

Commentary/Op-Ed - May 2018

Op-Ed: NYC Tourism Industry Deserves Credit For Major Job Growth

Over the past two decades, tourism in New York City has swelled from 33 million to nearly 63 million annual visitors. The city should make concrete efforts that recognize tourism's role in the region's economy, and plan to sustain it.

by Jonathan Bowles, Angela Pinsky, and Tim Tompkins

The 90 percent increase in tourists to New York City over the last two decades has sparked hundreds of thousands of new jobs in hotels, restaurants, retail shops, museums, airports, tour bus companies, and even travel-tech startups. More than 291,000 New Yorkers count on tourism for their jobs—putting it on par with the tech ecosystem, the creative economy, and the finance industry.

In this *Gotham Gazette* op-ed, Jonathan Bowles, executive director of Center for an Urban Future, Angela Pinsky, executive director of the Association for a Better New York (ABNY), and Tim Tompkins, president of Times Square Alliance, assert that the city needs to upgrade its tourism infrastructure. New York has never adequately planned for 60 million tourists a year, and it has not made enough of the infrastructure investments that are needed to sustain this many annual visitors.

Read this op-ed here.

This op-ed is a continuation of the Center for an Urban Future's extensive research on economic opportunity in New York, including the recent study *Destination New York.*

Photo credit: Matt A.V. Chaban

This op-ed was made possible by **Times Square Alliance** and the **Association for a Better New York** (ABNY).

General operating support for the Center for an Urban Future has been provided by the **Clark Foundation**, the **Bernard F. and Alva B. Gimbel Foundation**, and **Altman Foundation**. CUF is also grateful for support from **Fisher Brothers** for the Middle Class Jobs Project.

Center for an Urban Future (CUF) is an independent, nonprofit think tank that generates innovative policies to create jobs, reduce inequality and help lower income New Yorkers climb into the middle class. For 20 years, CUF has published accessible, data-driven reports on ways to grow and diversify the economy and expand opportunity that are anchored in rigorous research, not preconceived notions about outcome. Our work has been a powerful catalyst for policy change in New York City and serves as an invaluable resource for government officials, community groups, nonprofit practitioners and business leaders as they advocate for and implement policies to address some of New York's biggest challenges and opportunities.

RELATED PRESS

New Jobless Hope Seeds of Tourism Can Be Resown in Big Apple

New York Times, April 30, 2020

Vallone proposes tourism office to serve as intermediary between NYC tourists, businesses

QNS, by Jenna Bagcal, October 25, 2019

CENTER FOR AN URBAN FUTURE
120 Wall Street, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10005

cuf@nycfuture.org © All Rights Reserved.