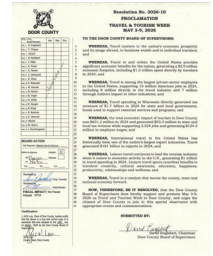


DESTINATION DOOR COUNTY

March 2026

COMMUNITY & WORKFORCE PILLAR

Tourism Proclamation Approved - We worked with county leadership and formally presented a Tourism Proclamation to the Door County Board of Supervisors at their March 24, 2026 meeting, which passed on a unanimous voice vote. The proclamation celebrates National Travel & Tourism Week (May 3-9, 2026), while also recognizing the vital role tourism plays in supporting the local economy, workforce, and overall community vitality. Presenting the proclamation also provided us with a visible platform to express appreciation for the Board's continued support of responsible destination management and to reaffirm our shared commitment to sustaining a healthy, vibrant visitor economy.



Accessibility Assessment Webinar - We held an Accessibility Assessment recruitment webinar with Wheel The World on Thursday March 19 in an effort to continue recruiting local businesses and organizations to participate in our Spring 2026 assessment process. As of 3/31/26, we had 9 locations signed up, with room for 21 more. [DoorCounty.com/accessibility](https://www.doorcounty.com/accessibility).

Workforce Recruitment Campaign - efforts to promote working in Door County kicked off in March. The campaign is targeting both student and adult audiences through high-impact, cross-channel placements, with a call to action being our community focused jobs site, [JobsInDoorCounty.com](https://www.JobsInDoorCounty.com).

STEWARDSHIP & REGENERATION PILLAR

Community Investment Fund - We were able to present ceremonial big checks to two Community Investment Fund grant recipients in March, including the County of Door at their March 24, 2026 County Board Meeting, and the Village of Ephraim. Find all grant awards at [DoorCounty.com/CIF](https://www.doorcounty.com/CIF). The next round of grant awards should be announced in May, and the next application deadline is Monday June 22. Find details on every dollar invested in all grant awards at [DoorCounty.com/CIF](https://www.doorcounty.com/CIF).



Regenerative Coffee Cup Initiative - This program will be piloted during May at Kick Ash Coffee in Ellison Bay, replacing their standard cups with compostable bamboo cups, lids, and sleeves. Part of our broader sustainability and stewardship efforts, this program involves coordinated partnerships with the Climate Change Coalition of Door County, Door County North, and Mighty Wind Farms to ensure proper collection and composting, including weekly transport of materials to the compost site. Messaging and branding, aligned under the "Care for Door County" umbrella, will educate customers on proper disposal and encourage participation through trackable engagement, including monitoring the number of cups dispensed, returned, and composted. The pilot will provide operational insights and performance data to evaluate scalability and potential replication at additional locations.

ECONOMIC VITALITY PILLAR

PAID MEDIA

Paid Search continued strong this month with CTRs ranging from 32-68% higher than the industry average. Demand Gen maintained a healthy CTR despite notable increases in clicks and impressions, while Performance Max drove another CTR increase and reached a remarkable 12.29% CTR (389% higher than the benchmark). Paid Social continued to drive higher-quality traffic in terms of site engagement in exchange for volume, while Meta Lead Gen drove 190% more leads than the previous month. In addition to some new Co-Ops, we also launched the Parks & Workforce Recruitment campaigns this month.

EMAIL

The new template launched successfully in March (see below), with open rates rising 8% year over year to 42% and click-through rates increasing slightly by 0.4% to an average of 2.2%. Engagement leaned strongly toward seasonal planning and family-friendly experiences, led by Fish Fry at 28% of clicks and the Kids Guide at 20%, reinforcing continued interest in classic Door County traditions and activities for families.

Lead Gen audiences Performed well, with a 34.6% open rate and a 2.6% click-through rate. Bandwango Leads continue to perform above average, delivering a 52% open rate and a 4.1% click-through rate.

SMS Campaigns launched in March with a warm reception from SMS audiences producing an average CTR of 37% across two campaigns and 1,600 sms deliveries.

SEO

When looking at March 2026 year-over-year, Destination Door County observed a 4.5% decrease in impressions mostly centered on community-focused queries, like “Sturgeon Bay,” “Sister Bay,” state park terms, and more. While visibility remained consistent for Door County/regional terms, this indicates a opportunity to boost/improve town and community pages with local insights, expert guidance, and pillar-cluster model style content. The website also saw a decrease for hotel terms, but still remains at the top of search for desktop and mobile.


Official eNewsletter Gets a Refresh

We’re pleased to share an update to the design of DDC’s official consumer newsletter, now aligned with the *Swept Away* campaign. The refreshed look creates a more cohesive and visually engaging experience for subscribers while continuing to highlight Door County’s unique experiences and seasonal offerings.




DESTINATION
DOOR COUNTY

WHERE HISTORY MEETS *Hospitality*



From storied inns to century-old lodges, these Door County accommodations offer generations of history. You're invited to settle in, slow down, and experience spring in spaces that have welcomed travelers for generations.

EXPLORE PLACES TO STAY



A GUIDE TO VISITING WASHINGTON ISLAND

Four miles offshore, Washington Island invites you to unplug and discover rocky beaches, Norwegian roots, and island-grown flavors you won't soon forget. And the only way to get here is on an iconic, scenic ferry.

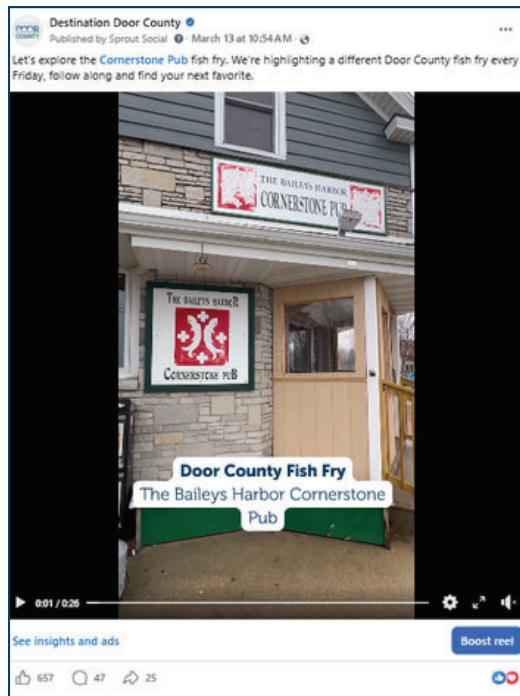
IT'S ISLAND TIME

Organic Social

Facebook continued to see strong engagement this month, with a 47% increase YoY. Impressions were down slightly (4%), but remained high at over 900K. For the first time in a while, Instagram saw growth in both impressions (up 45%) and engagement (up 2%). Both Facebook (846) and Instagram (474) also experienced significant follower growth this month.

We’ve continued to stay active on X, where we’re seeing solid engagement, with an 8.2% engagement rate this month. TikTok had a great month with our consistent posting, resulting in a 453% YoY increase in impressions and a 320% increase in engagement.

Our six-week Friday fish fry series performed well across all channels. On Instagram, the videos generated 461 shares and 136 saves. Facebook saw a strong influx of new followers, with many impressions coming from non-followers. On TikTok, the series drove 43 shares, 41 saves, and 174 new followers in March.



Media Highlights from the work of the Destination Door County Team

“2026- Best of the Midwest - Getaway of the Year - Door County” *Midwest Living*, March 17, 2026

PARTNERSHIP & WELCOME CENTER

Partnership – March 2026

- Met directly with partners across the county to understand off-season conditions. Feedback ranged from “quiet” to “busy,” helping us better gauge where support is needed heading into spring
- Moved the coffee cup composting pilot from concept to execution, including vendor pricing, material decisions, and confirming a May launch with committed business participation
- Secured Door County North’s involvement to transport used cups, solving a key operational gap and turning the pilot into a viable, county supported effort
- Finalized water station commitments with multiple community events and began volunteer coordination
- Scheduled and coordinated annual presentations across all 19 municipalities, including aligning expectations with CBAs and board leadership
- Provided hands on support to partners (technology, marketing, listings), while also capturing real-time insights on business operations to inform future decisions

Welcome Center – March 2026 (Stats)

- **Visitors:** 630 (March 2025: 789) ↓ 20.2%
 - Average daily visitors: 25
 - Busiest day: Friday
 - Lowest traffic day: Sunday
- **Phone Calls:** 438 vs. 462 ↓ 5.2%
- **Kiosk Sessions:** 71
 - Average screens per session: 3
 - Average session time: 3:32
- **Gift certificate Sales:** \$14,810 (↓ \$3,320 / 18.3%)
- **Gift certificate Redemptions:** \$21,615 (↓ \$9,275 / 30.0%)

SAVE THE DATE

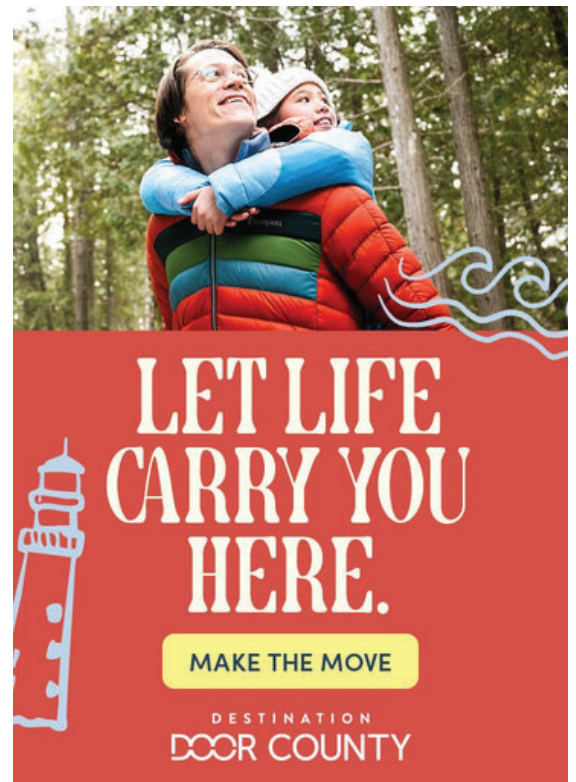
APRIL 14 DDC BOARD RETREAT AT WRITE ON, DOOR COUNTY (JUDDVILLE)
MAY 5 NATIONAL TRAVEL & TOURISM WEEK BREAKFAST EVENT, 8:30-10 AM AT STONE HARBOR RESORT

MONTHLY DEEP DIVE | MARCH 2026

Workforce Recruitment Efforts

In collaboration with the Door County Economic Development Corporation’s workforce recruitment efforts and outreach initiatives, we are activating a workforce recruitment campaign using Google Responsive Display & Programmatic Rich Media targeting to reach both student and adult audiences through high-impact, cross-channel placements that inspire travel, encourage visitation, and drive conversions.

- **Student Target (Ages 18–23):** Reaches college students in Wisconsin and Northern Illinois who are actively job hunting or attending job fairs. Using Google’s responsive display ads and geofenced programmatic placements on platforms like LinkedIn and Indeed, the campaign drives applications on JobsInDoorCounty.com while highlighting the lifestyle, community, and personal growth that come with spending a season in Door County, encouraging both short-term work and future visitation.
- **Adult Target (Ages 30–50):** Targets high-income households in key metros such as Chicago and Milwaukee who are exploring relocation or new opportunities. By geofencing premium ZIP codes and using platforms like Zillow, Trulia, and Indeed, the campaign optimizes conversions on the new upcoming relocation landing page, promoting Door County’s quality of life and strong sense of community. This effort reinforces that every move begins with a visit, encouraging potential residents to first experience Door County as visitors.



Note: Door County Economic Development worked in collaboration with Destination Door County to align in resources, timing, groups, and placements for the 2026 Workforce Recruitment Campaign. With their help, we were able to better align our key markets and placements for the student and adult focused groups.

RESEARCH DATA SNAPSHOT - COUNTY-WIDE LODGING

Uncertain Start to 2026 - Q2 Appears More Promising

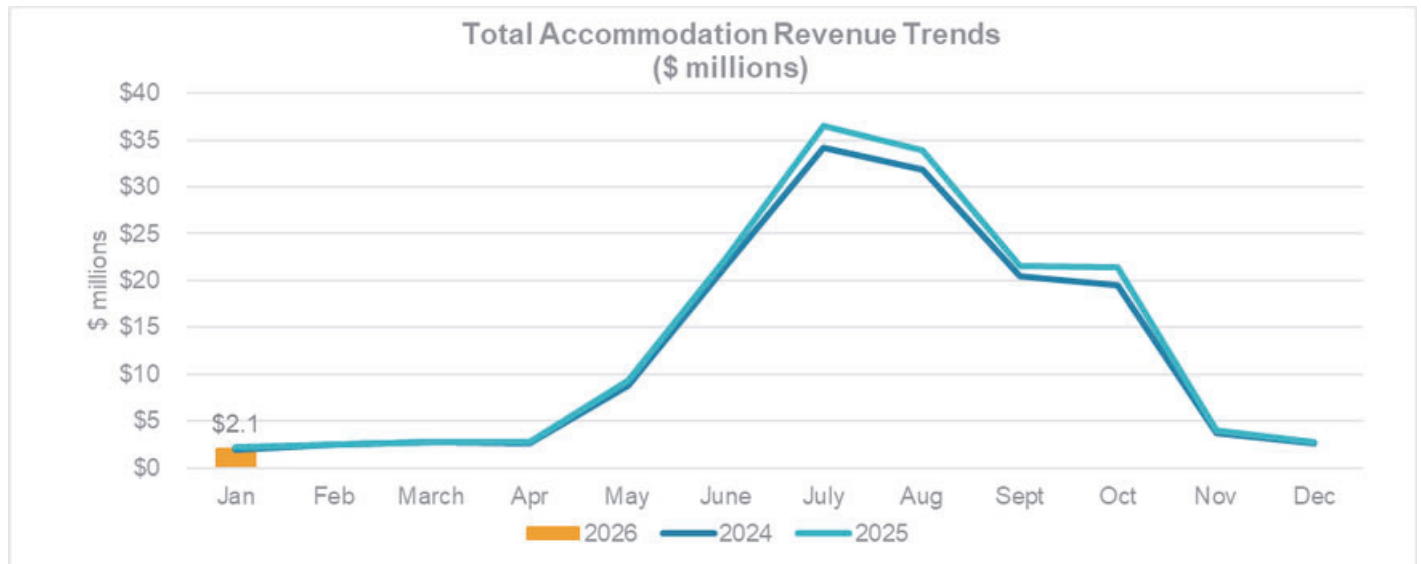
One month into 2026, Door County accommodation performance kicked off the year a bit slowly with both lodging revenue and room tax collections down 7% for the month of January. While rates held steady with January 2025, even with available rooms down 3%, occupied rooms and occupancy were down further.

Traditional hotel/motel property type revenue was up 16% year-over-year in January while most other property types experienced a decline or were flat compared to January 2025 revenue.

Looking toward Q2 2026, short-term rental bookings point to positive, albeit slower growth, particularly as booking windows are extended. Short-term rental bookings through late June are flat compared to 2025 yet revenue is up 12%, driven by an 11% increase in rates. Short-term rental booking windows are averaging 128 days for the next 90-days, up 9% compared to 2025, potentially making immediate demand appear softer than it may be.

Door County Total Lodging* January				
Metric	2025	2026	YoY % Chg	
Revenue (\$ millions)	\$ 2.3	\$ 2.1	-8.3%	
Average Daily Rate	\$ 159	\$ 159	0.0%	
Available Rooms (000's)	88.7	86.1	-2.9%	
Occupied Rooms (000's)	14.5	13.3	-8.3%	
Percent Occupied	16.4%	15.4%	-5.6%	

Total Accommodation: January 2026



Source: *Total lodging reported by Door County Tourism Zone Commission. Data reported monthly, latest data available is January 2026.

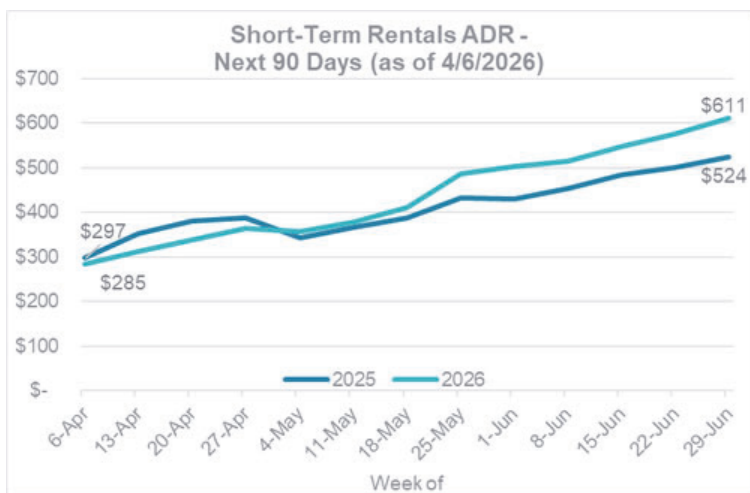
RESEARCH DATA SNAPSHOT - SHORT TERM RENTALS

- Through Q1 2026, short-term rental revenue was down 9% compared to 2025. While night supply was down 5%, demand was down further at -10%.
- The booking window is up 6% year-to-date and now averages 29 days.

Door County Short-Term Rentals* Jan - March				
Metric	2025	2026	YoY % Chg	
Revenue (\$ millions)	\$ 6.4	\$ 5.8	-9.2%	
Average Daily Rate	\$ 287	\$ 289	0.9%	
Percent Occupied	12.6%	11.9%	-5.4%	
Avg Active AirBNB Listings	1,128	1,075	-4.7%	
Avg Booking Window	27.3	29.1	6.3%	
Avg Length of Stay	3.1	2.9	-6.1%	

Short-Term Rental Outlook

- As of early April, short-term rental bookings for the next 90-days were flat compared to the same time frame in 2025.
- While occupancy was up 3%, an 11% increase in rates drove up revenue +12%.

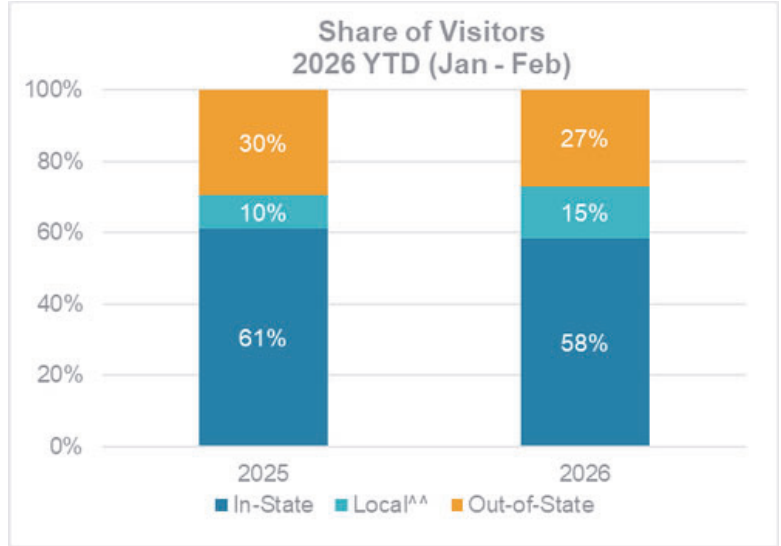


**Short-term rentals sourced to KeyData. Data reported monthly, latest data available is March 2026.

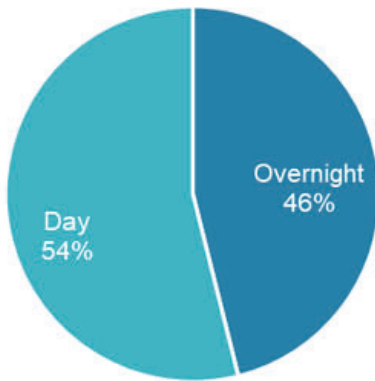
RESEARCH DATA SNAPSHOT - VISITOR BEHAVIOR

Visitor Behavior via Mobile Location Data[^]

- Compared to the first two months of 2025, the share of locals increased to 15% while the share of out-of-state visitors declined to 27% and in-state visitors also declined to 58% from 61% last year. ⇨
- Year-to-date, 46% of all visitors stayed overnight, increasing from 42% the same time frame last year. ⇩

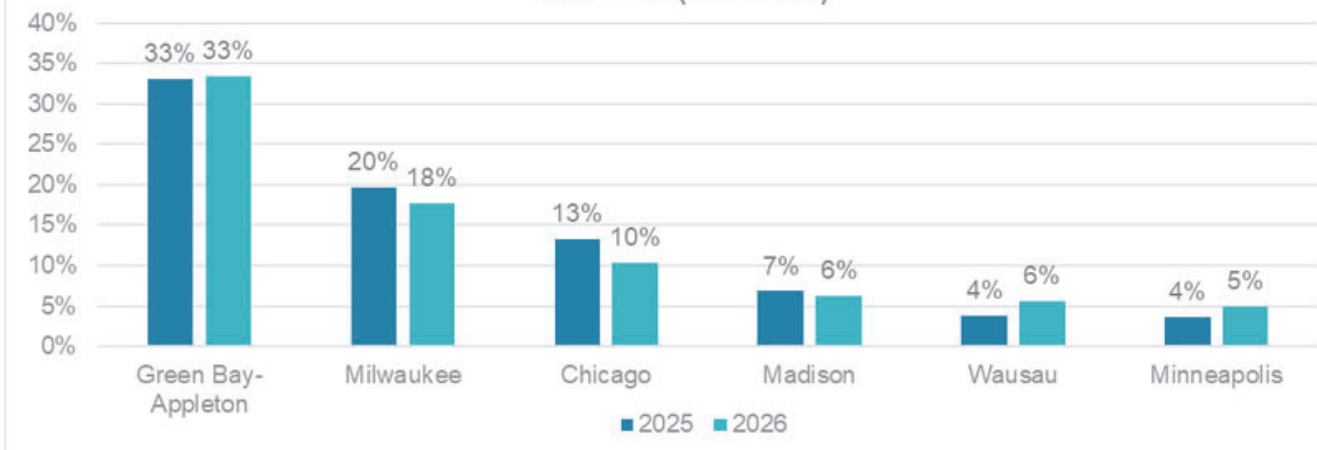


Total Overnight Share 2026 YTD (Jan - Feb)



Overnight visitor origin markets were largely consistent with the prior year, although the share of visitors from Milwaukee and Chicago were slightly lower, while the share of visitors originating in Wausau and Minneapolis was higher compared to last year. ⇩

Mobile Device Origin Markets 2026 YTD (Jan - Feb)



[^]Source: Azira mobile location data is collected through the usage of phone mobile apps. It is completely privacy compliant and allows tourism organizations to understand visitor behavior while in destination. Data reported monthly, latest data is from February 2026. ^{^^}Locals defined as Door County residents.