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RISE IN TOURISM REVITALIZES CLEVELAND ECONOMY

POSITIVELY CLEVELAND RELEASES RESULTS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

CLEVELAND (Sept. 13, 2012) – Travel and tourism is on the rise in Cleveland. And, the results showcase how this industry is helping to revitalize the economy.

Positively Cleveland, the region's convention and visitors bureau, released new data detailing the economic impact of the growing tourism industry in Cuyahoga County for 2011 today.

According to *The Economic Impact of Tourism Study*, organized by the research firm Tourism Economics and coordinated by the Ohio Tourism Division, tourism is increasing across Northeast Ohio and impacting Greater Cleveland in four economic areas:

- **VISITOR VOLUME**– In 2011, according to a 2012 study conducted by D.K. Shifflet & Associates, 14.9 million visitors came to Cuyahoga County (up from 13 million in 2009).¹ In fact, tourism generated \$6.7 billion in related business activity. These sales figures are up 12 percent from 2009.²
- **JOB GROWTH** - Tourism supports 1 in every 11 salaried jobs in Cuyahoga County, sustaining nearly 9 percent of salaried employment; Cuyahoga County's tourism employment was more than 60,946 individuals in 2011. The travel and tourism industry is Cuyahoga County's fourth largest employer.³
- **WAGES** - Tourism employment generated \$1.8 billion dollars in wages in 2011.⁴
- **TAX REVENUES** - Tourism in Cuyahoga County contributed more than \$886 million in taxes, with \$265 million for state taxes and \$194 million in local taxes in 2011. Visitors generate tax revenues for public coffers as they pay sales tax on goods and services. In fact, each household in Ohio would need to be taxed an additional \$600 per year to replace the tourism taxes received by state and local governments.⁵

"The tourism industry is a major contributor to the economic vitality of our region," Positively Cleveland's President/ CEO David Gilbert said. "Visitors to our region buy local products and services, support area amenities, generate tax revenues and sustain jobs."

(more)

MORE VISITORS ANTICIPATED

With \$2 billion in visitor-related development underway throughout Northeast Ohio, visitor numbers are increasing in both business and leisure travel. In fact, visitors to Downtown Cleveland are expected to double in 2013. That equates to a projected six million visitors.

“Based on these projections, Cleveland will welcome the number of visitors equivalent to the entire population of Scotland in just 2013 alone.” Gilbert said.

Much of the increase will come as a result of the newly opened Horseshoe Casino Cleveland. Since its opening in May 2012, the casino has welcomed more than 1.8 million visitors.⁶

“We are thrilled to be part of the growth in Cuyahoga County and, in particular, the vibrancy in Downtown Cleveland,” Marcus Glover, Senior Vice President and General Manager of Horseshoe Casino Cleveland, said. “Our unique location offers guests an opportunity to partake in casino entertainment and experience Downtown Cleveland’s restaurants, hotels, arts and cultural offerings, and professional sporting events.”

HOTEL STAYS INCREASE

This recent influx of visitors also can be tracked in demand for hotel rooms (also known as “number of rooms sold”). From January 2011 through July 2011, Cleveland sold 2,545,568 hotel rooms. That number jumped to 2,660,408 from January 2012 through July 2012, which equates to a 4.5 percent increase. The national average increase is only 3.2 percent.⁷

MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

And, those numbers are expected to increase as the city also welcomes the new Cleveland Convention Center & Medical Mart in July 2013. The facility anticipates hosting 300,000 convention and meeting attendees each year.

Currently in the pipeline of potential new business is 360,000 room nights, 35 percent of which are considering Cleveland due to the opening of the city’s new convention center. This potential new business equates to \$150–\$190 million in projected economic impact over the next seven years. Positively Cleveland also is seeing a steep increase in the number of site visits with convention, meeting and group tour planners over the past year.⁸

GOING WITH THE FLOW

To accommodate the projected increases in visitation, while simultaneously improving how the city looks, acts and feels as a destination, Positively Cleveland is currently reorganizing itself to meet the additional demands. [Click here to view recent staff hirings, promotions and updates.](#)

“With more than \$2 billion in tourism developments headed to Cleveland over the next five years, it’s imperative that our organization follow strategies that capitalize on the impact of these opportunities and ultimately bring more visitors to Cleveland,” Gilbert said.

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About Positively Cleveland: *Positively Cleveland’s mission is to promote Cleveland and the surrounding region as an outstanding business meeting and tourism destination in order to grow the region’s economy. To learn more, visit PositivelyCleveland.com.*

About The Economic Impact of Tourism Study: *This study was organized by the Ohio Department of Development’s Office of Tourism and was conducted by Tourism Economics. Positively Cleveland has traditionally received the study every two years.*

¹ 2012 D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd.

² July 2012 The Economic Impact of Tourism in Cuyahoga County, pgs 25-26

³ July 2012 The Economic Impact of Tourism in Cuyahoga County, pgs 3, 28

⁴ July 2012 The Economic Impact of Tourism in Cuyahoga County, pgs 30

⁵ July 2012 The Economic Impact of Tourism in Cuyahoga County, pgs 14, 32

⁶ Horseshoe Casino Cleveland

⁷ Smith Travel Research

⁸ Positively Cleveland Convention Sales Team