Getting the word out about the more than $2 Billion in tourism-related investment in our region supports the region’s economic development, talent attraction and retention efforts. Erie County invests the least in tourism out of our peers, despite being a targeted growth sector for our region. The benefits of destination promotion extend far beyond tourism dollars. Cities and states that prioritize destination marketing and coordinate these efforts with economic development initiatives have experienced significant site relocations and new investments as a direct result. Central to our economic development efforts, Visit Buffalo Niagara (VBN) needs more funding to match the level other peer metros are investing in their destination marketing organizations.

Bed tax revenue in Erie County set a new record in 2018 of $11,168,456, an increase of 4.4% over the previous year.

Erie County allocates the smallest total amount from bed tax revenue to tourism promotion.

Tourism employment has grown by 10 percent in five years, now supporting 33,000 jobs.

VBN is funded at the lowest total level of any peer metro except for Rochester, NY.

VBN receives nearly half of the bed tax funding from Erie County than the peer-metro average (46% less).

VBN has nearly $500K less spending power than it did in 2004, after adjusting for inflation.

In 2018, VBN generated a return of $98.65 in contracted visitor spending from convention sales, amateur athletic events, and group tours for every $1 it received in funding.

AMONG OUR PEERS

50 BUFFALO • 1.13M

51 Rochester, NY • 1.08M

52 Grand Rapids, MI • 1.05M

53 Tucson, AZ • 1.02M

54 Honolulu, HI • 993K

55 Tulsa, OK • 987K

Top 100 Largest Metros

Rank Metro Population
45 Richmond, VA • 1.28M
46 New Orleans, LA • 1.27M
47 Hartford, CT • 1.21M
48 Salt Lake City, UT • 1.19M
49 Birmingham, AL • 1.14M