

THE ECONOMY OF TOURISM

IN HIGHLANDS COUNTY



The **Highlands County Tourist Development Tax (TDT)** is a **4% 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.



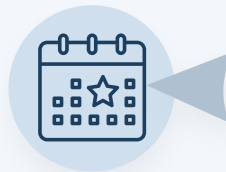
Visitors Pay for Visitors

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.



\$247.5
MILLION

Total Visitor Spending in Highlands County in 2021

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 2021, Highlands County tourism attributed to \$82.5 million in local employees' wages.



Tourism impacted a total of 3,866 jobs in Highlands County in 2021.

9.8%

of Total Jobs in Highlands County were supported by Visitor Spending

Data and figures reported to Highlands County TDC from VISIT FLORIDA based on 2021 data.

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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

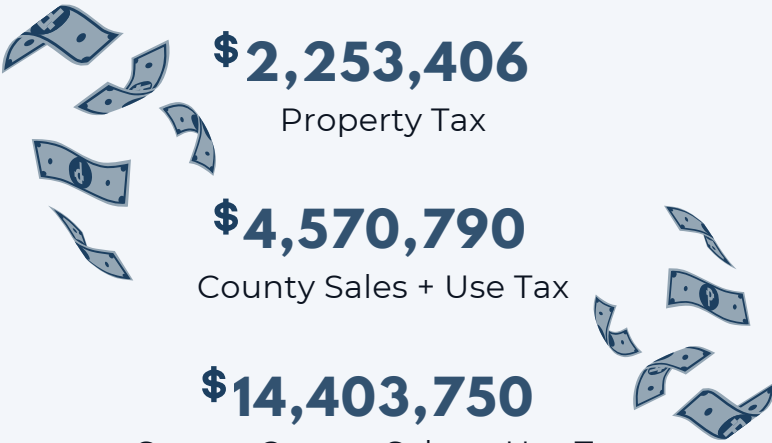
Property Tax

\$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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