

# SUCCESS STORY



## RUTHERFORD COUNTY, TENNESSEE

Just 30 miles south of Nashville, Tennessee you will find Rutherford County, the fastest growing county in the state and home to the 10th fastest growing city in the United States, Murfreesboro. As economic development continues to grow at an astounding rate so does tourism across Rutherford County.

According to figures released by the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development and the U.S. Travel Association, Rutherford County saw an increase of 4.9% in tourist spending from 2015 to 2016. The increase can certainly be correlated to the efforts of Destination Rutherford, a not-for-profit economic development organization.

Destination Rutherford, an initiative of the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce, has served the citizens of Rutherford County by providing significant job growth through the attraction of new industry, expansion of existing industry, tourism awareness, and increased retail growth – resulting in significant economic opportunities and ensuring a

prosperous community since its inception in 2002. In terms of tourism, Destination Rutherford has focused on marketing the county as a destination for leisure travelers, sports events and as a great location for conferences and tradeshows. Travel-related expenditures have increased each year that Destination Rutherford has been in existence, and during the last campaign tourism spending totaled over \$1.7 billion.

"Destination Rutherford is committed to developing and

growing Rutherford County's tourism revenue," said Destination Rutherford Chairman Bill Jones. "This increase is proof that we're doing what we said we would. Tourism continues to be a significant economic driver that benefits everyone in the community."

Tourism-related spending increased from \$316.45 to \$331.89 million in 2016, placing Rutherford County in the top 10 counties across the state for travel-related expenditures. "As our community grows and number of businesses and entertainment venues rise, it's exciting to see the parallel in tourism revenue," said Rutherford County Convention and Visitors Bureau Chair, Travis Emore. "While these numbers are impressive, we look forward to what the future holds for Rutherford County. Our highly-energized Convention and Visitors Bureau continues to work hard at securing and assisting all those who choose Rutherford County as their destination by maintaining a hometown feel that continues to draw people and businesses."

Offering great customer service and exceptional hospitality is something the Convention and Visitors Bureau staff extends to each guest. "As the marketing arm for tourism in Rutherford County, we strive to make each event a success and to help each visitor make lasting memories of their time here," says Barbara Wolke, Senior Vice President of the Rutherford County Convention and Visitors Bureau. "We are very fortunate to have an organization like Destination Rutherford that is focused on the future of Rutherford County and fostering our local tourism by expanding our economic development. Having such a diverse selection of hotels, restaurants and retail is a huge asset and makes our community so marketable for events and travelers," says Wolke.



## IMPACT STATEMENT

- Tourism spending has reached in excess of \$3.1 billion in Rutherford County over the past twelve years.
- Hotel demand topped 1 million room nights for the first time in 2015 and has remained strong. Most recently, in 2017 Rutherford County saw more than 1.13 rooms sold.
- 2016 overall tourism economic impact was over \$331 million, a \$15 million increase over the previous year.
- An economic impact study revealed that the nonprofit arts and culture industry generates \$31.2 million in annual economic activity in Rutherford County.
- Over \$8 billion in retail sales for 2016, ranking fourth in the state of Tennessee for retail revenue.

