



# Elizabeth City - Pasquotank County Tourism Development Authority Board Meeting

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT | JANUARY 28, 2021



# *Marketing Updates*

# Shop & Dine Pass Poster



## OUR E-CITY SHOP & DINE PASS

Our E-City Shop & Dine Passport is a mobile savings pass and check-in challenge designed to bring the best of the destination to you at a discount. It's perfect for locals and visitors alike - after all, Elizabeth City makes everyone feel at home! Save at your favorite shops, try a new restaurant at a discount, and check in along the way to qualify for prizes!

### HOW IT WORKS



Receive a text or email with a link to your passport



Redeem your discounts at partner locations and click on 'Check in' to check-in at participating venues



Enter the displayed PIN# to check in



Sign up for free by scanning the QR code or visiting [Fun.VisitElizabethCity.com](https://Fun.VisitElizabethCity.com)

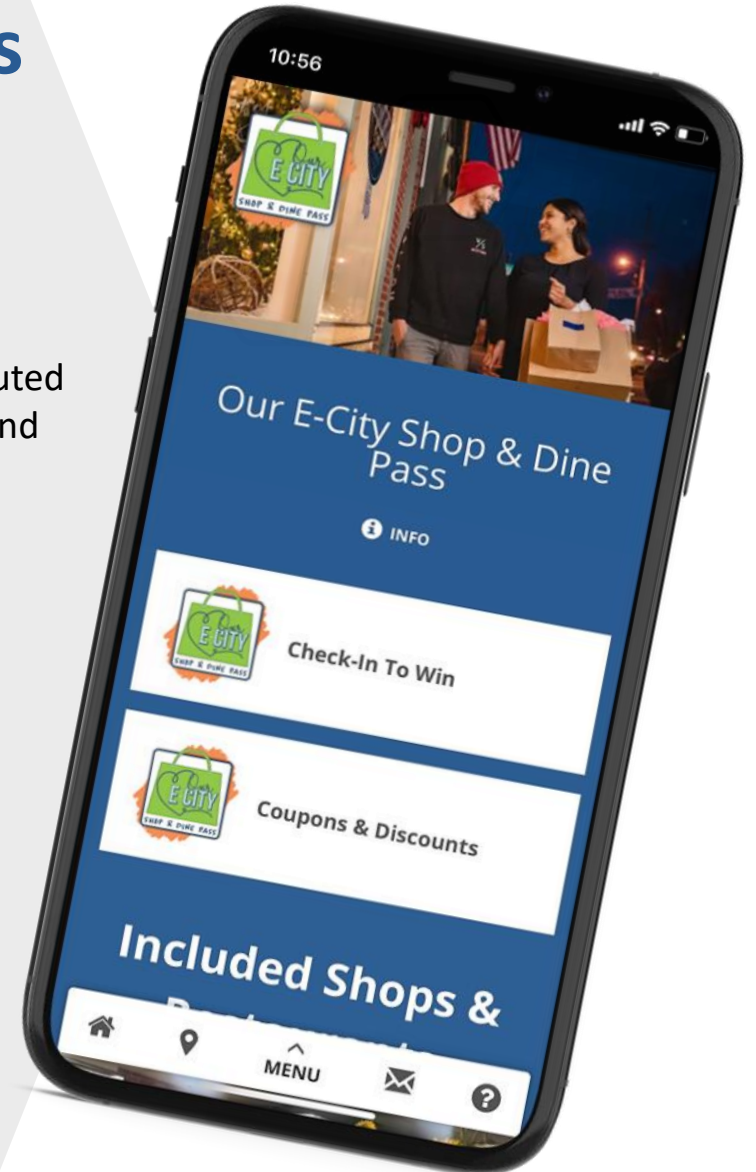


Enter the following PIN # to complete check-in

# 0908



40+ posters printed and distributed to all participating businesses and the welcome center







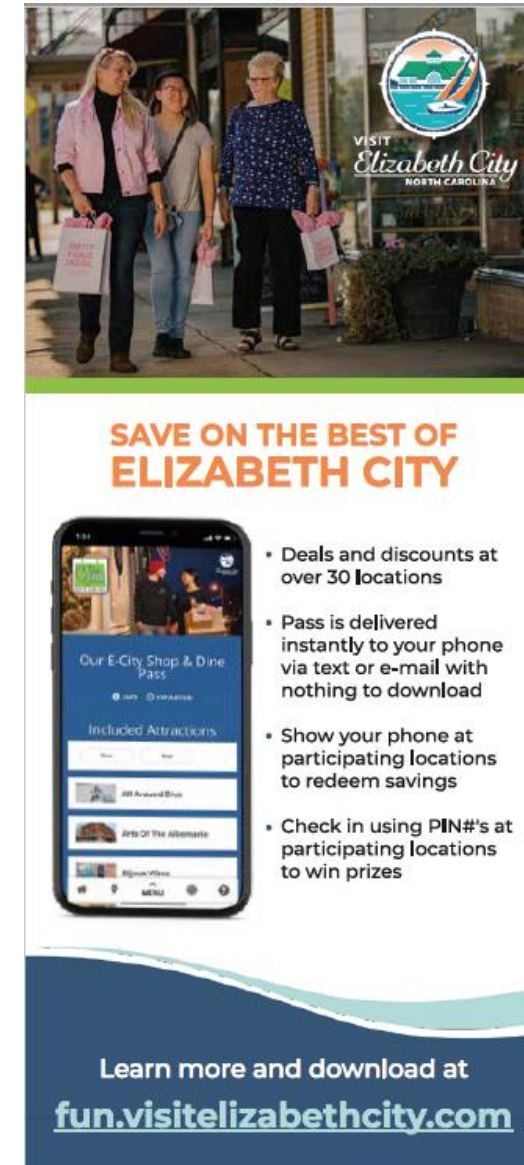
The front of the rack card features a green shopping bag icon with a heart shape inside. The text "Our E-CITY" is written in a cursive font inside the heart, and "SHOP & DINE PASS" is written below it. Below the icon, a green banner reads "SAVE AND WIN". The main text says "Unlock discounts at local restaurants and shops with our free savings pass. **Plus, win prizes along the way!**" followed by "Scan the code or visit our website to get yours!". At the bottom, there is a QR code and the website "fun.visitelizabethcity.com".

## Shop & Dine Pass Rack Card

← Front

Back →

500 rack cards printed and distributed to consumers via local shops, restaurants, hotels and the welcome center



The back of the rack card features a photo of three people walking on a sidewalk. Below the photo, the text "SAVE ON THE BEST OF ELIZABETH CITY" is written in orange. A smartphone displays the app interface for the "Our E-City Shop & Dine Pass". To the right of the phone, a list of features is provided: "Deals and discounts at over 30 locations", "Pass is delivered instantly to your phone via text or e-mail with nothing to download", "Show your phone at participating locations to redeem savings", and "Check in using PIN#'s at participating locations to win prizes". At the bottom, it says "Learn more and download at [fun.visitelizabethcity.com](https://fun.visitelizabethcity.com)".

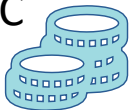


Grant funding used for a \$1300 paid Google PPC + retargeting Campaign earned-



Impressions:  
**780,512**

Average CPC  
**\$0.15**



Clicks  
**7,431**



## Paid Media Results



Grant funding used for a \$1000 paid Facebook placement earned-



Impressions:  
**139,087**

Reach  
**50,176**



Clicks  
**3,852**







Holidays



Email Sign-Up

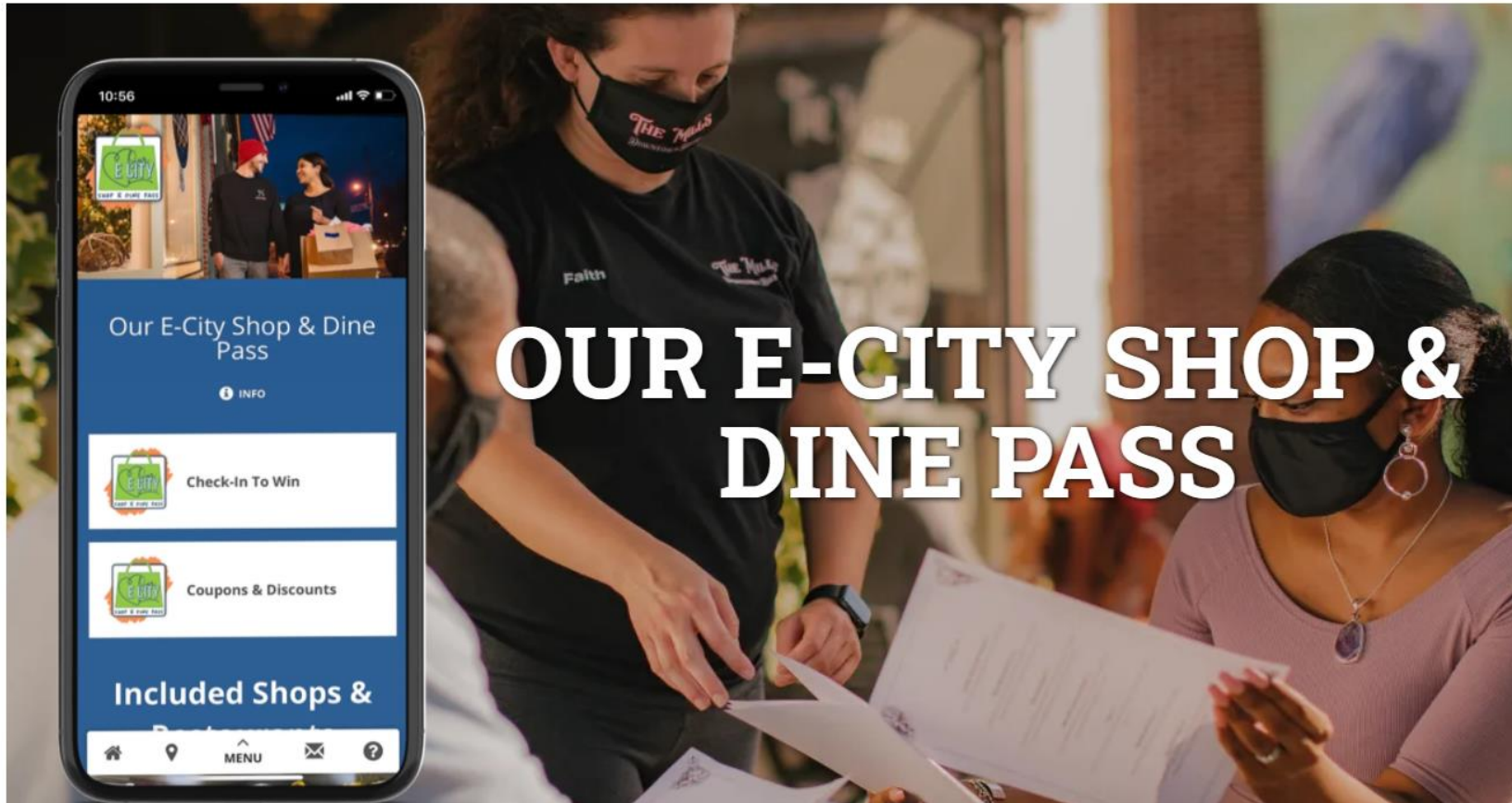


HarborCam



Search

## Shop, Dine & Support Local!



# OUR E-CITY SHOP & DINE PASS

*In the 5 weeks the pass was live (during the grant timeframe)*



Pageviews:  
**13,490**

Average Time on Page  
**3:05**



Pass Landing Page:

<https://visitelizabethcity.com/OurE-City/shop-dine-pass>



# Shop & Dine Pass

## 5 week results

**439** unique pass sign-ups

**378**

email  
opt-ins

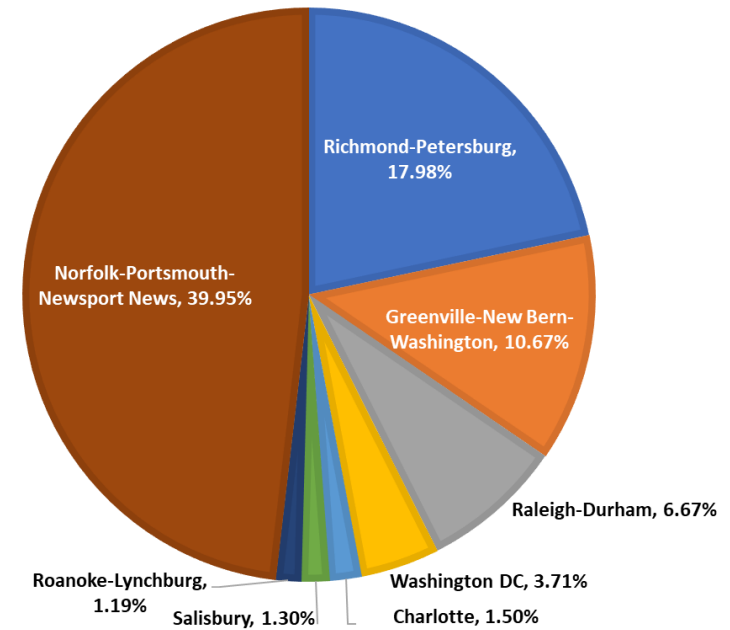


**391**

check-ins at  
participating  
businesses



**38** coupons  
redeemed



**39**

participating businesses









Over the last three months MMGY NJF has worked to promote interest in travel to Elizabeth City, North Carolina and generate awareness for the destination through a media relations campaign. By creating a proactive and robust media relations engine and creative programming, MMGY NJF garnered coverage in targeted national and regional publications and helped to improve business relationships with local partners. The campaign consisted of:

**“Calling All Elizabeths” Promotion:** To make national headlines and bring attention to Visit Elizabeth City, MMGY NJF worked with partners to create a quirky package that celebrated Elizabeths everywhere. The promotion included exclusive discounts to travelers named Elizabeth that were redeemable at local bars, restaurants, accommodations and attractions. A press release announcing the package was distributed to national and regional outlets.

**“Cozy Up with Elizabeth City” Media Mailer:** MMGY NJF curated a charming assortment of unique gifts and winter essentials that were locally sourced, including coffee, baked goods, a scented candle and more that together told the story of Elizabeth City. The mailers were sent to 11 regional and national journalists (freelancers and on-staff) to excite them about the destination and invite them to visit.

**News Bureau:** We developed at least two pitches per month that helped to align Elizabeth City with major trends in travel, current events and holidays. The destination was featured in pitches themed around charming small towns of America, cities with must-see art, National Wright Brothers Day, domestic haunted hotels and destinations, and towns full of Christmas cheer.

# CALLING ALL ELIZABETHS

## NEW YORK POST

### This city is inviting anyone named Elizabeth to come visit and enjoy discounts

By Cortney Moore, Fox News  
November 13, 2020



Ghost Harbor Brewing Company has cre

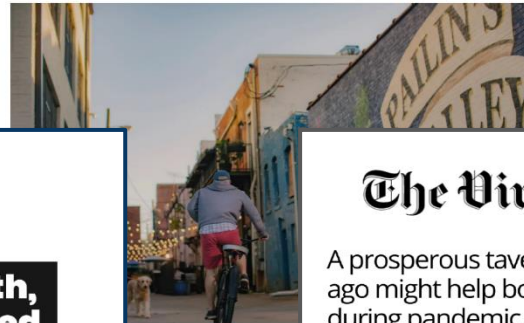
## TRAVEL+LEISURE

### Calling All Elizabeths: This Nc Town Has a Sweet Deal for You

Elizabeth City, North Carolina want to celebrate people who share its name.

NOVEMBER 11, 2020

BY STACEY LEASCA



## TimeOut

### If your name is Elizabeth, you can travel to this city in North Carolina for pretty cheap

Elizabeths of the world, unite!

Anna Ben Yehuda



Elizabeth City in North Carolina is looking for you.

## MATADOR network

### If your name is Elizabeth, you can get a discounted vacation to this North Carolina town

Eben Diskin

Nov 13, 2020

IF YOU HAPPEN to be named Elizabeth, you're eligible for a discounted trip to Elizabeth City in North Carolina. Located where the Inner Banks meet the Outer Banks, the city is celebrating those who share its name with a new "Calling All Elizabeths" promotion. The deal, which runs from November 9 to December 30, 2020, includes discounts on accommodation, dining, and activities for all travelers named Elizabeth.

Corrina Ruffiux, executive director of Visit Elizabeth City, said in a statement, "We wanted a fun and exciting way to celebrate our town and invite travelers to experience this hidden gem of the South. Elizabeth is the fifth most popular name in the United States, so we hope to have quite a few Elizabeths answer the call and enjoy the sights and sounds of our inviting waterfront community."

## The Virginian-Pilot

A prosperous tavern owner from two centuries ago might help boost Elizabeth City's downtown during pandemic

By JEFF HAMPTON  
NOV 13, 2020



Casey Heard, owner of The Sweet Easy in Elizabeth City, mixes an Elizabeth Latte as part of a town campaign. (Visit Elizabeth City)

15  
Media  
Placements

313,216,106  
Impressions



**BuzzFeed**

## 18 Surprisingly Cool Small Towns In The USA

Size isn't everything.



by **Jemima Skelley**  
BuzzFeed Contributor

Dec 28, 2020

### 17. Elizabeth City — No



**Forbes**

## Five Idyllic American Small Towns To Visit In 2021

*Every destination has a story, no matter how small.*

Jared Rahanan

Nov 26, 2020

The United States has won worldwide acclaim for its rich array of bustling cities stretching from New York City to Los Angeles. While skyscrapers and busy streets may appeal to some visitors, those who prefer to trek off the beaten path should plan a visit to one of the many small towns that can be found all across the nation. Equipped with spectacular natural beauty and fascinating historic backgrounds, these five towns are the perfect fit for experiencing the quieter side of the United States.

**TRAVEL  
PULSE**

## Small US Towns to Add to Your Travel Bucket List

LACEY PFALZ

OCTOBER 28, 2020

### Small US Towns to Add to Your Bucket List

Small towns have always been the treasures of the American South. With so many people hitting the road this year than ever before, small towns are becoming more popular than ever. These cities are perfect for anyone looking for a small-town experience. Elizabeth City, North Carolina, is a perfect example of a small town that has everything you need for a great vacation. It's a beautiful coastal town with a rich history and a welcoming atmosphere. Whether you're in the mood for a lazy beach vacation or a more adventurous trip, Elizabeth City has something for everyone. It's a great place to add to your travel bucket list.

**msn**

## Small US Towns to Add to Your Travel Bucket List

LACEY PFALZ

OCTOBER 28, 2020



### Elizabeth City, North Carolina

Population: 17,558

Located near the Outer Banks, the coastal town of Elizabeth City is home to B&Bs such as the [Culpepper Inn](#) and the [Pond House Inn](#). A variety of cultural events await visitors to the town, such as the [North Carolina Potato Festival](#) and the [First Friday ArtWalk](#), featuring live music and art created by local artists. The city itself is a hub of artistic endeavor: check out the [Coca-Cola ghost mural](#), along with the many others commissioned by [Project Art Downtown](#). Good food and great art awaits you at this charming coastal town.

4

Media  
Placements

118,663,154  
Impressions

## COZY UP TO ELIZABETH CITY



11  
Media Mailers

27,113  
Instagram  
Impressions



# RESULTS



Over \$8.5 MILLION  
Advertising Equivalency



# THANK YOU

**MM  
GY** NJF





Brought to you by our Presenting Sponsor



**CoastGuardRun.com** – Launched 01/21/2021

[Sign Up Now](#)[Race Info](#)[Event Info](#)[Sign Up Now](#)[Photos](#)[Teams](#)[Results](#)

# Coast Guard Half Marathon & 5K

Sat March 6 - Wed March 31, 2021

Elizabeth City, NC 27909 US



## DESCRIPTION

Get ready to run (or walk) the first ever Coast Guard Half Marathon or Guardians of the Atlantic 5K! With safety in mind, this inaugural event is going virtual, so run your race wherever you choose – on a treadmill, in a park, on a local track, or on your usual jogging route. Whether you finish the half marathon or 5k on March 6, 2021 or run a half-mile each day until you reach the virtual finish line is up to you!

All runners receive a swag package including a custom bib, marathon 100% cotton t-shirt and interactive finisher's medal for just \$45.

Until now, the United States Coast Guard was the only branch of the U.S. military without an official foot race. As the host of the event, Visit Elizabeth City is excited to celebrate our Coastie community and host this official event for Coast Guard members, family, and supporters across the country.

**[RunSignUp.com/Race/NC/ElizabethCity/CoastGuardHalf](https://RunSignUp.com/Race/NC/ElizabethCity/CoastGuardHalf) — Launched 01/21/2021**



Presenting Sponsor: **\$22,500**



Contributing Sponsor: **\$1,000**

vector**CSP**

# Registration Package



## Early-bird bonus

Free water bottle for first 500 registrants!



<https://runsignup.com/Race/NC/ElizabethCity/CoastGuardHalf>



# Display Ads

**COAST GUARD**  
HALF MARATHON

Ready.  
Set.  
Go!

Inaugural **Virtual Coast Guard** Half Marathon & 5k Race

hosted by

VISIT Elizabeth City  
NORTH CAROLINA

VRC  
VIRTUAL RUNNING CLUB

March 6<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> 2021 | **Register Today!**



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VRC  
VIRTUAL RUNNING CLUB

March 6<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> 2021 | **Register Today!**





# Google Display Ads + PPC

**COAST GUARD**  **Ready. Set. Go!**  
**HALF MARATHON**  
Inaugural **Virtual Coast Guard** Half Marathon & 5k Race

hosted by  
  
VISIT Elizabeth City NORTH CAROLINA  




March 6<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> 2021 | **Register Today!**

**COAST GUARD**  **Ready. Set. Go!**  
**HALF MARATHON**  
Inaugural **Virtual Coast Guard** Half Marathon & 5k Race

hosted by  
  
VISIT Elizabeth City NORTH CAROLINA  




March 6<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> 2021 | **Register Today!**

# Facebook & Instagram Ads

**COAST GUARD**  **Inaugural Virtual Coast Guard Half Marathon & 5k Race**  
**HALF MARATHON** March 6<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> 2021

hosted by  
  
VISIT Elizabeth City NORTH CAROLINA  




**ALWAYS READY**  
INAUGURAL COAST GUARD HALF MARATHON & 5K

**COAST GUARD**  **Inaugural Virtual Coast Guard Half Marathon & 5k Race**  
**HALF MARATHON** March 6<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> 2021

hosted by  
  
VISIT Elizabeth City NORTH CAROLINA  




**ALWAYS READY**  
INAUGURAL COAST GUARD HALF MARATHON & 5K



8.5x11 flyer

# READY. SET. RACE!

INAUGURAL COAST GUARD HALF MARATHON & 5K

MARCH 6 - 31, 2021

Until now, the United States Coast Guard was the only branch of the U.S. military without an official road race. **Visit Elizabeth City** is excited to host this first official **Coast Guard Half Marathon**. With safety in mind, this inaugural event is going virtual, so you can run your own race in your own space.

All active and retired military receive 10% off the entry fee, so get ready to run the first ever Coast Guard Half Marathon or Guardians of the Atlantic 5K and register today!



To learn more about the race,  
visit **CoastGuardRun.com**  
or scan this QR code




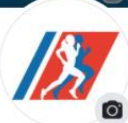
Presenting Sponsor  
**AdeNation**  
Hydration for every body, every day™

# CoastGuardRun.com

Please like, share,  
and follow!

# Social Media





**Coast Guard Half Marathon & 5K**  
@CoastGuardRun · Sports Event

[Edit Sign Up](#)

Home Events Reviews More

[Promote](#) [View as Visitor](#) [Search](#) [More](#)

Manage your Page and Instagram account together with Business Suite.

[Go to Business Suite](#)

**You Completed All the Steps**  
Great job! You can update info any time in [Edit Page Info](#). Remember to also post regularly so that people can learn more about your business.

13 of 13 steps completed

Create Post

Photo/Video

Get Messages

Feeling/Activity

Create

Live


Event

Offer

Job

[More](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/CoastGuardRun>






**coastguardrun** [Message](#) [Follow](#) [More](#)

5 posts 12 followers 17 following

**Coast Guard Half Marathon**  
The first official foot race of the U.S. Coast Guard taking place virtually in Elizabeth City, NC. Virtual race starts March 6, 2021!  
[coastguardrun.com](https://coastguardrun.com)

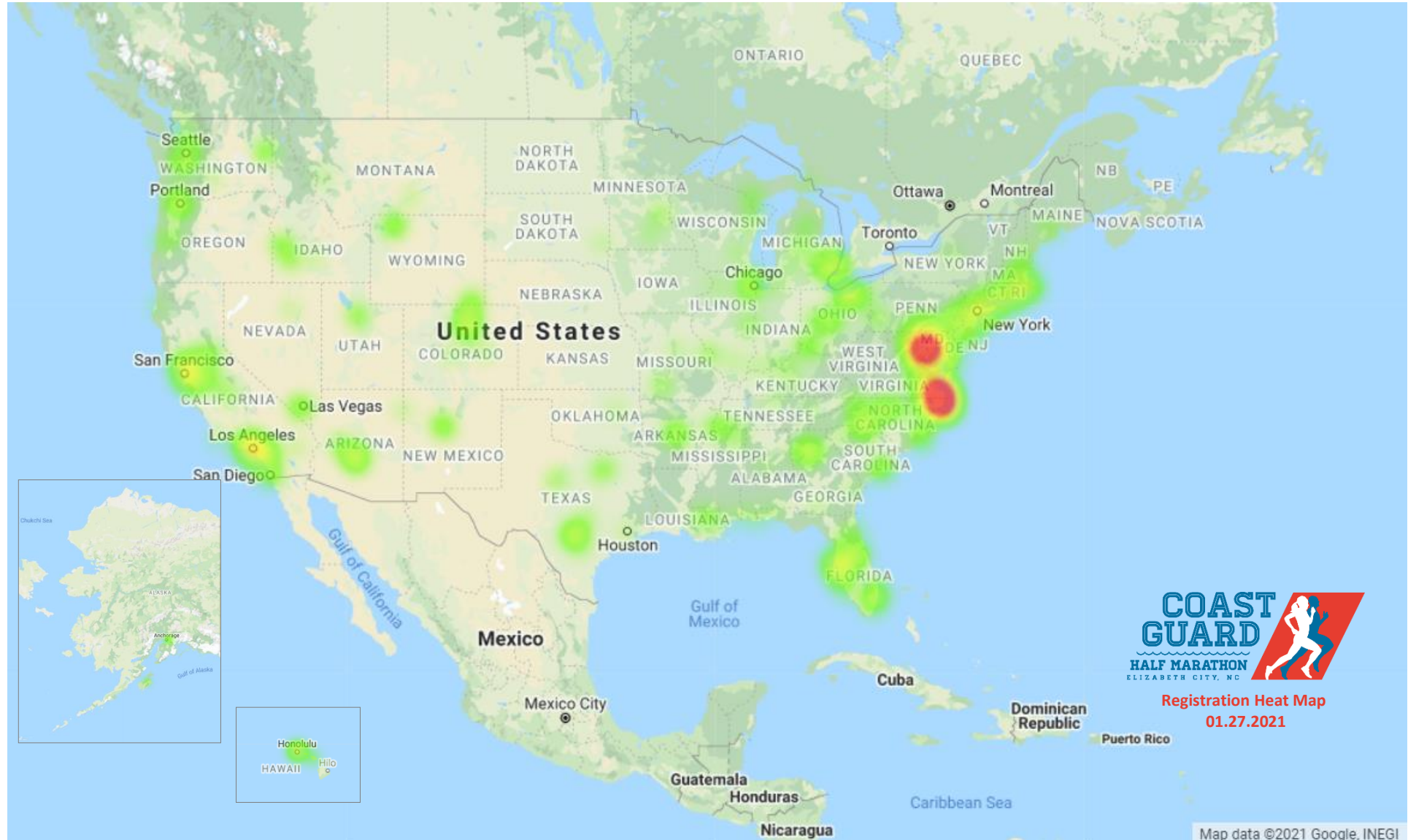
POSTS TAGGED



<https://www.instagram.com/coastguardrun/>



# Registrations in 45 States & counting





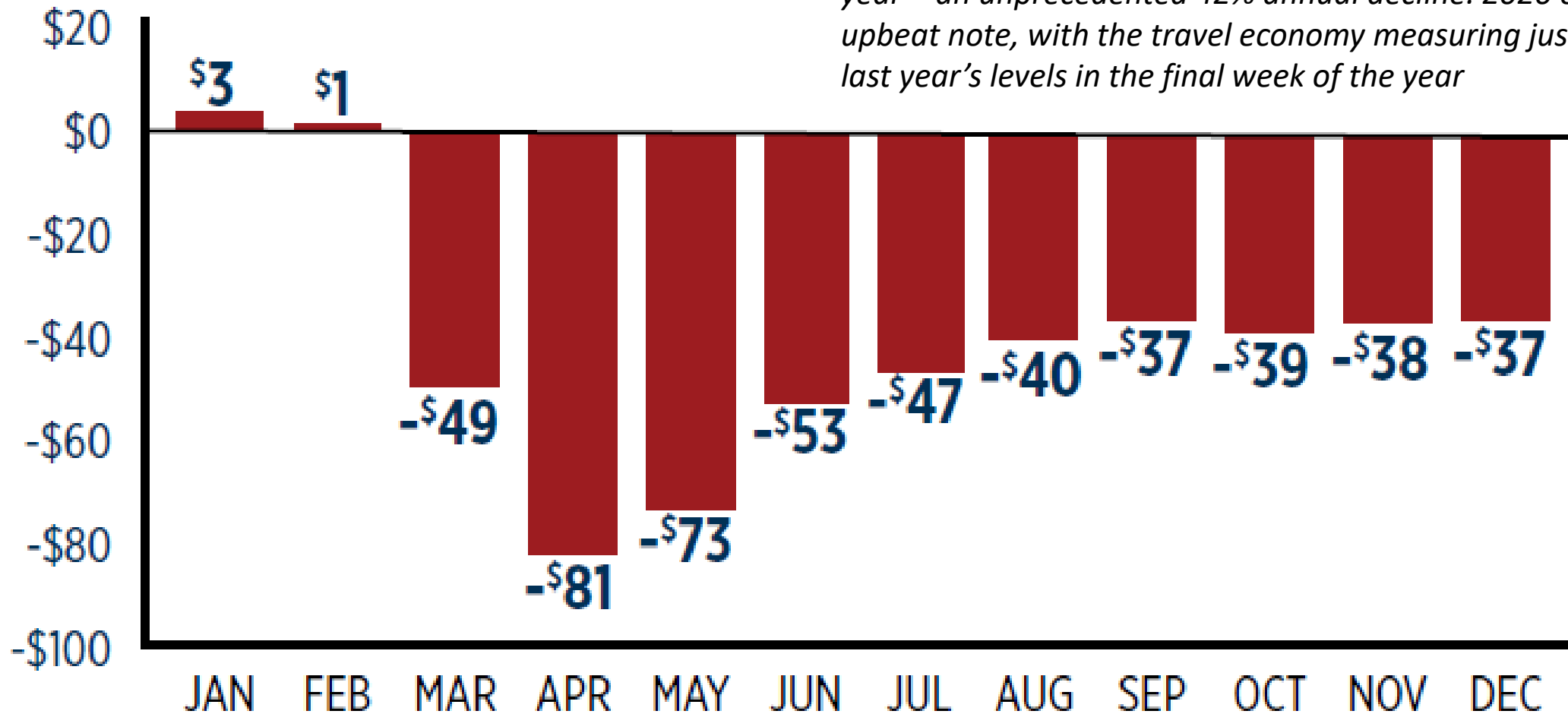
# *COVID-19 & the State of the Travel Industry*



# National Monthly Travel Spending

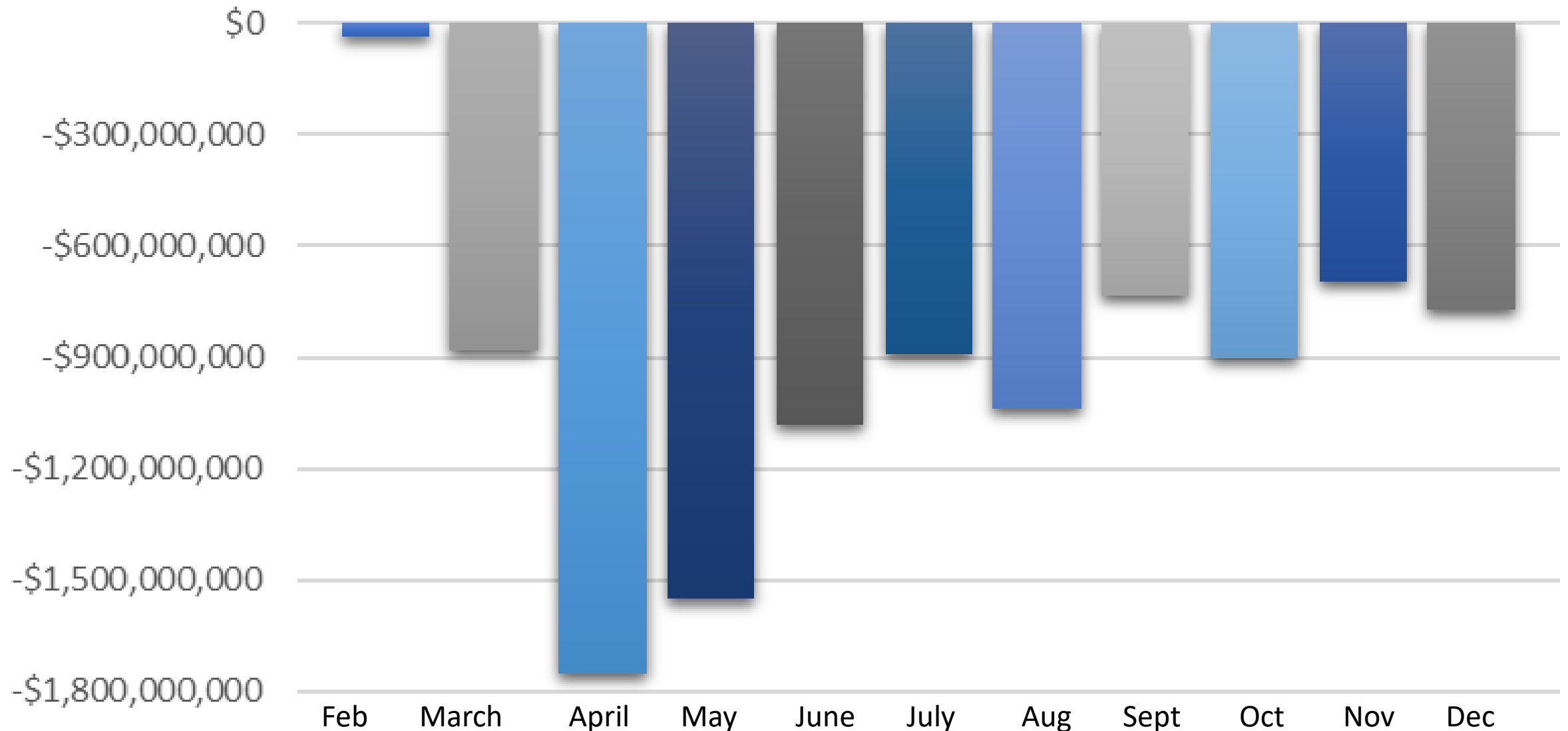
(\$ billions, year-over-year change)

*In 2020, the travel sector lost \$492 billion compared to the prior year – an unprecedented 42% annual decline. 2020 ended on an upbeat note, with the travel economy measuring just 27% below last year's levels in the final week of the year*



Source: Tourism Economics

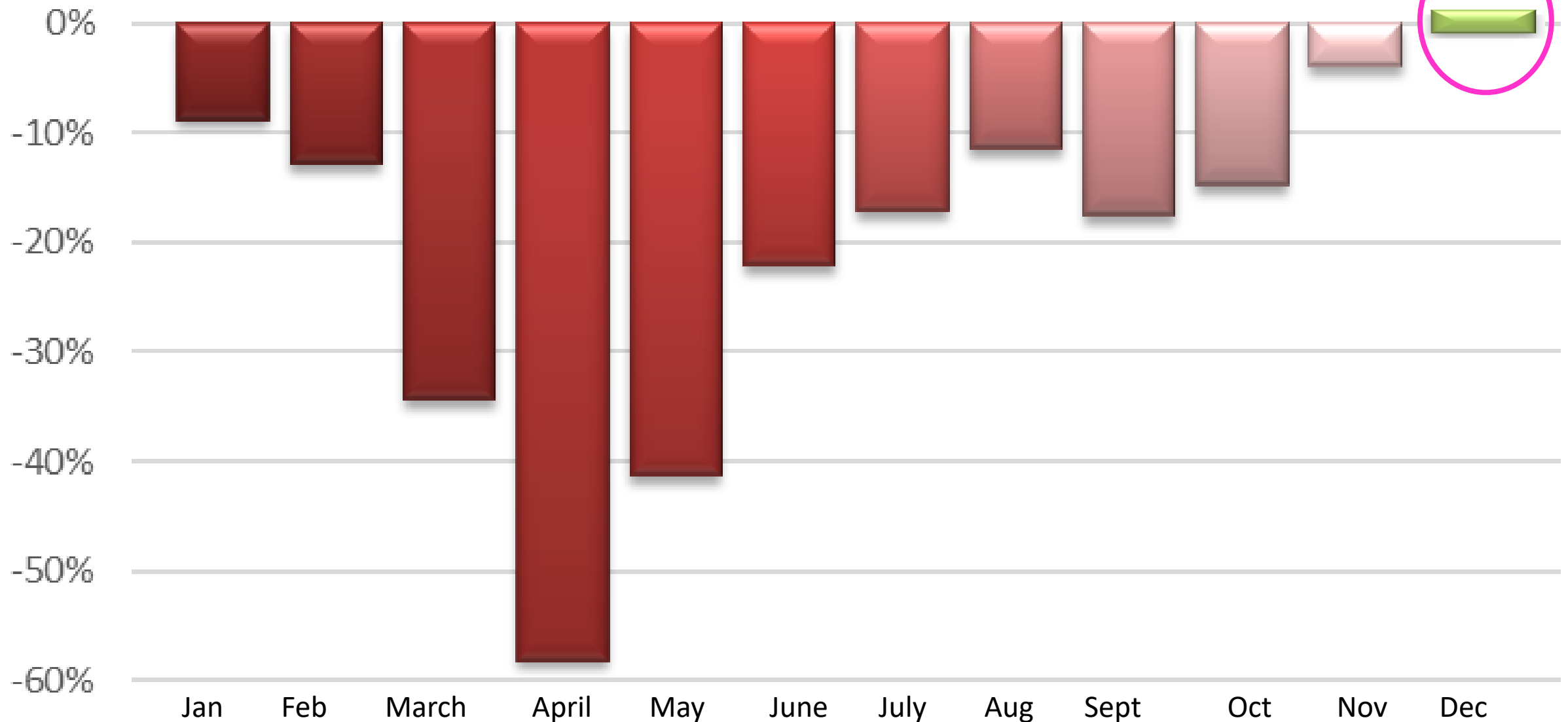
# North Carolina YoY Change in Travel Spending





# Elizabeth City - Pasquotank County

## Occupancy Tax Year-over-Year Decrease





## 2020 Smith Travel Research Report Measures

	EC Region <i>Actuals</i>	EC Region YOY <i>Comparison</i>	Golds- boro <i>Actuals</i>	Golds- boro YOY <i>Comparison</i>	Beaufort County <i>Actuals</i>	Beaufort County YOY <i>Comparison</i>	New Bern <i>Actuals</i>	New Bern YOY <i>Comparison</i>	Middle OBX <i>Actuals</i>	Middle OBX YOY <i>Comparison</i>	Suffolk, VA <i>Actuals</i>	Suffolk, VA YOY <i>Comparison</i>	NC – Entire State YOY <i>Comparison</i>	NC – Northeast Region YOY <i>Comparison</i>
<i>Month To Date – December, 2020</i>														
Occupancy	51.1%	+7.2% from Dec'19	36.9%	-17.0%	30.2%	-14.1%	46.8%	-19.3%	26.9%	-9.4%	43.9%	-4.0%		
ADR	\$74.12	-9.9%	\$79.29	-6.6%	\$65.85	-11.4%	\$91.23	-7.1%	\$99.11	5.4%	\$75.44	-7.5%		
RevPAR	\$37.84	-3.4%	\$29.23	-22.5%	\$19.90	-23.9%	\$42.67	-25.0%	\$26.65	-4.5%	\$33.09	-11.2%		
<i>Year to Date – December 2020</i>														
Occupancy	50.6%	-17.9%	49.3%	-18.2%	33.7%	-35.1%	59.2%	-22.9%	49.5%	-16.7%	50.2%	-19.9%		
ADR	\$84.45	-7.7%	\$82.44	-6.6%	\$72.61	-6.4%	\$97.05	-13.8%	\$180.03	4.6%	\$81.49	-11.5%		
RevPAR	\$42.70	-24.2%	\$40.64	-23.6%	\$24.45	-39.2%	\$57.43	-33.6%	\$89.19	-12.9%	\$40.87	-29.1%		

EC Region includes: 7 out of 7 properties; total rooms: 541/541

Goldsboro includes: 10 out of 15 properties; total rooms: 915/1127

Beaufort County includes: 6 out of 9 properties; total rooms: 413/548

Northeast Region includes: Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Edgecombe, Gates, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Martin, Nash, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Pitt, Tyrrell, Washington, Wilson

New Bern includes: 7 out of 8 properties; total rooms: 636/701

Middle OBX includes: 6 out of 17 properties; total rooms: 687/1095; (Kitty Hawk, Duck, Nags Head)

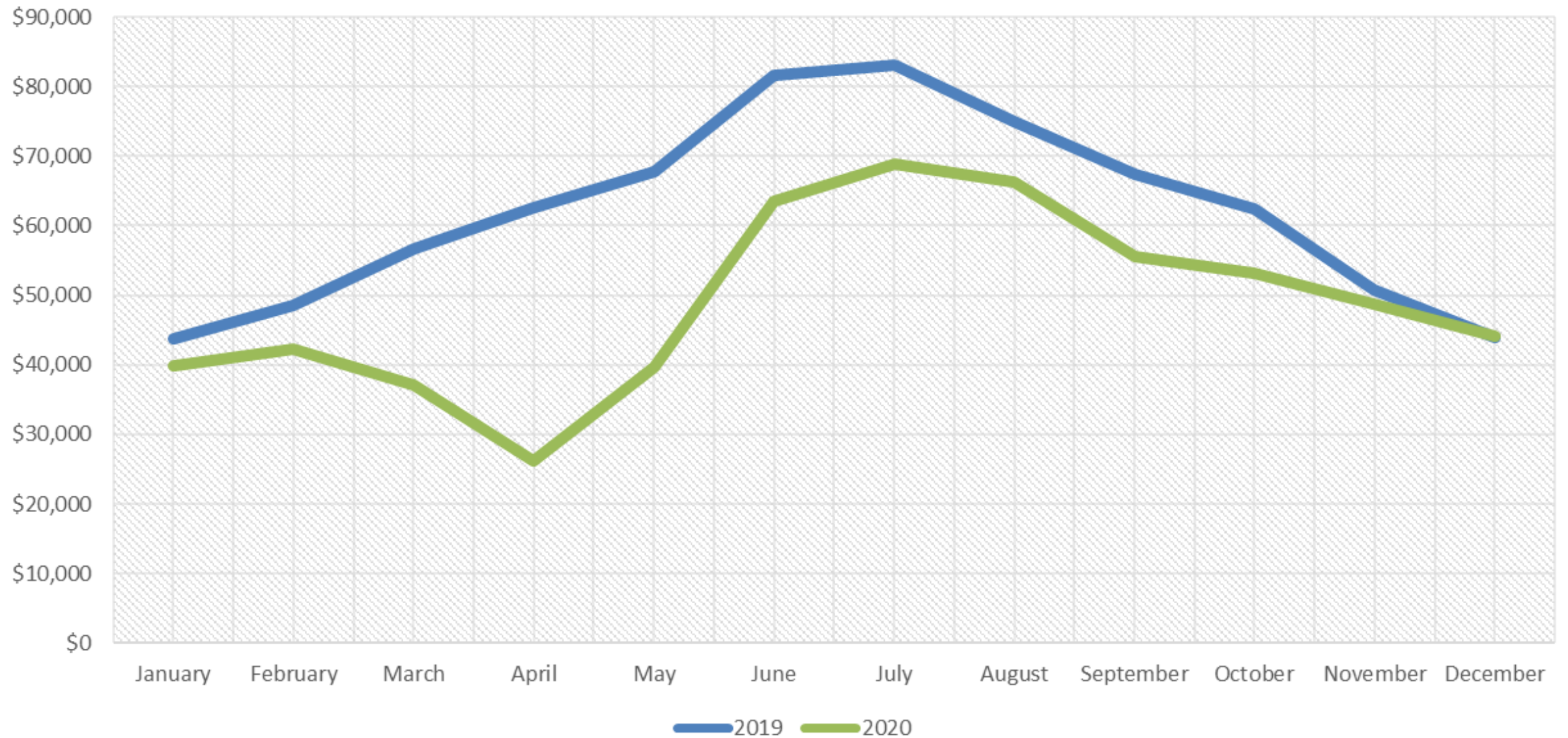
Suffolk, VA includes: 9/12 properties; total rooms: 835/990

ADR= Average Daily Rate

RevPAR= Revenue Per Available Room

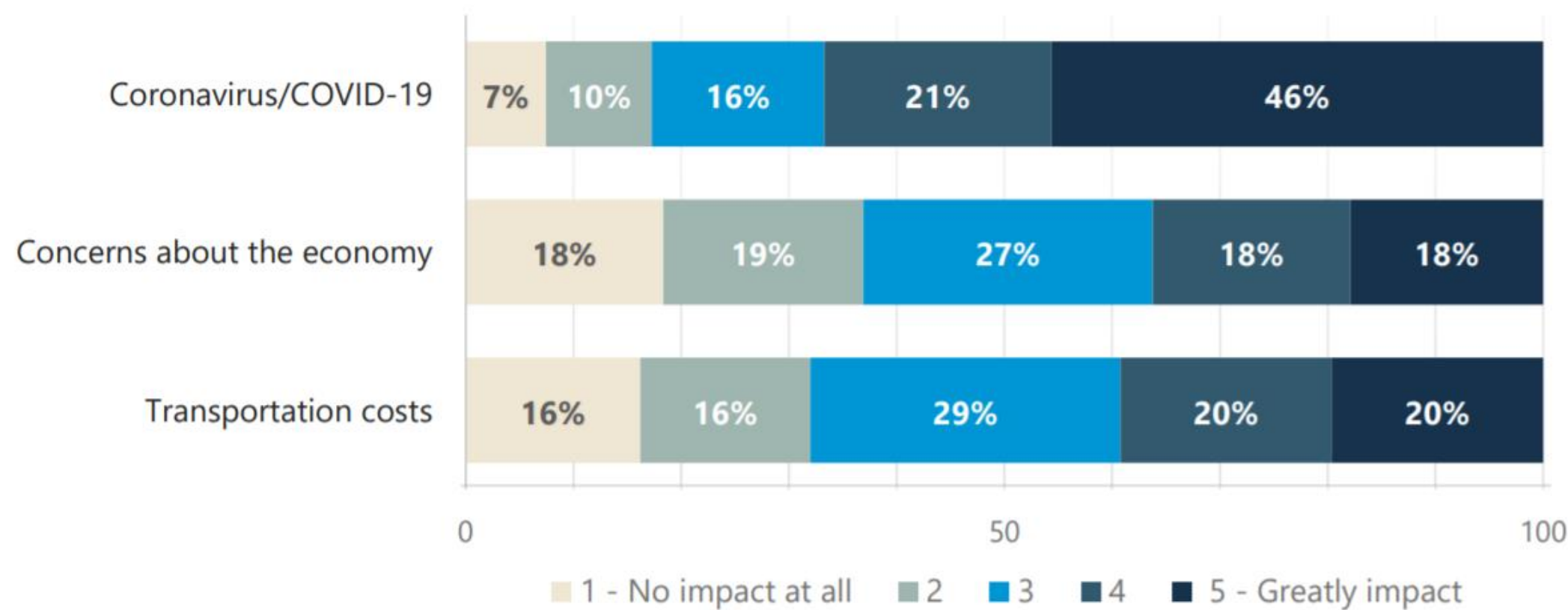


## Actual Revenue Collected 2019 vs 2020



**IMPACT ON TRAVEL PLANS**

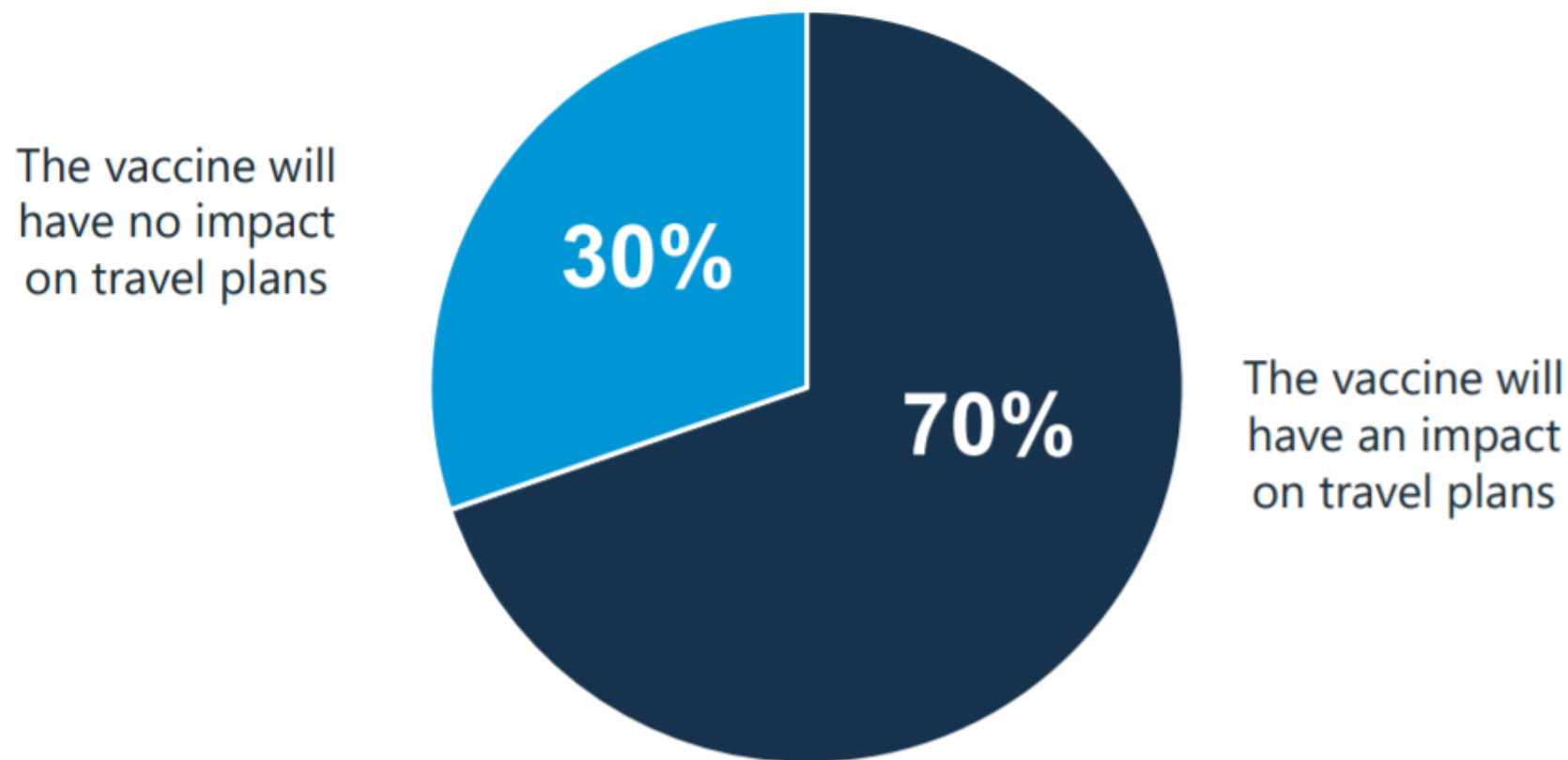
**Factors Impacting Decisions to Travel in Next 6 Months**





## IMPACT ON TRAVEL PLANS

### Impact of COVID-19 Vaccine on Travel Plans

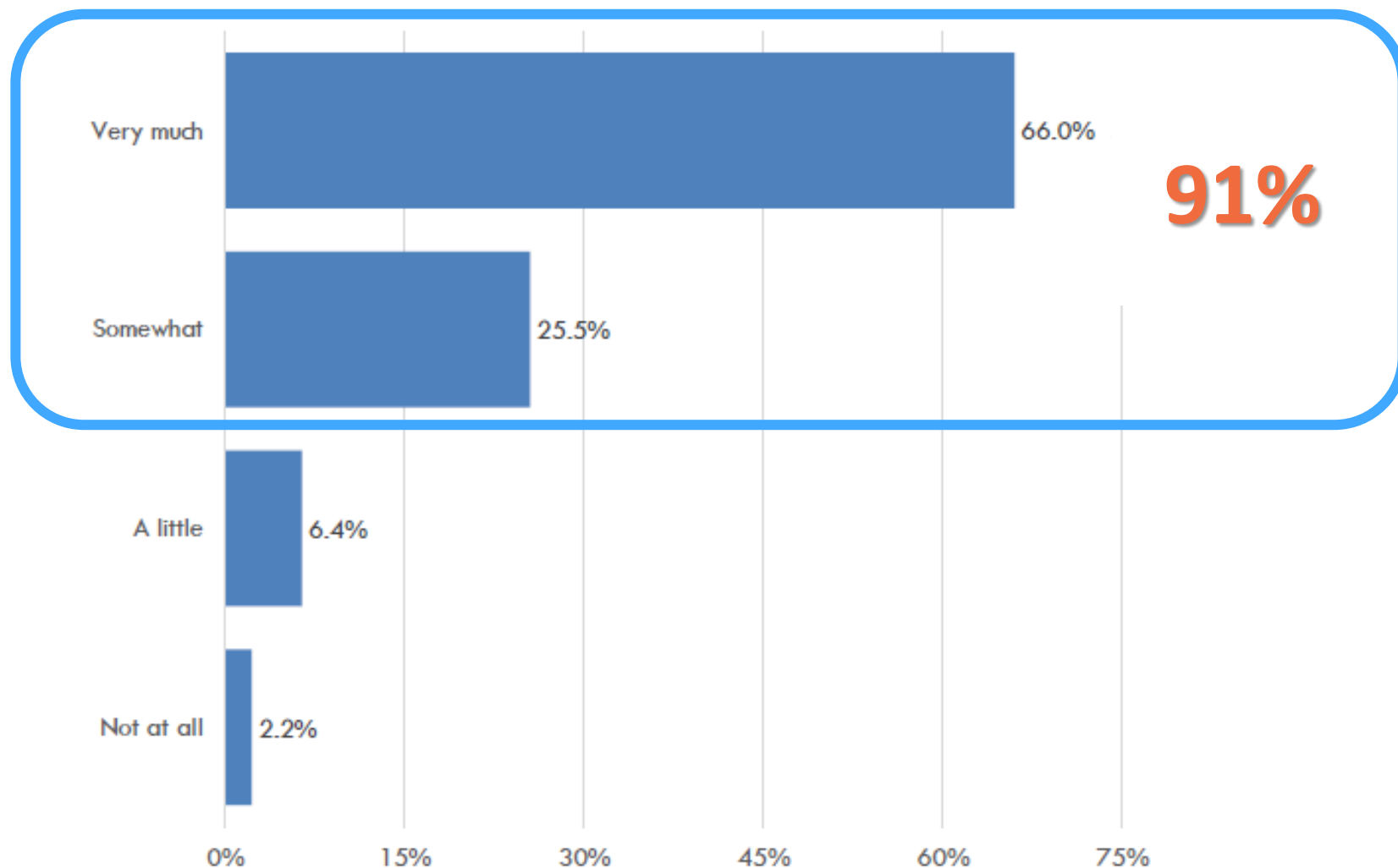


# AMERICANS WHOSE TRAVEL PATTERNS HAVE CHANGED DUE TO PANDEMIC: HOW MUCH DO YOU MISS TRAVELING?

**Question:** How much do you miss traveling? (Select one to fill in the blank)

I miss traveling \_\_\_\_\_

(Base: Waves 46 data. Respondents who have changed their travel patterns in response to the pandemic, 958 completed surveys. Data collected January 22-24, 2021)

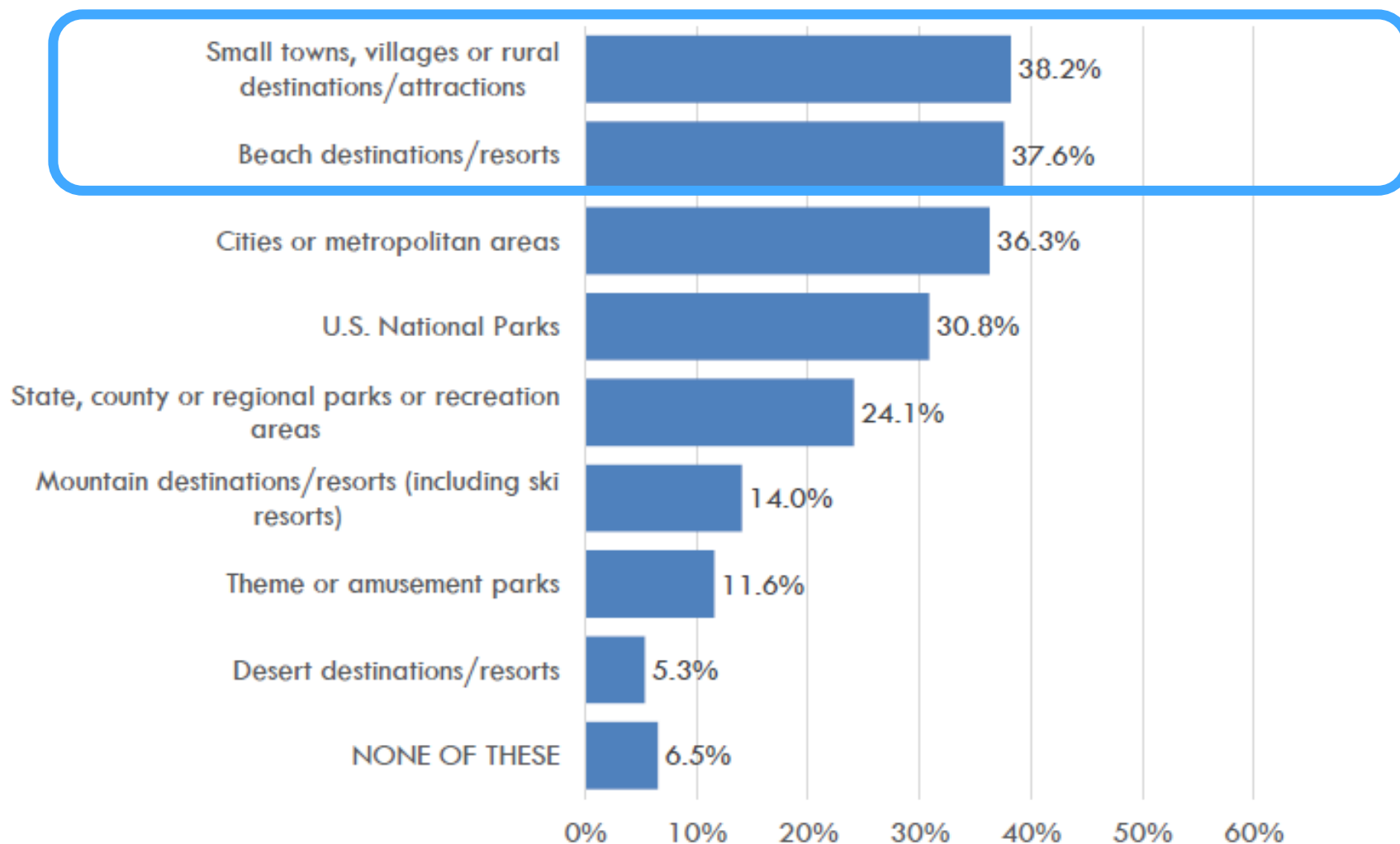




# DESTINATION TYPES EXPECTED (NEXT THREE MONTHS)

**Question:** On these leisure trips, which of the following are you expecting to visit?

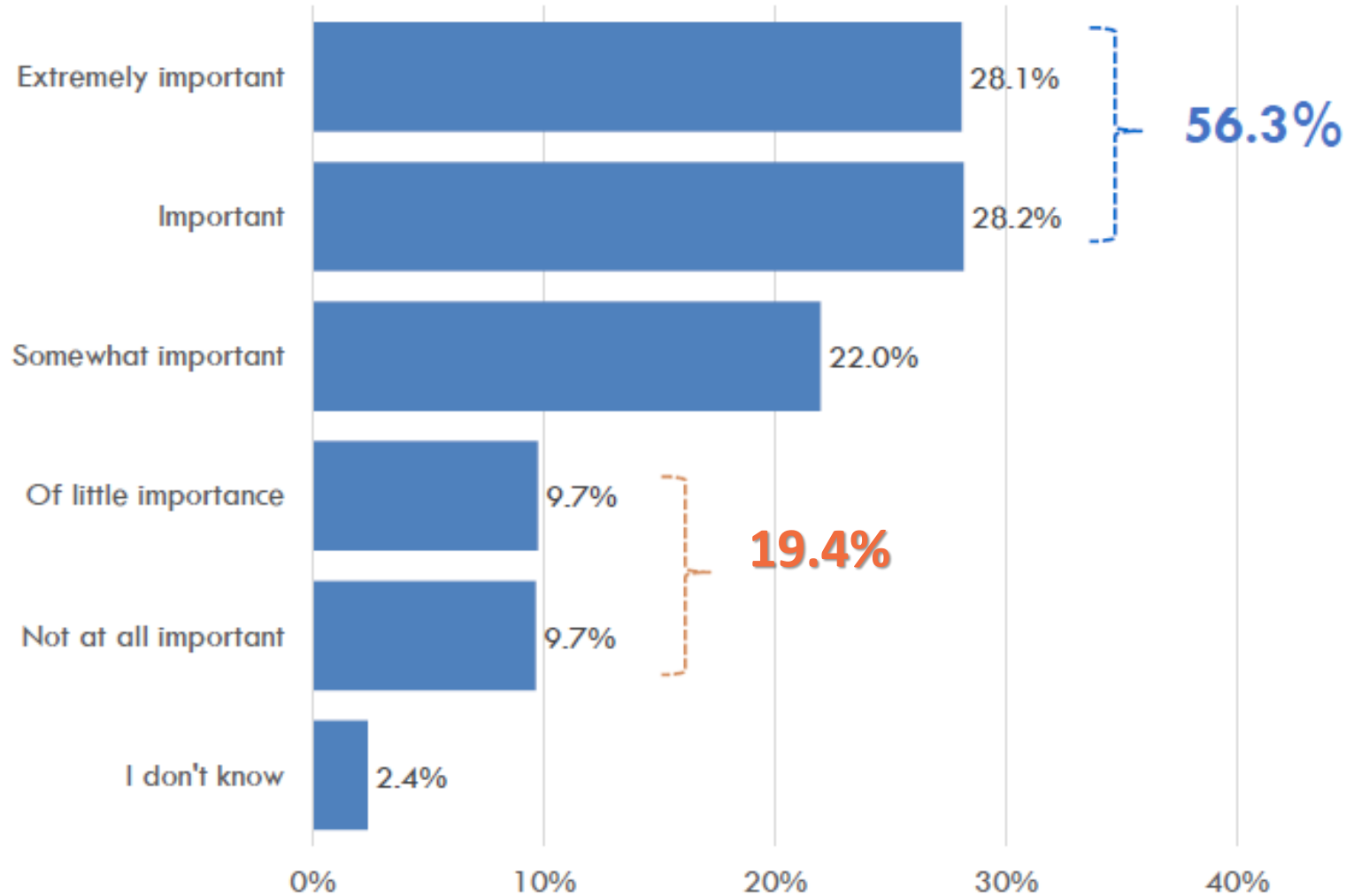
(Base: Waves 46 data. Respondents expecting to travel in the next three months, 552 completed surveys. Data collected January 22-24, 2021)



# COVID-19 SAFETY AND PREFERENCE FOR RURAL DESTINATIONS

**Question:** How important are safety concerns related to the COVID-19 situation to your preference for small towns and rural destinations? (Select one)

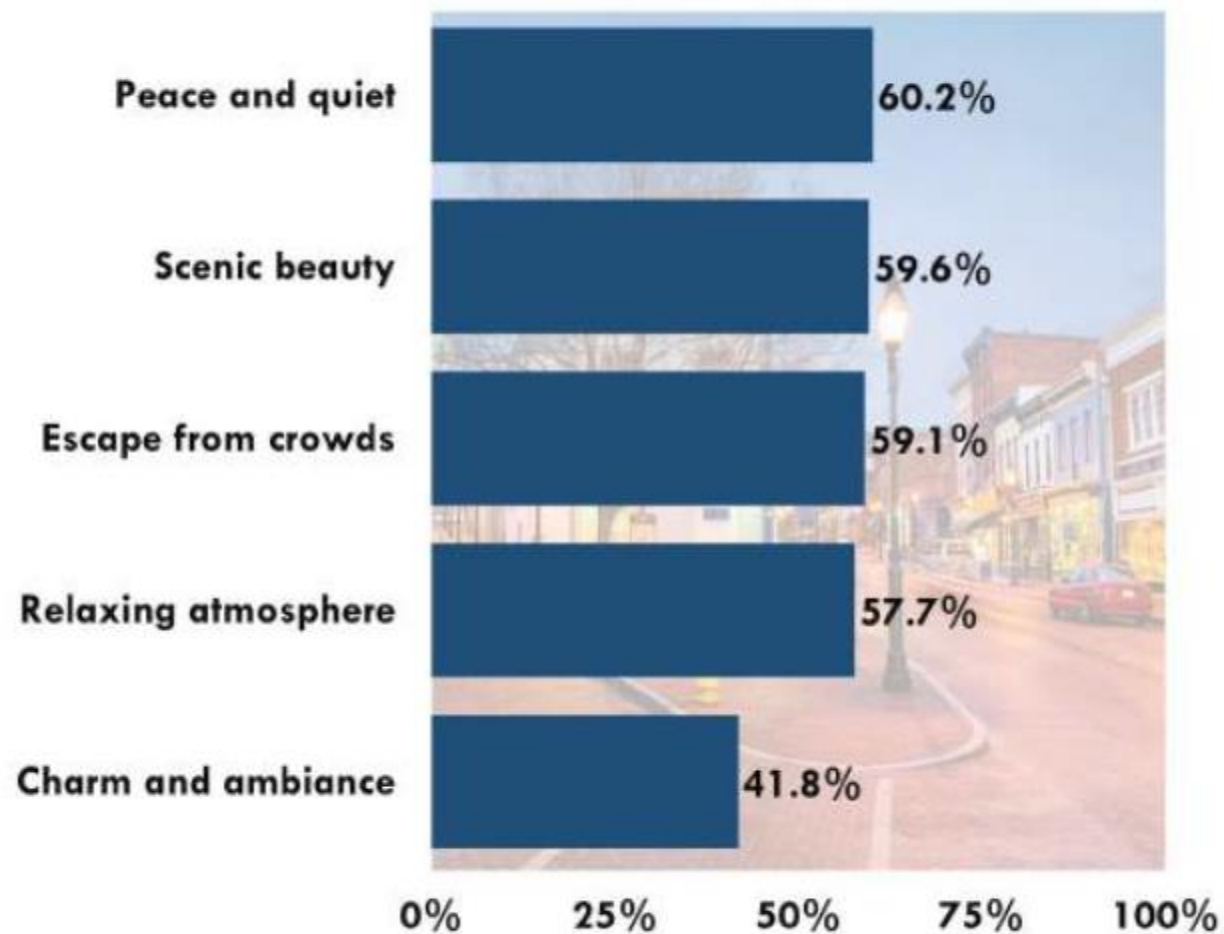
(Base: Waves 46 data. Respondents who prefer rural destinations. 390 completed surveys. Data collected January 22-24, 2021)





# TOP 5 REASONS FOR RURAL TRAVEL PREFERENCE

AS OF JANUARY 24, 2021



**Question:** Which of the following are reasons you prefer small towns or rural destinations? (Select all that apply)

## Feelings About Travel: Historical Perspective

## Marc



## April



## May



## October











## *Old Business*



DESTINATION MARKETING  
ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

### **ADVOCACY PLAN**

**The DMO has an advocacy plan and is pro-actively involved in advocacy initiatives for issues impacting the destination and/or the DMO.**

The local advocacy plan should involve more than just DMO staff members, and should incorporate members of the board and/or industry at a minimum. Plans may include educational outreach within the community to inform about the value and/or contributions of the industry (or the DMO) to the community's bottom line; speaker bureaus; specific initiatives tied to a referendum of interest; representation on key community organizations; etc.

## Funding Commitments:

City of Elizabeth City – up to \$75,000

Pasquotank County – up to \$75,000

Visit Elizabeth City – up to \$75,000

Elizabeth City Downtown, Inc – up to \$20,000

Committee of 100 - \$5,000

## Progress Updates:

- In-person meeting with NCDOT on Jan. 12
- NCDOT to review and provide preliminary feedback (est 30 days)
- Any necessary modifications addressed and formal application will be submitted (est 5 days)
- Final NCDOT approval (est 30 days)

## Moving Ahead:

- Publish Fabrication RFP to solicit accurate pricing and installation timeline







*New Business*



#### A highlight of the requirements to qualify:

- The organization has 300 or fewer employees
- The organization does not receive more than 15 percent of receipts from lobbying;
- Demonstrate at least a 25% reduction in gross receipts in the first, second, or third quarter of 2020 relative to the same quarter in 2019

#### A highlight of allowable expenses to request forgiveness

- Payroll (same definition as above)
- Rent
- Utilities including phones, cloud-based software and internet service

#### One additional key element:

- Retain the same number of employees throughout the PPP funded period.

#### ***Requested Motion:***

*This funding is essential to our continuing to operate at our standard level of work and programs due to significant loss of revenue into the TDA due to COVID and authorize the Executive Director to move forward with the application.*



**Thank you!**