



As we continue to be challenged by this global pandemic, Governor Hogan recently announced his three phase plan to reopen Maryland. On the heels of the Governor’s announcement, the marketing team at Visit Frederick is working on our own “Roadmap to Recovery” based on a model released by MMGY, the world’s leading integrated travel and hospitality marketing agency. This plan includes 4 phases to promote our destination and bring visitors back to

Frederick County: **Wait, Ready, Set, and Go**. Below is the entire roadmap with all of the phases, however, we would like to share an update on what Visit Frederick has been working on in the current phase, the “Wait” phase, and our preparations to move into the next stage, the “Ready” phase.



Since mid-March, we have been in the “Wait” phase, which has halted all non-essential travel. During this phase, Visit Frederick has maintained a social media presence and sent out regular email communications to stay connected with businesses, the local community, and visitors. Visit Frederick is partnering with the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Frederick Partnership and the City & County on community messages. By offering “armchair travel” through virtual experiences, visitors and locals alike are inspired to dream about travel in the near future. Our team is closely monitoring our website’s analytics. On a weekly basis, we evaluate what people

are searching for and then offer similar content, either new or repurposed. Additionally, we are monitoring keyword searches related to Frederick County to observe traveler sentiments toward traveling again.

The various stages below indicate when and how Visit Frederick will adjust marketing messages, markets and advertising placements due to COVID-19.

	Wait	Wait - Visit Frederick
Traveler Truths	Quarantined & social distancing	
Traveler Motivators	Creating a new daily normal way of living and seeking outlets for the now	"Armchair travel", creating content that can be consumed from home.
Brand Roles	Acknowledgement of circumstances (national); Rallying around community (local)	Partner with the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Frederick Partnership, and City & County Economic Development all pushing out similar messages.
Purpose	Maintain top-of-mind awareness	Consistent social media presence.
Messaging	Inspirational and reuniting post-crisis; Support community stories; Book now travel later	Partner with members to create content that can be shared throughout channels. Primarily messaging to the local community.
Desired Action	Stay connected	Regular e-newsletter communication, maintain a social media schedule.

While we don't know exactly how long we will be in the "Wait" phase, we are already making preparations to pivot to the next phase, the "Ready" phase. When social distancing restrictions are eased in the "Ready" phase, we can transition to a message of planning ahead, while being sensitive to health and safety precautions. We can begin to offer future experiences where people can connect with and be in the presence of others. Visit Frederick encourages and inspires travelers to "Rediscover Frederick". Current traveler studies show that destinations within driving distance and visiting friends & family will be top of mind once some restrictions are lifted. Also, travelers have indicated they are more likely to visit a familiar place, rather than visiting someplace new. Our marketing team is taking this data into consideration as we develop our messaging, geared toward visitors and locals alike.

	Ready	Ready - Visit Frederick
Traveler Truths	Social distancing reduction and potential financial impacts	
Traveler Motivators	Returning to normal daily routines with renewed caution and experimenting with future travel plans	
Brand Roles	Understanding safety and health precautions; getaway solutions to break 'cabin fever'	Partner with local health officials on crafting a message to position Frederick as a "safe destination". Describe what local hotels, businesses are doing to ensure safety when visiting.
Purpose	Drive awareness, consideration, and visitation	
Messaging	Inspirational & informational (safety, rates, etc.); bookings	Transition to a message of planning ahead, while being sensitive to safety and health precautions. We can begin to offer future experiences where people can connect with and be in the presence of others. Visit Frederick encourages and inspires travelers to "Rediscover Frederick". Local audience within Frederick County.
Desired Action	Planning ahead and positive connections between traveler and brand	Begin paid social media (Facebook, Instagram, Google) with "Rediscover Frederick" message to areas 50 miles or less, including Frederick County. This plan is contingent upon any restrictions that might still be in place in these nearby locations that would affect the ability to travel.

In the set stage, Visit Frederick will pivot marketing to capture a local audience, in addition to the regional audience to begin to encourage overnight stays. Overnight stays are likely to come from road trip visitors.

	Set	Set - Visit Frederick
Traveler Truths	New normal	Visitors traveling to and within Maryland & Frederick County are aware of local social distancing expectations and masks are required.
Traveler Motivators	Adapting and proactively seeking an escape	Website search statistics show uptick in searches for "things to do" in Frederick County, such as dining, outdoor recreation and shopping.
Brand Roles	Encouraging travelers to get out and explore	Visit Frederick works closely with City & County officials to encourage locals and visitors to explore the area.
Purpose	Increase consideration & visitation	Slowly increase visitation message with a soft approach.
Messaging	Full-funnel	Encourage travel planning for the near future. With an emphasis on "last minute" planning or a short booking window of 0-21 days.
Desired Action	Get excited and making initial travel plans	Continue social media advertising and expand reach to 100-300 miles from home, encouraging overnight stays. Begin local print advertising that drives spending in restaurants and shops. Continue to encourage outdoor recreational activities. Advertising is inspirational in nature to nurture pent up demand and excitement to travel. Extend print and digital advertising to high-value target markets in the mid-Atlantic to encourage overnight visitation. Engage with travel journalists interested in covering the reopening of Frederick County. Use sponsored content articles to convey what is available to locals and visitors in Frederick County. Advertise local, small capacity events.

The “Go” phase indicates a return to travel at a normal cadence, without restrictions. Visit Frederick will monitor travel industry research and website research to reveal when our visitation has reached this stage.

	Go	Go - Visit Frederick
Traveler Truths	Traveling at a normal cadence	Visitors traveling to and within Maryland & Frederick County are aware of local health guidelines that may still be in place.
Traveler Motivators	Resuming normal travel plans	Travel booking and hotel occupancy returns to near or normal level pre-COVID.
Brand Roles	Connecting travelers with reasons to travel	
Purpose	Encourage visitation	Encourage Visitors to Frederick County for such activities as large festivals & events.
Messaging	Full-funnel	Marketing messages are offered to travel to Frederick County without any restrictions. All hotels, restaurants, shops & attractions are open and ready to receive visitors.
Desired Action	Booking travel	Booking windows return to pre-COVID level of approximately 30 days out from arrival.

Over the next several weeks and months, as we move through the Governor’s phased reopening, Visit Frederick will adjust our plans according to observed traveler sentiments. We will continue to share our plans with you as we are able to move into the remainder of the phases. For more information about resources for businesses & museums to reopen, [visit visitfrederick.org/partners/tourism-resources/financial-resources](https://visitfrederick.org/partners/tourism-resources/financial-resources).

Tourism Phased Roadmap to Recovery

	Wait	Ready	Set	Go
Traveler Truths	Quarantined & social distancing	Social distancing reduction and potential financial impacts	New normal	Traveling at a normal cadence
Traveler Motivators	Creating a new daily normal way of living and seeking outlets for the now	Returning to normal daily routines with renewed caution and experimenting with future travel plans	Adapting and proactively seeking an escape	Resuming normal travel plans
Brand Roles	Acknowledgement of circumstances (national); Rallying around community (local)	Understanding safety and health precautions; getaway solutions to break 'cabin fever'	Encouraging travelers to get out and explore	Connecting travelers with reasons to travel
Purpose	Maintain top-of-mind awareness	Drive awareness, consideration and visitation	Increase consideration & visitation	Encourage visitation
Messaging	Inspirational and reuniting post-crisis; Support community stories; Book now travel later	Inspirational & informational (safety, rates, etc.); bookings	Full-funnel	Full-funnel
Desired Action	Stay connected	Planning ahead and positive connections between traveler and brand	Get excited and making initial travel plans	Booking travel