

# THE ECONOMY OF TOURISM

## IN HIGHLANDS COUNTY



The **Highlands County Tourist Development Tax (TDT)** is a **5% tax paid by visitors** staying overnight in the county for 6 months or less. The tax is sometimes referred to as "Heads in Beds" tax or "Lodging Tax". Residents do not contribute to the Highlands County TDT.

**Visit Sebring is completely self-funded by the TDT collections.** Visit Sebring serves as a destination marketing organization that works to generate overnight stays, increase tax revenues, stimulate economic growth, and strives to constantly enhance the image of Highlands County.



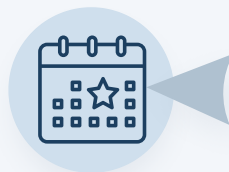
### Visitors Pay for Visitors

The TDT is supported by "heads in beds". Portions of the TDT are then spent on marketing and promotion of the area to bring more visitors in, bringing in more TDT and allowing the TDC more funds to utilize for tourism efforts.



### Tourism Benefits Quality of Life

Portions of the TDT collected from visitors provides support and enhancement to local infrastructures for sport and recreation, benefiting not just tourists, but local residents as well.



### Target Tourism for Key Months

The TDC is able to recognize key months for driving tourism, targeting markets and demographics traveling during those times to help keep visitor-supported businesses steady year-round.



**\$ 310.3**  
MILLION

**Total Visitor Spending in Highlands County in 2022**

**Visitors spend hundreds of millions of dollars in Highlands County, benefitting our local businesses. They pay sales tax and tourist tax, which in turn saves residents over \$170/year in taxes.**



In 2022, Highlands County tourism attributed to \$103.2 million in local employees' wages.



Tourism impacted a total of 4,825 jobs in Highlands County in 2022.

**11.4%**

**of Total Jobs in Highlands County were supported by Visitor Spending**

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**Tourism reaches further into the into the community than you may think...**


**Taxes that visitors pay save each Highlands County household over**

**\$170**

**in local taxes annually**



In 2018, visitors paid \$6,824,196 in local sales and property taxes. For perspective, that is equivalent to:

-  Salaries of 233 teachers who teach 3,593 students in Highlands County
-  Salaries of 148 police officers in Highlands County
-  Salaries of 201 firefighters in Highlands County
-  Maintaining 10 miles of roads in Highlands County

**Taxes Generated from Tourism in Highlands County in 2018**

**\$2,253,406**

Property Tax

**\$4,570,790**

County Sales + Use Tax

**\$14,403,750**

State + County Sales + Use Tax



**Visitors spent**

**\$38,710,549**

**at restaurants in Highlands County in 2018, supporting the gross sales at over**

**33 restaurants in Highlands County.**

Data and figures reported to Highlands County TDC in 2018 study conducted by Downs & St. Germain Research firm - data for study sourced from Florida Department of Revenue, U.S. Census Bureau, Highlands County TDC, U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, and Florida Department of Transportation,

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