



# CHATTA NOOGA

CONVENTION &  
VISITORS BUREAU

2019 TOURISM REPORT

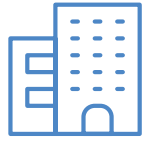
ECONOMIC POWER  
OF THE VISITOR  
IN 2018

**\$1.16 BILLION**

IN VISITOR SPENDING

A **4.75%** INCREASE

Source: Tennessee Department of Tourist Development



**438** New Hotel Rooms



Each **Hamilton County** household saves **\$673.45** due to state and local taxes generated by visitors



**8,970** Hospitality Jobs



1. First time CHA exceeds **500,000+** airport boardings
2. New **nonstop** flights to Philadelphia and New York
3. Solar farm generates **100%** of power needs

EVERY DAY IN CHATTANOOGA

**\$3.2M**

SPENT BY  
VISITORS

**\$600K**

IN DAILY  
PAYROLL

**\$70K**

IN DAILY LOCAL TAX REVENUES  
OF WHICH \$35K GOES TO  
HAMILTON COUNTY SCHOOLS



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO - A YEAR OF CHANGE

One team member referred to the last ten months as “running a business while doing a startup at the same time.” This past year was one of transition for the Convention and Visitors Bureau as we aligned financial and human resources to accomplish multi-year objectives. We remained focused on growing total visitor spending in Chattanooga and Hamilton County to record numbers (\$1.16B in 2018) while building a true destination marketing and management organization with expanded objectives and programs.

I want to thank our volunteer board and executive committee members for their vision, leadership and unwavering support. Thanks are also owed to each individual CVB team member for their patience, perseverance, and commitment to preparing and positioning this organization and our community for great success in years to come.

Finally, thanks to those within the hospitality community who came together to re-vision what the CVB should focus on for the next three years. The collective vision is captured in our new three-year strategic plan.

The CVB initiatives in this report were taken directly from the Strategic Plan. As a community, you defined the top priorities to move tourism forward in Hamilton County.

We are marching into 2020 with stronger partners, a strategically designed team and a collaboratively developed strategy.



Barry White



**THE OVERARCHING GOALS OF  
THIS REORGANIZATION ARE TO:**

.....

ENHANCE BRAND AWARENESS

DRIVE VISITOR DEMAND

DEVELOP VISITOR EXPERIENCES

ENHANCE COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND ADVOCACY



# FY2020 ANNUAL BUSINESS AND MARKETING PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

## INCREASE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Confirm a greater number of group travelers  
using targeted services and sales strategies

### OBJECTIVES

- Revise all Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and metrics and launch the Event Impact Calculator
- Develop a comprehensive Sports Tourism Strategy
- Increase the use of technology to enhance group and leisure visitor services



## ENHANCE BRAND AWARENESS

Apply diverse promotional strategies and  
tactics to increase the number of leisure travelers

### OBJECTIVES

- Maximize digital experience through social media platforms, an immersive website and increased video content
- Formulate and launch an inclusive research-based branding initiative
- Create and execute a multi-year research strategy
- Develop and implement new local event marketing and financial support guidelines, policies and procedures
- Increase the rate of day visitors to become overnight visitors

## DEVELOP VISITOR EXPERIENCES

Facilitate and support strategic branded development of the community's attractions/events, amenities, hospitality services and related tourism infrastructure

### OBJECTIVES

- Execute the Cultural, Heritage and Arts Tourism Strategy
- Launch a new and improved local hospitality training program



## ENHANCE COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND ADVOCACY

Increase awareness about the trends and value of the tourism industry in the region

### OBJECTIVES

- Create and implement a community relations and advocacy plan
- Convert the existing membership program into an inclusive partnership program with cooperative marketing options
- Collaborate with partner organizations on common issues and opportunities



## MAXIMIZE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Operate as a fiscally responsible and talent-based organization

### OBJECTIVES

- Identify and implement finance and governance best practices policies and procedures
- Ensure long-term commitment of existing and new public investment
- Evaluate CVB office/visitor center location options
- Initiate a comprehensive performance management plan for staff teams



# FY2019 INITIATIVES

## NEW PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The CVB is currently restructuring its membership program and moving away from a dues-based model, which required an annual fee for basic services such as a website listing. In the spirit of showcasing the diversity of our local partners, we are transitioning to a partnership model where all qualified partners will receive a complimentary website listing on ChattanoogaFun.com. The launch phase of our partnership model includes a menu of individual marketing bundles for those who want increased visibility to multiple target audiences. In the coming months, phase two will include additional options including cooperative marketing bundles. We invite you to learn more about these new options and make your partnership investment by visiting [ChattanoogaFun.com/partnership](http://ChattanoogaFun.com/partnership). If you have further questions about this transition or the new marketing bundles, contact, Director of Partnerships, Honor Hostetler at **[HonorH@ChattanoogaCVB.com](mailto:HonorH@ChattanoogaCVB.com)**.

# CULTURE, HERITAGE, AND ARTS STRATEGY

## MISSION

To promote and develop engaging, integrated culture, heritage and arts visitor experiences through mutually rewarding partnerships.

## VISITOR PROMISE

We connect visitors with Chattanooga area culture, heritage and arts experiences.

## PARTNER PROMISE

We champion economic opportunities for the Chattanooga area driven by tourism-based culture, heritage and arts experiences.

The 2018 Chattanooga CVB Strategic Plan identified an initiative to assess and prepare a dedicated Culture, Heritage, and Arts Strategy. In the winter of 2019, more than 35 stakeholders and community partners provided input for the 3-year CHA Strategy for the Chattanooga CVB. A DestinationNEXT survey collected input from over 265 community and tourism stakeholders, while professionally facilitated meetings with staff, board members, civic leaders and community stakeholders contributed to the development of the CHA strategy. This collaboratively developed 3-year strategy lays out a new purpose, vision and value proposition for the organization and its strategic partners. It identifies the top opportunities and creates mission focused initiatives, goals and measurable results to direct the strategy forward.



# FY2019 INITIATIVES, CONTINUED

## EVENT IMPACT CALCULATOR

The Chattanooga CVB implemented a state-of-the-art measurement tool called the Event Impact Calculator on July 1, 2019, which is the industry standard method of calculating the economic value of conventions, sports and events and their return on a community's investment. The EIC was developed by Tourism Economics, an Oxford Economics Company, and is used by more than 250 CVB's and tourism agencies around the world who have analyzed more than 300K events. Oxford Economics is a leader in global forecasting and quantitative analysis and works with more than 1,500 clients worldwide. The EIC models quantify the direct, indirect and induced impacts in terms of business sales, personal income, jobs and taxes. Direct impact includes visitor spending on food and beverage, retail, recreation, lodging and more. Indirect and induced impacts include local industries buying goods and services from other local businesses. Due to this new methodology, economic impact estimates as of July 1, 2019 cannot be compared to previous estimates for the same events in prior years. Year-over-year comparisons will not be available until the new methodology has been in use for 1 full year.

## SPORTS STRATEGY

The Chattanooga Sports Committee hosted a kickoff meeting with 30+ community stakeholders to begin the Sports Strategy process. The initial feedback from venue operators and our local parks and recreation professionals is exciting. Destination Consulting Group, the CSC and our community partners will continue to work together to complete this strategy by the end of October 2019. This initiative will strengthen our organizational approach for driving sports tourism in Hamilton County.







## **NEW HOSPITALITY TRAINING PROGRAM EVALUATION**

We evaluated the CVB's previous annual hospitality training program in order to improve it. The Chattanooga CVB has assessed potential third-party programs, interviewed other destination management organizations with robust hospitality training initiatives and conducted a series of small focus groups with local stakeholders to develop a new curriculum, format, and calendar for the training program. The new hospitality training program will be rolled out in 2020.

## **FINANCIAL TECHNOLOGY & GOVERNANCE**

A comprehensive review of our financial and HR management software resulted in a complete revamp of the technology used to support our organization. New, more efficient systems have been deployed that allow team members timely and accurate financial tracking and reporting. Our HR system is now online to provide our team with access to essential documents. The system also helps the team remain in communication while out promoting Chattanooga as the destination for vacations, meetings and sporting events. We engaged a Managed Services Provider to provide more reliable technology hardware, services and support to our team. We will be converting to full cloud-based access for our network files and the software used by our marketing team for creativity, storage and collaboration with vendor partners.

## **DESTINATION BRANDING RESEARCH**

Seventeen agencies responded to our request for proposals for brand positioning research. Development Counsellors International, our current PR agency, was selected by a committee of 10 team members and partner advisors. The CVB worked with DCI to conduct perception research on how visitors and locals perceive Chattanooga. Surveys were conducted with 2,050+ past/potential visitors, 120 stakeholders, 430 residents and 73 meeting planners. A selection committee chose a lead marketing agency to partner with the CVB to bring the branding research to life with new creative advertising for 2020 and beyond.



# 2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Chattanooga CVB is governed by a board of directors that represents a cross section of business partners.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairman - Keith Sanford

Vice Chairman - Mitch Patel

Secretary - Johnny O'Brien

Treasurer - Lisa Maragnano

At-Large - Allen Corey

At-Large - Ken DeFoor

At-Large - Hon. Randy Fairbanks

President & CEO - Barry White

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Karlene Claridy	Reggie Piercy
Kevin Conley	Carla Pritchard
Mayor Jim Coppinger	Meredith Roberts
Todd Gardenhire	Henry Schulson
Christy Gillenwater	Jack Sherman
Sheldon Grizzle	Jeff Sikes
Susan Harris	Mike Steele
Dan Jacobson	Rob Stickley
Mickey McCamish	Annie Still
Jeff Messinger	Elaine Swafford
Bernie Miller	Fletcher Thompson
Tricia Mims	Stratton Tingle
Jennifer Mingola	Cindy Todd
Hugh Morrow	Tom Underwood
Susan Moses	Eda Ira Walldorf
Molly O'Brien	

For an up-to-date list of staff and their contact information,  
visit [ChattanoogaFun.com/Contact-Us](http://ChattanoogaFun.com/Contact-Us).



MEETINGS AND  
SPORTING EVENTS  
FY2019

**268**

MEETINGS AND SPORTING EVENTS  
THAT ENGAGED CVB SERVICES

**243,583**

TOTAL ATTENDEES

TOTAL ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT

**\$87,923,161.66**



# TOP 6 EVENTS



#1. IRONMAN CHATTANOOGA

**11.5K Attendees**

#2. CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY  
BIENNIAL INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**10K Attendees**

#3. CONNECT SPORTS SCENIC  
CITY SUMMER SHOWCASE

**11.2K Attendees**

#4. HEAD OF THE HOCH  
ROWING REGATTA

**16K Attendees**

#5. MOON RIVER FESTIVAL

**10K Attendees**

#6. CON NOOGA FEAR CONNECTION

**5K Attendees**



MARKETING AND  
COMMUNICATIONS

CHATTANOOGAFUN.COM

**2.7M**

SESSIONS

CONSUMER EMAIL DATABASE

**47K**

OPT-INS

**483.4K**

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

FACEBOOK

**353K**



INSTAGRAM

**55.3K**

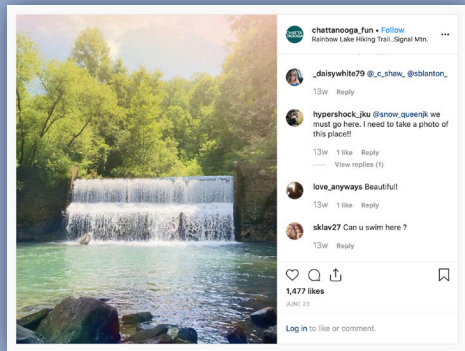


TWITTER

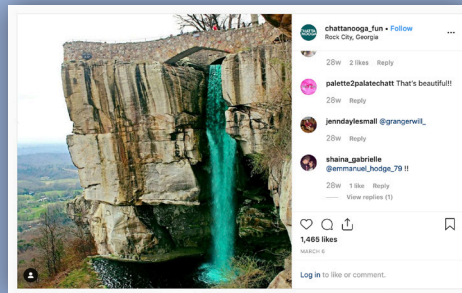
**75.1K**



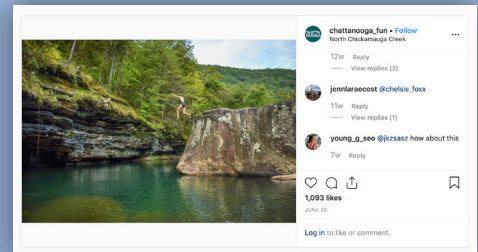
## TOP 3 INSTAGRAM POSTS (highest engagement)



**28K** Impressions  
**1.5K** Likes



**25K** Impressions  
**1.5K** Likes

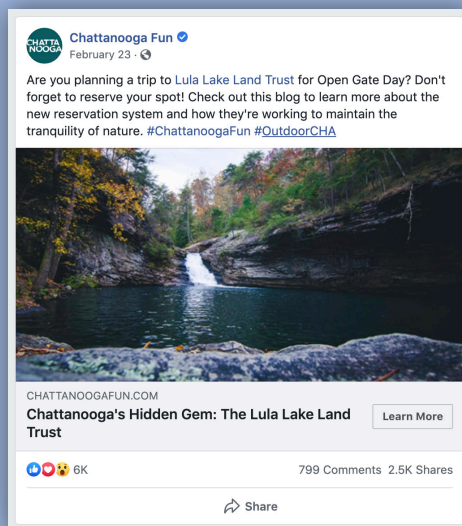


**26K** Impressions  
**1.1K** Likes

## TOP 3 FACEBOOK POSTS (highest engagement)



**1.2M** People Reached  
**50.9K** Engagements



**1.0M** People Reached  
**45.3K** Engagements



**839K** People Reached  
**27.7K** Engagements

## CHATTANOOGAFUN.COM TOP BLOGS

(highest # of views)

### 5 Awesome Swimming Holes Near Chattanooga

Monday, June 24, 2019 8:00 PM



60.4K Views

### Cabin Rentals

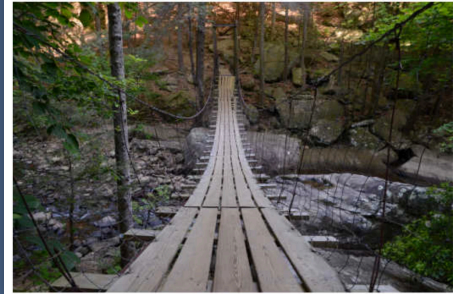
Wednesday, October 10, 2018 10:00 AM



43.7K Views

### Hiking to Edwards Point: One of Chattanooga's Best Day Hikes

Friday, May 11, 2018 9:00 AM



35.8K Views

## LIVABILITY

### 2019 TOP 100 BEST PLACES TO LIVE

*"Surrounded by mountains and countless stunning views, the city lives up to its "Scenic City" moniker. With easy access to hiking trails, waterfalls, world-class rock climbing spots*

*and winter sports, outdoor recreation abounds."*

*"...truly, the sense of opportunity and growth in Chattanooga right now is palpable." - **March 2019***



## SOUTHERN LIVING

### THE BEST TENNESSEE GETAWAYS FOR SPRING

*"For a crowd pleaser with something for everybody, Chattanooga is tough to beat." - **March 2019***

# TRAVEL CHANNEL

## THE 10 BEST 2019 BUDGET TRAVEL DESTINATIONS

*"...Chattanooga has emerged from Nashville's shadow to become a primary destination. Once known as a railway hub, today the city*

*is better known for its outdoor activities, culture and affordable restaurants.." - **February 2019***



# NEW YORK POST

## PERFECT TENN - THIS ONCE BLEAK TENNESSEE TOWN IS GOING FULL STEAM AHEAD

*"Chattanooga has enjoyed one of the fastest and most extreme turnarounds in America."*

*"Reenergized Chattanooga has alluring sights, eats and drinks."*  
**- April 2019**



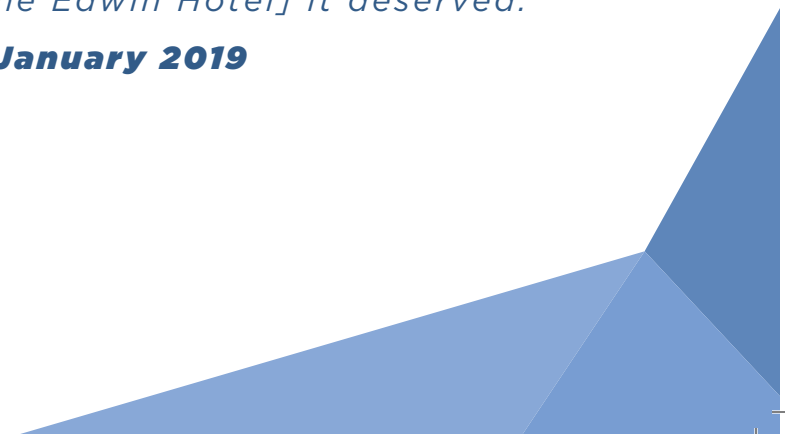
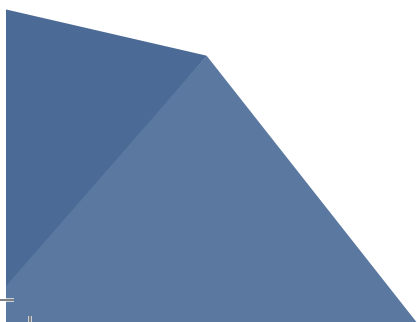
# FORBES

## YOUR WEEKEND GUIDE TO CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE

*"Whether you're leisurely taking in breathless views from Rock City and Ruby Falls, or cycling down Chattanooga's Riverwalk and Stringer's Ridge, there's*

*endless ways to enjoy the great outdoors here."*

*"...Chattanooga finally received the chic, design-minded boutique hotel [The Edwin Hotel] it deserved."*  
**- January 2019**







A special thank  
you to our partners,  
especially the Hamilton  
County Commissioners and  
Mayor, for your dedicated and  
ongoing investment in improving  
our community's economic and  
social prosperity through  
tourism.

# CHATTA NOOGA

Chattanooga Convention & Visitors Bureau  
736 Market Street, 18th Floor  
Chattanooga, TN 37402  
[ChattanoogaFun.com](http://ChattanoogaFun.com)