



## **Mammoth Lakes Tourism**

**Visitor Volume**

**November 2022**

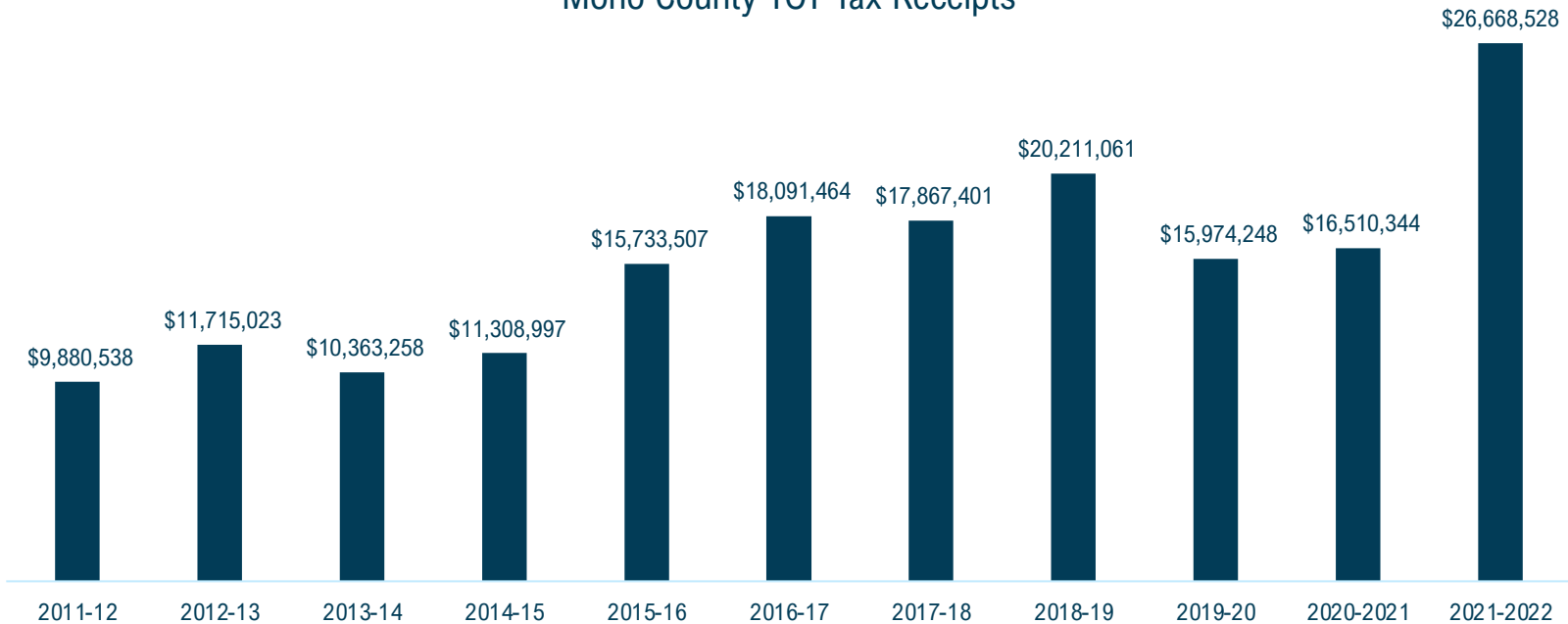
# Background

- Mammoth Lakes Tourism (MLT) is responsible for promoting the destination to leisure travel visitors. Tourism-related businesses (lodging, restaurants, retail) pay an annual assessment based on the type and size of business. It is important that the agency knows how many visitors come to the destination annually in order to ensure that the assessment is being collected appropriately and to budget for future marketing efforts.
- Determining visitor volume is always challenging, but it is more complicated for MLT as the majority of visitor lodging in Mammoth Lakes is non-hotel. Hotels typically have the information systems in place to accurately track visitation. Even Airbnb, VRBO, and other such sites have some information-reporting mechanisms. But individual property owners – who may rent a house, cabin, or room through direct contact with visitors – are far less equipped to report the information that MLT needs. The challenges have only increased over the past few years with the restrictions that were imposed during COVID.
- MLT partnered with Strategic Marketing & Research Insights (SMARInsights) in 2016 to combine results of both primary and secondary research in an effort to arrive at a visitor volume figure after considering several data sources and triangulating the results. A key data point was regional TOT data, data provided by Dean Runyan and posted on the Visit California website. An update was provided in 2018, again utilizing the Dean Runyan data.
- For the current report, SMARInsights was able to work directly with Dean Runyan, with the approval of Visit California, to utilize data to calculate volume for Mammoth Lakes. TOT data was provided by MLT.

# TOT Tax Receipts

- This graph illustrates annual visitor growth leading up to the pandemic, and the sharp decline that corresponds to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, the destination's performance during FY 19-20 and 20-21 was excellent, but it was the closures that caused depressed numbers.
- Finally, in FY21-22, the destination recovered fully – and then some.

Mono County TOT Tax Receipts



# Mammoth Lakes Visitor Volume

- Definitions:
  - Person trips = one person taking one trip to Mammoth Lakes = a visitor
  - Unique visitors = number of different people that visited and accounts for repeat trips
  - Visitor days = number of visitors times average trip length
- Note regarding data sources: The source for number of trips per visitor and length of stay is SMARInsights visitor profile survey. However, since there was no research done in FY2019-20, we do not have this data for that time period and we cannot calculate unique visitors or total visitor dates.

	2015-16	2017-18	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Mammoth Lakes person trips	2,323,979	2,510,122	2,359,564	2,438,751	3,939,221
Average # of trips per visitor	1.44	1.48		1.55	1.63
Unique visitors	1,613,875	1,697,385		1,573,388	2,416,700
Average length of stay in Mammoth Lakes	3.20	3.1		3.05	3.15
Total visitor days	7,436,734	7,718,329		7,438,190	12,408,547

# 2021-22 Seasonal Visitor Volume

Mammoth Lakes Visitor Volume by Season	Fall	Winter	Spring/Summer	TOTAL FY21-22
Share of trips	15%	54%	31%	100%
Mammoth Lakes person trips	590,883	2,127,179	1,221,159	3,939,221
Average length of stay in Mammoth Lakes	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.15
Total visitor days	1,802,194	6,743,159	3,863,194	12,408,546
Unique visitors	362,505	1,305,018	749,177	2,416,700

Fall = September-November  
 Winter = December-May\*  
 Spring/Summer = June-August

*\*\*Winter\* typically ends in March but snow continued through May this year*