The Great Allegheny Passage Economic Impact Study (2007-2008)

For
The Progress Fund's Trail Town Program
Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau
and
Allegheny Trail Alliance

Job #07-294

August 7, 2009



Table of Contents

Background and Methodology	l
Background and Objectives	
Methodology	
Analytical Notes	
Executive Summary	6
Phase I: Business Survey	Appendix A
Phase II: Trail User Survey	Appendix E
Phase III: Business Survey	Appendix C
Calculated Receipts Model	Appendix D





Background and Objectives

The Progress Fund's Trail Town Program, Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau (LHVB), and the Allegheny Trail Alliance (ATA) contracted Campos Inc to conduct three phases of research:

- Phase I, economic impact research among businesses located on and around the trail (completed in 2008)
- Phase II, marketing research among trail users (conducted throughout 2008 and reported in 2009)
- Phase III, follow-up economic impact research among businesses (completed in 2009).

The objectives for each phase of the study included the following:

Phases I and III:

- To obtain gross sales revenue from trail side and trail-related businesses for 2006 and 2007 (Phase I) and 2008 (Phase III).
- To determine if businesses expanded operations in the past year and/or if they have plans to expand in the upcoming year.
- To determine if businesses created new employee positions in the past year and/or if they have plans to add positions in the upcoming year.
- To identify other actions or indicators that may have occurred as a direct result of the revitalization around the completion of the Great Allegheny Passage.

Phase II:

- To profile trail visitors' usage of the trail (i.e., how often they visit, purpose of visit, hours spent, etc.).
- To determine group characteristics (i.e. ages, gender, income, etc).
- To establish the ZIP code origin of the visitor.
- To determine mode of transportation to arrive at trail and one-way distance.
- To determine how much was spent in various categories such as bike rental, equipment, food and drink, gasoline, retail shopping, grocery/convenience store purchases, lodging, etc.
- To profile dining habits in terms of bringing food, purchasing food for picnics/"on the go", dining at restaurants, and reasons for choosing that option.
- To identify any unmet needs of trail users.
- To determine reasons for not visiting the trail areas among prospective visitors that did not follow through with a visit.



Methodology

Phases I and III:

Campos Inc designed the Phase I survey instrument and made minor revisions for Phase III with input and approval from the Trail Town Program, LHVB, and ATA.

Each phase of the economic impact among businesses utilized a multimodal data collection methodology, mail, web, and telephone interviews. Data collection for Phase I took place between March 17, 2008 and April 24, 2008 while Phase III data collection started March 30, 2009 and ended May 28, 2009.

Overall, for each phase businesses were surveyed as follows:

	Phase I	Phase III
Mail/fax	58	64
Online	30	20
Phone	29	36
Total Completes	117	120

All completed interviews were edited, coded, computer tabulated, and analyzed by Campos Inc.

Copies of the questionnaires can be found in Appendixes A and C.

Phase II:

Campos Inc designed the survey instrument with input and approval from the Trail Town Program, LHVB, and the ATA.

The intercept survey was administered by volunteers to trail users at specific locations along the trail and the completed surveys were entered online. Overall, more than 1,000 hours were invested by volunteers over the course of the 6 month period administering surveys and entering data; ultimately saving the Trail Town Program, LHVB, and the ATA upwards of \$25,000 in potential data collection costs.



A total of 1,272 intercept surveys were administered at eight different locations along the Great Allegheny Passage starting on May 23, 2008 and ending on October 26, 2008.

Intercept surveys were collected as follows:

	Completes
Weekdays (MonThurs.)	664
Weekends (FriSun.)	571
Summer Holidays*	37
Total Completes	1,272

*Note: Memorial Day, 4th of July, or Labor Day

In addition to the intercept survey, a supplemental sample was collected online among individuals that had requested information about the trail within the past year.

The survey instrument for this supplemental sample was nearly identical to the intercept survey with the addition of several qualifying questions and a series of unique questions aimed at discovering reasons that non-visitors chose <u>not</u> to visit the trail/region and identifying any alternative plans/trips.

A total of 302 respondents completed the supplemental survey between October 8, 2008 and November 29, 2008 with 228 reporting that they visited/planned to visit the trail and 74 respondents reporting that they had not/did not plan to visit the trail.

All completed surveys were edited, coded, computer tabulated, and analyzed by Campos Inc.

Copies of the questionnaires can be found in Appendix B.



Analytical Notes

- Based on their statistical accuracy (SA) scores at the 95% confidence level, there is a one in twenty (20) chance that the "true" measurements observed among the following sample sizes would fall outside of these ranges:
 - The Phase I sample of 117 yielded a SA of ±7.14%.
 - The Phase II (intercept) sample of 1,272 yielded a SA of ±2.75%.
 - The Phase II (supplemental) sample of 321 yielded a SA of ±5.64%.
 - The Phase III sample of 120 yielded a SA of ±7.9%.
- Where appropriate, statistical testing was conducted to determine significant differences between:
 - Business types and county locations for Phases I and III.
 - Locations of interview, type of trail user, and various demographics for Phase II.
- Due to small sample sizes, caution should be used when interpreting some of the subgroup analysis results. While some subgroups may have been too small to draw statistically valid conclusions, patterns may have emerged that can be useful.
- Throughout the report, percentages may not add to 100% because of rounding and/or multiple responses.
- The term *net* is used in some tables in this report. Net is the summary of a group of related responses and represents the percentage of respondents who made one or more comments in that category/group.
- Base is the number of respondents who were asked a particular question.
 At times, questions are skipped by some respondents based on their answers to previous questions.
- A top-two box score refers to the two highest responses on a rating scale (for example, excellent and very good), that have been combined for reporting purposes.
- Several tables throughout the report show only the most frequently mentioned responses. For a complete listing of responses, please refer to Computer Tables, furnished under a separate cover.



Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) is a 132-mile system of biking and hiking trails that connects Cumberland, MD to McKeesport, PA (near Pittsburgh, PA). In 2006, the GAP was connected to the C & O Canal Towpath in Cumberland, MD creating a continuous non-motorized corridor, 318 miles long, from McKeesport to Washington, DC. The Progress Fund's Trail Town Program, Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau (LHVB), and Allegheny Trail Alliance (ATA) contracted Campos Inc to conduct three phases of research aimed as discovering the economic impact that the completion of the trail has had on the trail towns and businesses located near or along the trail.

On average, business owners indicated that one-quarter of their gross revenue was directly attributed to trail users and two-thirds reported that they experienced at least some increase in gross revenue because of their proximity to the trail. Over one-quarter of all businesses that were surveyed mentioned that they have or plan to either expand their operations or hire additional staff because of the impact of the trail.

- Generally speaking, lodging/hotel establishments and outdoor/trail related businesses reported the largest increases in their estimated annual revenue compared to the other business types.
- On average, businesses located in Fayette County, Somerset County, and Allegany County, MD provided the highest estimation in regard to the percentage of their gross annual revenue that could be directly attributed to the trail.
- Among those surveyed over the past two years \$23,878,495 worth of receipts (actual revenue)*was attributed to the trail (\$11,990,990 in 2007 and \$11,887,505 in 2008) and \$4,372,190 worth of wages* were paid to employees of those respective businesses (\$2,078,956 in 2007 and \$2,293,234 in 2008).

When projecting average total receipts across the businesses included in the sample universe, trail attributed revenue in 2007 was \$32,614,703 and it was projected that businesses distributed \$6,273,927 in wages. Despite the tough economic times, in 2008 these figures actually increased to projected receipts and wages of \$40,677,299 and \$7,500,798, respectively.

*See Appendix D at the end of the report for a detailed model of the receipt calculation.

Executive Summary

Trail users' purchasing and usage behaviors differed depending on which type of trail user they were. Not surprisingly, trail users traveling 50 miles or more to arrive at the trail spent approximately twice as much in trail communities as those traveling less than 50 miles.

- Four in ten trail users that were surveyed planned an overnight stay as part of their trip. On average, these overnight trail users spent
 \$98 a day in the trail communities and on lodging.
 - Over one-third of the overnight trail users reported household incomes of \$100K or more.
- The remaining trail users surveyed were either local residents or were enjoying a day trip. These local/day trip trail users spent an average of \$13 a day in the trail communities.
- The average distance traveled to arrive at the trailhead was 131 miles and the median distance was 20 miles. On average, overnight trail users traveled 289 miles with a median distance of 90 miles.
- Biking was the primary activity being performed by approximately nine in ten trail users. **Nearly all of the overnight trail users reported** biking as their primary activity while using the trail.
- Over three-quarters of the overnight trail users reported using the trail for recreation. In contrast, using the trail for health and/or fitness was mentioned by more than half of the local and day trip trail users.
- Trail users from 670 unique postal codes were surveyed; this included nearly every state in the continental United States and parts of Canada.
- Over eight in ten trail users indicated that they were 35 years of age or older.





Appendix A – Phase I: Business Survey (2008)

Trail 7	Town B	Busines	ss Sur	vey				
	Bike r Camp Converted Hotel, Outdo Pharr Resta Retail Trans Other How lor location	ss location rental/sappround enience /motel/Epor recrease /macy/draurant/tal/gift/spessportation /	on? Cir ales/sup s/grocer &&B eation/d ug store avern/ca ecialty son/shutt	ry store cutfitter e afé/ice o store cling	number.	01 02 03 04 05 06 hop 07 08 09 10 in this		What impact did the trail have on the location of your business? Very strong influence
3.	What <u>m</u> your?	nonths o Circle	of the ye the mo	ear do y onths.		sider to be	0.	Has the trail had any impact on your decision to do the following with respect to your operations? Expand your operations in the past year 1 Make plans to expand your operations 2
	,	seaso			Mari	المدينة		Downsize your operations in the past
	Jan Jul	Feb Aug	Mar Sep	Apr Oct	May Nov	Jun Dec		year3
			•	nonths:		Dec		Make plans to downsize your operations4 None5
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun		(If none or downsizing, please go to Q9)
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	 8a	. If expanding, did/will you expand your
	in any g Yes No	given m	onth du	iring the	year?	2 weeks 1 2		operations? At your current business location 1 At another location of the trail system 2 At a location that is not part of the trail system
3d.	If yes, v							Other 4
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	9.	Has the trail had any impact on your decision
4.	Jul How ma approp				Nov yourse uring			to do the following with respect to your workforce? Create new positions in the past year 1 Make plans to create new positions 2
	a) Peak	(seasoi			e			Eliminate positions in the past year 3 Make plans to eliminate positions 4 None
	b) Off-p	eak sea			e		10	. Approximately what were the gross revenue figures for this business location in?
5.				ny <u>hours</u> work du		<u>ek</u> does		2006: \$ 2007: \$
	•	seasoi	p	oart-tim	e		11	. What percent of your 2007 annual business would you estimate could be largely attributable to the existence of the area's
	b) Off-p	eak sea)			biking/hiking trail?
			p	oart-tim	е			%
								OVER-

(Answer question 12 if your business is a r	,	
12. Do you offer shipping services for custo Yes		
No		
Not applicable	3	
13. Please explain any other actions that ye	ou have taken to attract and/o	r cater to trail users.
14. Feel free to make any comments relate	and to the according on viranmen	at of your community, the impact
of the trail, and/or the trail itself.	ed to the economic environmen	it of your community, the impact
Please remember that any business info and will be reported as aggregated num		eated as strictly confidential
Optional Information (Please complete if your prepared by Campos Inc. We encourage e		
Name:		
Business:		
Address:		
City:	State:	ZIP:
Phone (include area code):		
email address:		

Please complete your survey online at www.surveywriter.net/in/survey/survey47/07-294a.asp, or return your completed survey in the postage-paid, provided envelope addressed to:

Allegheny Trail Alliance PO Box 501 Latrobe, PA 15650



Appendix B - Phase II: Trail User Survey (2008)

2008 Trail Users Survey

Survey ID#: Date:	Q8. Which of the following best identifies your age group? (Read List)
Start Time:Stop Time:	16-241
Location:	25-342
	35-443
	45-544
Q1. Where did you start on the trail?	55-645
Q	65+6
Q2. Will you be/have you been on the trail for successive days?	Q9. What is your zip/postal code?
Yes(<i>Record Number</i>)	Q10. How many persons were in your group today?
No2	Just myself
	Other(Record Number)2
Q3. What form of transportation did you use to get to the trail	
today?	Q11. What type of group are you traveling with?
Bike1	Personal group of friends/family1
Car/truck/van (personal)2	Packaged trip (commercial)2
Car/truck/van (friends/family)3	Packaged trip (private)3
Group tour bus4	Fundraising trip4
Private shuttle service5	Other5
Public transportation (bus, taxi, etc.) 6	
Walked7	Q12a. How many persons in your group are in the following
Other8	age categories? (Record Number)
	Under 10 35-44
Q4. Where are you ending on the trail?	10-15 45-54
Q IV Who to allo you chang on the train	16-24 55-64
	25-34 65 or older
Q5. How far did you travel, ONE WAY, to come to the trail? (Record Number) Miles	Q12b.How many trips will each person in your group make the trail this calendar year? (Record Number)
Q6. How often, on average, do you use the trail?	You Person 4
Once a week or more often	Person 1 Person 5
Several times a month	Person 2 Person 6
Several times a year	Person 3 Person 7
Once a year	Q13. What did you/your group do on the trail today?
Of a What down of the small do your tour calles winit the two 10	(Select all that apply)
Q6a. What days of the week do you typically visit the trail?	Bikel
(Select all that apply)	Hike/Walk
Monday-Thursday	Jogging/Running3
Friday	Fishing
Saturday	Birding/Bird Watching5
Sunday 4	Other6
Q6b. What time(s) of year do you typically visit the trail? (Select all that apply)	Q13a. How many persons in your group brought their own recreational equipment/gear?
Spring	012h Hann manna in mann mann mantal thair
Summer	Q13b. How many persons in your group <u>rented</u> their
Fall	equipment/gear?
Winter	O14 What was a ward and a construction of the
Don't know/No pattern 5	Q14. What was your/your group's <u>primary</u> reason for using the trail today? (<i>Read List only if necessary</i>)
Q7. Gender: (Record by observation)	Commuting1
Male 1	Fitness training (marathon, triathlon)2
Female2	Health and exercise3
	Recreation4

Q15. Have you/your group, or do you/your group plan to,	Q17. How did you originally hear or find out about the trail?
purchase or rent equipment, food, clothing, souvenirs,	(Select all that apply and Record media source)
etc., in the communities along the trail or trailhead today?	Word of mouth (friends, family, etc.)01
Yes 1	Bike/Recreation Shop or Store
No 2 <mark>Skip to Q16</mark>	Driving past/Roadside sign
	Internet search 04
Q15a. What do you estimate <u>your</u> total spending will be in the	Internet web site 05
communities today on? (If with group ask to exclude)	Live by the trail
Beverages\$	Magazine 07
Clothing\$	Newspaper08
Candy/snacks\$	Other 09
Daily Equipment rental (bikes, etc.) \$	Don't recall/don't know 10
Ice Cream\$	
Restaurants\$	Q18. Which category best describes your total household
Souvenirs\$	income before taxes? (<i>Read List</i>)
Transportation (shuttling, taxi, etc.)\$	Less than \$25K
Other (sunscreen, film, etc.)\$	\$25K to \$50K2
Individual Package Cost\$	\$51K to \$100K3
(i.e., if package cost is \$800 for food, lodging, and	\$101K to \$150K4
equipment, do not input \$ for those categories)	\$151K to \$200K5
	More than \$200K6
Q15b. What do you estimate your group's total spending will	Refused (<i>Don't read</i>)7
be in the communities today on? (Don't ask if alone)	
Beverages\$	Q19. How would you rate your overall experience on the trail
Clothing\$	today? (Read List)
Condy/angels	
Candy/snacks\$	Excellent
Equipment rental (bikes, canoes, etc.) \$	Very good2 **Q22
Ice Cream\$	Good3 **Q22
Restaurants\$	Fair4
Souvenirs\$	Poor5
Transportation (shuttling, taxi, etc.)\$	Don't know <mark>(<i>Don't read</i>)</mark> 6
Other (sunscreen, film, etc.)\$	
Estimated group package cost\$	Q20. What else about the trail itself could make your
(If unknown or can't estimate, SKIP group package cost)	experience better?
(1) unknown of can i estimate, SKII group package cost)	experience better:
Q16. In conjunction with your trip, have or will you plan an overnight stay?	
•	
Yes 1	
No	Q21. What else about the <u>trail communities</u> could make your
	experience better?
Q16a. In what type of accommodation do you plan on	
staying?	
Bed and Breakfast 1	
Campground2	
Friend or Relatives Home	Q22. Additional comments?
	Q22. Additional comments?
Motel/Hotel4	44N7-4- 70, 11 11 1 1 1 1 C
Other5	**Note: If trail user provided at least a good rating for
	overall experience $(Q19)$ then ask for reason why?
Q16b. How much do you plan to spend for your overnight	
accommodations (per night)?\$	^^Note: If respondent(s) is on a multiple day trip record how
(r · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	they arrived at and are planning to return to their original
Q16c. How many overnight stays have you/do you plan to	departure point.
have in conjunction with your visit to the trail?	
Tonight only1	
Two or more2	
Not sure	
Other4	

Appendix C

Appendix C - Phase III: Business Survey (2009)

Trail	Town Business Survey	
	What is the primary classification of this business location? Circle one number. Bike rentals/repairs/sales/supplies	6. What impact did the trail have on the location of your business? Very strong influence
2.	How long have you been in business in this location?	Has had no impact
3.	years months What months of the year do you consider to be your? Circle the months.	8. Has the trail had any impact on your decision to do the following with respect to your operations? Expand your operations in the past year 1
	a) Peak season months:	Make plans to expand your operations 2
	Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec	Downsize your operations in the past year
	b) Off-peak season months:	operations4 None5
	Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun	8a. If expanding, did/will you expand your
3c.	Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Is your business closed for more than 2 weeks in any given month during the year? Yes	operations? At your current business location 1 At another location of the trail system 2 At a location that is not part of the trail system
3d.	If yes, which months?	Other4
	Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec How many persons, including yourself if	9. Has the trail had any impact on your decision to do the following with respect to your workforce? Create new positions in the past year 1 Make plans to create new positions 2
	a) Peak season: full-time part-time	Eliminate positions in the past year 3 Make plans to eliminate positions 4 None 5
	b) Off-peak season: full-time part-time	10. Approximately what were the gross revenue figures for this business location in? (Do not use commas, etc. ex: \$1M=1000000)
5.	On average, how many <u>hours per week</u> does the <i>typical</i> employee work during?	2007: \$ 2008: \$
	a) Peak season: full-time part-time b) Off-peak season: full-time part-time	11. What percent of your 2008 annual business would you estimate could be largely attributable to the existence of the area's biking/hiking trail? (Round to nearest percentage)

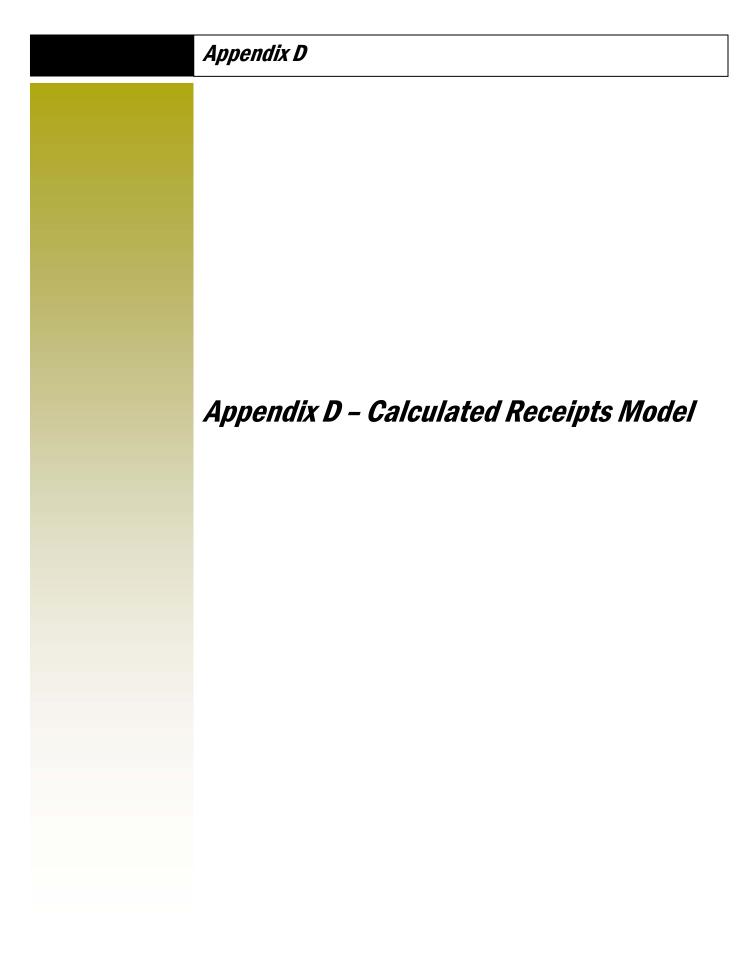
OVER -

•	o n 11a if your busi nt of your 2008 ann		•	s generated through:
(Round to near	est percentages)			
Rentals:	Repairs:	Sales:	Supplies:	
12. Do you offer s Yes	an 12 if your busing thipping services for the services for the services able	r customer purch 1	•	
12a. What is your	zip code?			
13. Please explai	n any other actions	that you have ta	ken to attract and/o	or cater to trail users.
	ake any comments d/or the trail itself.	related to the ed	conomic environme	nt of your community, the impact
	er that any busines			reated as strictly confidential
Optional Informat		ete if you would lik	ke to receive a cop	y of the key findings to be paper.)
Name:				
Business:				
				ZIP:
Phone (include a	rea code):			
Email address: _				

Please complete your survey online at **www.gaptrailsurvey2009.campos.com**, or return your completed survey in the postage-paid, provided envelope addressed to:

Allegheny Trail Alliance PO Box 501 Latrobe, PA 15650

If you completed the online version of the survey, please do not mail this form. Thank you.



Appendix D

In the 1998 Economic impact study, researchers calculated the amount of total sales (calculated receipts) that a business received from trail users by performing a calculation that included the following variables

- Average number of employees staffed:
 - Full-time/peak season (FP)
 - Full-time/off-peak season (FO)
 - Part-time/peak season (PP)
 - Part-time/off-peak season (PO)
- Average work hours per week:
 - Full-time employees/peak season (FHP)
 - Full-time employees/off-peak season (FHO)
 - Part-time employees/peak season (PHP)
 - Part-time employees/off-peak season (PHO)
- Number of months closed (CM)
- Number of months in off-peak season (OM)
- Estimated percentage of annual gross revenue attributed to the trail (%)
- Average employee wages by industry, derived from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data (AW)

	Average Wage			
Occupation	1998	Phases I & III	% +/-	
Retail/Cashiers	\$5.98	\$8.06	25.8%	
Restaurant/Food service worker	\$6.29	\$7.86	20.0%	
Lodging/Maids and housemen	\$8.18	\$11.14	26.6%	

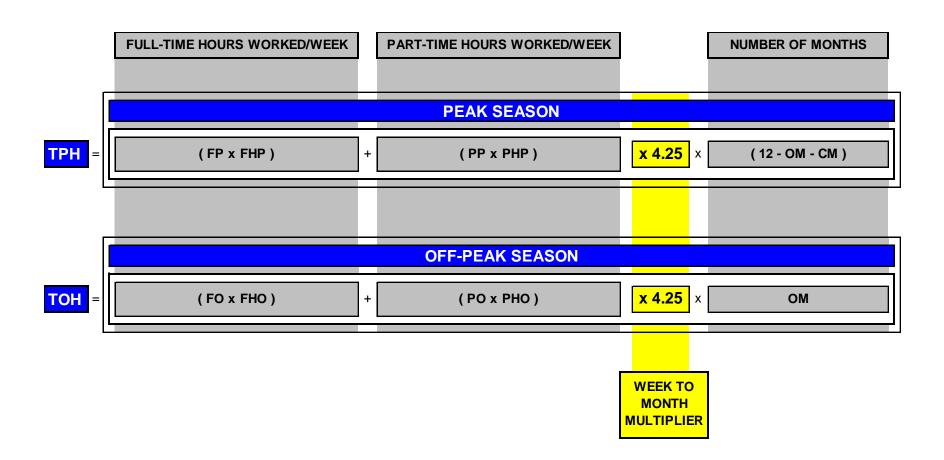
 Average ratio of earned revenue to such wages within a particular industry, derived from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data (R)

	Revenue/Wage Ratio			
Industry	1998	Phases I & III		
Retail	9%	10%		
Restaurant	26%	28%		
Outdoor/Sporting Goods	8%	10%		
Lodging	33%	30%		

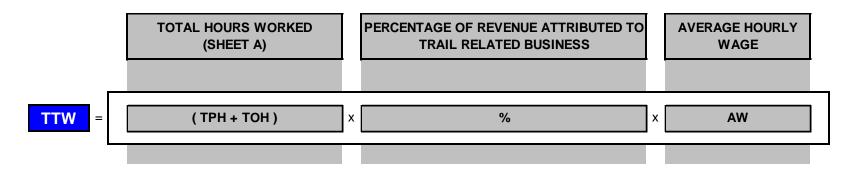
The following pages will model this formula in a "step-by-step" equation format using the variables listed above.



First, the total hours worked by all employees during the months of the Peak Season (TPH) and the months of the Off-Peak Season (**TOH**) must be determined using the following equation:



Next, using the appropriate average hourly wage (**AW**) for employees working in a specific industry that is published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the following equation is used to determine the total dollar amount that was paid to employees in wages for the time they spent accommodating/addressing trail attributed revenue sources (**TTW**):



Finally, using the appropriate revenue/wage ratio (**R**) published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, which states the average amount of a businesses total revenue that is paid out in wages for a specific industry, **Calculated Receipts** are determined by performing the following equation:

