

# FLAGLER COUNTY VISITOR EXPERIENCE CENTER



*Palm Coast*  
AND THE *Coast*  
**FLAGLER BEACHES**

Beverly Beach • Bunnell • Flagler Beach  
The Hammock • Marineland





## WHO WE ARE

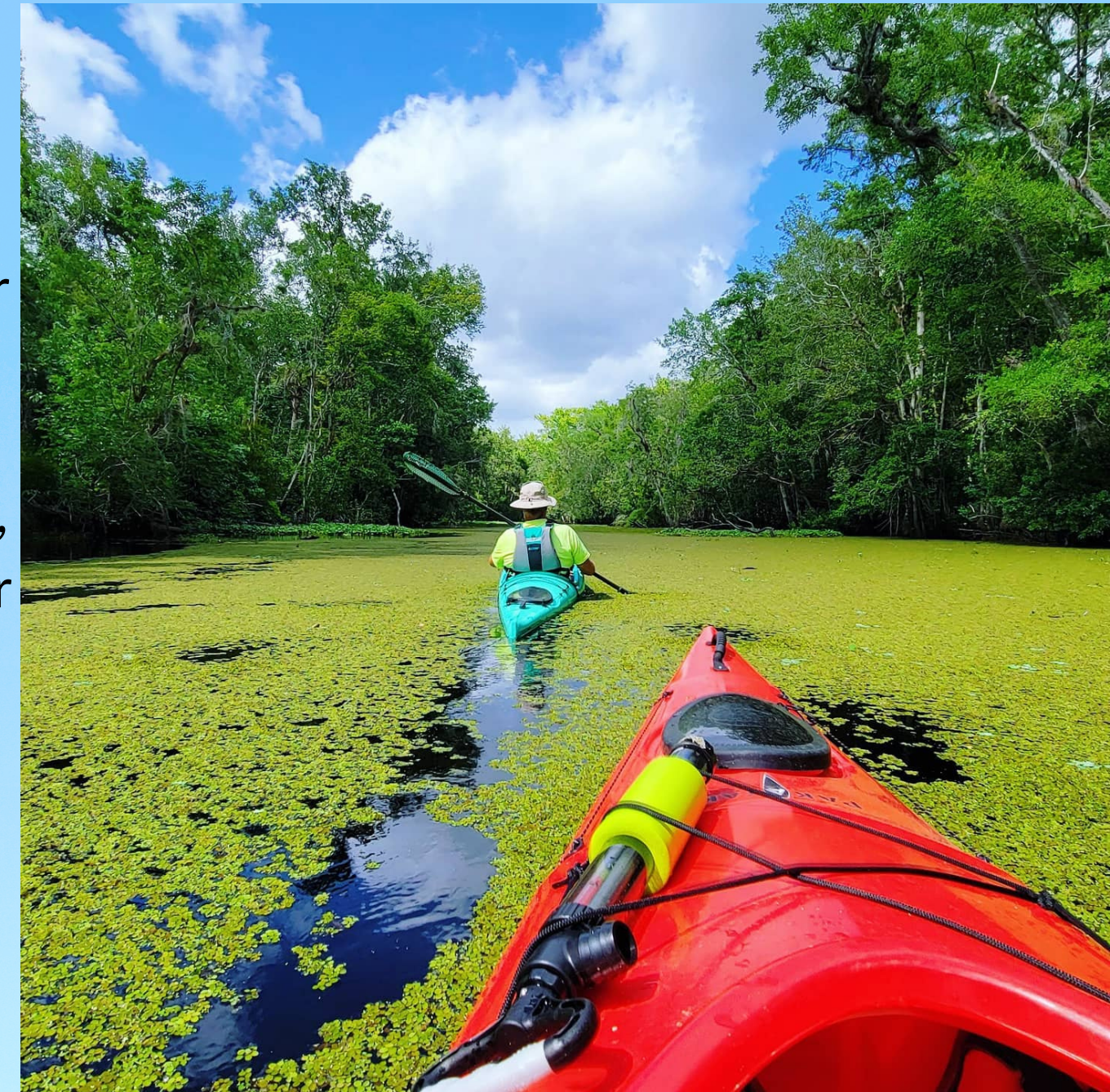
The Flagler County Tourist Development Office, known as Palm Coast and the Flagler Beaches (PCFB), is the official organization responsible for promoting Flagler County as an attractive destination tourism and economic activity.

Our efforts are critical to support the region's economy, tourism-related businesses, employees working in the tourism industry, and ultimately residents who call Flagler County home.

## WHAT WE DO

PCFB operates under **Florida State Statute 125.0104** and is funded exclusively by the Tourist Development Tax, which is also known as "bed tax".

A **5% tax is collected** on all accommodations in Flagler County rented for less than six months.







# 100% OF ALL REVENUE AND EXPENSES ARE FROM OUT OF COUNTY VISITORS

Operating/Marketing and Advertising  
Beach Management Projects  
Tourism Related Capital Projects





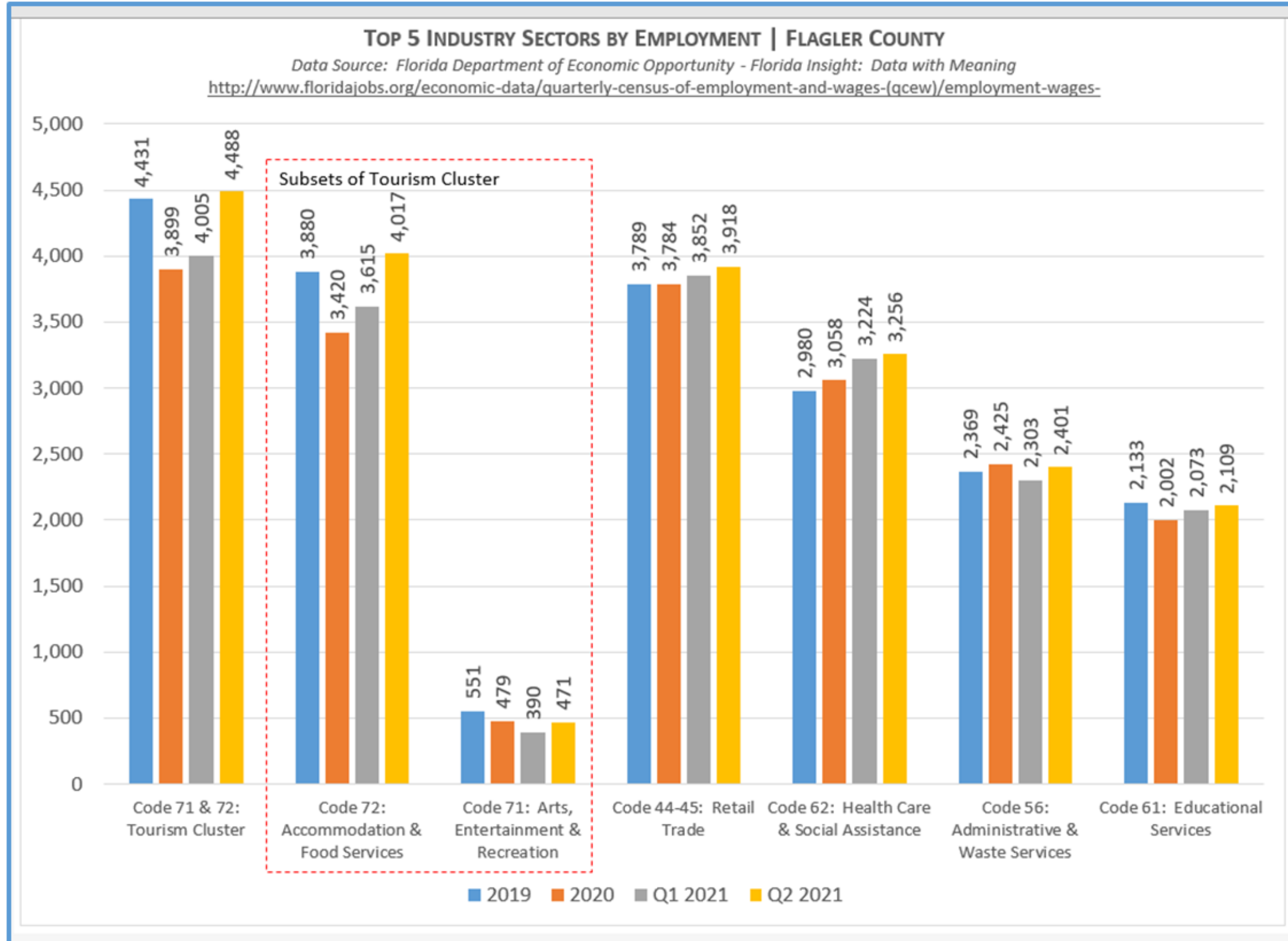
# WHY TOURISM MATTERS IN FLAGLER COUNTY

- Whether traveling for business, leisure, family/friends, sports, or other events, every person who comes to Flagler County contributes to the County's economic vitality through dollars spent on dining, lodging, transportation, shopping, and entertainment. Every time a visitor spends money in our County they also pay taxes.
- Those tax dollars do not come from us, the residents, but contribute directly to our schools, help expand our roads, and provide services like police, fire, and rescue.
- Flagler County relies on tourism for economic development, job creation, and tax revenues. Without the travel spending, the impact its absence would have on our local economy and families would be devastating.

**Visitors to Flagler County saved local residents  
\$756 in taxes per household in FY20**



# WHY TOURISM MATTERS IN FLAGLER COUNTY



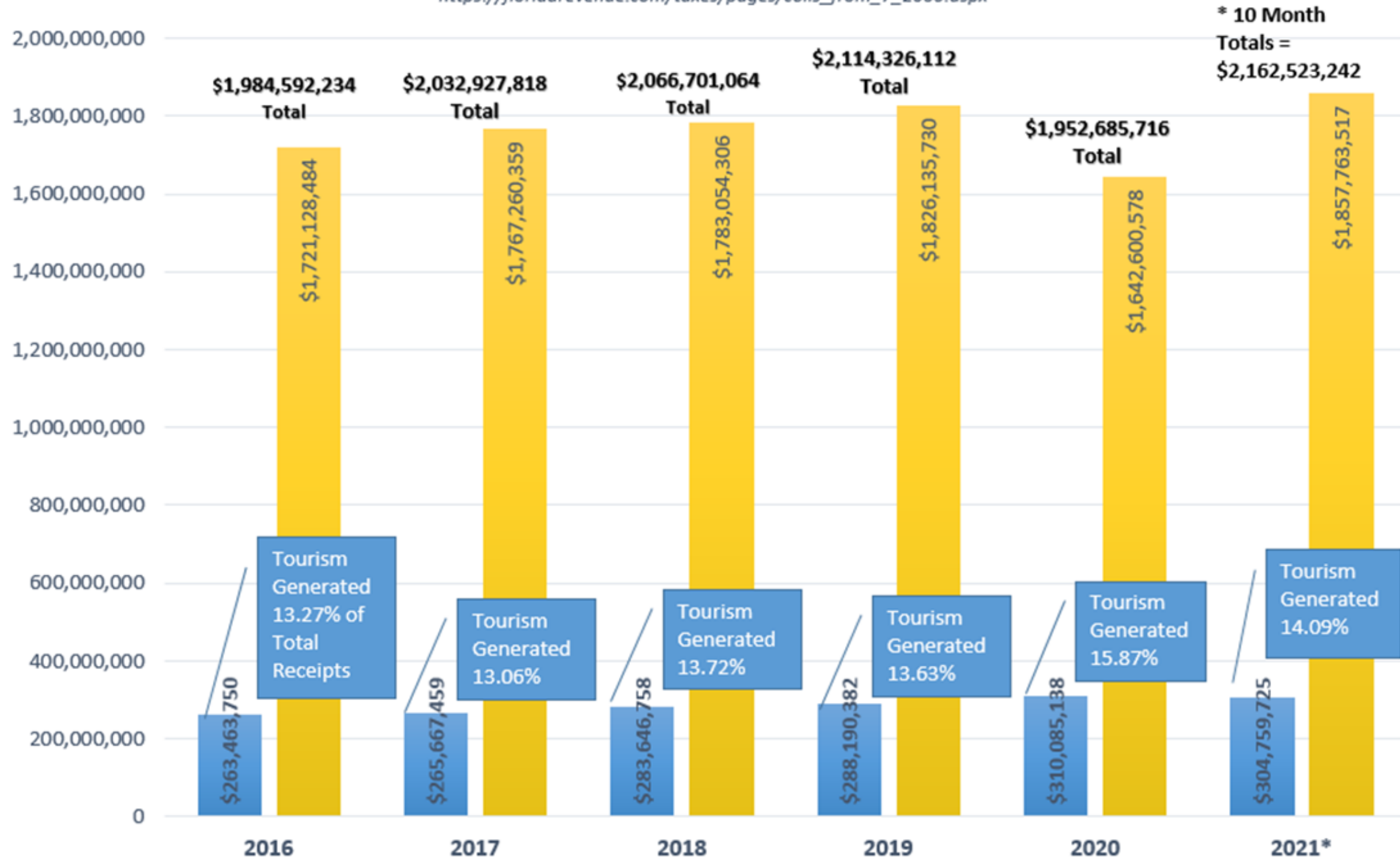


# WHY TOURISM MATTERS IN FLAGLER COUNTY

## FLAGLER COUNTY VALIDATED GROSS SALES TAX RECEIPTS - CALENDAR YEARS

Data Source: Florida Department of Revenue

[https://floridarevenue.com/taxes/pages/colls\\_from\\_7\\_2003.aspx](https://floridarevenue.com/taxes/pages/colls_from_7_2003.aspx)



## QUICK TAKES

Year after year the Tourism Industry Sector generates a significant portion of the gross sales tax receipts in Flagler County.

Sales Tax Receipts are contributed to the General Fund for the operations of local government.



# TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX REVENUES

FY21	\$3,608,505.41	+ \$1,231,513.63	+51.81%
FY22 (YTD)	\$ 826,877.65	+ \$ 249,757.56	+43.28%



# FLAGLER COUNTY VISITOR EXPERIENCE CENTER

- How Did We Get Here
- Why Do We Need One
- What Makes it Successful
- Facility Functionality
- What's Inside
- Who Pays for It





# HOW DID WE GET HERE?

It has become increasingly obvious that communities need effective marketing for more than just attracting visitors; destinations need to be marketed to attract investment, workforce, entrepreneurs, and future residents. Every community is in competition to attract the best and brightest as a way to enhance the quality of life and long-range sustainability.

The realization that a Destination Marketing Organization's (DMO) role has grown and stems, in part, from a study by Longwoods International that proves that tourism advertising has a marked effect on consumer interest in communities as a place to live, go to college, and start a business. That means DMOs are far more than just "Heads in Beds." DMOs help plow the road for Economic Development agencies.

It is with these concepts in mind that the Flagler County Tourism Development Council (TDC) met on September 18, 2019, to map out a strategy for the evolution of the organization over the next three years. No longer content to continue with traditional destination marketing strategies, the TDC looks to re-imagine the role of the DMO within the greater community development imperatives throughout the county.

**In FY21 and FY22 - \$1.1m was allocated and approved to begin the project when the right opportunity became available.**



# WHY DO WE NEED ONE?

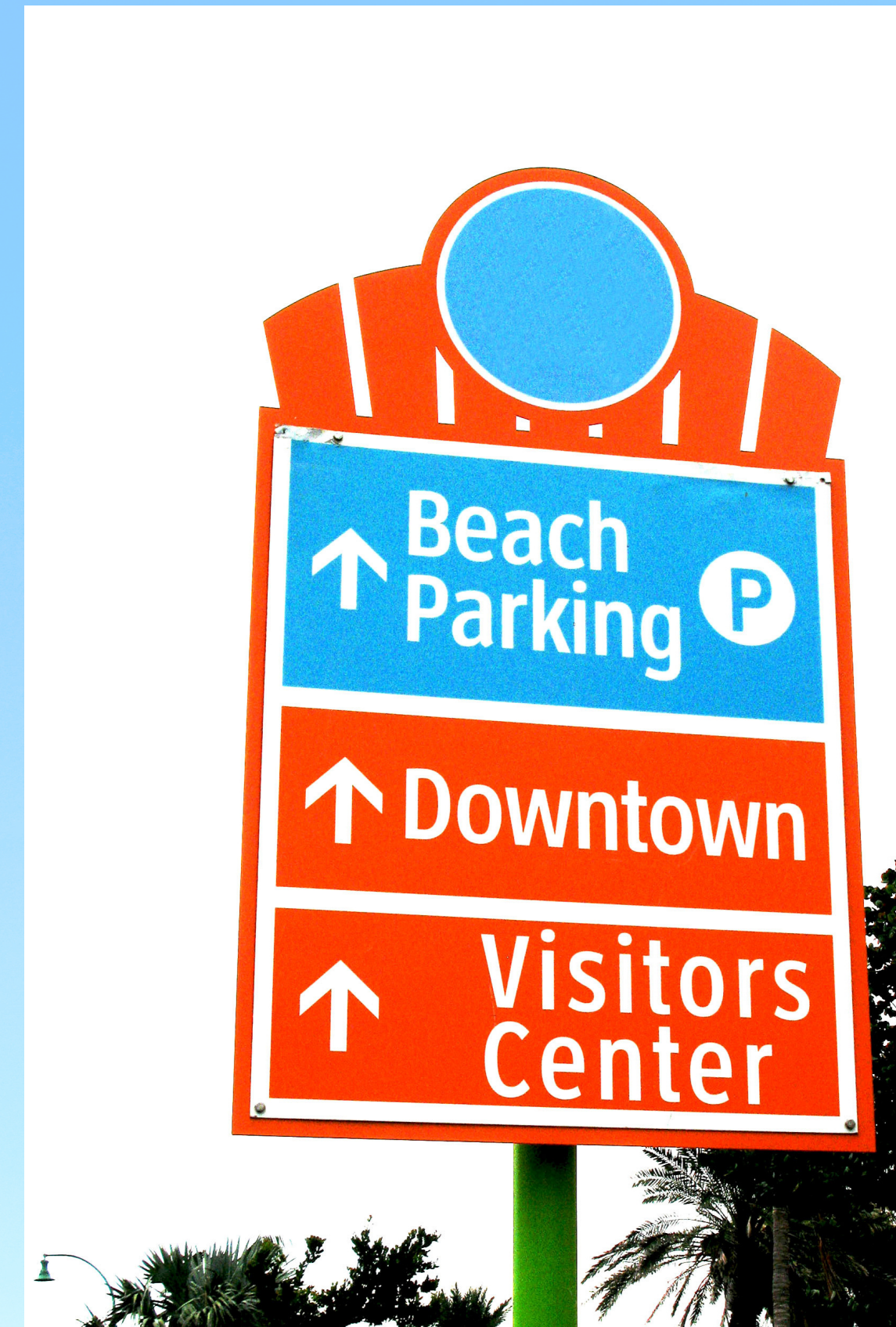
Through the strategic plan process, we identified new opportunities where gaps exist to support the experiences available in the destination and to create new ones.

This included the need to develop new multiple streams of revenue for the tourism office and new revenue for tourism-related businesses.

- Experiences & Packages
- Outfitters/Rentals
- Partner Marketing Opportunities
- Education- Environmental & Sustainability
- Tourism Events
- Partnerships- Scenic A1A, Chamber, LAA, FB Historical Museum, FCAR, State Parks, etc.

Visitors still want information while in the destination, they just want it to **EVOLVE** to their terms just like retail and other industries.

Public space for visitors, existing and future businesses, and residents.





# WHY DO WE NEED ONE?

Today's guests want more than just to visit a destination. They want to learn, participate and engage with local people and places when they travel. They want stories of amazing people and places they can share with their friends and family.

Visitors are looking for a tourism experience - the emotional feeling or personal achievement a visitor derives from the purchase, participation or consumption of a tourism product.

**At the core of an exceptional visitor experience is our ability to purposefully and thoughtfully combine the physical and human assets with an emotional interaction that visitors are looking for.**

Properly preparing for the future and the inevitable for our community.







- The tourism product is what the customer buys, the tourism experience is what they remember.
-



# WHAT MAKES IT SUCCESSFUL?

## Location:

Industry studies provided evidence that visitors of "community--based" centers are more likely to engage in informational materials and are more likely to change trip plans based on the information obtained. This indicates that community-based centers are effective in that they attract visitors who are willing to alter their plans based on the information provided at the information center.

Maximizing all vehicle and pedestrian activity- ability to pull travelers along A1A that find us by accident or be able to offer a one-stop shop for all things Flagler County.





# WHAT MAKES IT SUCCESSFUL?

## Location:

Visitor centers should be where visitors already are. Travelers don't want to go out of their way – in a community they're unfamiliar with to find information.

Being able to promote and partner with nearby businesses is key.

It's not how many brochures are available, how many posters or maps hang on the wall or what is available in a gift shop, it is providing an exciting and engaging environment that becomes an attraction for tourists and locals to explore and **experience**.





# WHAT MAKES IT SUCCESSFUL?

An Experience Center is an asset that will continue to appreciate over time and will build community development through:

- Tourism
- Economic development
- Business partnerships
- Sub-leases
- Industry is looking more towards community development vs. just a heads in beds attitude
- Can act as an incubator for business development
- Investment in the community
- Increase in Tourist Development Tax
- Increase revenues for County and Municipalities





# FACILITY FUNCTIONALITY

The primary use of this facility is to promote Flagler County and its local community, environmental, and economic assets for the purpose of promoting tourism and encouraging new business development within the County.

This facility should not only function as a visitor center but also an educational facility, recreational rentals, locally sourced gift shop, public bathrooms and showers, additional parking, event space, meeting and presentation area, remote offices for partners, tourism, and economic development offices.

All educational elements should include local agriculture, ecosystems, and other relevant subject matters specific to conservation, and marine life, etc.





# FACILITY FUNCTIONALITY

## Goals & Objectives:

- Enhance the quality of recreation and tourism opportunities for all visitors and residents
- Partner and support other local entities within the County
- Provide information and interpretation on the recreational, natural, cultural, and historical resources
- Provide support facilities and conveniences for visitor safety and enjoyment
- Personal and authentic space that connects us to our target audience
- Hospitality driven gathering spaces and amenities
- Educate and Inform the community of tourism projects and activities





# WHAT'S INSIDE?

## Inform-Educate-Experience:

- Revenue generation opportunities
- Experience center & ticketing
- Educational interactive digital kiosks with region-specific themes & partners
- Meeting spaces/Event hosting space/Partner pop-ups
- Home of future historical center iterations
- Local artist wall
- Aquatic exhibition featuring indoor live aquarium - that would be used to promote Eco-tourism and the marine preservation efforts of County sponsors.
- Social media photo op murals or statues
- Themed gardens around the outside of the building, sponsored by partners across the county and themed for environmental awareness - i.e. bee & bird attracting flowers, salt hardy/ erosion prevention planting, herbs and edible growing etc.
- Outdoor spaces & interactive zones to engage visitors with natural surroundings



## WHO PAYS FOR IT?

No local resident taxes are used  
Visitors pay for the visitor center  
Upcoming 80/20 grant opportunity  
Purchase price bound by statute







*Thank You!!!*