



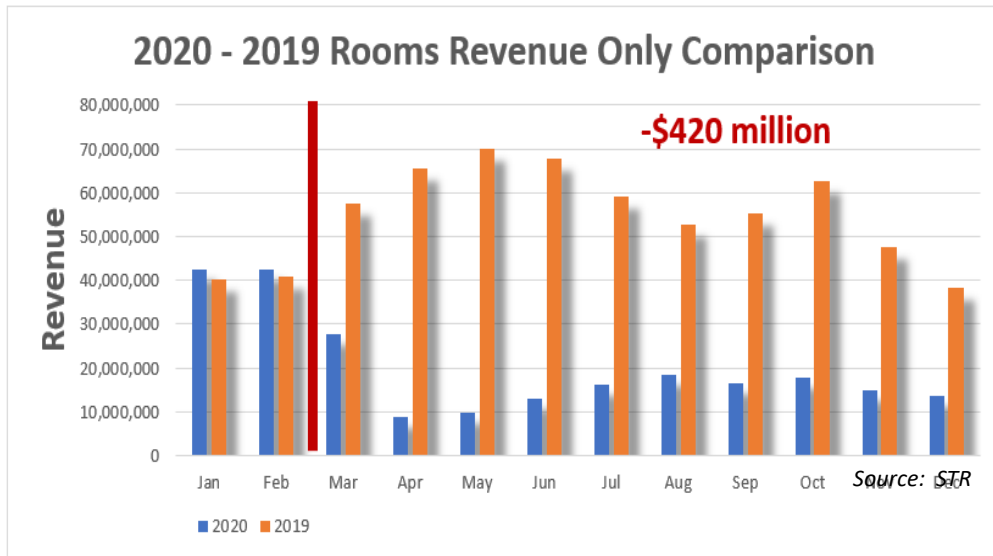
Fairfax County Tourism – Visit Fairfax Plan for Travel, Tourism, & Hospitality Recovery through Virginia Tourism Corporation and American Rescue Plan Funding



PLANNING & INNOVATION FOR

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

Beginning in the spring of 2020 and throughout the past year, the hospitality and tourism community attempted to navigate unprecedented waters through a storm like nothing we had ever seen. This was not the first time that the industry faced troubled times, but neither the aftermath of 9-11 nor the 2008 financial crisis prepared us for the devastating economic impact of COVID-19.



The past two years have been a roller coaster ride for our nation and certainly for the tourism industry. The impact on our hospitality and tourism community was swift and devastating. Within the Commonwealth, Northern Virginia workers were disproportionately affected; and in Fairfax County, tourism-related jobs and workers of color suffered the most.

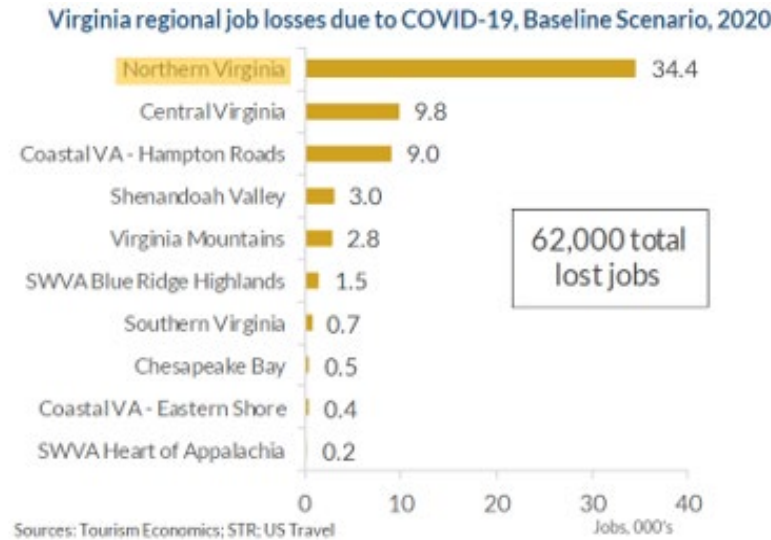
Frequently, the national conversation has centered around shutdowns with many restrictions changing almost overnight, and as it relates to our national psyche, this uncertainty appears to be our new normal. The timing for a full recovery remains uncertain; however, even as restrictions begin to lift, some consumers are hesitant to travel. For event planners and individual business travelers, the situation is even worse with many companies choosing to hold off on meetings and even individual corporate travel.

While all markets suffered, the business markets were impacted severely. Unfortunately, the corporate, government, and association markets can be difficult to reach without the right resources. Coming up with innovative ways to connect with group decision makers through the right attention-getting message is important as the echo of the pandemic lingers. In an incredibly competitive environment for those meetings that are still taking place, we need to arm our group sales managers with the best possible tools to be

Tourism-related jobs accounted for at least 32% of all job losses. Nearly twice as many Hotel and Restaurant Workers lost their jobs compared to the next highest segment.

Source: Virginia Employment Commission

34%
of Virginia's
hospitality job losses
came from Northern
Virginia



63%
of all job losses took
place in industries with
higher-than-average
representation of people
of color

effective in their jobs, and in doing so, leverage the power of human connection that comes only from face-to-face interaction. The leisure markets are already bringing back travelers, but meetings are critical to a full recovery. Consequently, it is imperative that we raise a unified voice to instill confidence in event planners by concentrating on safe meetings.

Additionally, there is opportunity to market internally as well as externally. If companies are not quite ready to send their team members out, Fairfax County has what they need right here with over 100 hotels and meeting facilities. For our local residents who have acquired a new appreciation for home, a “Buy Local” message and the “Made in Fairfax” initiative will surely resonate.

We remain positive not only that the future is indeed bright, but also that the American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funding will enable us to execute brand new strategies designed to amplify our message, reach new audiences, and move us in the right direction. This has been a year of unpredictability; however, one thing is certain: our resilient nation will travel and meet again. This is not a question of if, but when. Perhaps the more important questions are how and why.

Recognizing this new paradigm, these additional resources allow Visit Fairfax to tap into the pent-up desire to travel that so many are feeling. Without doubt, travel will resume; however, the manner in which visitors and corporations choose to travel and the core drivers that motivate them have changed. Fairfax County needs to be there – at exactly the right time, in the right place, and with the right message to attract visitors in this more complicated world of travel.

All indicators suggest that the travel industry will need two to three years to reach pre-COVID business levels. Consequently, consistent and ongoing marketing campaigns are critical to ensure the successful recovery of Fairfax County’s tourism industry. To sustain our businesses that rely heavily on tourism, the additional \$4.17 million in funding over the next two years will allow Visit Fairfax to support Fairfax County businesses by escalating our marketing efforts and drive incremental tax dollars that contribute to the quality of life of our citizens.

MARKETING & SALES STRATEGY



The Visit Fairfax strategy is three-pronged. Firstly, since individual leisure consumer markets have already shown increased demand, Fairfax County has the opportunity to maximize share within the Capital Region, develop new high-volume and high-return drive markets, and explore new fly markets that were previously unavailable to us due to funding limitations. By leveraging new research and waste-eliminating media technologies, we have the opportunity to reach new markets and audiences through a series of campaigns that provide measurable results. Secondly, we need to pave the way for the return of group meetings within the most competitive marketplace that we have ever seen. Through the use of innovative sales tools supported by effective marketing campaigns, the team will help our stakeholders identify and convert incremental business meetings, group tours, and sports tournaments and events. Our third strategy centers around showcasing our multi-cultural and diverse communities. We have the opportunity to introduce new audiences to one of our biggest strengths: the diversity of our population, our shared culture, and our unique history. Finally, Visit Fairfax will utilize new industry research and tracking technology to optimize campaigns and assess return-on-investment for future efforts.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Increase hotel occupancy and sales tax revenues by putting more group events and business travelers into Fairfax County hotels.
2. Develop and execute a marketing and communications strategy for local residents and constituents that increases spending and contributes to the quality of life in Fairfax County.
3. Inspire new individual leisure travel by developing and executing integrated marketing campaigns that target leisure consumers by engaging those potential visitors with highly targeted messaging and relevant content.
4. Generate incremental spending and hotel occupancy tax revenues by attracting and maximizing lucrative sports tournaments for adult and youth athletes.
5. Increase market share of group tours within the Washington Metropolitan Region by increasing awareness of Fairfax County as a preferred destination for domestic and international tour groups.
6. Optimize program effectiveness and provide measurable return-on-investment data for both stakeholders and county leadership by utilizing new research and tracking technologies.



PERFORMANCE MEASURES

1. Incremental tourism spending in Fairfax County businesses generated by the visitor economy through Visit Fairfax individual leisure consumer programs.
2. Incremental Business Meetings, Sports Events, and Group Leisure Travelers in Fairfax County.
3. Additional exposure and engagement with Fairfax County's local residents.
4. Track and report conversion through research and measurement tools.

OBJECTIVES → ACTION STEPS

1. **GROUP MEETINGS:** Increase hotel occupancy and sales tax revenues by putting more group events and business travelers into Fairfax County hotels.

Tactic

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| A. Use a countywide virtual tour experience to facilitate future planning and site inspections regardless of potential travel restrictions. | Q1 – Q3 2023 |
| B. Develop and execute an integrated marketing campaign encouraging association, corporate, and government meeting planners to meet in Fairfax County through targeted print and digital media, including specialty publications, e-blasts, e-newsletters, and other online marketing vehicles. | Q4 2022 & Q1 2023 |
| C. Leverage strategic partnerships with local business organizations such as the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority and the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce, among others, to encourage Fairfax County businesses to host local meetings as an alternative to virtual options. | Q1 & Q2 2024 |
| D. Identify and convert new group business meetings using the Destinations International proprietary MINT database of events combined with an attention-getting direct marketing device to qualified planners. | Q4 2022, Q1 & Q4 2023 |
| E. Produce an attention-getting direct mail collateral piece to promote the new Metrorail line to Dulles International Airport. | Q4 2022 |

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| F. Host The Military Reunion Network (TMRN) Familiarization tour Weekend to attract planners for 15 to 20 military reunion groups to Fairfax County; highlight the National Museum of the United States Army and other military-themed attractions. | Q3 2022 |
| G. Host an Association of Meeting Professionals (AMPs) monthly meeting for 25 to 50 locally based planners to meet at a Fairfax County venue. | Q4 2022 |
| H. Host a Meeting Professionals International (MPI) monthly meeting for 25 to 50 locally based planners to meet at a Fairfax County venue. | Q1 2023 |
| I. Host a PCMA Capital Chapter monthly meeting for 50 locally based planners to meet at Capital One Hall. | Q4 2022 |
| J. Identify and convert new group business meetings using an enhanced subscription to the proprietary CVENT sales system. | Q3 2022 – Q2 2024 |
| K. Attend the Mid-Atlantic Regional SMART Meetings tradeshow as a new avenue to generate more leads and definite bookings. | Q2 2022 & Q2 2023 |
| L. Attend new tradeshow track for CONNECT DC (MedTech track) to generate more leads and definite bookings. | Q4 2022 & 2023 |
| M. Place digital advertising with <i>Smart Meetings</i> to generate greater awareness within the meeting planner community. | Q1 2023 & 2024 |
| N. Execute a digital retargeting campaign to engage meeting and event planners via the proprietary CONNECT website. | Q1 2023 & 2024 |

2. LOCAL RESIDENTS: Develop and execute a marketing and communications strategy for local residents and constituents that increases spending and contributes to the quality of life in Fairfax County.

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| A. Develop and execute a marketing campaign aimed at local residents to remind them to “Buy Local” with special emphasis on the unique hand-crafted products showcased through the “Made in Fairfax” initiative. | Q4 2023 & Q2 2024 |
| B. Implement a variety of curated “experience paths” featuring South County businesses which are promoted through digital media as amenities for both local residents and visitors featuring targeted itineraries, special discounts/passports, and other benefits, that showcase the areas of Mount Vernon, Lorton, Springfield, Clifton, and Burke. | Q3 & Q4 2023 |
| C. Implement a variety of curated “experience paths” featuring Central County businesses which are promoted through digital media as amenities for both local residents and visitors featuring targeted itineraries, special discounts/passports, and other benefits, that showcase the areas of Tysons, Annandale, Merrifield, Vienna, and Great Falls. | Q3 & Q4 2023 |
| D. Implement a variety of curated “experience paths” featuring Western County businesses which are promoted through digital media as amenities for both local residents and visitors featuring targeted itineraries, special | Q3 & Q4 2023 |

discounts/passports, and other benefits, that showcase the areas of Dulles, Reston, Herndon, Centreville, and Chantilly.

- E. Generate new photography assets that promote tourism businesses throughout Fairfax County and that illustrate the diversity of our communities and our culture. Work with attractions as well as towns within Fairfax County including Clifton, Herndon, and Vienna to capture the best representative imagery. Q2 & Q3 2023
- F. Foster community pride and better understanding of the value of tourism, which not only leads to tax relief for our citizens but also enhances quality of life, by installing LOVEwork public art in high-traffic sites throughout the county with QR codes that link to entertaining videos. Q3 2023
- G. Collaborate with Tysons Corner Center to create a digital media lounge for both local residents and visitors that showcases Fairfax County tourism businesses. Q4 2023

3. LEISURE CONSUMERS: Inspire new individual leisure travel by developing and executing integrated marketing campaigns that target leisure consumers by engaging those potential visitors with highly targeted messaging and relevant content.

Tactic

- A. Increase reach within the current Visit Fairfax integrated advertising campaign to drive markets within 300 miles of Fairfax County via paid search, increased promoted social posts, display, and print advertising. Q4 2022 – Q1 2024
- B. Plan and execute a digital campaign that reflects the abundance of African American culture and history found in Fairfax County. Q2 2023
- C. Saturate the high-volume feeder market of Philadelphia through a coordinated campaign using digital banner advertising, paid search, native & print advertising as well as out-of-home and streaming video service (OTT) advertising that invites residents of the City of Brotherly Love to visit Fairfax County where Virginia is for Lovers. Q2 & Q3 2023
- D. Execute a digital campaign to the high-volume feeder market of New York that incorporates the elements of digital banner advertising, paid search, and native/social advertising. Q2 & Q3 2023
- E. Execute two new campaigns to high-yield drive markets within the Commonwealth that include the elements of digital banner advertising, paid search, and native/social advertising. Q2 2023 & 2024
- F. Execute two new campaigns to Northern Virginia fly markets with the greatest potential for Fairfax County including elements of digital banner advertising, paid search, and native/social advertising. Q2 2023 & 2024
- G. Take advantage of Virginia Tourism Corporation ARPA partner, Adara, to target their proprietary audiences and introduce Fairfax County as a leisure destination. Q2 2023 & Q1 2024
- H. Create three promotional videos of Fairfax County as a travel destination and distribute the new content through the proprietary Matador and Hearst Communication Networks. Q4 2022, Q3 2023 & Q2 2024

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| I. Collaborate with the Northern Virginia Tourism Partnership to develop and execute a regional marketing campaign that showcases Northern Virginia as a destination. | Q2 2023 |
| J. Partner with influencers to showcase Fairfax County's tourism assets to their niche audiences. | Q2 2023 & 2024 |
| K. Join Capital Region USA (CRUSA) on media missions and desksides to key international markets to encourage them to write about Fairfax County tourism stakeholders. | Q2 2022 & Q1-Q2 2023 |
| L. Attend the TravMedia Summit and International Marketplace as a new opportunity to promote Fairfax County to journalists. | Q4 2022 & Q1 2023 |
| M. Plan and execute media Familiarization Tours to Fairfax County for qualified journalists to encourage them to write about Fairfax County tourism stakeholders. | Q3 2022 & Q2-3 2023 |
| N. Retain website developers to create new and appealing content pages that are optimized to attract new niche audiences. | Q4 2022 - Q2 2024 |

4. SPORTS TOURNAMENTS: Generate incremental spending and hotel occupancy tax revenues by attracting and maximizing lucrative sports tournaments for competing adult and youth athletes.

Tactic

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| A. Attend the S.P.O.R.T.S. Relationship Conference to market and sell Fairfax County's sports tourism venues and other assets. | Q3 2022 & 2023 |
| B. Sponsor the S.P.O.R.T.S. Relationship Conference to market and sell Fairfax County's sports tourism venues and other assets. | Q3 2022 & 2023 |
| C. Attend the American Baseball Coaches Association Convention to market and sell Fairfax County's sports tourism venues and other assets. | Q4 2022 & Q1 2023 |
| D. Upgrade subscription level of the proprietary Playeasy sports tourism marketing, networking, and lead platform to enhance lead generation opportunities. | Q4 2022 & 2023 |
| E. Design and produce sports facility profile sheets and create custom facility guides to distribute via email and in person to sports tournament organizers. | Q1 2023 |
| F. Develop a sports montage video demonstrating that Fairfax County is an ideal destination to host a variety of sports events. | Q2 2023 |
| G. Conduct familiarization tours and site inspections of Patriot Park North, the county's baseball/softball complex currently under construction. | Q4 2022 & Q1 2023 |
| H. Sponsor select annual tradeshow (TEAMS, CONNECT, Sports ETA) with SportsNOVA partners to market Northern Virginia as a preferred destination for travel sports events, particularly multisport and large single-sport competitions. | Q3 2023 |

5. GROUP TOUR: Increase market share for group tours within the Washington Metropolitan Region by increasing awareness of Fairfax County as a preferred destination for domestic and international tour groups.

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| A. Leverage a new sales opportunity with the Accent on the East Tradeshow and Familiarization Tour. | Q4 2022 |
| B. Leverage the Accent on the East media package to maximize awareness among attendees. | Q4 2022 |
| C. Participate in Brand USA's Travel Week Europe to promote Fairfax County to international tour operators and secure Fairfax County's position in anticipation of full recovery. | Q2 2023 |
| D. Host a pre or post Familiarization Tour for the inaugural Capital Region USA (CRUSA) marketplace to introduce receptive and international operators to Fairfax County | Q4 2022 |
| E. Sponsor a pre-event Familiarization Tour for qualified operators prior to the Student Youth Travel Association Annual Meeting. | Q3 2022 |
| F. Plan and execute Familiarization Tours for group tour operators to secure additional placement within their group tour products. | Q4 2022 – Q1 2024 |

6. TRACKING ROI: Optimize program effectiveness and provide measurable return-on-investment data for both stakeholders and county leadership by utilizing new research and tracking technologies.

Tactic

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| A. Retain a research specialist to provide visitor spending data including source market as well as spending location and type within Fairfax County. | Q4 2022 & 2023 |
| B. Work with digital marketing agency to produce two visitor profile research studies – one to serve a baseline for awareness among past visitors and a second to establish market potential by state within spending categories. | Q4 2022 & Q2 2024 |
| C. Work with digital marketing agency to create research-based visitor personas that will assist in creative asset development. | Q4 2022 |
| D. Conduct two campaign tracking research reports to track incremental tourism spending generated by Visit Fairfax advertising campaigns. | Q3 2023 & Q2 2024 |
| E. Provide ongoing expense reporting and plan management via the Virginia Tourism Corporation ARPA portal as well as quarterly plan updates and results summaries for County leadership. | Q4 2022 – Q2 2024 |