

REINTRODUCTION TO THE CHARLOTTESVILLE ALBEMARLE CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

September 16, 2026



AGENDA



- Introduction to the CACVB
- Destination 2045: Inaugural Tourism Master Plan
- Strategic Plan FY26-28
- Albemarle County-specific support
- Questions

What We Do

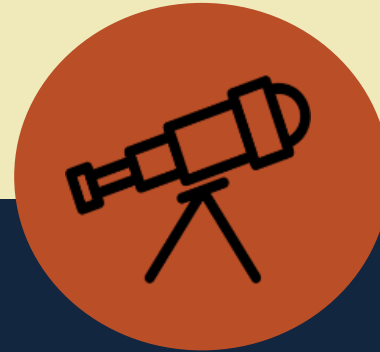


What Guides the CACVB?



Mission

The mission of the CACVB is to enhance the economic prosperity of the City and County by promoting, selling and marketing the City of Charlottesville and County of Albemarle as a destination, in pursuit of the meetings and tourism markets.



Vision

The CACVB envisions a future where tourism enriches the local community, providing inclusive, seamless connections and welcoming and memorable experiences.



Values

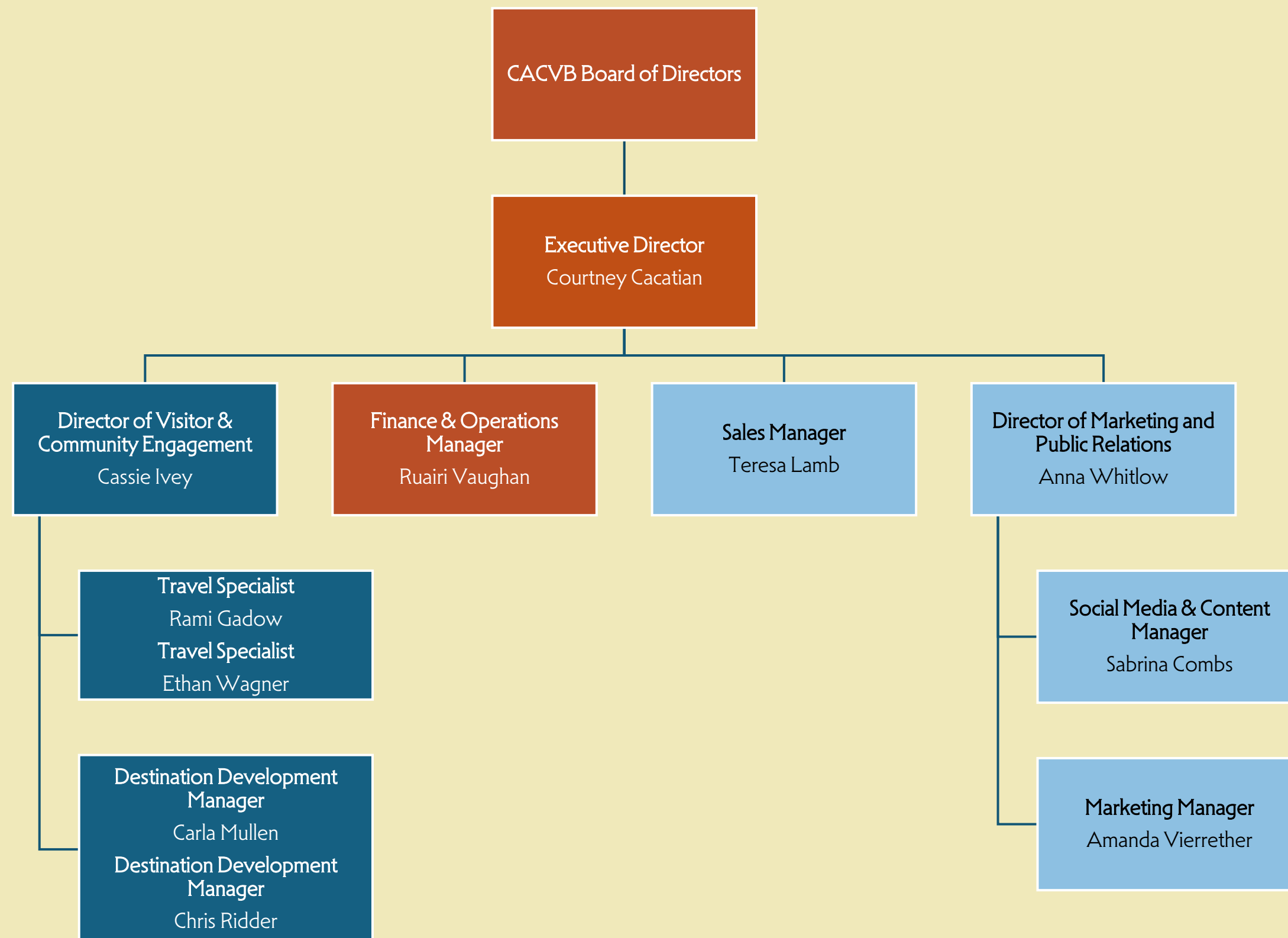
To uphold the values of resiliency, unity, diversity, creativity, and responsibility, and let these ideals lead the work we do.

Who Are We?

- Tourism office for Charlottesville and Albemarle County. (Fiscal Agent: Albemarle County)
- Leadership: Reports to Board of Directors
- CACVB Teams: Executive, Engagement, & Promotion (11 total staff)
- Funded: By a portion of the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT). This is the only revenue source.
- Impact: Visitor spending reaches **more than \$1 billion**, and tourism supports more than 7,000 jobs
- Stakeholders: County and City, Tourism Partners, Visitors, Education, Local Non-Profits, Workforce, Residents & Tourism Associations



CACVB STRUCTURE



Executive

Engagement

Promotion

CACVB Board Composition



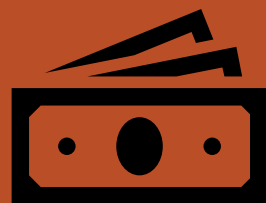
- One member of the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors
- One member of Charlottesville City Council
- One accommodations representative appointed by the County Board of Supervisors
- One accommodations representative appointed by Charlottesville City Council
- County Director of Economic Development or designee
- City Director of Economic Development or designee
- Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer of the University of Virginia or designee
- One tourism industry representative appointed by the County Board of Supervisors
- One tourism industry representative appointed by City Council
- One food or beverage representative appointed by the County Board of Supervisors
- One food or beverage representative appointed by the City Council
- One representative of the arts community jointly appointed
- One representative of the recreation community jointly appointed
- President or CEO of the Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce or designee
- President or CEO of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation or designee

Why Do We Do It?



Economic Impact

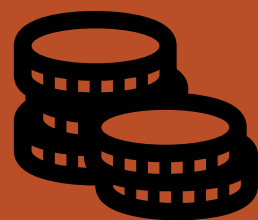
The Charlottesville-Albemarle tourism industry makes a profound impact on the region's economy, leveraging a percentage of the transient occupancy tax to drive visitor spending in food and beverage, accommodations, outdoor recreation, shopping and more.



\$1 billion
in direct visitor spending



7,227 jobs
supported by tourism



\$51.3 million
in local taxes collected



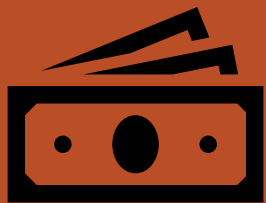
2.9%
spending share of state



4.5 %
increase over 2024

The economic impact data presented reflects the most recent findings released by the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VATC.org) and Tourism Economics, in cooperation with localities.

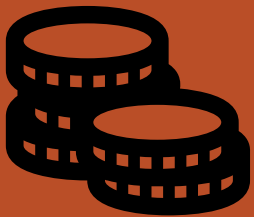
Economic Impact: Albemarle County



\$603.5 million
in direct visitor spending



3,861 jobs
supported by tourism



\$29 million
in local taxes collected



1.7%
spending share of state



2.8 %
increase over 2024

The economic impact data presented reflects the most recent findings released by the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VATC.org) and Tourism Economics, in cooperation with localities.

Modeling Welcoming

The CACVB maintains a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan that sets the expectation that the organization will continuously assess its values and driving motivations. The plan supports the Strategic Plan and guides the CACVB is analyzing the following:

- 1 Management & Workforce
- 2 Visitor Experience
- 3 Community Impact
- 4 Marketing & Communications



Equity and Inclusivity Statement:

At the Charlottesville Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau, we believe in the power of diversity and inclusion to enrich our community and enhance every visitor's experience. We welcome visitors from every corner of the globe, embracing the diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and identities that make our area vibrant. Whether you are here for a short stay or a long visit, we strive to ensure your experience is memorable, accessible, and inclusive. The CACVB pledges to actively promote a culture where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to explore and enjoy all that our destination offers by creating inclusive content, sharing diverse local stories, and providing equitable opportunities for local partners in our work. We here at the CACVB would like to be the first to welcome you to visit our community in the heart of Central Virginia, where diversity thrives, and inclusion is at the heart of everything we do.

What Do We Always Do?



How Does the CACVB Manage Work?



Critical Business Imperatives

The top strategic priorities an organization must focus on to ensure long-term success. They represent the essential actions of the organization

- Overnight Stays and Mid-week Business
- Visitor Spending
- Leadership, Governance & Transparency
- Research
- Promotion
- Partner Engagement and Development
- Visitor Services

Long-Term Planning

Setting future-focused goals and mapping out steps to reach them by anticipating needs, opportunities, and challenges so you can move forward intentionally rather than reactively.

- Tourism Master Plan (20 years)
- Strategic Plan (3 Years)
- Employee Annual Performance (1 Year)

Critical Business Imperatives

1

Overnight Stays: The CACVB's mission is to attract visitors to stay overnight, resulting in lodging taxes for Albemarle County and Charlottesville. A portion of this tax is earmarked for funding the CACVB and is its only source of funding. All efforts beyond this mission go to enhance and entice additional overnight stays.

2

Visitor Spending: After attracting visitors to Albemarle County and Charlottesville, the CACVB promotes additional activities beyond their initial interests, boosting spending at local restaurants, attractions, and tourism businesses. Longer stays increase visitor spending, significantly contributing to sales and meals/food and beverage tax revenue growth. This activity is primarily promoted through our mobile visitor centers.

Critical Business Imperatives (cont.)

3

Mid-week Business: The CACVB targets need times at accommodations, including shoulder seasons and especially weekdays to attract longer stays, promote meetings and events during off-peak times, and collaborate with tour operators to enhance visitor product. Key metrics include hotel occupancy, revenue per available room, increased product offerings with tour operators, and bookings of group business, including meetings and events.

4

Research: As the destination marketing organization, the CACVB identifies research opportunities that can inform the work of its accommodations and other partners within the tourism industry as needs arise. This research is provided to the community for its use. Examples include Costar lodging charts with hotel occupancy/average daily rate/revenue per available room, prospective/past visitor surveys, and more.

Critical Business Imperatives (cont.)

5

Leadership, Governance & Transparency: The CACVB, funded by City and County lodging taxes, must use these funds transparently and efficiently. It aims for high performance and leadership at all levels. Among these aims are open board meetings and oversight, public and sound financial reports, alignment with County policies and procedures, and frequent communication to the community and industry partners.

6

Promotion: The CACVB generates robust destination promotion efforts through owned (website/social media), earned (public relations) and paid media (advertising). Through this outreach, the CACVB inspires potential visitors to travel to Charlottesville and Albemarle County, generating lodging, sales and meals/food and beverage tax. This outreach is specific to target markets and measurable results based on budgetary restrictions.

Critical Business Imperatives (cont.)

7

Partner Engagement & Development: The CACVB relies on tourism partner information, relationships and participation to grow the tourism economy. The destination development team builds relationships with industry partners to foster strategic partner growth, identify funding, and foster opportunities for collaboration, promotion, networking, action planning, workforce development and more.

8

Visitor Services: Visitors need assistance planning their trips and finding things to do once they arrive. The CACVB's visitor services team directly assists and educates visitors through email, phone calls, visitor materials, and onsite through its mobile visitor centers by providing recommendations, maps and brochures. The mobile visitor centers are stationed throughout Albemarle County and Charlottesville to reach visitors where they are and promote exploration throughout the community. The MVCs are supported by the CACVB's office space.



DESTINATION 2045: TOURISM MASTER PLAN

Multi-Step Planning Approach



The CACVB and S.I.R. (Richmond-based research firm) implemented a multi-phased approach from August 2023 to June 2024. To ensure this plan reflects key stakeholder perspectives, S.I.R. conducted one-on-one interviews, small group meetings, a visitor survey, an industry survey, and workshops with the CACVB's Board of Directors.

In total, this plan reflects the voices of more than 150 stakeholders and 800 past and prospective visitors.

In addition to stakeholder input sessions, the team also reviewed relevant strategic plans from partner organizations and conducted a landscape assessment, competitive analysis, trends analysis, economic impact analysis, and SWOT analysis.

Additional research reports detail key findings and insights. This plan includes a high-level summary of key findings. The finalized key focus areas reflect the summation of all inputs.

Hold Project Kickoff and Organization

Conduct Foundational Research

Conduct Quantitative Research

Engage Stakeholders

Identify Priorities and Recommendations

Craft the Plan

Create the Final Report

SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis builds on the 2019 version developed by the board and industry stakeholders. It has been refined with the board and with insights from the stakeholder and visitor research to accurately reflect the region’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This collaborative effort provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing tourism in the region and informs strategic decision-making for the future.

INTERNAL

STRENGTHS

- Beautiful landscapes
- Mountains
- Wineries
- History, historic sites
- UVA
- Family-friendly
- Vibrant, unique, something for everyone
- Things to do (events, festivals)
- Location (proximity to DC)
- Educated
- Variety
- Food and beverages
- Weddings
- Accessible

WEAKNESSES

- Downtown Mall
- Politics/government
- August 2017/reputation
- Not affordable
- Lack of transportation
- No convention center
- Lack of communication
- Politics
- Exposure
- Underfunded
- Lack of diversity
- Seasonality
- Public perception of elite
- Airlift

EXTERNAL

OPPORTUNITIES

- Marketing, storytelling
- Promote packages
- UVA
- Corporate travel
- Midweek business
- Group travel
- Increase flights
- DMO bigger role
- Group sales
- Rich African American history
- Conference center
- Walkability

THREATS

- Lack of promotion, people don’t know about C’ville
- Affordability
- Inflation
- Politics
- Travel, people pulling back
- Airlines pulling back flights
- Competition (DC, VA Beach)
- Brain drain
- Cost of living
- Community resistance
- Shifting labor dynamics
- Economy
- Lack of local transit
- Racism
- Bad press

SWOT Analysis

We applied the SWOT analysis to identify strategies for leveraging the region's strengths to capitalize on opportunities, as well as to shore up weaknesses and minimize threats. By examining each aspect of the SWOT, we developed targeted actions that utilize existing assets to drive growth and mitigate challenges, ensuring a balanced and sustainable approach to tourism development in the region.

How to use strengths to leverage opportunities

- Continue to develop compelling narratives around the region's diverse offerings and unique history, focusing on building upon successful campaigns like Discover Black Cville and Tourism for All to highlight the area's heritage further.
- Work on enhancing collaboration with UVA by identifying mutually beneficial opportunities, such as joint educational and corporate travel programs that increase midweek and group visits. This could also include joint programs for attendees at the UVA conference center to get out and explore the region.
- Explore and consider the feasibility of developing a conference center.
- Continue to develop and refine travel packages that cater to groups, incorporating local attractions and experiences that enrich visitors' stays and encourage repeat visits.

How to use strengths to shore up weaknesses and minimize threats

- Highlight the region's cultural diversity and rich history through stories and community voices to counteract negative perceptions, leveraging Discover Black Cville and Tourism for All.
- Explore developing affordable travel packages that offer discounts or bundled services with local businesses and attractions, potentially easing the burden of hotel costs.
- Continue to focus on developing off-season tourism packages. This could include indoor venues during colder months and special highlights of year-round attractions during off-peak season.
- Leverage strong stakeholder relationships and continually share the story of the CVB, the challenges the region faces, and potential opportunities with increased funding.
- Explore opportunities with UVA to retain local talent and enhance professional opportunities in tourism.

Objective | Vision | Goals

Objective

Develop a 20-year vision and pathway for tourism in the region through improving the experience of visitors, residents, nonprofits, and businesses and elevating the region as a unique and sustainable destination.

Vision

The Tourism Master Plan will help the CACVB and the region envision a future where tourism enriches the local community, providing inclusive, seamless connections and welcoming and memorable experiences.



To see a copy of Destination 2045, our Tourism Master Plan, please scan this QR code.



Goals

Overarching goals informing the planning process:

- 1 Amplify Visitor Experiences:** Promote and enhance the visitor experience through targeted marketing of the region’s unique cultural and natural attractions.
- 2 Foster a Welcoming Community:** Champion DEI by ensuring tourism benefits all community members and visitors, promoting inclusive participation and equitable opportunities.
- 3 Strengthen Community Partnerships:** Cultivate robust partnerships with local stakeholders, businesses, and the community to enhance storytelling and experiences.
- 4 Enhance Local Quality of Life:** Ensure tourism efforts directly contribute to community well-being.
- 5 Boost Sustainable Economic Growth:** Drive economic growth by attracting a diverse range of tourists and encouraging investments in local businesses, workforce, and tourism-related infrastructure.



STRATEGIC PLAN FY26-28

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS: YEAR 1



- Amplify Visitor Experiences
 - Rebranding
- Fostering a Welcoming Community
 - Accessibility
 - Tourism for All
- Strengthen Community Partnerships
 - Food & Beverage Campaign
 - VA250
- Enhance local quality of life
 - Crisis Communications Plan
- Boost Sustainable Economic Growth
 - Mid-Week Business
 - Downtown Mall's 50th
- Critical Business Imperatives
 - Work that continues regardless of strategic plan goals

VISIT
CHARLOTTESVILLE
ALBEMARLE COUNTY

AMPLIFY VISITOR EXPERIENCES

CACVB REBRAND



Strategic Plan Goal: Develop a brand that creates a distinct identity for the Charlottesville-Albemarle region and builds visitor recognition of our destination and its assets.

- What does our new brand do that our previous could not?
 - Reflect tourism assets of Charlottesville and Albemarle County
 - Create an image of our area that feels relatable and inspires action
- What has the feedback been so far?
 - More than 11,00,000 advertising impressions with new logos
 - Partner and community engagement through requests to include our logo on promotional items
 - Stronger visibility for Mobile Visitor Centers throughout their routes and in visitor locations



Timeline



Rebrand Agency
Selected
(May 2025)

Initial Rebrand
Presentation
(August 2025)

Logo Design
Process
(Fall 2025)

New Logo Rolled Out to
CACVB Board
(December 2025)

Full Brand
Reveal
(February 2026)

Community Input
Sessions and
Survey
(Summer 2025)

Special Board
Meeting for
Revised Logo
Direction
(September 2025)

Advertising Campaign
Development
(Fall 2025)

Revamped
VisitCharlottesville.
org Launched
(January 2026)

Advertising
Campaign
Launched
(March 2026)

What were the Outcomes?



- Community Feedback and Input:
 - 439 survey respondents and 7 in-person focus groups to gauge local resident and tourism stakeholder opinion in brand development
 - Rebrand incorporates the feedback about creating a welcoming environment and celebrating the area's assets
- New Marketing Materials:
 - Updated Advertisements
 - Rewrapped Mobile Visitor Centers
 - Reskinned Website (More than 1 million visitors annually)
 - Redesigned Visitor Guide (50,000 distributed annually)
- Advertising Placements:
 - Digital advertising led to 29,456,029 impressions (March 2026 through June 2026)
 - Placements have been across Google Ads, Meta (Facebook and Instagram) and other digital display, all with a focus of creating awareness of Charlottesville and Albemarle County in regional targets to high-travel intent audiences

Logo Development



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FOSTER A WELCOMING COMMUNITY

ACCESSIBLE VISITOR EXPERIENCES

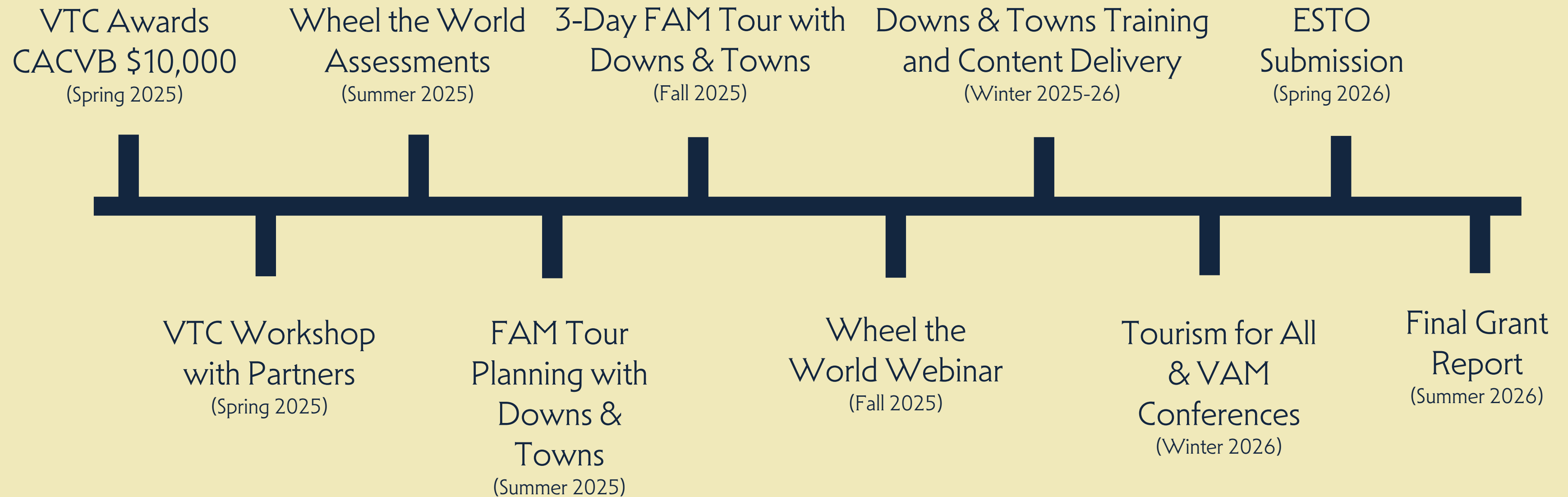


Strategic Plan Goal: Identify and promote visitor experiences that remove barriers and provide equal opportunities for everyone regardless of their abilities.

- What defines our message?
 - Partners: Focus on collaboration, shared responsibility, education, and practical impact.
 - Visitors: Emphasize welcome, clarity, and confidence in planning.
- What are our vehicles for change?
 - Grants/Product Development
 - Wheel the World
 - Tourism for All
 - Promotional Materials



Timeline



What were the Outcomes?



- Experiential/ On-the-ground Tactics:
 - 3-day Familiarization (FAM) tour with Downs & Towns and 20+ partners
 - 7 new Wheel the World assessments (Total Assessed 65+)
- Content Creation Channels:
 - Professional photography with Downs & Towns (600+ Images)
 - Blog content featuring accessible experiences and itinerary for visitors ([View Here](#))
 - Social media content highlighting FAM tour (66,373 Impressions | 1,506 Engagements)
 - Inclusion in Visitor Guide (50,000 distributed annually)
- Education/Industry Channels:
 - Training materials developed for Tourism for All cohort
 - Accessibility Photography and Advertising SOP
 - Accessibility Panel at TFA (Rating "Very Applicable") + Accessibility Panel at VAM (Rating 4.7 out of 5)
 - VTC workshop with 25 partners and disability advocates
 - Wheel the World Webinar in November

TOURISM FOR ALL AMBASSADORS

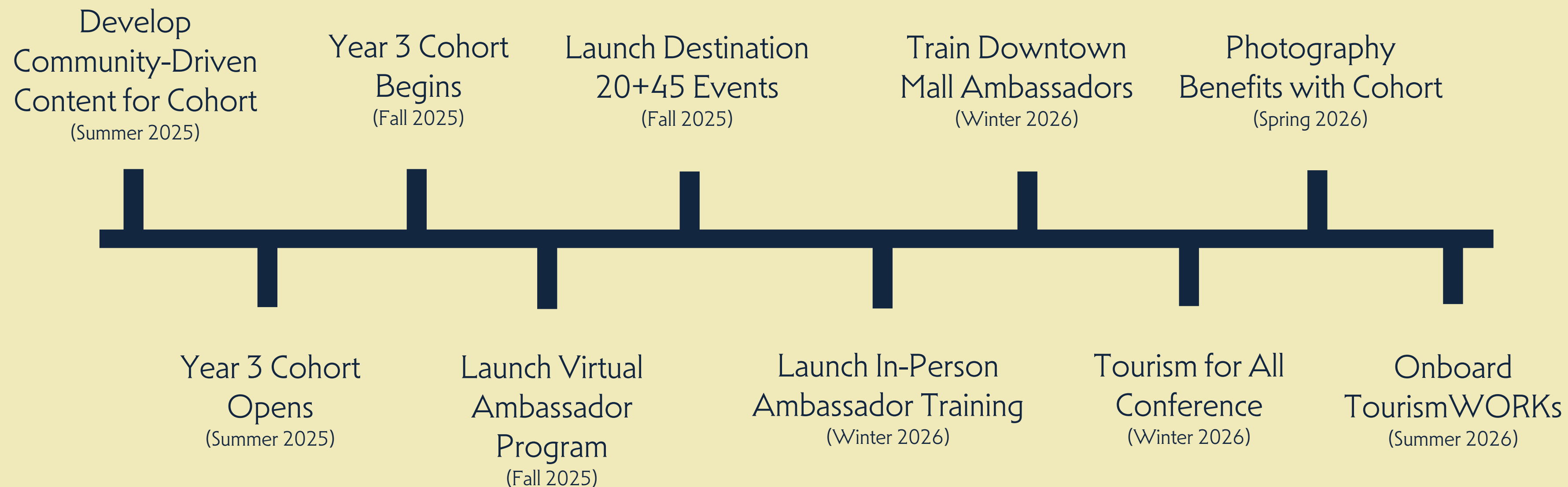


Strategic Plan Goal: Develop ambassadors through an extension of Tourism for All programming to instill pride and inclusion when welcoming visitors to our destination.

- What defines our message?
 - Partners: Tourism for All programs cultivate welcoming community ambassadors/partners.
 - Visitors: Emphasize feeling welcomed, valued, and heard.
- What are our vehicles for change?
 - TFA Conference
 - TFA Ambassadors
 - TFA Cohort
 - TourismWORKs



Timeline



What were the Outcomes?



- Tourism for All Conference
 - 89 partners in attendance for 2026 (same as 2025), 15 tourism businesses highlighted
 - Attendees rated content of the conference as “Very Applicable”
 - Attendees rated the logistics of the conference as “Exceeding Expectations”
 - Survey results indicated support for charging a conference fee
- Tourism for All Ambassadors and Destination 20+45 Events
 - 4 D20+45 Events (25 partners per event)
 - Overall ratings from year 1 attendees marked the events as “Valuable” or “Very Valuable”
 - Virtual Ambassador program launched
 - In-person program launched, Downtown Mall ambassadors trained, interest from Ivy Creek and Loving Cup Winery
- Tourism for All Cohort
 - Graduated 8 Partners (25 total since creation)
 - Moved to community-driven content vs. Destinations International
 - Included photography benefit that then marketing could leverage
 - NEW! TourismWORKs benefit.
 - NEW! Partnership with PVCC for year 4 of the cohort (FY27)

VISIT
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ALBEMARLE COUNTY

STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

F&B PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN



Strategic Plan Goal: Develop a promotional campaign alongside food and beverage (F&B) partners to strengthen relationships and promote Charlottesville and Albemarle County as a premier culinary destination.

- What defines our message?
 - Partners: Food and beverage partners are part of the tourism ecosystem, and the CACVB has free resources.
 - Visitors: Promote Charlottesville and Albemarle County as a premier culinary destination.
- What are our vehicles for change?
 - Partner Outreach & Education
 - Marketing and Asset Creation



Timeline



Coffee & Conversations
with City Economic
Development
(Fall 2025)

Senior Stay Day,
F&B Invites & Panel
(Winter 2026)

Photoshoot with
Tourism Partners
(Spring 2026)

Founding Footprints
F&B Episodes
(Fall-Winter 2025)

TFA Conference
featuring ACPS Savor
Studio
(Winter 2026)

Outreach to F&B
Partners about Web
Listings.
(Summer 2026)

What were the Outcomes?



- Partner Outreach & Education
 - 8 F&B FAM Tours/Meetings on operations, events and groups, and CACVB resources
 - Destination Development has reached out to 20 F&B partners about having a free listing on our website
 - Zero attendance from F&B partners at the fall Coffee & Conversations with City Economic Development
 - Workforce Panel highlighting ACPS Savor Studio and Culinary Concepts (Rated “Valuable” at TFA Conference)
 - F&B partners made up 5% of the 16% of tourism partners at Senior Stay Day and Community Job Fair
 - Continual presence on Charlottesville Ale Trail and Monticello Wine Trail
- Marketing & Asset Creation
 - Spring photoshoot (15 of the 19 stops were F&B partners)
 - Episodes of Founding Footprints heavily featuring F&B partners (118 F&B mentions across project)
 - Inclusion of F&B Outlets in “What’s New” Press Release and Media Outreach
 - Fall photoshoot included 5 F&B partner locations
 - Coordination with Destination Development to create blogs highlighting F&B partners

Strategic Plan Goal: Coordinate VA250th efforts that showcase our destination's focus on revolutionary history through tours, programming, events, and exhibitions.

- What defines our message?
 - Partners: Be the visitor resources for local VA250 initiatives by capitalizing on funding resources and partnerships
 - Visitors: Share history leading up and during Revolution, Revolutionary ideas, and lesser-known stories
- What are our vehicles for change?
 - Founding Footprints Podcast & Itineraries
 - VA250 Mobile Museum
 - Partner Collaborations & Grants
 - Marketing



FOUNDING FOOTPRINTS

S1E9 - Food Traditions of Virginia: Leni Sorenson

0:05:21 0:26:00

JUNE 11	S1E1 - From Tobacco Fields to Richmond Markets: James River Batteau Company
JULY 2	S1E2 - A Developing History: James Monroe's Highland
JULY 24	S1E3 - Your Local Archive: The Albemarle Charlottesville Historical Society
AUGUST 14	S1E4 - Southern Hospitality: Hollymead House
AUGUST 28	S1E5 - A Centennial to Celebrate: The Jefferson School African American Heritage Center



Episode 2 Itinerary:
Explore Lesser-Known History (Agriculture and Outdoor Spaces)

LEARN MORE →



Episode 5 Itinerary:
Explore Lesser-Known History (Education and Civil Rights)

LEARN MORE →

Timeline



Visit Charlottesville
starts leading the
local VA250
Committee
(As Early as 2023)

VA250 Mobile
Museum visits
Highland
(Summer 2025)

Carla Mullen wins
Ordinary Award
for VA250 efforts
(Fall 2025)

Content creation
for History pages
(Winter 2025)

VA250 Mobile
Museum visits
Downtown Mall
(Spring 2026)

CACVB awarded
VTC VA250
Marketing Leverage
Program grant
(FY2025)

Founding
Footprints 10-
episode series
Launches
(Fall 2025)

VA250 letters
of support for
partners
(Fall 2025)

Chesapeake
Gateways Partner
Meeting
(Winter 2026)

Complete final
Grant Report
(Summer 2026)

What were the Outcomes?



- Founding Footprints Podcast
 - 10-episode podcast with accompanying itineraries featuring over 350 partners. The podcast has received 1,215 listens as of mid-June 2026.
 - So far, Itineraries 1 – 6 have been posted social media for a total of 14 posts. Those posts have garnered 236,000 impressions, 7,900 engagements, 226 link clicks, and (on Instagram) 524 saves and shares.
 - Destination Development Manager Carla Mullen wins Ordinary Award for VA250 efforts
 - Presentation at Chesapeake Gateway's Partner Meeting
- 250th Mobile Museum
 - Summer visit to James Monroe's Highland—Attendance 625 over 3 days
 - Spring visit to the Downtown Mall—Attendance to 764 over 3 days
 - Attendance at other VA locations over 3 days is 500 (Mobile Museum Manager)
 - Coverage by CBS19 and NBC29, visitation by US Congressman, City Mayor, and two County Supervisors
- Partners Collaborations, Grants & Marketing
 - Visit Charlottesville engages local VA250th committee monthly, committee includes over 100 people from 25 organizations
 - Dedicated partner- and visitor-focused VA250 webpages
 - Awarded VTC VA250 Marketing Leverage Program grant (\$10,000) for podcast, content creation, and Cville Puzzle Hunt
 - Letters of Support and strategic assistance for \$15,800 in matching funds to promote local VA250 initiatives

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ENHANCE LOCAL QUALITY OF LIFE

CACVB CRISIS PLAN

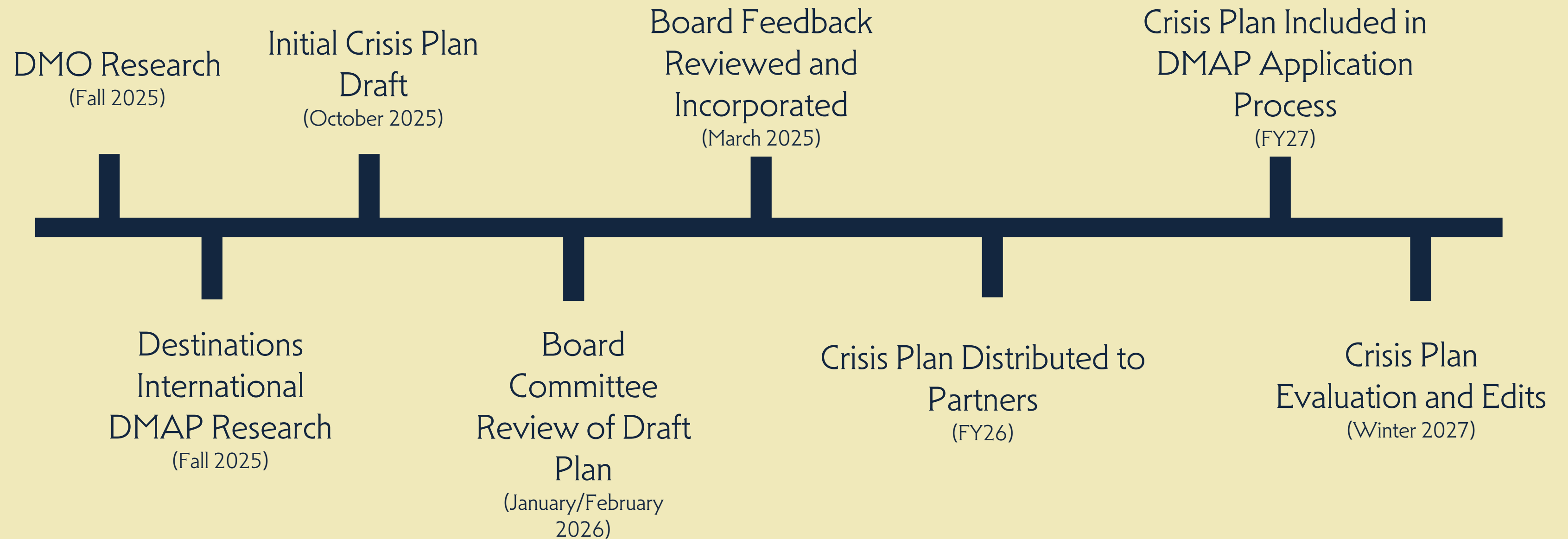


Strategic Plan Goal: Create a formal destination strategy for responding to global, national, and local threats that takes into considerations visitors and community members.

- How does the crisis plan reflect the specific needs of destination marketing organizations?
- Engaged board members in the tourism industry to gain insight on their businesses
- Researched DMOs nationwide and Destinations International to form the CACVB plan
- Heard from city and county government entities on how the plan can include support for emergency management from the hospitality industry
- How will we roll out the plan?
- Tested and revised during Winter Storm Fern in January 2026
- Will go live for partners in the partner portal during FY27
- Plan will be evaluated after every crisis event and updated annually



CRISIS PLAN TIMELINE



What were the Outcomes?



- Enhanced coordination with City and County:
 - Engaged city and county emergency management in drafting of plan and in edits to reflect their needs
 - In discussions with city and county for inclusion in their planning processes
 - Attended joint press conference prior to Winter Storm Fern
- Incorporated Industry Insights Via Board Committee
 - Addressed concerns from Board Members relevant to their industries
 - Adjusted elements of the plan to better reflect industry needs
- Built Industry Standard Plan
 - Created crisis plan that reflects Destinations International guidelines for crisis planning for DMOs
 - Consulted peer organizations for insights on their planning process

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BOOST SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

DOWNTOWN MALL 50TH ANNIVERSARY



Strategic Plan Goal: Collaborate with downtown businesses and associations to improve the vibrancy of the Downtown Mall for its 50th anniversary (2026).

- What defines our message?
 - Partners: Focus on collaboration and alignment around key activities and events.
 - Visitors: Join us in celebrating 50 years of the heart of Charlottesville. One of few remaining pedestrian malls where communities can come together to shop, dine, create, and enjoy.
- What are our vehicles for change?
 - Mobile Visitor Centers & Visitor Resources
 - Leveraging VA250 Celebrations
 - Marketing & Advertising
 - Media Relations



Timeline



Downtown Mall 50th
Communication and
Activation Planning
(Fall 2025)

Downtown Mall
50th Presentation at
City Council
(Winter 2026)

Mobile Visitor Center
Lantern Activations
(June 2026)

July 3-4
Celebrations
(Summer 2026)

Friends of Cville present
Downtown Mall 50th at
the Dec. Board Meeting
(December 2025)

VA250 Mobile
Museum on
Downtown Mall
(Spring 2026)

Ride with GPS
Downtown Mall 50th
Route
(Summer 2026)

What were the Outcomes?



- Mobile Visitor Centers & Visitor Resources
 - Lantern making activities started at the MVC on Wed., June. 3. These activities will be done at Downtown Mall and Ix Art Park shifts. Over the course of one month of lantern making (approximately 12 shifts), the team has the opportunity to engage with more than 350 people based on previous shift attendance.
 - This initiative is ongoing through July 3.
- Leveraging VA250 Celebrations
 - The Mobile Museum on Downtown Mall saw 764 visitors over Apr. 13-15
 - CBS19 and 29 News coverage
- Marketing & Advertising:
 - Established a partnership with Friends of Cville Downtown that led to the inclusion of Fridays After Five and a Monticello–Paramount Theater collaboration in boosting attendance for the 50th anniversary lantern parade
 - Pitched and secured an online story highlighting the merchants of the Downtown Mall and 50th anniversary events in Garden & Gun

1 Amplify Visitor Experiences

Strategic Plan Goals:	Yr 1 FY26	Yr 2 FY27	Yr 3 FY28	Future SP	Team Lead
Develop a brand that creates a distinct identity for the Charlottesville-Albemarle region and builds visitor recognition of our destination and its assets.	✓				Promotion
Complete a comprehensive facelift of the existing website's design, structure, functionality, and content to drive higher visitation from targeted audiences.		✓			Promotion
Increase visitation to enable greater discovery of the destination through crafting a long-term plan for brochure distribution.			✓	✓	Engagement
Purchase or upfit current Mobile Visitor Centers (MVCs) to meet the needs of our visitors and employees.				✓	Engagement

2 Foster a Welcoming Community

Strategic Plan Goals:	Yr 1 FY26	Yr 2 FY27	Yr 3 FY28	Future SP	Team Lead
Identify and promote visitor experiences that remove barriers and provide equal opportunities for everyone, regardless of their disabilities.	✓	✓	✓		Engagement
Develop ambassadors through an extension of Tourism for All programming to instill pride and inclusion when welcoming visitors in our destination.	✓	✓	✓		Engagement, Executive
Complete Destinations International's DMAP accreditation to ensure the CACVB is an organization of high-quality performance and standards, equitable opportunity, and accountable to its stakeholders.		✓	✓		Executive

3 Strengthen Community Partnerships

Strategic Plan Goals:	Yr 1 FY26	Yr 2 FY27	Yr 3 FY28	Future SP	Team Lead
Develop a promotional campaign alongside food and beverage partners to strengthen relationships and promote Charlottesville and Albemarle County as a premier culinary destination.	✓	✓			Engagement, Promotion
Coordinate VA250th efforts that showcase our destination's focus on revolutionary history through tours, programming, events, and exhibitions.	✓	✓			Engagement, Promotion
Foster a stronger relationship with University of Virginia and UVA Foundation to increase mid-week business and visitor services, especially as the Virginia Guesthouse enters and shapes the market.		✓		✓	Executive, Engagement
Develop a robust partner portal and industry communications strategy that clearly outlines CACVB's development, promotional, and visitor support resources, providing partners with easy access to tools, information, and opportunities to engage with the organization.		✓			Engagement, Promotion

4 Enhance Local Quality of Life

Strategic Plan Goals:	Yr 1 FY26	Yr 2 FY27	Yr 3 FY28	Future SP	Team Lead
Create a formal destination strategy for responding to global, national, and local threats that takes into considerations visitors and community members.	✓				Executive, Promotion
Strengthen CACVB-wide stewardship by evaluating internal department operations and identifying opportunities for improvement.		✓	✓		Engagement
Craft and implement a strategy that meaningfully increases stewardship across existing programs, promoting responsible use of the destination and cultivating a shared culture of care among stakeholders.			✓	✓	Engagement

5 Boost Sustainable Economic Growth

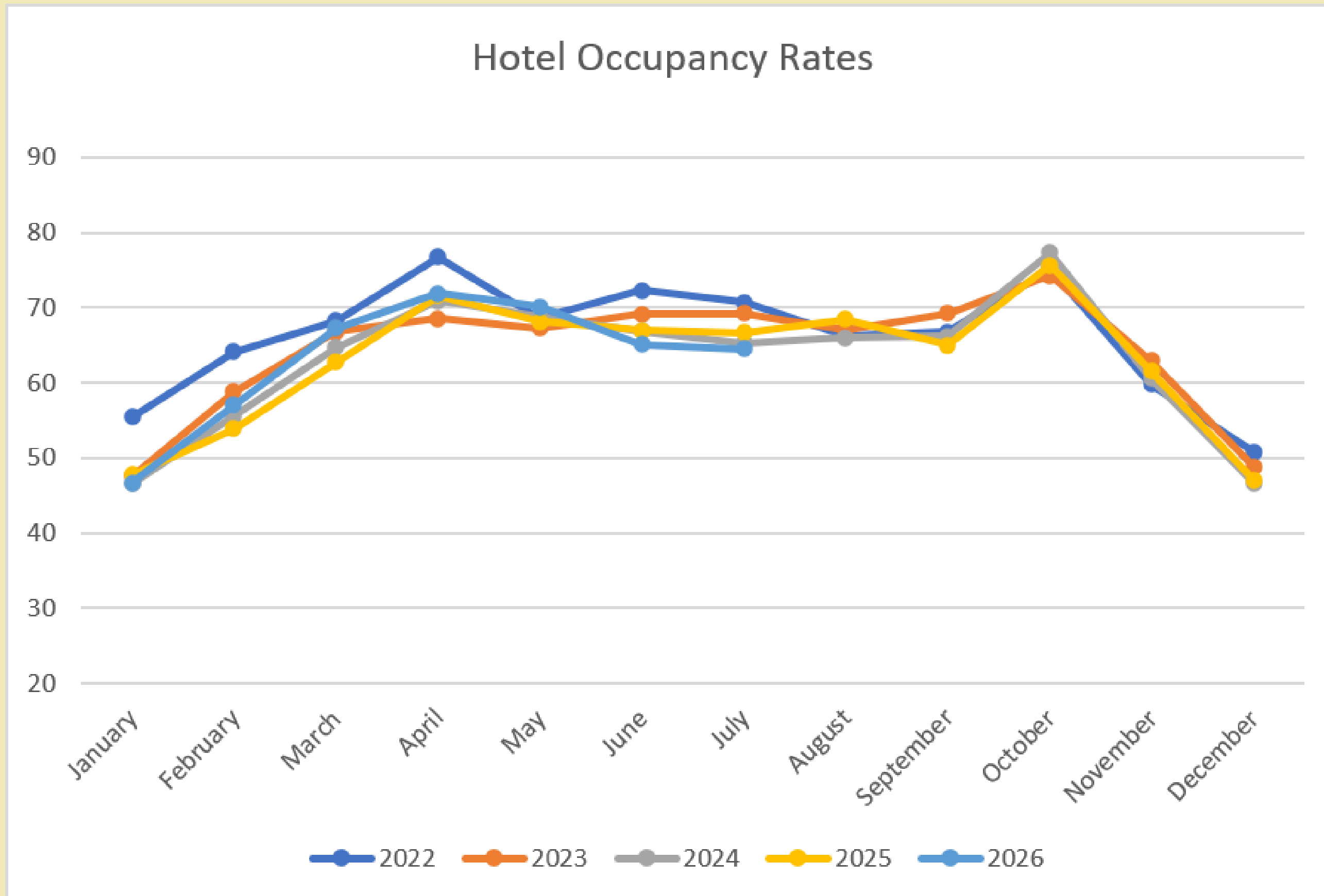
Strategic Plan Goals:	Yr 1 FY26	Yr 2 FY27	Yr 3 FY28	Future SP	Team Lead
Complete a thorough investigation of midweek business to create foundational research, possibly leading to a conference center feasibility study.	✓	✓	✓	✓	Executive, Promotion
Develop a workforce focus group for engaging students and prospective employees with professional development opportunities and job openings.		✓	✓		Engagement
Collaborate with downtown businesses and associations to improve the vibrancy of the Downtown Mall for its 50th anniversary (2026).	✓	✓			Executive, Engagement, Promotion

5

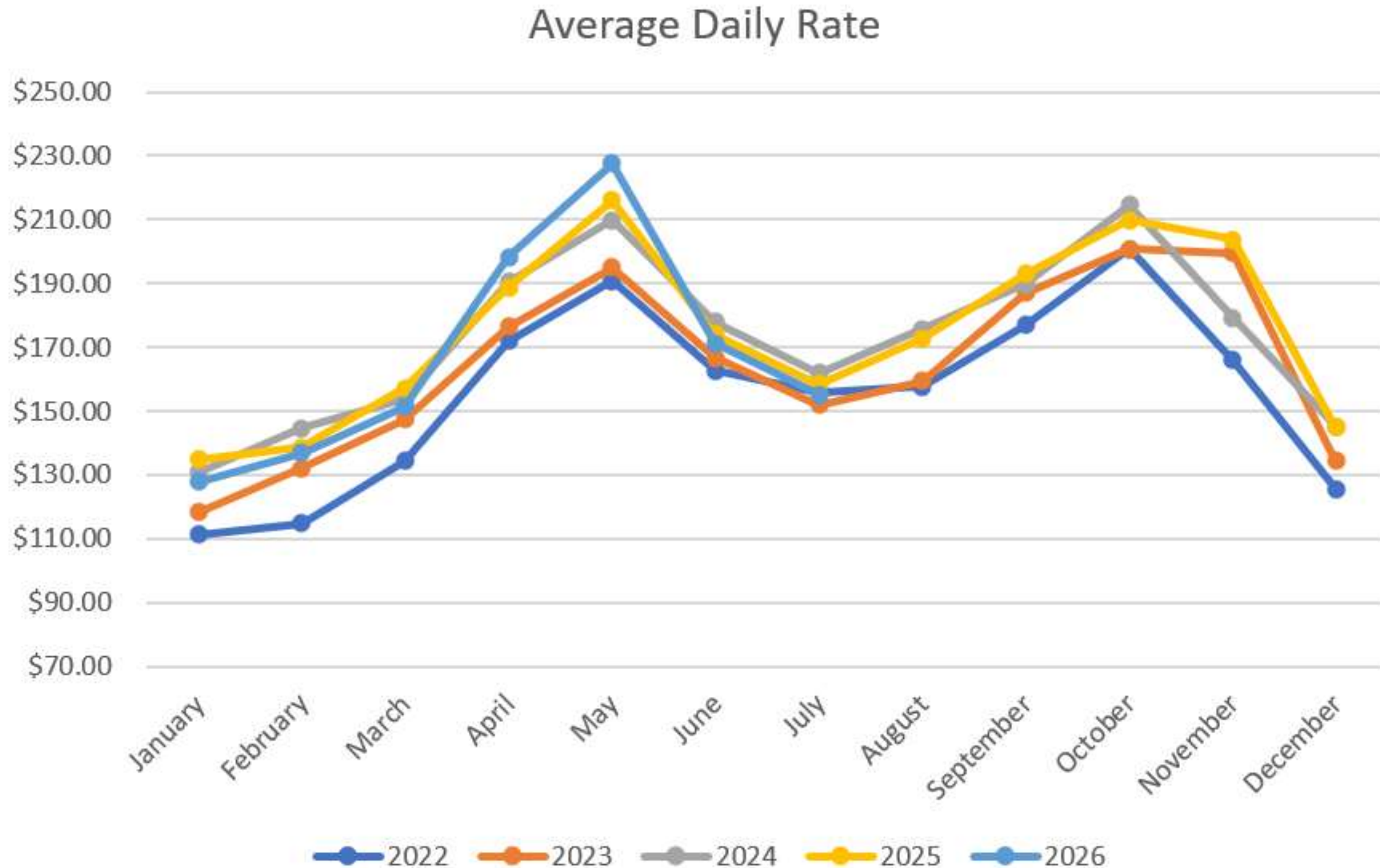
Boost Sustainable Economic Growth (cont.)

Strategic Plan Goals:	Yr 1 FY26	Yr 2 FY27	Yr 3 FY28	Future SP	Team Lead
Identify opportunities to promote and upgrade existing transportation infrastructure to better support travel within the region.				✓	Executive
Explore funding possibilities within destination development to support partner education and efforts that drive tourism operations.				✓	Executive, Engagement

HOTEL OCCUPANCY



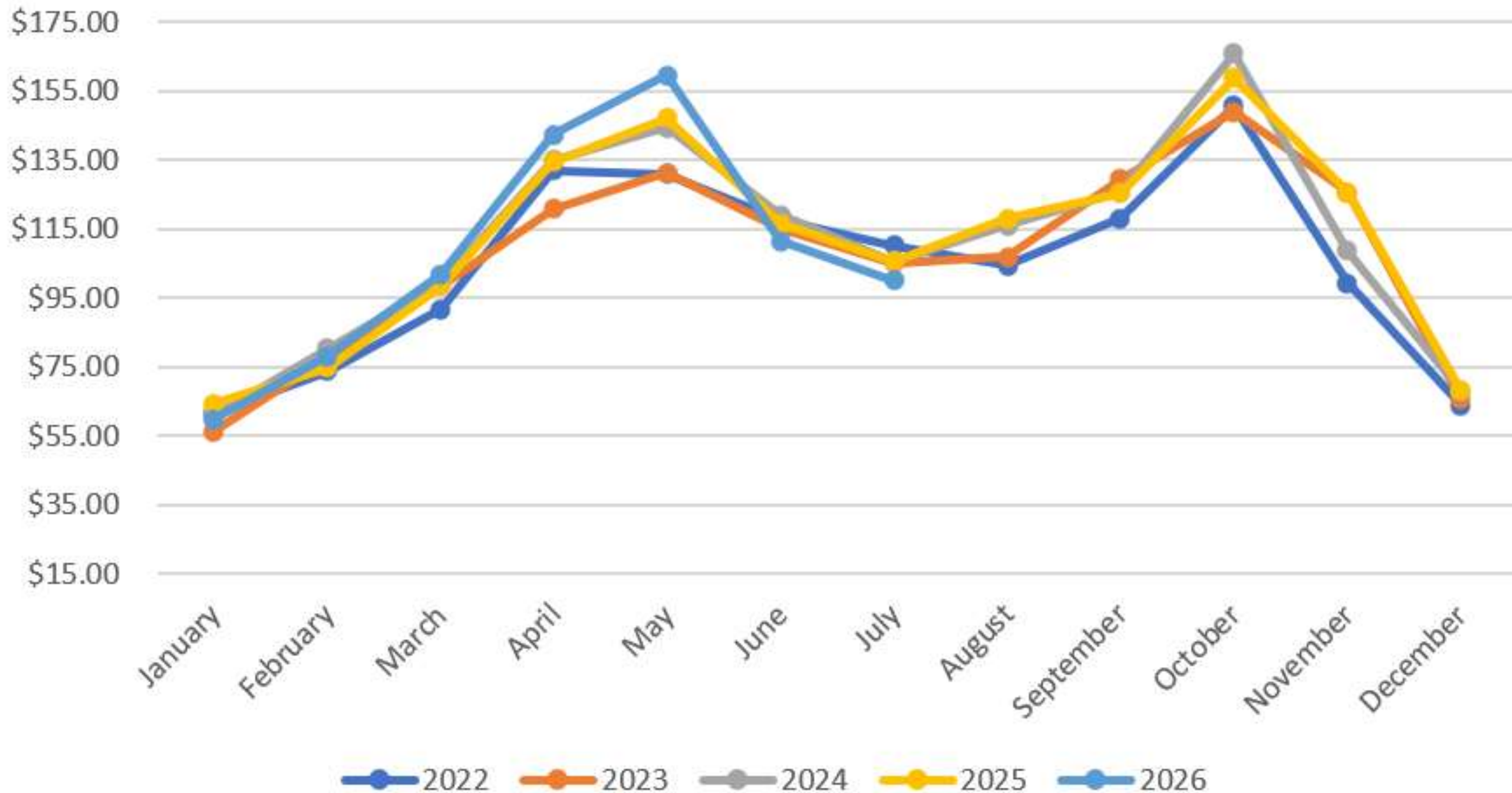
HOTEL AVERAGE DAILY RATE



HOTEL REVENUE PER AVAILABLE ROOM



Revenue per Available Room



RevPAR determines transient occupancy tax (TOT) collection – the only funding source for the CACVB



ALBEMARLE COUNTY SUPPORT

Albemarle County Support



- Writes tourism section of County's annual financial plan to help secure AAA bond rating
- Provides tourism insight to Community Development/Zoning, Economic Development, Parks and Recreation, Equity and Accessibility, Community Engagement, Budget projections, and more
- Collaborates on crisis communications to distribute messages to visitors and visitor-facing businesses, as well as determine hotel room availability as needed
- Provides letters of support for grants County seeks
- Provides lists of contacts, particularly for wineries
- Serves as local VA250 coordinator without support funding
- Serve as ACPS curriculum advisors and partners with Scholar Studios through ACPS and support Senior Stay Day



Albemarle County Comprehensive Plan



The defense industry is one of several industries with major local economic impacts. Notable entities for this industry include Northrop Grumman and Rivanna Station.

- Total county impact (2020): \$567.2 million.
- Total jobs (direct, indirect, and induced): 4,790.
- In 2023, the County purchased 462 acres around Rivanna Station with the intent to both retain and grow the defense sector in the community, an initiative known as Rivanna Futures. Since acquiring the land in 2023, the County has rezoned 172 acres for light industrial use. This is now one of the largest development opportunities in the county.
- In 2024, the University of Virginia announced the creation of the National Security Data and Policy Institute and the establishment of a strategic research and development partnership between the Institute and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

The biotechnology and life sciences sector is another area of opportunity for the region.

- Gross regional product for this sector in the county is \$269 million, the highest of any sector that is export-oriented (goods and services are sold outside of the county).
- There are more than 75 companies in this sector in the region. They have more than 1,900 employees.
- The Commonwealth BioAccelerator, an accelerator program for biotechnology and life sciences companies, opened in 2025. It accepts four to eight companies and provides access to mentorship, technical support, and shared wet lab space.

- The Manning Institute, which is anticipated to open in 2027 and will host up to 100 clinical research laboratories at the Fontaine Research Park to advance research, development, commercialization, and manufacturing of new cellular, gene, and immunotherapies, is expected to continue to grow opportunities in this sector.

Outdoor recreation activities, historic resources, and other local assets bring visitors to the area and drive the tourism and hospitality economy. The Charlottesville Albemarle Convention and Visitors Bureau (CACVB) is the direct marketing organization that supports the tourism sector in the region.

- The tourism sector represents a \$1.3 billion annual economic impact on the regional economy, with more than half of direct visitor spending occurring in county lodging, dining, destination, and recreation locations.
- There are more than 45 wineries, cideries, distilleries, and breweries in the county. According to the most recent Census of Agriculture (2022), grapes are now a top five crop (from an acreage standpoint). This is a change from the 2017 Census of Agriculture, when grapes did not make the top five list.
- In 2024, thanks to the efforts of the county's family vineyard and winery owners and with the assistance of the CACVB, the region was recognized as "Wine Region of the Year" by Wine Enthusiast. Strategic partnerships with Discover Black Cville, 'Tourism for All' with Destinations International TripAdvisor, and Wheel the World ensure that the region is welcoming and accessible to all.
- The CACVB's 2024 tourism master plan, Destination 2045: Crafting Our Tourism Future Together, guides its efforts to promote the region.

- Recognizes tourism industry's economic impact, the CACVB's role, Destination 2045, Wine Region of the Year award, Discover Black Cville, Tourism for All, and accessibility efforts
- Commitment to growing tourism and outdoor recreation industries in addition to workforce
- Collaborates with the Economic Development Office and the CACVB to promote local outdoor recreation tourism and events, including for biking, running, bird watching, and kayaking
- Recognizes CACVB's role in promoting cultural, historic, and art resources to visitors

STRATEGY 3.7

Expand the agritourism economy through partnership with Charlottesville-Albemarle Convention and Visitors Bureau.

A strategy to grow rural tourism by expanding lodging, events, and farm-based food and beverage experiences.

WHY IT MATTERS
Agritourism is already a core strength of Albemarle County's economy, anchored by its wineries, scenic landscapes, and vibrant local food scene. But many producers face barriers to expanding into lodging, events, or year-round experiences that generate sustained revenue. With targeted support and deeper collaboration between the county and the Charlottesville-Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau, Albemarle can scale its rural tourism economy, draw new visitor segments, and strengthen the financial sustainability of its agribusinesses. Agritourism is not just a lifestyle asset—it's a growing economic driver that connects rural vitality with broader regional appeal.



WHAT'S NEEDED			
	Continue to expand destination marketing and visitor experience development focused on rural assets.	→	Elevates agritourism offerings and draws new tourism demand into rural parts of the county.
	Support producers and rural entrepreneurs in expanding lodging, food and beverage, and event-based tourism, including by exploring County Code amendments to allow restaurants in rural areas by special use permit.	→	Unlocks new business models and adds year-round economic value to working lands.
	Identify and address regulatory or permitting barriers that limit the growth of agritourism operations.	→	Makes it easier for producers to scale visitor-facing services.
	Promote cross-sector tourism experiences that connect agribusiness with arts, outdoor recreation, and cultural heritage.	→	Builds more holistic and compelling visitor itineraries across the county.

Albemarle County Economic Development Plan

- Focus for economic development in next 18 – 36 months
- CACVB to gather baseline data based on identified success metric: tracking the number of new or expanded agritourism experiences. Awaiting definition of “experiences” from Albemarle County.
- CACVB to identify the regulatory issues we have heard from our partners
- CACVB proposed meeting this winter when economic development will likely have a better idea of timeline, and we’ll know what we can measure and ways we can effectively move the needle.
- The CACVB already has a running list of what we want to include in our next strategic plan, so we’re adding this, since the timing for that would be 25 months from now (with CACVB board approval likely happening well before then – more at the 18-month point – October or December 2027 ahead of planning our budget).



THANK YOU
