



# 2022–2023 Business Plan

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**Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau**

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[www.visitRaleigh.com](http://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

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

## BASIC FACTS AND FIGURES

- There were 15.8 million visitors in 2021—up 22.6% from 2020. These international (0.2%) and domestic (99.8%) visitors directly spent \$2.341 billion on Wake County trips in 2021—up 39.7% from 2020.
- Average overnight party size was 2.7 in 2021; average day-trip party size was 2.5 in 2021.
- Overnight travel totaled approximately 8.37 million visitors in 2021. Some 79% of 2021 overnight travelers to Raleigh/Wake County are repeat visitors; 56% of overnight travelers had visited before in the prior 12 months.
- Per traveler spending was \$148 in 2021.

## VISITOR BREAKDOWN

- Average age of Raleigh/Wake County's overnight visitors is 44 years old (2021). Distribution is:
  - 18–24 years: 12%
  - 25–34 years: 27%
  - 35–44 years: 16%
  - 44–54 years: 17%
  - 55–64 years: 14%
  - 65+ years: 14%
- Overnight travelers to Raleigh/Wake County in 2021 have children in their household as follows:
  - no children under 18: 58%
  - any 13–17: 18%
  - any 6–12: 25%
  - any child under 6: 18%
- Overnight travelers to Raleigh/Wake County in 2021 have household sizes as follows:
  - 1 member: 26%
  - 2 members: 34%
  - 3 members: 18%
  - 4 members: 12%
  - 5+ members: 10%
- Overnight visitors' transportation used to get to Raleigh/Wake County (2021) is: 79% own car or truck – 20% plane – 17% online ride or taxi service – 12% rental car – 10% camper or RV – 8% train – 6% bus – 11% other.
- The most popular overnight travel seasons for Raleigh/Wake County (2021) are Oct. to Dec. (27%), followed by April to June (25%) and July to Sept. (25%). Day-trip visitors predominantly arrive in the fourth quarter as well.
- Household income distribution of Raleigh/Wake County's overnight travelers (2021) is: 49%, <\$49.9K; 16%, \$50–\$74.9K; 17%, \$75–\$99K; 14%, \$100–\$149.9K; 4%, \$150K+.
- Accommodation type for Raleigh/Wake County visitors (2021): 41% hotel – 29% home of friends/relatives – 16% motel – 12% resort hotel – 8% rented home/condo/apartment – 7% B&B – 5% campground/RV park.

## GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN

- Some 44% of Raleigh/Wake County's overnight visitors in 2021 came from North Carolina. Other top states (2021) are: 7%, Virginia; 7%, Florida; 6%, South Carolina; and 6%, New York.
- Some 67% of Raleigh/Wake County's day-trip visitors in 2021 came from North Carolina. Other top states (2021) are: 5%, Virginia; 4%, New York; 4%, Florida; and 4%, South Carolina.

**VISITOR ACTIVITIES AND MOTIVATORS**

- The main purpose provided by overnight visitors for a Raleigh/Wake County trip (2021) is: 62% visiting friends/relatives – 7% touring – 6% city trip – 6% special event – 3% outdoors – 5% other leisure – 1% conference/convention – 4% other business trip – 3% bleisure.
- By activity grouping, Raleigh/Wake County overnight travelers (2021) are participating in: 61% entertainment activities – 45% outdoor activities – 32% cultural activities – 22% sporting activities – 19% business activities.
- Specific activity and experience participation of Raleigh/Wake County overnight visitors (2021):
 

32%, shopping	13%, local parks/playgrounds
19%, sightseeing	12%, landmark/historic site
18%, attending celebration	12%, beach/waterfront
16%, bar/nightclub	11%, business meeting
14%, museum	11%, swimming

**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 2021 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&amp;B TAX REVENUE</u>
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
2020	44.2%	\$86.68	\$14,287,830	\$25,055,592
2021	57.2%	\$97.03	\$22,665,333	\$34,149,993

## Talking Points for the 2022–2023 Fiscal Year

Talking points recommended for GRCVB staff, board members, economic development allies, stakeholders and area hospitality partners during the 2022–2023 fiscal year are three themelines that are core to the Raleigh, N.C., destination brand platform.

### **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](http://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.

## 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 2022–2023 Business Plan, when departmental objectives, audiences and strategies directly relate to year-four implementation of any of the DSP priorities, they are marked with one or more of these symbols:

- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| ① Meetings & Conventions | ⑤ Individual Leisure      |
| ② Sports                 | ⑥ Destination Development |
| ③ Events                 | ⑦ Regional Demand Drivers |
| ④ Key Attractors         | ⑧ Quality of Place        |

## Business Planning for Post-Pandemic Tourism

Resulting from the international COVID-19 pandemic, coronavirus spread reached North Carolina and Raleigh in March 2020. Countywide visitor tracking analytics available to GRCVB quickly showed an almost total loss of area visitation as stay-at-home orders went into effect. By summer/fall 2020, the Bureau's initial rebuild and recovery plan for area tourism was underway, and calendar year 2021 recovery has been significant. Rebuild of overnight visitation, especially to pre-2020 tourism levels, continues as of this business planning cycle.

Global travel recovery insights and measurements of the U.S. travel industry, as well as of the broader economy, still fluctuate considerably as of this writing. However, the following departmental strategies and initiatives are based on COVID-19 conditions in March 2022, which indicate sustained tourism growth after the case spike from an omicron variant in Wake County and N.C. If area tourism forecasts should change by mid-year, GRCVB's strategies and initiatives will be revised and retargeted.

## 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 2022–2023 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. 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. ③
- 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. In 2022–2023, explore allies' willingness to participate in redevelopment of an area brand strategy for both tourism and other economic development uses. ③

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**Key to Destination 2028 symbols:** ① Meetings & Conventions, ② Sports, ③ Events, ④ Key Attractors, ⑤ Individual Leisure, ⑥ Destination Development, ⑦ Regional Demand Drivers, ⑧ Quality of Place



- With the Destination Technology Department, explore opportunities to further optimize and increase website usage by implementing an improved design for all site sections, based on a fresh usability study to be initiated in 2023.
- 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, and continue to position Raleigh competitively among its peer destinations in these areas.
- 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), advertising on the official website or the expanded Digital Asset Library, while also increasing contracted resources to help maintain partners’ event content at the highest levels. This year’s approach also includes collaborating with Destination Technology to implement a new Customer Relationship Management (destination database) software version, mitigating any impacts of the change on partner and stakeholder relations. ⑤, ⑧
- 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 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 compelling advertising, the Meetings Watch e-newsletter, official Meeting Planners Guides, enhanced bid books, video content, the visitRaleigh.com website section for Meetings & Conventions and visitRaleigh meetings insider blog.
- Through the content marketing manager role, continue to articulate and fill-in additional marketing strategy/tactics that can aid the four Meeting Districts beyond Downtown in selling to outside meeting professionals. ①

## **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. Continue to 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) 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. Contract to again publish an inspirational, content- and photography-heavy Official Visitors Guide for 2024 designed to send readers to visitRaleigh.com for more detailed trip-planning/conversion.
- Use the 2022–2023 Editorial Timeline, the Digital Content Marketing Strategy and the Social Media Marketing Strategy as guides to continually steer all tourism marketing tactics (Internet marketing activities, print advertising, 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. ③
- 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 (P1t) Inc., to begin serving visitors (tourists or groups) in uniquely brand-compliant ways. ⑤
- 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 Airbnb, IGLTA, 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. Continue to 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 compelling advertising, collateral, promotional products, social media marketing tactics, new video content 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.

## **MARKETING STRATEGIES, MARKETING RESEARCH**

- Update visitor volume and spending estimates through calendar year 2022 with research from Longwoods International, 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).
- Assist the Destination Technology and Administration Departments in evolving the Bureau's business intelligence platforms made possible by research and measurement vendors such as Arrivalist and Longwoods. Envision and support provision of some of this destination data in summary to partners/stakeholders, whether through regular reporting online or through other, individualized forms of dashboard access that could better inform the strategic decision-making on their part as well as the Bureau's own marketing decisions month-to-month.
- 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. Facilitate formal applications for the Signature Event Development Pilot Program. ⑥

## Public Relations and International Tourism Department

The Public Relations and International Tourism 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 tourism marketing and 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 tourism marketing and travel trade efforts include working with airlines, 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 foreign 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 and 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 (Economic Development Alliance partners), Research Triangle Regional Partnership and Wake County colleges and universities 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. ③
  - Enhance 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 an ongoing joint sales and marketing discussion 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.
- 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 theme lines.
- 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.

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## **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.
- Revise 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 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 2022–2023 Editorial Calendar of brand theme lines, tourism assets and campaigns.
- Update and maintain the 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 the assistant director of marketing and communications, senior content marketing manager and content marketing manager to promote positive media coverage garnered for the area—encouraging sharing.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES, GREATER RALEIGH SPORTS ALLIANCE**

- Maintain 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.
- Maintain sports and esports 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.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES, ADMINISTRATION**

- Sustain positioning of 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.
- Maintain 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. ⑥
- 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. ⑥

## **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, influencers, cable network producers and digital editors alike. 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 and events.
- Utilize social media as an integrated tool for media outreach, relationship development and targeted pitching.
- Oversee influencer marketing strategy working with the assistant director of marketing and communications and senior content marketing manager to foster relationships with digital influencers and develop strategic content partnerships.
- Work with the Destination Technology department to 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, influencers etc., and continue to respond to inquiries that come directly to the 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, as well as hold desk-side visits with key out-of-market media writing for travel, leisure and lifestyle outlets.
- Develop a public relations campaign around blockbuster exhibitions at area attraction partners and the opening of destination restaurants. ③

## **TRAVEL TRADE OBJECTIVES**

- Generate increased room-nights for Wake County lodging partners through selling via tour operators, bedbanks and other wholesalers working in the F.I.T. market.

## **TRAVEL TRADE STRATEGIES**

- Develop and execute a proactive sales training program with key tour operators, wholesalers and travel agencies to generate more F.I.T. in Wake County from both domestic and international travelers alike.

## **INTERNATIONAL TOURISM OBJECTIVES**

- Local Objectives:
  - Elevate awareness of the value of the international visitor market within Raleigh/Wake County. ⑦
  - 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). ⑦
  - Work with local partners and businesses to create single- and multi-day itineraries for tour operators and travel agencies to sell. ⑦
  - Collaborate with regional economic development groups such as RDU International Airport, Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, Visit North Carolina, Travel South USA, Research Triangle Regional Partnership, Wake County Economic Development, Wake County colleges and universities and others to develop strategies around increasing international bleisure travel (extending business travel into leisure time). ⑦
- Out-of-market Objectives:
  - Execute proactive media outreach programs 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. ⑦
  - 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. ⑦

## **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. ⑦
- Generate tour operator and receptive operator leads for hotels, attractions and other partners. ⑦
- Conduct trainings on Wake County market and product offering to international tour operators, wholesalers and travel agents. ⑦
- Develop and maintain effective networking relationships within the international travel trade industry representatives including tour operators, wholesalers, travel agents, media and airlines. ⑦
- Compile and maintain a database of international tour operators, wholesalers and travel agents within the CRM and create ongoing communications outreach strategy for contacts. ⑦
- 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. ⑦
- Work closely with Brand USA, Travel South USA and Visit N.C. Participate in strategic marketing and sales initiatives, campaigns, travel trade sales and media missions and hosted site visits/familiarization tours. Additionally, source applicable research from these groups to help drive overall departmental strategy. ⑦
- 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
- Revamp 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

## 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 all Wake County hotels, Raleigh Convention Center, PNC Arena and other county venues. 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 meetings destination in key feeder markets (Southeast, Mid-Atlantic, Midwest and Northeast).
- Execute convention sales strategies that align with the Destination Strategic Plan (DSP) for the Raleigh Convention Center and Wake County's five meeting districts. ❶
- Continue to position the Visit Raleigh sales teams as industry experts, trusted advisors, partners to meeting clients and sales professionals at meeting venues and hotels from a local and global perspective.
- 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.
- Enhance relationships with connectors locally and regionally to influence business with a strong regional presence to host meetings and events at the Raleigh Convention Center and Wake County meeting hotels. This will showcase the benefits of hosting events in their own community, generating direct economic impact.

### CONVENTION SALES STRATEGIES

- Advance the Wake County DSP prospect accounts to meet and exceed the five-year glidepath goals. ❶
- Evaluate and adjust business development strategies for DSP accounts to align with our current and projected market analysis. ❶
- Create a focus group of meeting professionals that represent all convention markets to identify new trends and discuss the evolving landscape of meetings and events post-pandemic to apply to our business development strategies. (Meeting professionals will represent corporate, state and national associations, multicultural and diversity and faith-based organizations.)
- Enhance social selling strategy, with targeted engagement, by investing in LinkedIn Professional to develop personal brands. The focus will be curating new relationships with key decision-influencers and strengthening our presence with existing connections. New initiatives will be evaluated utilizing demographic information and metrics obtained from LinkedIn.
- Activate resources from Wake County Economic Development's team to continue 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 a focus on organizational synergies, industry education and messaging. ❶
- Engage our list of local business and community leaders using Act-On technology to target top-tier multicultural and diversity champions, organization 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. The team will meet with influencers to gain support and intellectual capital on potential conferences.
- The Sales team will intentionally lead as industry influencers, by serving in leadership roles, board of directors and committee positions with international, national and regional industry organizations (e.g., MPI, PCMA, AENC, SGMP and NCBMP).

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**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



- Utilize data intelligence from Act-On to identify priority prospects from engagement scoring for targeting of future business.
- Execute hotel and facility site visits using destination drone footage and 360° tours. The site visits will be personalized and yield a positive ROI for our Wake County partners and the planners. ❶
- Position the Sales team as industry experts by serving on panels and for speaking opportunities with state, national and international organizations.
- Launch social media series in partnership with the Marketing and Communications Department, with messaging to the meeting professional audience, to promote the value of the CVB as a partner and to create awareness of Raleigh/Wake County as a viable meetings destination.
- Reimagine “sales calls” by creating interactive experiences for meeting planners in all geographic regions.
- Encapsulate all countywide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives in destination proposals, prospecting and business development conversations.
- Implement targeted quarterly engagement for full-service meeting hotels to continue to educate hoteliers on our role as a trusted partner and resource for business development, to include partner connect visits, educational opportunities, sales strategy, M&C PIXL training, best practices and business development opportunities.
- Leverage the destination brand and continue to curate passionate locals and signature experiences into client engagement tradeshows, client events, site inspections and sales missions, in order to showcase destination assets and to differentiate Raleigh/Wake County as a meetings destination. In an effort to provide collaboration, destination partners will also be invited to participate in the following:
  - client events in-market including the Midwest, Mid-Atlantic, Northeast and Southeast, in partnership with our local brand ambassadors around themes that reflect the destination brand;
  - themed familiarization tours and networking opportunities for potential clients from our markets around signature events, concerts, festivals and sporting events, in conjunction with our hospitality community, to showcase Raleigh’s entertainment, culinary and cultural scenes;
  - select industry-related tradeshows and events to build relationships that result in direct sales.
- Contribute relevant content of interest to meeting professionals and other members of the larger GRCVB community for use in Meetings Watch, GRCVB blog posts and social media accounts.

## 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

- Event and Sports Services: Use the event planning for meetings, conventions and sports events and the 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 AND SPORTS EVENT 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 the services provided will help to position GRCVB as a leader in the convention and meetings marketplace.
- Continue to build the department by leveling up to include sports event services, working toward department efficiencies, due to having all servicing in one team.
- Continue to host and support existing signature events by collaborating with rights-holders and local partners to strengthen the event or enhance the “event experience” through 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 repeat business. Work hard to develop programs that can achieve these goals without financial investment.
- Focus on best practices that build on the unique proposition that destination services teams provide—including services that continue to reflect best practices like services protocols, scope of services provided and timing of what is provided will be revised and revisited as needed to include but not limited to:
  - Continue use and tweaking of the Meeting Planners Digital Marketing Tool Kit, monitor successes and work with the Marketing and Communications Department to fine-tune as needed so that tools reflect current best practices for meetings and events.
  - Continue to revise our scope of services (what services a group receives based upon size of the group), to ensure that our services and resources are expended appropriately and most efficiently.
  - Keep “attendance promotion” as the driving force for our servicing efforts and ensure that the planners’ key indicators of success (total attendance and overall attendee satisfaction) are met.
  - Working with the Marketing and Communications and Convention Sales Departments, continue to revisit and revise the services we provide to groups outside of the convention center campus, considering new sales strategies focused on major hotel-anchored meeting districts. ❶
- Revisit the services we provide to weddings, reunions and group tours, as well as those provided as referral bookings (groups that book directly with venues and hotels and come to us for servicing); the goal is to service them effectively and efficiently yet preserve our resources for groups that yield higher ROI. Continue to focus and refine tools that are “grab and go.”
- Continue to grow and rebound the CVB’s Volunteer Ambassador program by connecting with key partners (museums, attractions etc.) to discuss and collaborate on utilizing a shared pool of ambassadors, not only to increase our number of volunteers but also to meet the needs of both organizations while providing them with a variety of skill sets and experience.
- Maintain participation in local host organizing committees (LOCs) as a key value to local host partners and local connectors who bring conventions, meetings and events home to Raleigh. ❶

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- 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. Reignite and maximize our relationship with Activate Good, a non-profit volunteer organization, for servicing the needs of our groups to provide “voluntourism” or corporate social responsibility “plug and play” options, while also helping to promote the giving back opportunities our partners are developing. We will focus on developing relationships for opportunities that support local needs either on-site or virtually. ❶, ❸
- Maintain a high standard for convention and sport servicing by increasing the awareness of and the return on investment that stellar event servicing yields. Leverage our involvement in the Event Service Professionals Association (ESPA) to provide shared learning opportunities and more awareness of and appreciation for all convention service manager (CSM) and event manager (EM) roles, at all intersects (hotels, venues and our own Destination Services team).
- Work with the Destination Technology Department to improve our reporting and tracking:
  - Continue implementation of use of uniform traces for all primary convention group and sport servicing functions to result in better and more accurate reporting of the ROIs we provide.
  - Work to automate a consolidated Arriving Groups and Sports Event Calendar to include key internal and external partner servicing contacts needed to service conventions and events more efficiently with all information presented in one place. This search tool will be our standard automated report used and shared with our CSMs and EMs at quarterly meetings with the Raleigh Convention Center (RCC).
  - Continue hotel room-night tracking and pick-up following all key sporting events, to wit (1) verify contracted room-nights and (2) utilize Arrivalist’s technology to verify uncontracted rooms for overall room demand in-market, for final direct economic impact. ❷
  - Automate reporting of end-of-month service KPIs (# of planning visits, pre/post-cons, attendance promotions)
- To stay relevant and provide sought-after resources, continue our partnership with our third-party housing company, Orchid Events, a leader in convention and event housing services for groups needing or requesting this service.
- Grow the effectiveness of our event service provider partnerships for returning events post-pandemic (which have an increased need to have strong event service provider partners) by strengthening our relationships with them:
  - Continue working with the Marketing and Communications Department to help recruit service providers for our local Event Services & Suppliers Listing (ESL), which lists providers that offer key services and resources that convention, meeting and sports event planners would benefit from.
  - Working in conjunction with Convention Sales, host an inaugural Service Provider Summit targeted to local event service providers. With COVID-related impacts and staff displacement, it’s essential to bring partners back together to refresh our relationships and understand their business objectives; this will provide essential services to our mutual event and meeting planners for sustainable success.
  - Continue to support the Marketing Department on an ongoing audit of all partner accounts and contacts.
  - Work cross-departmentally to encourage local minority/women-owned business enterprise (MWBE) and LGBTQ-owned businesses to maximize their listings by self-identifying in either or both categories so these may be displayed and searched for online through the visitRaleigh.com search tools.
- Work with Sales, GRSA and PR to target three to four convention and sports groups to maximize visibility and provide positive testimony through GRCVB social media and E-newsletters.
- Provide specific destination content to event and meeting attendees for the purpose of increasing attendee satisfaction and overall positive attendance-building for events and meetings.
- Work with Marketing team to develop an “Introduction to Destination Services” video for new destination services teams at hotel partners to rebuild relationships after staff displacement during the pandemic.

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

- Continue to review and revise all VIC standard operating procedures (SOPs) to reflect best practices for health and safety operations for our visitors and staff, post-pandemic.
- Ensure that the VIC space reflects the Raleigh, N.C., brand by:
  - working cooperatively with Marketing to promote signature experiences to individuals and groups alike; ❹, ❺

- coordinating efforts with Marketing and Destination Technology Departments to maximize use of updated display monitors in the VIC, to promote attractions, calendar of events, restaurants and arriving downtown convention and sports groups.
- Grow VIC visitation and effectiveness in these ways:
  - Revisit local partnerships for development of unique programming/activations and visibility.
  - Increase awareness of the VIC by overhauling the current look and feel by adding new full window-cling images with informational QR codes and external lighting to help direct visitors.
  - Reestablish relationships with other visitor centers to include state welcome centers, Capital Area Visitor Services etc., by actively engaging the personnel in these centers for ongoing partnerships.
  - Continue efforts to convey that downtown Raleigh, where the VIC is located, is an area that is safe for visitors, by continuing relationships with Raleigh Convention Center, Raleigh Marriott City Center and Sheraton Raleigh Hotel security teams, as well as Raleigh Police Department and Downtown Raleigh Alliance ambassadors.
  - Work with Marketing and Communications to help identify key attractions and partners (local visitors centers, welcome centers, major museums) to request to promote the VIC on their websites to increase VIC visitation and awareness and promote its “one-stop shop” destination assistance.
  - Work with the Marketing and Communications Department on any special promotions (like grand openings of new exhibits, new attractions).

## **DESTINATION SERVICES STRATEGIES, PARTNER RELATIONS**

- Continue to support partners who are rebuilding staffs post-pandemic. Use customer service as a key strategy for excellent hospitality delivery by encouraging use of existing training programs that impact experience delivery including Tourism U retraining and implementation.
- Support the event management development initiatives of GRCVB by continuing to serve on City of Raleigh’s Events Task Force. ❶, ❸, ❹
- Continue our proactive Visitors Guide delivery to local hotels and area attractions as well as key CVB partners, when necessary. (This valued program has a GRCVB representative regularly onsite with these key partners and brings the materials to them.) 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.)
- Continue to provide visitor information (visitor guides and maps) to hosts of short-term rentals, by working in partnership with GRCVB’s Marketing team, to maximize these properties’ relationship with City of Raleigh especially regarding short-term rental policies.
- Seek partnerships and work with other CVB departments to renew relationships with the offsite venue offerings for our destination, get updated on their current safety practices and reestablish relationships with the staffs of each. ❶

## 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 Greater Raleigh.

### 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. ②

### PRIORITIES AND NEW INITIATIVES FOR 2022–2023

1. Sales efforts will continue to focus primarily on regional and national events, outdoor events and participant-driven events, along with retaining existing annual events
2. Hosting major events including visitRaleigh.com Showcase Series, NCAA Men’s and Women’s College Cups, City of Oaks Volleyball Challenge, NHL Stadium Series, NCAA DI Women’s Lacrosse Championship, USA Baseball’s National High School Invitational and more
3. Next steps with NCAA Championships awarded for 2022–2026 (13 Championship events); lead and coordinate efforts with our partners for the next NCAA 4-year bid cycle (expected to get underway in 2023)
4. Continue advancing Destination Strategic Plan initiatives including communication with Wake County Parks & Rec directors and MOU guidelines for multi-municipality events and marketing ②
5. Managing and actively vetting esports opportunities that align with the goals and capabilities of our venues ②
6. Tradeshow participation and sponsorship activation pre- and post-show
7. Advocate and provide planning support for the multitude of major, new sports facility projects currently underway in municipalities throughout Wake County ②
8. Emphasis on online platforms (website and social media) and increased focus on video/new content
9. Leveraging PR outreach—messaging to community, local media and national industry publications
10. Utilizing Event Impact Calculator (EIC) for sporting events

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## GRSA STRATEGIES

- Attend national tradeshows to meet one-on-one with event owners and rights-holders and to promote Raleigh and Wake County as a premier sports event destination.
- 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 including esports, cricket, disc golf, BMX, Ultimate, table tennis; (4) state, regional, national and, in some cases, international markets; and (5) multi-year event opportunities (incl. NCHSAA State Championships and various youth, collegiate and amateur events).<sup>2</sup>
- Prospect strategically for new business, primarily through existing contacts and client relationships and by attending tradeshows, but also via "events available" databases and industry online publications
- Research and evaluate potential events (in coordination with our host partners) to determine which ones are the "right fit" for Greater Raleigh.
- 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/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.
- 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, Triangle Volleyball Club, Town of Cary, NCFC Youth, USA Baseball and many more.
- 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.
- 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.
- Maintain active membership and leadership roles with the Sports ETA, NC Sports Association and NC Sports Leadership Council.

## Destination Technology Department

The Destination Technology Department is responsible for all of the Bureau's cloud-based software solutions, technology infrastructure, web development, data analytics, 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 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.
- Provide staff with business intelligence via data dashboards and data analysis on an as-needed basis for event attendee-by-ZIP-code or Event Impact Calculator (EIC) analysis.

### DESTINATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIES

- Work with all departments this fiscal and next fiscal year to incorporate Arrivalist data reporting into internal staff processes and meeting planner and partner interactions in various ways. For example, the Sales team meeting with area hotels will be able to provide hoteliers with monthly or yearly information on origin markets, demographics and cross-visitation of their guests. Also, working with marketing and communications, Destination Technology will be able to provide device movement data reports for the partners on the Raleigh Beer Trail, adding another layer of data validation to this visitor incentive program. Also, Destination Technology working with Sales, GRSA and services will be able to provide event planner clients with the cross-visitation, day-of-visit and tracked origin markets of their attendees. We will continue to evaluate device movement metrics for all booked events and store this data in the CRM for future reference.
- Close to the end of the fiscal, Destination Technology and Marketing and Communications Departments will work with a market research firm to conduct research study on the usability of visitRaleigh.com. This will help identify any new opportunities for the official tourism website, related to technology innovations, in desktop or mobile devices' interaction with our website.

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- Close to the end of this fiscal year, initiate a new reporting product for pace reporting. Next fiscal year Destination Technology will continue to support destination pace reporting to area hotel sales and management; this will for the long-term help to identify needs periods, giving GRCVB the opportunity to implement a more proactive and aligned booking strategy with our stakeholders. The product also includes short-term reports with formatting most used by hotels, allowing them to easily understand GRCVB's production in relation to their own pace production. Additionally on a quarterly basis, Destination Technology will provide an industry-wide key findings report from Oxford Economics.
- Deploy new educational cybersecurity platform to empower staff to be more vigilant and aware of ransomware and spoofing practices. Assess current enterprise-system security to identify areas that are lacking controls and empower staff with training to be more aware of potential cyber-threats either external or internal via network.
- Work strategically with the Destination Services Department to review new metrics for tracking additional services goals. The Destination Technology Department will develop and align these processes with custom CRM functionality, allowing the Services team to track data with automated reports via the CRM and dashboards and also adding these new metrics to the monthly reporting to staff and stakeholders. In addition, support the Services team with an improved, custom CRM services module to house post-event survey data. Work with them on new dashboards to visualize data for meeting planner feedback survey for key data insights.
- Work with Sales, GRSA and Services to evaluate and align on new or updated centralized reports that can work for all workflow processes to align internal and external data communication, accompanied with dashboards to help staff with oversight and decision making.
- Continue to improve and support online bid proposals used by PR, Sales, Services and GRSA staff with event planners and journalists. Work with Marketing and Communications on updating the platform with the latest video and destination content. Support integrations with current platforms like Act-On, user-generated content, Threshold 360 and video capabilities. This will provide strategic lead-scoring capabilities on embedded links and planner usage of virtual bid books. Assist Marketing and Sales teams to incorporate sales videos into bids.
- Explore a more integrated booking platform. Work with Marketing and Communications and Destination Services Departments to technologically empower area partners to manage promotion of experiences that will inspire memorable visits; this includes building healthy, new relationships with area tour providers, non-profits or entrepreneurs/small businesses and creating new online/offline experience fulfillment strategies and data-reporting processes. With all departments, strategically deploy a destination experience engine to help manage, guide our visitors and help track visits and consumption with partnership.
- 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 2022-2023 with all Bureau departments; collaborate with all departments to maintain and support all destination vertical markets through these software solutions.
- Continue to make sure our partners and stakeholders and leisure visitors are receiving our communications by monitoring email deliverability to ensure systems are in alignment. Work with all departments to continue educate and review contact suppression CRM data to make sure we are reaching our partner and key stakeholders.
- 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 by using Act-On and Outlook plugin for customized, tailored communications.
- Continue to support PR, Convention Sales, GRSA and Destination Services Departments on using the Threshold 360 platform to assist in familiarization tours and site inspections—empowering these departments to create and share custom itineraries with 360° tours and custom videos. Work with all departments to make sure data for partners is up to date and integrations with our website and bid book process via SendSites is aligned.
- Support GRSA, 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.
- 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. Work with all departments to improve real-time dashboards for Act-On email tracking and behavioral scores' trends for DSP prospects and partner contacts, which will be used as a tool to provide to guide strategic business decisions utilizing the data contained in the Bureau CRM and interaction with Act-on. ❶



- Work closely with the PR Department 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 PR and International Tourism and Marketing and Communications Departments on dynamic international content for visitRaleigh.com based on targeted localization.
- Continue to support and work with all departments on a Bureau-wide marketing communications automation platform, with 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 and API integrations. Continue support and build out functionality via integrated CMS for visitRaleigh.com and raleighsports.org.
- Continue to manage and support 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 the marketing communications automation platform, Authorize.net, CVENT and Mint+, Destinations International and pace reporting (FuturePace).
- 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.
- Maintain and support user-generated content feeds via Instagram, Twitter, website and widgets for the official Visitor Information Center and convention groups.
- Support staff on social media applications, social management tools. Monitor Google Analytics and manage Search Engine Marketing (SEM)/Pay-Per-Click (PPC)/YouTube, troubleshoot and improve visibility in search engine results.
- Manage and support the digital asset management system, Visit Raleigh Studio, allowing for visual content to be accessed not only internally by employees but also externally by media, partners, agencies, clients and even the public.
- Continue to support devices that will enable staff to interact more effectively with sports event organizers, meeting planners and partners.
- Support all staff and partners with the CRM's DSP EIC tool, streamlining the data collection process from Bureau staff and partners with data visualizations. Work with staff on measurements allowing us to maintain traveler conversion, profiling and segmentation data through a research platform.

## 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 (BDF) for increasing citywide convention and tradeshow business at RCC.
- Continue serving on the committee with the City of Raleigh and Wake County to review the future of the PNC Arena to determine future enhancements and development around the existing complex or options to build a new facility.
- 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. ❷, ❸, ❹
- Continue to be the lead resource to all Wake County municipalities and facility partners for assisting in the calculation of projected direct economic impact of meetings, events and festivals using the Tourism Economics' meeting, sports and festival Event Impact Calculator, along with Arrivalist, ORDA, and survey intercept measurement resources managed by the GRCVB. ❸
- Establish the data output from economic impact projections via the Event Impact Calculator as the countywide standard for the measurement of "highest and best" use of inter-local public funding for proposed future tourism infrastructure or the expansion/enhancement to existing facilities, attractions and competition sites.
- 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. ❹
- Continue to provide data, input and support regarding future air service and other local transportation channels. ❺
- 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 2022-2023 Business Plan.

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**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, ❸ Quality of Place

- 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 pace, 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
  - City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Dix Master Plan
  - Town/municipal sports and leisure tourism master plans
  - Downtown Raleigh Alliance Master Plan Advisory Board
  - Imagine Wake Alliance for Affordable Housing
  - Vision Wake -Quality of Place Initiative

Also, the Destination 2028 Blue Ribbon Task Force will meet periodically in FY 2023 and will continue the advocacy and implementation of the 10-year DSP.

- 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, US Travel Association, 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 four-three implementation mode, a continued strategic focus will guide the scope of services delivered by one contractor position within the GRCVB to achieve year-three implementation goals related to esports event activations.
- Continue to work with EDPNC and NC Department of Commerce on the implementation of the Esports Production Grant process and the planning of the Esports Production and Performance Center at NCSU. (Add tactics to GRSA section)
- Continue to identify signature event fund opportunities which will have measurable and significant impact on overnight visitation for the county through blockbuster exhibitions, festivals and competitions.
- Continue to work with national and state organizations such as US Travel and the NC Restaurant and Lodging Association to address the labor shortage in the hospitality sector.
- Work with national and local partners along with staff to ensure GRCVB is implementing and following best practices regarding diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Work with Wake County Economic Development and Wake County to create and execute a structured plan to help identify and address a county-wide vision to improve quality of place.

## **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 4,200+ 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 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.

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 travel destination.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES**

- Educate locals (living or working in Wake County) on the mission, shared value/benefits and relevance of tourism and of the successful 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 stakeholders and partners with similar or overlapping missions, bringing them into the overall fold of tourism-related economic development (developing product).

### **TARGET AUDIENCES**

- Target audiences for 2022–2023:
  - Area alliance and chamber executives
  - Destination 2028 Blue Ribbon Task Force
  - GRCVB Board of Directors
  - GRSA Advisory Board
  - Key corporate/institutional leaders in the Raleigh area
  - Municipal elected officials and leaders
  - State and federal elected officials
  - University leaders from the area
  - Wake County Hospitality Alliance members
  - News media
- Other important community audiences include:
  - Area residents at large
  - Local LGBTQ and other diverse communities of residents/workers
  - Workforce from non-hospitality industries

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

- Participate in work sessions or provide updates annually with all Wake County-based town councils and chambers of commerce. 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.
- Participate in an annual work session with the Raleigh City Council and with the Wake County Board of Commissioners and their management staffs to discuss and provide updates on tourism development initiatives and strategies.

- Based on results from a research project conducted with 2019–2020 target audiences, refine/expand and 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.
- Finalize an Advocate Relationship Management (ARM) system within a new Community Engagement Strategy module of the Bureau's existing CRM system, to better document target stakeholders' attributes, their participation in/exposure to our community engagement tactics and their past tourism advocacy efforts.
- Enact a year-long outreach plan with identified stakeholder-advocates according to their preferred method of communication and with specific tactics determined in follow-up to "Tourism at the Table" survey work completed March–May 2022.
- Explore formation of an annual advocacy plan committee, possibly comprised of Bureau staff, board members or other leaders external to the Bureau, to identify specific advocacy needs, create an "ask" for those needs and match resources/advocates to those upcoming asks (through use of the ARM system etc.).
- 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](http://visitRaleigh.com/tourismmatters) that contains talking points, Tourism Talk blog posts, educational/training materials and white papers.
- 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.

## Summary of GRCVB Measurable Performance Objectives

<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>2021 GOAL</b>	<b>2021 ACTUAL</b>	<b>2022 GOAL</b>	<b>VARIANCE FROM ACTUAL</b>
1. Wake County Occupancy	55.4%	57.2%	64%	12%
2. Wake County ADR	\$87.63	\$97.03	\$107.19	10%
3. Wake County Occupancy Tax	\$15,716,613	\$22,665,333	\$27,683,686	22%
4. Wake County PFB Tax	\$26,057,815	\$34,149,993	\$36,935,514	8.2%

<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>21-22 GOAL</b>	<b>21-22 ACTUAL</b>	<b>22-23 GOAL</b>	<b>VARIANCE FROM GOAL</b>
5. Group Definite Bookings	242	303	254	5%
6. Group Definite Room-Nights	201,772	223,095	211,860	5%
7. Definite Economic Impact	\$129.7 million	\$144 million	\$136.1 million	4.9%
8. Group Leads	562	792	578	2.8%
9. Group Leads Room-Nights	426,746	562,788	439,548	3%
10. Economic Impact of Leads	\$308.4 million	\$312.3 million	\$308.4 million	—
11. Website Sessions	2,900,000	4,034,692	3,538,000	22%
12. Net Reach/Impressions from Earned Media	450 million	586.8 million	500 million	11%
13. Significant Placements	64	77	70	9.4%
14. Speakers Bureau Presentations	50	52	51	2%
15. Groups Serviced*	348	307	300	-14%
16. Visitors at VIC*	6,867	5,392	5,000	-27%
17. Visitor Requests Fulfilled*	6,923	3,674	4,250	-39%
18. Visitors Guide Delivery Service Guides/Maps Delivered**	29,925	42,552	35,910	20%
19. Visitors Guide Delivery Service Partners Serviced**	297	443	445	50%

\* COVID-19 impacts, especially the case spike from an omicron variant, dampened the forecast and subsequent recovery goal.

\*\* Visitors Guide Delivery Service part-time employee cut in March 2020; service resumed Fall 2021.

## **Industry Leadership Positions Held by GRCVB Staff**

### **DANA CANBY**

- Co-Chair, Community Activation Committee, IBMA World of Bluegrass Local Organizing Committee

### **TORI COLLINS**

- Co-Chair, Greater Raleigh Esports Local Organizing Committee

### **MARC DOONER**

- Community Service Committee, Philadelphia Chapter, Professional Convention Management Association
- Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Greater New York Chapter, Meeting Professionals International

### **SCOTT DUPREE**

- Chair, North Carolina Sports Leadership Council
- Government Relations Committee, North Carolina Sports Association
- Board of Directors, North Carolina Baseball Museum

### **DENNIS EDWARDS**

- Board of Directors, U.S. Travel Association
- Treasurer, North Carolina Travel & Tourism Coalition
- Board of Directors, Regional Transportation Alliance
- Chair, Tourism & Business Travel, RTA
- Board of Directors, Wake County Economic Development
- Board of Directors, Downtown Raleigh Alliance
- Advisory Board, School of Hospitality Leadership, East Carolina University
- Liaison, The Centennial Authority
- Dorothea Dix Conservancy Board
- Litter Task Force, North Carolina Department of Transportation
- Board of Directors, North Carolina Travel & Tourism
- Board of Directors, Triangle Trails Initiative
- Advocacy Committee, Destinations International

### **JONATHAN FREEZE, CDME**

- Professional Development Committee, Destinations International
- Faculty, Certified Destination Management Executive Program, Destinations International

### **LOREN GOLD**

- Convention Sales & Services Committee, Destinations International
- MINT+ Steering Committee, Destinations International
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee, Destinations International
- Co-Chair, Greater Raleigh Esports Local Organizing Committee
- Tri-Chair, IBMA World of Bluegrass Local Organizing Committee
- Advisory Board, Hospitality START, Wake Technical Community College
- Advisory Board, Simpleview, Inc.
- Sales Innovation Roundtable, 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
- Membership Committee, Destinations International
- Past Presidents Council, MPI-Carolinas Chapter
- Scholarship and Awards Committee, MPI-Carolinas Chapter
- Scholarship and Awards Committee, Association Executives of North Carolina

**GRAY HENDERSON, CGSP®**

- Grants Panel, City of Raleigh Arts Commission

**JESSICA HOLT**

- Public Relations and Communications Task Force, Destinations International
- Board of Directors, Raleigh Sister Cities
- International Business Committee, Wake County Economic Development

**STEPHEN JACKSON, CMP**

- Emerging Professionals, Capital Chapter, Professional Convention Management Association
- Membership Committee, Potomac Chapter, Meeting Professionals International

**TAMMY JEFFRIES, CGSP®**

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, Event Service Professionals Association
- Education Committee, ESPA
- Leadership Committee, ESPA
- Education Committee, Meeting Professionals International–Carolinas Chapter
- Co-Chair, Community Activation Committee, IBMA World of Bluegrass Local Organizing Committee
- Co-Chair, Hospitality Committee, LEAD® Local Organizing Committee
- City of Raleigh Special Events Task Force

**NICOLE KESHLER**

- Communications Committee, Professional Convention Management Association
- Young Professionals Network Task Force, Programs, Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce

**CHRISTINA LASKORUNSKY**

- Co-Chair, Volunteer Committee, IBMA World of Bluegrass Local Organizing Committee

**JASON PHILBECK, STS**

- Chair, Board Development Committee, North Carolina Sports Association
- Local Organizing Committee, NCAA Men's and Women's College Cups
- Local Organizing Committee, NCAA DI Women's Lacrosse Championship

**KATHRYN SHORT**

- Young Professionals Network Task Force, Membership, Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce

**VIMAL VYAS**

- MINT+ Steering Committee, Destinations International
- CMS User Group, Simpleview, Inc.

**LORETTA YINGLING, CMP**

- Membership Committee, Chicago Area Chapter, Meeting Professionals International
- Awards Committee, Greater Midwest Chapter, Professional Convention Management Association
- Membership Engagement Committee, Greater Midwest Chapter, PCMA
- Liaison for the Inclusion, Diversity & Equity Task Force, Membership Engagement Committee, Greater Midwest Chapter, PCMA
- Co-Chair, Holiday Showcase Tradeshow Advisory Group, Association Forum
- Business Model Focus Group, Association Forum