

Tourism Development

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Consolidated all tourism marketing into a single organization within Leon County government to be known as Visit Tallahassee.
- Successfully hosted a strategic planning retreat with the Leon County Commission and the TDC on tourism development for the Tallahassee-Leon County area. Industry and community stakeholders participated in the discussions on the future of tourism for Tallahassee-Leon County. From this retreat, a new Tourism Strategic Plan was developed. The new Plan will act as the road map to sustain and grow tourism over the next five years.
- Developed and updated Leon County's Tourism Development Plan which is a part of the Leon County Ordinance.
- Collected a total of \$3,008,875 in tourist development tax revenues. This amount represents a 10.6% decrease in the 4-cent collections compared to collections in FY 2008. This decrease is relatively modest compared to the impact felt by other tourism destinations nationwide and in Florida. Leon County also levied a 5th penny of the tourist development tax which resulted in a collection of \$235,047 during FY 2009.
- Expanded promotional efforts in the small meetings and conventions market targeting associations, government, faith based, and diversity event planners and corporate meeting planners. The growth experienced last year increased by 17% in economic impact and by 37% in the number of rooms booked.
- In 2008, the Tallahassee Sports Council, in partnership with Leon County Public Schools, was awarded the bid to host the 2009 FHSAA Competitive Cheerleading Championships. Exactly 166 teams competed in the Tallahassee/Leon County Civic Center for the 2009 FHSAA Competitive Cheerleading Championships in Tallahassee providing 2,500 athletes and 3,500 total visitors to Leon County. In conclusion, the Cheerleading Championships generated 1,900 room nights and approximately \$1.5 million in economic impact.
- New film and production projects including Extreme Makeover: Home Edition, SuperNanny, HGTV, as well as other productions all located in Tallahassee; provided in-kind promotional and marketing services to the Tallahassee Film Festival; and, provided film services to the BBC science documentary series about the influence of geology on the history of civilization/water theme. The series will feature Wakulla Springs and air on the BBC in the UK and the National Geographic Channel in the U.S. in early 2010.
- Co-partnered with Florida State Athletics to kick off the inaugural year of the Morcom Aquatic Center with a bid to host the 2009 AT&T USA Diving National Championships. The bid was successful and the Tallahassee Sports Council supported the planning process and event execution. The event generated 700 room nights, 300 visitors and \$600,300 in economic impact. This event was provided financial assistance from the Leon County Special Events Grant Program and an additional \$2,000 grant through the Florida Sports Foundation grant program.
- The Tallahassee Sports Council, in partnership with the City of Tallahassee Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs, hosted the 2009 Amateur Softball Association 18U Girls Fast Pitch 'A' Southern National. Eighteen teams, traveling from as far away as South Florida, Texas and North Carolina, convened in Tallahassee to determine the champion. Taking advantage of their time here, the majority of the girls toured one or more of the colleges and universities in the area. The five-day event provided over 537 room nights, over 500 visitors and generated over \$300,000 in economic impact.
- Secured a 12-page article profiling Tallahassee in US Airways Magazine reaching approximately eight million travelers.

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The Department of Tourism Development provides staff support and assistance to the Leon County Tourist Development Council (TDC). The Department works with the TDC to enhance the local economy and quality of life through the benefits associated with a strong visitor industry.

During FY 08/09, tourism sales efforts were coordinated through the Tallahassee Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (TACVB). The TACVB is a private, non-profit membership association, which sells the Tallahassee area as a leisure and business destination.

In addition to marketing efforts in the Leisure, Meetings and Conventions market, the TACVB maximized the economic benefits of sports through the Tallahassee Sports Council by hosting of international, national, regional and state events that span a wide spectrum of sports and performance levels.



Did You Know

Tourism Development provided world-class hospitality services at three Visitor Services Centers resulting in an increase in the number of visitors assisted over last year.

