



Rowan County Tourism: 2025-2026 Program of Work

Goals & Objectives



Destination Promotion

Drive visitation through targeted destination marketing, digital channels and implementation of new tourism products to reach regional audiences.



Tourism Partnerships

Foster relationships with key tourism partners to create destination awareness, strengthen existing success, and expand the tourism market.



Overnight Visitation

Emphasize key attractions, events, and Stay & Play packages to boost and promote extended stays in Rowan County.



Destination Development

Complete current capital projects and initiate new infrastructure and placemaking efforts to enhance visitor experiences and support tourism growth.

Additional objectives include maintaining regular communication with media members, promoting the F&M Bank Historic Trolley System, managing relationships with groups hosting events, increasing community engagement, and maintaining the Paul E. Fisher Gateway Building as a professional environment through proactive maintenance and planned renovations.

Destination Marketing & Digital Infrastructure

Multi-Platform Marketing

Execute year-round destination awareness campaigns across Facebook, Instagram, X, lifestyle blogs and through digital influencers to highlight Rowan County's original experiences. These highly visual, story-driven campaigns will promote seasonal attractions, signature events, and unique local offerings with the goal of achieving a 10% annual increase in digital engagement and reaching at least 1 million impressions annually.

- Develop co-op marketing with tourism partners to amplify awareness of unique events
- Create Stay & Play Packages targeting 575 bookings (835 room nights)
- Support at least 25 partners annually through the Tourism Support Program

Digital Growth Targets

Enhance digital infrastructure to support overall marketing strategy with specific performance targets for 2025:

- 532,000 website pageviews (+3.55%) and 237,000 users (+5.55%)
- Grow social media following to 47,000 (+6.19%) across platforms
- Secure influencer content partnerships generating 2.5M+ views
- Publish 95+ blog posts with 60,900 views (+17.4%)
- Increase booking platform conversions to 600 reservations (+9.96%)

Digital marketing efforts will focus on SEO enhancements, content optimization, influencer partnerships, and reallocation of resources from underperforming channels to high-ROI strategies.

Branding, PR & Group Sales



Be an Original™ Brand

Adhere to established brand guidelines across all materials to ensure consistency and brand integrity while using the brand as the cornerstone of all messaging.



Partner Engagement

Make 65+ partner visits to strengthen relationships, distribute quarterly stakeholder newsletters, and develop compelling press releases to generate media coverage.



Group Travel

Cultivate strategic partnerships targeting groups aligned with Rowan County's authentic assets, providing customized support for venue recommendations, logistics, and hospitality.



Coordinated Promotion

Align group sales with PR efforts to communicate recruitment efforts, bookings, meeting locations, and trolley services to stakeholders.

The Be an Original™ brand will continue to position Rowan County as a distinctive destination while championing the vitality of the local tourism industry. Through robust digital marketing, story-driven content, and strategic partnerships, these efforts aim to foster destination pride, industry recognition, and increased visitation from both leisure and group travelers.

Visitor Services & Trolley Operations

Enhanced Visitor Center Experience

Rowan County Tourism will continue providing comprehensive visitor services through both traditional and digital channels. Key initiatives include:

- Annual evaluation of print and digital collateral to explore consolidation opportunities
- Launch of a fully digital downtown Salisbury walking tour with interactive map integration
- Installation of user-friendly digital lobby displays
- Maintaining quick fulfillment of visitor inquiries by mail and email
- Complete renovation of the Visitors Center lobby by the end of 2025

Staff will ensure a welcoming environment with accurate information on attractions, events, and points of interest while supporting the operational oversight of both the Visitors Center and the Paul E. Fisher Gateway Building.

F&M Bank Trolley System

The trolley system will continue as a premier destination experience for tours, weddings, private groups, and special events with ambitious growth targets:

- Expanding themed programming through theatrical, history, holiday, and urban-themed tours
- Strengthening partnerships with key stakeholders like F&M Bank and Novant Health
- Targeting 200 private rentals for the year (8.7% increase)
- Implementing targeted digital marketing campaigns to promote trolley services

Through strategic programming and partnerships, the trolley system aims to increase overall ridership and engagement while serving as a unique attraction that differentiates Rowan County's visitor experience.

Marketing Trends & Destination Development

Evolving Marketing Strategies

Rowan County Tourism will align with emerging industry trends to enhance brand visibility and strengthen its position as a leading regional destination:

- Leveraging authentic influencer partnerships to tell the destination's story
- Maintaining a streamlined hotel booking process within the website
- Focusing on storytelling rather than transactional messaging
- Promoting unique, authentic experiences rather than generic "something for everyone" messaging
- Targeting family travel across various dynamics, from parents with children to multigenerational travelers
- Fostering a connected, collaborative community among tourism partners

By sharing real stories and highlighting authentic experiences, these efforts aim to build stronger emotional connections and increase recognition of Rowan County as a memorable travel destination.

Infrastructure & Visitor Experience Improvements

Significant investments will enhance tourism infrastructure and visitor-facing tools:

- Complete redesign of the Visit Rowan County, NC website to improve user experience and accessibility
- Implementation of countywide wayfinding signage, including downtown directional signs, welcome signs, and interstate signs
- Completion of the Railwalk Development project in Downtown Salisbury by Q3
- Renovations to the Paul E. Fisher Gateway Building lobby by end of 2025
- Annual vendor and contract review to reduce costs and streamline services

These capital projects and digital improvements will support tourism growth by enhancing navigation, creating pedestrian-friendly spaces, and providing better access to information.

Gateway Building Management & Operations



Facility Excellence

Maintain the Paul E. Fisher Gateway Building with a focus on operational excellence, tenant satisfaction, and facility preservation through quarterly and annual maintenance tasks including HVAC inspections, pressure washing, window cleaning, landscaping, and pest control.



Administrative Oversight

Conduct annual reviews of vendor contracts and tenant leases to ensure quality service, cost-effectiveness, and compliance, with updated agreements provided in May and biannual building partner meetings to discuss facility needs.



Operational Efficiency

Streamline internal workflows, digitize office records by Q3 2025 to reduce physical storage by 50%, define performance standards for core processes, and implement quarterly vendor review cycles to maintain value-driven partnerships.



Meeting Space Management

Ensure efficient scheduling of meeting spaces with clear visibility and booking options through the Visit Rowan County website, providing community access while maintaining a professional environment for all users.

These operational initiatives will be supported by enhanced team communication protocols, regular capital asset management through annual inventory and evaluation, and ongoing facility readiness inspections at least once per month to ensure a welcoming environment for visitors and tenants alike.

Financial Management & Administration



Budget Oversight

Monitor annual tourism budget with monthly reviews to maintain alignment with financial goals



Transparent Reporting

Ensure 100% on-time submission of monthly, quarterly, and year-end financial summaries



Process Improvement

Reduce manual entry by 25% through payment system automation



Strategic Analysis

Develop mid-year projections to support informed decision-making

Financial goals prioritize fiscal responsibility, transparent reporting, and integrated practices that enable strategic growth. Additional initiatives include conducting annual insurance and benefit provider reviews by Q4 2025, increasing ACH and digital payments to improve reconciliation speed, and providing comprehensive support for grants and sponsorships through accurate tracking and reporting.

These financial and administrative frameworks will reinforce the foundational structure of Rowan County Tourism operations, supporting programming and marketing initiatives while ensuring resources are allocated efficiently to maximize impact and drive tourism growth throughout the county.