



April 22, 2020

Mr. David Ellis
County Manager
Wake County
PO Box 550
Raleigh, NC 27602

David:

The Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau (GRCVB) FY21 business plan and budget information are attached for your review and distribution to the Wake County Commission. The GRCVB FY21 business plan and budget were unanimously approved by the GRCVB Board of Directors at their meeting held on Tuesday, April 21, 2020.

Overall the GRCVB is expecting a 23.8% or \$1,953,520 decrease in budget from \$8,624,021 (19/20 budget) to \$6,570,500. Lingering effects from COVID-19 are the leading factors to the budget decline.

As we enter the new budget year the following spending restrictions will continue to be in place for our organization:

- A moratorium on spending remains in effect. No funds can be spent without approval of the President & CEO and Director of Finance and Human Resources.
- No travel (even client related) until December 1, 2020. Date is subject to change.
- All client events are on hold.
- No promo items or staff apparel will be purchased through December 31, 2020. Date is subject to change.
- All new events/commitments need to be put on hold.
- Effective April 1, 2020 all employee salaries will be reduced by 10%. This is carried out in the FY21 budget until December 1, 2020. Collections will be monitored, and staff salaries will not be brought up to FY20 levels until collection levels increase.
- GRCVB stopped the automatic 2% contribution to VALIC for staff effective April 1, 2020. GRCVB will continue to match the employee contribution up to 5%.
- Advertising has been suspended until occupancy tax collections improve.

The staff at our organization is ready to meet the opportunities and challenges when convention, sport and leisure travel resumes in Wake County. We will continue to meet the needs of our partners as their businesses come back online after COVID-19 restrictions.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding the GRCVB business plan and budget.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dennis Edwards".

Dennis Edwards
President & CEO



MEMORANDUM

To: Raleigh City Council
Wake County Commission

From: Dennis Edwards, GRCVB President & CEO
Paula McChristian, GRCVB Director of Finance and Human Resources

Date: April 22, 2020

Subject: GRCVB Budget 2020-2021

The 2020/2021 proposed budget follows for your review. Overall the GRCVB is expecting a 23.8% or \$1,953,520 decrease in budget from \$8,624,021 (19/20 budget) to \$6,570,500. Lingering effects from COVID-19 are the leading factors to the budget decline.

INCOME

- Hotel Occupancy Tax income number is provided to the GRCVB by the Wake County Budget Office. Wake County is projecting that collections for 2019/2020 will be \$22,589,000. The projection for 2020/20201 is \$23,558,000. The GRCVB receives a portion of those collections based on a tiered formula, \$5,299,000.
- The GRCVB portion of the Prepared Food and Beverage Tax is capped at \$675,000.
- Destination Travel Network (website advertising) is estimated at \$40,000.
- Other program revenue includes IBMA Local Organizing Committee income, \$400,000 and NCAA Men's Basketball Local Organizing Committee, \$150,000.

EXPENSES

The following are explanations of the budget variances for the proposed 2020/2021 budget versus the 2019/2020 revised budget:

Salaries & Wages: 4.6% decrease from \$2,615,930 to \$2,496,301

- Salaries reflect continuing staff 10% salary reduction through November 2020. Occupancy tax collections will be monitored, and salaries will be restored to pre COVID-19 levels December 2020 if collections improve.

Payroll Taxes: 2.8% decrease from \$186,933 to \$181,652 - FICA increase based on payroll.

Travel & Entertainment: 67.4% decrease from \$225,090 to \$151,630

- Client site visits for all departments.
- Professional development and educations offerings including Simpleview Summit and Destinations International annual meeting and departmental related summits have been removed this year due to budget constraints.

Marketing & Advertising: Overall 56% decrease, from \$3,671,263 to \$2,206,434

- Sales: 17.8% decrease from \$429,930 to \$190,240

- Sales budget includes funding for participation in tradeshow and for travel to various markets to participate in industry events.
- Looking to expand virtual options to host meetings, site visits and educational programs.
- Sales will host promotional events and regional sales missions/calls to our key markets including Washington, DC, Philadelphia, Chicago and Atlanta when travel restrictions are lifted.
- **Services – 13% decrease from \$74,476 to \$64,575**
 - Services team will continue to use Destinations International’s “CVB Attendance Promotion Practices” as a guideline for revitalizing our services offered to convention groups. This includes deploying the new meeting planner toolkit.
 - Event servicing for arriving groups.
- **Public Relations and International Tourism: 81% decrease from \$85,775 to \$16,700**
 - Partnering with VisitNC for regional, in-state and Canada media missions and with GRCVB sales department for in-market events.
 - Monies allocated for hosting travel writers throughout the year.
 - Serves on the Wake County Economic Development Foreign Investment Committee and the department will develop and execute a proactive sales training program with travel agents and receptive tour operators to generate more bookings of F.I.T. in Wake County.
- **Marketing: 70% decrease from \$1,527,301 to \$452,187**
 - Visitor Guide production is included in the marketing budget along with promotional items and materials for all departments.
 - Social media advertising, photography and creative agency fees included. As budget improves advertising will resume.
 - Funds also allocated visitor volume and spending data.
- **Sports (GRSA) 39% increase from \$319,700 to \$445,650**
 - For 2020/2021 Sports is scheduled to help host/service over 30 events including ACC Men’s & Women’s Soccer Championships, USSSA World Series, Major League Fishing and NHL Stadium Series. Sports will also support NCAA events including Women’s College Cup and DII Baseball World Series.
 - Raleigh will host Rounds 1 and 2 of the NCAA Men’s Basketball Tournament. Local Organizing Committee expected expenses of \$150,000 are included in the sports budget for 2020/2021.
 - Increased focus on esports and how to bring this fast-emerging and rapidly changing industry to the area.
- **Information Technology: 38% decrease from \$160,288 to \$98,492**
 - Budget includes AudioEye, ActOn marketing automation and commission expense for DTN advertising.
- **Administration: 3.5% increase from \$906,970 to \$938,590**
 - GRCVB commitment for NHL Stadium Series and IBMA per current memorandum of understanding.
 - Continued funding for e-sports consultant to assist in identifying e-sports opportunities to bring to the area and act as a technology liaison between our venues and the customer.
 - Business Incubator Fund will be used for last minute bid or marketing opportunities for sales, sports and leisure initiatives.
 - Serve as administrative organization for IBMA Local Organizing Committee.

Event Promotion: Sports Event Investment Program (SEIP) \$300,000

- Program provides funds for rights fees, bid fees and marketing sponsorships for new and existing sporting events that will have a positive impact on Wake County hospitality.
- All SEIP requests are approved by the GRCVB Board of Directors. Any unused SEIP monies will be transferred to Marketing and Advertising.

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Dues & Subscriptions: 40.2% decrease from \$114,680 to \$68,566

- GRCVB maintains memberships in local, state, regional and national organizations to build customer relations and receive education, research and information on advocacy issues.
- For several memberships GRCVB has moved from a sponsorship to a basic membership for the 2020/2021 budget year.

Education & Training: 65.5% decrease from \$25,090 to \$8,645

- Staff maintain certifications in their areas of expertise and proposed budget includes Certified Meeting Planner (CMP) training and testing expenses for Services and Sales staff as well as Certified Sports Event Executive certification renewal for GRSA staff. Continuing professional education (CPE) is included for the Director of Finance and Human Resources to maintain the Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM) designation.

Rent/Parking: 5.4% increase from \$244,435 to \$257,545

- Rent increase for 2nd floor office space per lease and also increase in staff parking/guest parking charges at One City Plaza.

Printing & Stationery: 41.7% decrease from \$6,000 to \$3,500

- All stationery, envelopes, business cards and other administrative printing needs are included here.

Office Supplies: 15.8% decrease from \$19,000 to \$16,000

- Budget for all office supplies and copier costs for GRCVB offices in Raleigh, DC sales office and Visitor Information Center.

Telephone/Cell/Wireless: 4% decrease from \$58,320 to \$55,980

- GRCVB maintains office phone lines, staff cellular phones, iPads, conference call services and a 1-800 line. Wireless plan was renegotiated, and costs will be less in 2020/2021 budget year.

Equipment Maintenance: 4.1% increase from \$18,050 to \$18,782

- Increased licensing fees for Quickbooks Enterprise accounting software and Expense Watch expense reporting and invoice approval system.
- Equipment maintenance includes all equipment warranties and maintenance fees.

Local Transportation: 1.6% increase from \$28,000 to \$28,450

- GRCVB maintains two vehicles and reimburses staff for mileage based on the current IRS rates.

Professional Services: 10.7% increase from \$116,900 to \$129,400

- Cloud services charges from Celito.net have decreased.

- Annual audit, legal services and management of the GRCVB IT infrastructure and cloud computing environment are also included in budget.

Office Maintenance: 24.1% decrease from \$21,310 to \$16,170

- Visitor guide storage and delivery service are included in the Office Maintenance line item.

Insurance: 6.7% increase from \$30,000 to \$32,000

- GRCVB maintains workers comp, Board of Directors D&O, general liability and equipment insurance for all locations.

Equipment Leases: 5.7% increase \$61,020 to \$64,510

- Leases are maintained on company vehicles, printers, postage machine, computers and conference room equipment.

Property & Use Tax: No change, \$1,700

Employee Benefits: 4.3% increase from \$472,500 to \$492,855

- Increase is for anticipated premium increases for health insurance, group hospital confinement indemnity insurance, vision, dental, short term and long-term disability insurance provided for full time employees. Healthcare premium projected increase of 15% for 2020/2021 premium.
- GRCVB decreasing contribution to Medical Flexible Spending accounts from \$500 to \$250 for full time employees for the 2020/2021 year.
- GRCVB also matches employee retirement contributions up to 5%. 2% automatic contribution has been stopped through November 2020.

Postage: 10.4% decrease from \$36,000 to \$32,250

- Postage includes all mailing of visitor guides, promotional materials, ad lead fulfillment and tradeshow booth shipping.

Equipment /Software/Improvements: 49.8% decrease from \$171,800 to \$86,300

- Monies allocated for server replacement if needed.
- Software includes Office365, Citrix Sharefile, LastPass, Knowbe4 and Adobe Creative Suites subscriptions.

GRCVB Budget Revenue

2020-2021

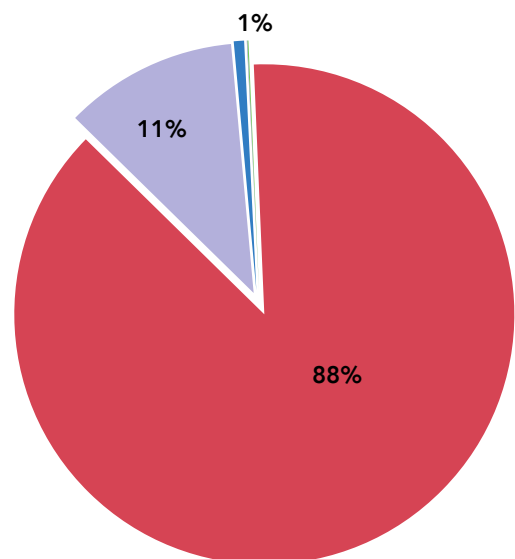


	2020/2021 Proposed budget	2019/2020 Budget
Hotel Occupancy Tax	\$5,299,000	\$6,915,000
Prepared Food & Beverage Tax	675,000	675,000
Convention Center Marketing	0	130,000
Annual Meeting	0	51,495
Destination Travel Network	40,000	127,028
Dividends	2,000	2,000
Interest	4,500	11,000
Reserves (over collections from 18/19 budget years)	\$0	350,000
TOTAL operating income	\$6,020,500	\$8,261,523
Other program revenue IBMA, 2021 NCAA Men's Basketball LOC)	\$550,000	\$362,498
TOTAL	\$6,570,500	\$8,624,021

Anticipated GRCVB Revenue

- Hotel Occupancy Tax
- Prepared Food & Beverage Tax
- Convention Center Marketing
- Annual Meeting
- Destination Travel Network
- Dividends
- Interest

*Hotel Occupancy number provided by Wake County Budget Office.
Wake County predicts occupancy tax for 20/21 will be \$23,558,000.
GRCVB receives a portion of those taxes based on a tiered formula.



GRCVB Budgeted Expenses*

2020-2021

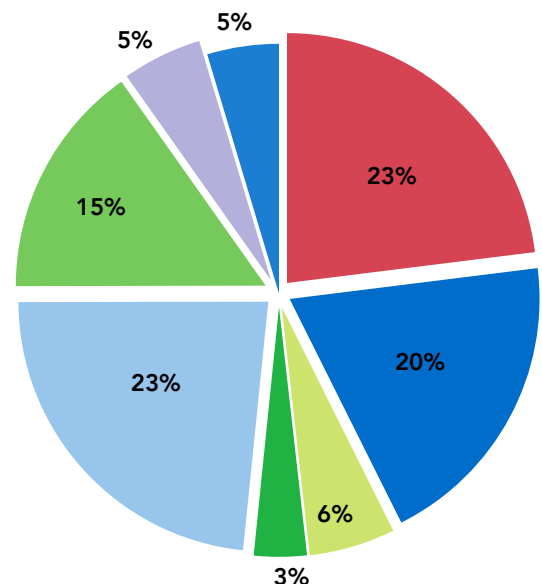


	2020/2021 Proposed budget	2019/2020 Budget
Administration	1,417,378	1,985,823
Sales	1,373,987	1,690,427
Services and Visitor Information Center	487,249	481,188
Public Relations and International Tourism	191,890	294,079
Marketing and Communications	930,852	2,014,027
Sports - GRSA	1,237,169	1,313,348
Information Technology	381,975	445,129
Other Program Expenses	550,000	400,000
TOTAL	\$6,570,500	\$8,624,021

GRCVB Budgeted Expenses 2020/2021

- Administration
- Sales
- Services and Visitor Information Center
- Public Relations and International Tourism
- Marketing and Communications
- Sports Marketing
- Information Technology
- Other program expenses

*For this presentation salaries and payroll taxes are allocated by department



GRCVB BUDGET - EXPENSE COMPARISONS



ACCT NO.	CHART OF ACCOUNTS	2019/2020 BUDGET (Revised)	2020/2021 Proposed	Variance	Percentage Inc/Dec
5010	Salaries & Wages	\$2,615,930	\$2,496,301	-\$119,629	-4.6%
5020	Payroll Taxes	186,933	181,652	-5,281	-2.8%
5120-5170	Travel & Entertainment	225,090	73,460	-151,630	-67.4%
5200-5380	Marketing & Advertising (Includes IBMA LOC Expenses)	3,671,263	2,206,434	-1,464,829	-39.9%
5920	SEIP Event Promotion	400,000	300,000	-100,000	-25.0%
5980	Special Event Fund	100,000	0	-100,000	-100.0%
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES					
5400	Dues & Subscriptions	114,680	68,566	-46,114	-40.2%
5430	Education & Training	25,090	8,645	-16,445	-65.5%
5410	Rent/Parking	244,435	257,545	13,110	5.4%
5420	Printing & Stationery	6,000	3,500	-2,500	-41.7%
5440	Office Supplies	19,000	16,000	-3,000	-15.8%
5450	Telephone/Cell/Wireless	58,320	55,980	-2,340	-4.0%
5460	Equipment Maintenance	18,050	18,782	732	4.1%
5470	Local Transportation	28,000	28,450	450	1.6%
5480	Professional Services	116,900	129,400	12,500	10.7%
5500	Office Maintenance	21,310	16,170	-5,140	-24.1%
5510	Insurance	30,000	32,000	2,000	6.7%
5530	Equipment Leases	61,020	64,510	3,490	5.7%
5540	Property & Use Tax	1,700	1,700	0	0.0%
5560	Employee Benefits	472,500	492,855	20,355	4.3%
5570	Postage	36,000	32,250	-3,750	-10.4%
5590	Equipment/Software Purchases/Office & VIC Upgrades	171,800	86,300	-85,500	-49.8%
	Total Administrative Expenses	1,424,805	1,312,653	-112,152	
	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$8,624,021	\$6,570,500	-\$1,953,520	-23.8%



2020–2021 Business Plan

Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau

421 Fayetteville St., Ste. 1505

Raleigh, N.C. 27601-2995

www.visitRaleigh.com ★ [#visitRaleigh](https://twitter.com/visitRaleigh)



About the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau

MISSION

The Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau, as the official destination marketing organization of Raleigh and Wake County, accelerates sustainable economic growth and development by increasing visitor and convention business.

INTERNATIONALLY ACCREDITED DESTINATION ORGANIZATION

The destination organization is accredited by the Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP) of Destinations International, 2025 M St., N.W., Ste. 500, Washington, D.C., 20036, U.S.A., Ph. 202.296.7888.

ORGANIZATION VISION

To be the prime visitor advocate and regional leader of destination marketing and product development.

GRCVB PHILOSOPHY AND CUSTOMER COMMITMENT

We perform effectively by adhering to values and guiding principles, and delivering on customer promises:

- Customer-centric
- Entrepreneurial
- Collaborative
- Innovative
- Ethical

PARTNER PROMISE

We pledge, as an accountable and supportive partner, to offering enhanced exposure to visitor market opportunities and to appropriate community leadership through increased promotion of destination experiences and extended professional advocacy commitment.

ADVISORY BOARDS, BOARDS AND COMMITTEES AT GRCVB

- GRCVB Board of Directors
- Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance Advisory Board
- Cultural Presenters Forum
- Destination 2028 Blue Ribbon Task Force
- Destination 2028 Key Attractors Working Group
- Live Music Advisory Committee
- Wake County Beer Summit

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Visitor Profile for Raleigh, N.C., and Wake County

BASIC FACTS AND FIGURES

- There were 16.8 million visitors in 2018—up 4.8 percent from 2017. These international and domestic visitors directly spent \$2.7 billion on Wake County trips in 2018—up 7.2 percent from 2017.
- Average overnight party size was 1.69 in 2016–2018—the same as in 2014–2016. Average day-trip party size was 1.61 in 2016–2018—compared to 1.63 in 2014–2016.
- Overnight travel totaled approximately 9.2 million visitors in 2018.
- Overnight daily spending by visitors was \$128 per person in 2016–2018—compared to \$132 nationwide. Day-trip daily spending by visitors was \$100 per person in 2016–2018—compared to \$105 nationwide.

VISITOR BREAKDOWN

- Domestic leisure visitors – Approximately 12.9 million in 2018
- Domestic business travelers – Approximately 3.9 million in 2018
- Average overnight traveler to Raleigh/Wake County by lifestage (2016–2018):
 - Moderate to Affluent Mature – 29 percent;
 - Maturing/Free – 22 percent;
 - Moderate to Affluent Family – 19 percent;
 - Young Family – 13 percent;
 - Young & Free – 13 percent.
- Average age of Raleigh/Wake County's overnight visitors is 48 years old (2016–2018). Distribution is:
 - 18–34 years: 26 percent
 - Young & Free – Without children/any household income: 13 percent;
 - Young Family – With children/any household income: 13 percent.
 - 35–54 years: 41 percent
 - Maturing & Free – Without children/any household income: 22 percent;
 - Moderate Family – With children/household income under \$75K: 5 percent;
 - Affluent Family – With children/household income above \$75K: 14 percent.
 - 55+ years: 33 percent
 - Moderate Mature – Without children/household income under \$60K: 8 percent;
 - Affluent Mature – Without children/household income above \$60K: 21 percent.
- Raleigh/Wake County's average party per overnight trip spending by age (2016–2018):
 - 18–34 years: \$767
 - 35–54 years: \$626
 - 55+ years: \$539
- The means of transportation for Raleigh/Wake County's overnight visitors (2016–2018) is: 85 percent drive – 14 percent fly – 1 percent other.
- The most popular overnight travel months to Raleigh/Wake County (2016–2018) were Dec. (11 percent), followed by Nov. (10 percent) and May (10 percent), making the fourth quarter the most popular quarter for Raleigh's overnight visitation. Day-trip visitors predominantly arrived in the fourth quarter as well.
- Average household income of Raleigh/Wake County's overnight visitors (2016–2018) is: 35 percent, \$50,000–\$74,900; 16 percent, \$75,000–\$99,999; 47 percent, \$100,000 or higher.
- Accommodation type for Raleigh/Wake County visitors (2016–2018): 65 percent of stays occur in paid accommodations (hotels/motels/other), while 35 percent occur in non-paid (including private homes).

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN

- Some 36 percent of Raleigh/Wake County's overnight visitors (2016–2018) came from North Carolina. The top 10 states are: 36.3 percent, North Carolina; 13.1 percent, Virginia; 7.2 percent, South Carolina; 7.0 percent, Georgia; 4.4 percent, Florida; 4.1 percent, New York; 2.5 percent, Pennsylvania; 2.3 percent, Maryland; 2.1 percent, Texas; and 1.6 percent, Ohio.
- Some 86 percent of Raleigh/Wake County's day-trip visitors (2016–2018) came from North Carolina. The top 10 states are: 86.1 percent, North Carolina; 3.4 percent, South Carolina; 3.3 percent, Virginia; 1.9 percent, Georgia; 0.8 percent, Michigan; 0.7 percent, Pennsylvania; 0.6 percent, Maryland; 0.3 percent, New York; 0.2 percent, Florida; and 0.1%, Texas.

VISITOR ACTIVITIES AND MOTIVATORS

- Activity participation of Raleigh/Wake County overnight stays (2016–2018):

23 percent, culinary/dining	6 percent, live music
18 percent, shopping	6 percent, movies
10 percent, museums/exhibitions	6 percent, touring/sightseeing
7 percent, business/work	5 percent, amateur sports
7 percent, nightlife	5 percent, beach/waterfront
7 percent, state parks	5 percent, festivals/fairs
6 percent, holiday celebration	5 percent, historic sites

AVERAGE OCCUPANCY, AVERAGE DAILY RATE AND VISITOR-RELATED TAX REVENUE HISTORY

The following is a summary of the collections from Wake County's hotel occupancy and prepared food & beverage taxes as well as the average occupancy and average daily rates for 2019 and for the previous 10 years in Raleigh/Wake County paid accommodations:

	<u>AVERAGE OCCUPANCY</u>	<u>AVERAGE DAILY RATE</u>	<u>OCCUPANCY TAX REVENUE</u>	<u>F&B TAX REVENUE</u>
2009	56.5%	\$80.92	\$12,863,589	\$17,326,526
2010	58.9%	\$79.67	\$13,853,293	\$17,642,600
2011	61.8%	\$82.66	\$15,586,539	\$18,703,047
2012	61.6%	\$85.34	\$16,707,165	\$20,261,838
2013	63.6%	\$86.53	\$17,948,940	\$21,126,371
2014	67.9%	\$91.31	\$20,261,653	\$23,015,254
2015	69.7%	\$95.87	\$22,401,795	\$25,262,981
2016	70.1%	\$100.85	\$24,273,522	\$26,910,616
2017	69.1%	\$102.90	\$25,144,387	\$28,326,065
2018	70.3%	\$106.55	\$27,899,926	\$30,004,566
2019	73.8%	\$109.22	\$30,617,786	\$32,536,123

Talking Points for the 2020–2021 Fiscal Year

Talking points recommended for GRCVB staff, board members, economic development allies, stakeholders and area hospitality partners during the 2020–2021 fiscal year are three themelines that are core to the Raleigh, N.C., destination brand platform, as well as three themes that continue to reinforce the GRCVB Community Engagement Strategy with its target audiences this year (see GRCVB Community Engagement Strategy for more information).

RALEIGH, N.C., DESTINATION BRAND THEMELINES

Each of these major themelines encapsulates the strongest and most central attributes of the destination's brand, based on 2014–2015 research and articulation of brand strategy. (See the Raleigh, N.C., Destination Brand Strategy Manual at www.raleighncbrand.com for full information on messaging.)

Smart: Continually fueled by one of the world's most significant research and educational epicenters, Raleigh benefits from a stream of savvy students- and professionals-turned-residents who are collectively driving the city and area's cultural renaissance forth, creating experiences for enrichment and learning.

A Modern Establishment: Driven by the desire to innovate, a pursuit of prosperity and the need to live well, Raleigh's community is embracing a modern vision for their historic capital city area. This has given life to business big and small, new music, arts and cultural experiences that join Raleigh's existing cultural assets, expansive green spaces and institutions to create an appealing destination.

Undiscovered: Raleigh's unassuming stature as a destination has allowed it to develop organically and sustainably, evolving naturally for the greater good of those who live here and those who will visit. It is that genuine element that defines many of the destination's handcrafted experiences and provides the visitor with an assurance that discovery in Raleigh will always be authentic and unique—qualities rarely found in today's more established destinations.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THEMES FOR 2020

The Value of Tourism: Local audiences should grasp the multibillion-dollar impacts of area tourism-related economic development.

Destination 2028: Our Destination Strategic Plan report completed in 2018 sets out the 10-year tourism plan for Wake County (www.visitRaleigh.com/2028).

Destination Brand: Rearticulated in 2014–2015, the destination brand strategy must continue to be embedded into all touchpoints of area tourism such that visiting consumers sense, feel and share in it.

Destination Strategic Plan and Implementation for Destination 2028

In 2017, GRCVB commissioned a Destination Strategic Plan (DSP), to develop a platform through which destination partners can work together seamlessly to strengthen the area's destination product and increase overnight visitation over 10 years (to the year 2028). The CVB engaged JLL's Hospitality and Tourism Group to facilitate and lead this yearlong, countywide planning effort, which culminated with the Aug./Sept. 2018 release of the DSP final report and presentation of specific municipality plans to each of Wake County's 12 municipalities.

The DSP final report identifies actions that destination partners, stakeholders and allies can take, in conjunction with GRCVB, to impact overnight visitation along three visitation channels: meetings and conventions, sporting events and leisure visitation. It is meant to serve now as a blueprint for the area's destination development, with Wake County government, the 12 municipalities, GRCVB and many destination partners having collective and individual roles in its implementation, transforming Raleigh/Wake County into the ideal destination it can be in 2028. The final plan and the Destination 2028 implementation are organized according to eight priorities.

Throughout this 2020–2021 Business Plan, when departmental objectives, audiences and strategies directly relate to year-two implementation of any of the DSP priorities, they are marked with one or more of these symbols:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| ❶ Meetings & Conventions | ❸ Individual Leisure |
| ❷ Sports | ❹ Destination Development |
| ❸ Events | ❺ Regional Demand Drivers |
| ❹ Key Attractors | ❻ Quality of Place |

During the 2019–2020 fiscal year (officially implementation year-one), GRCVB leadership and staff—alongside a Destination 2028 Blue Ribbon Task Force—logged many accomplishments across the eight priorities. A summary (though not comprehensive in every detail for the sake of space) of strategic recommendations already being implemented or completed (as of April 2020) follows. More details and updates will be presented online at www.visitRaleigh.com/2028 and in the Bureau's 2019–2020 Annual Report.

1. MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS PRIORITY

Strategy	Tactics	GRCVB Role	Status/ Original Timing
<i>Optimize use of the RCC</i>			
	Build and agree on strategy to focus on Priority One events	Facilitate final session and present needed detail for City to adopt booking policy	✓ Within 6-mos.
	Update the RCC booking policy	Use RCC booking policy as a guide when marketing to potential events	✓ Within 6-mos.
	Set RCC occupancy goal based on Scenario 2	GRCVB Sales team will set internal goals to help RCC reach that goal	✓ By July 1, 2019
	Create a prospect tracking system	Utilize Simpleview to drive prospecting efforts	✓ Within year-1
	Use shared software		✓ Within year-1
<i>Better leverage other elements of the downtown events campus to strength competitiveness of RCC as a meetings venue</i>			
	Use DECPA more for meetings where possible to increase utilization and revenue potential	Promote a campus experiences with groups where venues could be a fit	✓ Year-2
	Consider relocation of Red Hat – pending Dix decisions – and use space for RCC expansion	Be a resource and advocate for this move with the City, Dorothea Dix Park Conservancy and others	✓ Beginning in year-1
<i>Increase downtown Raleigh room inventory</i>			
	Explore the creation of a public-private partnership to facilitate	Advocate for and be a resource to provide data for this effort	Underway (City of Raleigh RFI)

Strategy	Tactics	GRCVB Role	Status/ Original Timing
	hotel development in downtown Raleigh		
<i>Develop/articulate strategy for marketing/selling other meeting districts in the county</i>			
	Reposition/reaffirm the role of GRCVB Sales team as the leader of the effort to recruit meetings to the county	Get communities and districts affected to buy in	✓ Within year-1
	Redefine/affirm GRCVB Sales team role in supporting other meeting districts	Get communities and districts affected to buy in	Underway Within year-2
<i>Develop renovation and expansion plans for RCC</i>			
	Hire architect to determine space requirements from DSP recommendations	Provide data to City and consultant, inform on desired outcomes	Underway Aligned with hotel development within year-3

2. SPORTS PRIORITY

Strategy	Tactics	GRCVB Role	Status/ Original Timing
<i>Advocate for needed sports developments</i>			
	Advocate with partners for needed inventory developments	GRSA to provide data as support for specific inventory needs, e.g., basketball arena	Underway Within year-4
	Support City-owned assets for potential investment	For assets like the RCC and PNC Arena, GRCVB should continue to advocate for capital improvements where needed based on organizer feedback	Underway Within year-3
	Advocate for Multipurpose Indoor Sports Complex	Advocate for, and potentially provide data to a developer, to create an opportunity for this development	✓ Within year-5

3. EVENTS PRIORITY

Strategy	Tactics	GRCVB Role	Status/ Original Timing
<i>Create a process with criteria by which events would receive funding via public dollars and, in doing so, create a transparent platform</i>			
	Form a group to meet on finalizing event funding criteria	GRCVB is the convener to bring this group together on the topic	✓ Within year-2
	Identify opportunities for a signature event	GRCVB is the initial convener to bring this group together on the topic and lead planning efforts with an organizer if there is support	✓ Within year-5
	Utilize the Event Impact Calculator to measure ROI for events	GRCVB to be the source for measurement and reporting, but will need source data from events; events will be required to utilize criteria determined and provide data to GRCVB	Underway Within year-2

4. KEY ATTRACTORS PRIORITY

Strategy	Tactics	GRCVB Role	Status/ Original Timing
<i>Collaboratively identify how each of the four, key attractor museums can grow demonstratively more compelling</i>			
	Form a group to meet on linking assets via development features	GRCVB is the convener to bring this group together on the topic	✓ Within year-2
<i>Leverage Dorothea Dix Park as a future key attractor to increase overnight visitation</i>			
	Begin discussion to include an iconic feature as part of the site's master plan	GRCVB to provide data, research and support for development at Dorothea Dix (designate liaison)	✓ (Dennis Edwards liaison)
	Consider relocation of Red Hat – pending Dix decisions – and use space for RCC expansion	Be a resource and advocate for this move with the City, Dorothea Dix Park Conservancy and others	Underway Aligned with Dorothea Dix Park timing
	Include Dix in discussion to better link districts in and around downtown Raleigh		✓ Within year-1

5. INDIVIDUAL LEISURE PRIORITY

Strategy	Tactics	GRCVB Role	Status/Original Timing
<i>Continue to create, curate and develop unique experiences to drive overnight stays to provide more interconnected and user-ready experiences for the leisure traveler</i>			
	Solidify relationship with People-First Tourism (P1t) program; work with P1t to create pathway to participation	Work with partners to create this inventory of experiences by being the curator and coordinator	✓ Within year-1

6. DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY

Strategy	Tactics	GRCVB Role	Status/ Original Timing
<i>Encourage repurposing or redeveloping key parcels throughout the county to serve the needs of travelers and concentrate destination assets around demand drivers</i>			
	Work with development community to inform on visitor trends for asset development	GRCVB will need to designate a liaison in this space to build these relationships	Underway (Daniel Douglas liaison; two Hotel Dev. Summits held)

7. REGIONAL DEMAND DRIVERS PRIORITY

Strategy	Tactics	GRCVB Role	Status/ Original Timing
<i>Strengthen relationships with regional demand drivers and leverage their power to support and grow Wake County's gateway brand</i>			
	Expand relationships with the drivers	GRCVB needs to stay informed on updates throughout the region that affect tourism in Wake County positively or negatively	Underway Within year-4

8. QUALITY OF PLACE PRIORITY

Strategy	Tactics	GRCVB Role	Status/Original Timing
<i>Continue to develop amenities and attractions for new local residents (the growing population) that will also be of interest to the visitor</i>			
	Support enhancements to the county's transportation product, especially in the transportation arena, with any eye toward better servicing the visitor	Participate in work groups and committees to further the visitor experience when it comes to transportation within the county	Underway (Dennis Edwards chairing RTA's Tourism & Business Travel committee)

Many more implementation steps will evolve into GRCVB department-led projects in upcoming fiscal years and will be designated for completion within the departmental sections of future annual business plans.

Marketing and Communications Department

The Marketing and Communications Department is responsible for the Bureau's integrated marketing communications efforts, through which various destination marketing tools work together to maximize their total impact on (mostly external) target consumers or stakeholders. Based on consumer market research and other GRCVB marketing data, these efforts comprise the advertising, brand communications, cooperative partner programming, publications and tourism strategies that lead to consideration of Raleigh, N.C., as a destination for the sports, convention and leisure tourism vertical markets. The primary goal of the department is to increase overall visitation to the destination and area hotel and restaurant revenues.

MARKETING OBJECTIVES

- Continue to grow Raleigh/Wake County's destination brand equity overall, as recommended in the Raleigh, N.C., Marketing Blueprint (2015), and build upon the Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance (GRSA) brand within the sports vertical market, according to GRSA's positioning statement.
- Increase hotel occupancy and revenue through compelling domestic or international marketing programs—advertising, online, packaging, promotions—targeted primarily at leisure tourists.
- Establish Raleigh, N.C., as the convention and sports destination of choice through compelling advertising, collateral and online marketing communications targeted to industry professionals (or local connections to outside industry professionals).
- Encourage visitors to do and spend more by creating accurate, compelling content showcasing what Raleigh, N.C., promises and delivers to its visitors and gain exposure for the official tourism content/promotions in visitor welcome centers, on mobile-friendly online and social media marketing platforms and in local areas with high visitor traffic.
- Increase visitor attendance for signature events/festivals, with signature experiences and at special performances and venues, as well as convert day-trippers to overnight visitors (when possible), through online messaging and content marketing strategy.
- Increase website traffic levels (sessions and users) through a research-based, user-optimized visitRaleigh.com/raleighsports.org presence and via search engine optimization, search engine marketing, content marketing and other tactics.
- Enact GRCVB's Digital Content Marketing Strategy to continue to establish visitRaleigh.com as the single, official source for the area's tourism, restaurant, hotel, attraction/experience and event, meeting, sports, travel media and partner/local resident information.

MARKETING STRATEGIES, ALL VERTICALS

- Steward the destination brand strategy for 2020–2021 and future years. Use the Raleigh, N.C., Destination Brand Strategy Manual and Marketing Blueprint to guide and reinforce well-aligned marketing, messaging/content and communication across all Bureau departments. Provide ongoing brand strategy education and more training resources for Bureau staff and other brand messengers, such as the 12 municipalities in the Raleigh area, each of which is forming a tourism task force or committee under Destination 2028. Continue to shape the Bureau's future as the “go-to” source or curator of a wide variety of tourism/destination content and for a wide variety of local and destination customer audiences. ⑧
- Collaborate with local economic development allies to build consistent messaging and synergy between their traditional economic development strategies and GRCVB's visitor-related economic development strategies, e.g., convention sales strategy, destination brand, joint public affairs tactics in the Raleigh area.

Key to Destination 2028 symbols: ❶ Meetings & Conventions, ❷ Sports, ❸ Events, ❹ Key Attractors, ❺ Individual Leisure, ❻ Destination Development, ❼ Regional Demand Drivers, ❽ Quality of Place

- Continue to enact a GRCVB/GRSA Social Media Marketing Strategy to take full advantage of social conversations, engagement and networking, brand ambassadorship and shareable content.
- Continue to empower the area's visitor sector partners representing all industries/verticals to "help themselves" to GRCVB's marketing programs and co-op opportunities (self-service) through Bureau projects, such as PIXL (Partner Information eXchange Login) or advertising on the official website. ③, ⑧
- Collaborate with the Destination Technology Department to optimize the implementation and usage of new messaging distribution software upgraded in 2019–2020.
- Continue to nurture new business relationships directly with select local producers or suppliers (entrepreneurs), providing GRCVB with brand-compliant promotional products for all verticals, while maintaining a business relationship with an outside promotional consultant who can facilitate all other product needs of Bureau departments. Explore deployment of an online retail store featuring products that reinforce the destination brand and that could be purchased by individuals or arriving groups. ⑤

MARKETING STRATEGIES, CONVENTION SALES

- Continue collaborating with Destination Technology to template all the steps of the personal selling process, enabling convention sales and services staff to fully deploy new prospecting, lead-nurturing, deal-closing, attendance-promoting or relationship-building emails or other tactics in accordance with the Bureau's Digital Content Marketing Strategy and refined tactical steps of strategic selling.
- Arm sales staff with new designs, prepackaged themes, collateral, promotional products and social media marketing strategy, in accordance with the destination brand, to supplement tradeshow booth installations, stunts or activations at all shows throughout the year.
- Continue to put Raleigh on the list for consideration with convention and meeting planners through the Meetings Watch e-newsletter, official Meeting Planners Guides, enhanced bid books, professionally printed pieces as needed, the visitRaleigh.com website section for Meetings & Conventions and visitRaleigh meetings insider blog.

MARKETING STRATEGIES, DESTINATION SERVICES

- Work cooperatively with Services team to automate/digitize and otherwise enable the online implementation of Destinations International's handbook of CVB Attendance Promotion Practices and other new and revised programs/tools for Raleigh area convention and visitor services.
- Continue to enhance conversion to visitors at in-state points of sale (state welcome centers) and increase circulation among Raleigh visitors at local information desks by proactively distributing collateral at major sites. With Services staff, redefine the official Visitor Information Center as a pivotal, physical space for fulfilling the sale of new signature experiences with individual leisure tourists or arriving groups. ⑤

MARKETING STRATEGIES, DOMESTIC TOURISM

- Promote the following to the Bureau's target audiences*, inspiring overnight stays and day-trips for leisure purposes, the conversion of day-trips to overnight stays and brand ambassadorship:
 - Raleigh, N.C.'s destination brand;
 - entrepreneurial locals as well as the museums, arts, live music, craft culinary and beverage scene, handcrafted goods and historic experiences they are responsible for and have fostered here; and,
 - other compelling tourism product offerings (e.g., hotels, things to do, signature experiences, leisure tourism events, restaurants).
 Focus on promoting Raleigh experiences that leave visitors feeling enriched and energized. ⑤

*Backyard Boosters, Lifestyle Chameleons and Pulse Keepers (as defined in Marketing Blueprint)

- Constantly and strategically influence and inspire potential visitors at key touch-points through Internet platforms (e.g., articles and social media, email activations, search engines) and publications in order to

increase awareness of and preference for the Raleigh, N.C., destination brand and to inspire potential visitors to travel and/or stay overnight. Publish an inspirational, content- and photography-heavy Official Visitors Guide for 2021–2022 designed to send readers to visitRaleigh.com for detailed trip-planning/conversion.

- Use the 2020–2021 Editorial Calendar, the Digital Content Marketing Strategy and the Social Media Marketing Strategy as guides to continually steer all tourism marketing tactics (Internet marketing activities, point-of-sale initiatives) toward annual goals/objectives. Engage with area hospitality partners to create and curate inspirational content that supports themes and promotions. Keep partners updated with co-op partner program opportunities as they arise under each theme, timeframe and editorial emphasis.
- Establish and/or strengthen relationships with Raleigh, N.C.'s smart and passionate residents (in some cases through local third-party introductions) who are shaping the growth of the historic city's emerging creative businesses, innovative festivals and food establishments, passionate music and sports scenes and modern cultural experiences—to generate content that will entice visitors to experience the destination, become brand ambassadors and make return visits.⁸
- Strengthen area partner relationships to influence and guide creation of one-of-a-kind, signature experiences that will inspire memorable visits when marketed well; this includes building healthy, new relationships with area microentrepreneurs, non-profits or entrepreneurs/small businesses that can associate with GRCVB/the visitor sector or with People-First Tourism, Inc. (P1t), to begin serving visitors (tourists or groups) in uniquely brand-compliant ways.⁹
- Strengthen relationships with hospitality partners and with area allies/municipalities (e.g., City of Raleigh Housing & Neighborhoods Department, Downtown Raleigh Alliance, Hillsborough Street Community Service Corporation, Midtown Raleigh Alliance, 12 town tourism task forces/committees) to collaborate in the best ways possible for content or tourism product to enhance the Raleigh, N.C., destination brand and attract or better serve visitors.
- Create and/or maintain strategic partnerships statewide and nationwide with IGLTA, LGBTCVB, OpenTable, P1t, Priceline, Visit North Carolina, Yelp and others and augment GRCVB's destination marketing efforts.

MARKETING STRATEGIES, GREATER RALEIGH SPORTS ALLIANCE

- Collaborate with Destination Technology to template all steps of the sports marketing process, enabling GRSA staff to fully deploy new prospecting, lead-nurturing, deal-closing, attendance-promoting or relationship-building emails or other tactics in accordance with the Bureau's Digital Content Marketing Strategy. Re-conceptualize the printed/online bid proposals used by GRSA staff with sports event planners.
- Continue to build upon the GRSA brand within the sports vertical through collateral, promotional products, social media marketing tactics and content development on raleighsports.org.

MARKETING STRATEGIES, PUBLIC RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL TOURISM

- Conduct a local-oriented visiting-friends-and-relatives (VFR) and brand ambassador campaign. Recruit "insiders" or individuals from all walks of life who can help create content, become destination brand ambassadors and provide local, authentic and unbiased advice on their Raleigh. Encourage families who have settled in the area from outside to drive visitation from VFR, who in turn will showcase the destination's compelling story more on social media.
- Ensure the Bureau's overall content and social media strategies promote the positive media coverage garnered for the area, encouraging consumer sharing.
- Ensure the Marketing and Communications Department and Public Relations Department editorial calendars are aligned to foster consistent messaging to the domestic tourism vertical and media.

- Develop, with Public Relations Department staff, collateral and electronic communication/presentation materials about Raleigh, N.C., and about special-interest travel promotions or specifically recommended travel experiences, to aid in that department's pursuit of international tourism sales during 2020–2021.

MARKETING STRATEGIES, MARKETING RESEARCH

- Update visitor volume and spending estimates through calendar year 2020 with research from DK Shifflet, the U.S. Travel Association or other research vendors.
- Update and disseminate research on the overall annual economic impacts (direct, indirect and induced) of visitors to Wake County, as a Bureau performance indicator and as a communications tool for government relations and community engagement (Tourism Economics).
- Continue to join with local arts/culture/leisure tourism event partners to maintain event impact data on their annual events/festivals and provide additional research, destination brand training, marketing consultations and other stakeholder education to organizers identified for further development of signature events. ③

Public Relations and International Tourism Department

The Public Relations Department is responsible for managing all external communication activities, which include all media relations, influencer marketing, public affairs, community awareness and advocacy as well as crisis, issues and reputation management functions. Additionally, the department is responsible for overseeing international travel trade efforts for the Bureau.

Media relations efforts include local earned media to generate community awareness and out-of-town earned media in the meetings, leisure, group tour and sports markets to help generate visitation. Public affairs efforts include advocating for the value of the visitor economy to Wake County and the role the Bureau plays in creating and fostering the visitor experience. International travel trade efforts include working with tour operators, wholesalers and travel agents as well as media in key feeder markets (Canada, U.K. and France) abroad to increase brand awareness and drive frequent individual travelers (F.I.T.) to Wake County.

PUBLIC RELATIONS OBJECTIVES

- Local Objectives:
 - Elevate GRCVB brand awareness to residents, media and partners in the Wake County hospitality community.
 - Engage in building and fostering strong relationships with local television, print, radio and online media, updating them on GRCVB initiatives and the tourism industry in Wake County, building credibility in the local and business community.
 - Work with Public Information Officers from all Wake County municipalities to develop communication objectives for promoting events, festivals and news of interest to leisure and meeting visitors.
 - Work in collaboration with appropriate communications and public relations representatives in local organizations including Wake County Economic Development, City of Raleigh, North Carolina State University Centennial Campus and Research Triangle Regional Partnership to collaborate on story ideas and to ensure that we have consistent messaging on how we are branding and marketing the area and continue to develop quality-of-place theme lines.
 - Develop a local connectors' network of travel writers to pitch "hometown" travel articles to state, regional and national publications.
- Out-of-market Objective:
 - Execute a proactive media outreach program to generate earned media with an emphasis on relationship-building and targeting to ensure the destination brand message is conveyed in editorial, broadcast and online placements outside of Wake County.

PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES, CONVENTION SALES

- Facilitate a joint sales and marketing summit between the Convention Sales, Destination Services as well as Marketing and Communications departments and those of Wake County Economic Development with the goal of developing a comprehensive sales and marketing strategy around aligned key industry clusters inclusive of tradeshow attendance and promotion, sales missions and fostering local connectors.
- Collaborate with appropriate Convention Sales team members to identify and plan a targeted planner/media event using brand-specific themes in a mutually aligned target market.
- Work with Raleigh Convention Center and all Wake County meeting industry partners to promote successes of the Raleigh Convention Center and new initiatives and developments of local hotels, venues and meeting facilities through media relations tactics. Work with Marketing and Communications to support the meetings blog editorial calendar with media relations efforts aligning with convention themelines.

Key to Destination 2028 symbols: ❶ Meetings & Conventions, ❷ Sports, ❸ Events, ❹ Key Attractors, ❺ Individual Leisure, ❻ Destination Development, ❼ Regional Demand Drivers, ❽ Quality of Place

- Provide easy access to standard tools through pre-written editorial pieces, destination descriptions and quotes that reflect the Raleigh, N.C., brand.
- Collaborate with the Convention Sales Department to identify relevant topics and trends in the meeting industry in which the Raleigh area has a relevant claim (e.g., smart) for major media push.

PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES, DESTINATION SERVICES

- Identify the major meetings and conventions within the key industry clusters to develop a comprehensive local and national public relations plan to maximize exposure.
- Regularly update the “Do It Yourself Media Relations Toolkit” for meeting and convention planners to include best practices for garnering local media exposure for their meeting or event.

PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Work strategically with the Marketing and Communications Department to promote tourism messaging to local, statewide and regional audiences and potential visitors—efforts to include up-to-date, dedicated press releases and backgrounders on ambassadors and putting the area’s passionate people in the spotlight.
- Develop integrated marketing campaigns and editorial that utilize the Marketing and Communications Department’s 2020–2021 Editorial Calendar of brand themelines, tourism assets and campaigns.
- Develop a digital b-roll library of stock video footage available on-demand to media outlets working with Marketing and Communications Department.
- Update content of the Media section on visitRaleigh.com to reflect the Raleigh, N.C., brand and tell the story of the entrepreneurial Raleigh residents who enhance the area’s visitor appeal.
- Develop a social media marketing strategy with senior marketing manager, group marketing manager and content marketing manager to promote positive media coverage garnered for the area—encouraging sharing.

PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES, GREATER RALEIGH SPORTS ALLIANCE

- Build local sports and traditional media lists and relationships by providing timely story ideas, facts and figures such as participant numbers, room-nights and economic impact figures on a timely basis.
- Build sports business and industry trade media lists to use in promoting Wake County as a sports destination and GRSA as an industry leader in sports destination marketing.
- Craft press releases on key sports events taking place in the area, as well as continue to position the Raleigh area as a key market for amateur sports.
- Develop strategy around increasing leisure and destination brand messaging inclusion in traditional competition-based (sport or team beat reporter) media coverage of professional, amateur and collegiate sporting events within Wake County. Deploy a toolkit for athletic communications departments to share with visiting team and sports media.

PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES, ADMINISTRATION

- Position GRCVB as the singular voice for tourism in Wake County and position executive staff as travel industry experts for journalists to use as top-of-mind sources for stories on local and national tourism.

- Develop and implement a comprehensive community awareness campaign to advocate for the value that tourism and hospitality bring to Wake County and educate the public on the impact of the visitor economy, working in conjunction with the Marketing and Communications Department.
- Develop a comprehensive public relations campaign around GRCVB's ongoing efforts to implement the Destination 2028 Strategic Plan for Wake County.
- Create talking points for internal use relating to travel and tourism issues. These reference documents will aid in Administration and other staff members being on the same page regarding issues facing Wake County tourism.
- Maintain a series of canned quotes regarding meetings and conventions, tourism initiatives and local policies that affect the tourism industry in Wake County.
- Develop and execute an integrated tourism and economic development campaign strategy centered around quality of place in conjunction with Wake County Economic Development and the City of Raleigh around the SXSW Interactive Trade Show including messaging and on-site activation.

PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES, MEDIA RELATIONS

- Promote positive impact of tourism through public awareness initiatives and a series of pitches and/or press releases detailing travel figures specific to Wake County.
- Create customized pitches aimed at journalists, bloggers, cable network producers and online editors. Identify and respond to pitch opportunities generated through partner organizations and tourism public relations firms representing local hotels, restaurants and attractions.
- Cultivate new and existing media relationships through one-on-one connections including media tours, targeted pitches, networking events and site visit facilitation.
- Encourage journalists on assignment to expand and infuse stories with destination brand messages and callouts where appropriate to the area's passionate-minded people as well as seasonal and niche story ideas. Promote inclusion of call-to-action, conversion-oriented elements including online resources, social media accounts, hashtags, campaign-specific URLs, travel packages and events.
- Broaden use of social media as an integrated tool for media outreach, relationship development and targeted pitching.
- Oversee influencer marketing strategy working with the senior marketing manager and content marketing manager to foster relationships with digital influencers and develop strategic paid content partnerships.
- Integrate targeted keywords into traditional and online PR efforts to align with SEO efforts.
- Integrate advanced earned media analytics through media measurement software to guide earned media strategies, advanced analytics and KPIs moving forward.
- Work with Visit North Carolina's Public Relations Department to participate in media missions in key target markets as well as in-state.
- Pursue qualified travel media to visit the destination on individual visits or during any planned group press trips.
- Create customized pitches for editors, freelance writers, bloggers, etc. and continue to respond to inquiries that come directly to the Public Relations Department.
- Keep the online press room updated with press releases, backgrounders, media alerts, quotes and accolades as well as industry facts and figures to communicate news and information for easy access to media.

- Attend targeted media marketplace events such as TravMedia's IMM and others, as well as hold desk-side visits with key out-of-market media writing for travel, leisure and lifestyle outlets.
- Collaborate with the Marketing and Communications Department to align public relations strategies with major marketing campaigns surrounding live music, craft breweries, arts and culture.
- Develop a public relations campaign around blockbuster exhibitions at area attraction partners and the opening of destination restaurants. ❸

PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTION CALENDAR	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Individual Media Visits	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
TravMedia's IMM North America							x					
Visit North Carolina Media Events (state, regional and N.Y.C.)		x							x	x	x	

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM OBJECTIVES

- Local Objectives:
 - Elevate awareness of the value of the international visitor market within Raleigh/Wake County. ❶
 - Work with local hoteliers to sign contracts with and get product into tour operators and travel agencies portfolios in key markets (Canada, U.K. and France). ❶
 - Work with local partners, businesses to create single- and multi-day itineraries for tour operators and travel agencies to sell. ❶
 - Work with regional economic development groups such as RDU International Airport, Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, Visit North Carolina, Travel South U.S.A., Research Triangle Regional Partnership, Wake County Economic Development, N.C. State University and others to develop strategies around increasing international leisure travel (extending business travel into leisure time). ❶
 - Support RDU International Airport and broader economic development community in developing a China-Ready strategy and aid the effort to bring a flight from China to RDU. ❶
- Out-of-market Objectives:
 - Develop and execute a proactive media outreach program to generate earned media with an emphasis on relationship-building and targeting to ensure the destination brand message is conveyed in editorial, broadcast and online placements in key international feeder markets. ❶
 - Develop and execute a proactive sales training program with tour operators and travel agencies to generate more bookings of F.I.T. in Wake County. ❶

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGIES

- Work with Wake County hotels, attractions and restaurants to educate them on the importance of the international business, how to work with that market and help generate business for our partners. ❶
- Generate tour operator and receptive operator leads for hotels, attractions and other partners. ❶
- Produce and conduct trainings on Wake County market and product offering to international tour operators, wholesalers and travel agents. ❶
- Develop and maintain effective networking relationships within the international travel trade industry representatives including tour operators, wholesalers, travel agents, media and airlines. ❶
- Compile and maintain a database of international tour operators, wholesalers and travel agents within the CRM and create ongoing communications outreach strategy for contacts. ❶
- Attend tradeshow, sales and media missions targeted towards the international market with an emphasis on supporting our international flights from Canada, the U.K. and France. ❶

- Work closely with Visit North Carolina to coordinate site visits/familiarization trips to the area. ⑦
- Create recommended itineraries for international visitors and work with the Marketing and Communications Department to produce necessary collateral and electronic communication material. ⑦
- Develop and execute marketing and sales promotions in key markets working with Marketing and Communications Department on any creative, collateral or electronic communication materials needed. ⑦
- Research emerging international markets and create destination-specific strategies based on travel drivers of each including India, Germany, China and Mexico. ⑦
- Develop strategic-integrated marketing, communications and sales strategies with airlines that serve RDU with international service to increase awareness/exposure for routes and generate bookings. ⑦
- Work jointly with regional economic development groups such as RDU International Airport, Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, Visit N.C., Travel South U.S.A., Research Triangle Regional Partnership, Wake County Economic Development, N.C. State University and others to determine drivers for visitation from China and gauge interest in the market. ⑦

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM ACTION CALENDAR	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Individual Media Visits	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Visit North Carolina Canadian Media Mission								x				

Convention Sales Department

The primary goal of the Convention Sales Department is to promote Raleigh/Wake County as a convention and meetings destination and establish a strong regional, national and international presence in the meetings industry, thus initiating direct economic impact by increasing room-night production for our area hotel partners.

CONVENTION SALES OBJECTIVES

- Generate leads and produce room-night business for Wake County hotels, Raleigh Convention Center, PNC Arena and other county venues. ❶
- Execute Convention Sales strategies that align with the Destination Strategic Plan (DSP) for the Raleigh Convention Center campus and Wake County's five meeting districts. ❶
- Identify and engage with key meeting planners and decision-makers who have the potential to bring conventions and meetings to Wake County and increase awareness of Raleigh as a meeting destination in key feeder markets (Southeast, Mid-Atlantic, Midwest and Northeast).
- Influence corporate business headquartered in the region or with a strong regional presence to host meetings and events at the Raleigh Convention Center and meeting hotels.
- Continue to engage the region's economic development and start-up communities to gain insights and connections related to emerging markets and our four key industry clusters: Cleantech/Smart Grid, Advanced Manufacturing, IT/Technology and Life Sciences.
- Educate business leaders and meeting professionals on the role of GRCVB.
- Enhance relationships with the local multicultural and diversity community to increase awareness of the meeting capacity in the county and the benefits and economic impact of hosting events in their hometown.
- Optimize partnerships with Association Management Companies (AMCs) and multivolume, third-party accounts in all regions to increase the sales prospecting funnel.
- Leverage the destination brand of passionate minds to showcase the diversity of events and the destination assets in Wake County and to differentiate Raleigh/Wake County as a meetings destination.
- Position the GRCVB Convention Sales team members as leaders in their profession and key partners locally and from a global perspective.

CONVENTION SALES STRATEGIES

- Continue to evolve in our role as a business strategist and consultant for clients, taking the sales-to-services approach, by evaluating current processes and embracing best practices on how we can add value-driven results to meeting and convention organizers.
- Research and develop an updated list of qualified prospects that meet the recommended guidelines of the Wake County DSP. ❶
- Develop a customized site visit program for qualified meeting professionals. The personalized approach will yield a positive ROI for our Wake County partners, the planners and CVB representatives. ❶
- Shift processes and technologies, in partnership with the Destination Technology Department, to develop a report in the CRM to provide instant access to gap analysis, compression and pace, to guide strategic business decisions utilizing the data contained in the CRM. ❶

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- Expand our reach to clients and partners by collaborating with the Destination Technology Department to enhance virtual options to host meetings, networking events, site visits and educational programs.
- Curate relevant list of local business and community leaders who are members, board members and officers of groups that may consider Raleigh for their meeting destination or are faculty of higher-education institutions in the region. Specific focus will include but is not limited to North Carolina State University, Shaw University, Saint Augustine's University, N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences and the Nature Research Center. Schedule individual "connectors" meetings with those identified to gain support and intellectual capital on potential conferences.
- Host a local Multicultural/Diversity Task Force comprised of local multicultural corporations and stakeholders. This group would engage by assisting in identifying meetings/conferences that would fit our current infrastructure, producing letters of support and assist the GRCVB in selling to these groups.
- Further engage with AMCs and multivolume, third-party accounts in all regions to increase the sales prospecting funnel. Schedule presentations with AMCs in the Midwest, Mid-Atlantic, Northeast and Southeast.
- Leverage the destination brand (culinary, breweries, music or arts and culture) and continue to curate passionate locals and signature experiences into client engagements at select tradeshow, client events, site inspections and sales missions, to showcase the diversity of events and the destination assets in Wake County and to differentiate Raleigh/Wake County as a meetings destination. Local hospitality partners will be invited to participate.
- Partner with Wake County Economic Development's team to strengthen knowledge of Raleigh's emerging markets and four key industry clusters: Cleantech/Smart Grid, Advanced Manufacturing, IT/Technology and Life Sciences. Initiatives will include in-person and virtual meetings, with a focus on messaging, organizational synergies, industry education and messaging. ❶
- Contribute relevant content of interest to meeting professionals and other members of the larger GRCVB community for use in the "Meeting Planner Spotlight" or other elements of the Meetings Watch, GRCVB blog posts and social media accounts. Such spotlights give concrete examples of how individuals have assisted in bringing business to our community through leads, letters of support etc.
- With support from the Public Relations team, develop news releases and briefs targeting meetings industry publications like *Successful Meetings*, *M&C*, *Meetings Today*, *Meeting Mentor*, *Convene* and *The Meeting Professional* (MPI).
- Host biannual roundtable discussions with the sales leaders who represent Raleigh/Wake County meeting districts to reevaluate Bureau strategies and align business objectives with future trends and target markets. ❶
- Co-host Sales and Services partnership-focused education event to grow the effectiveness of our convention and event vendors (i.e., hotels and also AV, transportation, catering service and similar providers); the format will feature a panel of meeting and event planners with GRCVB staff, along with other resources. The learner outcomes will include an in-depth review of tactical steps to meet the clients' expectations for RFP responses, site visits and event execution, thus ensuring success for the clients, for the partners themselves and for GRCVB. ❶
- Host annual PIXL lead response training for Wake County hotels, to foster a better understanding of how we aim to present the area's best package to planners.
- Identify and recruit local university students from business, marketing & finance and parks & recreation departments as interns. The interns will receive valuable experience and assist the Sales team with market research, database knowledge, partner and client engagement.
- Continue to position the Sales team as industry leaders, by seeking out leadership, board of directors and committee positions with international, national and regional industry organizations (e.g., MPI, PCMA, AENC, SGMP and NCBMP).

Destination Services Department

The Destination Services Department impacts the visitor experience by connecting visitors, attendees and planners to the destination's resources.

DESTINATION SERVICES OBJECTIVES

- Convention/Group Services: Use the convention planning and servicing process to provide “one-stop shop” event planning services.
- Visitor Services/Visitor Information Center (VIC): Provide visitor information, counseling and destination awareness to encourage positive experiences that result in longer stays and increased visitor spending.
- Partner Relations: Create and facilitate connections between our planners and visitors to area hospitality partners.

DESTINATION SERVICES STRATEGIES, CONVENTION/GROUP SERVICES

- Work across all CVB departments to expand the services we offer and the speed at which we can provide them with a goal that services provided will help to position GRCVB as a leader in the convention and meetings marketplace.
- Continue to implement GRCVB's attendance promotion practices, as developed in FY 2019–2020, and use these guidelines for revitalizing our services. We will focus on servicing practices that build on the unique proposition of CVB Services teams in these roles. This process will include but won't be limited to:
 - Deploy use of the new meeting planner toolkit, monitor successes and work with Marketing to fine-tune as needed.
 - Continue to revise our scope of services (what services a group receives based upon size of the group) to ensure that our services resources are expended appropriately.
 - Keep “attendance promotion” as the driving force for our servicing efforts and that the planners' key indicators of success (total attendance and overall attendee satisfaction) are met.
 - Revisit the services we provide to groups outside of the convention center campus, taking into account new sales strategies focused on hotel-anchored meeting districts. ❶
- Revisit the services we provide to weddings, reunions and group tours, as well as those provided to referral bookings (groups that book direct with venues and hotels that come to us for servicing); the goal is to service them effectively and efficiently yet preserve our resources for groups that yield higher ROI. Focus on tools that are “grab and go” while also moving these services to come through our VIC.
- Because festivals and events are a strong part of the Raleigh, N.C., brand, we will continue to work to differentiate services provided to those groups compared to services provided to convention/meeting groups. ❷
- Continue to build on the value of corporate social responsibility in meetings and conventions, to yield a positive benefit from hosting events in our community. Maximize our relationship with Activate Good for servicing the needs of our groups to provide “voluntourism” or corporate social responsibility “plug and play” options, while also promoting the giving back opportunities our partners are developing. ❶, ❸
- Create and implement awareness of sustainability as another form of corporate social responsibility by working with partners like Reborn to repurpose welcome banners and signage, by redistributing unused event materials (tradeshaw items, etc.) and through hotels offering green programs. ❶, ❸
- Leverage participation in local host organizing committees as a key value to local host partners/local connectors who bring conventions and meetings home to Raleigh. ❶

Key to Destination 2028 symbols: ❶ Meetings & Conventions, ❷ Sports, ❸ Events, ❹ Key Attractors, ❺ Individual Leisure, ❻ Destination Development, ❼ Regional Demand Drivers, ❽ Quality of Place

- Maintain a high standard for event servicing by increasing the awareness and the value of stellar event servicing. Leverage our involvement in the Event Service Professionals Association (ESPA) to provide shared learning opportunities and more awareness of and appreciation for all convention services manager (CSM)/event manager (EM) roles, at all intersects (hotels, venues and our own CVB team).
- Work with the Destination Technology Department to improve our reporting and tracking:
 - Implement consistent and uniform traces for all primary group servicing functions to result in better reporting of the ROI we provide.
 - Develop a post-event recap for our planner clients that condenses post-event hotel pickup reports plus services provided plus actualized economic impact.
- Develop relationships with third-party housing vendors, and transition clients to them due to discontinuation of in-house service.
- Grow the effectiveness of our event service vendor partnerships (i.e. hotels and also AV, transportation, catering service and similar providers) by co-hosting (Sales and Services together) a partnership-focused education event either in person or virtually; the format will feature meeting and event planners with GRCVB staff. Our goal will be to better prepare those partners to meet our clients' expectations for RFP responses, site visits and event execution, thus ensuring success for the clients, for the partners themselves and for GRCVB.❶
- Target three to four groups and work with PR to maximize visibility of key arriving groups.

DESTINATION SERVICES STRATEGIES, VISITOR SERVICES/VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER (VIC)

- Ensure that the VIC space reflects the Raleigh, N.C. brand by:
 - providing locally-made merchandise via an online portal that is promoted in the VIC;❹,❺
 - working cooperatively with Marketing to promote signature experiences and People-First Tourism experiences;❹,❺
 - offering iconic/Instagram-worthy photo-op space for visitors;
 - offering immersive programming, partnering with local attractions/venues throughout the year;❹,❺
 - encouraging local tour companies to utilize the VIC as a starting point for tours.❹,❺
- Strive to grow VIC visitation and effectiveness in these ways:
 - Maintain local partnerships for unique programming/activations and visibility.
 - Work with Destination Technology to provide value to our partners by developing a tracking method for visitor referrals and needs that are fulfilled by our VIC.
 - Increase awareness to minimize visitor frustrations in finding the VIC by highlighting the need for updated wayfinding and external signage to better direct visitors to the VIC, including placement of VIC signage in the parking garages.
 - Maintain optimum levels of brochure inventory to ensure distribution that represents Raleigh, N.C., well, including all municipalities; quarterly we will review the number, type and quality of visitor-related businesses that are represented in the VIC to ensure that we are meeting visitors' needs.
 - Maintain and grow awareness through other visitor centers to include state welcome centers, Capital Area Visitor Services etc., by actively engaging the personnel in these centers for ongoing partnerships.
 - Keep safety of visitors in or near the VIC in our forefront by continuing ongoing efforts to develop relationships with Raleigh Convention Center and Raleigh Marriott City Center security teams, as well as Raleigh Police Department and DRA Ambassadors.
 - Raise the level of awareness for the VIC by conducting periodic visitor intercepts to assess perceptions of the VIC's appearance, performance and suitability for our visitors overall.
 - Continue to develop inquiry fulfillment opportunities.
 - Work with the Marketing and Communications Department on any special promotions (like grand openings of new exhibits, new attractions etc.).

DESTINATION SERVICES STRATEGIES, PARTNER RELATIONS

- Use customer service as a key strategy for excellent hospitality delivery by improving our training programs that impact experience delivery and optimize the impact of the programs by working to grow attendance for the programs:
 - Although our team will not host the Guest Service Gold® program for customer service certification, we will promote the resources to our partners for self-education. The program, developed by the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI), is a partnership with the N.C. Restaurant and Lodging Association (NCRLA) that allows our partners to participate at a cost savings.
 - Promote the use of the online destination awareness training/introduction tool on our website for new hospitality employees. The hoped-for result is having a community of business partners who understand and support the destination brand experience and deliver the brand promise more enthusiastically to our visitors.
 - Ensure that our services team trains and participates in Tourism U training and implementation.
 - Assist the CVB with workforce development. Help with partners' staffing needs by working with teams across GRCVB to promote and support the annual Wake County Hospitality Job Fair 2021. ⑤
 - Use the success of All Access Wake County (FY 2019–2020) to build awareness for accessibility needs of visitors to ensure that “all are welcome here.” Leverage the hosting of the Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD®) Conference in Aug. 2021 for developing partnerships for enhancing accessibility as well as the hosting of Facing Race for inclusion awareness. ①, ⑤
- Support the event management development initiatives of GRCVB by continuing to serve on City of Raleigh's Events Task Force. ①, ③, ⑤
- Inspire community engagement for arriving groups. Continue to use large events like IBMA to engage local businesses to maximize on those events through hospitality and welcome services, volunteer recruitment and training and partner engagement via community partner activations like special deals and programming. The blueprint for servicing IBMA World of Bluegrass can be used in smaller and larger ways for many arriving groups. ①
- Grow our key partner relationships in these ways:
 - Grow the effectiveness of our event service vendor partnerships (i.e. hotels and also AV, transportation, catering service and similar providers) by hosting a partnership-focused education event; the format will feature meeting and event planners with GRCVB staff including both sales and destination services teams. Our goal will be to better prepare those partners to meet our clients' expectations for RFP responses, site visits and event execution, thus ensuring success for the clients, for the partners themselves and for GRCVB. ①
 - Continuing to offer our proactive Visitors Guide delivery service (as budget allows), maximizing on the role that hotels and key attractions have in providing accurate visitor information to arriving visitors. This valued program has a GRCVB representative regularly onsite with these key partners to provide hard-copy materials. This has proven to yield an important side benefit of developing face-to-face relationships with frontline staff and management, allowing us to communicate key initiatives and training opportunities.
 - Maximize the impacts of shared-economy service providers (like Uber, Lyft and Airbnb) to develop methods to raise awareness of the Raleigh, N.C., brand, the value of great customer service and Official Visitors Guides.
- Support the development of key vendor services and servicing needs:
 - Work cooperatively with Marketing and Communications to leverage the use of GRCVB's Event Services & Suppliers listings, to promote existing local vendors and as a marketing tool to encourage new companies. ①
 - Seek partnerships and work with other CVB departments to grow the offsite venue offerings for our destination. ①

DESTINATION SERVICES ACTION CALENDAR

	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Celebrate Services Day with ESPA		x										
ESPA Annual Meeting – Kansas City, Mo.							x					
Lunch and Learns/ESPA Webinars	x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x	x
Sales & Services Partner Service Provider Event						x						
Partner Meetings (frequency TBD)												

Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance

The Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance—a department of the Greater Raleigh CVB—markets and promotes Raleigh, all of Wake County and the area’s sports venues in order to create economic development for the region in the form of sports events, tournaments, championships and meetings. The GRSA works closely with local partner organizations to successfully host and service existing events for the purpose of enhancing the product and developing repeat business. Both the sales/marketing and hosting components are designed to effectively position and brand Greater Raleigh as one of the nation’s leading sports event destinations. The GRSA has a 21-member Advisory Board, made up of sports, government, tourism and hospitality leaders who play key roles in the sports event industry in Raleigh/Wake County.

GRSA OBJECTIVES

- Create economic impact by filling hotels and restaurants with sports-related business.
- Position, or brand, Greater Raleigh as one of the nation’s premier locations for sporting events and a “championship destination.”
- Provide excellent leadership and/or support in the area of event hosting and servicing.
- Generate positive media exposure and visibility for Greater Raleigh and its venues.
- Increase local awareness of the sports event industry as a key generator of economic development in Wake County.
- Continue to develop and strengthen relationships with local host partners and sports organizations.
- Continue to strengthen the GRSA’s reputation as the foremost authority on the sports event industry in Wake County.
- Advocate for new and improved sports facilities and venues in Wake County that will spur economic impact from visitor spending. ❷

PRIORITIES AND NEW INITIATIVES FOR 2020–2021

1. NHL Stadium Series ❷, ❸
2. NCAA Men’s Basketball 1st & 2nd Rounds
3. Next steps with NCAA Championships’ site selection process for 2022–2026
4. Destination 2028—next steps with sports-related projects and components of 10-year plan. ❷
5. Increased focus on esports—event recruitment and participation on the GRELOC. ❷
6. Major events including Premier Lacrosse League Tour Stop, NCAA Women’s College Cup, Powerade State Games and many more
7. Retargeted marketing strategy; sponsorship activation at tradeshow (and pre- and post-show)
8. Event Impact Calculator for sporting events—GRCVB’s newly formed economic impact analyst position
9. Increased role as resource/advocate for new sports venues and facility improvements. ❷, ❹, ❻
10. Increased emphasis on social media platforms
11. PR outreach—partner/client event(s) hosted in collaboration with GRSA and PR Department
12. Emphasis on video/new content

GRSA STRATEGIES, SALES

- Attend national tradeshow to meet one-on-one with event owners and rights-holders and to promote Raleigh and Wake County as a premier sports event destination. (See sports marketing travel schedule for a complete list of tradeshow and events.)

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- Utilize, leverage and activate sponsorship opportunities with key industry tradeshows to enhance GRSA's presence.
- Focus on the following sales priorities: (1) collegiate, high school and amateur sports; (2) core sports of soccer, softball, baseball, basketball, volleyball, lacrosse, swimming, tennis, cross country and cheerleading; (3) emerging sports of esports, disc golf, BMX, Ultimate, cricket and table tennis; and (4) state, regional, national and, in some cases, international markets. ❷
- Prospect strategically for new business, primarily through existing contacts and client relationships and by attending tradeshows, but also via "events available" databases, digital listings, sports directories, industry online publications and industry contacts.
- Research and evaluate potential events (in coordination with our host partners) to determine which ones are the "right fit" for Raleigh/Wake County.
- Develop and generate qualified sports leads on a consistent basis for Wake County hotels.
- Produce high-quality bid proposals and presentations for select sporting events as needed. Work closely with hotels, venues and local host organizations and partners.
- Travel as needed to make sales calls and presentations, in order to recruit and secure new sports business.
- Organize and host site inspections and client events for rights-holders and event planners to showcase the area's sports venues, accommodations and attractions.
- Contact local sports organizations, clubs and associations to learn which events they compete in at the statewide, regional or national levels, and determine which of those events might be a reasonable and desirable fit for Wake County. At the same time, determine which of those organizations would be interested in helping to recruit, manage and host the event once it has been booked.
- Manage the Sports Event Investment Program (SEIP) and work closely with GRCVB Board of Directors and GRSA Advisory Board to generate new sports business opportunities and economic impact for Wake County.
- Support the efforts of local organizations to bring sporting events to the area. This includes but is not limited to N.C. State University, PNC Arena, City of Raleigh, Town of Cary, NCFC Youth, USA Baseball and many more.

GRSA STRATEGIES, MARKETING

- Continue to build brand awareness and establish the value of the Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance within the national and regional sports event industry, as well as within the local market. The GRSA brand will continue to grow through professionalism, hospitality, reliability and a commitment to excellence—plus various marketing, advertising and proactive media initiatives.
- Continue to update and develop a more accurate and comprehensive database of sports event owners and rights-holders at the state, regional and national levels, and categorize each entry by sport for digital marketing purposes. Expand the database by researching and entering new and potential client organizations.
- Distribute periodic email marketing campaigns that target event owners and rights-holders by sport with venue-specific updates and other key updates regarding the sports destination. These can also be distributed to local partners, host organizations and media.

- Continue to utilize the GRSA sports website as a primary sales and marketing tool and as the number-one information resource for the sports event industry in Wake County. Promote the GRSA sports website to event owners and rights-holders through emails and collateral materials.
- Increase emphasis on social media, primarily through Twitter, Instagram and blogs. Determine if new platforms are useful.
- Update and manage master calendar of Wake County sporting events that are affiliated with GRSA.
- Expand or maintain the GRSA's sports photo/video library for promotional and media purposes.
- Continue to develop proactive local media relations plan designed to increase awareness of the sports event industry as a vital generator of economic development in Wake County.
- Continue to develop proactive national media relations plan designed to position Greater Raleigh as a premier destination for sporting events.
- Maintain active membership in the Sports ETA and the North Carolina Sports Association.

GRSA STRATEGIES, HOSTING & SERVICING

- Place our traditional strong emphasis on hosting and servicing a series of signature sporting events in fiscal year 2020–2021. Work with event planners and local partners to plan and successfully host these events.
- Take a leadership role in housing issues while staying current with changes within the industry—continuing to lead, coordinate, provide and improve hotel and housing services and options for events rights-holders and planners.
- Emphasize continued excellence in traditional visitor services for sporting events—as requested, as needed and at a service level commensurate with the impact of the event on the local hospitality industry. This includes area maps, information desks, hotel decorations, airport digital welcomes, venue signage, team gift baskets, VIP gifts and much more.
- Serve on Local Organizing Committees, as needed.
- Provide volunteer ambassadors on site at select sporting events, when applicable.
- Support existing priority events by collaborating with rights-holders and local partners to strengthen the event or enhance the “event experience” through such avenues as visitor services, marketing and sponsorship support, hospitality programs, ancillary programming and VIP gifts, for the purpose of leveraging strong community support to help retain desirable events (repeat business). With limited funds, we will work to develop programs that can achieve these goals without a financial investment.
- Continue hotel room-night tracking and pick-up following all key sporting events, with an emphasis on being as thorough and accurate as possible. Identify two separate numbers: (1) room-nights tracked; and (2) GRSA's educated best-estimate of actual room-nights generated in the market.
- Continue gathering post-event report information following selected key sporting events.
- Continue post-event evaluations by surveying event owners and rights-holders.
- Create and host sports event microsites (landing pages) for major events, when applicable.

GRSA ACTION CALENDAR	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Connect Sports Market Place – New Orleans		x										
S.P.O.R.T.S. Conference – Colorado Springs, Colo.			x									
GRSA Advisory Board Meeting – Raleigh			x									
N.C. Sports Association Quarterly Mtg. – TBD			x									
TEAMS – Houston				x								
USOC Sportslink – Houston				x								
GRSA Advisory Board Meeting – Raleigh					x							
N.C. Sports Association Quarterly Meeting - TBD						x						
American Baseball Coaches Assoc. – Washington, D.C.							x					
U.S. Lacrosse National Convention – Baltimore, Md.							x					
National Soccer Coaches / USYSA – Anaheim, Calif.							x					
NCAA Convention – Washington, D.C.							x					
GRSA Advisory Board Meeting – Raleigh								x				
N.C. Sports Association Quarterly Meeting – TBD									x			
NCAA Men's Basketball Final Four – Indianapolis, Ind.										x		
Sports ETA Symposium – Birmingham, Ala.										x		
GRSA Advisory Board Meeting – Raleigh											x	
Esports Travel – TBD												x
N.C. Sports Association Quarterly Meeting – TBD												x

Destination Technology Department

The Destination Technology Department is responsible for all of the Bureau's cloud-based software solutions, technology infrastructure, web development, business intelligence and social media, content and Internet marketing technologies. The primary goal of the department is to support the Destination Strategic Plan (DSP), organizational business plan and individual departments' business objectives through the effective use of information technology and cloud-based services—providing the resources to support the destination management and marketing that attracts more visitors.

DESTINATION TECHNOLOGY OBJECTIVES

- Train, support and enable staff on all organization-related technology deployments in an effective manner, to promote productivity and empower staff with continuous learning opportunities via existing webinars and knowledge-base access.
- Identify, manage and solve/address all organizational technology-related opportunities.
- Automate the organization's use of internal information to ensure that data are organized and shared in a manner that adds value, enhances productivity, protects against loss and promotes customer retention.
- Continue to evolve and maintain enterprise intelligence for the Bureau and destination by working closely with each department on maintaining critical metrics and analytics.
- Work closely day-to-day with the Marketing and Communications Department to implement Internet and content marketing strategies that ultimately attract more visitors and visitor spending.
- Maintain, support and upgrade infrastructure for GRCVB administrative offices and the official Visitor Information Center (VIC).
- Continue to maintain alternative methods of communication during crises or emergency situations in the destination or during unscheduled server downtimes.
- Increase website traffic levels (sessions and users) via search engine optimization and marketing.
- Establish visitRaleigh.com as the single, official source for the area's tourism, restaurant, hotel, attraction/experience and event, meeting, sports, travel media and partner/local resident information through the effective application of new web technology.
- Maintain and support social media aggregation tools for user-generated content and a digital asset management system.

DESTINATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIES

- Closer to the end of the fiscal year, start the migration process to the new versions of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software and business intelligence update for 2020–2021 with all Bureau departments; collaborate with all departments to maintain and support all destination vertical markets through these software solutions.
- Continue to support Marketing and Communications and Services Departments to technologically empower area partners to manage promotion of one-of-a-kind, signature experiences that will inspire memorable visits; this includes building healthy, new relationships with area microentrepreneurs, non-profits or entrepreneurs/small businesses and creating new online/offline experience fulfillment strategies and data reporting processes. Investigate kiosk device for booking capabilities at the VIC to help visitors book signature events when in the destination. ❶

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- Continue to support templating for all steps of the sales and sports marketing processes, enabling Sales and GRSA staff to deploy new prospecting, lead-nurturing, deal-closing, attendance-promoting or relationship-building emails or other tactics. Deploy a new version of the printed/online bid proposals used by Sales and GRSA staff with event planners.
- Work closely with Sports, Sales and Services to ensure that the integration, upgrades and communication between third-party online destination sales and marketing channels like website RFP submission and Cvent are seamless via the CRM and maintain a cohesive presence that represents our destination well.
- Research alternative solutions that will integrate with our CRM and dashboards for visitor device movement tracking. Allowing us to maintain traveler conversion, profiling and segmentation data through a research platform. ⑤
- Continue to support and evolve our data business intelligence platform, providing each Bureau department access to track key metrics and allow for multiple charts and graphs of CRM metrics, key performance indicators and strategic partner metrics. Align with Bureau departments to refine dashboards based on new functionality for layered metrics. Continue to evolve each municipality's, the Raleigh Convention Center's and overall future pace reporting to help with forecasting, feasibility, developer and municipal inquiries. Work closely with platform provider to align with DSP metric needs, providing another layer of what-if scenarios as staff examine data to understand trends and derive insights. Continue to collaborate with Sales/GRSA in developing a real-time dashboard for the convention center campus that will be used as a tool to provide instant access to gap analysis, compression and pace, to guide strategic business decisions utilizing the data contained in the Bureau CRM. ①
- Continue to maintain cybersecurity training and software needs by accessing current enterprise-system security to identify areas that are lacking controls and empowering staff with web-based continuous learning to be more aware of potential cyber threats either external or internal via network.
- Work closely with the PR Department to secure international visitor research and to ensure that the integration and communication between Cision, Google Analytics, CRM and destination dashboards are seamless and maintain data integrity, better representing our destination's PR reach.
- Continue to support and work with all departments on a Bureau-wide marketing communications automation platform to integrate with current platforms, allowing for the ability to track very specific behaviors and reach consumers and clients with approved, personalized messaging and electronic collateral from all integrated marketing communication channels; help departments redefine their prospecting processes by tracking key data points for meeting profiles, which will allow the teams to target specific new business based on rotation, industry and other demand drivers. ⑤
- Manage aspects related to visitRaleigh.com and raleighsports.org including updates and improvements to the Content Management System (CMS) and booking engine as well as Yelp, OpenTable, Google Maps, external data feeds and CVNC.org events API integrations. Continue support and build out functionality via integrated CMS for visitRaleigh.com and raleighsports.org. Work with Google's partnership program to integrate Google reviews onto partner listings via API.
- Continue to manage opportunities to serve partners' advertising on the official website and other sections like GRSA and Meetings & Conventions sections.
- Manage and evolve the CRM system for destination marketing that provides the tools to promote organization and productivity and to power sales, services and other processes Bureau-wide. Also support all third-party integrations from a new marketing communications automation platform, Authorize.net, CVNC.org, Destinations International and pace reporting (ARENA).
- Continue to support all staff and partners with the CRM's DSP Event Impact Calculator (EIC) tool, streamlining the data collection process from Bureau staff and partners. This will allow a partner to submit raw/input data for EIC evaluation and for staff to manage the economic impact analysis and output process. ①

- Continue to support the CRM's integrated partner login with staff, with local hotels/meeting facilities and with local hospitality partners whose information is housed in the CRM. Evaluate customizations to the Partner Information eXchange Login (PIXL) system based on feedback.
- Support an integrated CRM-enabled mobile-friendly website solution with PIXL access for key arriving groups (like International Bluegrass Music Association), in conjunction with the Administration and Services Departments, populating then deploying approved content via the mobile website prior to annual group arrival.
- Manage and support MeetingMax housing platform with local hotels and meeting planners until Dec. 2020. Work with Services and Sales to evaluate alternative housing partners to replace the current housing platform. Assist Services team to educate meeting planners on the alternative housing partners.
- Maintain and support user-generated content feeds via Instagram, Twitter, Facebook for tradeshow, social walls, website and widgets for the official Visitor Information Center and convention groups.
- Deploy, support and train staff on social media applications, social posting strategies and management tools. Monitor Google Analytics and manage Search Engine Marketing (SEM)/Pay-Per-Click (PPC)/YouTube to evaluate, troubleshoot and improve visibility in search engine results.
- Manage the digital asset management system allowing for visual content to be accessed not only internally by employees but also externally by media, partners, agencies, clients and even the public. Work with Marketing and Communications to deploy a new version of the Meeting Planners Digital Marketing Tool Kit via the Barberstock platform, to help approve and track digital asset usage. Also, deploy and train on new UX update, reporting and functionality changes to this system.
- Provide third-party support and hosting to regional initiatives in which the Bureau has taken leadership roles.
- Continue to support devices that will enable staff to interact more effectively with sports event organizers, meeting planners and partners.
- Continue to use the CRM/CMS/website as a tool to facilitate critical data during a crisis to communicate with partners and travelers.
- Continue to support security surveillance and existing technology tools for improved delivery of services at the VIC.

Administration Department

The primary goal of the Administration Department is to provide managerial guidance to all GRCVB departments related to staffing, management, operational efficiencies, organizational strategic planning, education and community-based initiatives that position the GRCVB to be the leader in hospitality and tourism-based economic development for Wake County, N.C.

ADMINISTRATION OBJECTIVES

- Continue to enhance the proactive reporting, measurements and formats of monthly and yearly tourism data through the acquisition of third-party research and economic metrics to better communicate tourism economic impacts to media, industry and policymakers.
- Directly communicate the measurements of the data dashboards reporting and benchmarking system for group sales, group booking pace and interactive analytics for visitRaleigh.com/owned media to all countywide partners. Collaborate with the Raleigh Convention Center (RCC) and downtown hotel partners on the new RCC booking pace report. These measurements will be used for both internal and external analysis, strategic decision-making and articulating the value of the Destination Strategic Plan (DSP).
- Continue to collaboratively manage the Wake County and City of Raleigh Business Development Fund for increasing citywide convention and tradeshow business at RCC. Reporting will include robust total tax generation and a strong return-on-investment ratio in the use of interlocal funds.
- Support the City of Raleigh's ongoing efforts to optimize and expand the RCC along with attracting an adjacent 500-plus-room, full-service convention hotel.❶
- Continue to serve on the Dorothea Dix Park Conservancy Board and give input on the Dorothea Dix Park Master Plan to ensure that elements are considered for development that will be iconic and help draw overnight leisure visitation.❸,❹,❺
- Continue to be the lead resource to all Wake County municipalities and facility partners for assisting in the calculation of projected or estimated direct economic impact of events and festivals. using the Tourism Economics' meetings, sports and festival Event Impact Calculator, along with other measurement resources managed by the GRCVB's economic impact analyst.❸
- Work with Wake County municipalities, economic developers and local planning organizations to continue to emphasize the need for tourism development assets and how to incorporate those assets into future developments and planning conversations.❺
- Continue to provide data, input and support regarding future air service and other local transportation channels.❷
- Increase engagement and briefings with local municipalities, making the case for why tourism matters and is a necessity of a quality-of-place strategy. Support the ongoing implementation of municipal tourism plans and collaborative tourism committees to ensure continuity and trackable success.❸

ADMINISTRATION STRATEGIES

- Host quarterly partner meetings with hotels, attractions, restaurants and other interested partners specific to GRCVB designated projects, programs and initiatives noted in the fiscal year 2020–2021 Business Plan.

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- Maintain engagement with our technology partner to aggregate the data from our CRM system and provide a reporting and benchmarking dashboard for group sales transactions, with countywide hotels and the RCC via a group booking page, interactive analytics from visitRaleigh.com/owned media and project management and tracking of the DSP implementation. This data will be shared with our hotel, facility partners, attractions and community stakeholders for forecasting, budgeting, feasibility studies and ROI measurement.
- Continue work with community and regional organizations to promote programs, information, planner resources and events that gain our partners recognition for their tourism economic development efforts and programs. This information will be aggregated and listed in a dynamic microsite on visitRaleigh.com/2028. Topics and partners will include those that are assisting in Destination 2028 and specific examples of the collaborative work going into each of the eight DSP Priorities.
- Serve in a proactive partnership and advocacy role with local economic development allies such as City of Raleigh Economic Development (ED), Wake County Economic Development (WCED), Raleigh and Wake County parks and recreation departments and the RDU Airport Authority specific to the following projects:
 - RDU Airport Authority and Regional Transportation Alliance Air Service Advancement Program
 - City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Dix Master Plan
 - Town/municipal sports and leisure tourism master plans
 - Comprehensive economic development activations, to include aligned messaging and branding with City of Raleigh and Wake County at events like SXSW and regular media outreach
 Also, the Destination 2028 Blue Ribbon Task Force will meet periodically in FY 2021 and will continue the advocacy and implementation of the 10-year DSP.
- Work in conjunction with accounting, HR, office administration and IT teams to find the best software solutions for technology environments that deliver the highest ROI and efficiencies.
- Continue working with our elected city and county officials, municipal managers, their staffs and our hospitality partners to ensure that the Interlocal Fund review, project measurement, project selection and distribution of project funding via Room Occupancy and Prepared Food and Beverage Taxes are founded on visitation infrastructure that will deliver the best ROI and address facilities that we don't currently have in our countywide inventory. The DSP's implementation continues to provide strategic direction to various community stakeholders on the highest and best use of future visitation facilities over the next 10 years.
- Involve GRCVB staff with Regional Transportation Alliance, Visit North Carolina, the N.C. Travel & Tourism Coalition, N.C. Travel Industry Association, Destinations International, N.C. Restaurant & Lodging Association and the American Society of Association Executives, to ensure that we have a voice on local, state and national issues impacting Wake County tourism.
- Under Destination 2028 and with GRCVB staff in year-two implementation mode, a continued strategic focus will guide the scope of services delivered by one contractor position within the GRCVB to achieve year-two implementation goals related to esports event activations.

GRCVB Community Engagement Strategy

Beyond annual Bureau-wide goals, objectives and strategies to increase visitor and convention business for Raleigh/Wake County directly through bookings and arrivals, GRCVB also joins the interests of travel suppliers, city/town/county governments, trade and civic associations and other local stakeholders in achieving overall tourism-related economic development.

Differing from Bureau staff's day-to-day relations with the area's 4,000+ hospitality partners (attractions, hotels, restaurants and other service providers), the GRCVB Community Engagement Strategy formalized in 2018–2019 (to be updated annually) comprises specific objectives for engaging target audiences other than traditional industry insiders/partners. These other audiences represent high- and mid-level community leaders, including key local influencers, who can advocate strategic talking points relating to Wake County's pursuit of tourism development. (See Talking Points for the 2020–2021 Fiscal Year.)

By engaging the community this way, the Community Engagement Strategy, as outlined each year by the Administration, Marketing and Communications and Public Relations Departments, can build awareness, relationships, support and resources for the Bureau and for Raleigh/Wake County's continued success as a tourism destination.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

- Educate locals (living or working in Wake County) on the mission, value, benefits and relevance of tourism and of the successful tourism-related economic development work of GRCVB.
- Increase the perceived value of the Bureau in the business community and in the municipalities, giving us "seats at more tables" and expanding the network of advocates and collaborators.
- Indirectly persuade our area hospitality partners to be more engaged with us as leaders, as well as create synergy among partners with similar or overlapping missions, bringing them into the overall fold of tourism-related economic development (developing product).

TARGET AUDIENCES

- Target audiences for 2020:
 - Destination 2028 Blue Ribbon Task Force and other standing GRCVB boards/committees
 - Former members of The Conference Table advisory board and their related organizations
 - Local elected officials, area chamber/municipal leaders and mid-level chamber/municipal managers
- Other important community audiences include:
 - Area residents
 - Local LGBTQ and other diverse communities of residents/workers
 - Colleges/universities
 - News media
 - Workforce (especially from non-hospitality industries)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

- Produce the monthly Tourism Economic Development Report and charts, designed especially to articulate the benefits of tourism strategy and tourism economic development. Produce and disseminate the weekly Tourism Talk blog, designed especially for community engagement.
- Maintain a resource kit at visitRaleigh.com/tourismmatters that contains talking points, Tourism Talk blog posts, educational/training materials and white papers.
- Hold follow-up community conversations with all of GRCVB's standing advisory boards, boards and committees; update area hospitality partners (through meetings such as Tourism Talk Live) on what the new Community Engagement Strategy means and already has accomplished.

- Conduct work sessions annually with all Wake County-based town councils, chambers of commerce and business leaders. Share annual tourism report cards, powered by predefined data fields from the GRCVB CRM, and participate in strategic events with all 11 towns/chambers to reinforce engagement, collaboration and the value of tourism-related economic development.
- Organize and execute annual work sessions with Raleigh City Council and Wake County Board of Commissioners and their management staffs to discuss and strategize on tourism development initiatives.
- Pitch and secure local media coverage of GRCVB, including news releases and announcements that highlight the importance of tourism or sports tourism to the local economy. Collaborate with other economic development allies, such as Downtown Raleigh Alliance and Wake County Economic Development, on pitches and hosting of journalists.
- Continue executing a multilevel training program titled Tourism U (a set of in-person presentations for a speakers bureau), which starts with the basics of tourism in Wake County and its relationship to overall economic development goals and progresses to more in-depth information about visitor-generated tax revenues and Interlocal Fund priorities.
- In Late 2020, review results of a limited research project conducted with 2019–2020 target audiences to determine their current perceptions of the important role/impacts of tourism in Raleigh/Wake County as well their perceptions of GRCVB and willingness to engage as advocates for GRCVB’s mission.
- Based on research results, further tailor informational presentations and collateral to address any misconceptions or gaps in perception as the formal strategy moves forward through the new fiscal year.

Summary of GRCVB Measurable Performance Objectives

MEASURE	2019 GOAL	2019 ACTUAL	2020 GOAL	VARIANCE FROM ACTUAL
1. Wake County Occupancy	69.4%	73.8%	52.4%	-29%
2. Wake County ADR	\$105.50	\$109.22	\$97.42	-10.8%
3. Wake County Occupancy Tax	\$26,150,162	\$30,617,786	\$23,581,819	-23%
4. Wake County PFB Tax	\$29,742,368	\$32,536,123	\$25,846,697	-20.6%

MEASURE	19-20 GOAL	19-20 FORECAST	20-21 GOAL	VARIANCE FROM GOAL
5. Group Definite Bookings	294	289	235	-20%
6. Group Definite Room-Nights	244,870	226,772	195,896	-20%
7. Definite Economic Impact	\$157.5 million	\$141.8 million	\$126 million	-20%
8. Group Leads	702	768	562	-20%
9. Group Tentative Room-Nights	533,433	706,448	426,746	-20%
10. Tentative Economic Impact	\$385.5 million	\$512.1 million	\$308.4 million	-20%
11. Website Sessions	3,189,186	2,750,214	2,550,000	-20%
12. Net Reach/Impressions from Earned Media	710 million	388.7 million	568 million	-20%
13. Significant Placements	80	54	64	-20%
14. Speakers Bureau Presentations	42	43	42	—
15. Groups Serviced	582	367	466	-20%
16. Service Survey Response Rate	42%	30%	34%	-19%
17. Average Survey Score (out of 5)	4.75	4.75	4.75	—
18. Visitors at VIC	11,444	7,942	9,155	-20%
19. Visitor Requests Fulfilled	8,654	8,458	6,923	-20%
20. Visitors Guide Delivery Service Guides/Maps Delivered	49,875	37,900	39,900	-20%
21. Visitors Guide Delivery Service Partners Serviced	495	410	396	-20%

Industry Leadership Positions Held by GRCVB Staff

DEREK ALLMAN, CHIA

- Co-Chair, Marketing Committee, Destination Marketing Association of North Carolina

JULIE BRAKENBURY, CGSP®

- President Elect, Board of Directors, Event Service Professionals Association
- Grants Panel, City of Raleigh Arts Commission
- Advisory Board, Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management, North Carolina State University

TORI COLLINS

- Local Organizing Committee, NCAA Men's Basketball 1st & 2nd Rounds
- Tradeshow Committee, North Carolina Sports Association

SCOTT DUPREE

- Local Organizing Committee, NCAA Men's Basketball 1st & 2nd Rounds
- Local Organizing Committee, NHL Stadium Series
- Nominating Committee, North Carolina Sports Association
- Board of Directors, North Carolina Baseball Museum

DENNIS EDWARDS

- Treasurer, North Carolina Travel & Tourism Coalition
- Member, Raleigh-Durham Skål Chapter
- Vice Chair, RDU Air Service Committee, Regional Transportation Alliance
- Board of Directors, RTA
- Board of Directors, Wake County Economic Development
- Board of Directors, City Club of Raleigh
- Board of Directors, Downtown Raleigh Alliance
- Advisory Board, School of Hospitality Leadership, East Carolina University
- Liaison, The Centennial Authority

JONATHAN FREEZE, CDME

- Faculty, Certified Destination Management Executive Program, Destinations International

LOREN GOLD

- Sales & Marketing Committee, Destinations International
- Co-Chair, Greater Raleigh Esports Local Organizing Committee
- Co-Chair, 2020 IBMA World of Bluegrass Local Organizing Committee
- Advisory Board, Hospitality START, Wake Technical Community College
- Advisory Board, Simpleview, Inc.
- Liaison, Raleigh Convention Center Commission
- Advisory Board, Hospitality Academy, Broughton High School

MALINDA HARRELL, CMP, CASE

- Anti-Human Trafficking Committee, Meeting Professionals International
- Advocacy Committee, MPI-Carolinas Chapter
- Scholarship and Awards Committee, MPI-Carolinas Chapter
- Scholarship and Awards Committee, Association Executives of North Carolina

GRAY HENDERSON, CGSP®

- Annual Conference Planning Committee, Event Service Professionals Association

STEPHEN JACKSON, CMP

- Education Committee, New England Chapter, Meeting Professionals International
- Membership Committee, Philadelphia Chapter, Professional Convention Management Association
- Education Committee, New York Chapter, PCMA

TAMMY JEFFRIES, CGSP®

- Annual Conference Planning Committee, Event Service Professionals Association
- Education Committee, Meeting Professionals International–Carolinas Chapter
- Representative, City of Raleigh Special Events Task Force

NICOLE KESHLER

- Immediate Past President, Board of Directors, Meeting Professionals International–Carolinas Chapter

ASHLEE KIRK

- Co-Chair, Governmental Relations Committee, North Carolina Sports Association
- Marketing Committee, NCSA
- Local Organizing Committee, NCAA Men's Basketball 1st & 2nd Rounds

MELANIE MARTIN, CGSP®

- Annual Conference Planning Committee, Event Service Professionals Association

JOCELYN O'SULLIVAN

- Local Organizing Committee, NCAA Men's Basketball 1st & 2nd Rounds
- Membership Committee, North Carolina Sports Association

SCOTT PEACOCK

- PR/Communications Task Force, Destinations International
- Chair, Target Country Subcommittee, Foreign Direct Investment Committee, Wake County Economic Development
- Marketing Advisory Committee, Wake County Economic Development
- Advisory Board, North American International Media Marketplace, TravMedia

JASON PHILBECK, CSEE

- Immediate Past Chair, Executive Committee, North Carolina Sports Association
- Chair, Nominating Committee, NCSA
- Local Organizing Committee, NCAA Men's Basketball 1st & 2nd Rounds
- Local Organizing Committee, NCAA Women's College Cup

THERESA TYLER, CGSP®

- Local Organizing Committee, NCAA Men's Basketball 1st & 2nd Rounds
- Local Organizing Committee, NCAA Women's College Cup

VIMAL VYAS

- MINT Super User Group, Destinations International
- CMS User Group, Simpleview, Inc.

LORETTA YINGLING, CMP

- Membership Committee, Chicago Area Chapter, Professional Convention Management Association
- Awards Committee, Greater Midwest Chapter, PCMA