

Travel Trends

Negative ⁽⁺⁾
Resident
Sentiment:
Particularly
Shoulder season

Using ⁽⁺⁾
Ellsworth, ME
as a hub
for travel

season
expansion
early May → november

#2 in
Air BnB

Businesses
seeing
minimal
gain/losses

Destinations
are more
varied compared
to previous years

Micro
businesses

RV
parks
still popular

more
traffic

Ten-ton air tours-
September
busiest month
for first time
since 2024 -
tough for employees!

"24 Hour town"
coming to airplane
tours without
reservations

Expect resident
community efforts
to release pressure
on BnB, to only
increase. (community
share)

cross-
marketing

Boutique
hotels
on the rise

Families doing
long weekends
in shoulder
season - affordable,
some tranquility etc
and not too hot

^{read, see}
Do not take
print adver-
tising from
Inn rooms

Visitors to
Inn < 50
already know
what they want
(ironhorse)

"old salt"
skills
caning, canoeing,
crafts

Acadia
is very
popular

Visitor Info
Centers seeing
print marketing
materials used

Looking for
"experience bingos"
"I camped, did
a hotel, now I'm
in this region and I
want a cabin"

Visitor Info
Centers seeing
people coming
without even
reservations
or plans

remote
workers
create
travel trends

more
maine (in-
state)
travellers

^(city version)
Many travellers
like crowds and
close proximity -
including for
"natural beauty"
experiences

^{Ironhorse}
Avg stay 3
nights - to
see Bar Harbor
Acadia. Often ^{canoe}
disappointed and want
"Shoulder, ferry, etc."

Session Location & Date

Ellsworth
01/08

Destination Management Plan –2025 Reset



Brand, Marketing & Visitors

From your perspective, how can we – Maine's tourism industry – further our goals for Brand, Marketing and Visitors over the next two years?

Can we make a goal of LESS in strategic areas?

defining the unique character of each place

respect/initiatives for indigenous cultures

respect/honor/encourage diversity of the whole state of Maine

① Deliver on experience visitors can afford. Maine is/can be expensive.

① Partnering with social media influencers

① Understand demographic might be changing from repeat visitors to first-time visitors

① Play into the "Maine Mystique" (storytelling)

① Instead of gathering "things" people want to gather "experiences"

Municipal value capture (local tax)

What are the pressing needs?

regenerative tourism strategies (support nature business)

② Listening to residents + telling stories of value of Tourism/VisitMaine

so much to do - have to come back

emphasize what we have in common and what's each special characteristic

② Better serving under represented areas of the state

② Not let misinformation snowball out of control

traffic cooling strategies esp. for Ellsworth

What does this look like in action?

in action:
Ask: what are you looking for?
maine has much to offer...

review what other New England "gateway communities" are doing

working as team for same goal: promote maine

Incentivize private investment in accommodations further downstate

③ Using resources that are already in place more effectively

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MAINE.

VISITMAINE.COM

Destination Management Plan -2025 Reset



Protecting our Culture and Places

From your perspective, how can we – Maine's tourism industry – protect our state's culture and places over the next two years?

GEM in B.H. has been a great model - the (re)awakened culture

umbrella organization to coordinate various non-profits together

Directory, networking oppo educate each other about what's grand. not just Bar Harbor

expand focus to other communities not just Ellsworth / Bar Harbor

① Focus on the priorities
↳ Too many principles: spread too thin

novelty + The experience + beauty of
could even without snow - indoor + outdoor

① Highlight National Heritage Areas

What are the pressing needs?

preserve documents building businesses that have been here a long time...

Where do visitors see stewardship? principles - i.e. Mainland's pledge in school

What does this look like in action?

share resources to promote each other.

Destination Stewardship - from Acadia Gateway Center

Ironbound tracked visitor Metrics for December 75% tourists + local tourists (campers, families)

educating ourselves on what we have to offer

① Start with the Mission then have guiding principles + tactics

① Tell the Community Stories

Tours of the area the town the churches, etc.

enhancing story-telling historical tourism

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C
coraggiogroup

Destination Management Plan -2025 Reset



Experience and Infrastructure Investment

From your perspective, how can we – Maine's tourism industry – improve and elevate our experiences and infrastructure over the next two years?

① Managing Congestion through new infrastructure

② Facilitating Communications between different communities with the same issue

More places to see fireworks w/ wrap-around events + activities - Belfast NYE

What are the pressing needs?

④ Get businesses, Non-profits, + landmarks to just share information

access to health care (access for travelling nurses)

TRAFFIC alternatives: ferries, bikes, bike trails, shuttles.

limits on Air Bn B/ de for resident/ owners

② Building new visitor/tourist center (s) ~~increase personal vehicle use~~

infrastructure: affordable housing for people to stay/ business to grow

designated specific bike lanes/ routes

The Maine Office of Tourism + Maine Chamber must support local option lodging taxes that enable communities to pay for and upgrade infrastructure needed to support the volume of tourists

necessary infra- bathrooms - subsidize bike bathrooms?

giving promo off the beaten path hidden gems via word of mouth

Econ. impact study - Join Menthime time zone - extra hour daylight in peak season

What does this look like in action?

③ Increase Support of bus infrastructure + personal vehicle reservation system

Unique intersections of art/performance and the outdoors

summer "giving machines" (raise money for charities)

build off well-known "Maine-made" locally owned craftsmanship

Film art food history FESTIVALS! Existing + emerging

historical events: lobster/fish fair bakery event

encourage more business promo of music, art, culture, venues

walking tours ghost tours bike routes get off the road in the town

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Collaboration and Partnership

From your perspective, how can we – Maine's tourism industry – further collaboration and partnership across the industry over the next two years?

co-ordinating
services
w/ each other

Avoid
creating
redundancy
(great solutions
already moving)

Role of
towns/cities
(affordable
housing/workforce,
parking)

Help with
Marketing &
Social Media
Strategy

What are the pressing needs?

Planning
support (is?)
connections?
Btw "roving"
and "hosting"
plans

Need for
MOT, DART
Elksw. + BH
chambers
create visitor/housing
center in Elksworth
@ Hampton Hwy
convenient
location

Maine
state
community
calendar

Closely
coordinate with
smaller towns &
communities that
may be increasingly
promoted so that
they are not
overshadowed

workshops
for
non-profits to
connect
a few times a year

What does this look like in action?

Themed
Festivals open
to public
with local
non-profits
seasonal or
annual.

Signs giving
heads up about
traffic, parking
situation in B.H.

break down
silos
quarterly
meetings
focus

Events like
this focused
on solution-
sharing
(Regions)

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