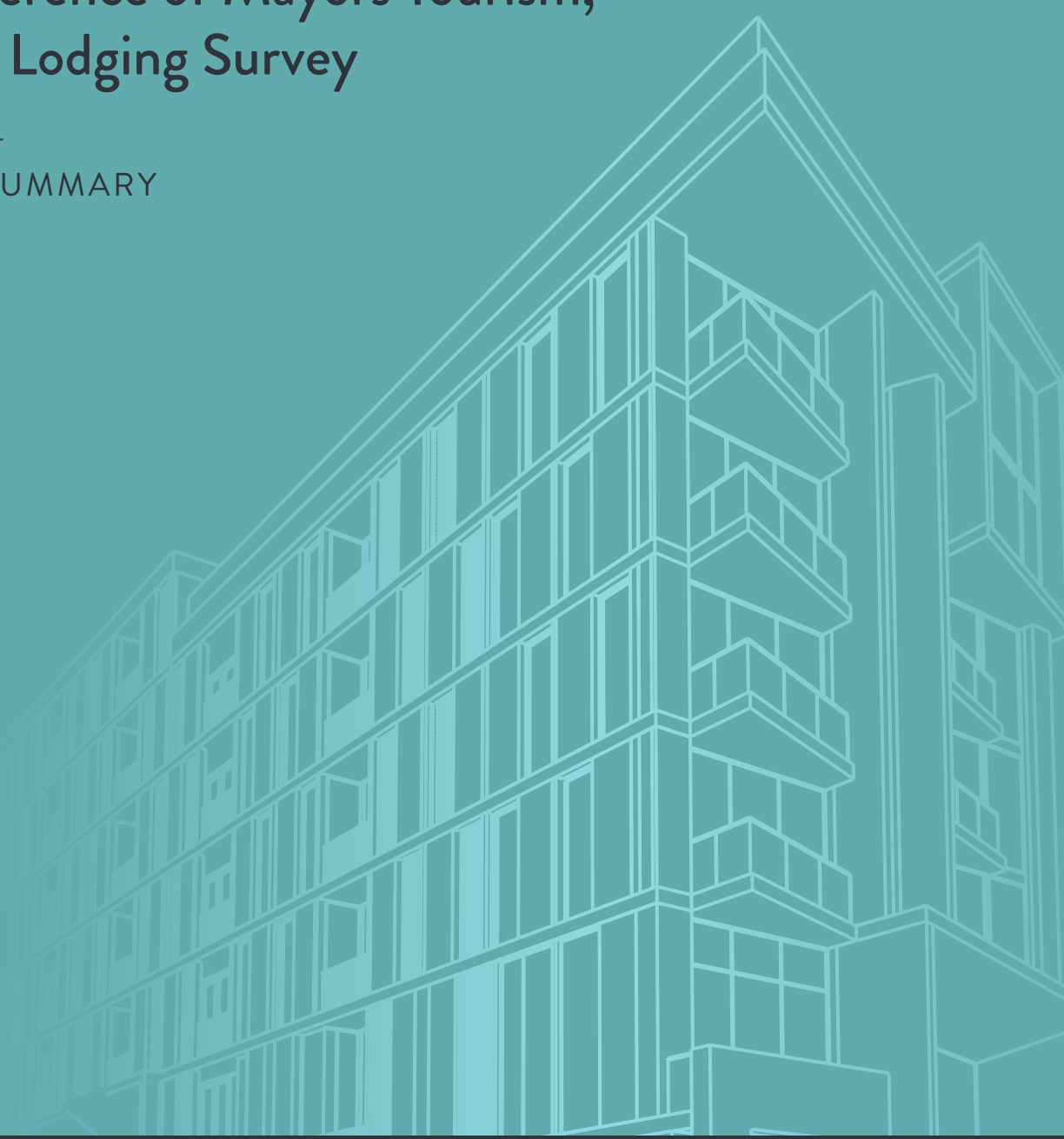


# 2017

## U.S. Conference of Mayors Tourism, Hotel and Lodging Survey

---

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS





**MICK CORNETT**

Mayor of Oklahoma City  
President

**MITCHELL J. LANDRIEU**

Mayor of New Orleans  
Vice President

**STEPHEN K. BENJAMIN**

Mayor of Columbia  
Second Vice President

**TOM COCHRAN**

CEO and Executive Director



The hotel and lodging industry is a critical component of the local economies of cities across the nation. Hotels are catalysts for increased revenue, opportunity and wages for employees and commercial growth to area business large and small. Offering career opportunities for a wide variety of people at different levels, hotels employ many entry level positions and provide internal upward mobility for their employees.

Hotel and lodging businesses are mainstays of their communities, and they support and invest in them through increased tax revenue, capital investment, tourism-related development and promotion, civic leadership, and charitable contributions and sponsorship.

Beyond their own communities, hotels also welcome tourists to new locations, by investing in visitor outreach and destination awareness. These efforts create new investments and foster repeat business. As the first faces people encounter upon arriving, hotels and their employees are essential to showing visitors that their city is the type of community they'd like to stay in to build or conduct their own business.

## METHODOLOGY

This survey was conducted by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the official non-partisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more, and was funded through a grant provided by the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Foundation (AHLEF). The survey was sourced from their 800 plus active members to gain mayors' perspectives on the tourism, hotel and lodging industry in their respective cities. The survey was sent to all members of the Conference with follow up targeting of Conference leadership, appropriate committees, and selected cities with tourism-based economies. Data was collected from more than 100 mayors between July and December 2016.

*\*Quotes are based on survey responses from mayors' offices.*

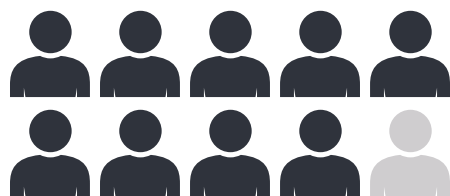
## Tourism and Hospitality Industry a Major Driver for Local Economies

While the healthcare industry was cited as the single largest sector of the local economy by the majority of mayors at 28 percent, tourism and hospitality ranked a close second at 20 percent. Nearly three-quarters of mayors said tourism and hospitality (including hotels and lodging, restaurants and food service, and convention centers and entertainment venues) contributes greater than 10 percent to their local economy overall.



## Mayors Want More Hotels in their Cities

Nine out of ten mayors stated that their community would benefit from additional hotels, inns or bed and breakfasts. Mayors qualified the value of broader economic growth and activity supported in the form of new businesses, creation of new jobs and increased revenue to local businesses, among other responses. They also cited the increased tax revenue generated by hotels and lodging, which in turn amplified tourism and visibility in their cities.



**9 out of 10**  
mayors say their community would benefit from more hotels



*When attracting new corporate development, having significant lodging opportunities available is one more value add feature in our economic development toolkit.”*

Hoffman Estates (IL) Mayor  
William McLeod



*Hotels in Columbus are powerful economic engines. They employ large numbers of people and, therefore, contribute significantly as a wage provider and contribute to the tax base through employment tax and property taxes, too.”*

Columbus (OH) Mayor  
Andrew Ginther





## Hotel and Lodging Industry Provides Good Local Jobs

Seventy percent of mayors stated that when they think about jobs with the most opportunity, good benefits and wages within the tourism industry, they think about hotels and lodging. Convention centers and entertainment venues made up 18 percent of the responses, followed by restaurants and food service at 11 percent.

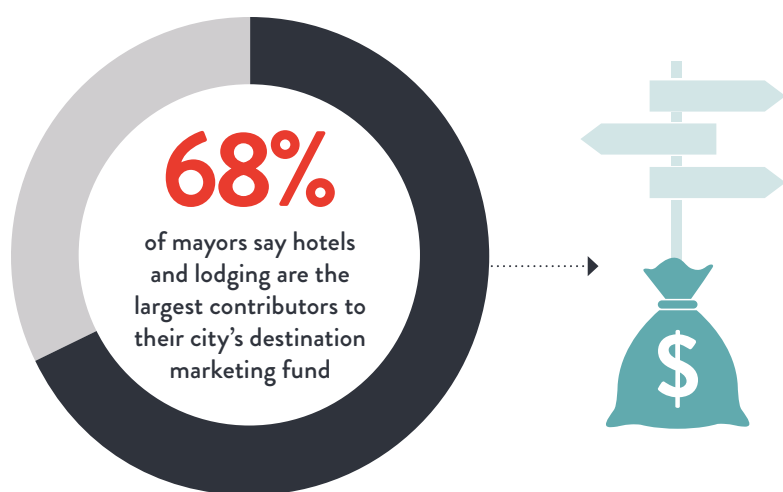


*The hotels contract with local businesses for services, thus creating jobs in related industries. For example, hotels will use wholesale food and beverage suppliers, laundry services, florists, catering companies, payroll providers and local transportation companies.”*

Tempe Mayor  
Mark Mitchell

## Hotel and Lodging Industry Attract Visitors and Major Events

The mayors surveyed acknowledged the value of local tourism boards and visitors' bureaus in marketing their respective cities as destinations for travel, but hotels and lodging were overwhelmingly credited as the largest contributors to the city's destination marketing fund through direct membership and tax revenue collections.



As the first face that visitors see, mayors named hotels as great ambassadors for their communities. Indeed, some mayors noted that individual hotels invest directly in visitors' bureaus, in visitor-focused service and outreach, and in sales and marketing programs to increase visitor volume.

When asked to elaborate, the mayors credited hotel and lodging businesses for offering support to the cities' bids to host large events like the Super Bowl and NCAA Final Four, which expose them to national and international audiences. Mayors appreciate hotels hosting potential developers, site selectors or decision makers on fact-finding trips and working collaboratively with civic and government leaders to plan for smart development. Mayors see hotels as valued partners in growth, not only for the purposes of the hotels but for related development such as restaurants, entertainment and retail.

“

*Hotels provide a sense of place and comfortable surroundings for visitors to experience all our City has to offer. They also make it possible for large groups to gather in St. Louis providing us with an opportunity to showcase our community.”*

St. Louis Mayor  
Francis Slay

“

*They support local jobs, charitable foundations, and support the city's bid to host large events like the Super Bowl and Final Four which expose the city to millions across the world.”*

Phoenix Mayor  
Greg Stanton



## Hotel and Lodging Industry Are Local Civic and Business Leaders

Mayors named tourism and hospitality industry leadership, including general managers of hotels across the city, as active members of the business community, many of whom take roles as civic leaders. Aside from housing international, national and regional travelers, mayors cited hotels' roles in conventions, conferences and sporting events as key contributions to the community. Many noted the involvement of hotels and hotel employees in the sponsorship of charitable activities in their cities, including blood drives, school supply drives and support for local food drive campaigns, as well as organizing teams of employees to staff cleanup efforts to keep cities beautiful. Beyond community service, mayors also praised hotels for their help revitalizing older historic areas of their cities, creating walk-able urban centers.



*Hotel developers work collaboratively with civic and government leaders to plan for smart development, not only for the purposes of the hotel but for spin-off and related development.”*

Columbus (OH) Mayor  
Andrew Ginther

