



Wheeling
HERITAGE

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

FY25

PREPARED BY TRIPP UMBACH



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Infographic	6
Project Overview	8
Study Objectives	8
Methodology	8
Areas Of Economic Impact	9
About Wheeling Heritage	10
Overall Economic Impact	12
Tourism Impact	14
Operational Impact	15
Employment Impact	16
Tax Impact	18
Additional Impacts	21
Gateway Visitors and Heritage Center	21
Wheeling Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program	22
Wheeling Heritage’s Partnership Grant	23
Community Partner	24
Snowflake Initiative	24
CO.STARTERS and Show Of Hands Programs	25
Arts and Cultural Programs Programs	25
Appendix A: Definition of Terms	26
Appendix B: Technical Appendix	28
Appendix C: Tripp Umbach Qualifications	30

INTRODUCTION

Heritage areas such as the Wheeling Heritage in West Virginia are instrumental in advancing local economies by preserving historic assets, promoting cultural tourism, and fostering community revitalization. As the birthplace of West Virginia and a former industrial hub along the Ohio River, Wheeling occupies a distinctive place in American history. Its congressional designation as a National Heritage Area provides a powerful platform to preserve historic and natural resources while sharing the region's rich cultural story. Since its inception in 1994 as a 501(c)(3) organization, Wheeling Heritage has leveraged this designation, along with public-private partnerships, to advance community revitalization and economic development across Wheeling and the Main Street Area.

Following the 2016 merger with Reinvent Wheeling, the city's Main Street program, Wheeling Heritage expanded its focus to include business development, city planning, and public art initiatives. As a Main Street West Virginia Community, the organization combines historic preservation with targeted economic strategies that stimulate investment in landmark properties, support small businesses, promote cultural tourism, and enhance overall quality of life, demonstrating how heritage conservation can catalyze sustainable local economic growth.

Since 2012, Tripp Umbach¹ has conducted multiple economic impact analyses for heritage areas across the United States, including comprehensive studies for Wheeling Heritage and Main Street area. In FY25, the economic and community impact analysis that Wheeling Heritage generates a total annual economic impact of **\$221.6 million**, supports **2,199 jobs**, and generates **\$19.0 million** in tax revenue. This demonstrates the enduring value of Wheeling Heritage's work in advancing preservation, tourism, and community development in the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia.

Additionally, Wheeling Heritage's catalytic role in a multi-million-dollar Wheeling Gateway Visitors and Heritage Center project demonstrates how targeted funding transforms vision into large-scale impact. Through initiatives such as the Wheeling Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program, Partnership Grants, the Snowflake Initiative, CO.STARTERS, Show of Hands, and other programs, Wheeling Heritage stimulates entrepreneurship, historic preservation, and tourism growth. Collectively, these programs sustain jobs, attract new visitors, and reinforce Wheeling's position as a thriving, creative, and resilient community.

As Wheeling Heritage continues to expand its programs, strengthen partnerships, and invest in community revitalization, it remains essential to regularly assess the organization's economic impact on Wheeling's Main Street area. Wheeling Heritage's preservation, tourism, and development initiatives contribute to sustained regional growth and increased economic activity.

¹ Since 1990, Tripp Umbach has completed approximately 1,000 custom economic impact studies in all regions of the United States and internationally.



OVERALL IMPACT IN FY25

\$221.6 MILLION

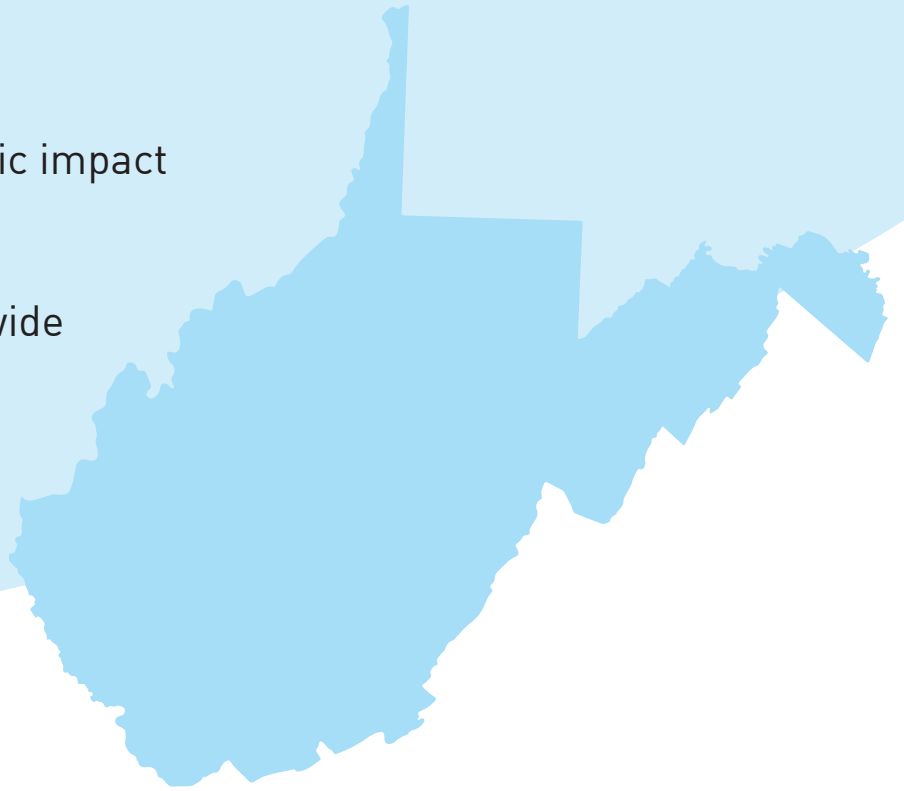
generated statewide in economic impact

2,199 JOBS

supported and sustained statewide

\$19.0 MILLION

generated in state and local taxes



OPERATIONS

\$3.0 MILLION

generated statewide in economic impact

\$1.1 MILLION in direct organizational spending

\$1.9 MILLION in indirect economic impact

**7 DIRECT JOBS AND
19 TOTAL JOBS**

supported and sustained statewide

\$107,780

generated in state and local taxes

TOURISM VISITORS

\$218.5 MILLION

generated statewide in economic impact

2,180 JOBS

supported and sustained statewide

\$18.8 MILLION

generated in state and local taxes

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM IMPACT

WHEELING GATEWAY VISITORS AND HERITAGE CENTER (PROJECT)

\$554,482

in economic impact to the region

\$308,046 in direct investment

\$246,436 in indirect value in the regional economy

WHEELING HISTORIC REVITALIZATION SUBGRANT PROGRAM

\$2.6 MILLION

in total economic impact since 2021 to the region

\$1.4 million in direct investment

\$1.2 million in indirect value in the regional economy

PARTNERSHIP GRANT (QUARTERLY)

\$48,769

in total economic impact to the region

\$21,675 in direct investment and

\$27,094 in indirect value in the regional economy



PROJECT OVERVIEW

In August 2025, Tripp Umbach was engaged by Wheeling Heritage, with support from Main Street America, to conduct an economic impact analysis measuring the organization’s contributions to the Wheeling and Main Street economies, workforce, and local and state tax revenues. The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive and current assessment of Wheeling Heritage’s role as an economic and cultural catalyst in the community.

STUDY OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the FY25 (October 2024 to September 2025) analysis include:

- Quantifying the current economic, employment, and tax impacts of Wheeling Heritage’s operational, tourism, and investments in Wheeling and Main Street.
- Demonstrating the broader community and cultural benefits that Wheeling Heritage and its Main Street programs generate through its preservation, revitalization, and heritage tourism initiatives.

METHODOLOGY

This analysis aims to reflect recent organizational activity and regional economic conditions. The study incorporates FY25 data on Wheeling Heritage’s operating expenditures, tourism, and projects. Tripp Umbach used primary data from Wheeling Heritage, supplemented with publicly available regional economic and tourism data. The IMPLAN modeling system estimated total economic output, employment supported, labor income, and fiscal impacts at the state level.





AREAS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT

Visitor and Tourism Activity

Wheeling Heritage's efforts to preserve historic assets and promote cultural tourism generate substantial economic activity across the Wheeling area. Visitors drawn to downtown Wheeling's historic sites, cultural events, and revitalized public spaces contribute directly to local businesses through spending on lodging, dining, retail, and entertainment. These expenditures circulate through the local economy, supporting additional employment, income, and tax revenues.

Operational Expenditures

The organization's operational spending, including staff salaries and benefits, facility operations, professional services, and local contracting, generates measurable, recurring economic benefits. Wheeling Heritage's consistent investment in local resources reinforces its role as a stable economic contributor within the region.

Broader Community Contributions

Besides its quantifiable economic impact, Wheeling Heritage delivers meaningful community benefits that enhance the city's social and cultural fabric. Through leadership in historic preservation, small-business development, arts programming, and downtown revitalization, the organization strengthens civic engagement, promotes local pride, and improves residents' quality of life. While these outcomes extend beyond the scope of traditional economic modeling, they represent essential elements of Wheeling Heritage's enduring impact on the community.

ABOUT WHEELING HERITAGE

Wheeling Heritage is dedicated to preserving, promoting, and revitalizing Wheeling's historic and cultural legacy in West Virginia. Since the Wheeling National Heritage Area's congressional designation in 2000, Wheeling Heritage has catalyzed downtown revitalization, historic preservation, and community development, leveraging the city's rich industrial, architectural, and cultural history to drive sustainable economic growth.

Through strategic investments, grants, and partnerships, Wheeling Heritage advances projects that preserve Wheeling's historic character while generating new opportunities for business, tourism, and community engagement. The organization's efforts have helped restore key landmarks, activate underutilized spaces, and attract both residents and visitors to the downtown core.

Wheeling Heritage's role extends beyond preservation; it serves as a central driver of revitalization efforts. The organization provides funding and technical assistance to restore historic buildings, develop cultural programming, and support small businesses. Prominent redevelopment initiatives such as the legacy projects, including the restoration of the Capitol Theatre, Artisan Center, Heritage Port, and the Wheeling Stamping Building, stand as enduring examples of the organization's long-term commitment to preserving Wheeling's architectural heritage and repurposing historic assets into thriving community spaces.





Recently, Wheeling Heritage has continued to drive new economic and cultural momentum through initiatives such as Wheeling Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program, the Wheeling Gateway Visitors and Heritage Center, and its robust arts programs. Beyond its physical revitalization efforts, Wheeling Heritage is supporting individual businesses and entrepreneurs through projects such as Partnership Grants, CO.STARTERS, and Show of Hands Events, which expand the visitor experience and contribute to the region's growing tourism economy.

As part of its broader community and economic development mission, Wheeling Heritage leads workforce-attraction and relocation efforts to encourage people to live and work in Wheeling. Central to this strategy is the Wheeling Live Here Guide², an interactive, comprehensive resource that highlights the city's employers, healthcare, affordable housing, vibrant neighborhoods, cultural and recreational amenities, schools, and local business opportunities to help prospective residents and employees envision life in the Friendly City while making well-informed relocation decisions. The Snowflake Initiative is another example of their continued commitment to expanding tourism in Wheeling. Together, these efforts have revitalized key properties, empowered entrepreneurs, strengthened tourism, and enhanced Wheeling's reputation as a dynamic, creative, and resilient city rooted in its heritage.

For more than 30 years, Wheeling Heritage has played an essential role in shaping the city's resurgence. By blending preservation with innovation, the organization continues to build a strong sense of place, celebrate Wheeling's distinctive identity, and promote economic opportunity through the thoughtful stewardship of its historic and cultural assets.

² [Weelunk: Wheeling Live Here](#)

OVERALL ECONOMIC IMPACT

Wheeling Heritage’s economic impact is estimated at **\$221.6 million**, reflecting the organization’s significant role in driving economic growth across the Wheeling region. This total impact comprises two key components: tourism-related spending and organizational operations. Visitor activity associated with Wheeling Heritage and its programs generates the vast majority of its total economic impact (**\$218.5 million out of the \$221.6 million is visitor-related**), signifying the importance of cultural heritage, historic attractions, and community events in supporting the businesses, hospitality, retail, and entertainment sectors. In addition, Wheeling Heritage’s operational expenditures, including staff salaries, contracting, professional services, and program investments, contribute **\$3.0 million** in direct economic activity. Together, these components demonstrate that Wheeling Heritage not only preserves the city’s cultural identity but also serves as a powerful economic engine for downtown revitalization and regional development (see Figure 1).³

³ All data used to calculate impacts were based on FY25.

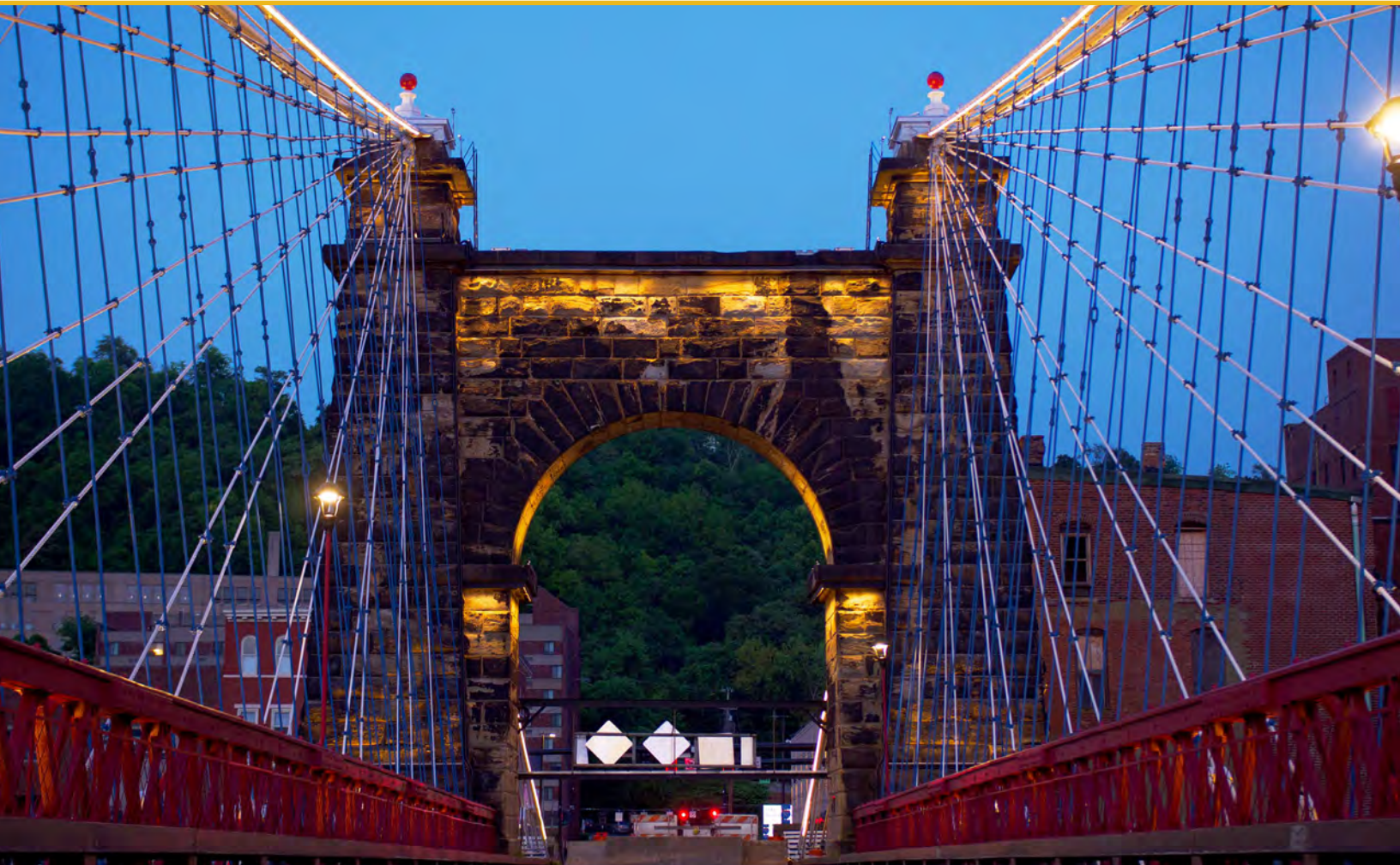
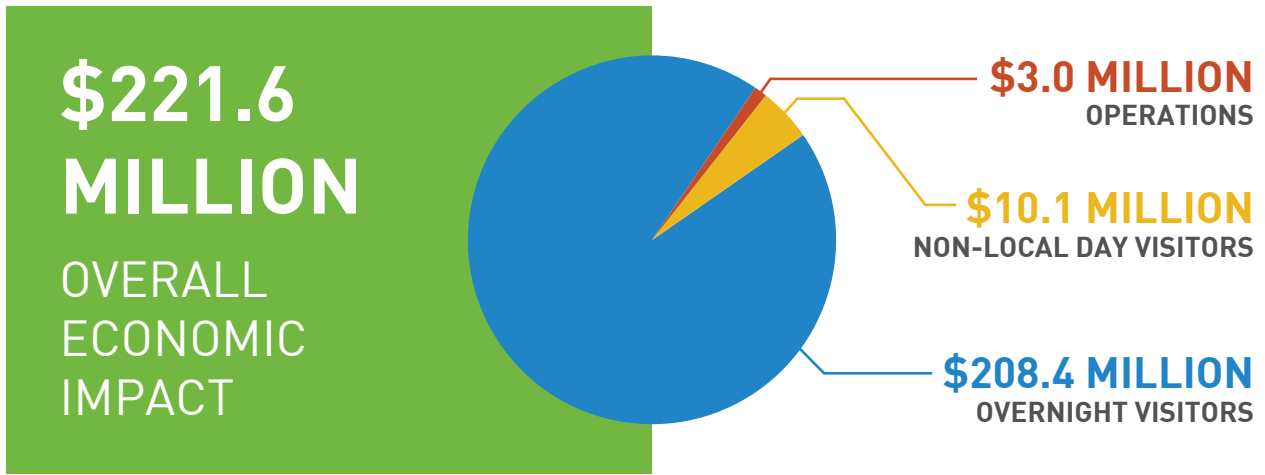


Figure 1: Overall Economic Impact



Wheeling Heritage’s activities and visitors’ spending generate measurable benefits across multiple sectors of the local economy. The table below presents the 10 industry sectors within the Wheeling Heritage region that experience the highest economic impact from Wheeling Heritage’s operations and visitor activity.

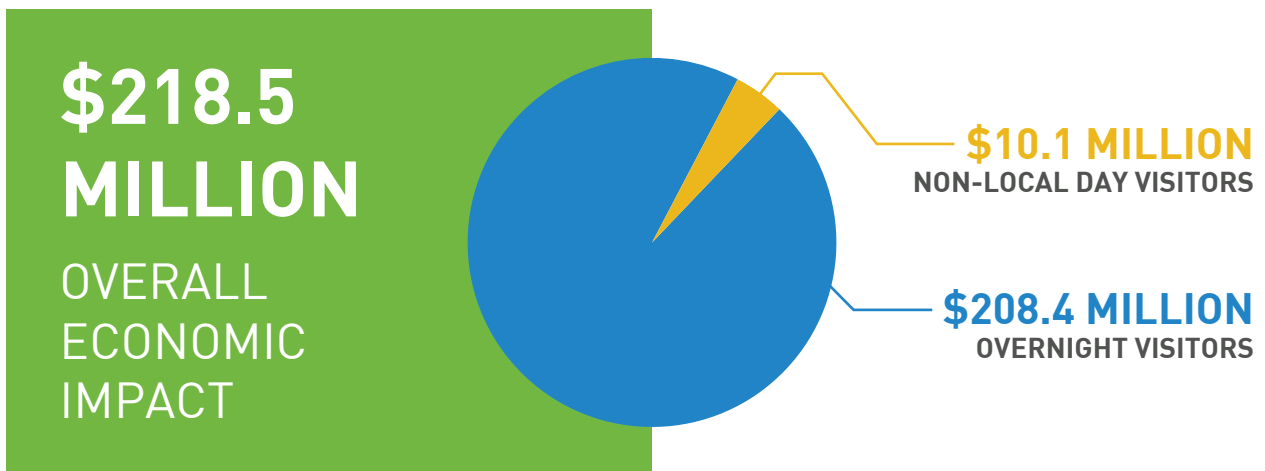
Table 1: Top 10 Economic Impact Sectors

Hotels and motels, including casino hotels	\$63,122,665
Full-service restaurants	\$44,799,558
Retail - Miscellaneous store retailers	\$13,480,987
Other amusement and recreation industries	\$9,622,240
Other real estate	\$7,682,133
Other accommodations	\$5,810,855
Owner-occupied dwellings	\$5,235,845
Hospitals	\$4,515,134
Management of companies and enterprises	\$4,189,587
Retail - Gasoline stores	\$3,539,931

TOURISM IMPACT

Visitation and tourism represent the most significant sources of economic benefit in the Wheeling Heritage region. Wheeling Heritage promotes and supports tourism through its preservation initiatives, cultural programming, and partnerships with regional organizations. Wheeling Heritage and its partners track visitor counts. In FY25, the region welcomed about **255,021⁴** Visitors whose spending directly supports businesses and generates a ripple effect throughout the regional economy. Wheeling Heritage’s ongoing efforts in heritage site restoration, community development, and downtown revitalization have been key drivers in increasing tourism. Based on the annual average number of visitors to the region and affiliated partner sites, tourism currently supports **\$218.5 million** in economic activity within the state (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Tourism Impact



The economic spending analysis indicates that out-of-state overnight visitors generate the most significant economic benefit to the Wheeling Heritage region. While overnight visitors account for approximately 75% of total visitation, they create more than 95% of Wheeling Heritage’s economic impact. This disproportionate effect is driven by the influx of new dollars into the economy, spent on lodging, dining, transportation, and other visitor-related services, thereby supporting regional businesses and stimulating broader economic activity.

⁴ Tripp Umbach estimates that 75% of visitors stay overnight.

OPERATIONAL IMPACT

In addition to attracting visitors and supporting tourism, Wheeling Heritage generates a measurable economic impact through its own operations. In FY25, operational spending contributed **\$3.0 million** to the local economy, reflecting expenditure on staff salaries, contracting, professional services, and day-to-day organizational activities. This impact also includes the wages and benefits of the employees supported by Wheeling Heritage.

For every **\$1** in economic impact generated through its operations, Wheeling Heritage and its partners produced an impressive **\$72** in tourism-related economic activity. This multiplier effect highlights the significant role that Wheeling Heritage and its partners play not only in directly supporting local jobs and businesses but also in attracting visitors whose spending further stimulates the regional economy, benefiting restaurants, hotels, shops, and cultural attractions across the area. The remarkable return demonstrates how strategic investments in heritage and cultural initiatives can drive substantial, broader economic benefits.



EMPLOYMENT IMPACT

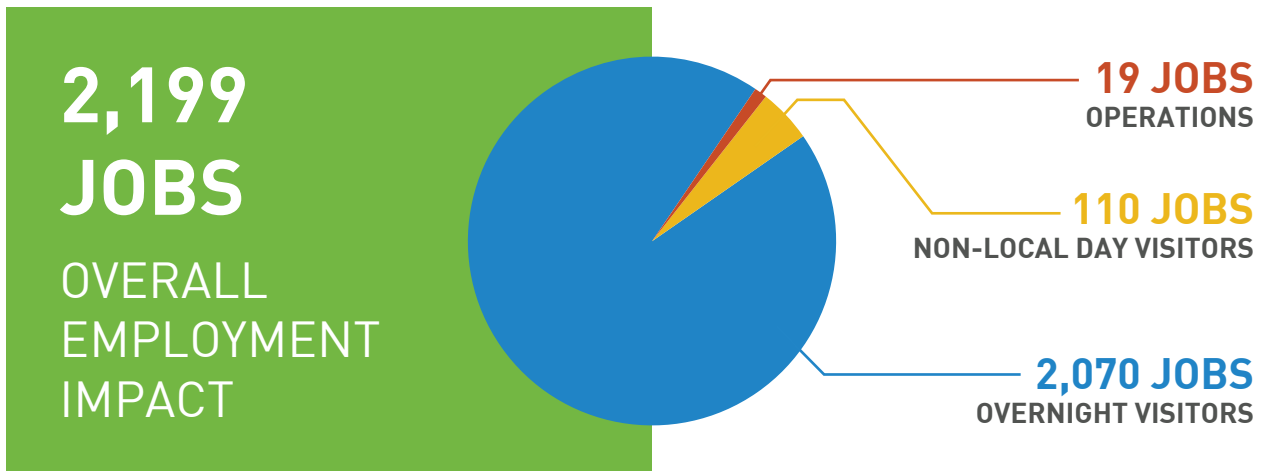
Wheeling Heritage generates a significant employment impact across the state, supporting up to **2,199 jobs**. These positions span a wide range of industries, with direct employment driven by business activity in sectors such as food services, retail, and lodging, where visitor and operational spending directly contribute to wages and salaries.

Most employment impacts stemmed from overnight visitors, who supported **2,070 jobs**, highlighting the strong influence of tourism-related spending on employment. Additionally, non-local day visitors supported **110 jobs**, while operations accounted for **19 jobs**.

These jobs are created as businesses reinvest their revenues into goods, services, and capital improvements needed to support ongoing demand. This ripple effect extends Wheeling Heritage's economic influence across the regional economy, amplifying its role in sustaining workforce opportunities and community vitality.



Figure 3: Overall Employment Impact



The Top 10 Employment Sectors table highlights the industries that support the most jobs, direct, indirect, and induced, associated with Wheeling Heritage. Sectors such as food services, lodging, amusement, and retail account for the largest share of employment, reflecting the direct impact of visitor spending and organizational activity. In addition, the economic ripple effect extends to other sectors, including hospitals, real estate, and gas stations, demonstrating how Wheeling Heritage’s operations and tourism-related spending support a broader range of jobs throughout the regional economy.

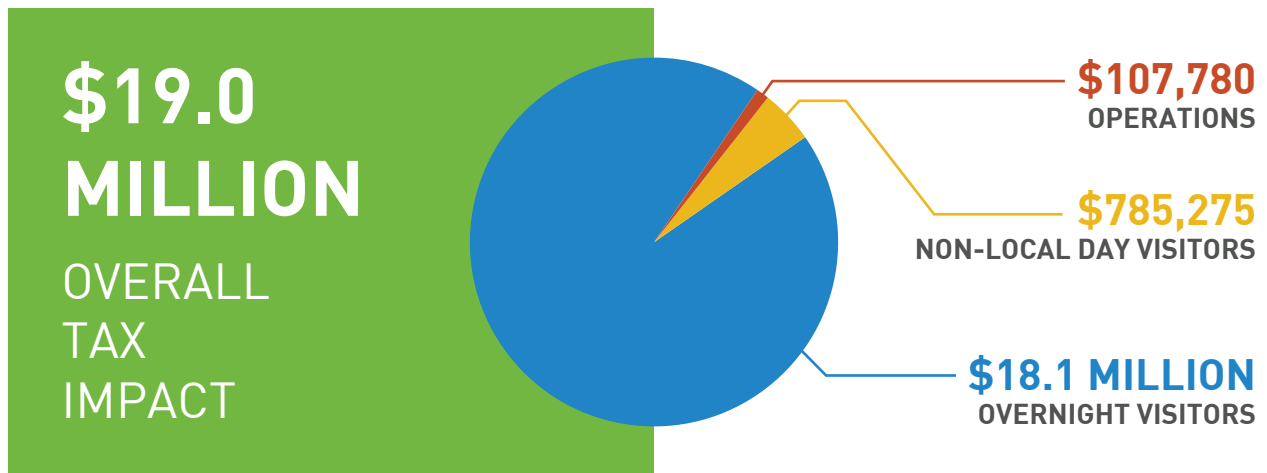
Table 3: Top 10 Employment Sectors

Full-service restaurants	540 jobs
Hotels and motels, including casino hotels	510 jobs
Other amusement and recreation industries	310 jobs
Retail - Miscellaneous store retailers	289 jobs
Other accommodations	82 jobs
Other real estate	33 jobs
All other food and drinking places	30 jobs
Hospitals	24 jobs
Management of companies and enterprises	21 jobs
Retail - Gasoline stores	20 jobs

TAX IMPACT

In addition to driving economic and employment growth, Wheeling Heritage generates significant fiscal benefits for state and local governments. In total, Wheeling Heritage supports **\$19.0 million** in annual tax revenue in FY 25, generated by operational and visitor spending in the area. Of this, **\$18.1 million** is generated by overnight visitors, reflecting the strong influence of tourism-related spending on the regional economy. Non-local day visitors contribute an additional **\$785,275**, while Wheeling Heritage’s operational activities account for **\$107,780** in tax revenues. Collectively, these impacts highlight the vital role of Wheeling Heritage in strengthening the regional tax base and sustaining public services through heritage-driven economic activity.

Figure 4: Tax Revenue from Operations and Visitors







ADDITIONAL IMPACTS

GATEWAY VISITORS AND HERITAGE CENTER

Wheeling Heritage’s strategic investment of \$308,046 represents far more than a financial contribution; it represented critical seed funding that unlocked millions of dollars in additional grants and public-private resources to advance the multi-million Wheeling Gateway Visitors and Heritage Center on the banks of the Ohio River. This project stands as one of the most transformative cultural and economic development initiatives in the city’s modern history, uniting a coalition of partners including the City of Wheeling, the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), the Regional Economic Development Partnership (RED), Ohio County, the State of West Virginia, and federal representatives who share a vision for a vibrant, connected downtown. The center’s design, featuring riverfront views, dining options, and meeting spaces, will anchor Wheeling’s tourism corridor, connecting the waterfront to nearby cultural landmarks, shops, and neighborhoods.

Economic Impact During Construction

The construction phase alone will generate substantial short-term economic benefits for the region. Based on standard multipliers for large-scale cultural and tourism developments, the millions in direct spending will circulate through local contractors, trades, suppliers, and service providers. Tripp Umbach estimates that during a two-year construction period, the Gateway Visitors and Heritage Center will generate **\$81 million** for the regional economy, support **540 jobs**, and produce **\$3.2 million** in tax revenues.⁵

Wheeling Heritage’s early financial commitment served as the catalyst that enabled this phase to move from concept to implementation, bridging the funding gap and demonstrating community confidence to state and federal funders. Therefore, Wheeling Heritage’s investment of \$308,046 in the project will generate a total of **\$554,482** in economic impact to the region.

Long-Term Tourism Benefits from the Gateway Visitors and Heritage Center

When complete, the redevelopment of the Gateway Visitors and Heritage Center is projected to attract approximately 175,000 additional visitors annually, dramatically increasing foot traffic to downtown Wheeling.⁶ These visitors will spend on lodging, dining, entertainment, and retail, infusing millions of new dollars into the economy each year. According to Tripp Umbach’s economic impact assessment, each visitor generates approximately \$650 in regional economic impact. Therefore, based on Tripp Umbach’s analysis, an additional 175,000 visitors generated by the Gateway Visitors and Heritage Center will add **\$113 million** to the tourism impact.

⁵ Based on a conservative multiplier of 1.8, with \$150,000 in economic impact supporting each job, and 4% of the total impact reflected in regional tax revenue.

⁶ [Wheeling Gateway Center, West Virginia](#)

WHEELING HISTORIC REVITALIZATION SUBGRANT PROGRAM

Through the Wheeling Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program, Wheeling Heritage has turned modest federal seed funding into measurable economic momentum for downtown Wheeling. Since 2021, the program has awarded \$962,500 in competitive subgrants to rehabilitate 16 historic commercial and neighborhood properties, leveraging a total of \$1.4 million in total investment.

Guided by the National Park Service–Rutgers economic impact framework for historic preservation,⁷ Tripp Umbach estimates that projects funded in Wheeling have collectively generated **\$2.6 million** in total economic impact, supported approximately **17** construction and rehabilitation job-years, and generated roughly **\$102,600** in state and local tax revenues during the build phase alone.⁸ Beyond these direct effects, the program’s impact continues to multiply as restored buildings attract new businesses, visitors, and residents, revitalizing downtown Wheeling’s urban fabric while preserving its architectural heritage and sense of place.

⁷ [National Park Service; Annual Report on the Economic Impact of the Federal Historic Tax Credits for Fiscal Year 2022](#)

⁸ All Economic Impact is based on a conservative multiplier of 1.8, with an estimation that every \$150,000 in spending creates a job. Further, this model assumes that 4% of all spending is returned to state and local governments.



WHEELING HERITAGE'S PARTNERSHIP GRANT

Wheeling Heritage's Partnership Grant awards up to \$1,000 and covers up to 75% of a project's direct costs. Projects are in preservation, community development, recreation, fairs/festivals, and the arts. Over 25 years, the program has awarded \$794,000 to approximately 550 community events/projects, while in FY25, 22 recipients received \$21,675.

Economic activity is leveraged through the partnership grants, as the 22 disbursements in FY25 resulted in a total local impact of **\$48,769** when applying a conservative 1.8 regional multiplier. Therefore, every dollar Wheeling Heritage invests in this program generates approximately \$2.25 in regional economic activity.

Over the past 25 years, these 550 grants totaling \$794,000 have resulted in at least \$992,500 in direct project spending, with many projects exceeding the 25% match. Therefore, the economic impact from total local spending over the past 25 years is approximately **\$1.8 million**.

Beyond local spending, many of these grants fund programming that draws visitors to the Wheeling area. The National Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 study estimates \$38 in event-related expenditures per local attendee, excluding admission, new dollars that flow to merchants. Because the Partnership Grants often underwrite festivals, performances, exhibits, and community events, this metric is the best available local visitor spending.⁹

Assuming the average project supported by a Wheeling Heritage Partnership Grant draws 100 participants, FY25 grant-funded projects are estimated to have attracted 2,200 participants and generated **\$84,612** in total direct spending.¹⁰ This direct local spending generated **\$152,302** in regional economic impact from participant spending in FY25. Applying this conservative estimate of 100 participants per event over the 25-year life of the program, the 550 projects attracted 55,000 visitors, generating **\$2.2 million** in direct local spending and a total regional economic impact of **\$3.8 million**. These figures do not include jobs supported or local taxes generated by this spending.

⁹ [AEP6, The Economic & Social Impact Study of Nonprofit Arts & Culture Organizations & Their Audiences](#)

¹⁰ \$38 in direct spending per participant based on [AEP6, The Economic & Social Impact Study of Nonprofit Arts & Culture Organizations & Their Audiences](#)



COMMUNITY PARTNER

Wheeling Heritage plays a central role in strengthening the city’s social and economic fabric through programs that celebrate creativity, support local enterprise, and bring people together. As a trusted community partner, the organization helps transform ideas into action, revitalizing downtown, empowering entrepreneurs, and elevating the arts. Initiatives such as the Snowflake Project, CO.STARTERS, Show of Hands, and Wheeling’s artisan programs not only strengthen civic pride but also generate tangible economic returns by driving foot traffic, supporting small businesses, and cultivating a vibrant sense of place. Together, these efforts exemplify Wheeling’s collaborative spirit and ongoing commitment to building a thriving, connected community where residents, visitors, and businesses all contribute to and benefit from its continued renaissance. The impacts in this area are included in the **\$221.6 million** overall economic impact of the Wheeling Heritage.

SNOWFLAKE INITIATIVE

The Snowflake Initiative has become one of Wheeling and the Main Street area’s most visible and unifying community projects, transforming downtown into a festive winter destination that draws residents and visitors from across the region. What began as a creative lighting effort has evolved into a source of civic pride and economic vitality. Starting in 2025, glowing LED snowflakes illuminated downtown Main and Market streets, creating a walkable, family-friendly atmosphere that encourages people to shop locally, dine downtown, and experience Wheeling’s renewed sense of place.

Supported by **\$40,545** in direct funding from Wheeling Heritage, the initiative brings together businesses, sponsors, volunteers, and civic organizations to enhance the city’s vibrancy. Each snowflake symbolizes both holiday cheer and the community’s collective investment in Wheeling’s future. Thousands of visitors each season generate measurable economic returns through increased retail sales, lodging stays, and event participation. At the same time, the initiative’s greater impact lies in strengthening local pride, connection, and tradition.

CO.STARTERS AND SHOW OF HANDS PROGRAMS

Wheeling Heritage's CO.STARTERS and Show of Hands programs are helping cultivate a new generation of entrepreneurs and small businesses that power economic growth. Together, they create a self-sustaining ecosystem that supports startups, accelerates existing businesses, and keeps wealth circulating within the community. Wheeling Heritage has invested **\$25,677** directly in these initiatives, and these impacts are included in Wheeling Heritage's overall economic impact on the area.

CO.STARTERS program, led by Regional Economic Development Partnership (RED) in partnership with Wheeling Heritage, nurtures emerging entrepreneurs by providing business-planning tools, mentorship, and connections to help turn ideas into sustainable ventures. These new enterprises generate jobs, strengthen the regional supply chain, and diversify Wheeling's economy.

The second program, Show of Hands, empowers existing small businesses through community-backed investment. At live pitch events, business owners compete for funding and visibility to expand their operations, often resulting in new storefront improvements, added capacity, and job creation. Beyond the dollars raised, the program builds civic pride and reinforces residents' connection to the businesses that define Wheeling's identity.

Together, these programs drive innovation, inspire collaboration, and anchor Wheeling's long-term prosperity by ensuring small businesses remain central to its economic and cultural renewal.

ARTS & CULTURAL PROGRAMS

Wheeling Heritage's arts programs are essential pathways for cultural vitality and economic growth in the Wheeling region. Through initiatives such as the Wheeling Artisan Center Shop, Handmade Holiday, and the Wheeling Artisan Center Gallery, the organization provides platforms for artists and makers to showcase and sell their work, build sustainable livelihoods, and connect with the community. A total of 12 Partnership Grants toward Arts & Culture projects were awarded in FY25. Wheeling Heritage has invested **\$48,873** in direct contributions to these initiatives. The following indicates the scale of these programs in FY25.



ARTISAN SHOP
177 VENDORS



HANDMADE HOLIDAY MARKETS
110 VENDORS



ARTISAN CENTER GALLERY
160 VENDORS

Collectively, these programs support Wheeling's dynamic arts economy that strengthens small businesses, enhances downtown vibrancy, and attracts residents and visitors alike. Investing in artists, makers, and cultural events, Wheeling Heritage reinforces community identity and supports small businesses. Wheeling Heritage's arts initiatives strengthen the city's cultural identity and economic vitality by supporting artists, makers, and creative entrepreneurs. Through the Wheeling Artisan Center Shop, Handmade Holiday market, and Artisan Center Gallery, the organization provides platforms to showcase regional talent, encourage spending, and enrich downtown vibrancy.

APPENDIX A: DEFINITION OF TERMS

STUDY YEAR	Fiscal Year 2025
TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT	The total economic impact of an institution encompasses both direct and indirect effects on the economy resulting from its presence.
DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT	The direct impact includes institutional, employee, and visitor spending on the institution.
INDIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT	Indirect impact, or the multiplier effect, includes re-spending by vendors/suppliers and households within the local economy.
MULTIPLIER EFFECT	The multiplier effect is the additional economic impact created by an institution's direct economic impact. Local companies that provide goods and services to an institution increase their purchasing power by creating a multiplier.
DIRECT EMPLOYMENT	The total number of employees at the institution is based on the total jobs.
INDIRECT EMPLOYMENT	Indirect employment is the additional jobs created by the institution's economic impact. Local companies that provide goods and services to an institution increase employment as purchasing increases, thereby creating an employment multiplier.
DIRECT TAX PAYMENTS	An institution makes direct tax payments to a unit of government.
INDIRECT TAX PAYMENTS	Governmental units collect government revenue in addition to that paid directly by an institution, including taxes paid directly by employees, visitors, and vendors who sell products to the institution.



APPENDIX B: TECHNICAL APPENDIX

IMPLAN Methodology

IMPLAN (Impact Analysis for PLANning) is an econometric modeling system developed by economists at the University of Minnesota and the U.S. Forest Service. In use since 1979, it is widely utilized by consulting firms, universities, and government agencies. IMPLAN draws on data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis to model trade flows and evaluate how changes in economic activity affect state, regional, and local economies.

For this analysis, IMPLAN's Regional Economic Accounts and Social Accounting Matrices were used to create state and regional multipliers. These multipliers estimate the ripple effects of Wheeling Heritage's spending and operations, factoring in economic leakage, excluding imports, and adjusting for substitution effects. This approach ensures that only impacts within the defined economic area are captured.

Economic Impact Value Definition

The overall economic impact values provided in this report for Wheeling Heritage include the following impact values that were broken out as sub-analyses:

- Organizational spending – capital and operational.
- Visitor spending.

Visitor Definitions

Impact analysis aims to quantify the impact of attracting “fresh” dollars to a region. Therefore, when including visitor spending in the impact analysis of a university, health system, or other organization, the analysis should exclude visitors arriving from within the region. Visitors to events who also live in the area would have spent their dollars there otherwise; therefore, this dollar was not attracted to the region because of the organization being analyzed.

The impact analysis for Wheeling Heritage examined impacts on the state of West Virginia. Visitors to Wheeling Heritage were counted only if they were from outside the analyzed geography.

Visitor Spending

Tripp Umbach uses federal per diem rates to approximate visitors' spending in a specific area. The use of per diem rates is considered a conservative measure, with visitors typically spending more than these rates in any given area.

Employment Definitions

IMPLAN analysis measures jobs/positions (part-time or full-time), not full-time equivalents (FTEs). Full-time and part-time employees impact the economy and support additional indirect and induced employment throughout the region. Employment data was provided for all individuals who received paychecks from Wheeling Heritage. This includes all full-time, part-time, and employed faculty, staff, students, and independent contractors.

Tax Impact Definition

State and local tax impacts generated in the current FY25 study included all taxes paid by Wheeling Heritage to West Virginia (i.e., payroll, property, sales, unemployment, income, and any other taxes paid to the state and local government). Any federal taxes paid by Wheeling Heritage were not included in the state and local tax impacts (i.e., FICA payments).



APPENDIX C: TRIPP UMBACH QUALIFICATIONS

Established in Pittsburgh, PA, and currently headquartered in Kansas City, MO, Tripp Umbach stands as one of the most highly regarded private consulting firms in the United States. Renowned for its expertise in economic and community development, the firm collaborates with healthcare, education, government, and corporate clients to enhance the economic, social, and physical well-being of communities globally. With 35 years of history, Tripp Umbach has partnered with more than 1,000 organizations, delivering services such as community and economic impact assessments and economic development strategies. The firm has successfully completed more than 500 economic impact studies in three and a half decades for colleges and universities throughout the United States.



trippumbach.com 





Wheeling
HERITAGE

