

## Athens County Tourism, Recreation & Parks Sector

### Why Is This Important?

As citizens become more comfortable with the Internet, they typically continue to find more uses for it. One of the industries benefiting from this trend is the tourism industry. Increasingly, people are using the Internet to research, book and pay for airline tickets, hotels and rental cars and to make other logistical arrangements for their vacations and business travel. In light of this fact, hotels, travel agents, restaurants, attractions and other support businesses in the tourism industry are taking advantage of this trend and making their information and services available on the Internet.

Additionally, with the help of high-speed Internet and computer technology, the leisure time planned and purchased over the Internet can also be used more efficiently, allowing for a more enjoyable experience. Whether it is vacation, recreation or a visit to a local park, high-speed Internet is making the travel experience more enjoyable and more convenient. Already, a number of innovative tourism attractions are using high-speed Internet to improve services and meet the changing demands of their guests.

A few of Ohio's major attractions are:

- National Museum of the Air Force
- Amusement Parks Cedar Point and Kings Island
- Center of Science and Industry (COSI)
- Lake Erie
- Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

#### Athens County Tourism, Recreation & Parks

- Visitors & Convention Bureau, [www.athensohio.com](http://www.athensohio.com)
- Strouds Run State Park, [www.friendsofstroudsrun.org](http://www.friendsofstroudsrun.org)
- Ohio Tourism, [www.ohio.gov/tourism](http://www.ohio.gov/tourism)
- Travel Ohio, [www.travelohio.com](http://www.travelohio.com)
- Ohio Travel, [www.ohiotravel.org](http://www.ohiotravel.org)
- Ohio Traveler, [www.ohiotraveler.com](http://www.ohiotraveler.com)
- Our Ohio, [ouohio.org/index.php?page=travel-ohio](http://ouohio.org/index.php?page=travel-ohio)
- Ohio Tourism & Recreation, [www.ohio.gov/tourism](http://www.ohio.gov/tourism)
- Appalachian Ohio Tourism, [www.firstohio.com/Tourism/default.aspx](http://www.firstohio.com/Tourism/default.aspx)
- Ohio Tourism, [consumer.discoverohio.com](http://consumer.discoverohio.com)
- Ohio Tourism Toolbox, [ohiotourism.osu.edu](http://ohiotourism.osu.edu)



Located in Athens County are:

- Strouds Run State Park

### Where Are We Today?

The Athens County tourism website is active with good information available online at [www.athensohio.com](http://www.athensohio.com).

The Ohio Department of Development, Division of Tourism, [consumer.discoverohio.com](http://consumer.discoverohio.com), promotes travel to and within Ohio and develops programs to encourage and support the growth of the state's tourism industry and to encourage visitors to extend their stay. They also offer incentives on their site with a monthly contest that includes prizes for overnight getaways to distinct locations and there is a custom Ohio eNewsletter that maintains a database of those interested in further information for travel and recreation to Ohio. The free online publications are an added bonus for web surfers quickly looking to book R & R.

The State of Ohio's Division of Parks was created as a division of ODNR in 1949 with the statutory obligation to create, supervise, operate and maintain a system of state parks and to promote their use by the public. Through land acquisition and transfer, the park system has grown from 30 to 74 state parks, in 60 counties, with over 174,000 acres of land and water resources. Facilities include nine resort lodges, three dining lodges, six golf courses, more than 9,000 campsites in 57 family campgrounds, 518 cottages, 36 visitor and nature centers, 80 swimming beaches and 19 swimming pools, 188 boat ramps, 7,583 boat docks, 463 picnic areas, and 1,167 miles of trails. Each year 55 million visitors enjoy Ohio's state parks.

The ODNR is currently operating under their second five year strategic growth plan; a plan designed to foster Customer Service, Resource Management, Human Resource Development, Infrastructure, and Stable Funding. Strategy 6, in the Customer Service Issue 1 section, specifically addresses emerging technologies such as Broadband.

All of this contributes to the state's economic growth, thereby enriching the quality of life for every Ohioan. Ohio is full of splendor and majesty, charm and hospitality. From the Ohio River to the Great Lakes, Ohio is home to some of the country's premier vacation destinations.

Tourism Recreation & Parks Sector Assessment Overview			
Category	Current Assessment	Future Vision	Additional Comments
Networked Places	NA	NA	
Applications & Services	NA	NA	
Leadership	NA	NA	

*The tourism, recreation & parks sector was not adequately represented on the eCommunity Leadership team, therefore, the sector self-assessment and project ideas are not available. Connect Ohio will continue attempts to engage representatives for this sector.*