



From what's coming, to who's coming — we are 'making it' READY for ALL!

Visit Macon 2023 Highlights

ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Record hotel-motel tax collections in 2022 – exceeding \$6 million for the first time
- Over \$6 million in sales tax revenue was generated for Macon-Bibb County
- \$448.8 million in total visitor spending – up 21.7% in 2022
- Visitor spending has increased by over \$53 million since 2018
- Visitors generated \$34.4 million in state and local taxes in 2022
- \$585 in tax savings for every Macon-Bibb household due to visitor spending

SALES & SERVICES

- Developed the Macon Music Half Marathon with Macon Tracks Club
- Hosted with Macon Mayhem and Macon Bacon, "Muscogee (Creek) Nation Nights," which included a delegation representing the Nation
- Hosted the Georgia Municipal Association's 2-day meeting, "Hub Cities and Housing"
- Visitor Center exceeded retail goals by more than \$8,200
- Added a new Mobile Visitor Center

MEDIA COVERAGE

2023 was a record-setting year for earned media coverage with stories appearing on CBS Mornings, in The New York Times as one of 52 Places for Travelers to Visit in 2023, Bloomberg, Conde' Nast Traveler, Forbes, Frommer's, Garden & Gun, Insider, Men's Journal, Southern Living, Travel + Leisure and featured on the cover of Vintage Rock magazine.

AWARDS IN 2023

- Visit Macon President and CEO Gary Wheat awarded GACVB's Larry Allen Tourism Leadership Award
- Ocmulgee National Park and Preserve Initiative - GACVB's Paul Nelson Award for Outdoor Recreation and Preservation
- Macon's "Christmas Lights Extravaganza" - 2023 GACVB Travelblazer Award winner
- DMAP Certification "With Distinction" from Destinations International

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- Partnered with NewTown Macon to host "Civic Commons Studio #7," part of the Knight Foundation's "Reimagining the Civic Commons" and on an InterCity Trip to Tulsa for Macon community leaders
- Contributions to Macon's Bicentennial
- To aid our tourism partners, who were tremendously affected by the pandemic, we distributed more than \$2 million in ARPA funds.



Launched the new [visitmacon.org](https://www.visitmacon.org)



COMING IN 2024

Anticipation that Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park will become Georgia's first, and our nation's 64th, national park in 2024


A new, state-of-the-art 10,000+ seat amphitheater

Completion of the world's largest indoor pickleball facility



Dear Friends, _____

Macon is no longer a “best-kept secret.” In fact, Macon was named one of the top 52 places in the **world** to visit in 2023 by *The New York Times*. This was not happenstance. It took vision, hard work and collaboration on the part of our local government, community organizations and our talented team at Visit Macon. The Visit Macon staff and board of directors set lofty goals for fiscal year 2023, which were not only met but surpassed. We had a record-breaking year for hotel-motel tax collections in Macon-Bibb in 2023. Visitor spending was up by almost 22% - reaching nearly \$450 million - and we're not slowing down.

Macon is READY for ALL. The 10,000+ seat, state-of-the-art Macon Amphitheater is almost complete and will be a game-changer for Macon. Situated on the site of the former Macon Mall, the amphitheater will bring headline musicians and millions of dollars to positively impact a part of town that many had written off. 

Included in the revitalization of the old mall property is the construction of the world's largest indoor pickleball court facility. Hitmakers of all types will soon be flocking to Macon. Macon is also READY to become the site of Georgia's first, and our nation's 64th, national park. After nearly two decades of work, the Ocmulgee National Park and Preserve Initiative (ONPPI) appears to be on the verge of securing coveted "National Park" status. Visit Macon, along with our local government leaders and community partners, is proud to be part of this team effort, which has the potential to transform Macon into one of the top tourism destinations in the United States.

On behalf of my team and the board of directors at Visit Macon, I am proud to report that Macon's travel industry is booming, and I can't wait to see what 2024 will bring. Whatever it may be...Macon is READY for ALL.



GARY WHEAT
President & CEO



Visit Macon Board of Directors

FY 2023

Macon-Bibb County Representative:

Mayor Pro Tem Seth Clark

Hotel Owners or General Managers:

Kathy Martin, Macon Marriott City Center
Nancy Lott, TownePlace Suites

Attraction Directors:

Emily Hopkins, Main Street Macon
Jamie Weatherford, Rock Candy Tours
Justin Andrews, Otis Redding Foundation
Susan Welsh, Museum of Arts & Sciences

Tourism Entity (including restaurants, retail, etc.):

Tina Dickson, Ingleside Village Pizza

Community Leaders:

Patty Gibbs, Family Counseling Center of
Central Georgia
David Thompson, Piedmont Construction Group
Rosetta Boatright, Anderson Conference Center

Executive Committee:

Patty Gibbs, Chair
Tina Dickson, Vice Chair
Justin Andrews, Secretary/Treasurer
Susan Welsh, Past Chair

Ex-Officio/Non-Voting Members:

David Aiello, Macon Centreplex/Spectra
Management
Gary Wheat, Visit Macon President & CEO
Renita Patterson, Greater Macon Chamber
of Commerce
Stacy Moore, International Cherry Blossom
Festival
Ryan Logan, Director of Marketing & Tourism
at Muscogee (Creek) Nation