

Destination 2028

Across 10 years (2019-2028), the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau (Visit Raleigh) is leading the charge to fully implement Wake County's **Destination Strategic Plan**.

OVERARCHING GOAL:

Increase total visitation to 21.7 million by 2028 as a result of implementing recommendations from the countywide strategic planning effort in 2017-2018.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- **Wake County Destination Strategic Plan (DSP): A 10-Year Tourism Plan for Wake County** was completed in 2018 by JLL's Tourism and Destinations advisory team
- The DSP report contains:
 - an executive summary, background and 2018 state of the Wake County tourism economy
 - eight chapters covering new priority recommendations
 - back matter
 - 12 municipality plans and appendices

Increase Visitor Flows Across Three Channels:

- Conventions/Meetings
- Sports
- Leisure

Eight Priorities of Focus for Wake County to Grow Tourism (Eight DSP Report Chapters):

- Meetings and Conventions
- Sports
- Events
- Key Attractors
- Individual Leisure
- Destination Development
- Regional Demand Drivers
- Quality of Place

ABOUT THE 2017-2018 PLANNING PROCESS:

- JLL engaged a broad range of Wake County stakeholders:
 - 1,800+ individuals engaged
 - 1,044 resident survey responses
 - 380 stakeholder survey responses
 - 36 focus groups
 - 11 steering committee meetings
- A steering committee with public- and private-sector members oversaw the yearlong planning process with JLL and GRCVB:
 - **John Q. Adams**, Red Hat
 - **Dan Ault**, Town of Cary
 - **Jennifer Bosser**, City of Raleigh Economic Development
 - **Jason Cannon**, Town of Wake Forest
 - **Angela Caraway, MMP**, TCMG, Inc.
 - **Deanna Crossman**, The Mayton Inn
 - **Robert Doreauk**, AT&T
 - **Katharine Eberhardt**, North Carolina Football Club Youth
 - **Sherry Fadool**, Triangle Volleyball Club
 - **Jim Greene**, City of Raleigh
 - **Scott Manning**, North Carolina State University
 - **Jennifer Martin**, Greater Raleigh Merchants Association
 - **Eleanor Oakley**, United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County
 - **Christine Quante**, Holly Springs Chamber of Commerce
 - **Ian Sauer**, Summit Hospitality Group, Ltd.
 - **Lesley Stracks-Mullem**, Taste Carolina Gourmet Food Tours
 - **Jason Widen**, HQ Raleigh
- The DSP report and Destination 2028 implementation updates are published at www.visitRaleigh.com/2028.



SCAN HERE TO GO TO THE
DESTINATION 2028 PORTAL

14 PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS ALREADY ACCOMPLISHED (BY MID-2023):

1. The Raleigh Convention Center's booking policy has been updated (both pre-pandemic and a refresh post-pandemic) to prioritize events by size, and Raleigh Convention & Performing Arts Complex utilization has been optimized further.
2. Plans are being set for a convention center expansion, with Interlocal Fund authorization to start covering its construction costs in fiscal year 2025.
3. The City of Raleigh issued an RFI and a subsequent RFP for development of a minimum-500-room, full-service hotel and parking infrastructure to sit adjacent to the downtown Raleigh convention complex, with funding also authorized from the Interlocal Fund in fiscal year 2025; this will increase downtown room inventory needed for prioritized conventions.
4. The Bureau has been repositioned and reaffirmed as the area leader in recruiting meetings countywide, across five Meeting Districts.
5. PNC Arena has undertaken a major design enhancement and renovation project of approximately \$300 million, envisioned to get underway in fiscal year 2025.
6. The Bureau has advocated for Cary's multipurpose indoor sports complex (The Center), with Interlocal Fund authorization to start supporting the project financially in fiscal year 2026.
7. The Bureau has engaged with Wake County municipalities on their sports facility inventory as well as analyzed and advocated for their small/medium project funding through Wake County's competitive process for Interlocal Fund venue investments.
8. Statewide esports event stakeholders including the Greater Raleigh Esports Local Organizing Committee secured N.C. Esports Production Grant funding allocation from the General Assembly as well as a one-time appropriation for an Esports Production and Performance Center and mobile truck unit to be housed at N.C. State University.
9. The Bureau finalized initial event funding criteria then created a Signature Event Development Pilot Program (SEDPP) to attract new or help grow existing festivals/ events with incremental increases in overnight visitation. SEDPP so far has funded four signature events, and many more events countywide are now being analyzed via the Bureau's Event Impact Calculator.
10. Development of Dorothea Dix Park is being leveraged as a key attractor for overnight visitation, with construction of Phase 1 underway. Blockbuster exhibits at state museums have continued to attract visitors during post-pandemic tourism recovery.

11. In conjunction with People-First Tourism (P1t) Inc., the destination has cultivated so far a supply of experiences from 125+ unique creatives/makers/growers in seven Wake County municipalities, with GRCVB now advertising three P1t events weekly to visitors and 30 more bookable by arriving groups. P1t Inc. has developed functional partnerships with more than a dozen area hotels/attractions/formal-sector partners as well.
12. RDU has become the country's fastest-growing airport and is now served by 15 airlines flying from 64 nonstop destinations, including delivering new international travelers to our area from six countries.
13. Partnering with the Regional Transportation Alliance, the accelerated implementation of a regionwide Freeway And Street-based Transit network, including Bus Rapid Transit corridors/extensions, is now underway.
14. The Bureau has advocated for enhancements to the greenway and park systems and has supported a group working toward a one-of-a-kind event (AWAKE: Cultural Paths) that would bring arts/cultural activations to countywide greenway trails annually.

NEXT STEPS IN CVB TACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION IN 2023-2024:

- Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance will propose a sports cluster model case study with the southwest Wake towns of Apex, Cary, Fuquay-Varina and Holly Springs and will add a countywide sports facility pipeline page on raleighsports.org.
- The Bureau will assist in the development/ understandings of an operational plan for the N.C. State University Esports Production and Performance Center, while separately pursuing a multiyear extension of the N.C. Esports Production Grant.
- CVB staff will partner with the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences on the rollout of marketing and promotions surrounding its blockbuster exhibit SECU DinoLab, as well as convene with other state museums regarding their enhancements/expansion....

Find other next steps of tactical implementation online at www.visitRaleigh.com/2028.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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