



# **FISCAL YEAR 2020 TOURISM MARKETING AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

MARYLAND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT BOARD AND THE OFFICE OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT



FISCAL YEAR 2020 TOURISM MARKETING AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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Choptank River Lighthouse

How to use this marketing plan

The Maryland Office of Tourism measures its programs against four strategic objectives:

Market Expansion 📈

In 2020, this includes building upon promotional pushes in Cleveland, Pittsburgh and the New York metro area.

Leveraging Partnerships 🤝

Working with private sector and county tourism offices on grants to generate overnight stays.

Maximizing Opportunities ⚙️

The 170th anniversary of Harriet Tubman’s self-liberation, and the opening of the feature film “Harriet” in the fall, are just some of the opportunities we will seek to maximize.

Transactionable Outcomes ⚙️

One goal here is to build on the success of programs such as December 2018’s “Home for the Holidays” promotion, where a \$20,000 investment generated 11,922 room nights and \$1.5 million in revenue.

Throughout this plan, all key strategies are coded with corresponding icons to denote which strategic objectives are being met.

Section 1

Marketing And Development Plan

Chairman’s Message

As Chair of the Maryland Tourism Development Board, I want to thank you for everything that you do to provide a positive Maryland tourism experience for our customers.

Tourism generates significant revenue that is integral to Maryland’s economic vitality. In 2017, visitor spending on travel in Maryland increased from \$17.4 to \$17.7 billion. That visitor spending is an important revenue generator for both state and local governments, contributing \$2.4 billion in taxes in 2017.

As the owner of a Maryland-based small business, I know the importance of the visitor-driven economy. Last year, 149,000 employees in tourism-related jobs around the state earned \$6.3 billion in wages—up 4 percent over the previous year. That makes tourism the 10th largest private sector employer in the state.

On behalf of the Maryland Tourism Development Board, I would like to thank Governor Hogan for his continuing support of the tourism industry in Maryland. We appreciate his strong support and thank him for bringing record-breaking funding to the Maryland Tourism Development Board—\$10.2 million for FY 2020. With the Governor’s leadership, the Maryland Department of Commerce and the Office of Tourism have the opportunity to highlight tourism’s role in creating economic benefit for the citizens of Maryland through customer spending, and the amenities that the tourism industry brings to the state for both its residents and its visitors.

This work plan has been developed by the staff of the Maryland Office of Tourism with the support of the Maryland Tourism Development Board. It serves as a master plan for all staff activities and programs in the upcoming Fiscal Year. And it introduces some of the important new partnership initiatives that will drive our endeavors in the coming year, including celebrating the Year of the Woman in 2020, promoting Maryland as the most powerful Underground Railroad storytelling destination in the world, touting our trail system as second to none, and hosting the American Bus Association’s annual convention in Baltimore in early 2021.

I am proud of this Board’s continuing work with the Office of Tourism and am pleased to present the Fiscal Year 2020 Tourism Marketing and Development Plan. The objectives and strategies in this plan are designed to enhance tourism’s positive impact in Maryland.

The Board and I look forward to working with you, our tourism industry partners, to continue to increase Maryland’s tourism expenditures, tax revenues and job opportunities.

Sincerely,

Judy Long Bixler

Chair, Maryland Tourism Development Board  
Owner/Captain, Oxford Bellevue Ferry



Chairman's Message



Fly fishing on the Gunpowder River

Marketing and Development Plan

# Objectives and Strategies by Program

## Maryland Tourism Development Board

The mission of the Maryland Tourism Development Board (MTDB) is to provide statewide leadership in policy development, management and competitiveness to ensure that Maryland enjoys greater economic benefits from travel and tourism spending.

### Objectives

Provide leadership and reviews of the budgets, staff and other resources allocated to the MTDB and OTD for tourism marketing and development purposes.

Ensure the growth and stability of statewide tourism development through the management of the MTDB Strategic Plan and Marketing/Development Plan.

### Key Strategies for Fiscal Year 2020

Continue efforts to ensure long-range funding stability for both the Office of Tourism and the Maryland Tourism Development Board.

Develop public/private partnerships to supplement General Funds appropriated to OTD and the MTDB fund.

Continue to develop new grant opportunities such as the “Open For It” grant program.

Ensure grant guidelines align with evolving marketing priorities annually.

Develop comprehensive industry-wide communications plan to educate the public and public officials of the value of the tourism industry and its impact on the quality of life for all citizens to encourage funding support at city, county and state levels.

## Maryland Office of Tourism

**Administrative/Management:** The goal of the Administrative/Management team is to provide the necessary organizational supervision and direction to ensure that the resources of staff, time and budgets are properly deployed to produce measurable results in accordance with the department’s mission.

### Objectives

Provide administrative support, such as Maryland Tourism Development Board support, budget development and monitoring, financial reporting, accounting and procurement.

Manage and monitor the OTD staff, prioritizing and balancing the workload to maximize efficiency and effectiveness. Ensure that sufficient staff is deployed to accomplish the mission.

Provide and maintain an internal work environment that aligns with the Commerce Department’s strategic plan and objective of achieving operational excellence.

Establish and maintain relationships with other agencies, tourism industry associations, organizations and institutions to ensure that Maryland’s tourism development activities are best in class and deliver the highest return on investment.

### Key Strategies for Fiscal Year 2020

Maintain ongoing collaborative relationships with Destination Marketing Organizations, Arts & Entertainment Districts, Main Streets and Maryland Heritage Areas to ensure proper state and local coordination.

Continue leadership in planning, reinvigorating and sponsoring the Maryland Tourism & Travel Summit – the only education program available to all of Maryland’s tourism community.

Foster inter-agency cooperation between local, state and national agencies.

Ensure the effectiveness of the \$2.5 million matching grant program and that it meets the objective of increasing overnight stays in Maryland.

Guide the actions and strategies of the Maryland Office of Tourism by aligning all initiatives and strategic objectives within one or more strategic functional categories: Market Expansion, Maximizing Opportunities, Leveraging Partnerships, and Transactionable Outcomes.

Research

The Research unit provides economic and market research, analysis and evaluation for the Maryland Office of Tourism and the Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts (TFA).

Objectives

Utilize proprietary and publicly-available data to assess the performance of Maryland’s tourism industry and benchmark the state against other states and the nation as a whole.

Collect, analyze and report the performances of tourism tax revenues by county as determined by the Tourism Promotion Act and work with the Maryland Comptroller to review the percentage of revenues from those industry tax codes.

In partnership with Maryland’s Destination Marketing Organizations, commission an annual study of the economic impact of tourism on jobs, payroll, tax revenues and expenditures.

Collaborate with Capital Region USA’s research team in projects that study overseas visitation and other trends affecting international travel.

Provide timely and accurate assistance to stakeholders by keeping abreast of trends affecting the travel/tourism industry and new research tools and methods.

Key Strategies for Fiscal Year 2020

Manage the purchase of syndicated research products to create a profile of visitors and work with the marketing team and advertising agency to develop strategies for refining target audiences.

Increase analysis of consumer-generated data gathered through welcome centers, VisitMaryland.org and other sites managed by OTD, mobile apps and social media to measure the performance of OTD’s advertising efforts.



Review data needs of OTD units and explore additional opportunities to leverage dollars to engage in new research studies or to work with stakeholders to collectively purchase additional data.

Identify and quantify the benefits of OTD’s programmatic and marketing efforts at the local level with emphasis on measuring their impact on consumers, businesses and the community.

Participate in collaborative discussions with partner agencies and stakeholders to ensure that existing tourism initiatives are meeting objectives and to ensure that new initiatives are developed and implemented using sound research.

Advertising and Communications

**Advertising—Media And Production:** The goal of the Marketing & Communications unit is to raise the awareness of and interest in Maryland as a travel destination. OTD focuses the state’s marketing efforts on those consumers, time periods and markets that generate the highest awareness levels and greatest return on investment effectively and efficiently.

Objectives

Use innovative advertising creative with strong images and call-to-action messages together with effective media placement strategy to measurably maximize the opportunity for advertising return on investment, customer inquiries, engagement, time spent in the state and spending in the state.

Focus communication efforts on Maryland’s most compelling tourism messages and tourism differentiators, as determined by our consumer research (both quantitative and qualitative).

Increase visitor revenue volume by targeting customers, particularly non-Maryland vacationers, with a strategic focus on overnight stays.

Key Strategies for Fiscal Year 2020

Maintain a communications platform that can be leveraged and enhanced by the DMOs and the private sector to increase awareness of Maryland as a compelling, must-see destination offering a variety of things to do.

Work with advertising/marketing agency to introduce and broadcast new signature advertising campaign, “Maryland—Open For It,” to be carried across multiple platforms for the next three years.

Continue efforts to appeal to and address an expanded range of diverse audiences with custom messaging, imagery and media buys, including development of the ‘Storytellers’ radio series.

Prepare materials and messaging for ‘Year of the Woman’ initiative in 2020 and the upcoming national ABA conference in Baltimore in early 2021.

Continue to invest in specific campaigns that inspire overnight travel in Maryland, such as ‘Summer of Music’ and ‘Home for the Holidays.’

Explore opportunities to extend advertising reach with private-sector tourism industry partners through collaboration and coordination of advertising programs and initiatives.

Further invest in newest digital marketing platforms such as Conversant, Adara, Arrivalist, TripAdvisor Experiences and Google Retargeting to target media delivery to generational and interest-based audiences, and to enhance trip planning and bookings to increase transactionable outcomes.

Continue to invest in expansion markets to encourage overnight visitation from Ohio, Western Pennsylvania and New York, to in turn promote growth in tourism tax revenue.

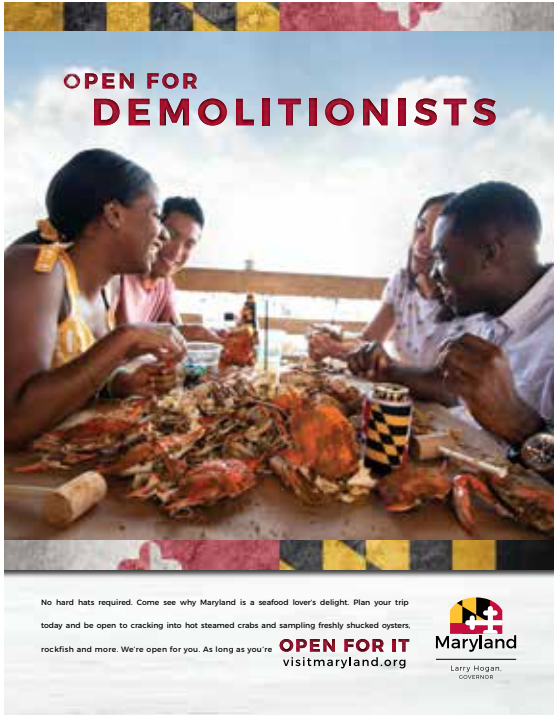
Promote Maryland’s Scenic Byways as ideal ways to experience the variety of Maryland destinations and the state’s authentic cultural heritage as well as prime ways to navigate attractions such as the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center, Maryland’s Crab & Oyster Trail and the Great Chesapeake Bay Loop.

Conduct consumer research and testing to maximize the effectiveness and reach of our consumer and industry e-newsletters.

Continue to redesign and upgrade our state Welcome Centers as storytelling destinations.

Continue to work with Capital Region USA on international marketing efforts in its trade markets of the U.K., France and Germany, and with BrandUSA on international marketing efforts in Canada and Korea.

Continue to develop cooperative advertising programs that can be purchased by the tourism industry that elevates Maryland’s destinations, accommodations, tour services and attractions.



Advertising and Communications (cont.)

**Public Relations and Social Media Outreach:** The Public Relations and Social Media Outreach team works to secure third-party editorial coverage and online conversations about Maryland as a premier travel destination. The team’s responsibilities include collecting, creating and curating compelling editorial content for communications outlets, including VisitMaryland.org and other related sites, and developing social media conversations for journalists and the public. The third-party endorsement of Maryland as a travel destination is a compelling motivator for consumers planning their leisure and business activities.

Objectives


Build and maintain awareness and packaging of Maryland as a premier vacation destination, targeting domestic and international media outlets with the highest propensity for travel.



Secure media placements promoting Maryland tourism and our specific initiatives that are then measured by our Maryland Media Measurement (M3) standards.


Influence visits to the state by interacting with and connecting to potential travelers and Maryland fans online via social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.


Continue to promote the significant impact the tourism industry has on the economic health of Maryland and position the division’s leadership as subject matter experts to the media.


Key Strategies for Fiscal 2020:



Ensure that all curated content for the office’s customer outreach is amplified through social media platforms. 


Promote state tourism initiatives (i.e., Underground Railroad storytelling initiatives, Maryland’s Crab & Oyster Trail, Great Chesapeake Bay Loop, Maryland’s trail system, 2020: Year of the Woman, Scenic Byways initiatives) to the media and customers through PR outreach and social media channels.  


Promote Maryland travel products through media missions, trade shows, desksides, media familiarization tours, educational seminars and consumer promotions. 


Target Maryland’s core feeder markets, including Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New York City and Cleveland, through social media engagement, familiarization tours and press outreach and missions. 


Develop and manage a comprehensive media relations program that generates print, broadcast and electronic coverage with an earned media value of at least \$1 million annually. 


Support Canada-centric PR opportunities with our Canadian PR partner, REACH Global.  

Plan and conduct an annual trade and media mission to Canada for state and supplier partners. 

Continue to work with Capital Region USA to promote Maryland’s Scenic Byways, culinary, history, and outdoor recreation offerings to international markets. 

Target national media to increase coverage by lifestyle outlets such as *Food Network*, *Southern Living*, *Garden & Gun*, *Travel & Leisure*, *The New York Times* and *The Travel Channel*. 

Produce video content to deploy on social media channels and OTD-owned assets. 

Continue to implement public relations and social media training for DMOs and the private sector to further amplify OTD’s messaging. 

**Content and Multimedia Visitor Collateral:** High-quality and informative print and digital publications are designed to inspire consumers to choose Maryland as a travel destination, encourage longer stays and motivate repeat visits. This “owned” media channel allows OTD to communicate in more detail than paid media (advertising) or earned media (press outreach). Additional vehicles target the tourism industry, communicating OTD’s messaging, results and marketing programs.

Objectives


Produce high-quality print, online and video products that support customer experiences and marketing initiatives and highlight Maryland as a must-see destination that is exciting and offers a variety of things to do.


Determine how customers prefer to receive travel information, through which outlets, and how they travel/ experience the state.


Develop strategic advertising sales opportunities and transactionable programs for OTD products to offset production costs.


Inform the travel industry and OTD partners of our office’s activities, initiatives and promotional/marketing opportunities through regular communication.


Key Strategies for Fiscal Year 2020



Work with OTD Interactive team and our content vendor to create a new website for VisitMaryland.org, a new microsite for Fish & Hunt Maryland, and a new Industry site. 


Work with publishing partner to develop engaging content for Destination Maryland, the state’s primary printed travel resource. Optimize usage of Crowdriff platform to increase amount of user-generated content and imagery within the guide. Re-evaluate content, presentation and listings in the guide to make it more valuable and useful to customers. 


Continue to develop new spin-off publications that showcase specific office initiatives and inspire travel, such as guides for the Chesapeake Bay region, African-American Heritage and National Network to Freedom. 


Develop content around major themes such as the Great Chesapeake Bay Loop, World’s Most Powerful Underground Railroad Storytelling Destination, and Trail System Second to None; and continue to build engaging content to support new tourism areas for growth, such as Watermen’s Heritage and Birding in Maryland. 

Grow our visual assets through user-generated content (UGC) platforms, a new comprehensive statewide commissioned photography initiative and outreach to DMOs and other tourism partners and agencies. 

Continue to catalog images/videos and supplement the accompanying credit, rights, usage and expiration data in the Digital Asset Management system (WebDAM) and make visual assets available to tourism partners and media.  

Continue to produce and launch new Scenic Byways videos to grow our collection of assets that showcase the routes as viable ways to explore Maryland. 

Work with Research unit and Product Development unit to determine best analytical method to gauge consumers’ interaction with content and determine how they best consume information on Maryland travel products to guide development of consumer publications and outreach. 

Deploy and cross-purpose our evolving video assets to strategically integrate with ongoing messaging and social media outreach. 



Far left: Promoting travel in Maryland on a WBAL-TV morning television segment.

Left: Partnering with Capital Region USA to host FAM tours for writers from France and the United Kingdom.

# Interactive Services

Ultimately, the goal of Interactive Marketing is to strengthen the perception of Maryland as a great place to live, work and play. As a result, this increases Maryland’s share of the travel market and maximizes the economic impact of travel and tourism in the state. This impact benefits the lives of all Marylanders.

## Objectives

Leverage technology to attain a better understanding of what our prospective visitors are searching for, and coordinate with content developers to feature website content that differentiates Maryland from other states in our competitive set.

Support and empower our tourism industry partners by providing access to news, education and resources.

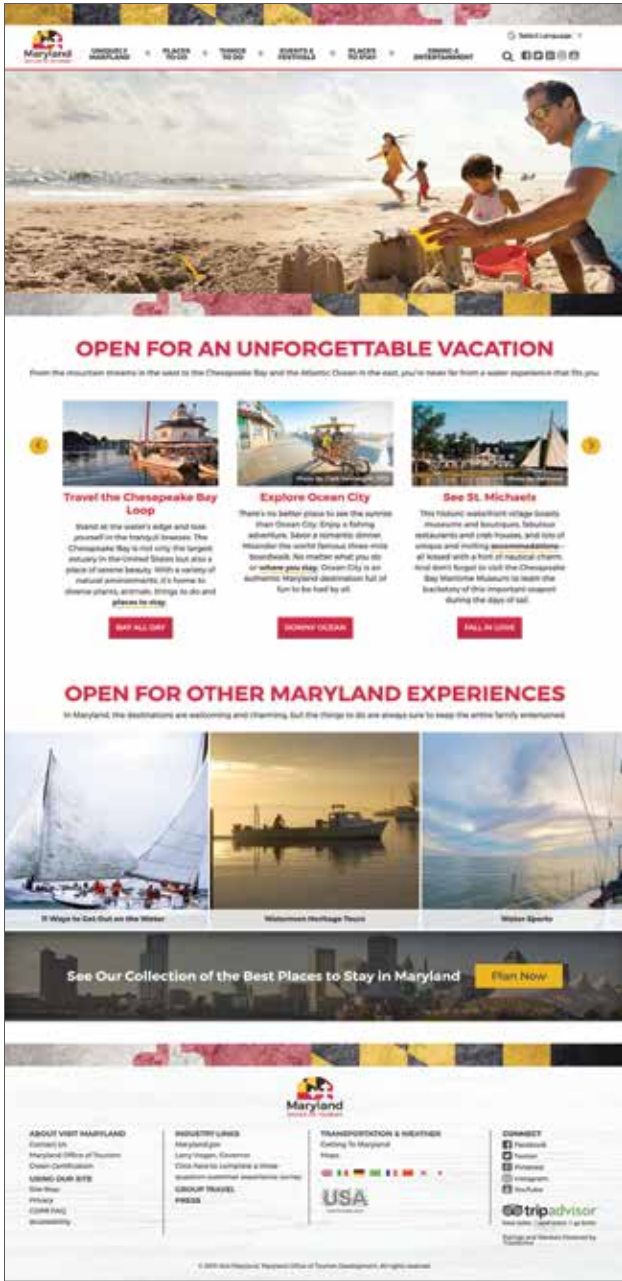
## Key Strategies for Fiscal Year 2020

**Upgrade VisitMaryland.org and Industry.VisitMaryland.org websites.**

Interactive marketing is in a state of perpetual transformation due to constant innovation in technology. To ensure the Visit Maryland website continues to thrive and grow in the future, in FY 2020, OTD will focus on creating a new consumer website for travelers and a new tourism industry website, (Industry.VisitMaryland.org) for our partners.

**Offer personalized content and prioritize customers.**

Aligning marketing channels and effectively communicating with customers using personalized content based on their preferences is essential to OTD’s success in marketing Maryland as a premier tourism destination. OTD’s electronic newsletters for visitors and for our industry partners are an example of this customized content. Prioritizing our customers allows us to deliver more visitors to Maryland and greater results for our tourism partners.



# Tourism Development

**Customer Contact Programs and Industry Database Administration:** OTD interfaces directly with customers through its eight Welcome Centers, Tourism Call Center and through inquiry fulfillment. Additionally, the Welcome Centers and Call Center offer the tourism industry market expansion opportunities by reaching visitors through free statewide brochure distribution and seasonal, regional and thematic promotions in alignment with OTD’s annual Marketing and Development Plan.

## Objective

Operate eight Welcome Centers, the Maryland Call Center and Fulfillment Operations to provide the most persuasive and comprehensive information on Maryland tourism products, assets and events. Develop and implement promotional and customer service programming that increases transaction outcomes for tourism industry partners.

## Key Strategies for Fiscal 2020

Manage Customer Contact Programs to ensure efficient and effective operation of all Welcome Centers, the Call Center and Fulfillment Services.

Enhance the Welcome Center and Rest Area experience through new exhibits, window displays and programming that aligns with OTD’s content calendar.

Enhance OTD marketing and sales efforts through managing the Pathway to the Marketplace process for assigned projects displays and attending trade/consumers shows.

Conduct outreach activities that best support industry education, engagement in OTD programs and/or promote the state as a must-see overnight visitor destination.

## Database Administration and Performance Metrics:

Efficient and effective administration of the OTD Business Listings and Calendar of Events Database and other technology based systems are vital to maximizing opportunities, increasing transactional outcomes and leveraging partnerships. Measuring the performance of OTD’s programs and activities provides important information that supports immediate, mid-range and long-term planning.

## Objectives

Engage with tourism industry stakeholders to recruit data and information that supports OTD’s Business Listings and Calendar of Events Database, Destination Maryland and other OTD marketing and development activities.

Manage and maintain a fully integrated technology program and infrastructure for VisitMaryland.org, Fish & Hunt Maryland, Call Center, Fulfillment Services, Welcome Centers, kiosks, mobile applications and publications.

Develop the database and unit-wide content delivery strategy in support of new VisitMaryland.org consumer website.

Implement a Grow With Google® integration for OTD’s place-based products such as Scenic Byways, Civil War Trails, Network to Freedom members, etc.

Work with the Research Manager to provide metrics that measure the performance of a OTD’s activities and programs.

# Objectives and Strategies by Program



Tourism Development (cont.)

**Product Development:** The Tourism Development unit coordinates statewide and regional programs that assist public and private sector stakeholders with the development of tourism assets and products that elevate the state’s competitive advantage in the domestic and international marketplace. The team maximizes opportunities through the production of distinctive and marketable visitor experiences that showcase the state as a must-see overnight destination and positively impact the growth of tourism sales tax revenues.

Objective

Ensure all initiatives and projects are enhanced through industry outreach and product development to ensure effective integration into OTD marketing platforms through the Pathway to the Marketplace process.

Key Strategies for Fiscal Year 2020

Manage the Maryland Underground Railroad Initiative to showcase the state’s marketplace position as “the most powerful Underground Railroad storytelling destination in the World.”

Manage the Great Chesapeake Bay Loop Initiative including the advancement the Chesapeake Bay Storytellers Initiative, developing “Bayways” travel products and the Pathway to the Marketplace process for a Spring 2020 marketing push.

Manage the Outdoor Recreation Tourism Initiative including activities associated with Maryland Trails - A System Second to None, Boat Maryland, Fish & Hunt Maryland and the Maryland Outdoor Recreation Economic Commission.

Manage the Maryland Scenic Byways Initiative through stakeholder outreach and print and digital product development.

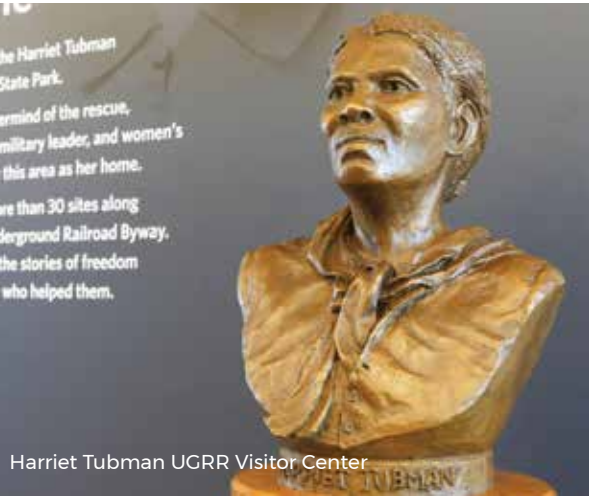
Manage the Maryland Civil War Trails (MCWT) Initiative through stakeholder outreach, print and digital product development and maintaining a seat on the multi-state Civil War Trails Board of Directors.

Manage the co-branding opportunity associated with Smithsonian-related travel including the development of a “Year of the Woman” travel itinerary and increasing the number of Maryland’s Smithsonian Affiliates and Journey’s Itineraries through online communications and other outreach activities.

Manage the Pathway to the Marketplace process to enhance consumer awareness of Maryland’s culinary differentiators including the promotion of the new statewide beer app and advancing the Maryland Crab & Oyster Trail by developing content that better showcases and delivers online content.

Assist the Marketing and Communications Unit in the production of publications such as the Destination Maryland Guide, African-American Heritage Travel Guide, etc.

Advance the Tourism Development Program by seeking/ securing alternative funding for key projects and participating in on-going professional development activities.



**Industry and Inter-Agency Engagement:** The Tourism Development unit takes the lead in working directly with the industry to leverage partnerships/alliances and maximize opportunities that help expand markets and increase transactional outcomes. Through outreach activities and inter-agency coordination, the team assists stakeholders who are developing destinations and assets that will positively impact the growth of tourism sales tax revenues.

Objectives

Conduct systematic and strategic outreach activities that increase engagement of public and private sector stakeholders in OTD Initiatives and programs.

Provide tourism development technical assistance to public and private sector stakeholders as required or requested to ensure optimal visitor-ready tourism products and experiences.

Key Strategies for Fiscal 2020

Increase the awareness of OTD marketing and development opportunities through outreach activities that include but are not limited to presentations, workshops, meetings and online content.

Support agencies and organizations with technical expertise by serving on advisory committees and boards which includes, but is not limited to, Capital Region USA, Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, Maryland Arts and Entertainment Districts Advisory Committee, Maryland Main Streets Program, State Highway Administration’s Tourism Sign Programs, Maryland Department of Transportation’s Transportation Alternative Program, Recreational Trails, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and Bikeways Review Committees.

Coordinate OTD staff and external stakeholders to ensure effective implementation of the Pathway to the Marketplace process which includes conducting meetings and developing production logs, marketing plans, tourism industry website content and after-action reports.

**Marketing Partnerships:** The Tourism Development unit is responsible for the management and administration of programs that leverage state investment with other public and private sector marketing and development investments. In FY 2020, under the direction of the Maryland Tourism Development Board (MTDB) and as authorized by the Tourism Promotion Act of 2008, OTD will grant \$2.5M in funds directly to the 25 recognized Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO) for each Maryland County, Ocean City and the City of Baltimore. Grant funds are intended to enhance DMO marketing investments in key feeder markets and are not intended to replace local DMO investment. Additional strategic marketing partnerships may be developed at the discretion of the MTDB and are subject to available funds.

Objectives

Manage the DMO Grant Program to ensure it aligns with evolving marketing priorities and funds are utilized to increase overnight visitation from key feeder markets.

Manage the Private Sector Consumer Advertising Partnership Program (PSCAPP) in accordance with its guidelines and ensure that funds are utilized to increase visitation by showcasing the state as an exciting, must-see overnight destination.

Manage the Open For It Marketing Program (OFI) in accordance with its guidelines and ensure that funds are utilized to increase overnight visitation by showcasing the state as an exciting, must-see destination to cross-cultural markets.

Key Strategies for Fiscal 2020

Administer the DMO Grant Program, which includes, but is not limited to, preparing programmatic reports, participating in the Maryland DMO Grant Review Committee meetings, reconciling reimbursement requests, administering grant documents, providing technical assistance to grantees, measuring program effectiveness, etc. Work with the MTDB and DMOs to review and update grant policies and procedures for the FY 2021 grant cycle.

Administer the PSCAPP, which includes, but is not limited to, preparing programmatic reports, meetings, reconciling reimbursement requests, administering grant documents, integration into OTD marketing platforms and providing technical assistance to grantees, measuring program effectiveness, etc.

Administer the OFI Marketing Program, which includes, but is not limited to, preparing programmatic reports, meetings, reconciling reimbursement requests, administering grant documents, integration into OTD marketing platforms and providing technical assistance to grantees, measuring program effectiveness, etc.

Travel Trade Sales

Travel Trade Sales promotes the increased salability and purchase of Maryland’s travel products to a variety of travel trade markets in North America and select international markets.

Objectives

Offer third-party sales to tour operators, student travel planners, group leaders and meeting and incentive planners through trade association partnerships, marketplace participation and sales missions.

Leverage media buys in new markets with public relations efforts and client meetings.

Maintain strong Capital Region USA international marketing partnership with Destination DC and Virginia Tourism; expand on new relationships with Korean tour operators and receptive tour operators.

Tourism; expand on new relationship with South Korean operators.

Key Strategies for Fiscal Year 2020

Organize participation in trade shows and marketplaces that support the selling of Maryland travel products to tour operators and receptive tour operator clients.

Coordinate with Interactive Services to increase group-focused web presence. This includes itineraries and tour packages, which support sales to the packaged travel industry. Continue general updates and inputting records to keep database current.

Coordinate the development of regional tour products and participate in promotional opportunities, which will result in Maryland being highlighted as a preferred tour destination.

Coordinate efforts for a stronger sales presence in Canada.



Maintain industry involvement to produce more business for Maryland venues and facilities by meeting, convention, conference and other group event planners.

Continue participation in a Capital Region USA through participation in targeted U.S.-based international travel marketplaces, FAM tours and other promotional activities.

Partner with the Fish & Hunt Maryland to promote Maryland and partner destinations at the Great American Sport & Outdoor Show to reach individuals in targeted geographic markets.

Support efforts of the American Bus Association coming to Baltimore in 2021. Assist with fam tours, sightseeing and other opportunities to showcase Maryland.

Strategic Partnerships

The Maryland Office of Tourism Development’s Strategic Partnerships office focuses on working with corporations, organizations, associations and other state agencies to identify public/private ventures that are mutually beneficial by attracting more visitors.

Objectives

Present corporations with opportunities currently existing within the State of Maryland’s Office of Tourism that will meet the specific retention and growth needs of Maryland’s hospitality, sports, entertainment and food & beverage industries.

Work jointly with Maryland’s private sector and other state agencies to create innovative programs that will attract more visitors to the state and add value to the Office of Tourism and incremental revenue for our partners.

Work with agency and corporate partners to turn Welcome Centers/Rest Areas into destination locations with events, programs, displays, exhibits and technology.

Secure sponsorship contracts with corporations for public/private ventures that will attract more visitors.

Work with industry and agency partners to either create new events, exhibits and travel experiences, or create new ones that celebrate women travelers during 2020 Maryland Year of the Woman and beyond.

Key Strategies for Fiscal Year 2020

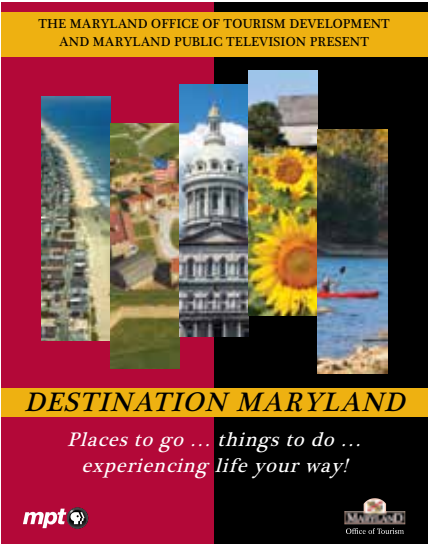
Provide marketing and event direction to the Governor’s Commission on the Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Passage of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution, and expand upon the deliverables of the Commission to create a comprehensive program for women travelers that markets women-centric exhibits, events and activities.

Work with the Maryland Arts Council, Maryland Office of Tourism departments and Western Maryland tourism organizations and companies to create a Mountain Maryland experience by adding live entertainment, technology, local arts and events to the campus of Western Maryland’s Welcome Centers.

Share best practices from other states in the implementation of a new business model pertaining to advertising at state-operated Welcome Centers.

Work with Maryland Public Television in the business and content development of a new tourism-specific television series.

Meet with strategic and business development executives at tourism-specific corporations to identify public/private programs and projects that will attract more visitors to the State of Maryland.





Section 3  
Events Calendar

Section 3

Marketing and Development Plan

Events Calendar

		DATES	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	CONTACT
2019	JULY	23 - 25	Destinations International Annual Convention	St. Louis, MO	Cynthia Miller
	AUGUST	9 - 13	Student Youth Travel Association Marketplace	Birmingham, AL	Rich Gilbert
	SEPTEMBER	18 - 22	VA-NC-SC Motorcoach Associations Marketplace	Winston-Salem, NC	Rich Gilbert
		24 - 26	MATPRA Media Marketplace	Richmond, VA	Matt Scales
	OCTOBER	9 - 10	Greater New Jersey Motorcoach Association Marketplace	Atlantic City, NJ	Rich Gilbert
		17 - 18	MATPRA Quarterly Meeting	Butler, PA	Matt Scales
		23 - 26	Southeastern Outdoor Press Association Annual Meeting	Oxford, MS	Connie Spindler
	NOVEMBER	3 - 6	Ontario Motorcoach Association Marketplace	Ottawa, ON	Rich Gilbert
		6 - 8	Maryland Tourism & Travel Summit	Rocky Gap Resort, Flinstone, MD	OTD
		8 - 10	Crowdriff Conference	Toronto, Canada	Matt Scales
	DECEMBER	8 - 12	National Tour Association Travel Exchange	Fort Worth, TX	Rich Gilbert
2020	JANUARY	10 - 14	American Bus Association Marketplace	Omaha, NE	Rich Gilbert
		14	ABA Marketplace Kick-off to Baltimore Event	Omaha, NE	Rich Gilbert
		16 - 17	MATPRA Quarterly Meeting	VA's Blue Ridge	Matt Scales
		20	Taste of Maryland Legislative Reception	Annapolis, MD	Liz Fitzsimmons, Marci Ross
		1 - 9	Great American Outdoor Show	Harrisburg, PA	Rich Gilbert, Heather Ersts, OTD staff
	FEBRUARY MARCH	2020	ABA Marketplace Advisory Committee	Baltimore, MD	Rich Gilbert
		24 - 25	Pennsylvania Bus Association Marketplace	York, PA	Rich Gilbert
		25 - 26	Maryland Motorcoach Association Marketplace	TBD	Connie Spindler
		29 - 31	Southeast Travel Counselors Alliance Conference	Memphis, TN	WC supervisors
		2020	Receptive Tour Operator Summit - East	New York, NY	Rich Gilbert Spindler
	APRIL	16 - 17	MATPRA Quarterly Meeting	Dewey Beach, DE	Matt Scales
	MAY	3 - 9	National Travel and Tourism Week (Open Houses)	Welcome Centers	TBD
		5/31 - 6/3	IPW	Las Vegas, NV	Rich Gilbert
	JUNE	7 - 10	PRSA National Travel & Tourism Conference	Spokane, WA	Leslie Troy & PR Team
		21-24	Pennsylvania Bus Association Annual Meeting/Sales Retreat	TBD	Rich Gilbert, Connie Spindler
		27-29	Outdoor Writers of America Association Annual Meeting	Jay Peak, VT	Connie Spindler
	AUGUST	22 - 25	ESTO	Grand Rapids, MI	Liz Fitzsimmons, Brian Lawrence, Marci Ross, Lucy Chittenden
	OCTOBER	10 - 14	Annapolis Sailboat Show	Annapolis, MD	TBD
	NOVEMBER	3	OMCA-Access Marketing Buyers Reception	Ottawa, ON	Rich Gilbert
	DECEMBER	TBD	National Tour Association Travel Exchange	TBD	Rich Gilbert

## Section 4

### Rosters

## Section 4

# Board & Staff Roster

## Maryland Office of Tourism

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### JUDY LONG BIXLER

Chair  
Owner/Captain  
Oxford Bellevue Ferry

### MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

#### DONNA ABBOTT

Tourism and Marketing Director  
Town of Ocean City

#### CARMEN GONZALES

Director of Communications  
Live! Casino & Hotel

#### G. HALE HARRISON

Vice President of Operations  
& Real Estate  
Harrison Group Resort Hotels

#### MONROE HARRISON

Director of Public Affairs  
Gaylord National Resort  
& Convention Center

#### CARA JOYCE

Owner  
Urban Pirates

#### CASEY JENKINS

Owner  
Southern Living  
Restaurant Group

#### CANDACE OSUNSADE

SVP, Chief Administrative Officer  
National Aquarium

#### DAN SPEDDEN

President  
Hagerstown-Washington County CVB

#### RUTH UMBEL

Teacher – Retired

#### ALEXANDRA LYN VON PARIS

Founder & CEO  
Route One Apparel

### LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS AND APPOINTEES

#### THE HONORABLE WENDELL R. BEITZEL

Delegate, District 1A  
Garrett and Allegany Counties

#### THE HONORABLE BILL FERGUSON

Senator, Maryland District 46  
Baltimore City

#### ADOLPH W. EBERSBERGER, JR.

Insurance and Financial Specialist –  
Retired

#### THE HONORABLE KATIE FRY-HESTER

Senator, Maryland District 9  
Carroll and Howard Counties

#### MICHAEL JAMES

President  
Hospitality Partners

#### JAMES N. MATTHIAS

Former Maryland Senator

#### PAT NUTTER

Former Calvert County Commissioner

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## Section 4

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#### Annapolis/Anne Arundel County

**CONNIE DEL SIGNORE**  
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Tammy McCorkle

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Adventure Sports Center International, McHenry



## Be Open for More Customers

There are many ways to partner with the Maryland Office of Tourism in order to market your destination/attraction and to get the word out about your events and initiatives. Here are a few suggestions and contact information for our staff members who can help you:

**Visit with a Travel Counselor at any of the eight Maryland Welcome Centers and your local Visitor Center.**

410-767-6296, [info@visitmaryland.org](mailto:info@visitmaryland.org)

**Distribute your brochures and display marketing materials at Maryland Welcome Centers.**

410-767-6296, [info@visitmaryland.org](mailto:info@visitmaryland.org)

**Send your press releases to us and participate in travel media familiarization tours (FAM tours).**

Leslie Troy, 410-767-6298, [ltroy@visitmaryland.org](mailto:ltroy@visitmaryland.org)

**Review [visitmaryland.org](http://visitmaryland.org) to make sure your business listing is up to date.**

410-767-6296, [info@visitmaryland.org](mailto:info@visitmaryland.org)

**Get help with your business listing content.**

Jim Meyer, 410-767-6325, [jmeyer@visitmaryland.org](mailto:jmeyer@visitmaryland.org)

**Add your events to the [visitmaryland.org](http://visitmaryland.org) calendar.**

Kathi Ash, 410-767-6341, [kash@visitmaryland.org](mailto:kash@visitmaryland.org)

**Follow @TravelMD (Facebook/Twitter) and @visitmaryland (Instagram) and use our hashtag #MDinFocus on social media.**

**Provide tickets/prizes for Maryland Mondays giveaways.**

Leslie Troy, 410-767-6298, [ltroy@visitmaryland.org](mailto:ltroy@visitmaryland.org)  
[industry.visitmaryland.org](http://industry.visitmaryland.org).

**Utilize the resources and information on the Maryland Office of Tourism industry website, [industry.visitmaryland.org](http://industry.visitmaryland.org).**

**Submit photos to our WebDAM (Web Digital Asset Management) for Maryland Office of Tourism use.**

Kathi Ash, 41-767-6341, [kash@visitmaryland.org](mailto:kash@visitmaryland.org)

**Create group tour opportunities, and let us know about them.**

Rich Gilbert, 410-767-6288, [rgilbert@visitmaryland.org](mailto:rgilbert@visitmaryland.org)

**Get help reaching the travel trade market—group tours, student groups, reunions and receptive travel buyers. Participate in sales missions and trade show outreach, and receive tour leads.**

Rich Gilbert, 410-767-6288, [rgilbert@visitmaryland.org](mailto:rgilbert@visitmaryland.org)

**Use “Open For It” branding and creative assets in your advertising.**

Brian Lawrence, 410-767-6299, [blawrence@visitmaryland.org](mailto:blawrence@visitmaryland.org)

**Nominate your story into the National UGRR Network to Freedom and/or a Smithsonian affiliate.**

Heather Ersts, 410-767-6974, [hersts@visitmaryland.org](mailto:hersts@visitmaryland.org)

**The Maryland Office of Tourism promotes worldwide through our partners at Capital Region USA (CRUSA) and Brand USA.**

Scott Balyo, 540-450-7593, [sbalyo@capitalregionusa.org](mailto:sbalyo@capitalregionusa.org)

**Know your Destination Marketing Organization, Heritage Areas, Main Streets, and Arts & Entertainment Districts.**

**Let's Be Open For More Customers By Working Together.**



Published by the Maryland Department of Commerce

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