

# Giddings Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center

Annual Report 2023-2024



## Making a Difference in the Community of Giddings

For 100 Years, the goal of the Giddings Chamber of Commerce has been to make a difference for our businesses, organizations and individuals. In 2023-2024, the Chamber continues its mission to “create a progressive business environment, take a leadership role in the community, to be an information resource for members and increase the growth of tourism.”



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## Giddings Area Chamber of Commerce

### Our Mission

**The mission of the Giddings Area Chamber of Commerce is to create a progressive business environment, take a leadership role in the community, be an information resource for members and increase growth of tourism.**

The Giddings Area Chamber of Commerce proudly welcomes visitors to Giddings. Our office reaches thousands of visitors each year with our many forms of media and advertising. Our purpose as a chamber is to engage our community and visitors.

**Our goal is to help visitors experience rural Texas as a visitor destination.  
Rural Texas is the Real Texas!**

The best months for our hotels have been historically during Spring and Fall for Round Top weeks that also coincide with numerous festivals, events and activities. The hotels have been much more aggressive in requesting maps, restaurant guides and visitor information to have on hand for these visitors.

- Destination marketing and public relations include advertising and promotion for annual events and activities in the Giddings/Lee County vicinity.
- Destination marketing of Giddings attracts visitors, tourists and those looking to relocate to our community by providing information on our website. This includes mailing visitor packages upon request.
- Opportunities to get our stories in more places because of our relationship with outside advertising venues and other organizations that we partner with annually.
- Promoting venues that create an economic impact averaging \$198 per day per visitor is a priority. Access to venues that can accommodate large groups is vital to our community

The Giddings Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center is the Official Welcome & Visitors Center of our community.

*Denice Harlan*

**Denice Harlan, Executive Director  
Giddings Area Chamber of Commerce**

# Giddings Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center

## The official Visitors Center of Giddings and Lee County

### Working on Tourism All Year Long

A Visitors Center located inside a tourist attraction, a dedicated Tourism Director and recognition as the official Visitors Center of Giddings and Lee County. Giddings has it all!

The Giddings Visitors Center works on Tourism all year long, 52 weeks, 260 work days a year, plus after hours/weekend activities.

### Making a Huge Contribution:

- The Chamber staff are sometimes the only people a visitor may contact, or speak to in town
- The Chamber & Visitors Center is usually the first contact by tourists to Giddings
- Marketing Metrics - A happy customer is 60-70% more likely to return  
**If the Visitors Center had 1620 visitors this year, then 1134 of those are likely to return.**
- Nielsen - 84% of people are influenced to act by recommendations from those they know.  
**Statistically, at least 6401 people have acted on the Visitors Center's recommendations**
- Travel Texas - The average visitor spends approximately \$198 dollars per day  
**At least 572 people who came to the Visitors Center have spent \$113,256 in Giddings**
- Forbes - 8 in 10 people will make a purchase based on a personal recommendation  
**The Visitors Center influenced 6096 people to make a purchase**



*Freedom Fest was considered a homecoming for Giddings as well as a draw for visitors and tourists.*

# The Chamber & Visitors Center- Working for You

## Serving Our Businesses & Promoting Tourism



*Encouraging and promoting our local businesses and restaurants*



*Hundreds of shoppers and vendors at the Sip & Shop Christmas in July Arts & Crafts show*

### **VISITORS - 1620 Visitors**

**Located in a historic house & museum on the Courthouse Square - What a Draw!**

- Has wayfinding signs on Highway 77 and Highway 290
- Historic house, museum and Visitors Center are tourist attractions
- 1620 Visitors (24 outside of Texas, 8 outside the United States)

### **Phone Contacts - Over 6000 per year**

- Taking an average of 20-30 calls per day
- Serving as the answering service and information center for all Giddings Area events and activities

### **Visitor Bags - 1293 bags**

- Given to visitors, tour groups, events, conferences, meetings and hotels
- Contains information on all hotels, lodging
- Contains information on businesses, events and attractions
- 483 bags to events
- 810 bags to walk-in visitors

### **Events**

- Promoting nearly every event in town
- Sponsoring 4 events per year with the potential to draw tourists
- Staff promotes and volunteers yearly at other community events
- Made 780 known in-person, verbal recommendations of events, inspiring 384 known visitor actions
- Other recommendations include phone, email, printed, social media

## Top Five Producing Months for Lodging

The most productive months are during the Spring and Fall Antiques Week in Round Top. The Chamber & Visitor's Center takes extra time to advertise during these months as well as to visit the Round Top Chamber and visitors center with materials.

1. October 2022 (**\$412,298**) - Round Top Antiques Week, Hunting Season, Black Bridge Fest
2. March 2022 (**\$409,759**)- Round Top Antiques Week, Field Trials and Dog Events, Sherwood Forest Faire, Special Olympics & Jr Livestock Show, St Patricks Casino Night
3. November 2022 (**\$325,626**) - Sip&Shop Christmas Market, Formula 1 Racing, Workforce Summit
4. June 2022 (**\$303,598**) - Festival Hill Concerts, Motorcycle Rally, Summer Break
5. September 2022 (**\$280,966**) - Round Top Antiques Week, Texas Wendish Fest, Fayette Cnty Fair



*The Chamber & Visitors Center was instrumental in attracting visitors from Czechoslovakia to attend Fury on the Fourth so they could meet some real Texas cowboys!*

## ADVERTISING - A Wide Variety

***The Chamber & Visitors Center will generate \$155,200 in ROI for the City Reaching minimum 125.6 Million with Advertising***

Travel Texas (Office of the Governor) and Strategic Marketing & Research Insights says there is a \$8 to \$1 return for every dollar spent on Tourism Promotion

### Promotionals -

brochures, rack cards, flyers, posters, visitor bags, promotionals

### Magazines - Reaching 42,508,000

Round Top Magazine, Texas Highways, Texas Travel Guide, Austin Metro, Thrifty Nickel

### Event Calendars

Texas Highways Event Calendar, TACVB, TDA, Tour Texas

### Highway Signs - Reaching 30,900,000

Visitor's Center signs on Hwy 77 & Hwy 290

### Newspapers

Giddings Times, Lexington Leader, Houston Chronicle, Brenham Banner, Austin American Statesman

### Enjoy 4th of July festivities in Giddings



*The Chamber arranged for a television interview and appeared with Mark Goodson to talk about Fourth of July activities in Giddings*

# Giddings Area Chamber & Visitors Center

## Internet & Social Media - Reaching 16,557,043

Travel Texas, Tour Texas, THLA, RoundTop.com, Multiple websites, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter

## Radio Ads - Reaching 1,152,956

KTEX, KWHI, KGID, KBUK

## Television Ads - Reaching 3,600,000

KBTX

## Trade Shows, Conferences & Conventions

Regional Chamber Ladies Breakfast, Texas Association of Convention & Visitor's Bureaus, Adobe Max, Central Texas Chamber Executives, Texas Economic Development Council, ARCIT

## Displays & Misc Advertising - Reaching 30,900,000

Geocaching, outdoor/indoor displays, Digital Sign, Certified Folder, Organization Memberships

## Texas Hotel & Lodging Memberships A Valuable Service to our Hotels



The Chamber provides for Giddings hotels and B&B to have a THLA membership. Benefits that include advocacy, legal support & advice, marketing & complimentary listings on prominent tourism websites, education online & onsite, and access to resources.



*Visitor's Center Wayfinding Signs*

## Visitor's Center Signs on Major Highways Directing Tourists to Visitors Center Receiving 30.9 million views

TXDoT has placed three Visitor's Center signs directing travelers to the Visitor's Center. There are two, North/South, on Highway 77 and one on Highway 290 from the East. These signs have the potential of receiving 30.9 million views.

## Giddings Brochures

### Bringing \$240,000+ Tourism Dollars to Giddings\*

This number does not include profit from digital brochures viewed or downloaded online

The Chamber has sent out almost 5000 brochures. New brochures will be ordered before the end of the fiscal year. Central Texas Folder delivers Giddings Brochures to 6 out of 12 Texas Travel Centers Other Travel Centers contact our Visitors Center directly.

Brochures are available for download online

Brochures have information on Giddings hotels, businesses, events and attractions

\* Economic impact for each Visitor Brochure distributed is \$48. Source: Destination Marketing Association of the West, The Impact of DMO Visitor Guides, November 2021

## Travel Texas 2023 Partner Program

**Potentially 12.8M Views or More!**

The Chamber & Visitors Center is partnering with Travel Texas, the tourism program sponsored by the Office of the Governor. So far mobile advertising and social stories have generated 12.8 Million impressions and more are on the way.

# Making the Future Giddings is a Great Place to Be

## Serving Needs on the Courthouse Square & Beyond

- The Chamber is well placed to provide directions, information and tours to visitors
- Located in a tourist attraction, The Schubert-Fletcher House & Lee County Museum
- Visitors Center works with County and City to create the best possible experience for locals and tourists

## Freedom Fest Music Concert July 2023

The Freedom Fest music concert was created by the Chamber & Visitors Center for the purpose of extending the Fourth of July holiday to encourage more tourists and overnight stays in hotels. The creation of this event has worked compatibly with existing events, Fury on the Fourth and the Firemen's Celebration and Fireworks, to present an awesome multi-day holiday celebration. All of which is advertised and promoted by the Chamber & Visitors Center.

The Chamber worked with the City and the Veterans Association in the production of this concert which displays the beautiful Veterans Memorial and the new improvements at the park, like the Splash Pad and pavilion. The City was inspired to install both the Splash Pad and the pavilion after the success of last year's Freedom Fest.

Attendees said more people than last year showed up to the event to listen to Texas Unlimited Band and the Lost Cause Band. A headcount made before TUB took the stage showed 500 people currently on the grounds.



*Delighted crowd dances to Texas Unlimited Band,  
July 2023 Freedom Fest*



## Cars & Coffee, April 2023

The Chamber & Visitors Center worked closely with local car enthusiasts in the creation of the new event Cars & Coffee, which was held in April in downtown Giddings. Car enthusiasts from all over Texas brought cars of all types and vintage to gather, talk and display their cars to the public in Giddings. The poster was designed by staff and the event was promoted and advertised by the Chamber. Staff was also onsite helping the other volunteers.

An estimated 100 cars were present with their drivers, making attendance somewhere around 500. This event was so popular that creators decided to make a bi-yearly gathering, with the next Cars & Coffee scheduled for October.



*Assisting in the creation and promotion of Cars & Coffee. Staff was onsite at the event.*



*Working with other organizations to help them promote their events like the Navity Drive-Thru. The Cowboy Church volunteers greeted the crowds at the Sip & Shop Christmas Market*

## Sip & Shop Markets in 2022 & 2023

The Chamber & Visitors Center hosts two Sip & Shop Arts and Crafts shows in the fiscal year. Christmas in July in July and Christmas Marketplace in November. Vendor set up occurs on the night before the show with snacks and drinks, encouraging vendors to come and stay the night in our hotels.

The popular arts and crafts show, with tasty beverages, draws hundreds of people twice a year to the event at The Silos to shop or display their wares.

## Santa at the Depot, Dec 2023

The Chamber & Visitors Center partnered with the Giddings Volunteer Fire Department and Dime Box Spirits to hold Santa at the Depot in December 2023. Santa arrived in spectacular fashion with sparkling lights and lots of sound, much to the delight of the children of all ages.



*Working with GVFD and Dime Box Spirits for Santa at the Depot 2022*

## Supporting All Giddings & Lee County Area Events

The Chamber & Visitor's Center will continue to assist both local and out-of-town groups and organizations in their efforts to create and promote events in Giddings that will attract tourists. The Chamber assists each of our major Giddings and Lee County events each year, as well as many small ones, with advertising and promotion.

## Annual Giddings Events

St. Patrick's Casino Night - March  
Rodeo Giddings - April

Lexington Homecoming - May  
Lee County Fair - May  
Charcoal Challenge Barbecue Cook-Off - May

Juneteenth Parade and Block Party - June

Freedom Fest Music Festival - July  
Firemen's Fourth of July Celebration - July  
Fury on the 4th Championship Bull Riding - July  
Sip & Shop: Christmas in July - July

Texas Wendish Fest - September

Dime Box Black Bridge Festival  
& Mini Marathon - October

Texas Word Wrangler Book Festival -  
November  
Sip & Shop Christmas Market - November

Christmas at the Courthouse - December  
Christmas at Tejas - November to December  
Annual Christmas Production - December

**SEPTEMBER 16**  
**FIRST ANNUAL GIDDINGS FIESTA A FREE EVENT**  
FROM NOON-10PM!  
MARIACHI - DANCING HORSES  
FOLKLORICO - AZTEC DANCERS  
SELENA LOOK-A-LIKE CONTEST  
GRITO CONTEST AT 8PM  
PLUS FOOD & BOUTIQUE VENDORS,  
SHOWCASING HISPANIC CULTURE,  
MUSIC, DANCING, AND MORE!  
AND LIVE ENTERTAINMENT  
FROM ELISA PENA  
AND DJ SUPERMAN!  
DON'T FORGET TO BRING  
YOUR LAWN CHAIRS!  
GIDDINGS DOWNTOWN PLAZA  
150 N. RUBLESON ST, GIDDINGS, TX 78942

**THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!**

Logos for sponsors include: Giddings Area Chamber & Visitors Center, H&H, Small Town, Pilot Pros, and others. Text below logos: GODSON-VOIGHT LUMBER & HARDWARE - LEE COUNTY SHERIFF POSSE, JAP SERVICE - MARION'S SHELL & SERVICE CENTER - LEECO REALTY GROUP - ONE & ONLY - PRECISION ELECTRIC CO. - POSAS CONSTRUCTION - AMIGO BAILBONDS - RENTAL SOLUTIONS, FIRST NATIONAL BANK - GRACE CONSTRUCTION - BLESSED GRACE BOUTIQUE - JANDA MONUMENT CO. EMILY SIEGMUND, SCHULTZ REALTOR - TRELLEBORG-GIDDINGS - ROUND TOP STATE BANK - NITSCHE GROUP

*The Chamber assisted the creators of Fiesta Giddings with the creation of their event, helping them connect dots and find the resources they needed. The Chamber is promoting and advertising the event as well as continuing to help volunteers involved.*



*Chamber staff volunteers and serves on the board of the Texas Word Wrangler Book Festival as well as promotes the event. Staff photographs the event.*

## Giddings Area Chamber & Visitors Center



*Staff created and volunteered for the Christmas theatrical production of the "The Christmas Gift Mixup." The play was promoted by the Chamber & Visitors Center. 181 people attended and 20 were from out of town.*



*The Chamber helps Giddings leaders to arrange meetings, bringing in people from out of town and helping our local businesses.*



*Staff volunteers at and serves on the board of the Lee County Fair as well as promotes the event. Staff serves as photographer at the Fair.*



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## Hotel Income on a Monthly Basis with Details

Source: Window on State Government

<http://www.window.state.tx.us>

Glen Hegar, Texas Comptroller

	January	February	March	April	May	June
2023	\$277,025	\$275,440	\$447,000	\$363,874		
<b>2022</b>	<b>\$181,242</b>	<b>\$235,177</b>	<b>\$409,759</b>	<b>\$258,686</b>	<b>\$220,931</b>	<b>\$303,598</b>
2021	\$143,669	\$141,588	\$310,107	\$268,921	\$207,918	\$256,484
2020	\$254,510	\$204,211	\$151,734	\$ 99,183	\$111,053	\$172,143
2019	\$230,918	\$181,630	\$296,746	\$188,511	\$252,861	\$197,848
2018	\$183,142	\$169,448	\$329,573	\$301,205	\$230,949	\$216,192

	July	August	September	October	November	December
2023						
<b>2022</b>	<b>\$240,054</b>	<b>\$265,443</b>	<b>\$280,966</b>	<b>\$412,298</b>	<b>\$325,626</b>	<b>\$276,750</b>
2021	\$270,508	\$204,111	\$232,474	\$406,927	\$238,046	\$199,462
2020	\$162,712	\$161,940	\$212,332	\$299,307	\$139,885	\$128,553
2019	\$238,585	\$210,642	\$300,504	\$399,209	\$288,754	\$296,064
2018	\$181,295	\$226,295	\$338,999	\$351,453	\$265,498	\$277,877

### Top Producing Months

1. October 2022 (**\$412,298**) - Round Top Antiques Week, Hunting Season, Black Bridge Fest
2. March 2022 (**\$409,759**)- Round Top Antiques Week, Field Trials and Dog Events, Sherwood Forest Faire, Special Olympics & Jr Livestock Show, St Patricks Casino Night
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5. September 2022 (**\$280,966**) - Round Top Antiques Week, Texas Wendish Fest, Fayette Cnty Fair

### Other Months

6. December 2022 (**\$276,750**) - Christmas at Tejas, Santa at the Gazebo, New Year
7. August 2022 (**\$265,443**)
8. April 2022 (**\$258,686**) - Round Top Antiques Week, Rodeo Giddings, MS 150, Sherwood Forrest, Field Trials
9. July 2022 (**\$240,054**) - Freedom Fest, July 4 Fireworks, Fury on the 4th Bull Riding, Sip&Shop
10. February 2022 (**\$235,177**) - Sherwood Forest, Field Trials
11. May 2022 (**\$220,931**) - COTA & Lexington Homecoming, Lee County Fair
12. January 2022 (**\$181,242**)

## Hotel Income Taxable Receipts By Year

Year	1st Quarter Jan-Feb-Mar	2nd Quarter Apr-May-Jun	3rd Quarter Jul-Aug-Sep	4th Quarter Oct-Nov-Dec	TOTAL
2023	\$999,465	\$520,093			
2022	\$826,177	\$783,216	\$796,764	\$980,221	\$3,386,378
2021	\$595,364	\$733,323	\$707,093	\$844,435	\$2,880,215
2020	\$610,455	\$382,379	\$536,984	\$567,746	\$2,097,567
2019	\$709,294	\$639,220	\$749,731	\$984,027	\$3,082,272
2018	\$682,163	\$748,346	\$746,589	\$894,828	\$3,071,926
2017	\$624,727	\$738,356	\$752,846	\$788,104	\$2,904,033
2016	\$607,721	\$564,802	\$551,185	\$506,129	\$2,229,837

Numbers fell in year 2020 due to the Covid pandemic but have returned to normal. Numbers in 2022-2023 have exceeded where they were in 2019. Large increases in the first and fourth quarters in 2022.

Information provided by:

Texas.gov  
 State Link Policy  
 Texas Homeland Security  
 Texas Transparency

[www.texas.gov](http://www.texas.gov)  
<http://dir.texas.gov/>  
<http://gov.texas.gov/>  
<http://www.texas Transparency.org/>

### Impact of Tourists in Texas

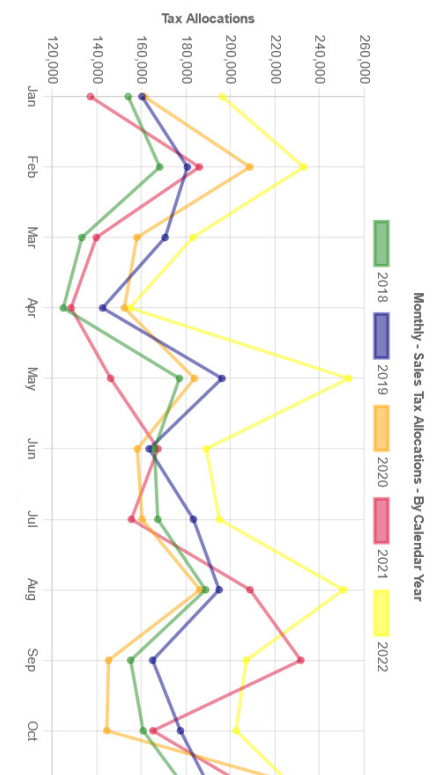
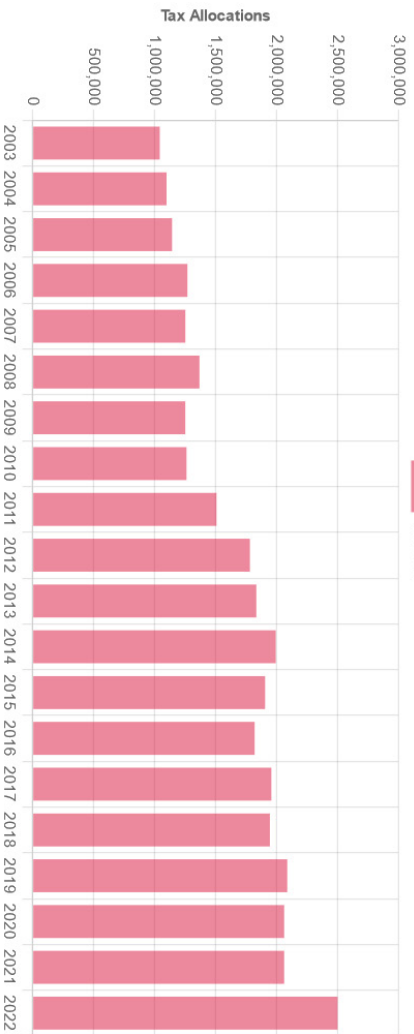
[www.travel.texas.gov](http://www.travel.texas.gov)

### An ROI of \$8 for every dollar put towards Tourism & Advertising

ROI for the Travel Texas program is \$8 for every dollar invested  
 Total direct travel spending in Texas - \$76.1 billion in 2021  
 Prairies & Lakes Region, where we're located, ranks #1 region in Texas for travelers  
 Texas road trips including an overnight stay are surpassing the figures of 2019  
 Texas outpaces the national average for recovery  
 Domestic visitors stay an average of 3 nights at hotels; International visitors can stay 9-21 nights  
 Spring and Summer are dominant travel seasons  
 The average traveler spends \$198 dollars per day on vacation.

# CITY OF GIDDINGS SALES TAX

Year†	January †	February †	March †	April †	May †	June †	July †	August †	September †	October †	November †	December †	Total †
2023	\$207,379	\$271,161	\$224,455	\$183,162	\$284,075	\$186,291	\$270,634	\$0	\$250,853	\$207,170	\$0	\$0	\$1,627,157
2022	\$196,394	\$232,994	\$183,196	\$154,853	\$253,164	\$189,233	\$195,084	\$250,853	\$207,170	\$202,610	\$234,923	\$202,495	\$2,502,969
2021	\$137,131	\$186,102	\$139,831	\$128,470	\$146,264	\$167,525	\$155,557	\$208,871	\$231,703	\$165,250	\$218,469	\$179,171	\$2,064,345
2020	\$161,434	\$208,838	\$158,059	\$152,391	\$183,908	\$158,216	\$160,376	\$186,433	\$145,315	\$144,522	\$256,757	\$148,471	\$2,064,730
2019	\$160,328	\$180,743	\$170,722	\$142,625	\$196,292	\$163,549	\$183,463	\$195,027	\$165,124	\$177,628	\$193,899	\$160,596	\$2,089,996
2018	\$154,144	\$168,317	\$133,340	\$124,999	\$177,166	\$165,962	\$167,432	\$188,943	\$155,254	\$160,870	\$184,238	\$166,698	\$1,947,365
2017	\$138,330	\$167,735	\$117,843	\$141,526	\$165,490	\$226,261	\$155,419	\$182,565	\$159,034	\$151,839	\$193,287	\$160,044	\$1,959,373
2016	\$149,044	\$209,263	\$131,856	\$131,533	\$129,390	\$132,098	\$145,654	\$176,518	\$123,497	\$124,040	\$175,960	\$193,421	\$1,822,274
2015	\$160,362	\$203,306	\$141,747	\$141,196	\$166,185	\$142,293	\$140,961	\$172,267	\$137,035	\$152,292	\$184,971	\$165,629	\$1,908,244
2014	\$145,738	\$174,396	\$139,681	\$154,259	\$190,958	\$145,828	\$159,124	\$192,984	\$180,371	\$157,766	\$188,378	\$166,073	\$1,995,556
2013	\$153,366	\$183,459	\$130,132	\$143,682	\$158,897	\$135,474	\$145,038	\$164,436	\$136,821	\$142,805	\$174,218	\$167,683	\$1,836,010
2012	\$130,901	\$152,946	\$156,539	\$123,493	\$159,325	\$144,427	\$150,049	\$155,867	\$137,605	\$142,759	\$176,839	\$152,645	\$1,783,396
2011	\$112,774	\$146,511	\$95,265	\$111,847	\$139,149	\$109,834	\$113,246	\$151,580	\$115,561	\$138,620	\$149,679	\$124,942	\$1,509,006
2010	\$81,484	\$117,586	\$83,627	\$77,495	\$126,070	\$100,568	\$95,077	\$134,227	\$101,601	\$116,597	\$125,959	\$103,054	\$1,263,347
2009	\$109,791	\$139,427	\$91,398	\$82,070	\$127,895	\$101,121	\$92,405	\$120,773	\$100,759	\$88,481	\$111,809	\$87,072	\$1,253,002
2008	\$87,818	\$131,996	\$91,035	\$101,189	\$124,714	\$118,180	\$104,338	\$132,086	\$125,040	\$119,634	\$122,421	\$110,533	\$1,368,984
2007	\$93,213	\$126,647	\$81,020	\$85,244	\$118,988	\$92,797	\$98,295	\$124,458	\$98,196	\$103,263	\$118,590	\$112,727	\$1,253,437
2006	\$93,762	\$128,420	\$83,618	\$86,248	\$115,228	\$95,134	\$135,239	\$133,690	\$92,440	\$91,534	\$112,977	\$102,448	\$1,270,738
2005	\$83,127	\$114,084	\$72,468	\$79,790	\$106,555	\$93,156	\$82,086	\$111,200	\$101,895	\$85,414	\$116,808	\$97,456	\$1,144,038
2004	\$72,365	\$107,937	\$77,691	\$73,382	\$103,588	\$89,747	\$81,771	\$114,692	\$86,493	\$88,083	\$118,401	\$84,928	\$1,099,078





**The Chamber**  
GIDDINGS AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**The Giddings Chamber of Commerce  
& Visitors Center  
183 E. Hempstead  
Giddings, Texas 78942**