



AT A GLANCE

**ONE OF NEW
BRAUNFELS' LARGEST
INDUSTRIES**

**\$531M
PER YEAR**

**IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITIES FROM TOURISM**

**8,663 DIRECT
EMPLOYEES**

**ACCORDING TO THE CONVENTION
AND VISITORS BUREAU 2015**



TOURISM

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EXISTING CONDITIONS

TOURISM INDUSTRY

New Braunfels has long been one of Texas' most attractive tourism destinations. New Braunfels has diversified its tourism portfolio from summer-related assets such as the Guadalupe and Comal Rivers, or Schlitterbahn Water Park, to Fall and Spring festivals such as Wurstfest, Wassailfest or the Gruene Wine and Music Festival as well as developing heritage tourism activities, events and tours.

The Tourism Plan Element focuses on goals and policies that capitalize on the positive impacts of tourism on the community. This includes the economy and the unique sense of place it engenders, as well as goals and policies that address tourism's impacts on infrastructure, public safety and the environment.

One of New Braunfels' largest industries, tourism, provides both direct employment opportunities and indirect employment opportunities such as auxiliary industries like lodging. The 2017 Economic Impact of New Braunfels' Hospitality Industry demonstrated over \$700 Million economic output per year.

It is important to understand that Tourism is one of the most immediately impacted industries during an economic downturn, therefore continued economic diversity is important for New Braunfels. Yet, strengthening this industry is equally important. To that end, the most important areas to focus on for tourism include:

- Workforce Housing for the relatively lower wage tourism employees. Tourism is highly seasonal, therefore wage and salary data tend to sit below area median figures; however, seasonal labor from peak tourism months (particularly the summer months) can also counterbalance their employment cycles with local opportunities in other offseason opportunities trades (Example: Walmart Distribution). Through strategic implementation and targeting, the community can convert some transient labor that is clogging regional infrastructure into established, gainfully employed residents.
- Downtown and redevelopment growth will contribute to perennial tourism (local and out of town).
- Residents generate approximately one-third of gross tax receipts; and, annual tax receipts from locals increased at a faster rate (approximately. 7.5 percent), than that of visitor receipts since 2006 (approximately. 6 percent). Residents could be a strong source of anticyclical spending at tourism sites.
- Connectivity through bike-lanes, bike-share and reliable transit throughout New Braunfels will enhance the tourism experience by allowing visitors to experience the city outside of the car.
- Our regions' population centers are a tremendous opportunity for a day-trip length destination like New Braunfels. Transit connections could be used to support the inflow/outflow of tourists and commuters.
- Local and regional bike paths and greenway connections could service tourists and reduce parking pressure in concentrated tourism hubs; especially if focusing on connections between corridor communities (ex: Seguin, Schertz, etc.) where much of the city's workforce inflow emanates.
- Increasing visitors' ability to spend more time and money throughout the year, rather than increasing seasonal service and capacity, could allow businesses the stability needed to increase jobs and the length of seasonal hiring. It would also reduce pressure on infrastructure and seasonal congestion.



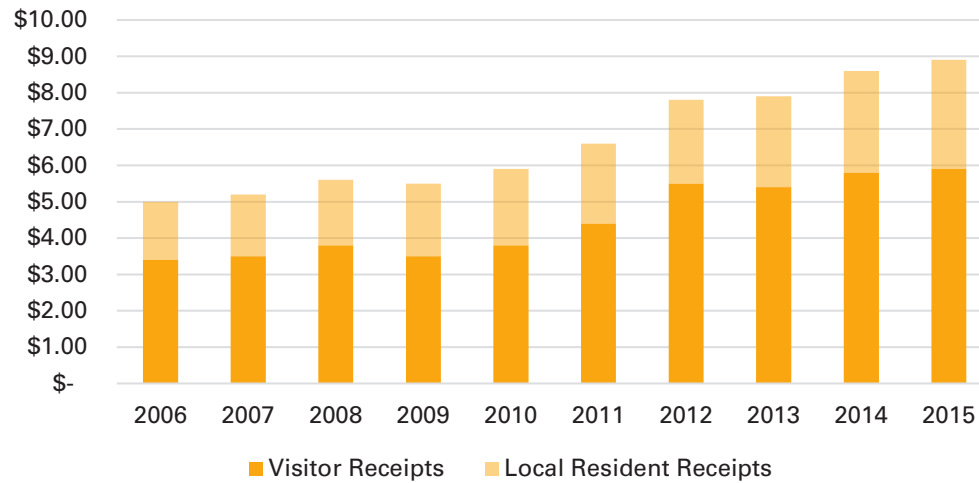
HOTELS

Part of New Braunfels' tourist economy are the lodging resources needed to accommodate the influx of visitors during peak visitation season. As of November 2016, New Braunfels has 147 hotels, lodgings or short-term rental facilities. Of those, 80 met the minimum threshold to report sales revenue or taxable sales to the State Comptroller.

Of those that reported, 14 had between 10 and 20 rooms, 37 between 20 and 74 rooms, and 12 had more than 75 rooms. The largest hotel is the Resort at Schlitterbahn, with 147 rooms. Gross monthly receipts were \$2,560,374 (\$2,178,851 taxable).

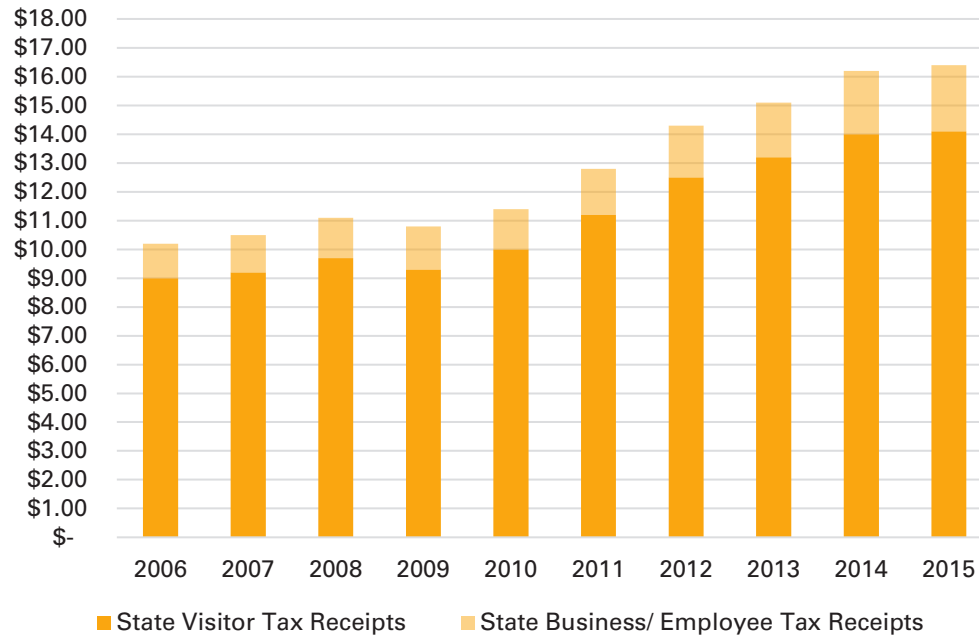


Local Tax Receipts from Tourism (in Millions)



Source: Dean Runyan
and Texas Department of
Economic Development
and Tourism

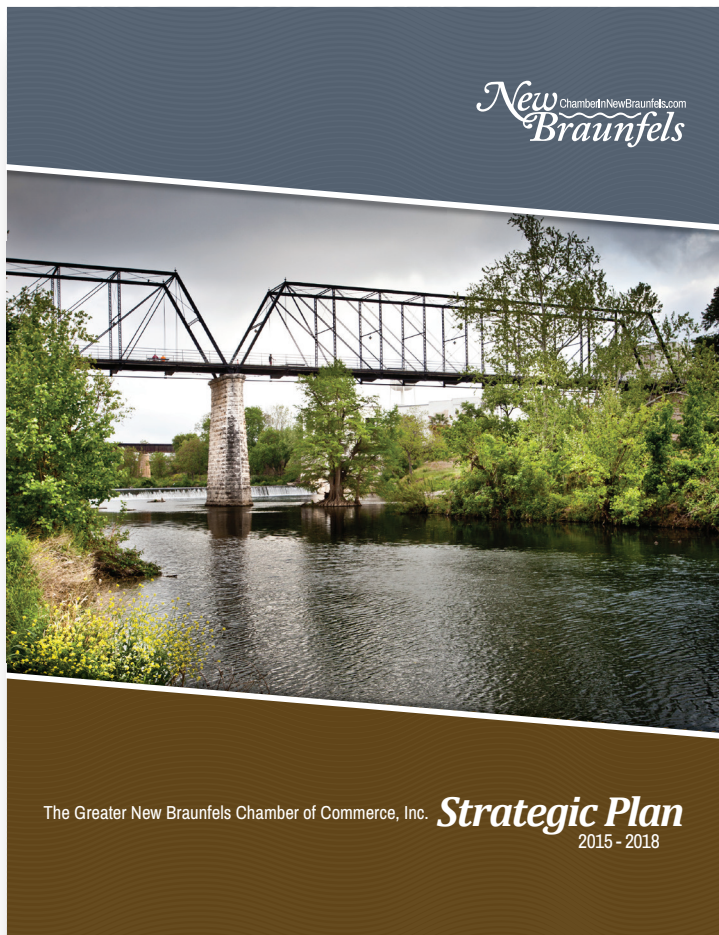
State Tax Receipts from Tourism (in Millions)



Source: Dean Runyan
and Texas Department of
Economic Development
and Tourism

THE GREATER NEW BRAUNFELS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE STRATEGIC PLAN

The purpose of The Greater New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce is to promote the civic and commercial progress of the area. The Strategic Plan is a four-year initiative to promote strengths, business opportunities and improve the economic future for New Braunfels. Tourism, being one of the City's largest industries, plays a significant role in this vision. The Strategic Plan provides specific tourism-focused strategies within its Priority Area 1: Strengthen the Local Economy.



PRIORITY 1: STRENGTHEN THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Support and enhance a flourishing economic environment in New Braunfels.

OBJECTIVE: ENSURE THAT NEW BRAUNFELS REMAINS A VIABLE TOURIST AND CULTURAL DESTINATION.

Recommendation: Increase, improve and expand products for the local visitor industry.

- Execute the Convention and Visitors Bureau's (CVB) current five-year professional services agreement (2014-19).
- Attract leisure, business and group travel, especially during the fall and winter seasons.
- Attract the family and cultural-heritage market through CVB sub-committees and a continued advertising/public relations campaign.
- Market the local cultural and heritage industry via a new campaign convertible to electronic and social mediums.
- Evaluate initiatives for increasing local tourism.
- Continue to collaborate with the local visitor industry and community groups to accomplish goals.
- Coordinate messaging on river marketing with stakeholders, government and citizens.
- Assist City with hike and bike trails connecting to visitor destinations.
- Invite key contacts to committee and Board meetings.
- Participate in City University.
- Publicly recognize the efforts of different agencies.
- Act as coordinator of special events logistics.
- Encourage and support preservation of historic buildings in the community.
- Support community sports venue development that creates positive economic impact.
- Educate the community on natatorium benefit.

Recommendation: Facilitate large downtown investment to support tourism, cultural and recreational amenities.

- Support the development of a downtown hotel adjacent to the New Braunfels Civic/Convention Center with a capacity of 130-150 rooms as per City Economic Development Strategic Plan.

PLAN ELEMENT ADVISORY GROUP RECAP

STRENGTHS

- New Braunfels' natural resources, and activities that rely on them, are among New Braunfels' most effective draws for tourists.
- Festivals that celebrate New Braunfels' history and identity are attractive to both residents and visitors.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Establishing a balance between the needs of visitors and residents will ensure that the economic gains from tourism do not come at the expense of community quality of life.
- Promoting tourism activity in the winter and fall months could bring a stable year-round revenue stream.

PRIOR GOALS (2016)

The Plan Element Advisory Group conducted an inventory of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan goals. They determined which goals were achieved and identified gaps that Envision New Braunfels could work to complete. Refer to the [Technical Report Appendix](#) for a matrix of the reviewed goals.



TOURISM GOALS

1. Continue to be a year-round destination in Central Texas, leveraging target markets via attractions and multi-day festivals.



2. Improve existing and create new facilities that encourage tourism and generate revenue through performing arts, conventions, sports events, festivals, and other destination events.



3. Enhance existing resources for tourism.



4. Create connections and ease of access to tourism destinations via multi-modal transportation.



5. Ensure adequate parking for all tourist destinations via public/private partnerships city-wide.



6. Increase arts/cultural/heritage tourism.



INDICATES A STRATEGY THAT SUPPORTS THE PLAN ELEMENT GOAL

APPLICABLE STRATEGIES
REFER TO PAGE 178

