

Putnam County Chamber of Commerce  
Tourism Development Council  
Quarterly Report October – December 2020

Pursuant to the agreement made and entered between the Putnam County Board of County Commissioners and the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce this report is submitted for the fourth quarter, October through December 2020.

The Chamber provides support necessary to administer the Putnam County Tourism Development Council (TDC) and tourism program. The tourism program is funded entirely by bed tax revenues – paid by visitors not our residents.

### **Marketing and Visitor Services**

Continue enhancing and publishing tourism brochures, website, events calendar, social media, and electronic messaging.

Ran TV campaign emphasizing “safe vacationing” aired in Ashville, NC, Mobile/Panama area and Baton Rouge, LA.

Conducted a digital marketing campaign targeted to outdoor enthusiasts that included both video and static advertisements revised to market our County as a “safe” vacation or getaway location with an abundance of outdoor opportunities fitting the new environment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. These ran in Charlotte, Atlanta, Birmingham and Mobile areas.

Responded to leads from print and online ads and direct inquiries from phone, mail, email, website, and social media.

### **Administration and Evaluation**

Chamber staff continues contacting hospitality industry businesses asking what we could do to help them. We are speaking with them often and ran 2 campaigns to help generate sales, I Shop Mom & Pop and Holiday Buy Local.

Continue working with area event coordinators and TDC grant recipients assisting with information and rescheduling.

Aided many businesses with 2<sup>nd</sup> round Payroll Protection Program (PPP) applications.

Continue to provide constantly updated information pertinent to operating during a pandemic and recovery.

Conducted research on tourism industry indicators to measure changes in local tourism economy.

Scheduled major events for the 2021 to help jumpstart the local economy.

The Putnam County Tax Collector's Office reported the Putnam County Bed Tax Collection from October 2020 through December 2020 as \$112,612.34. The 2020 calendar years had the second highest bed tax revenues coming in at \$496,567 – remarkable for a year that was mostly closed due to pandemic. Fortunately, the strong first quarter and then later some industrial projects really helped maintain occupancy rates.

### **Tourism Industry Relations**

Partnerships with local, regional and state organizations including Florida Sports Foundation, Florida Office of Greenways and Trails, Arts Council of Greater Palatka, Ravine Gardens State Park, St. Johns River Water Management District, Clay County Tourism, Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission, RCI Regional Tourism Committee and Visit Florida.