



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Aug 16, 2023

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2023 REGATTA GENERATED \$37.2 MILLION ECONOMIC IMPACT

An estimated 220,000 people attended five-day event

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — The City of Charleston, Sternwheel Regatta Commission and the Charleston Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) declared the 2023 Charleston Sternwheel Regatta a success at a press event Wednesday. Mayor Amy Shuler Goodwin announced the five-day event generated \$37.2 million in economic impact and attracted an estimated 220,000 attendees to the Capital City.

“Directly supporting nearly 8,000 jobs and generating a total economic impact of \$37.2 million, the Charleston Sternwheel Regatta continues to positively impact our Capital City and the region,” said Mayor Amy Shuler Goodwin. “Together, with the support of our community and partners, we will use this forward momentum to guide us as we plan for 2024 – helping ensure more folks can experience the nostalgia, energy, history and excitement of this summertime staple.”

Based on data provided by the Charleston CVB, 20% of Regatta attendees traveled from more than 50 miles away. Washington DC was the second largest origin market for visitors, behind only the Charleston-Huntington metro area. Rounding out the top five origin markets for visitors were Pittsburgh, PA; Parkersburg, WV; and Cincinnati, OH.

“We're especially pleased to see growth in the Washington, DC market,” said Tim Brady, President & CEO of the Charleston CVB. “Last year they were our fourth largest segment, jumping up two slots this year. Their estimated visitor spend is approximately 44% higher than other markets. So not only did more people come from DC, but they also spent more money.”

Further economic figures show the event directly supported an estimated 7,948 jobs.

This is the second year for the revived event, which originally began in the 1970s and ran through 2009. In 2022, the Charleston Sternwheel Regatta returned to the riverfront with nationally and internationally known acts, Sternwheeler Races, family activities, and more. The 2023 Regatta featured Better Than Ezra, Flo Rida, Kool & the Gang, and Jo Dee Messina, as well as professional wrestling, classic car show, funeral and fire truck parades, and two nights of fireworks.

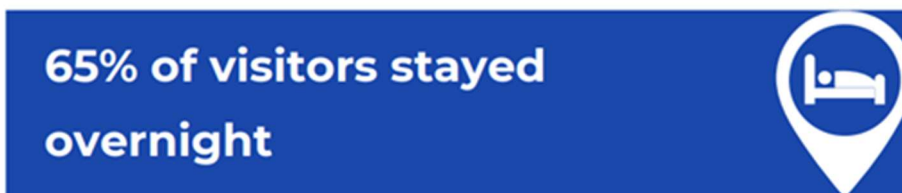
“The Charleston Sternwheel Regatta represents the best in our community—a spirit that transcends socio-economic boundaries, bringing citizens and visitors together in celebration and camaraderie,” said Alisa Bailey, President of the Sternwheel Regatta Commission.

Bailey added that preparations are underway for the 2024 Regatta, but dates have not been set yet.

The economic impact was calculated by the CVB using the Destinations International Event Economic Impact Calculator.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

2023 estimated attendance was 220,000. 20% of attendees were visitors from beyond a 50 mile radius.



VISITOR DATA

City of Origin

- 1.Charleston – Huntington
- 2.Washington, DC (+2)
- 3.Pittsburgh, PA (-1)
- 4.Parkersburg, WV (+2)
- 5.Cincinnati, OH (unranked)
- 6.Beckley-Bluefield (-4)
- 7.Baltimore, MD (unranked)
- 8.Harrisburg, PA (unranked)
- 9.Charlotte, NC (-2)
- 10.Cleveland, OH (-1)

NOTE

Washington, DC visitors spent 44% more on average than visitors from other origin markets and had an overnight stay percentage of 87%.

12% visitor contribution to overall spending in the city

19% visitor contribution to restaurant spending in the city