector’s direct impacts for 2025, which ultimately serve as inputs for the economic impact model. The direct impacts are separated into two spending categories:

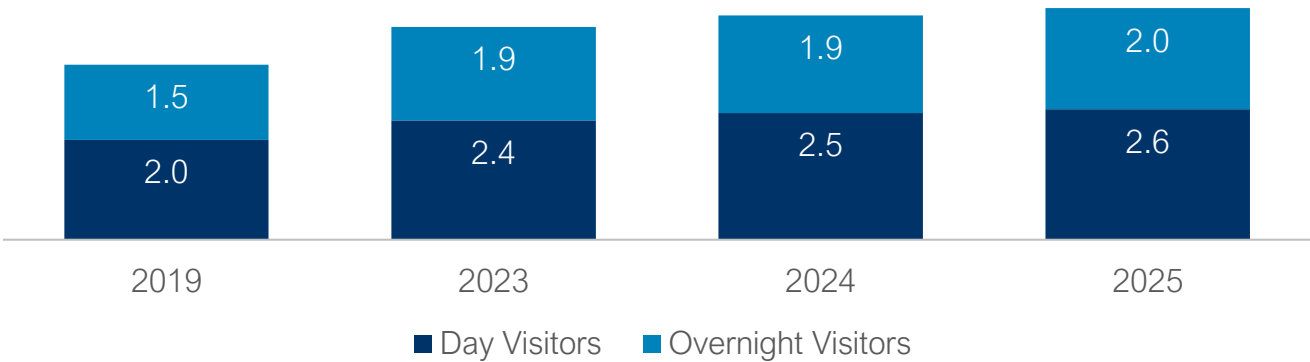
- \$1.2 billion in spending at off-site establishments in the local economy by sport’s participants and spectators
- \$110.2 million in tournament operations

For purposes of this report, “sports tourism” includes adult and youth amateur events and collegiate tournaments. The economic impact analyses conducted within the report exclude professional sports and collegiate regular season games.

Sports-Related Travel Volume

In 2025, 4.6 million sports travelers attended a sports tournament, race, or other event – either as a participant or spectator – in Wisconsin. Over half (56%) of the 4.6 million sports travelers visited the host community for the day and 44% stayed overnight. These sports travelers spent money while at the sports venue and at off-site establishments in the local economy, including local restaurants, hotels, retailers, and recreation / entertainment venues.

**Sports traveler levels
(millions of travelers)**

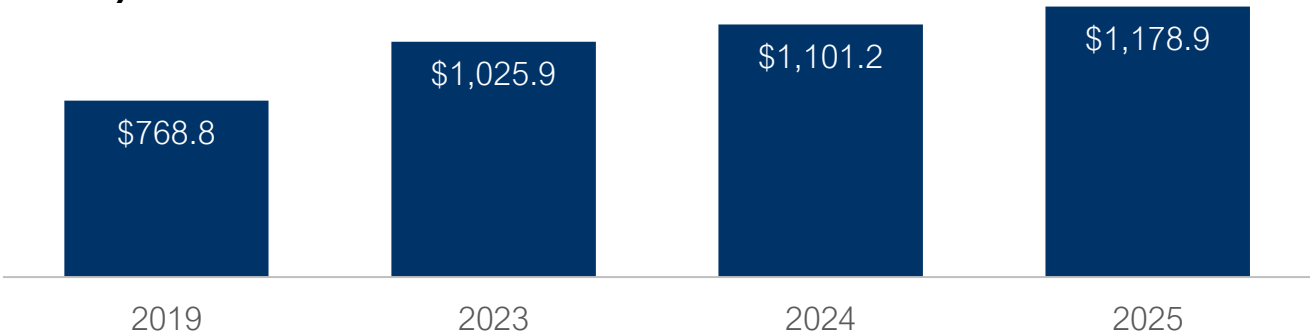


Source: Longwoods International, Wisconsin DMOs, US Travel Association, Tourism Economics
Note: totals may not sum due to rounding.

Sports-Related Travel Spending

In 2025, the 4.6 million sports travelers spent \$1.2 billion in the State of Wisconsin. Spending by sports travelers increased 7% between 2024 and 2025, which was a faster pace than the volume of sports travelers.

**Sports-related travel spending
(\$ millions)**



Source: Longwoods International, Wisconsin DMOs, US Travel Association, Tourism Economics

The sports tourism sector generated **\$1.3 billion** in direct spending in the State of Wisconsin in 2025.

Sports-Related Travel Spending (2025)

Sports travelers, event rights holders, and sports venues spent \$351.0 million on transportation, \$312.7 million on food and beverages, and \$215.4 million on retail. Lodging, recreation, and tournament operations rounded out the spending, registering \$188.5 million, \$111.3 million, and \$110.2 million, respectively.

On average, day-tripper sports travelers spent \$105 per person per event and overnight sports travelers spent \$341 per person per event in 2025.

\$1.3 billion in sports-related traveler spending in 2025



Sports Related-Travel Spending
(\$ millions)

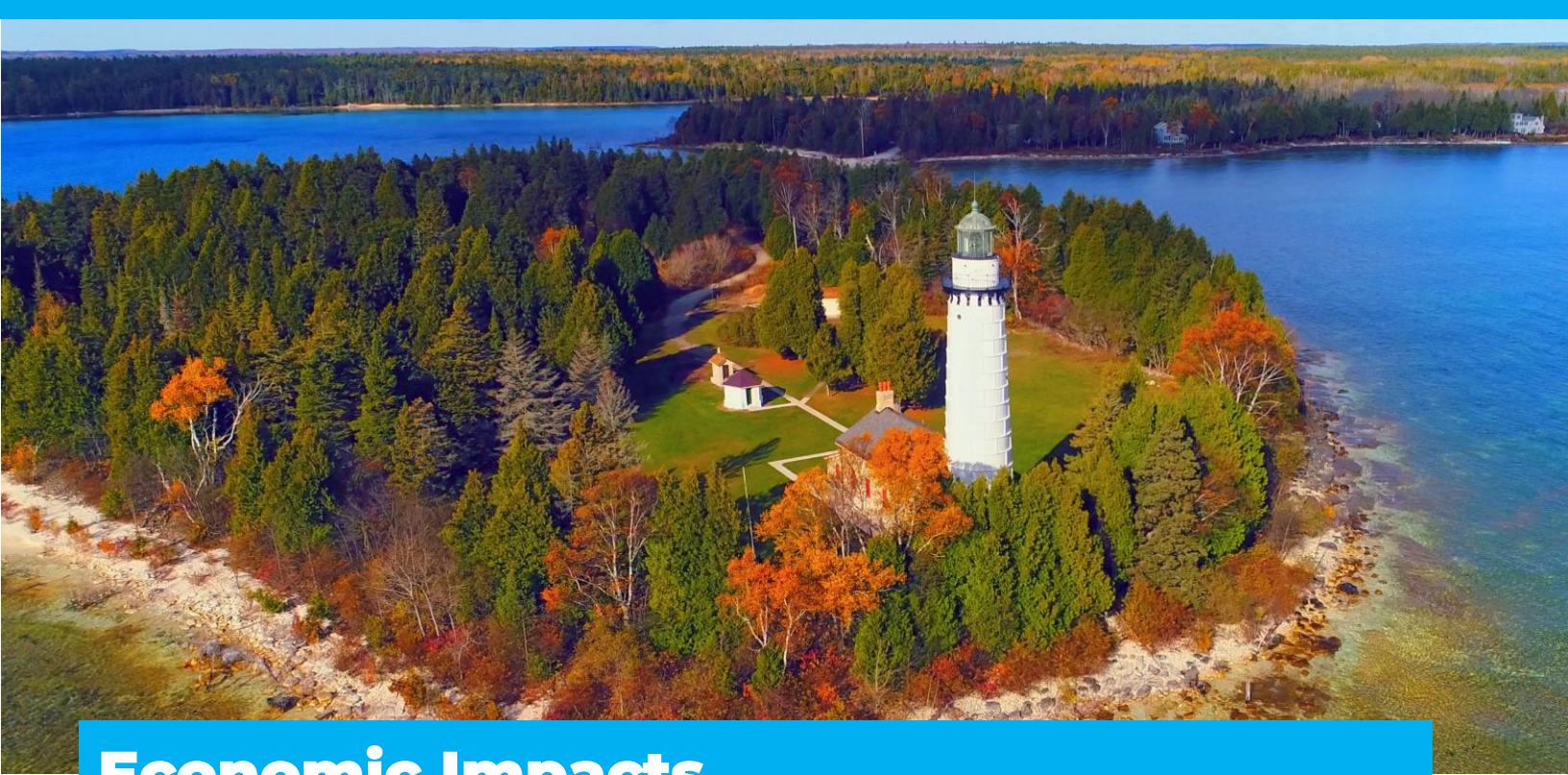
	2019	2023	2024	2025
Total spending	\$849.0	\$1,123.5	\$1,204.0	\$1,289.1
Lodging	\$117.7	\$167.8	\$179.3	\$188.5
Food & beverage	\$202.2	\$264.2	\$288.3	\$312.7
Retail	\$145.9	\$185.6	\$202.3	\$215.4
Recreation	\$71.3	\$93.5	\$103.0	\$111.3
Transportation	\$231.8	\$314.7	\$328.3	\$351.0
Tournament operations	\$80.2	\$97.6	\$102.9	\$110.2

Source: Tourism Economics

Note: totals may not sum due to rounding.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS





Economic Impacts

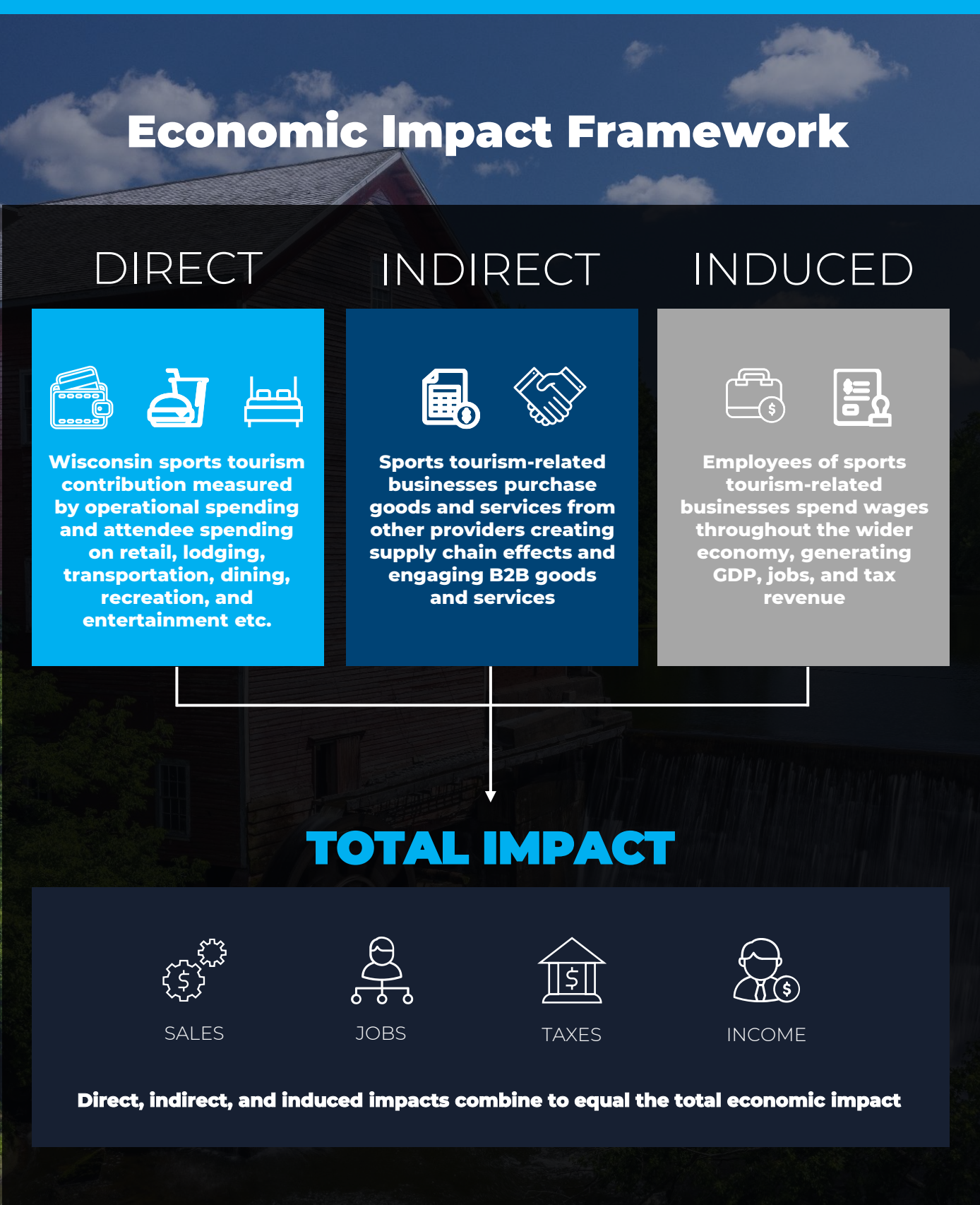
Tourism Economics estimated the economic impacts of sport tourism’s direct spending using regional Input-Output (I-O) model based on a customized IMPLAN (www.implan.com) model for the State of Wisconsin economy. IMPLAN is recognized as an industry standard in local-level I-O models.

An I-O model represents a profile of an economy by measuring the relationships among industries and consumers to track the flow of industry revenue to wages, profits, capital, taxes and suppliers. The supply chain is traced as dollars flow through the economy, representing indirect impacts. The model also calculates the induced impacts of spending. Induced impacts represent benefits to the economy as incomes earned as a result of direct spending are spent in the local economy, generating additional sales, jobs, taxes, and income.

The modeling process begins with aligning the direct expenditure measurements with the related sectors in the model (e.g. hotels, restaurants, retail, and recreation). The model is then run to trace the flow of these expenditures through the economy. In this process, the inter-relationships between consumers and industries generate each level of impact.

IMPLAN calculates three levels of impact – direct, indirect, and induced – for a broad set of indicators. These include the following:

- Business sales (also called gross output)
 - Household income (including wages and benefits)
 - Employment
- Federal taxes
 - State and local taxes

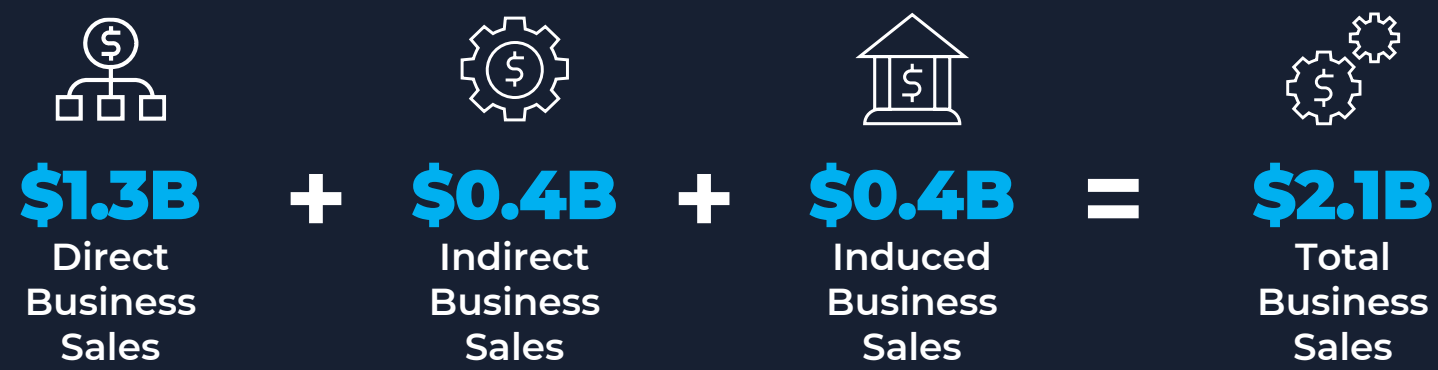


Economic Impact – Business Sales: Sports Tourism (2025)

The sports tourism sector generated a total economic impact of \$2.1 billion in the State of Wisconsin in 2025.

The \$1.3 billion in tournament operational spending and off-site spending by out-of-town spectators and participants generated \$412.9 million in indirect expenditures (purchases of inputs from suppliers) and \$408.9 million in induced expenditures (new consumption generated by household income impacts), resulting in a total economic impact of \$2.1 billion in the State of Wisconsin in 2025.

Summary Business Sales Impacts: Sports Tourism (2025)



Economic Impacts: Sports Tourism
Business Sales by Industry (\$ millions), 2025

	Direct Business Sales	Indirect Business Sales	Induced Business Sales	Total Business Sales
Total, all industries	\$1,289.1	\$412.9	\$408.9	\$2,111.0
By industry				
Food & Beverage	\$312.7	\$27.1	\$31.2	\$371.1
Retail Trade	\$215.4	\$5.6	\$34.9	\$255.9
Air Transport	\$223.6	\$0.6	\$0.9	\$225.1
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	\$11.4	\$93.8	\$116.5	\$221.7
Business Services	\$49.7	\$114.9	\$36.4	\$201.0
Lodging	\$188.5	\$0.1	\$0.9	\$189.5
Recreation and Entertainment	\$171.9	\$12.1	\$5.3	\$189.3
Gasoline Stations	\$87.1	\$0.4	\$3.0	\$90.6
Education and Health Care		\$1.4	\$76.5	\$78.0
Other Transport	\$28.8	\$29.5	\$10.9	\$69.2
Communications		\$30.2	\$18.6	\$48.8
Wholesale Trade		\$21.2	\$20.8	\$42.0
Construction and Utilities		\$25.4	\$11.2	\$36.6
Manufacturing		\$24.1	\$12.2	\$36.3
Personal Services		\$11.6	\$21.3	\$33.0
Government		\$12.3	\$6.1	\$18.5
Agriculture, Fishing, Mining		\$2.5	\$2.2	\$4.7

Source: Tourism Economics
Note: totals may not sum due to rounding.

Economic Impact – Employment: Sports Tourism (2025)

The sports tourism sector supported 14,343 part-time and full-time jobs in the State of Wisconsin in 2025.

The tournament operational spending and off-site spending by out-of-town spectators and participants directly supported 9,830 full-time and part-time jobs. Indirect and induced impacts supported 2,232 indirect jobs and 2,281 induced jobs, resulting in a total employment impact of 14,343 total jobs in the State of Wisconsin in 2025.

The food and beverage sector was the most-impacted industry with 3,757 total jobs, including 3,060 direct jobs, 350 indirect jobs, and 347 induced jobs. The recreation and entertainment industry followed with 2,992 total jobs.

Economic Impacts: Sports Tourism

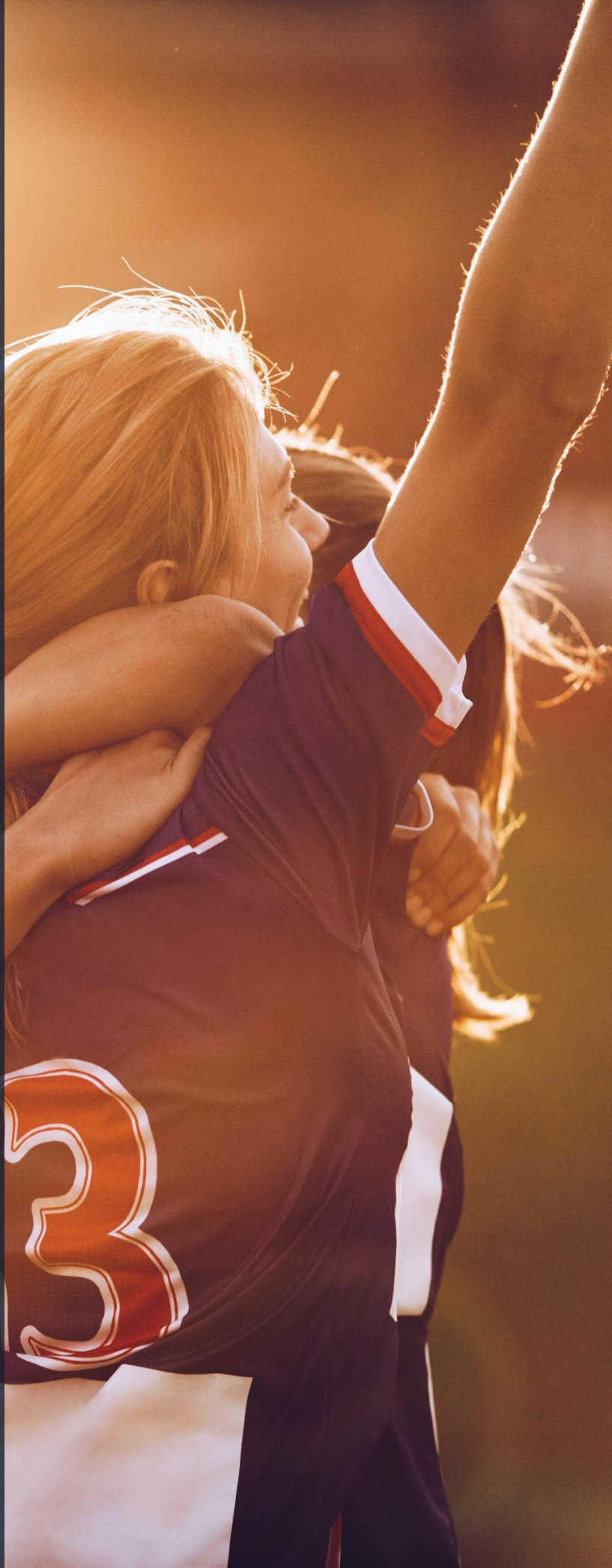
Employment Impacts by Industry (part time & full-time jobs), 2025

	Direct Employment	Indirect Employment	Induced Employment	Total Employment
Total, all industries	9,830	2,232	2,281	14,343
By industry				
Food & Beverage	3,060	350	347	3,757
Recreation and Entertainment	2,803	122	67	2,992
Lodging	1,857	1	11	1,869
Business Services	620	675	220	1,515
Retail Trade	714	45	296	1,055
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	50	392	266	709
Education and Health Care		15	599	615
Other Transport	226	253	82	561
Air Transport	438	1	2	441
Personal Services		104	201	305
Wholesale Trade		56	53	108
Manufacturing		61	28	89
Communications		49	34	83
Gasoline Stations	62	2	18	83
Government		54	21	75
Construction and Utilities		38	21	59
Agriculture, Fishing, Mining		13	15	28

Source: Tourism Economics

Note: totals may not sum due to rounding.

The sports tourism sector supported **14,343 total jobs** in the State of Wisconsin in 2025.



The sports tourism sector generated **\$612.4 million in total labor income** in the State of Wisconsin in 2025.

Economic Impact – Labor Income: Sports Tourism (2025)

The sports tourism sector generated a total labor income impact of **\$612.4 million in the State of Wisconsin in 2025.**

The tournament operational spending and off-site spending by out-of-town spectators and participants directly generated \$348.2 million in direct labor income. Indirect and induced impacts generated \$134.0 million in indirect labor income and \$130.3 million in induced labor income, resulting in \$612.4 million in total labor income in the State of Wisconsin in 2025.

The food and beverage industry was the most-impacted industry with \$114.7 million in total labor income, followed by business services with \$100.0 million in total labor income.

Economic Impacts: Sports Tourism
Labor Income Impacts by Industry (\$ millions), 2025

	Direct Personal Income	Indirect Personal Income	Induced Personal Income	Total Personal Income
Total, all industries	\$348.2	\$134.0	\$130.3	\$612.4
By industry				
Food & Beverage	\$92.8	\$11.1	\$10.8	\$114.7
Business Services	\$31.3	\$52.3	\$16.4	\$100.0
Lodging	\$78.0	\$0.1	\$0.5	\$78.6
Recreation and Entertainment	\$68.6	\$4.2	\$1.9	\$74.7
Education and Health Care		\$0.7	\$43.2	\$43.9
Air Transport	\$39.2	\$0.1	\$0.2	\$39.5
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	\$2.4	\$18.4	\$15.8	\$36.7
Retail Trade	\$23.1	\$1.7	\$10.8	\$35.6
Other Transport	\$10.5	\$14.6	\$4.2	\$29.3
Personal Services		\$6.3	\$9.8	\$16.2
Wholesale Trade		\$5.5	\$5.4	\$10.8
Communications		\$5.1	\$4.2	\$9.3
Government		\$5.0	\$1.9	\$6.9
Manufacturing		\$4.6	\$2.1	\$6.7
Construction and Utilities		\$3.8	\$1.9	\$5.8
Gasoline Stations	\$2.2	\$0.1	\$0.7	\$3.0
Agriculture, Fishing, Mining		\$0.4	\$0.5	\$0.9

Source: Tourism Economics

Note: totals may not sum due to rounding.

Fiscal (Tax) Impacts: Sports Tourism (2025)

The sports tourism sector generated \$299.3 million in federal, state, and local government revenue in 2025.

The tournament operational spending and off-site spending by out-of-town spectators and participants generated a total fiscal (tax) impact of \$299.3 million.

The State of Wisconsin government collected \$84.4 million in total taxes and the local governments collected \$70.0 million in total taxes as a result of the sports tourism sector in 2025.

Fiscal Impacts: Sports Tourism
State and Local Tax Revenue (\$ millions), 2025

	State	Local	Total
Total taxes	\$84.4	\$70.0	\$154.4
Sales	\$57.4	\$8.0	\$65.5
Bed Tax	\$0.0	\$6.7	\$6.7
Personal Income	\$13.9	\$0.0	\$13.9
Corporate	\$7.1	\$0.0	\$7.1
Social Insurance	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Excise and Fees	\$5.5	\$1.7	\$7.2
Property	\$0.5	\$53.6	\$54.0

Source: Tourism Economics

Fiscal Impacts: Sports Tourism
Total Tax Revenues (\$ millions), 2025

	Direct	Indirect / Induced	Total
Total Tax Revenues	\$190.5	\$108.9	\$299.3
Federal	\$82.0	\$62.9	\$144.9
Personal Income	\$32.8	\$24.9	\$57.7
Corporate	\$5.9	\$6.3	\$12.2
Indirect Business	\$3.3	\$1.3	\$4.6
Social Insurance	\$40.0	\$30.4	\$70.4
State and Local	\$108.5	\$45.9	\$154.4
Sales	\$46.8	\$18.6	\$65.5
Bed Tax	\$6.7	\$0.0	\$6.7
Personal Income	\$7.9	\$6.0	\$13.9
Corporate	\$3.4	\$3.7	\$7.1
Social Insurance	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Excise and Fees	\$5.0	\$2.2	\$7.2
Property	\$38.7	\$15.4	\$54.0

Source: Tourism Economics

Note: totals may not sum due to rounding.

The total business sales generated by the sports tourism sector **increased 7%** between 2024 and 2025.

Summary Economic Impacts: Sports Tourism
(\$ millions and number of employees)

	2019	2023	2024	2025	2025 Growth
Total business sales	\$1,409.4	\$1,838.6	\$1,972.5	\$2,111.0	7.0%
Direct business sales	\$849.0	\$1,123.5	\$1,204.0	\$1,289.1	7.1%
Visitor spending	\$768.8	\$1,025.9	\$1,101.2	\$1,178.9	7.1%
Tournament operations	\$80.2	\$97.6	\$102.9	\$110.2	7.1%
Total personal income	\$416.8	\$533.4	\$574.9	\$612.4	6.5%
Direct personal income	\$233.8	\$303.2	\$327.3	\$348.2	6.4%
Total employment	11,739	12,447	13,284	14,343	8.0%
Direct employment	8,054	8,514	9,057	9,830	8.5%
Total taxes	\$195.8	\$260.7	\$280.1	\$299.3	6.9%
Total state & local taxes	\$106.7	\$134.5	\$144.2	\$154.4	7.1%
Total federal taxes	\$89.1	\$126.3	\$135.9	\$144.9	6.7%
Direct taxes	\$123.0	\$166.3	\$178.0	\$190.5	7.0%
Direct state & local taxes	\$72.9	\$94.8	\$101.0	\$108.5	7.4%
Direct federal taxes	\$50.1	\$71.5	\$76.9	\$82.0	6.6%

Source: Tourism Economics

Note: totals may not sum due to rounding.

About the Research Team

Oxford Economics was founded in 1981 as a commercial venture with Oxford University's business college to provide economic forecasting and modelling to UK companies and financial institutions expanding abroad. Since then, we have become one of the world's foremost independent global advisory firms, providing reports, forecasts and analytical tools on 200 countries, 100 industrial sectors and over 3,000 cities. Our best-of-class global economic and industry models and analytical tools give us an unparalleled ability to forecast external market trends and assess their economic, social and business impact.

Oxford Economics is an adviser to corporate, financial and government decision-makers and thought leaders. Our worldwide client base comprises over 2,000 international organizations, including leading multinational companies and financial institutions; key government bodies and trade associations; and top universities, consultancies, and think tanks.

This study was conducted by the Tourism Economics group within Oxford Economics. Tourism Economics combines an understanding of traveler dynamics with rigorous economics in order to answer the most important questions facing destinations, investors, and strategic planners. By combining quantitative methods with industry knowledge, Tourism Economics designs custom market strategies, destination recovery plans, forecasting models, policy analysis, and economic impact studies.

Oxford Economics employs 600 full-time staff, including 300 professional economists and analysts. Headquartered in Oxford, England, with regional centers in London, New York, and Singapore, Oxford Economics has offices across the globe in Belfast, Chicago, Dubai, Miami, Milan, Paris, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington DC.



For more information, questions on the report or other general inquiries, please reach out to the team at admin@tourismeconomics.com.

