



Visit
Tallahassee

LEON COUNTY **Tourist Development Council**

Thursday, November 12, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.
County Commission Chambers - Leon County Courthouse, Fifth Floor
301 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee FL 32301

MEETING AGENDA

- I. Call to Order – **Bo Schmitz, Chairman**
- II. **Special Recognition for TDC Members County Commissioner Bryan Desloge and City Commissioner Elaine Bryant**
- III. Request for Additional Agenda Items – **Bo Schmitz**
- IV. Public Comment
- V. Items for Consent Approval – **Bo Schmitz**
 - September 17, 2020 Meeting Minutes
 - Financial Reports: Division Budget September 2020 Year-to-Date, Tourism Development Tax Collections and Smith Travel Report
 - Advertising/PR Activity Report/Digital Activity
 - Direct Sales, Communications, Visitor Services, and Sports Staff Reports
- VI. General Business – **Bo Schmitz**
 - Research Presentation – 4th Quarter Visitor Study & Year-End Report - Joseph St. Germain, Downs & St. Germain Research
 - Year-in-Review Presentation
 - Sports Events Update
 - Discussion on Development of New Tourism Strategic Plan
 - Proposed 2021 TDC Meeting Dates
 - Tallahassee Sports Council Update
 - COCA Update
- VII. Executive Director’s Report – **Kerri Post**
 - Amphitheater Support Space Update at NAP Cascades Development
- VIII. Additional Business: “For the Good of the Cause” – **Bo Schmitz**

Next TDC Meeting:
Tentative - January 21, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.
County Commission Chambers



**LEON COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
September 17, 2020**

The Leon County Tourist Development Council met virtually for a regular meeting with Chairman Bo Schmitz presiding. Council members present were City Commissioner Elaine Bryant, Mike Collins, Kathleen Spehar, Dr. Amanda Stringer, City Commissioner Dianne Williams-Cox, Sharon Priester, Sam Patel, Matt Thompson, Michelle Personette and County Commissioner Bryan Desloge.

Tourism Staff present: Kerri Post, Aundra Bryant, Katie Gardocki, Dionte Gavin, Amanda Heidecker, Renee Jones, Katie Kole, Scott Lindeman, Terri Messler, Janet Roach and Joseph Piotrowski.

Guests present: Dr. Joseph St. Germain representing Downs & St. Germain Research and Mr. Curtis Zimmerman representing the Zimmerman Agency.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Schmitz called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. Chairman Schmitz read for the record Governor DeSantis' Executive Order 20-69 issued March 20, 2020, and extended by Executive Order 20-112 April 30, 2020, authorizing legal governing bodies, including counties to conduct meetings without having a quorum physically present or at a specific location. He stated the order also authorizes the use of communications media technology for virtual meetings, such as audio and video conferencing. Kerri Post conducted a roll call of TDC members and announced a quorum. TDC members present remotely using *Zoom* as the meeting platform: Commissioner Elaine Bryant, Mike Collins, Kathleen Spehar, Dr. Amanda Stringer, Commissioner Dianne Williams-Cox, Sharon Priester, Sam Patel, Matt Thompson, Michelle Personette and County Commissioner Bryan Desloge. Ms. Post provided information regarding Leon County's Proclamation 2020-7 in advance of the meetings which amended Board Policy 01-05 temporarily established procedures for Leon County to hold virtual meetings as authorized by Executive Order 20-69. She also provided a statement regarding public notice of the virtual public meeting.
- II. **REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS:** Chairman Schmitz confirmed there were no requests for additional agenda items.
- III. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Chairman Schmitz confirmed there were no comments submitted.
- IV. **ITEMS FOR CONSENT APPROVAL:**
 - July 10, 2020, Meeting Minutes
 - Financial Reports: Division Budget July 2020 Year-to-Date, Tourism Development Tax Collections and Smith Travel Report
 - Advertising/PR Activity Report/Digital Activity
 - Direct Sales, Communications, Visitor Services and Sports Staff Reports

Commissioner Desloge moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Bryant, approval of the Items for Consent. The motion passed unanimously.

V. **GENERAL BUISNESS**

Research Presentation - 3rd Quarter Visitor Study

Joseph St. Germain, Ph.D., representing Downs and St. Germain Research presented to the Council the research results for April – June 2020 Visitor Tracking Report. He provided an overview of economic impact, direct spending year-over-year and provided an explanation of the visitor journey.

FY21 Tourism Event Grants Recommendations

Matt Thompson reviewed the recommendations for FY21 Signature Event Grants and Special Event Grants. He thanked fellow Grant Review Committee members Sharon Priester and Michelle Personette for their service. Sharon Priester made note of the new grant system and shared how much it improved the overall process. Mr. Thompson requested that the TDC members support the recommended funding levels that were presented. Commissioner Dianne Williams-Cox questioned discussion regarding one applicant that did not meet the minimum score threshold to receive funding to which it was determined the TDC would readdress shortly next.

Commissioner Desloge moved, seconded by Commissioner Williams-Cox, approval of the FY21 Signature Events/Emerging Signature Grants and Special Event Grant funding recommendations as presented by the Grant Review Committee. The motion passed 8-0 with Matt Thompson abstaining from the vote due to conflict of interest.

Kerri Post thanked the Grant Review Committee and reaffirmed the grant budget had been reduced over 40%. Due to the numerous event cancellations in FY20 due to COVID-19, she shared that the remaining grant funds from FY20 will be requested to carry forward into FY21 to be able to provide a second cycle of grants in January 2021. She proposed providing a budget update during the November TDC meeting as well as the potential to review a proposed second grant cycle at the beginning of the year.

Commissioner Williams-Cox moved, seconded by Commissioner Bryant to review the possibility for a second grant cycle at November's TDC meeting, using grant funds that will be carry forward from FY20. The motion passed unanimously.

FY21 Marketing and Sales Plans Highlights

Ms. Katie Kole highlighted the Marketing and Communications Sales Plan, and Visitor Services Work plan for FY21, promoting Tallahassee as a safe destination for travel on all platforms. She shared that the Agency Marketing Plan would be presented shortly and continued to highlight marketing staff plans to support partners through hosting quarterly meetings, whether virtual or in-person, creating a new Community Event Awareness Program generating community awareness when a large event or meeting is in town, the new Online Grant Management system, a new satellite Visitor Information Center at North American Properties/Amphitheater Support Space. She noted the travel budget has been strategically reduced while maintaining high exposure events and VISIT FLORIDA Media Missions.

Amanda Heidecker then highlighted changes in the Sales industry due to COVID-19 and the Sales team plans moving forward through building success with meeting planners in key markets, partner involvement and expanding on sports success with events and meetings. She shared the Sales team is looking to capitalize on marketing the new and renovated hotels for both leisure and meetings as well as working to position Tallahassee

as an outdoor hiking, biking and kayaking destination to Sports and event planners. Ms. Heidecker noted she is looking to fall and spring to expand sports with the re-opening of Apalachee Regional Park and potential IMBA designation from the International Mountain Biking Association. Kerri Post added that with the additional new properties in the market Tallahassee will have an increase in hotel capacity of 20% this year and that staff is targeting to fill those rooms with group and leisure bookings that are a good fit for our community.

Marketing Plan Presentation – CARES Act Funding

To introduce the Marketing Plan presentation, Kerri Post shared the positive news that the Division of Tourism received \$700,000 in C.A.R.E.S. Act funding from Leon County to safely and responsibly market the destination, it must be spent before the end of the 2020 calendar year. Mr. Curtis Zimmerman, representing the Zimmerman Agency and Ms. Katie Kole presented an overview of the Marketing Plan utilizing C.A.R.E.S. Act Funding. He shared the specifics of the C.A.R.E.S. Act Creative Campaign that has been and will be directed by health and safety guidelines as well as consumer sentiment in five stages: Respond, Engage, Rebound and Expand and finally, the New Normal. Michelle Personette requested information regarding the status of media familiarization tours and Katie Kole shared journalists are beginning to show interest in travel again and staff has begun to engage in “virtual desk side” meetings with media via Zoom. She shared that the Marketing staff also has a VISIT FLORIDA FAM trip planned for November, as well as a few confirmed media stays in October.

FY21 Sports Grants Recommendations and Tallahassee Sports Council Update

Mike Collins, Tallahassee Sports Council Chairman provided updates on the Tallahassee Sports Council. He presented the FY 21 Sports Grant recommendations in the amount of \$60,000 in grants for 43 events.

Michelle Personette moved, seconded by Sharon Priester, approval of the Tallahassee Sports Council FY21 Sports Event 1st Cycle Grant funding recommendations. The motion passed unanimously. Mike Collins stated for the record his conflict of interest and recusal..

Mr. Collins stated that IMBA will be coming in November as part of the application process for designation as a Bronze level Ride Center with the International Mountain Biking Association Destination and shared the upcoming sports events schedule.

Request to Move Next TDC Meeting to November 12 from November 5

Kerri Post requested to move the next TDC meeting from November 5, to November 12 due to several scheduling conflicts. The request was granted by the TDC.

COCA Update

Kathleen Spehar shared COCA highlights working with artists to assist with grant programs. She shared the new mobile-friendly arts guide has been made available online. Ms. Spehar reported area artists continue to shift to create select live and virtual experiences and programs that tell the COCA story as well as help build the COCA brand through a new “get out and get artsy” program.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

- Kerri Post shared that earlier in the week the BOCC voted to allow cross-country events to take place with additional safety protocols with the requirement that Tourism staff bring back a post-race report update at the BOCC’s October 13, 2020 meeting. Considerable discussion ensued regarding the future of organized

sports and safety protocols.

- Ms. Post recognized Janet Roach and Katie Gardocki to present the renewed Meetings & Groups expanded section on VisitTallahassee.com website.
- Ms. Post reported that the Division has hosted 30 consecutive virtual weekly meetings/webinars to date since COVID-19 began and featuring over 90 guest speakers between March 19 and September 9, 2020, as a means sharing resources and best practices for tourism industry partners in Leon County.

VII. **ADDITIONAL BUSINESS: "FOR THE GOOD OF THE CAUSE" – Bo Schmitz**

Chairman Schmitz and the Council recognized and thanked Commissioner Bryant for her service on the TDC. Commissioner Bryant will be honored formally for her service on the council at the November meeting.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 11:06 a.m.

Attest: Bo Schmitz,
Chairman

Attest: Renee Jones,
Public Relations & Marketing Specialist

Leon County Tourist Development Council
Statement of Cash Flow
Period Ending September 30, 2020

4-Cents Collections		YTD	September	FY 2019/20	% Revenue	
Acct #	REVENUES	Actuals	Actuals	Budget	Received	Variance
312100	Local Option Tax (4-cents)	\$ 3,779,099.41	\$ 306,099.04	\$ 4,673,848	81%	(894,749)
361320	Tax Collector FS 125.315	\$ -	-	-		-
361111	Pooled Interest Allocation	\$ 129,510.00	42,702.00	102,600		
365000	Merchandise Sales	\$ 4,805.15	434.83	3,634		
366500	Special Event Grant Reimbursements	\$ -	-	12,500		
366930	Other Contributions/Partnerships	\$ -	-	2,400		
361300	Interest Inc/FMV Adjustment	\$ -	-	-		
369900	Miscellaneous Revenue	\$ 19,534.19	-	72,500		
399900	Appropriated Fund Balance	\$ -	-	414,525		
Total Estimated Receipts				5,282,007		
		\$ 3,932,948.75	\$ 349,235.87			

Acct #	EXPENDITURES	YTD	September	FY 2019/20	FY 2019/20	% Budget	Under/
	<i>Administration (301)</i>	Actuals	Actuals	Adopt. Budget	Adj. Budget	Spent	(Over)
51200	Salaries & Wages	\$ 235,128.39	\$ 20,124.51	\$ 228,062	\$ 228,062	103%	\$ (7,066)
51250	Regular OPS Salaries & Wages	\$ 16,618.87	1,479.35	16,386	16,386	101%	(233)
51500	Special Pay	\$ -	-	1,100	1,100	0%	1,100
52100	FICA	\$ 18,580.60	1,588.62	18,980	18,980	98%	399
52200	Retirement Contributions	\$ 45,886.63	4,231.38	42,359	42,359	108%	(3,528)
52210	Deferred Compensation	\$ 489.72	42.60	766	766	64%	276
52300	Life & Health Insurance	\$ 33,755.98	3,152.80	33,444	33,444	101%	(312)
52400	Workers Compensation	\$ 453.08	38.87	378	378	120%	(75)
53400	Other Contractual Services	\$ 104,037.48	1,662.50	160,700	160,700	65%	56,663
54000	Travel & Per Diem	\$ 163.24	-	7,500	7,500	2%	7,337
54101	Communications - Phone System	\$ 265.00	265.00	480	480	55%	215
54300	Utilities-160-950-591001-552	\$ -	-	-	-	0%	-
54400	Rental & Leases	\$ 46,834.75	8,845.00	50,000	50,000	94%	3,165
54505	Vehicle Coverage	\$ 366.00	366.00	366	366	100%	-
54600	Repair & Maintenance	\$ 80.00	-	34,000	34,000	0%	33,920
54601	Vehicle Repair	\$ 162.92	156.00	580	580	28%	417
54900	Other Current Charges	\$ 908.32	-	1,971	1,971	46%	1,063
55100	Office Supplies	\$ 429.45	-	1,000	1,000	43%	571
55200	Operating Supplies	\$ 801.98	-	3,000	3,000	27%	2,198
55210	Fuel & Oil	\$ 23.90	23.90	415	415	6%	391
55400	Publications, Memberships	\$ 360.00	-	2,300	2,300	16%	1,940
55401	Training	\$ 2,720.00	-	3,000	3,000	91%	280
<i>Advertising/Public Relations (302)</i>							
53400	Other Contractual Services	\$ 1,017,434.91	\$ 142,382.49	\$ 1,616,473	\$ 1,843,473	55%	\$ 826,038
<i>Marketing (303)</i>							
51200	Salaries & Wages	\$ 496,000.84	\$ 43,427.23	\$ 456,399	\$ 456,399	109%	\$ (39,602)
51210	Regular OPS Salaries & Wages	\$ 16,619.11	1,479.37	16,386	16,386	101%	(233)
51500	Special Pay	\$ -	-	2,000	2,000	0%	2,000
52100	FICA	\$ 38,247.44	3,346.33	37,276	37,276	103%	(971)
52200	Retirement Contributions	\$ 43,277.44	4,326.66	40,308	40,308	107%	(2,969)
52210	Deferred Compensation	\$ -	-	-	-		-
52300	Life & Health Insurance	\$ 38,179.50	3,509.30	73,799	73,799	52%	35,620
52400	Workers Compensation	\$ 1,704.85	149.25	1,417	1,417	120%	(288)
53400	Other Contractual Services	\$ 65,552.40	7,350.00	125,500	125,500	52%	59,948
54000	Travel & Per Diem	\$ 10,506.07	147.00	72,925	72,925	14%	62,419
54100	Communications Services	\$ 2,507.58	-	7,823	7,823	32%	5,315
54101	Communications - Phone system	\$ 1,140.00	1,140.00	1,140	1,140	100%	-
54200	Postage	\$ 1,220.55	-	43,700	43,700	3%	42,479
54400	Rental & Leases	\$ 9,431.99	8,420.00	8,420	8,420	112%	(1,012)
54700	Printing	\$ 7,600.84	-	16,500	16,500	46%	8,899
54800	Promotional Activities	\$ 52,148.40	9.98	67,000	67,000	78%	14,852
54860	TDC Direct Sales Promotions	\$ 4,025.00	30.00	52,290	60,790	7%	56,765
54861	TDC Community Relations	\$ 5,395.82	-	38,000	38,000	14%	32,604

54862	TDC Merchandise	\$	5,383.50	342.84	7,500	7,500	72%	2,117
54900	Other Current Charges	\$	404,308.95	2,266.85	540,000	590,000	69%	185,691
54948	Other Current Chrg - Amphitheater	\$	213,514.29	-	315,000	410,000	52%	196,486
55100	Office Supplies	\$	1,896.73	34.99	3,700	3,700	51%	1,803
55200	Operating Supplies	\$	129.59	-	5,000	5,000	3%	4,870
52250	Uniforms	\$	233.36	-	4,500	4,500	5%	4,267

Acct #	EXPENDITURES		YTD	September	FY 2019/20	FY 2019/20	% Budget	Under/
	<i>Administration (303)(Continued)</i>		Actuals	Actuals	Adopt. Budget	Adj. Budget	Spent	(Over)
55400	Publications, Memberships	\$	10,753.08	\$ 4,258.11	\$ 24,028	\$ 24,028	45%	13,275
55401	Training	\$	(735.00)	-	10,000	10,000	-7%	10,735
56400	Machinery & Equipment	\$	-	-	-	-		-
58160	TDC Local T&E	\$	1,468.17	-	1,500	1,500	98%	32
58320	Sponsorship & Contributions	\$	26,590.00	25,840.00	36,000	53,000	50%	26,410
	<i>Special Events/Grants (304)</i>							
58300	Grants & Aids	\$	424,547.28	29,160.62	765,000	765,000	55%	340,453
	<i>Welcome Center CIP (086065)</i>							
56200	Building	\$	-	-	-	-		-
	<i>Countywide Automation (470)</i>							
54110	Com-net Communications	\$	4,735.00	4,735.00	4,735	4,735	100%	-
54600	Repairs and Maintenance	\$	3,087.00	3,087.00	3,087	3,087	100%	-
	<i>Risk Allocations (495)</i>							
54500	Insurance	\$	3,587.67	3,587.67	5,364	5,364	67%	1,776
	<i>Indirect Cost (499)</i>							
54900	Indirect Cost Charges	\$	221,000.00	221,000	221,000	221,000	100%	-
	<i>Line Item Funding - (888)</i>							
58214	Cultural Facilities Grant Program	\$	346,151.64	-	-	317,000	109%	(29,152)
58215	Local Arts Agency Program	\$	945,003.01	-	1,168,462	1,168,462	81%	223,459
	<i>Transfers (950)</i>							
591220	Transfer to Fund 220	\$	-	-	-	-	0%	-
591220	Transfer to Fund 305	\$	291,666.70	29,166.67	350,000	350,000	0%	58,333
	<i>Salary Contingency (990)</i>							
59900	Other Non-operating Uses	\$	-	-	50,000	50,000	0%	50,000
	Reserve for Fund Balance	\$	-	-	-	-		-
	Total Expenditures	\$	5,222,380.02	\$ 581,173.89	\$ 6,799,019	\$ 7,513,519		

1-Cent Collections

Acct #	REVENUES		YTD	September	FY 2019/20	FY 2019/20	% Revenue	Variance
			Actuals	Actuals	Adopt. Budget	Adj. Budget	Received	
312110	Local Option Resort (1 -cent)	\$	944,774.83	\$ 76,524.76	\$ 1,168,462	\$ 1,168,462	81%	223,687
361111	Pooled Interest	\$	-	-	-	-		-
361320	Tax Collector FS 125.315	\$	-	-	-	-		-
366930	Refund from Prior Years	\$	-	-	-	-		-
	Total Revenues		944,774.83	76,524.76	\$ 1,168,462	\$ 1,168,462		

Acct #	EXPENDITURES		YTD	September	FY 2019/20	FY 2019/20	% Budget	Under/
			Actuals	Actuals	Adopt. Budget	Adj. Budget	Spent	(Over)
58100	Aids to Government Agencies	\$	-	\$ -	\$ 5,107,770	\$ 5,107,770	0%	5,107,770
	Total Expenditures	\$	-	\$ -	\$ 5,107,770	\$ 5,107,770	0%	5,107,770

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT As of September 30, 2020

REVENUES

¹- Revenue for the 4-cent collections \$ 306,099.04

² - Revenue for the 1-cent collections \$ 76,524.76

EXPENSES

Grant program payments for FY20 - \$ 29,160.62 during this period.

Acct #	EXPENDITURES	FY20 Adopted Budget	FY20 Adjusted Budget	YTD Actuals as of 9/30/20	Projected Expenditures Remainder of FY	Total	Projected Year-End Savings	% of Adjusted Budget Savings as of 9/30/20
51200	Salaries & Wages	684,461	684,461	731,129.23	-	731,129.23	(46,668)	-6.82%
51250	Regular OPS Salaries & Wages	32,772	32,772	33,259.53	-	33,259.53	(488)	-1.49%
51500	Special Pay	3,100	3,100	-	-	-	3,100	100.00%
52100	FICA	56,256	56,256	56,829.69	-	56,829.69	(574)	-1.02%
52200	Retirement Contributions	82,667	82,667	90,081.05	-	90,081.05	(7,414)	-8.97%
52210	Deferred Compensation	766	766	489.72	-	489.72	276	36.07%
52300	Life & Health Insurance	107,243	107,243	71,935.49	-	71,935.49	35,308	32.92%
52400	Workers Compensation	1,795	1,795	2,157.97	-	2,157.97	(363)	-20.22%
53400	Other Contractual Services	286,200	286,200	203,064.73	-	203,064.73	83,135	29.05%
54000	Travel & Per Diem	80,425	80,425	19,637.81	-	19,637.81	60,787	75.58%
54101	Communications - Phone System	1,405	1,405	1,405.00	-	1,405.00	-	0.00%
54100	Communications Services	8,303	8,303	5,114.93	-	5,114.93	3,188	38.40%
54102	DMS Centrex	1,185	1,185	1,185.00	-	1,185.00	-	0.00%
54200	Postage	43,700	43,700	1,690.71	-	1,690.71	42,009	96.13%
54400	Rental & Leases	58,420	58,420	53,767.45	-	53,767.45	4,653	7.96%
54500	Insurance	5,364	5,364	3,587.67	-	3,587.67	1,776	33.12%
54505	Vehicle Coverage	366	366	366.00	-	366.00	-	0.00%
54600	Repair & Maintenance	37,087	37,087	5,147.41	-	5,147.41	31,940	86.12%
54601	Vehicle Repair	580	580	633.20	-	633.20	(53)	-9.17%
54700	Printing and Binding	16,500	16,500	8,412.06	-	8,412.06	8,088	49.02%
54800	Promotional Activities	67,000	67,000	46,954.65	-	46,954.65	20,045	29.92%
54860	TDC Direct Sales Promotions	52,290	60,790	11,340.23	-	11,340.23	49,450	81.35%
54861	TDC Community Relations	38,000	38,000	6,005.82	-	6,005.82	31,994	84.20%
54862	TDC Merchandise	7,500	7,500	7,208.15	-	7,208.15	292	3.89%
54900	Other Current Charges	540,000	591,971	438,296.74	20,000	458,296.74	133,674	22.58%
54948	Other Current Chrg - Amphitheater	315,000	410,000	213,514.29	-	213,514.29	196,486	47.92%
55100	Office Supplies	4,700	4,700	3,583.44	-	3,583.44	1,117	23.76%
55200	Operating Supplies	8,000	8,000	3,905.97	-	3,905.97	4,094	51.18%
55210	Fuel & Oil	415	415	75.66	-	75.66	339	81.77%
55400	Publications, Memberships	26,328	26,328	10,408.03	-	10,408.03	15,920	60.47%
55401	Training	13,000	13,000	2,470.00	-	2,470.00	10,530	81.00%
58160	TDC Local T&E	1,500	1,500	1,468.17	-	1,468.17	32	2.12%
58320	Sponsorship & Contributions	36,000	53,000	27,590.00	-	27,590.00	25,410	47.94%
Advertising/Public Relations								
53400	Other Contractual Services	1,616,473	1,843,473	1,017,434.91	-	1,017,434.91	\$ 826,038	44.81%
Special Events/Grants								
58300	Grants & Aids	765,000	765,000	350,921.57	-	350,921.57	\$ 414,078	54.13%
	Amphitheater Support Buildout-FFE		200,000	-	200,000	200,000.00	\$ -	0.00%
Total		4,999,801	5,599,272	3,431,072	220,000	3,651,072	1,948,200	34.79%
Indirect Costs:								
Countywide Automation (470)								
54110	Com-net Communications	4,735	4,735	4,735.00	-	4,735.00	\$ -	0.00%
54600	Repairs and Maintenance	3,087	3,087	3,087.00	-	3,087.00	\$ -	0.00%
Risk Allocations (495)								
54500	Insurance	5,364	5,364	3,587.67	-	3,587.67	\$ 1,776	33.12%
Indirect Cost (499)								
54900	Indirect Cost Charges	221,000	221,000	221,000.00	-	221,000.00	\$ -	0.00%
Transfers (950)								
591220	Transfer to Fund 220							
591220	Transfer to Fund 305	-	350,000	350,000.00	-	350,000.00	\$ -	0.00%
Salary Contingency (990)								
59900	Other Non-operating Uses							
	Reserve for Fund Balance	50,000	50,000	-	-	-	\$ 50,000	100.00%
Total		5,283,987	6,233,458	4,013,482	220,000	4,233,482	1,999,976	32.08%

Date Created: Oct 16, 2020

Visit Tallahassee

For the Month of September 2020



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Corporate North American Headquarters
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industryinfo@str.com www.str.com

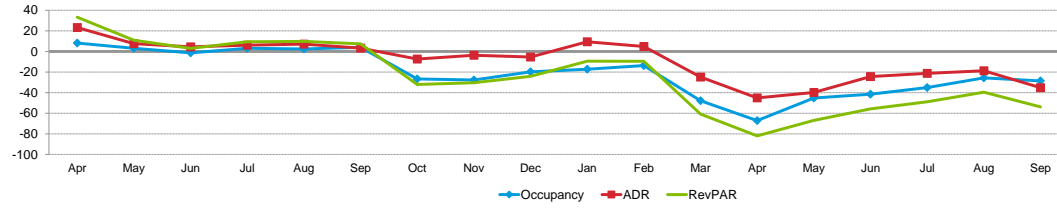
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Tab 2 - Trend Leon County, FL

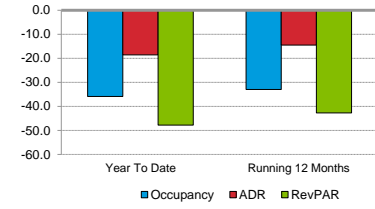
Currency: USD - US Dollar

Visit Tallahassee
For the Month of September 2020

Monthly Percent Change



Overall Percent Change



Occupancy (%)	2019												2020					
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
This Year	72.2	65.3	70.5	66.4	69.5	64.0	63.3	60.8	53.4	60.5	70.1	43.3	23.7	35.8	41.2	43.1	51.7	45.7
Last Year	66.7	63.3	71.5	64.4	67.8	61.6	86.3	84.1	66.5	73.1	81.2	83.2	72.2	65.3	70.5	66.4	69.5	64.0
Percent Change	8.2	3.1	-1.4	3.1	2.5	4.1	-26.6	-27.7	-19.8	-17.2	-13.7	-47.9	-67.1	-45.1	-41.6	-35.1	-25.7	-28.6

Year To Date			
2018	2019	2020	
67.5	71.6	45.9	
68.3	67.5	71.6	
-1.2	6.2	-35.9	

Running 12 Months			
2018	2019	2020	
66.8	73.4	49.2	
67.4	66.8	73.4	
-0.9	10.0	-33.0	

ADR	2019												2020					
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
This Year	121.11	115.35	95.35	92.05	106.90	123.45	119.16	116.52	95.71	116.12	120.05	94.12	66.47	69.44	72.14	72.52	86.92	79.96
Last Year	98.28	107.20	91.28	86.77	99.80	119.59	128.68	121.01	101.19	106.07	114.47	125.12	121.11	115.35	95.35	92.05	106.90	123.45
Percent Change	23.2	7.6	4.5	6.1	7.1	3.2	-7.4	-3.7	-5.4	9.5	4.9	-24.8	-45.1	-39.8	-24.3	-21.2	-18.7	-35.2

Year To Date			
2018	2019	2020	
101.51	111.35	90.65	
98.51	101.51	111.35	
3.0	9.7	-18.6	

Running 12 Months			
2018	2019	2020	
103.01	113.15	96.76	
101.43	103.01	113.15	
1.6	9.9	-14.5	

RevPAR	2019												2020					
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
This Year	87.42	75.34	67.19	61.10	74.31	79.07	75.45	70.82	51.07	70.24	84.17	40.80	15.77	24.89	29.71	31.23	44.92	36.56
Last Year	65.59	67.90	65.23	55.85	67.72	73.61	111.03	101.75	67.34	77.52	93.00	104.04	87.42	75.34	67.19	61.10	74.31	79.07
Percent Change	33.3	11.0	3.0	9.4	9.7	7.4	-32.0	-30.4	-24.2	-9.4	-9.5	-60.8	-82.0	-67.0	-55.8	-48.9	-39.6	-53.8

Year To Date			
2018	2019	2020	
68.47	79.77	41.64	
67.25	68.47	79.77	
1.8	16.5	-47.8	

Running 12 Months			
2018	2019	2020	
68.78	83.09	47.61	
68.32	68.78	83.09	
0.7	20.8	-42.7	

Supply	2019												2020					
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
This Year	173,850	179,645	173,850	179,645	179,645	173,850	179,645	176,490	182,373	182,373	164,724	184,388	178,440	184,388	178,440	184,388	188,821	182,730
Last Year	169,500	175,150	169,500	175,150	175,150	169,500	175,150	170,820	179,707	179,707	162,288	179,676	173,850	179,645	173,850	179,645	179,645	173,850
Percent Change	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	3.3	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	5.1	5.1	5.1

Year To Date			
2018	2019	2020	
1,522,550	1,582,156	1,628,692	
1,486,290	1,522,550	1,582,156	
2.4	3.9	2.9	

Running 12 Months			
2018	2019	2020	
2,015,670	2,107,833	2,167,200	
1,989,654	2,015,670	2,107,833	
1.3	4.6	2.8	

Demand	2019												2020					
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
This Year	125,493	117,330	122,504	119,253	124,878	111,348	113,749	107,266	97,324	110,312	115,494	79,922	42,331	66,079	73,490	79,414	97,579	83,535
Last Year	113,119	110,929	121,129	112,732	118,837	104,329	151,124	143,630	119,585	131,336	131,837	149,406	125,493	117,330	122,504	119,253	124,878	111,348
Percent Change	10.9	5.8	1.1	5.8	5.1	6.7	-24.7	-25.3	-18.6	-16.0	-12.4	-46.5	-66.3	-43.7	-40.0	-33.4	-21.9	-25.0

Year To Date			
2018	2019	2020	
1,027,071	1,133,385	748,156	
1,014,612	1,027,071	1,133,385	
1.2	10.4	-34.0	

Running 12 Months			
2018	2019	2020	
1,345,920	1,547,724	1,066,495	
1,340,264	1,345,920	1,547,724	
0.4	15.0	-31.1	

Revenue	2019												2020					
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
This Year	15,198,642	13,533,942	11,680,279	10,977,198	13,349,516	13,745,655	13,554,687	12,498,442	9,314,577	12,808,969	13,865,112	7,522,614	2,813,614	4,588,754	5,301,809	5,758,883	8,481,807	6,679,754
Last Year	11,117,844	11,891,919	11,056,771	9,781,267	11,860,346	12,476,360	19,447,253	17,380,231	12,100,745	13,931,203	15,092,007	18,693,647	15,198,642	13,533,942	11,680,279	10,977,198	13,349,516	13,745,655
Percent Change	36.7	13.8	5.6	12.2	12.6	10.2	-30.3	-28.1	-23.0	-8.1	-8.1	-59.8	-81.5	-66.1	-54.6	-47.5	-36.5	-51.4

Year To Date			
2018	2019	2020	
104,253,679	126,202,089	67,821,316	
99,947,918	104,253,679	126,202,089	
4.3	21.1	-46.3	

Running 12 Months			
2018	2019	2020	
138,638,199	175,130,319	103,189,022	
135,936,697	138,638,199	175,130,319	
2.0	26.3	-41.1	

Census %	2019												2020					
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Census Props	61	61	61	61	61	61	61	61	61	61	61	62	62	62	62	63	63	63
Census Rooms	5795	5795	5795	5795	5795	5795	5795	5883	5883	5883	5883	5948	5948	5948	5948	6091	6091	6091
% Rooms Participants	89.5	89.5	89.5	89.5	89.5	89.5	89.5	90.9	90.9	90.9	90.9	91.0	91.0	91.0	91.0	91.2	91.2	91.2

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FISCAL YEAR 2020 *Highlights*

Despite a pandemic that stalled tourism for 6 months of 2020, Visit Tallahassee enjoyed several positive increases as the marketing efforts were readjusted and realigned around the consumer travel lockdown. Due to CARES Act funding which allowed us to keep media, PR and social media spending at a functional level, our efforts continued to drive interest in the destination.

- Developed and launched a new VisitTallahassee.com website and Visit Tallahassee mobile app designed to appeal to today's mobile user.
- Developed and launched a new "Pretty. Unexpected." brand campaign designed to feature the beauty of Tallahassee and the unexpected aspects of the destination.
- Trailahassee.com flourished during the pandemic, with an increase in traffic by 18%.
- While overall traffic decreased, VisitTallahassee.com saw a rise in usage as a trip planning source (+6% vs. YAG).
- Public Relations publicity value surpassed goal by 97% (\$1.9MM in value).
- Instagram followers increased by 18% as consumer wanderlust thrived during lockdown.
- Paid search (e.g. Google text ads) campaigns garnered a 12.33% CTR, a 28% increase YoY and well above the industry average of 9.87%.
- Across all platforms, paid social efforts generated more than 5.5M impressions, 266,415 engagements and 29,522 clicks to the website.

FY2020 KPIs	FY2020 RESULTS	
Increase traffic to VisitTallahassee.com by 4%	Achieved 35% of goal (234,986)	X
Increase page views on VisitTallahassee.com by 4%	Achieved 37% of goal (477,020)	X
Increase traffic to Trailahassee.com by 5%	Achieved 112% of goal (38,960)	✓
Increase page views on Trailahassee.com by 5%	Achieved 116% of goal (73,453)	✓
Increase open rate for emails to 17%	Achieved 47% of goal (8%)	X
Improve click rate to 7%	Achieved 200% of goal (14%)	✓
Increase Instagram engagements by 10%	Achieved 67% of goal (181,352)	X
Increase Instagram followers by 16,000	Achieved 174% of goal (17,265)	✓
Increase Facebook engagements by 10%	Achieved 72% of goal (224,312)	X
Increase Facebook followers to 72,500	Achieved 12% of goal (66,934)	X
Increase Twitter engagements by 20%	Achieved 15% of goal (39,295)	X
Increase Twitter followers to 14,500	Achieved 39% of goal (14,140)	X
Increase #iHeartTally engagements by 15%	Achieved 81% of goal (50,398,855)	X
Increase PR earned media placements to 200	Achieved 185% of goal (370)	✓
Increase PR impressions to 100MM	Achieved 500% of goal (503M)	✓
Increase PR publicity value to \$1MM	Achieved 197% of goal (\$1.9M)	✓
Increase PR media experiences to 18	Achieved 88% of goal (14)	X
Increase PR radio promotions to 8	Achieved 113% of goal (9)	✓
Increase PR co-op promotions	Achieved 100% of goal (1)	✓



FY 2020 PUBLIC RELATIONS *Highlights*



- Visit Tallahassee received a total of **503,431,123** impressions, valued at **\$1,970,005** - resulting in an 18:1 ROI.
- **370** total earned media placements were secured highlighting Tallahassee within key outlets including Southern Living, MSN, Forbes, Okra Magazine, US News & World Report and more.
- Hosted 14 media + influencer stays, driving excitement for future travel through personalized experiences.
- Negotiated nine broadcast radio promotions in key drive markets including Jacksonville, Pensacola, Tampa, West Palm Beach and Birmingham.
- Secured national media mission appointments with Southern Lady and The Cottage Journal.
- Landed a national broadcast TV opportunity with CBS No. 1 gameshow, 'Let's Make a Deal' - reaching **4.5** million viewers.
- Partnered with Birdwatching Magazine for an in-book promotion, valued at nearly **\$80,000**.





FY 2020 VISITTALLAHASSEE.COM Highlights

- Developed and launched a new VisitTallahassee.com website and Visit Tallahassee mobile app designed to appeal to today's mobile user. Both will be the instrumental driving force behind all digital efforts going forward with a contemporary design and user-friendly experience.
- For 2020 all traffic sources were down due to the effects of Covid-19. Organic and Display were the main contributors toward the decrease.
 - *Locals stayed home and tourists halted travel for the majority of the year.*
 - *Paid media was suspended for 6+months having a significant impact on traffic.*
- The highest viewed page (behind the homepage), Events was down 73% due to events being cancelled for the year.
- However, engagement for the site was up - longer time of site and more pages being viewed.

Top Markets:

Atlanta
Jacksonville
Orlando

Top Pages:

Home
Events
Arts and Culture

SESSIONS: **234,986**
AVERAGE PAGES VISITED: **2.03**
AVERAGE SESSION DURATION: **2:21**

FY 2020 TRAILAHASSEE.COM Highlights

- While VisitTallahassee.com traffic was hit hard after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Trailahassee.com flourished during the pandemic due to users looking for safe outdoor activities. There was an 18% increase in traffic YoY.
- Organic Search was up almost 100%.
- Thanks to the new website content, social media engagement and email newsletter updates, the site was able to outperform last year.

Top Viewed Trails:

Miccosukee Greenway Trail
Wakulla River Trail
Lafayette Heritage Trail

Top Markets:

Tallahassee increased 57% YoY
Miami increased 53% YoY
Orlando increased 15% YoY

SESSIONS: **38,960**
AVERAGE PAGES VISITED: **1.90**
AVERAGE SESSION DURATION: **1:19**



FY 2020 DIGITAL MEDIA **Highlights**

- New VisitTallahassee.com website went live 2 weeks before pandemic, so ½ year was full paid support with the old website, and ½ year was re-adjusted support with the new website. The digital success can largely be attributed to the improved website, new content, new email and social support.
- 14,789,000+ total digital media impressions delivered.
- Digital media accounted for 27% of website click-through traffic.
 - *Paid Search was the strongest performing medium this year in terms of click-through traffic, generating almost 14% of VisitTallahassee.com's web traffic alone (9% Native, 4% Display).*
- The digital display ads operated at an average of 0.32% CTR over the course of the year.
 - *The display campaign also garnered an additional 16,954 view-through sessions mostly attributed to programmatic display banners.*
 - *Top performing creative centered around the outdoors and outdoor activities.*
- Paid search campaigns garnered a 12.33% CTR, a 28% increase YoY and well above the industry average of 9.87%.
 - *Paid Search also garnered a total of 22,487 conversions (clicks to secondary pages on the site i.e. Stay, Events, Seasonal, and Email sign-up pages), operating at a strong 68% conversion rate.*
 - *Top performing campaigns centered around events and concerts related searches.*

FY 2020 EMAIL MARKETING **Highlights**

- Email design was re-tooled for consistency within the new brand campaign, and the visitor database was scrubbed for greater efficiency and up-to-date lists.
- Local target emails perform better than overall consumer database with an average email open rate of 11% and click rate of 15%.
- Featured Trail emails receive 8.5% open rate and click rate of 13%.
- Full consumer database (100k +) averages a 2% open rate and a 12% click rate.
- The “Pretty. Unexpected.” campaign was largest email contributor.
- 63% of emails were viewed on desktop which is much higher than last year's 37%.

The Highest Viewed Area Was:
Promotions and Blogs

• **Average Open Rate:**
8%

• **Average Click Rate:**
14%



FY 2020 SOCIAL MEDIA *Highlights*

- Even with COVID impacting the tourism industry, Visit Tallahassee’s social media presence saw positive results.
 - *This can be attributed to an increase of “staycations” and day-tripping messaging.*
- Four of the key primary goals for the FY were more than 65% to goal without the assistance of paid media for more than a third of the year.
 - *Instagram followers exceeded the goal by 73%.*
 - Spikes in account growth aligned with ticket giveaways, paid advertising resuming in August, and college freshman students arriving in the Tallahassee area.
- Followers were most engaged with content that featured trails, greenways, murals and notable local gems (such as canopy roads and Bradley’s Country Store).
 - *Additionally, spotlighting partner accolades and events received positive reactions and high engagement.*
 - For example, the announcement of Tallahassee being named Southern Living’s Top 10 City of the South for the second consecutive year. Also named a Best College Town and home to the Best Garden Center (Tallahassee Nurseries).
- The top markets that engage with Visit Tallahassee’s social media platforms include Atlanta, Jacksonville, Tampa, and Orlando.
 - *Pensacola and Panama City also garnered a high amount of engagement.*
- #iHeartTally continues to enjoy significant organic growth and usage across Visit Tallahassee’s audiences.
- Across all platforms, paid social efforts generated more than 5.5M impressions, 266,415 engagements and 29,522 clicks to the website.

FY 2020 SOCIAL MEDIA *Snapshot*

Total Fans	Total Reached	Total Engagements	Total Impressions	Total #iHeartTally
98,339	4,689,595	444,959	8,659,306	50,398,855



FY 2020 *Instagram* HIGHLIGHTS

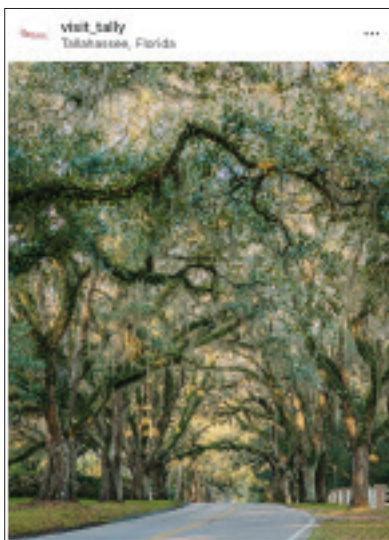
- Visit Tallahassee's Instagram reached a total of **2.2M** potential visitors and garnered **3.4M** impressions during the year.
 - *1.2M potential visitors and 2.2M impressions are from paid efforts.*
- Visit Tallahassee hosted six organic FSU basketball ticket giveaways via Instagram. These posts garnered a total of **2,732** engagements and **29.6k** impressions.
 - *While hosting these giveaways, many new followers were gained.*
- Top performing posts included outdoor scenery (canopy roads, greenways, and Wakulla Springs)



• **NEW FOLLOWERS:**
2,985

• **TOTAL FOLLOWERS:**
17,265

• **ENGAGEMENTS:**
181,352





FY 2020 *Facebook* HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit Tallahassee's Facebook posts garnered **6.64M** impressions and **1.64M** unique users engaged with the page.
- Followers are primarily women between 45 and 54 years old, located in Florida. **71%** women vs. **28%** men.
 - *Users that engaged with our content on Facebook were primarily 25-34 years old, located in Florida, 46.9% women vs. 44.9% men.*
- The top videos based on engagement were the paid Reengagement Campaign ("That's the Beautiful Thing About Tallahassee") Video ads and Wakulla River (organic) video.
- The top reacted posts on Facebook included a shout out of The Kool Beanz Cafe Pastry Chef for being nominated for a James Beard award and the announcement of the February Boyz II Men show.



- **NEW FOLLOWERS:**
725
- **TOTAL PAGE LIKES:**
66,934
- **ENGAGEMENTS:**
224,312





FY 2020 *Twitter* HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit Tallahassee's top Tweets included event spotlights like Market Days, FSU Basketball shout outs, and nature imagery such as Lake Jackson and canopy roads.
- There were over **7,600** #iHeartTally mentions YTD via Twitter.
- Top users interests include:
 - Family
 - Food and Drink
 - Arts and Crafts
 - Photo and Video
 - Travel



- NEW FOLLOWERS:
541
- TOTAL FOLLOWERS:
14,140
- ENGAGEMENTS:
39,295





MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2020

Katie Kole, Senior Marketing Director
Scott Lindeman, Marketing Communications Director
Renee Jones, PR/Marketing Specialist

AT A GLANCE



FY2020 Media Stories

Goal: 200

FY2020 Media Stories: 390

Media Stories

Aug. & Sept. = 22



FY2020 Media Value

Goal: \$1 Million

YTD Media Value

\$3,444,154

Media Value for

June & July = \$193,573



YTD Social Media

Engagements: 225,350

Facebook Likes: 66,934

Instagram Followers: 17,000

Twitter Followers: 14,100



Powerful Women

On August 26, we celebrated local "Leading Ladies" via a Zoom call on the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote.

MISSION STATEMENT

Position Tallahassee/Leon County as a desirable destination to targeted geographic, demographic and psychographic markets through public relations, owned & earned media, marketing, promotional campaigns, advertising and local industry relations.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Continued hosting weekly industry conference calls / Zoom Meetings with partners to discuss COVID-19 and the status of the tourism industry. In August and September we hosted 9 meetings featuring 33 guest speakers.
- Hosted writer/photographer Patrick Connolly on assignment from the *Orlando Sentinel* for an "Explore Florida" piece featuring our biking, hiking and paddling trails.
- Participated in two site visits including the new Hotel Indigo that opened in August in College Town and the Amphitheater Support Space & Visitor Center under construction at the Park View project at Cascades Park.
- Generated 8 new articles for our website including 6 that focused on highlighting African-American businesses, artists, attractions and events through our partnerships with Zimmerman and ESP Media.
- Hosted virtual deskside meetings with editors from *Southern Lady Magazine* and *Cottage Journal* for possible future media coverage.
- Held professional photoshoots for new content at SoDough, Food Glorious Food, Wakulla Springs, Table 23 and Eve on Adams.
- Executed partner promotion with radio stations WQIK-FM (99.1) & WWJK-FM (107.3) in Jacksonville, offering prize packages including hotel stays, meals and outdoor activities. Promotions resulted in 15:1 and 18:1 ROI respectively.

ON THE HORIZON

- Working with VISIT FLORIDA, Visit St. Augustine and Visit Panama City to bring in several prominent writers for a Women's Outdoor Adventure FAM trip scheduled for November.

OUT & ABOUT

In September, Visit Tallahassee hosted PinkBike writer/photographer Brice Shirbach for several days of trail rides and interaction with our mountain biking community. PinkBike is a global leader in mountain biking information with millions of visitors to their website each year. Coverage from the media stay includes editorial, new imagery and video.





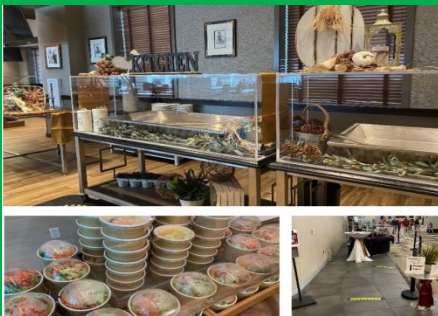
GOAL AT A GLANCE

FY2020
Room Nights Goal:
18,866

YTD Room Nights: 9,021

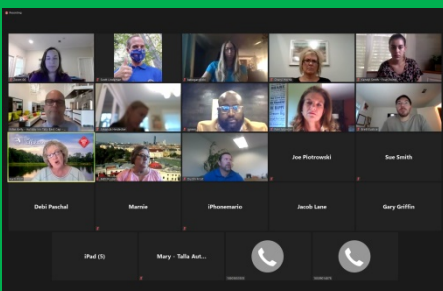
ON THE HORIZON

Our team is hosting the Florida Society of Association Executives (FSAE) Meeting Planner Roundtable on November 10 at the University Center Club discussing safe options for food & beverage.



OUT & ABOUT

On Aug. 6 the Meetings & Leisure Departments hosted an Event & Meeting Facility Roundtable attended by over 25 partners via Zoom to discuss the current state of live events including safer practices for events held in our community.



MISSION STATEMENT

MEETINGS: Promote meetings, conferences and conventions through direct sales efforts to meeting planners, decision makers and coordinating efforts with the local industry to positively impact the local economy.

LEISURE: Increase visibility to specific audience segments, i.e., reunions or bike riders, to generate visitation from leisure groups and assist industry partners with experiences for group customers.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Submitted a bid to host the US Trail Running Conference In 2021 and created a US Trail Running landing page on VisitTallahassee.com to showcasing Tallahassee's strong running community.
- Collaborated with the marketing team and the Zimmerman Agency to create an Epro Direct email blast that went to 5,230 meeting planners (Association, State and Corporate market segments) promoted safely meeting in Tallahassee's newest event spaces.
- Attended the 2020 MPI Southeastern Educational Summit virtually along with meeting professionals from around the southeast.
- Assisted with the FY 2021 Special and Signature Event Grant process by creating documents and compiling review committee scores used during the public workshop.
- Held meetings with the Director of Events & Marketing for FSU College Town and the General Manager of Complex Sports & Entertainment to discuss future events and meetings & events venues.
- Oversaw registration and assisted in planning for the 2020 FSU Invite/Pre-State Cross Country Meet including health and safety protocols, recording a PSA for the Jumbotron, and creating all printed materials for coaches' packets and the VisitTallahassee.com event page.
- Continuing to approve the calendar of events listings, create and distribute Happenings Around Town and manage the virtual events category on VisitTallahassee.com.



GOAL AT A GLANCE

FY2020

Room Nights Goal:
39,520

YTD Room Nights: 10,511

ON THE HORIZON

In partnership with the Florida High School Athletic Association, Visit Tallahassee Sports will be hosting the 2020 State Cross Country Championships November 13th – 14th. Over 1,200 runners from throughout the state will be competing over the three-day event.



OUT & ABOUT

Attended the unveiling of the new finish line structure out at Apalachee Regional Park just in time for the start of the 2020 season.



MISSION STATEMENT

Maximize sporting events and business that have a positive impact on Leon County by supporting and strengthening existing events and expanding our capacity to host additional events. February

HIGHLIGHTS

- Assisted in the coordination of the fiscal year 20/21 1st Cycle Sports Grant program that saw 45 applications.
- Took part in a weekly Zoom meeting hosted by the Sunshine Sports Council where the state of the industry and best practices in dealing with industry impacts from COVID 19 were discussed.
- Hosted a virtual Zoom Tallahassee Sports Council Meeting. The 2020/2021 Sports Grant recommendations were presented and approved by the Sports Council.
- Participated in the SportsETA, SPORTSBIZ virtual conference. Had multiple meetings with industry event rights holders over a three-week period. Promoted the community and discussed potential future business with industry peers.
- Coordinated the rescheduling of the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) Ride Center Designation review for November 2020.
- Completed Fiscal Year 20/21 sales plan and budgets.
- Worked with the Florida Sports Foundation to update applications that were previously submitted for the FSU Pre State Cross Country meet, FHSAA State Cross Country meet, AAU Cross Country National Championships, and the FHSAA State Football Championships, all of which were accepted and awarded financial grants.
- Planned and coordinated the 2020 Florida State University Invitational Cross-Country Meet. This included the normal planning process as well as working through new COVID requirements and precautions.
- Worked with the following event rights holders to discuss the potential of hosting future events in Leon County:
 - Kayak Bass Fishing Championships
 - Women's Professional Football League
 - Goodies Lacrosse
 - PGA (Korn Ferry Tour)
 - Tallahassee Soccer Club



AT A GLANCE

Hosted the TDC Grant Application Review Committee Public Meeting on September 10th.

TDC Approved Grant Funding Recommendations on September 17th.

FY2021 Grant Applications Funded

Signature/Emerging Signature = 5 for \$95,000
Special = 20 for \$54,933
Sports = 43 for \$60,000



Visitor Information Center
Closed to Public in August & September

Services are still being provided by Visitor Center staff via phone, email, and through our website.

Visitor Guide Requests: 101

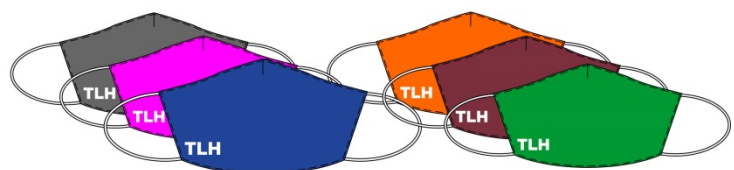
Group Services and Welcome Bags: 95

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hosted three virtual grant application workshops for Tourism grant programs and conducted virtual orientation program for TDC Grant Review Committee members.
- Participated in on-site tour of the North American Properties Cascades Amphitheatre Support Space and Satellite Visitor Information Center.
- Worked with Tourism Senior Operations Manager to close out all remaining open FY20 Grant Contracts before the end of the fiscal year on September 30th.
- Continued to work with WizeHive, Inc. as we moved through our first application cycle for the new Zengine grant management system. Assisted applicants and the review team as they learned how to navigate the system.
- Coordinated removal of last remaining items from the Visitor Information Center located at 106 East Jefferson and conducted final walkthrough of the empty building with the landlord.
- Facilitated transition of Visitor Information Center staff to temporary new office space and adjusted duties following closing of the Jefferson Street location.

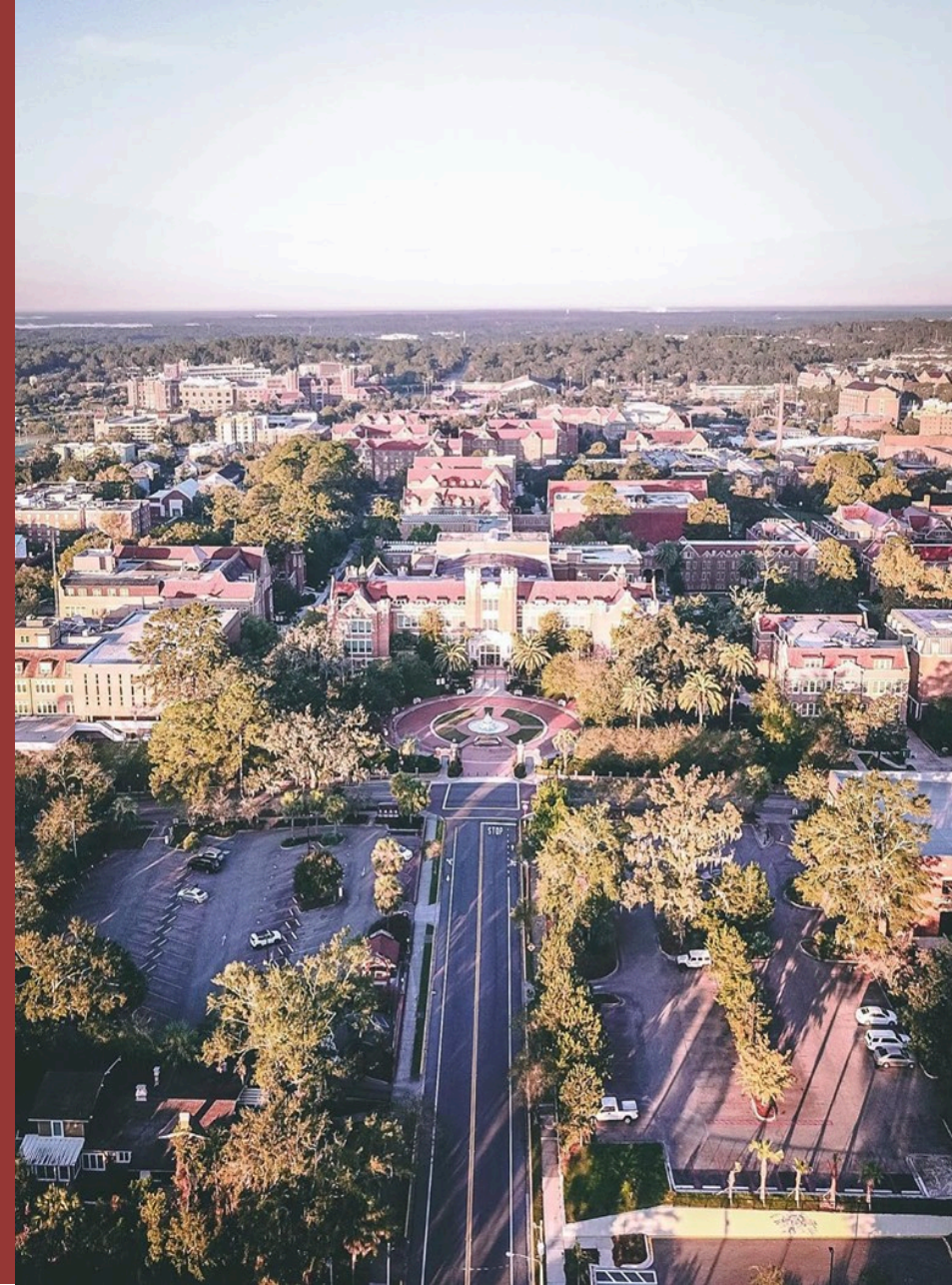
ON THE HORIZON

- Coordinate the review, processing, tracking and organization of Signature, Emerging Signature, Special and Sports grant applications and grant contracts for FY21.
- Plan and coordinate move to new Satellite Visitor Information Center at the North American Property location adjacent to Cascades Park.
- New TLH face masks for use in gift bags, promotional materials, and online gift shop sales are coming soon.



LEON COUNTY DIVISION OF TOURISM – VISIT TALLAHASSEE

July – Sept 2020 Visitor Tracking Study



Visit
Tallahassee
Pretty. Unexpected.

DS downs & st. germain
RESEARCH

STUDY OBJECTIVES: VISITOR JOURNEY



WHAT HAPPENED IN TALLAHASSEE: JULY-SEPT

- » COVID-19 Pandemic
- » Events cancelled due to COVID-19
 - » FAMU Football Season
 - » Limited Capacity and Tailgating at FSU Football games
 - » Downtown Getdown



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



STUDY OBJECTIVES: VISITOR JOURNEY



TOURISM SNAPSHOT: JULY–SEPT 2020*

	July – Sept 2019	July – Sept 2020	Percent Change
Visitors	528,900	328,200	-37.9%
Direct Expenditures**	\$152,845,700	\$102,581,600	-32.9%
Total Economic Impact	\$241,496,200	\$162,078,900	-32.9%

	July – Sept 2019	July – Sept 2020	Percent Change
Occupancy***	66.9%	46.8%	-30.0%
Room Rates***	\$107.19	\$79.80	-25.6%
RevPAR***	\$71.70	\$37.35	-47.9%
Room Nights***	373,437	260,528	-30.2%
TDT Collections****	\$1,615,601	\$937,431	-42.0%

* Significant year-over-year differences due to COVID-19 in 2020

** Includes spending for: accommodations, restaurants, entertainment, shopping, transportation, groceries, and “other” expenses.

*** From STR Report

**** From Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee



STUDY OBJECTIVES: VISITOR JOURNEY

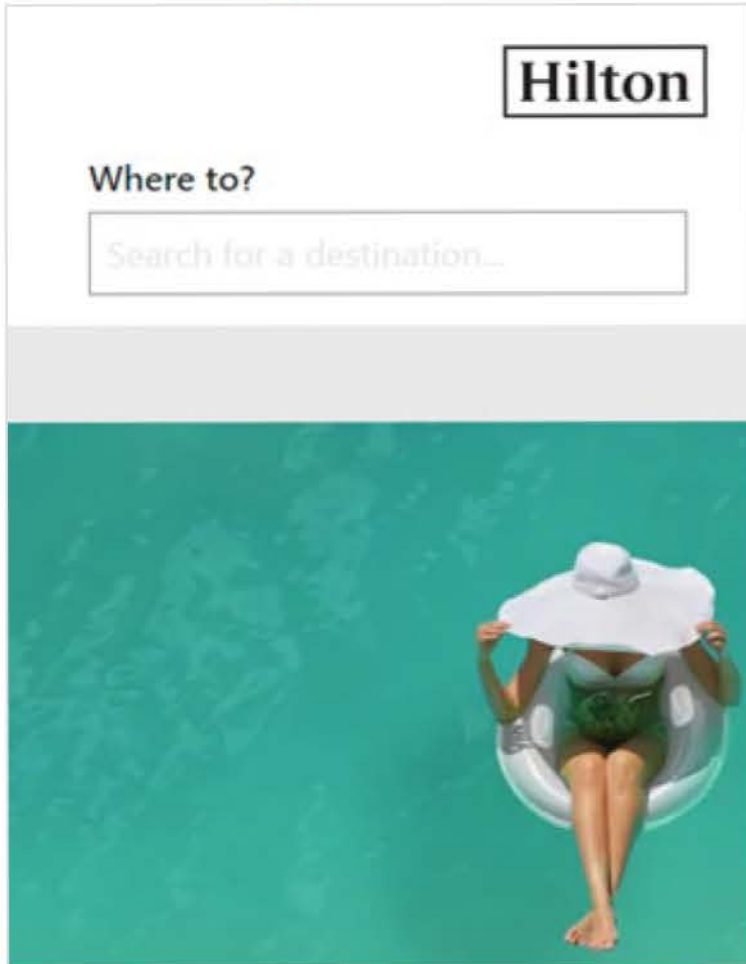


TRIP PLANNING CYCLE

- » **70%** of visitors planned their trip to Leon County a month or less in advance
- » Tallahassee was **85%** of visitors' primary destination



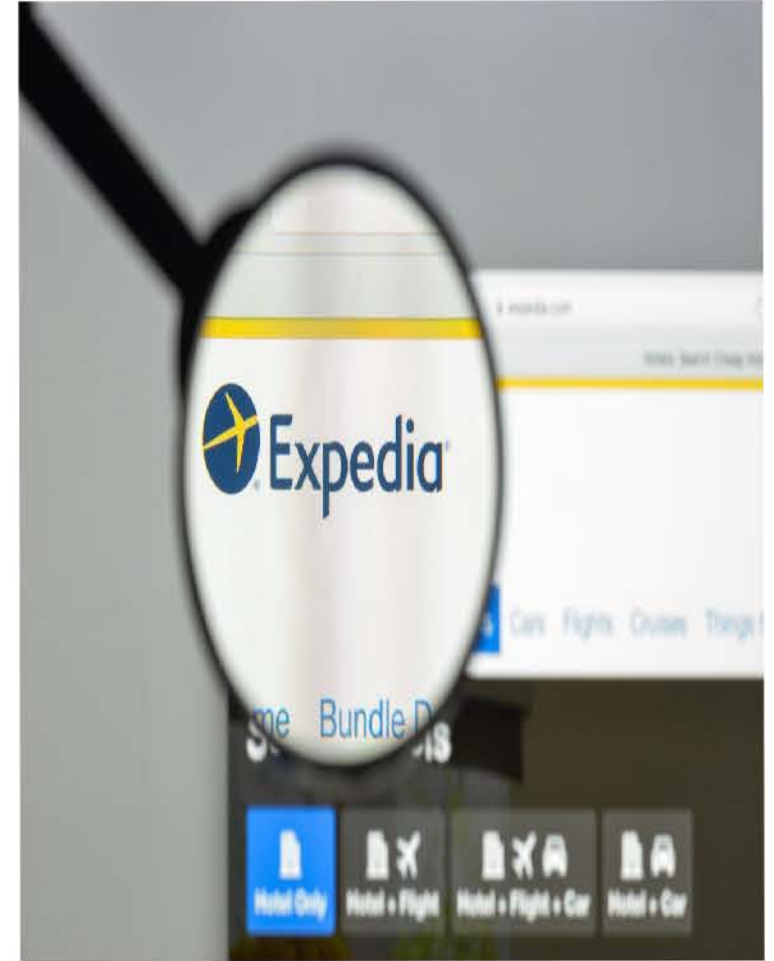
TRIP PLANNING SOURCES



22% Hotel/Resort Website



20% Search on Google



19% Online Travel Agency



TOP REASONS FOR VISITING



41% Visit
Friends/Family



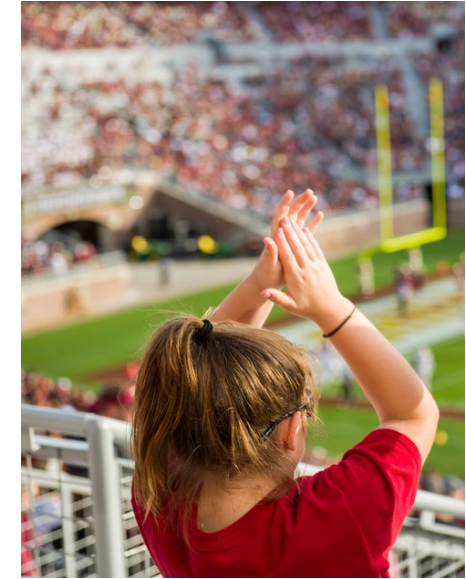
24% Education-
related



22% Business
Conference/Meeting



14% Family time



10% Watch a
Sporting event



TRANSPORTATION

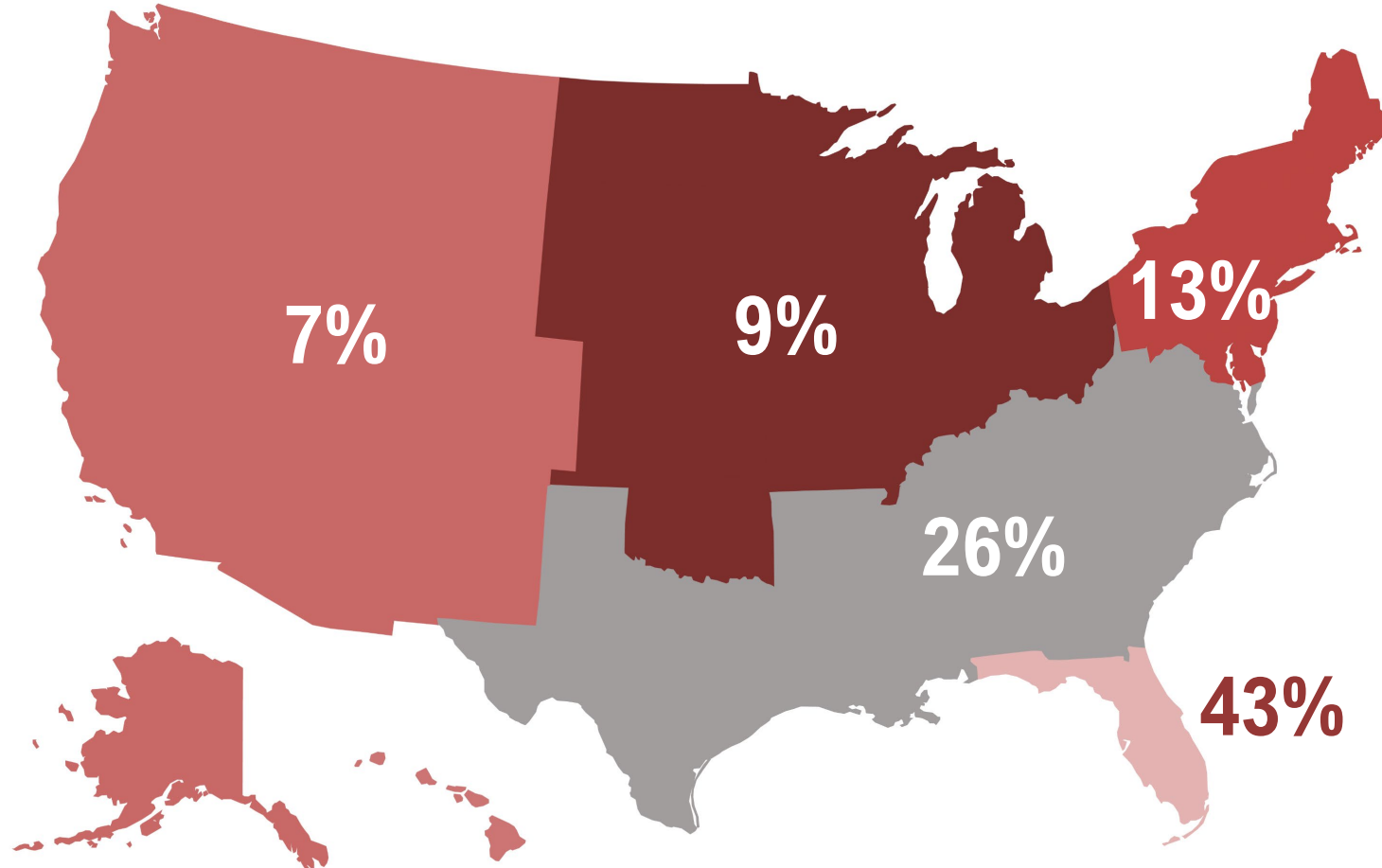
- » **87%** of visitors drove to Leon County



STUDY OBJECTIVES: VISITOR JOURNEY



REGION OF ORIGIN



2% of visitors were from areas outside the U.S.



TOP MARKETS OF ORIGIN



15% Miami – Ft. Lauderdale



9% Atlanta



6% Orlando



6% Jacksonville



TRAVEL PARTIES

The typical visitor traveled in a party composed of **2.5** people



28% traveled with at least one person under the age of 20, while **10%** traveled with children age 12 or younger



VISITOR PROFILE

- » The typical Leon County Visitor:
 - » Is **44** years old
 - » Has a household income of **\$98,500** per year
 - » Is female **(51%)**
 - » Has a college degree **(71%)**
 - » Is married **(55%)**
 - » Is Caucasian **(67%)**



STUDY OBJECTIVES: VISITOR JOURNEY



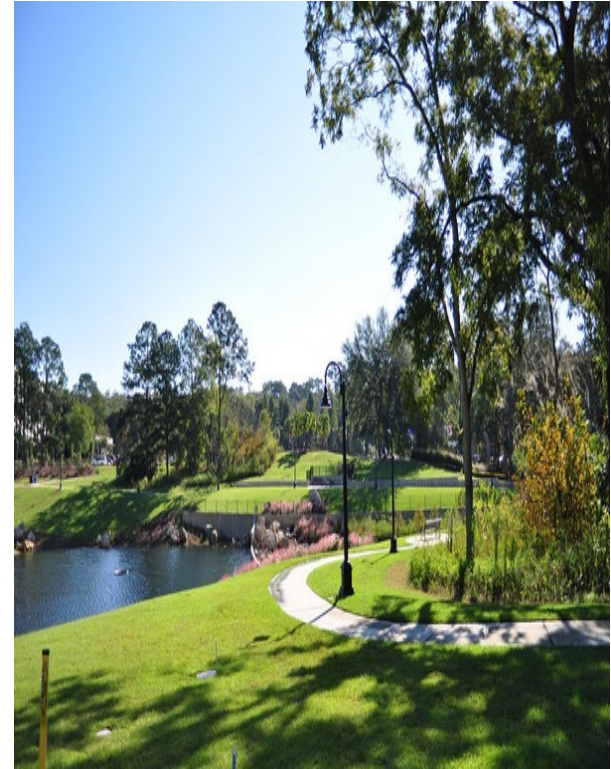
ACCOMMODATIONS



51% Hotel/Motel



29% Friends'/Family home



13% Day Tripper



OVERNIGHT VISITORS

» Typical visitors spent **3.5** nights in Leon County



VISITS TO TALLAHASSEE – LEON COUNTY

- » **26%** were first time-visitors to Leon County
- » **31%** had previously visited more than 10 times



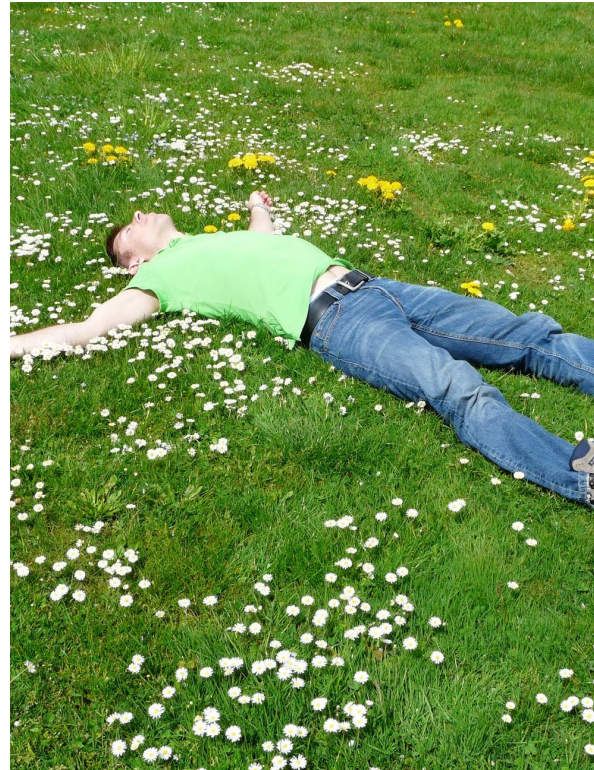
ACTIVITIES DURING VISIT



74% Restaurants



50% Visit Friends/Family



44% Relax and Unwind



40% Family time



TRAVEL PARTY SPENDING

- » Travel parties spent **\$275** per day in Leon County on lodging, dining, groceries, entertainment, transportation, and other expenditures
- » Typical travel parties spent **\$963** over the course of their trip



FINDING THEIR WAY AROUND

- » **98%** of visitors to Leon County owned a smartphone/tablet
- » **3 in 4** visitors used their smartphone/tablet to get around Leon County and find things to do



STUDY OBJECTIVES: VISITOR JOURNEY

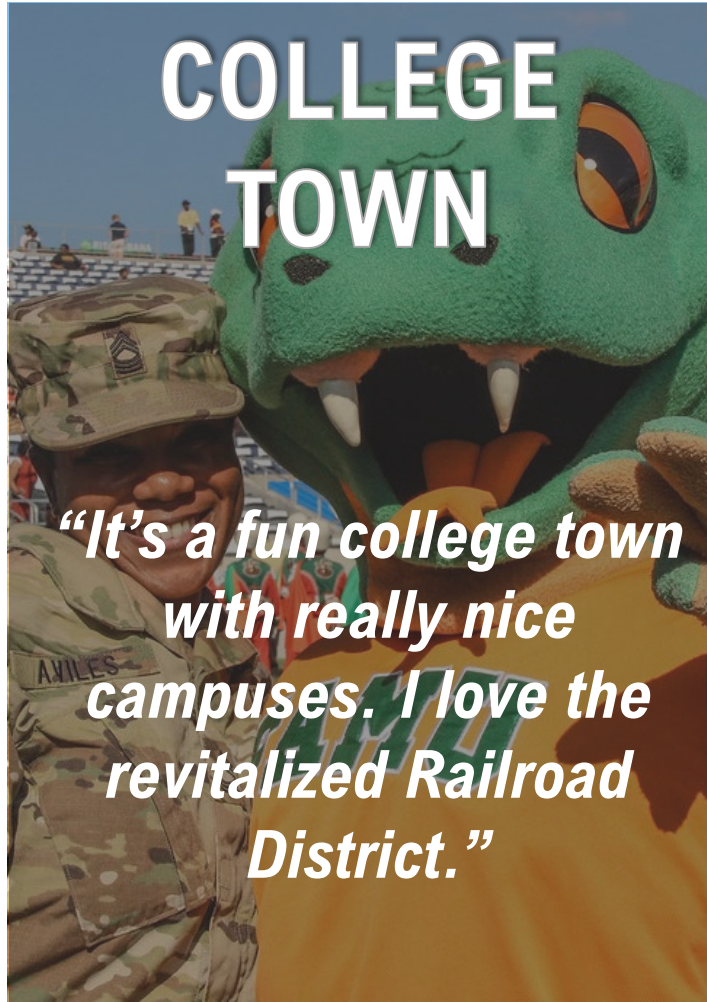


VISITOR SATISFACTION

- » Visitors gave Leon County a rating of **7.9** out of 10 as a place to visit
- » **90%** of visitors will return to Leon County



PERCEPTIONS OF TALLAHASSEE – LEON COUNTY



DETAILED FINDINGS



STUDY OBJECTIVES: VISITOR JOURNEY



TRIP PLANNING CYCLE



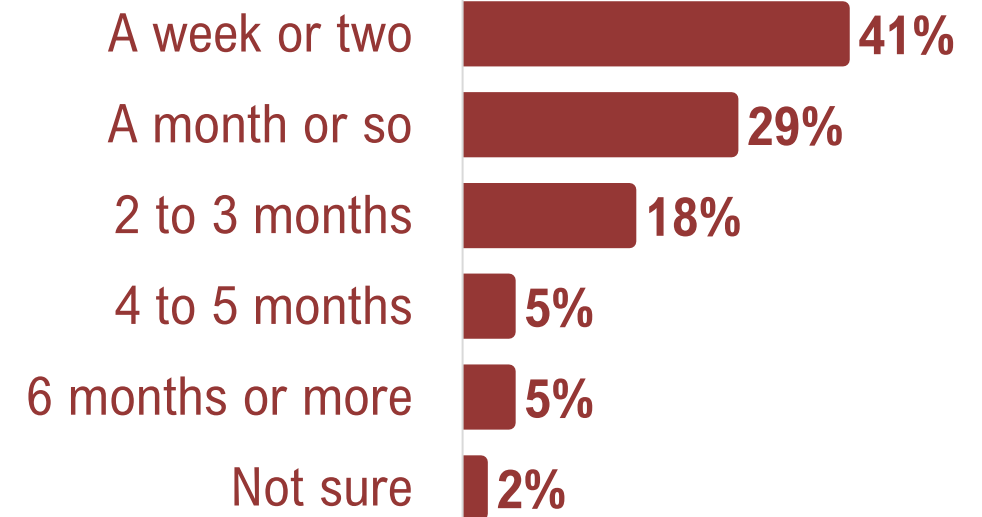
Tallahassee is an impulse destination for **7 in 10** visitors whose planning windows are a **month or less**



Only 1 in 10 visitors take **longer than 3 months** to plan their trips to Leon County



Tallahassee was **85%** of visitors' primary destination



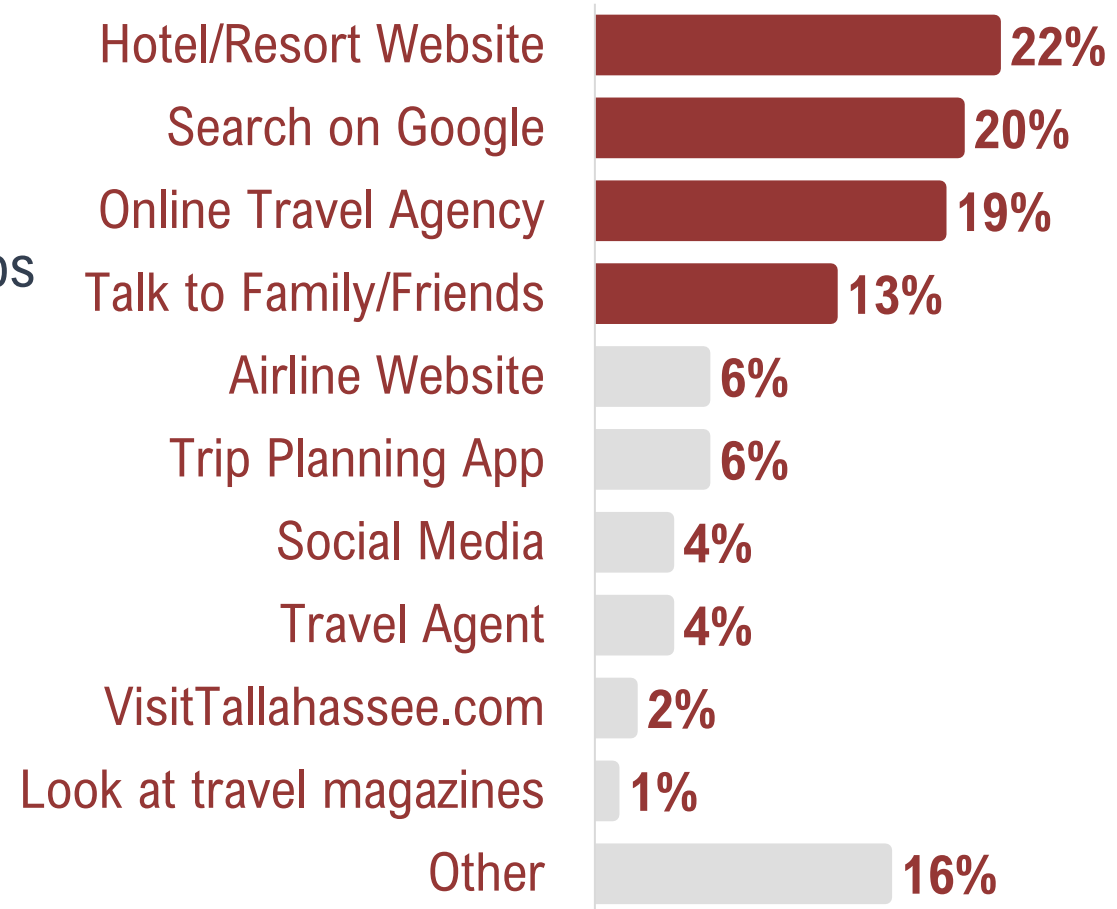
TRIP PLANNING SOURCES*



Over 1 in 5 visitors used a hotel/resort website to plan their trips to Leon County



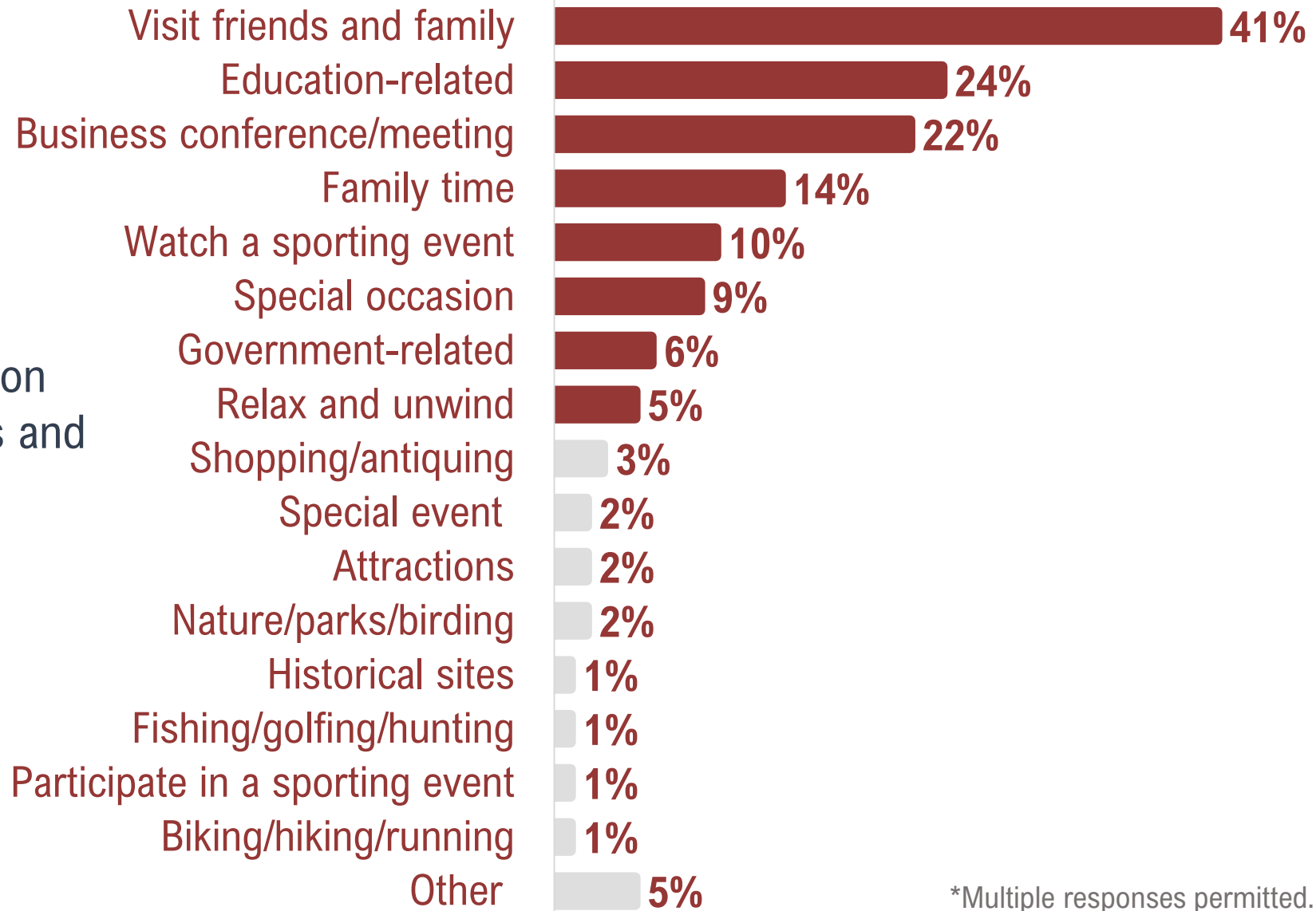
Online searches and **online travel agencies** were also used by about 1 in 5 visitors



REASONS FOR VISITING*



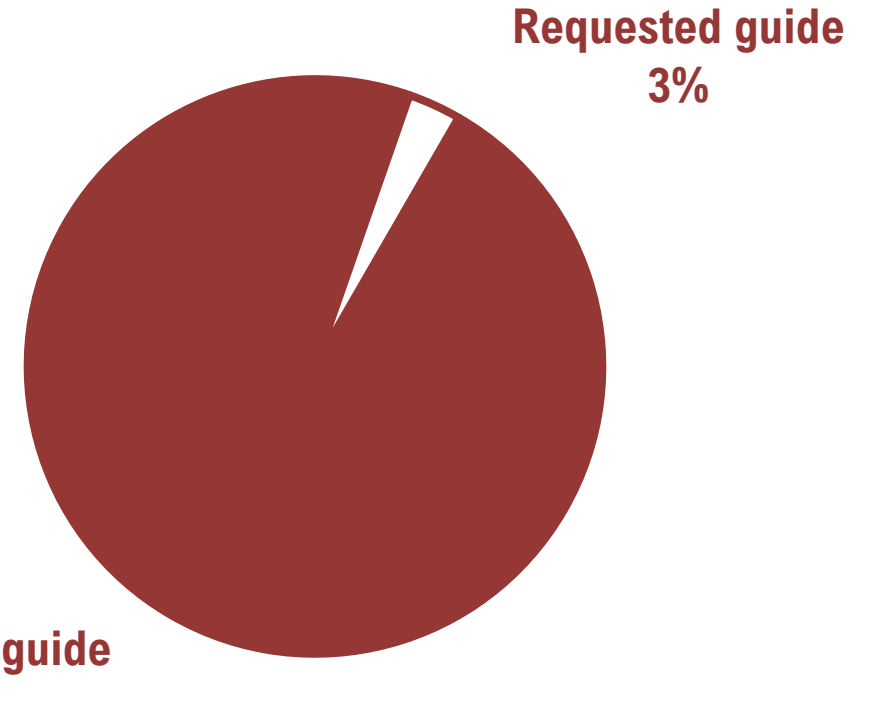
41% of visitors came to Leon County to visit their friends and family



VISITORS GUIDE



3% of visitors requested a Visitors Guide prior to their trip to Leon County



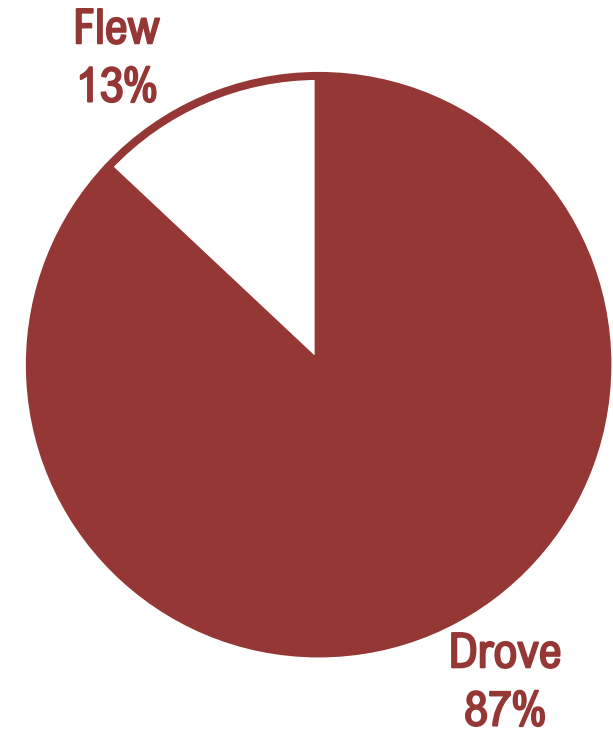
TRANSPORTATION



More than 8 in 10 visitors indicated that Leon County was the primary destination for their trip



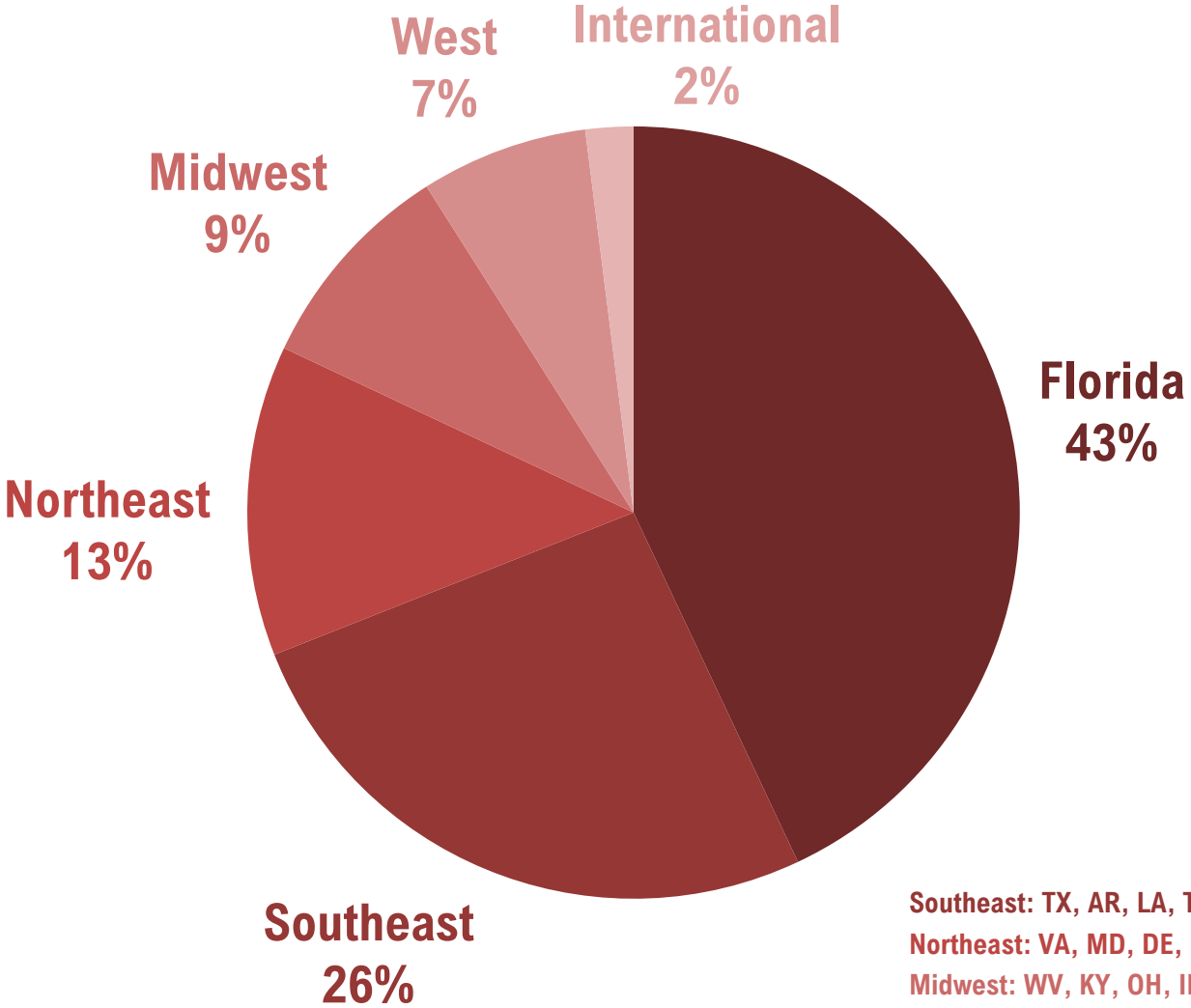
87% of visitors drove to Leon County for their trip **(+4% from 2019)**



STUDY OBJECTIVES: VISITOR JOURNEY



REGION OF ORIGIN



Southeast: TX, AR, LA, TN, MS, AL, NC, SC, GA
Northeast: VA, MD, DE, PA, NJ, NY, CT, RI, MA, VT, NH, ME
Midwest: WV, KY, OH, IN, MI, WI, IL, MN, IA, MO, ND, SD, NE, KS, OK
West: WA, OR, CA, NV, ID, MT, WY, CO, UT, AZ, NM, AK, HI



TOP MARKETS OF ORIGIN



56% of Leon County visitors lived in **12** markets

Market	July–Sept 2019	July–Sept 2020
Miami - Ft. Lauderdale	15%	15%
Atlanta	8%	9%
Orlando	7%	6%
Jacksonville	6%	5%
Tampa Bay area	5%	4%
New York City	2%	3%
Surrounding areas	2%	3%
Dallas - Ft. Worth	2%	3%
Washington DC - Baltimore	2%	2%
Charlotte	2%	2%
Sarasota - Bradenton	1%	2%
Thomasville - Valdosta	1%	2%



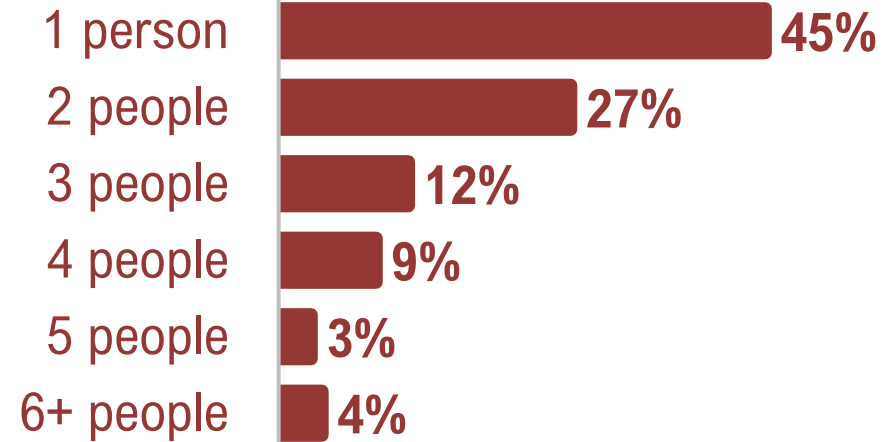
TRAVEL PARTIES

Typical visitors traveled in a party of **2.5** people

28% of visitors traveled with children age 20 or younger, while **10%** traveled with children age 12 or younger

Compared to most other Florida destinations, comparatively more visitors to Leon County come alone

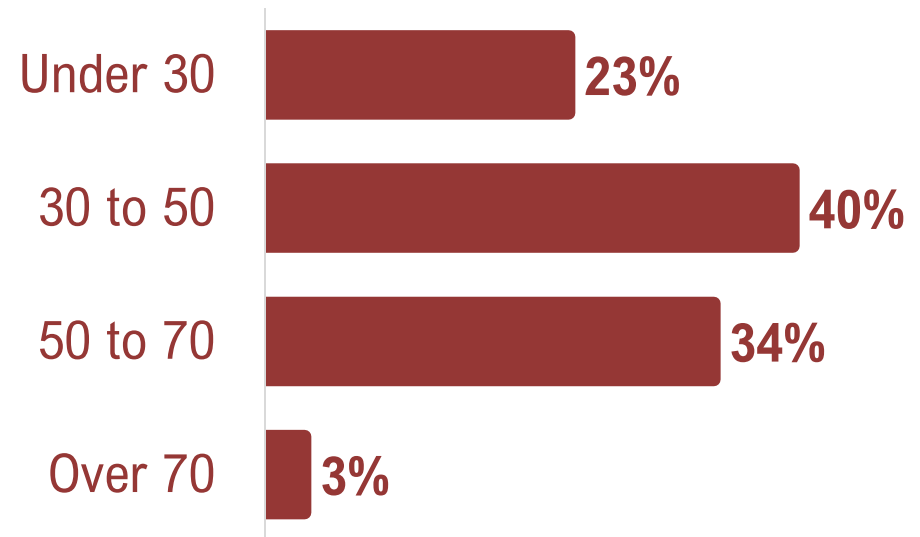
Travel Party Size



AGE OF VISITORS



Typical visitors to Leon County were **44** years old



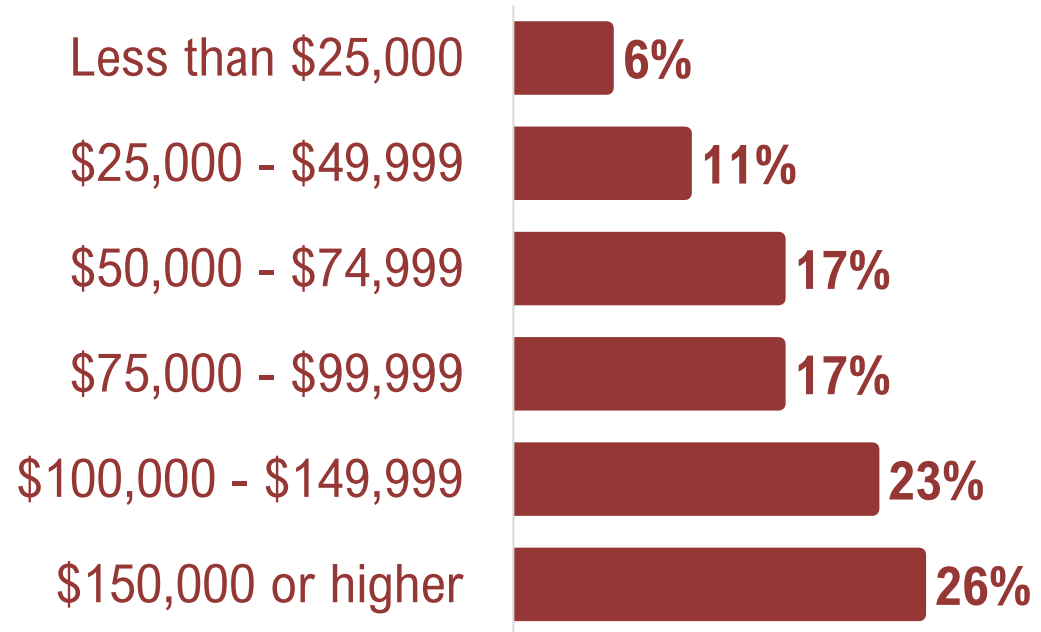
HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF VISITORS



Typical visitors to Leon County had a household income of **\$98,500** per year



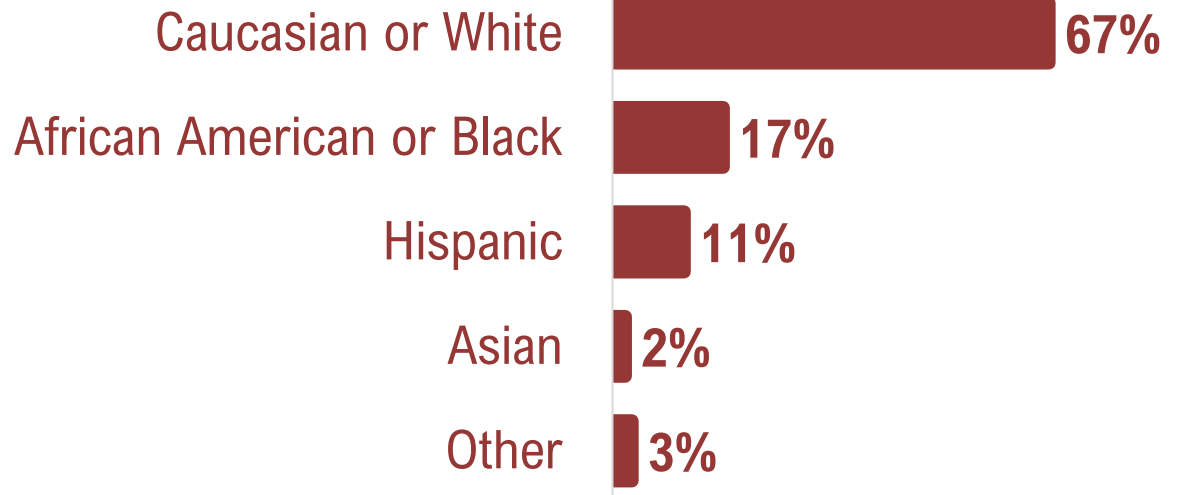
Nearly half of visitors earn over \$100,000



RACE/ETHNICITY OF VISITORS



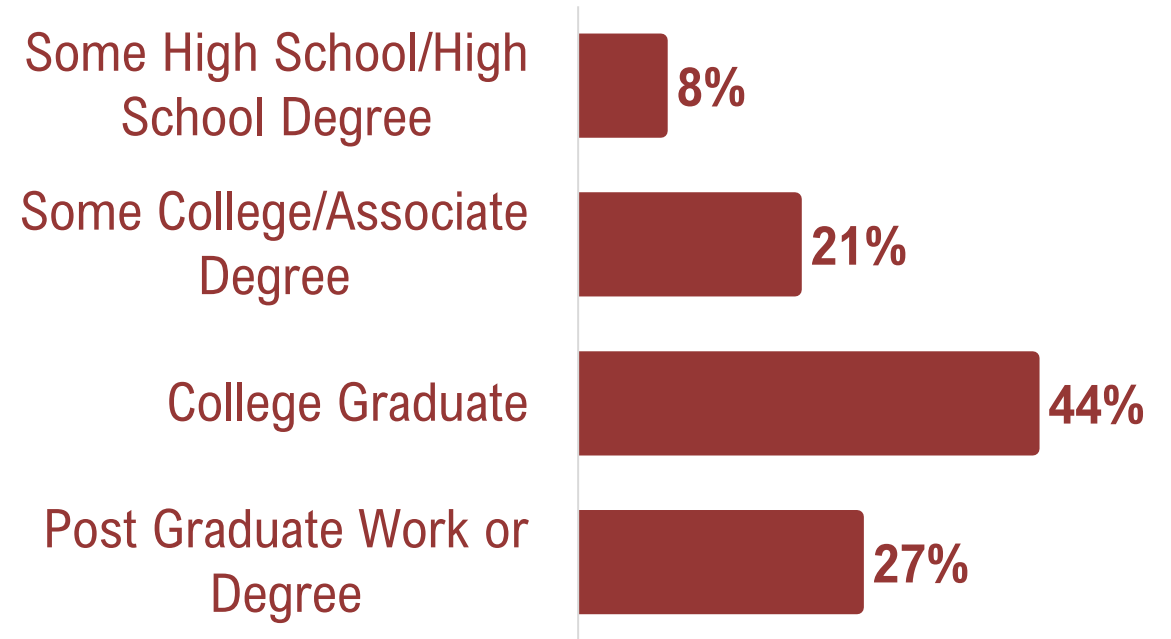
2 in 3 visitors to Leon County were Caucasian or white



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF VISITORS



7 in 10 visitors to Leon County had a college degree

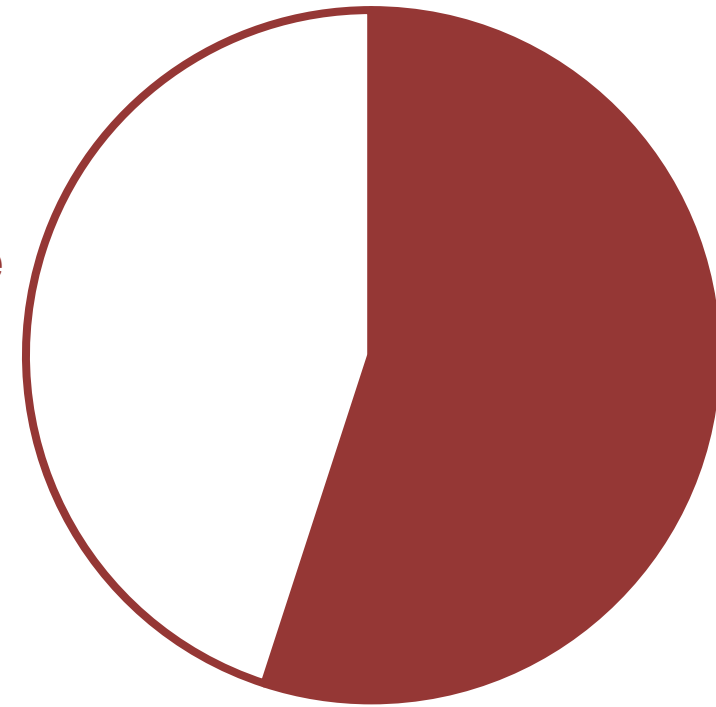


MARITAL STATUS OF VISITORS



Over half of visitors to Leon County were married

Single
45%



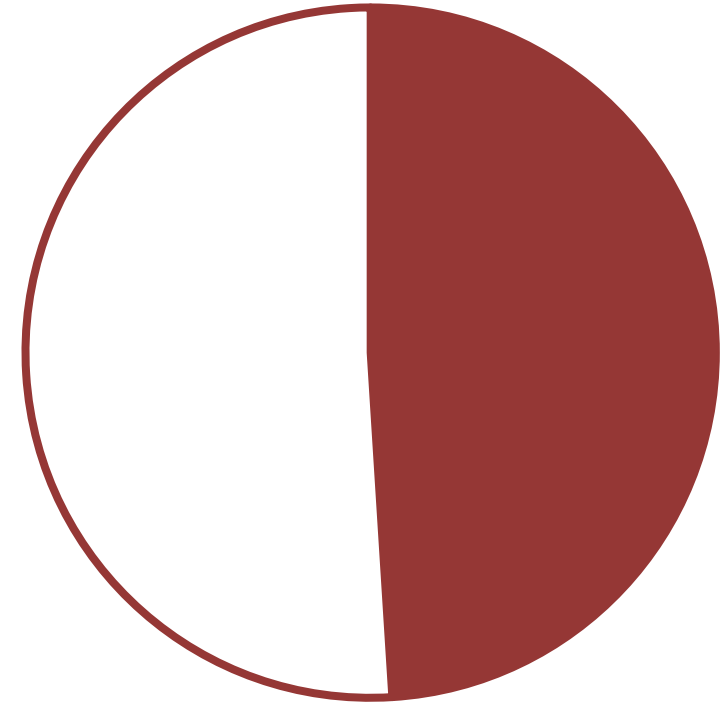
Married
55%

GENDER OF VISITORS



51% of visitors to Leon County were female

**Female
51%**



**Male
49%**

STUDY OBJECTIVES: VISITOR JOURNEY



ACCOMMODATIONS



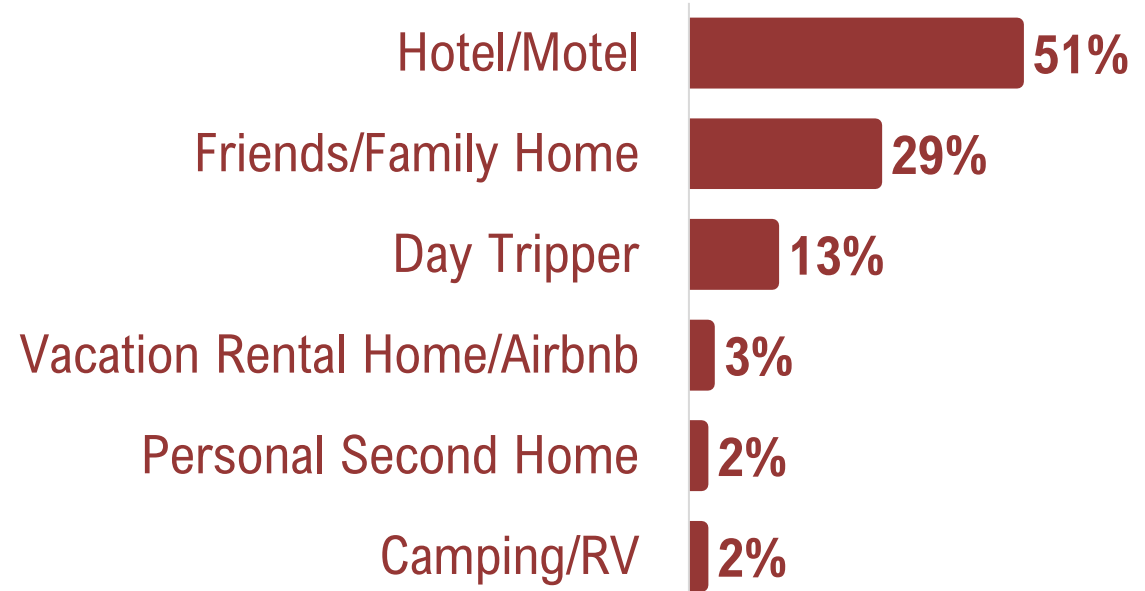
1 in 2 visitors stayed in a hotel/motel



Airbnb, HomeAway, VRBO, etc., which have significant presence in other Florida destinations, have a much smaller presence in Leon County



13% of visitors to the area came just for the day



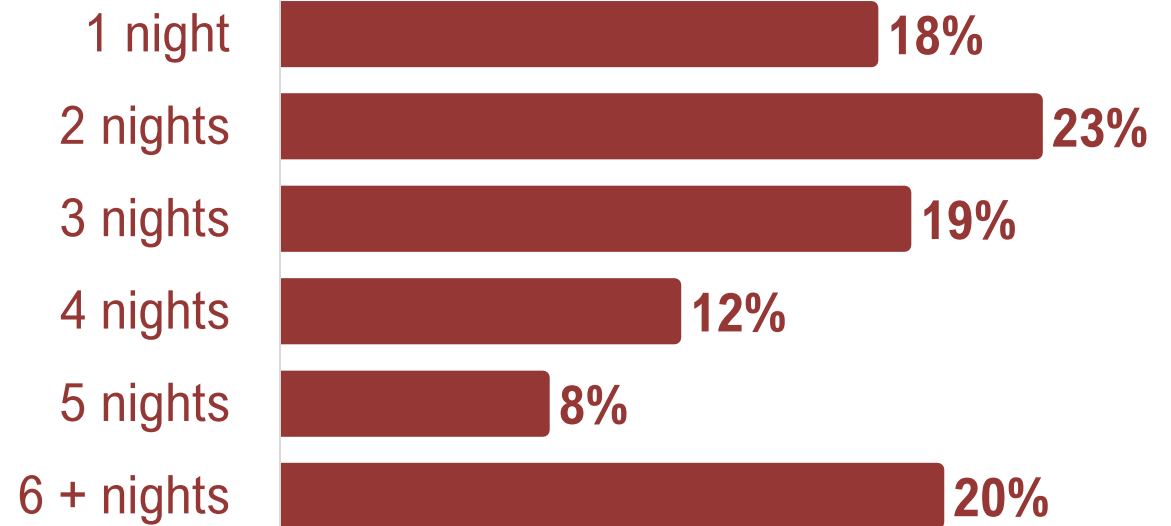
OVERNIGHT VISITORS




Typical overnight visitors stayed **3.5** nights in Leon County



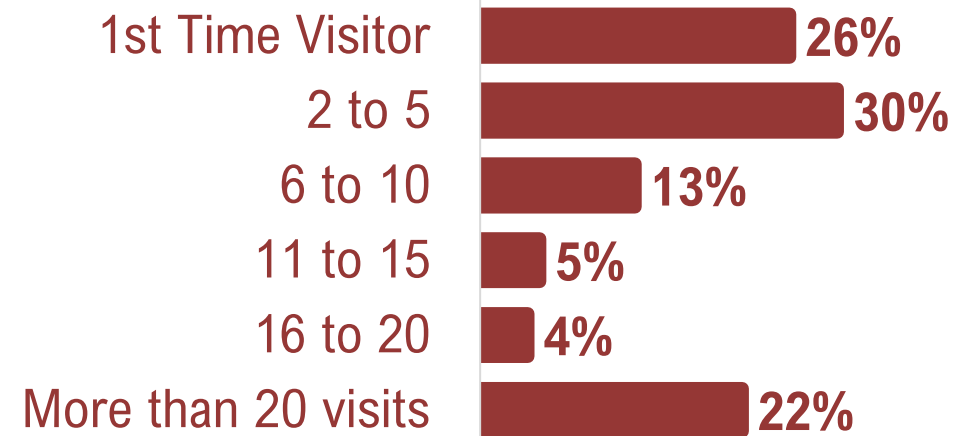
2 in 5 overnight visitors stayed 1 or 2 nights in Leon County, while **1 in 5** stayed 6 nights or more



VISITS TO TALLAHASSEE – LEON COUNTY

 **1 in 4** visitors were visiting Leon County for the first time

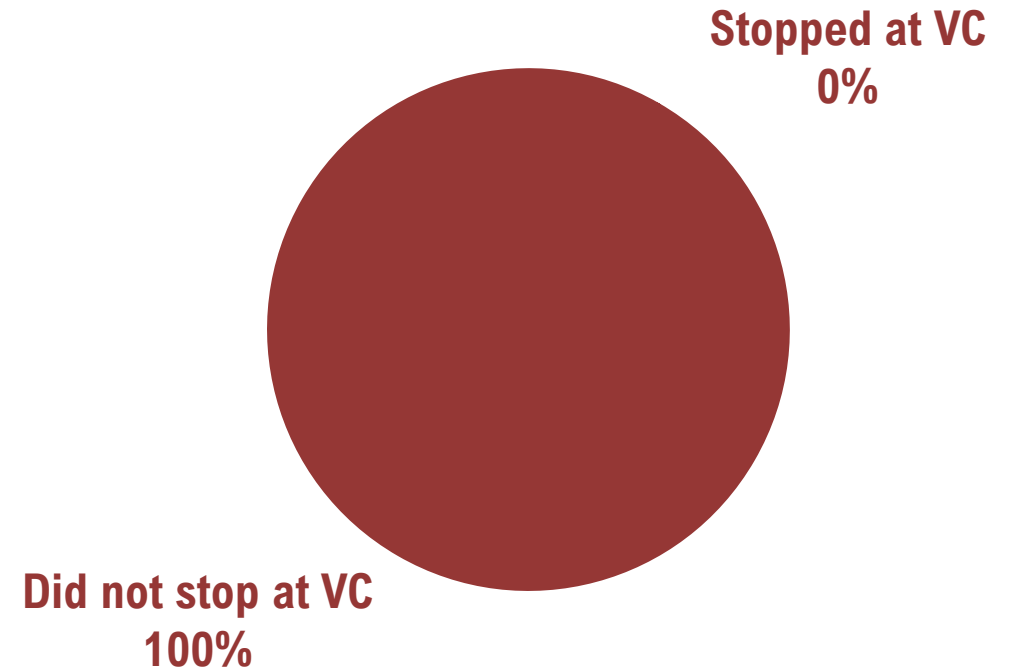
 Tallahassee has a loyal visitor segment, as **3 in 10** visitors have previously visited more than ten times



VISITORS CENTER*



No one stopped at the Visitors Center as it was closed this quarter due to COVID-19



ACTIVITIES DURING VISIT*



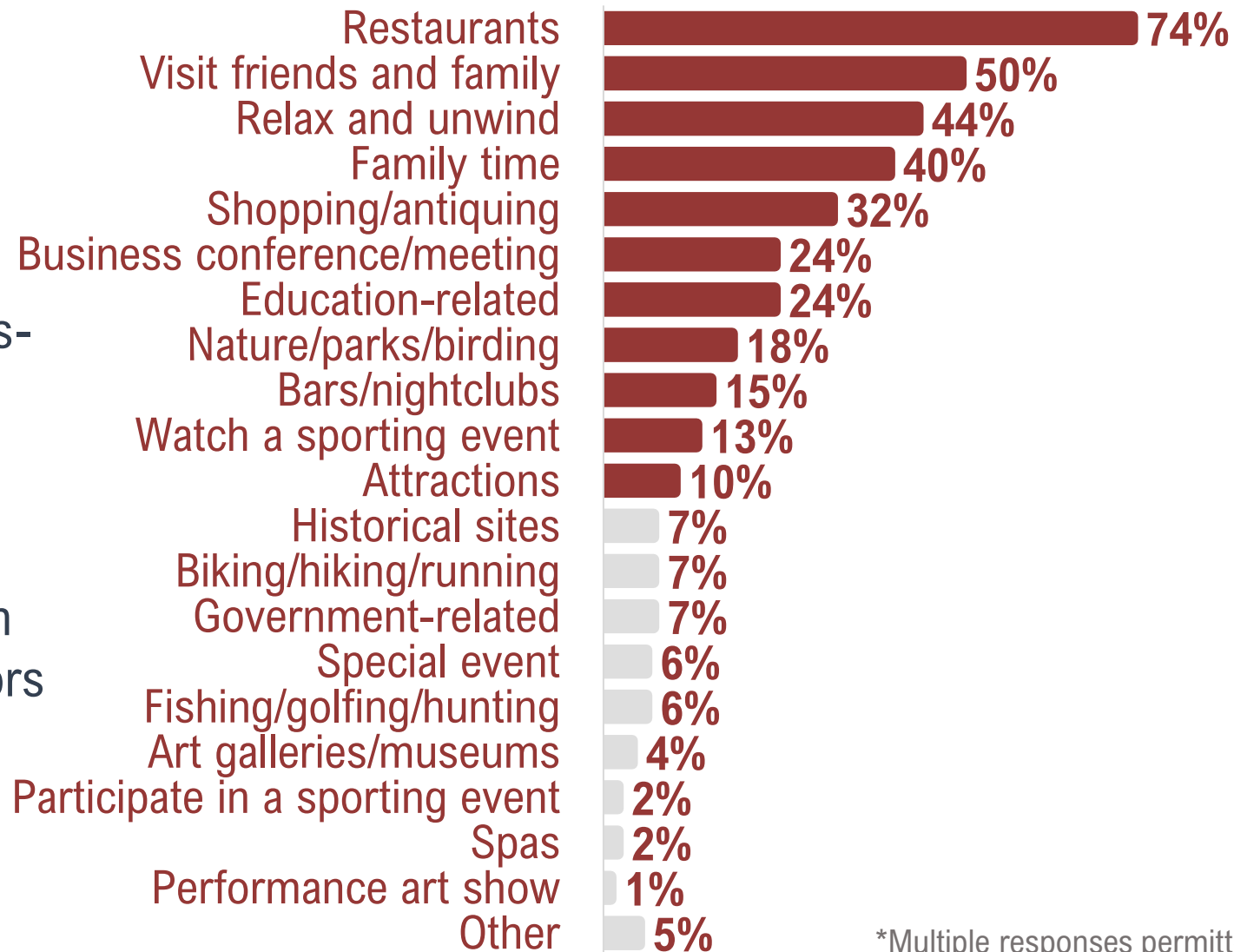
3 in 4 visitors dined out at restaurants during their trip



Tallahassee is a family and friends-oriented destination, as half of visitors visited friends and family

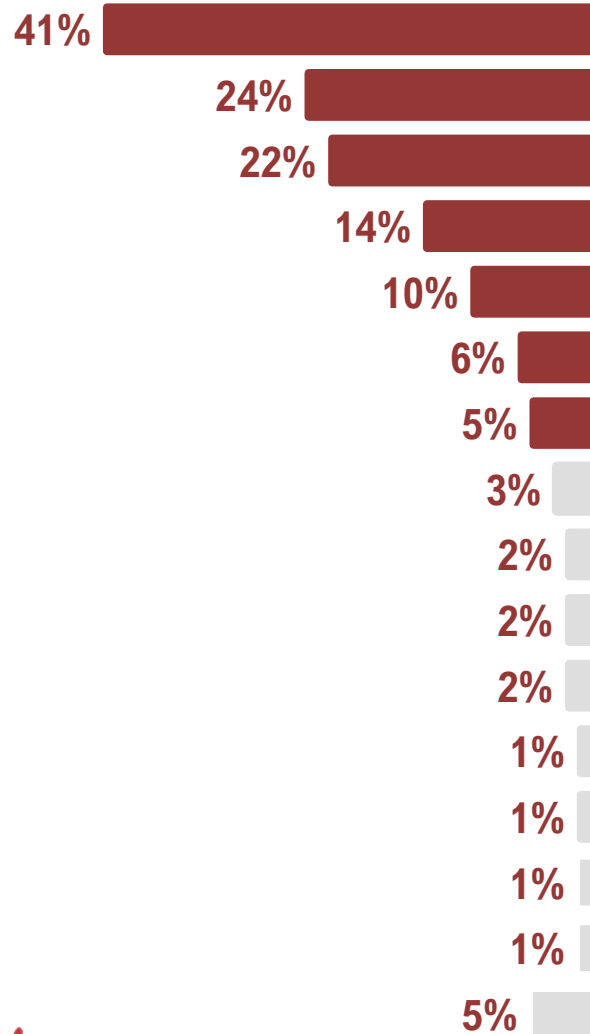


Compared to other destinations in Florida, comparatively more visitors come to transact business

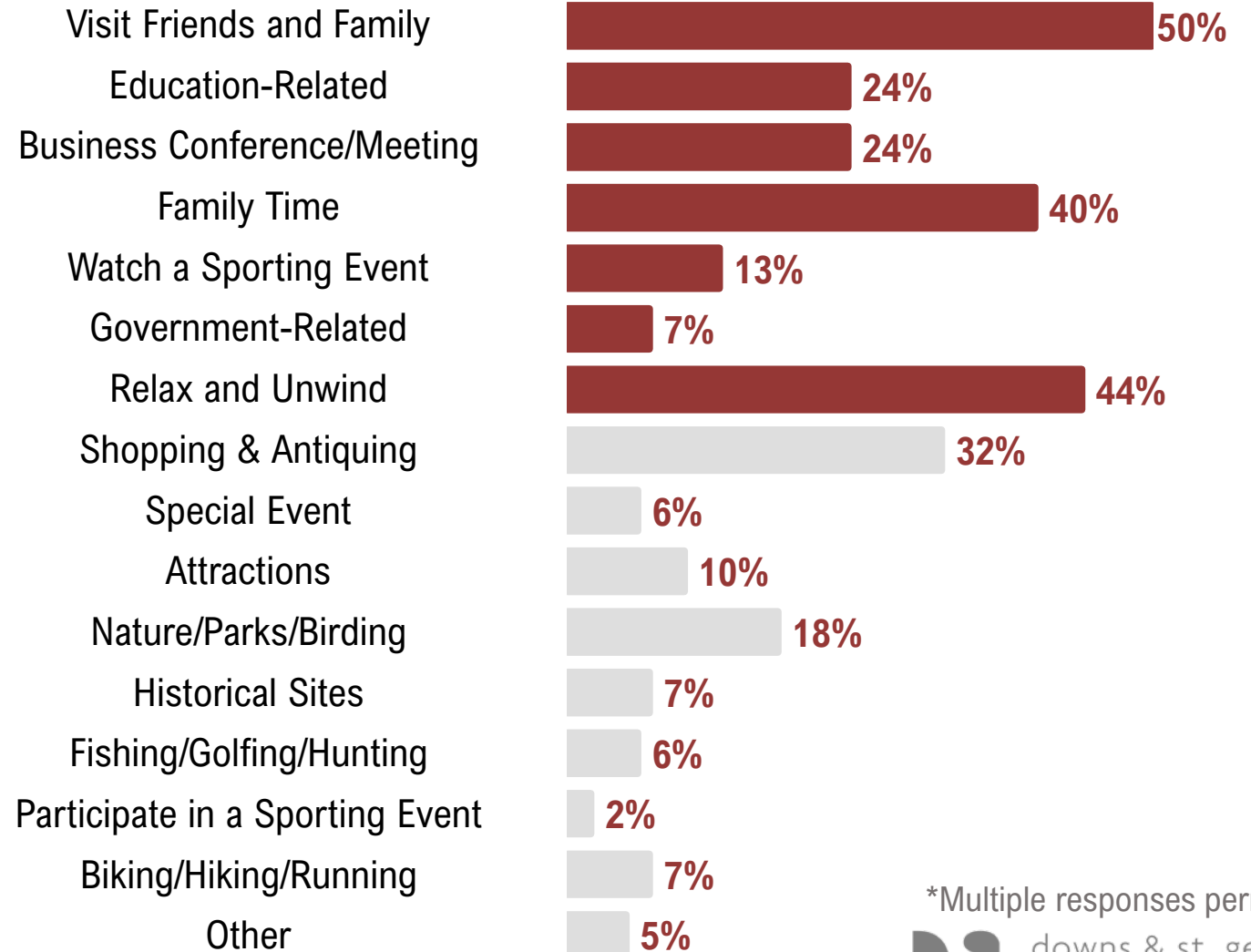


REASONS FOR VISITING VS. VISITOR ACTIVITIES

Reasons for Visiting*



Visitor Activities*



VISITOR SPENDING

	Spending per Day	Spending per Trip
Lodging	\$103	\$361
Restaurants	\$54	\$189
Groceries	\$19	\$67
Shopping	\$38	\$133
Entertainment	\$21	\$73
Transportation	\$29	\$101
Other	\$11	\$39
Total	\$275	\$963



FINDING THEIR WAY AROUND



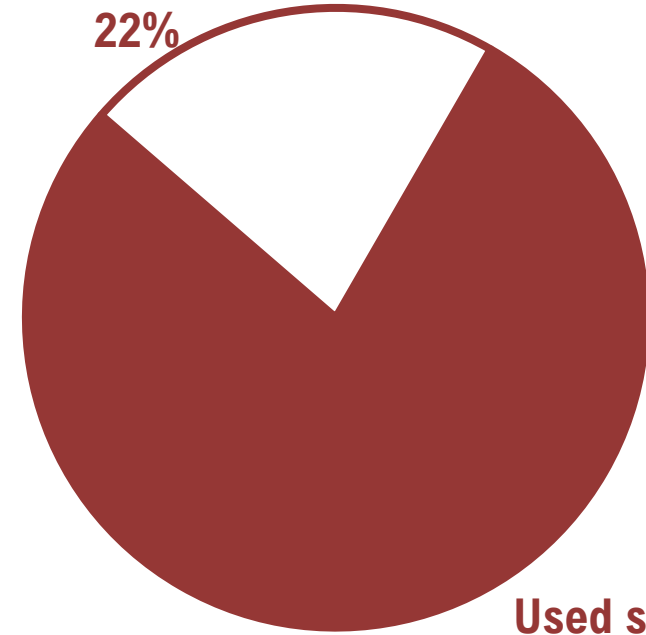
98% of visitors have a smartphone or tablet



3 in 4 visitors used their smartphone or tablet to get around Leon County

Did not use smartphone

22%



Used smartphone
78%

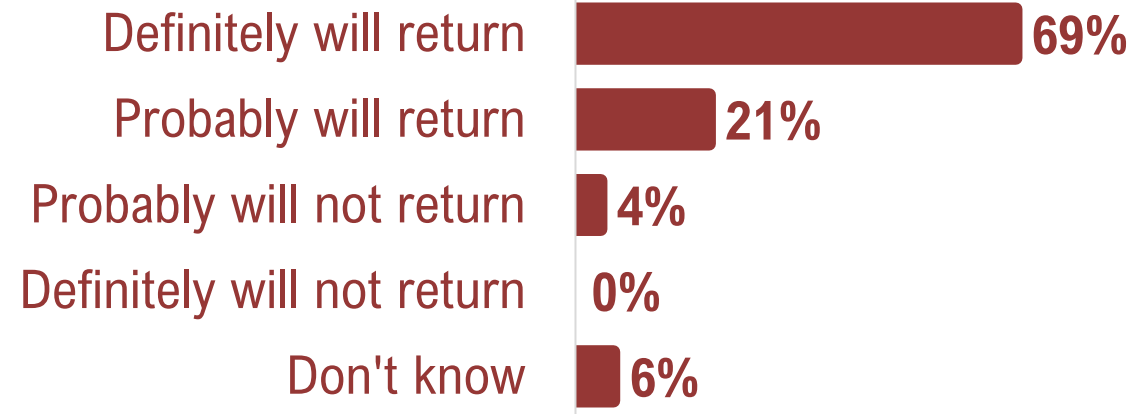
STUDY OBJECTIVES: VISITOR JOURNEY



VISITOR SATISFACTION

 Visitors gave Leon County an average rating of **7.9** as a place to visit

 **90%** of visitors will return to Leon County for a future visit or vacation*



*4% of visitors will not return for the following reasons:

- 1) Event/occasion for visit is over
- 2) Relative/Child graduated from college

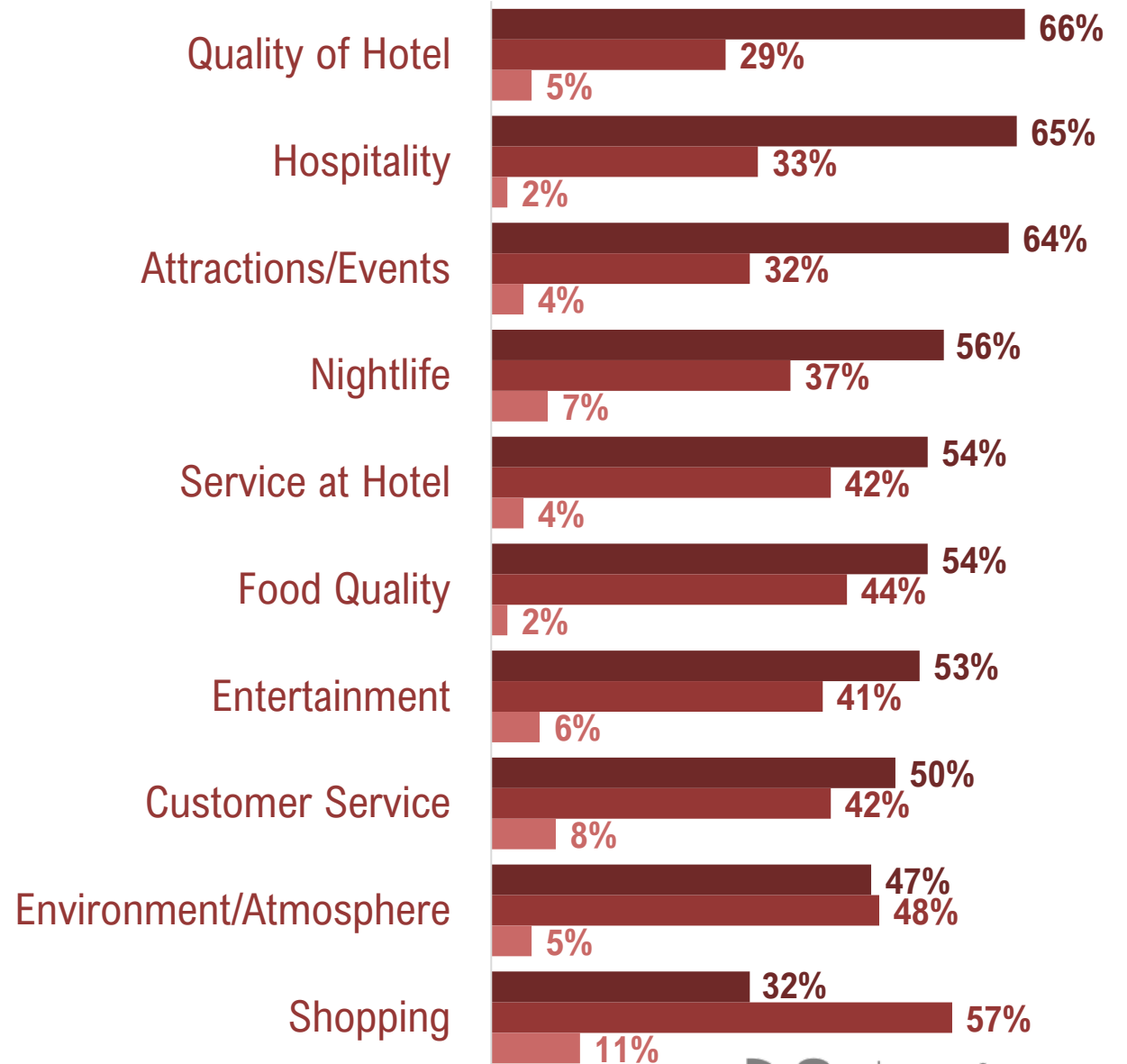
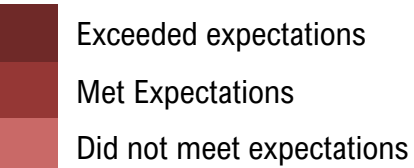
RATING EXPERIENCES IN TALLAHASSEE



Hotel quality, hospitality and attractions in Leon County were more likely than other experiences to exceed expectations



Shopping options in Leon County were rated low by visitors, in general



PERCEPTIONS OF TALLAHASSEE – LEON COUNTY*



A plurality of visitors describe Leon County as a “**College Town**”



Almost all **descriptors** of Leon County as a destination were **positive**



*Coded open-ended responses.
Multiple responses permitted.



PERCEPTIONS: “COLLEGE TOWN”



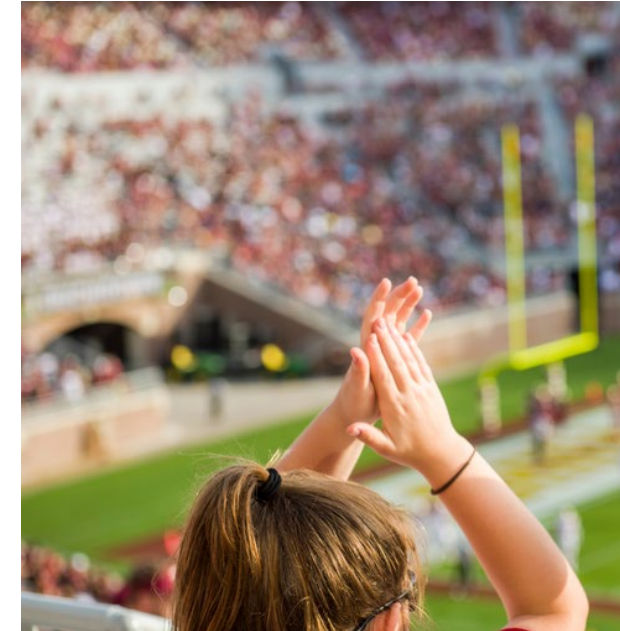
“It’s a fun college town with really nice campuses. I love the revitalized Railroad District.”



“Tallahassee is a great college town! But Tallahassee is also very family oriented with a lot of history.”



“A pretty college town that is scenic with a bunch of nature activities around.”



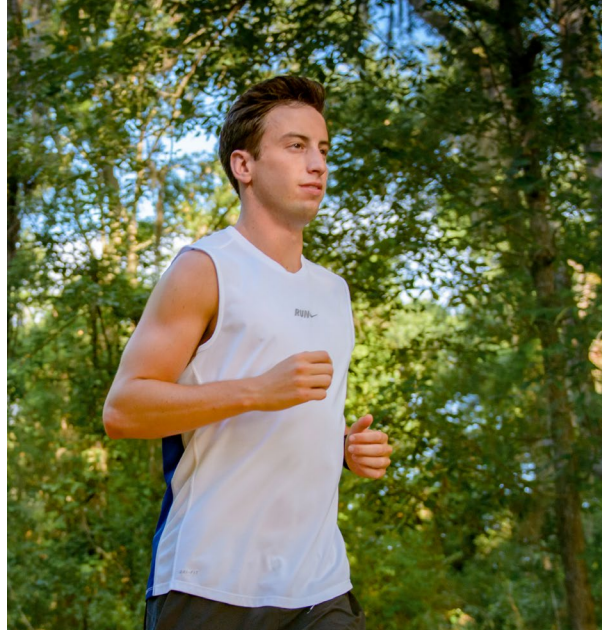
“It’s a college town with a lot of other stuff to do if that really isn’t your scene. Tallahassee is beautiful!”



PERCEPTIONS: “SMALL SOUTHERN TOWN”



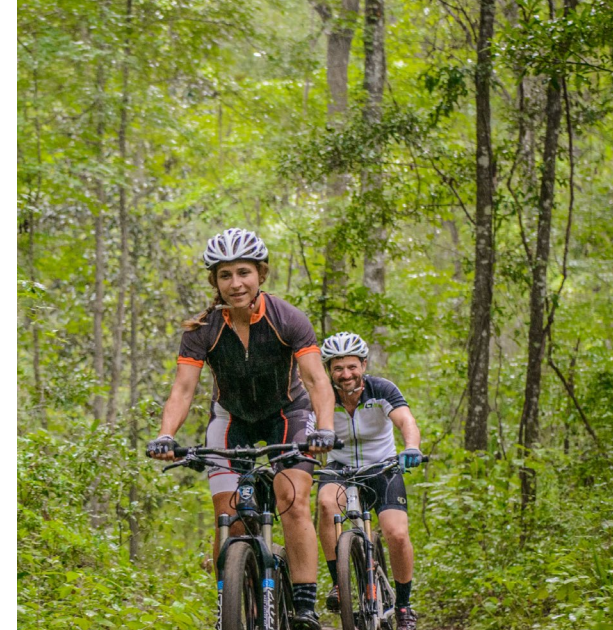
“Tallahassee is so small and cozy! It’s a cute little southern town.”



“It’s a small southern city with a good amount of things to do here in town.”



“Tallahassee has the things you need in a big city, but with a small town feel.”



“Tallahassee is more like South Georgia than North Florida. There is real southern charm here.”



PERCEPTIONS: “NICE PLACE TO VISIT”



“Tallahassee is nice. It has hills and nature around the area but isn’t too far from the beach.”



“You have to go visit Tallahassee! It’s really nice and we were pleasantly surprised.”



“Tallahassee would be a nice place to retire. I was really impressed with everything.”



“Tallahassee is such a great city and is very clean. I will definitely be back!”



YEAR-TO-YEAR COMPARISONS



YEAR-TO-YEAR COMPARISONS

Visitor Profile	July – Sept 2019	July – Sept 2020
Median Age	48	44
Gender (Female)	53%	51%
Household Income	\$110,400	\$98,500
College Degree or Higher	76%	71%
White/Caucasian	69%	67%
Married	64%	55%

Region of Origin	July – Sept 2019	July – Sept 2020
Southeast	75%	69%
Northeast	10%	13%
Midwest	7%	9%
West	6%	7%
International	2%	2%



YEAR-TO-YEAR COMPARISONS

Travel Parties	July – Sept 2019	July – Sept 2020
Travel Party Size	2.5	2.5
Traveled with Other Visitors	60%	52%
Traveled with Children	27%	28%
Drove to Leon County	83%	87%
Nights Stayed	3.5	3.5

Trips to Tallahassee - Leon County	July – Sept 2019	July – Sept 2020
Tallahassee was Primary Destination	88%	85%
Definitely/probably will return	87%	90%
Rating of Overall Experience	7.9	7.9
1 st Time Visitor	29%	26%
10+ Prior Visits to Leon County	26%	31%



YEAR-TO-YEAR COMPARISONS

Average Daily Spending	July – Sept 2019	July – Sept 2020
Accommodations	\$124	\$103
Restaurants	\$64	\$54
Groceries	\$22	\$19
Shopping	\$51	\$38
Entertainment	\$24	\$21
Transportation	\$32	\$29
Other	\$16	\$11
Total	\$333	\$275

Average Total Trip Spending	July – Sept 2019	July – Sept 2020
Accommodations	\$434	\$361
Restaurants	\$224	\$189
Groceries	\$77	\$67
Shopping	\$179	\$133
Entertainment	\$84	\$73
Transportation	\$112	\$101
Other	\$56	\$39
Total	\$1,166	\$963





Visitor Tracking Study

- » Interviews were completed in person and online with **684 visitors** at local hotels, the airport, parks, and attractions between **July 1st 2020 and September 31st 2020**

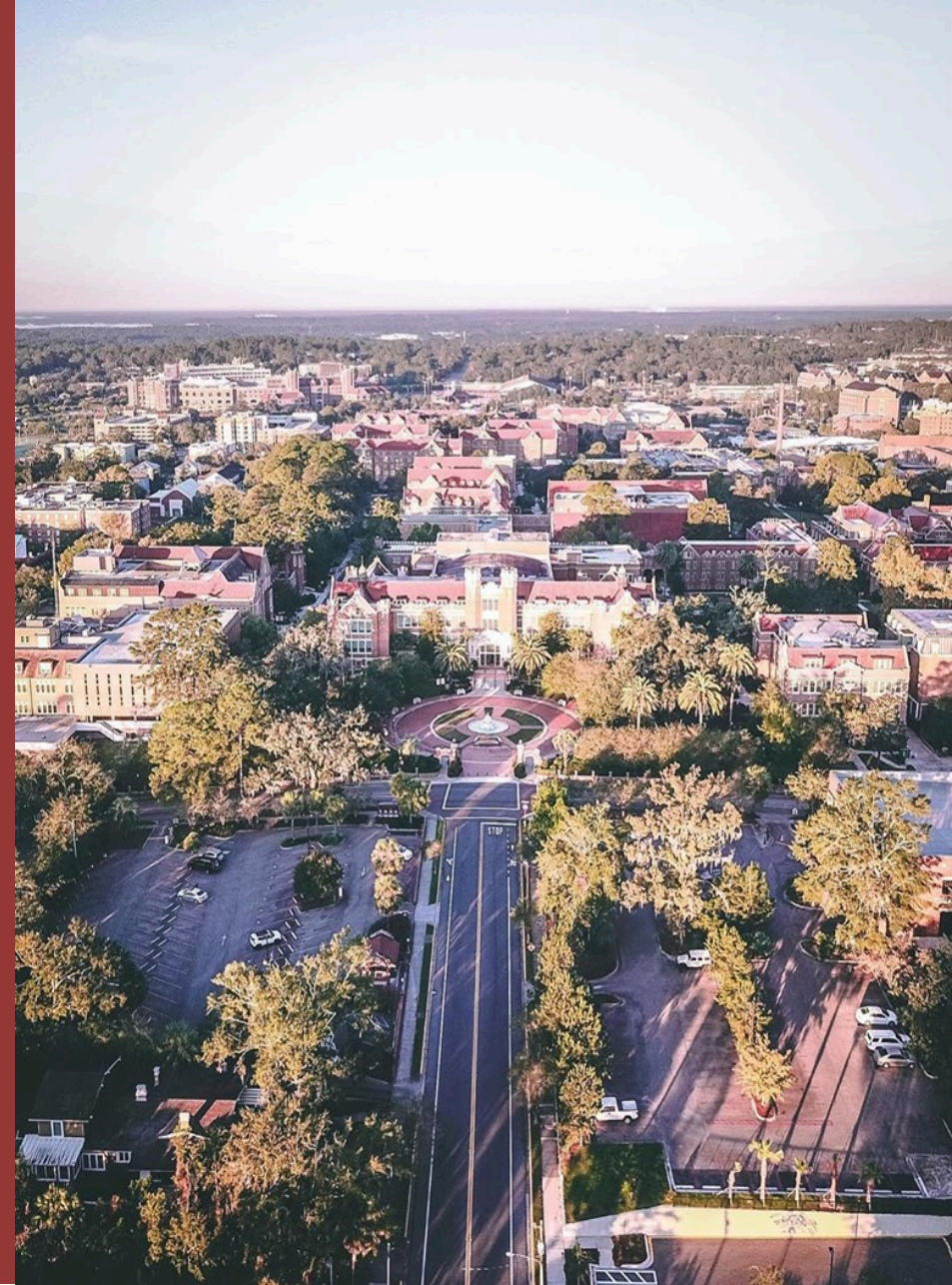
LEON COUNTY DIVISION OF TOURISM – VISIT TALLAHASSEE

July – Sept 2020 Visitor Tracking Study

Kerri Post

Executive Director, Leon County Division of Tourism/ Visit Tallahassee
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Visit
Tallahassee
Pretty. Unexpected.

DS downs & st. germain
RESEARCH

LEON COUNTY DIVISION OF TOURISM – VISIT TALLAHASSEE

Economic Impact of Tourism Report

Fiscal Year 2020 (October 2019 – September 2020)



Visit
Tallahassee
A Division of Leon County

DS downs & st. germain
RESEARCH

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STUDY METHODOLOGY



STUDY METHODS

Visitor Tracking Study

- » Economic impact of tourism for Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee was based on data from the following sources:
 - » 2,285 interviews conducted by Downs & St. Germain Research with visitors to Leon County
 - » Twelve (12) monthly STR Reports
 - » Downs & St. Germain Research's tourism database
 - » Various government agencies and data sources
 - » IMPLAN Online Economic Impact Modeling software
 - » TDT Collections provided by Leon County



YEAR-OVER-YEAR DIFFERENCES FROM FY2019 TO FY2020

- » COVID-19 Pandemic and subsequent event cancellations
- » FAMU 2020 Football season cancellation
- » New Legislators and staffing during session
- » Four fewer Florida State Home Football Games
- » Lower attendance at 2020 games



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT



\$766,180,400

Economic Impact

(-26.4% from FY2019)

VISITORS

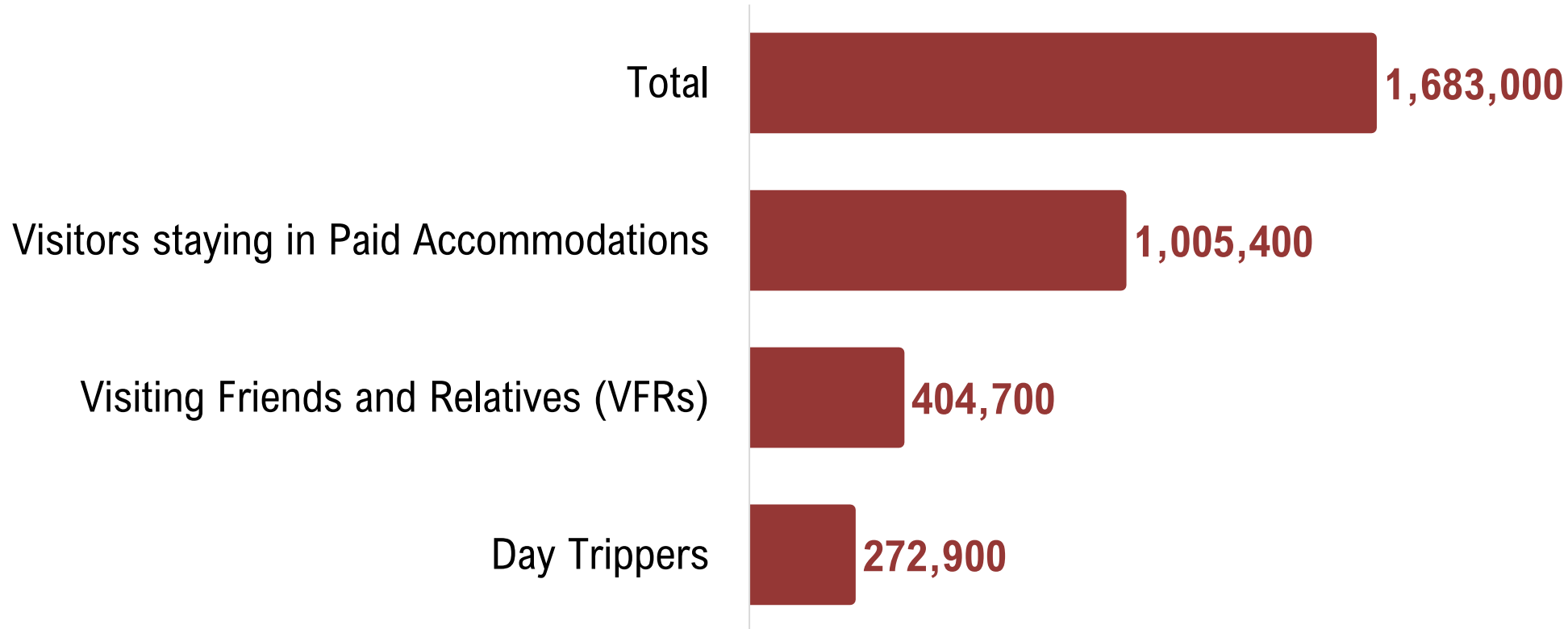
1,683,000
Visitors

(-31.0% from FY2019)



VISITORS TO LEON COUNTY

» **3 in 5** visitors stayed in Paid Accommodations



TOP MARKETS OF ORIGIN



62% of Leon County visitors lived in **12** markets

Market	FY 2019	FY 2020
Miami – Ft. Lauderdale	11%	13%
Atlanta	11%	10%
Orlando	6%	6%
Jacksonville	6%	6%
Tampa Bay area	5%	6%
Surrounding areas	6%	5%
Panama City – Destin	4%	3%
Pensacola – Mobile	4%	3%
Washington DC – Baltimore	1%	3%
New York City	2%	3%
Dallas – Ft. Worth	3%	2%
Naples – Ft. Myers	1%	2%

JOB CREATION

11,943 Jobs

(-26.1% from FY2019)

\$308,386,700 in wages

(-25.6% from FY2019)

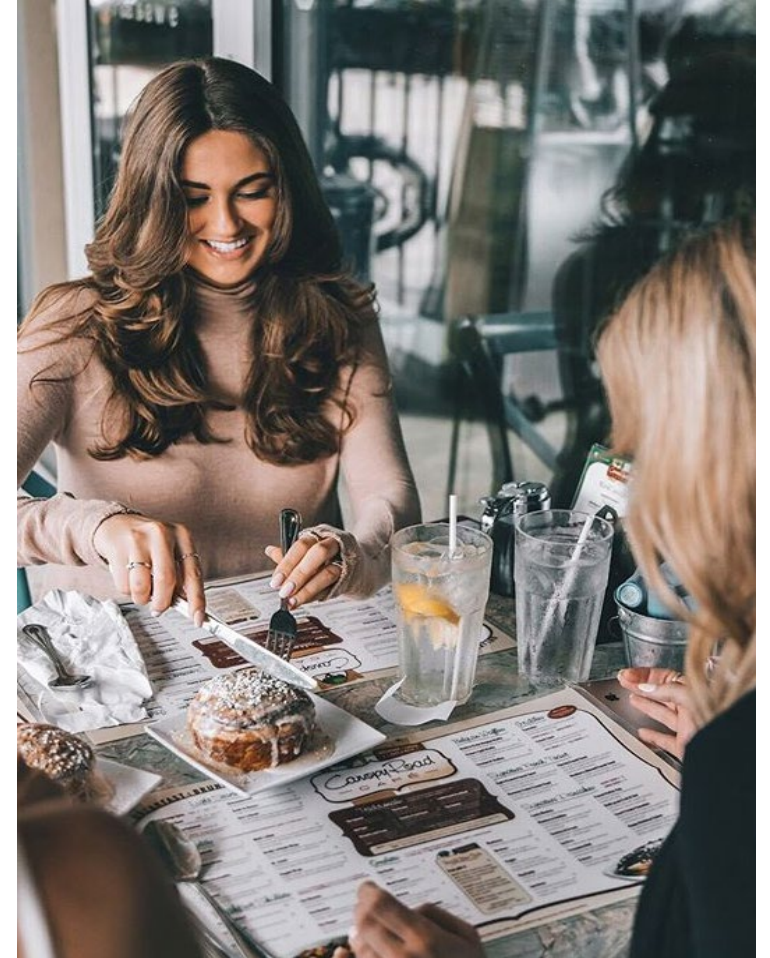


VISITORS CREATE JOBS

An additional Leon County job is supported by every

141

visitors



HOUSEHOLD SAVINGS

Visitors to Leon County save local residents

\$450

per household every year in taxes



MARKETING SPENDING

Every dollar spent by Visit Tallahassee on marketing is associated with

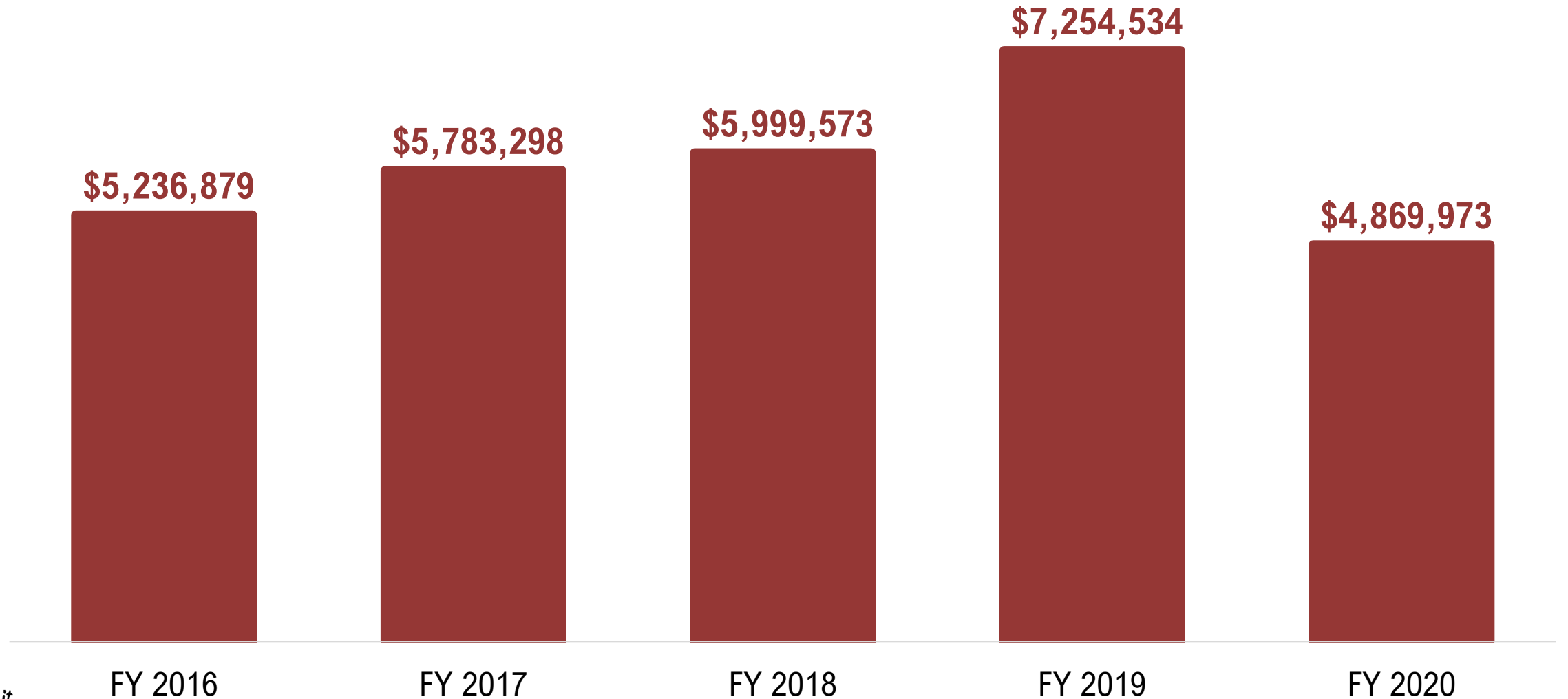
\$517

in visitor spending within Leon County



TDT COLLECTIONS FY2016 – FY2020

» TDT collections decreased 32.9% in FY2020



DETAILED FINDINGS



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Economic Indicators	FY 2019	FY 2020	% Change
Visitors	2,438,900	1,683,000	-31.0%
Direct expenditures	\$659,079,600	\$484,924,300	-26.4%
Total economic impact	\$1,041,345,800	\$766,180,400	-26.4%
Room nights generated	1,555,469	1,074,851	-30.9%
Jobs created	16,150	11,943	-26.1%
Wages paid	\$414,448,400	\$308,386,700	-25.6%
Taxes paid ¹	\$68,747,500	\$50,899,500	-26.0%
Tourist Development Tax	\$7,254,534	\$4,869,973	-32.9%

¹Sales, use, and property taxes.



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

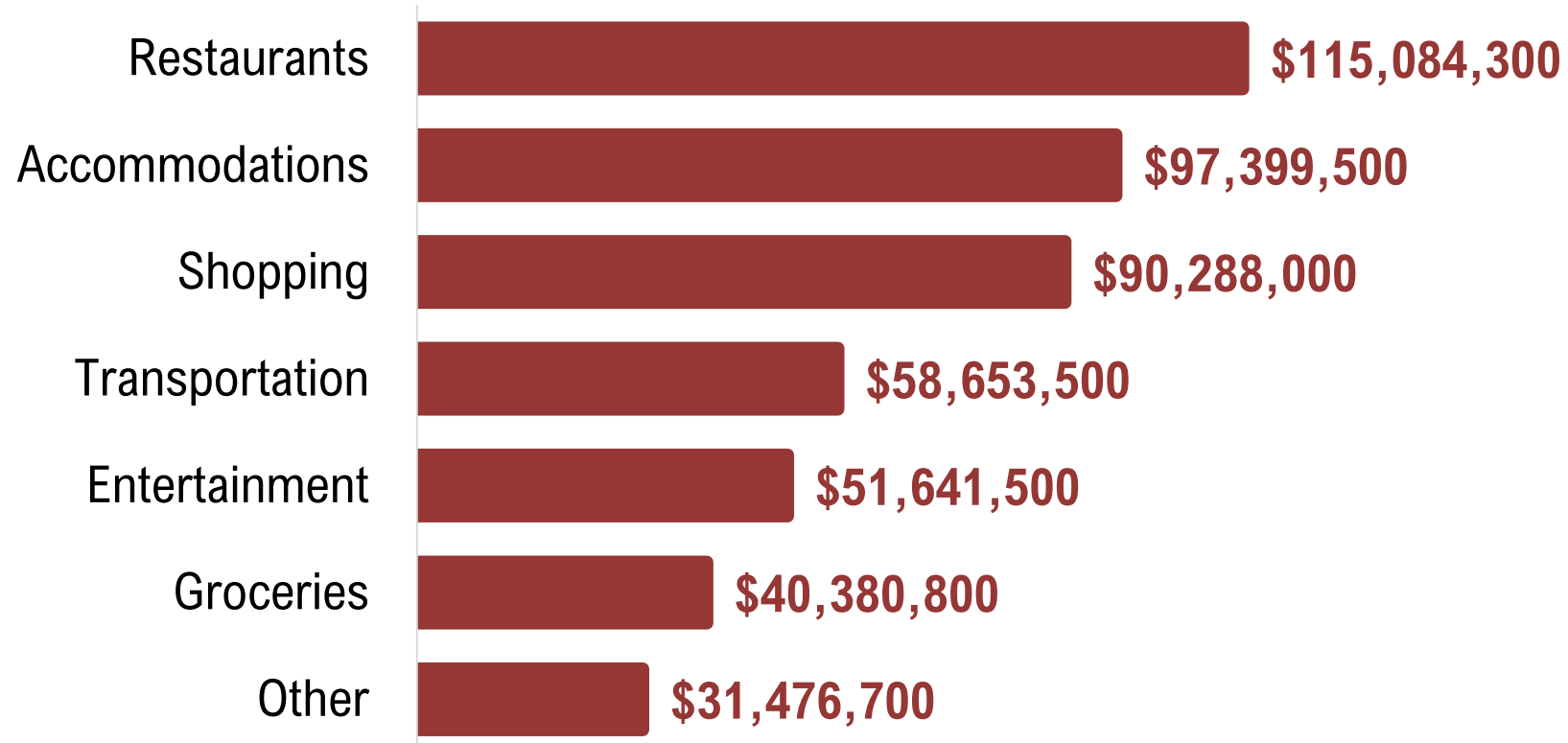
Economic Indicators	FY 2019	FY 2020	% Change
Visitors	2,438,900	1,683,000	-31.0%
Occupancy	73.5%	49.4%	-32.8%
Room rates	\$113.10	\$92.44	-18.3%
RevPAR	\$83.13	\$45.66	-45.1%
Travel party size	2.5	2.7	
Nights spent	3.3	3.3	
Will return	82%	89%	
Rating of experience	7.8 ¹	8.0 ¹	

¹On a 10-point scale.



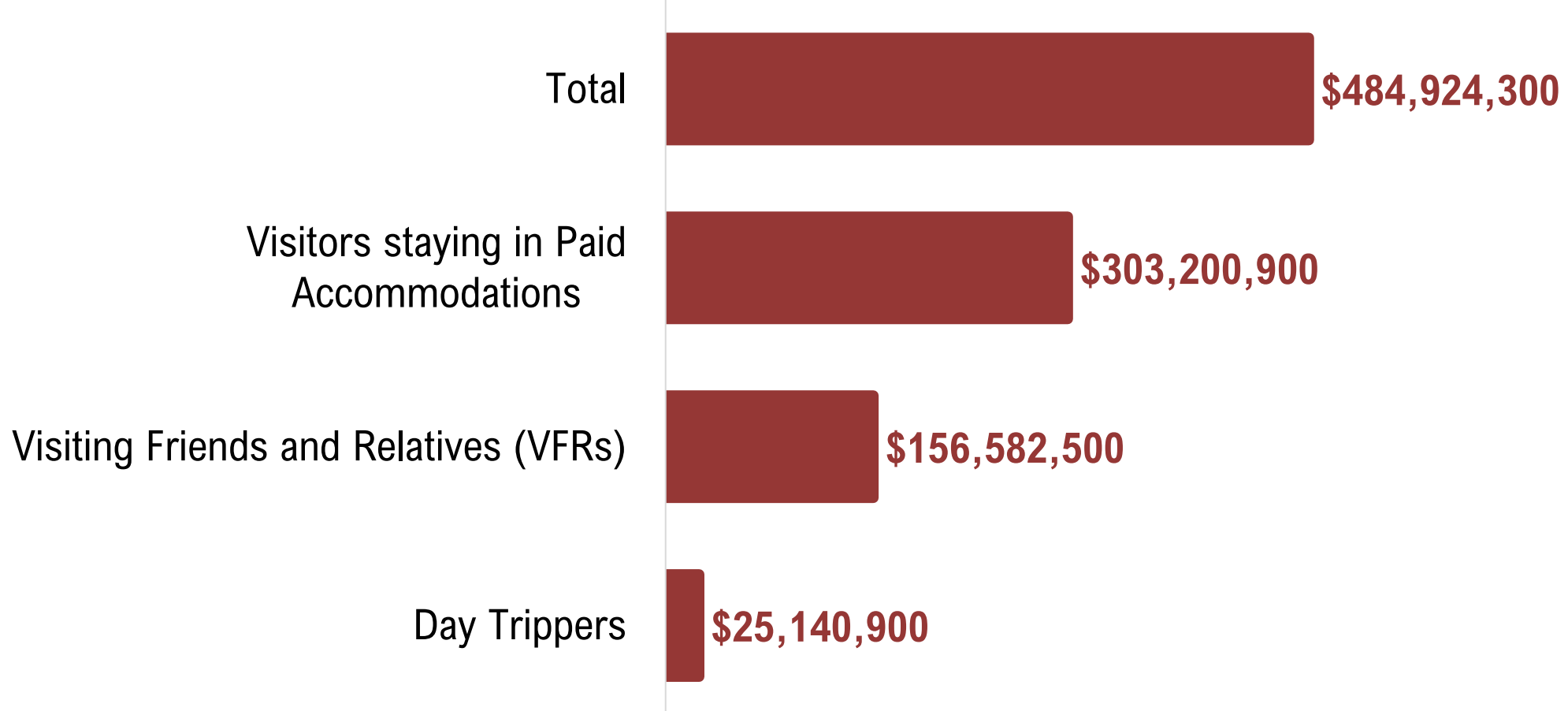
VISITORS DIRECT SPENDING

» Leon County Visitors spent **\$484,924,300** in FY2020



DIRECT SPENDING BY VISITOR TYPE

- » Visitors who stay in paid accommodations account for **63%** of visitor spending



KPIs – OCT-DEC 2019 (Q1)

Economic Indicators	Oct-Dec 2018 (Q1)	Oct-Dec 2019 (Q1)	% Change
Visitors	567,200	487,700	-14.0%
Direct Expenditures	\$165,392,800	\$155,244,600	-6.1%
Economic Impact	\$261,320,600	\$245,286,500	-6.1%
Occupancy	79.0%	59.2%	-25.1%
Room Rates	\$116.89	\$110.50	-5.5%
RevPAR	\$92.34	\$65.42	-29.2%
Travel party size	2.9	2.7	
Nights spent	3.0	3.4	
Will return	85%	85%	
Rating of experience	8.7 ¹	8.2 ¹	

¹On a 10-point scale.



KPIs – JAN-MAR 2020 (Q2)

Economic Indicators	Jan-Mar 2019 (Q2)	Jan-Mar 2020 (Q2)	% Change
Visitors	713,200	490,600	-31.2%
Direct Expenditures	\$185,358,400	\$142,622,200	-23.0%
Economic Impact	\$292,866,300	\$225,343,100	-23.0%
Occupancy	79.2%	58.0%	-26.8%
Room Rates	\$115.27	\$110.09	-4.5%
RevPAR	\$91.29	\$63.85	-30.1%
Travel party size	3.1	3.1	
Nights spent	3.3	3.4	
Will return	88%	91%	
Rating of experience	8.0 ¹	7.9 ¹	

¹On a 10-point scale.



KPIs – APR-JUN 2020 (Q3)

Economic Indicators	Apr-Jun 2019 (Q3)	Apr-Jun 2020 (Q3)	% Change
Visitors	629,600	376,500	-40.2%
Direct Expenditures	\$155,482,700	\$84,475,900	-45.7%
Economic Impact	\$245,662,700	\$133,471,900	-45.7%
Occupancy	69.3%	33.6%	-51.5%
Room Rates	\$110.68	\$69.35	-37.3%
RevPAR	\$76.70	\$23.30	-69.6%
Travel party size	2.5	2.5	
Nights spent	3.1	2.9	
Will return	88%	93%	
Rating of experience	7.8 ¹	7.8 ¹	

¹On a 10-point scale.



KPIs – JULY-SEPT 2020 (Q4)

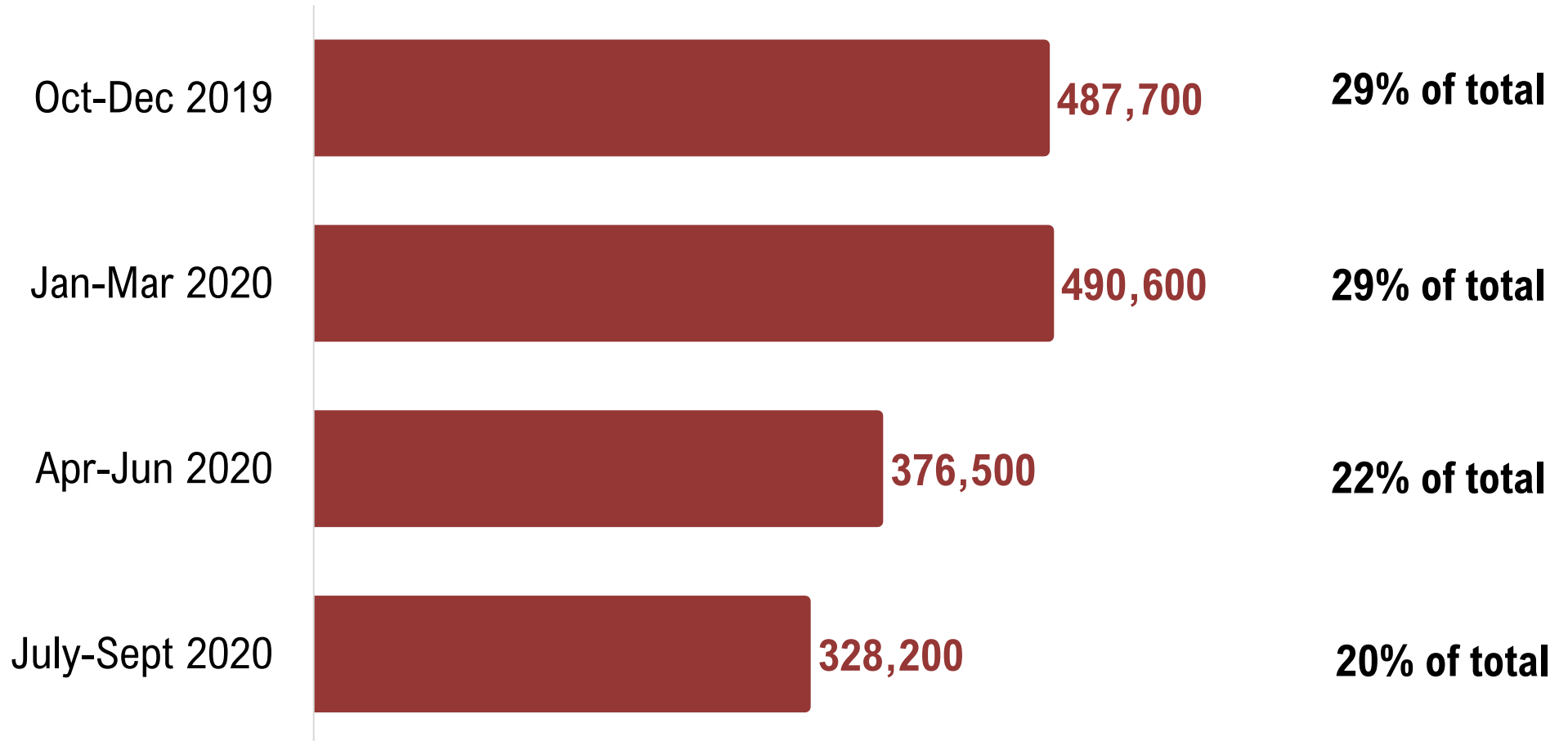
Economic Indicators	July-Sept 2019 (Q4)	July-Sept 2020 (Q4)	% Change
Visitors	528,900	328,200	-37.9%
Direct Expenditures	\$152,845,700	\$102,581,600	-32.9%
Economic Impact	\$241,496,200	\$162,078,900	-32.9%
Occupancy	66.9%	46.8%	-30.0%
Room Rates	\$107.19	\$79.80	-25.6%
RevPAR	\$71.70	\$37.35	-47.9%
Travel party size	2.5	2.5	
Nights spent	3.5	3.5	
Will return	87%	90%	
Rating of experience	7.9 ¹	7.9 ¹	

¹On a 10-point scale.



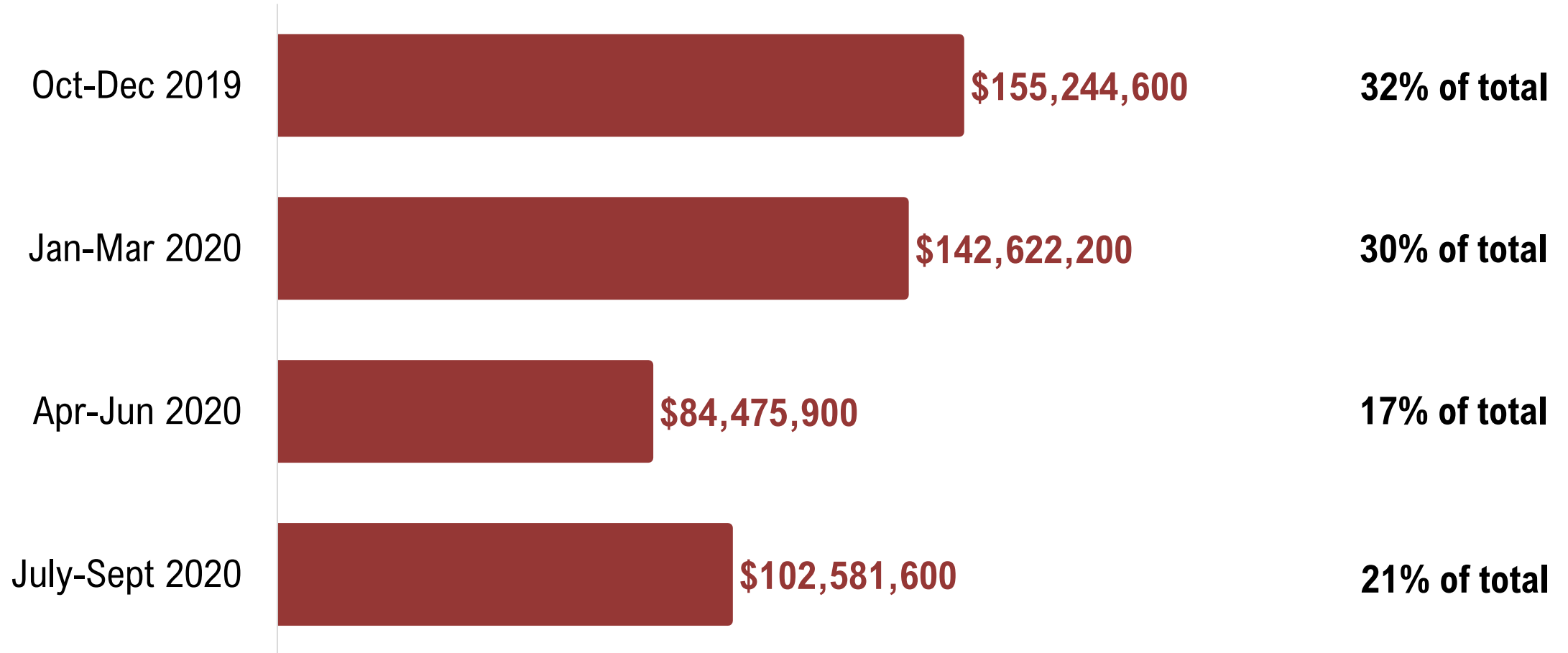
VISITORS BY QUARTER

Total Visitors: **1,683,000**



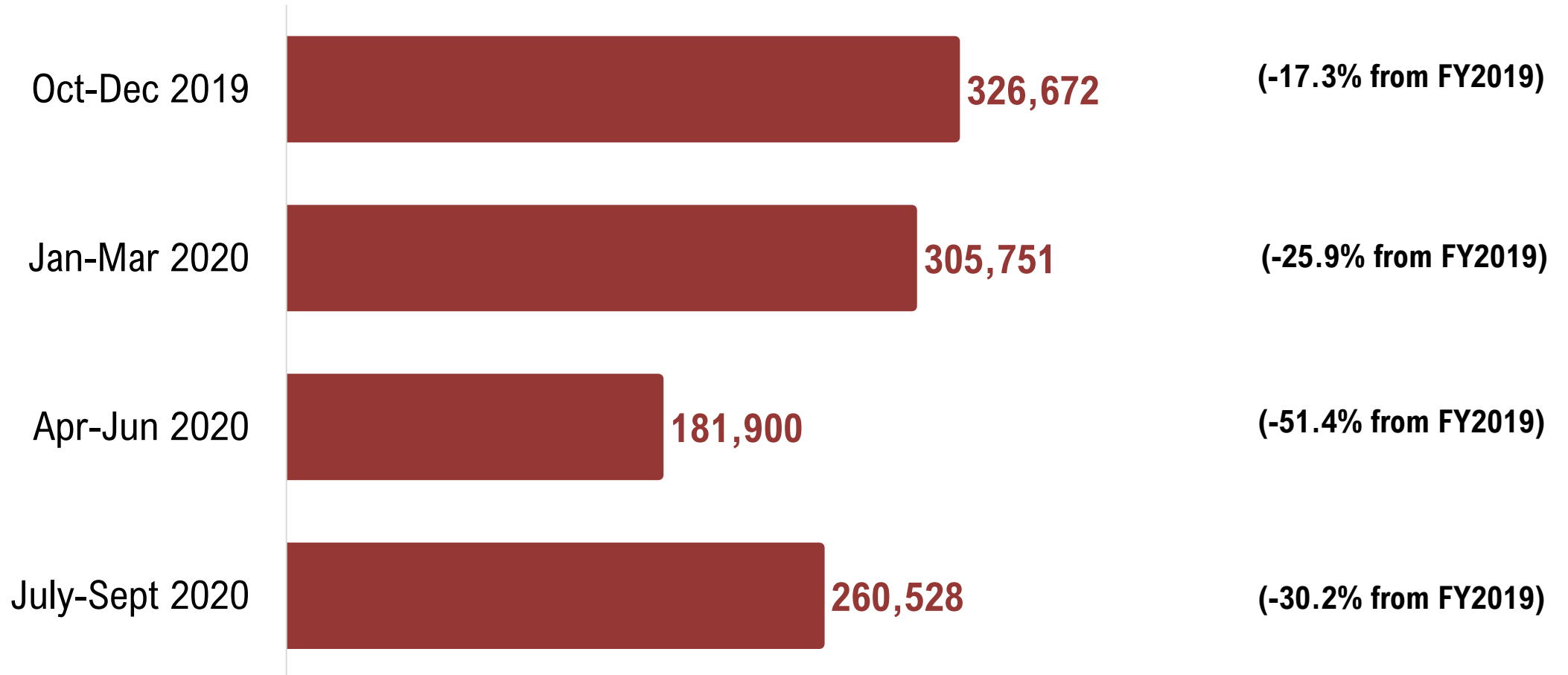
VISITORS DIRECT SPENDING BY QUARTER

Total Direct Spend: **\$484,924,300**



ROOM NIGHTS BY QUARTER

Total Room Nights: **1,074,851**



FISCAL YEAR 2020: VISITOR TRACKING



QUARTERLY COMPARISONS

Economic Indicators	Oct-Dec 2019 (Q1)	Jan-Mar 2020 (Q2)	Apr-Jun 2020 (Q3)	July-Sept 2020 (Q4)
Visitors*	487,700	490,600	376,500	328,200
Occupancy	59.2%	58.0%	33.6%	46.8%
Median age	46	47	44	44
Median HH income	\$98,500	\$97,200	\$83,300	\$98,500
From Southeast	74%	76%	84%	69%
From Florida	49%	48%	60%	43%
Travel party size	2.7	3.1	2.5	2.5
Drove	75%	76%	88%	87%
Length of stay	3.4	3.4	2.9	3.5
1st time visitor	21%	21%	16%	26%

* Includes day trippers and visitors staying with friends and relatives (VFRs)



QUARTERLY COMPARISONS

Economic Indicators	Oct-Dec 2019 (Q1)	Jan-Mar 2020 (Q2)	Apr-Jun 2020 (Q3)	July-Sept 2020 (Q4)
Rating of Leon County*	8.2	7.9	7.8	7.9
Likelihood of returning	85%	91%	93%	90%
Spending per travel party	\$1,057	\$1,146	\$770	\$1,047
Used VisitTallahassee.com	2%	2%	15%	2%
Used hotel website	23%	23%	22%	22%
Used smartphone on trip	77%	74%	70%	78%
Married	61%	66%	61%	55%
Has college degree	74%	73%	67%	71%

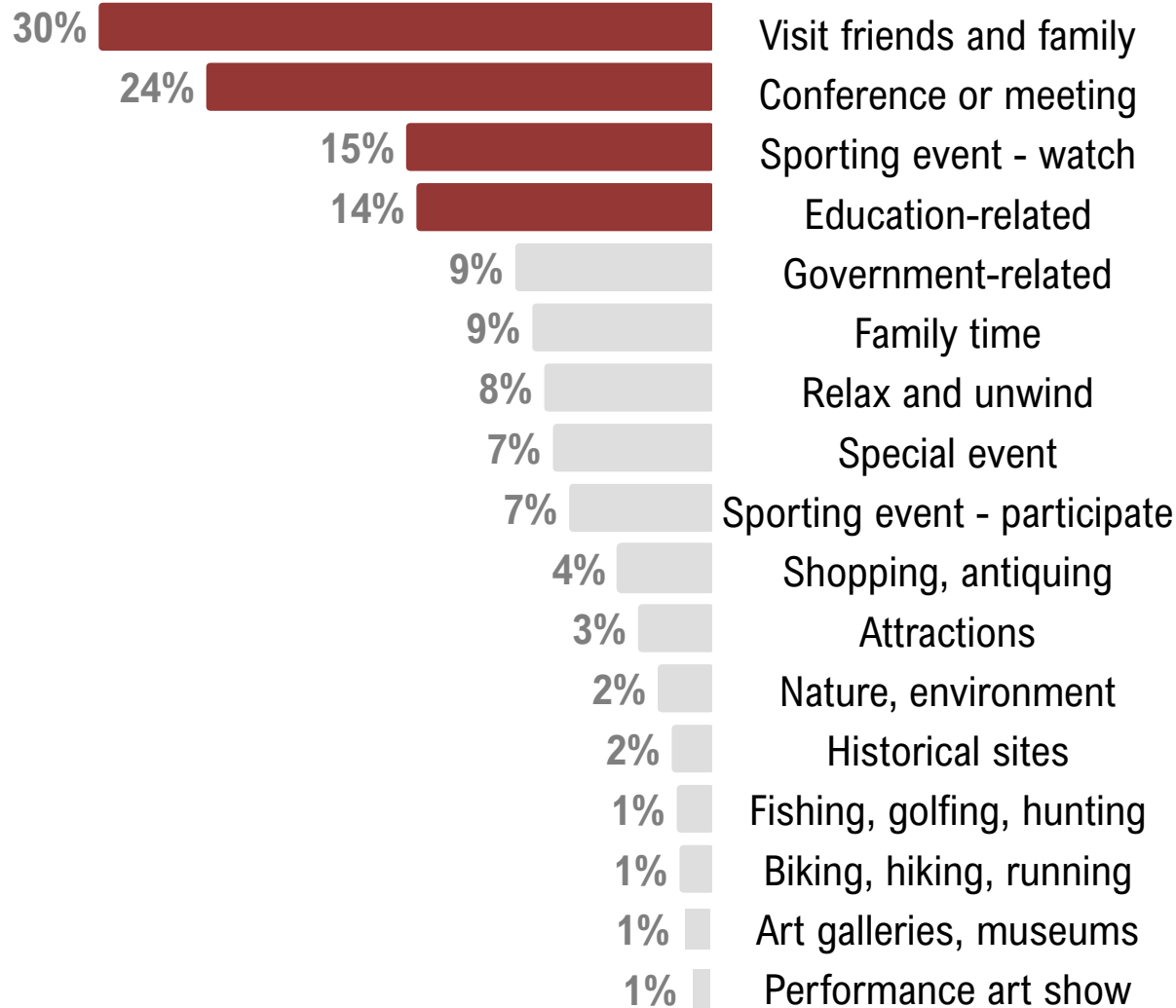
* Using a 10-point scale



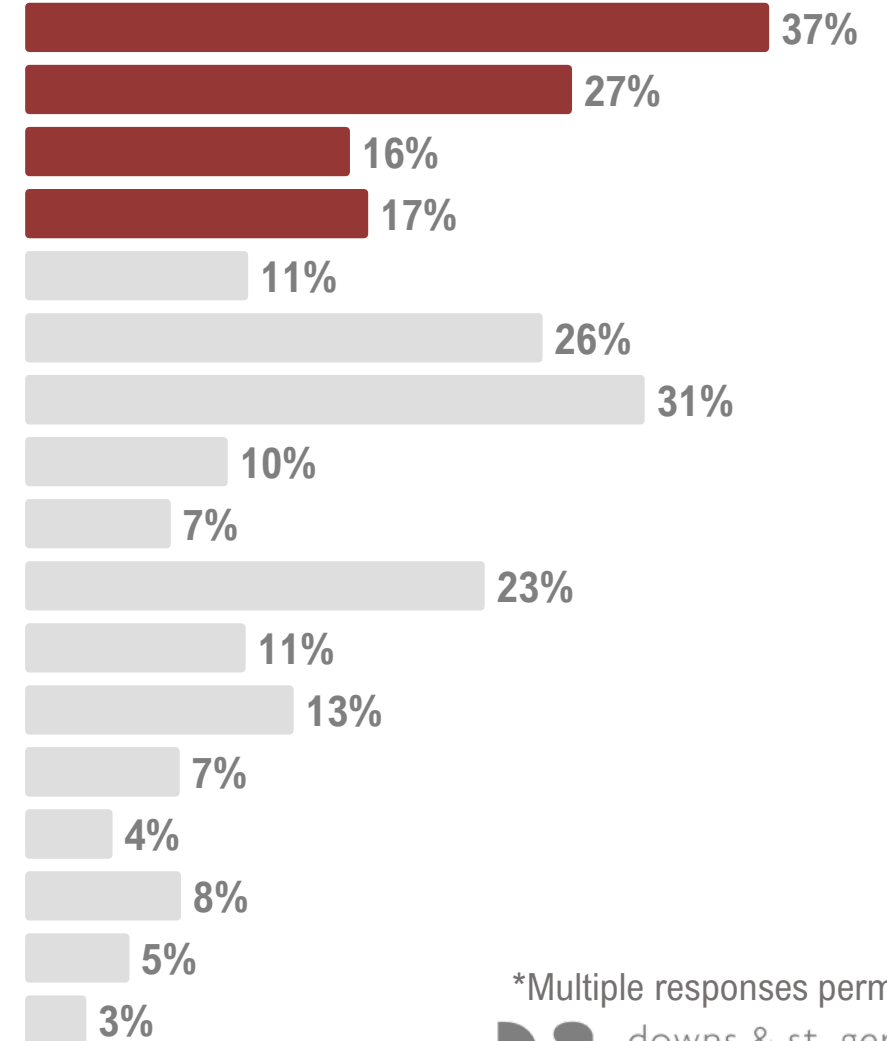
FY 2020 REASONS FOR VISITING VS. VISITOR ACTIVITIES



Reasons for Visiting*



Visitor Activities*



*Multiple responses permitted.

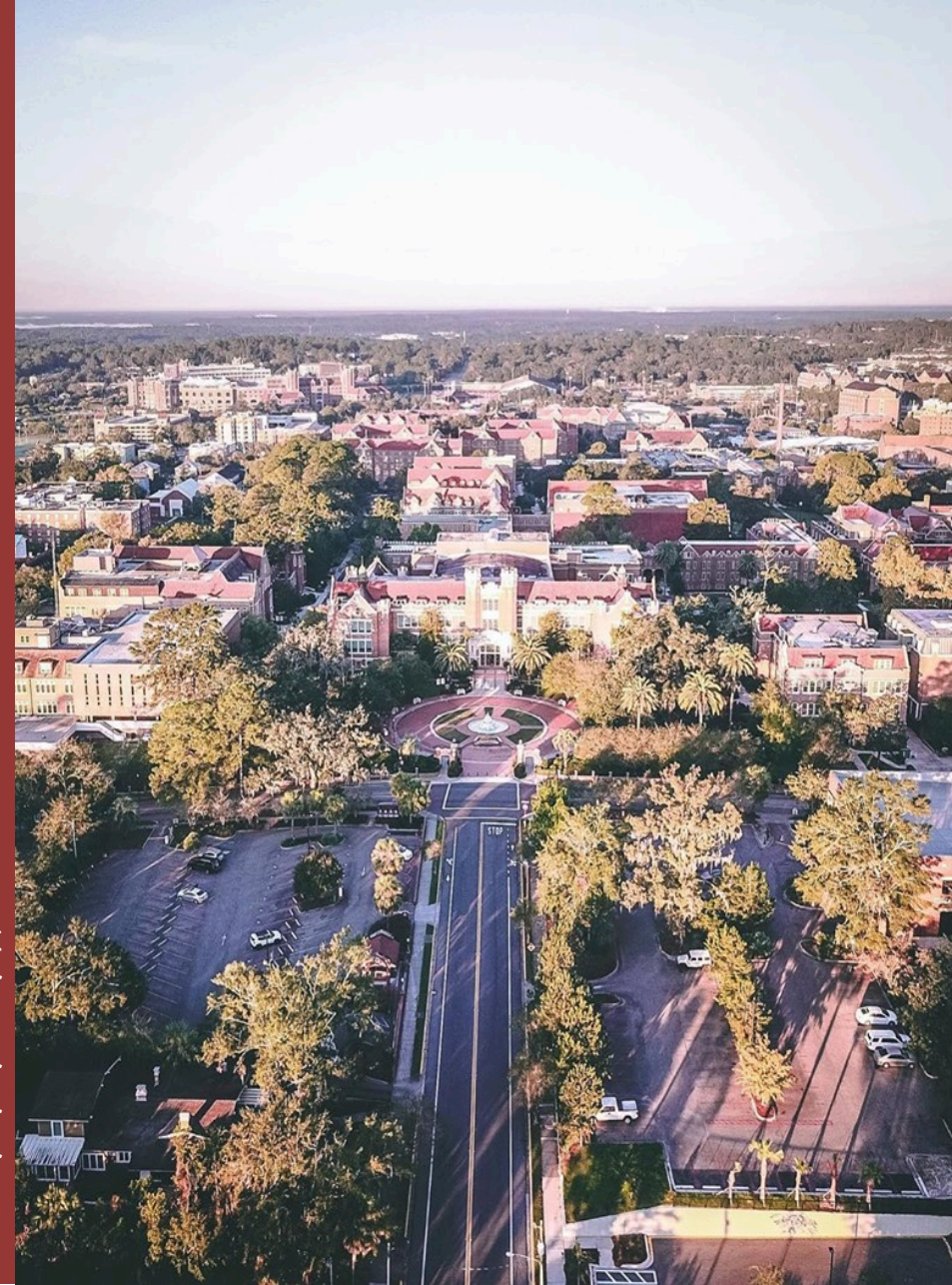
LEON COUNTY DIVISION OF TOURISM – VISIT TALLAHASSEE

Economic Impact of Tourism Report
Fiscal Year 2020 (October 2019 – September 2020)

Kerri Post

Executive Director, Leon County Division of Tourism/ Visit Tallahassee
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Visit
Tallahassee
A Division of Leon County

DS downs & st. germain
RESEARCH



FY 2019-2021
Strategic Plan
for the
Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee

Facilitated by
ZEITGEIST CONSULTING
**DMO
PRÖZ**
DMOproz.com

APPROVED JUNE 19, 2018



Visit
Tallahassee
A Division of Leon County

Destination Vision and Organizational Mission

The Leon County Tourism Development Council (TDC) and the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee, the County's official Destination Marketing Organization (DMO), exist to increase and enhance the region's visitor economy.

When TDC members met on the 9th of April, 2018, to discuss and ideate the future growth and direction for the destination and the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee, they first reviewed the existing Vision and Mission statements to ensure they remained accurate and relevant. Thoughtful discussion and evaluation followed and the revised statements below are being presented for the TDC's consideration:

NEW Vision for the Destination:

The Tallahassee Region will be recognized and appreciated as one of the most diverse and vibrant destinations in the Southeast.

NEW Mission of the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee:

To enhance the region's economic growth and quality of life by collaboratively inspiring the vitality of Tallahassee's Visitor Economy.

The destination Vision is what Leon County aspires to be in the eyes of the TDC. The Mission statement identifies how the Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee works to achieve that Vision.

TDC Members have committed themselves to the three year goals and objectives in the FY 2019-2021 Tourism Strategic Plan in order to inspire innovative growth of the community and provide expert counsel to the Leon County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). The goals align with Leon County priorities, economic goals, community desires and industry needs to create a synergistic plan to grow the region's visitor economy and enhance the quality of life for all residents of Leon County.

The goals and strategic initiatives on this page are included in the Leon County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) FY 2017-2021 Strategic Plan. Each year, the County updates its Strategic Plan as the County continues to evolve, engage and execute the strategies.

Leon County BOCC 5-Year Tourism Target Goals

- Realize \$5 billion in Visitor Spending between FY 2017 & FY 2021
- Attract 80 State, Regional or National Sports Championships between FY 2017 & FY 2021
- Host 100,000 attendees as part of the Amphitheater Concert Series between FY 2017 & FY 2021

Leon County BOCC Tourism Initiatives

Responsibility: **Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee**

- Host 2021 NCAA Cross-Country Championship
- Explore NFL Pre-Season and Other Events at Doak Campbell Stadium
- Enhance Competitiveness by Investing in Apalachee Regional Park
- Support Choose Tallahassee's Retirement Marketing

Responsibility: **Leon County TDC (*addressed in this Strategic Plan*)**

- Work with FSU on the potential Convention Center development
- Work with stakeholders to revise State Statute 125.0104 to include Leon County in the High Tourism Impact Tax designation



FY 2019-2021 Strategic Plan Executive Summary

The Strategic Planning Process

In developing the new three-year Strategic Plan, the Leon County Tourism Development Council (TDC) designed a collaborative process to gather a broad understanding of resident needs and expectations to ensure that its future work would increase visitor spending consistent with the County's priorities, economic goals, community desires and industry needs.

Working through DMOproz, the TDC reached out through online surveys, face-to-face interviews with community and governmental leaders and focus groups of industry stakeholders. Almost 300 points of view were registered in the intelligence gathering portion of the strategic planning process - more than 190 individuals responded to the online survey and over 100 interfaced directly with Mr. Bill Geist, president of DMOproz, the principle consultant on this project. This level of community input was invaluable in the TDC's ultimate decisions on its recommended path forward with this Strategic Plan

The TDC met on the 9th of April, 2018, to discuss and ideate the future growth and direction for the destination and the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee. During their time together, TDC members considered research that identified the realities of the present and the visions for tomorrow, as they considered new ways to increase visitor spending throughout the county.

This document was developed after a substantive discussion of present environments, threats and opportunities that followed online surveys of industry partners and stakeholders, as well as individual conversations and focus groups with community and government leaders, to better understand the expectations of and opportunities before the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee and the destination. The subsequent goals developed in this document are designed to power future discussions and actions of the TDC, community leaders and industry stakeholders to develop collaborative opportunities to enhance the impact of visitor spending in the region.

FY 2019-2021 Tourism Strategic Plan Contains Four Main Goals:

- Advocate for destination enhancing development
- Enhance the awareness, interest and support of Leon County's visitor economy
- Work to enhance the visitor experience throughout Leon County
- Analyze opportunities to increase the marketing budgetary resources of the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee

Abbreviated Destination Assessment of Leon County

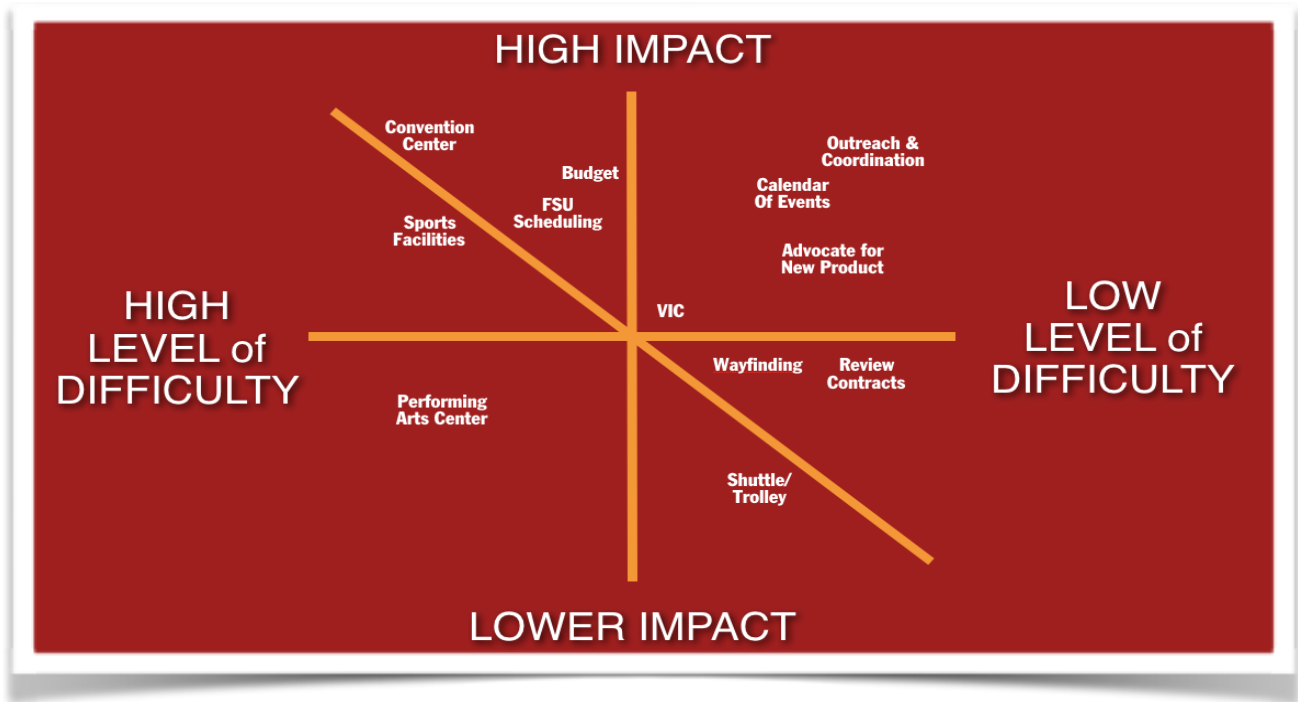
Lead consultant Bill Geist toured the area in April to better understand the changes in the destination from his previous visit to Leon County in 2009 as the consultant that developed Leon County's initial Tourism Strategic Plan. Significant enhancements to the destination have since occurred – with many new hotels and restaurants, and thriving new “districts” (i.e. Gaines Street/College Town, Midtown, Uptown, etc.) have been established providing enhanced entertainment and dining options throughout the community, each with unique qualities targeting different market segments. Success in the Sports marketing area continues to grow exponentially, especially hosting Cross Country championship events, and has elevated the destination profile. Additional hotel developments are currently planned, a Convention Center is again in discussion with \$20 million in public funds committed, along with numerous enhancements to parks and outdoor amenities are in various stages of implementation. Further, extensive stakeholder feedback indicates the tourism industry, community organizations, and local leadership have a favorable view of the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee as the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) and illustrates a very effective transition from a non-profit DMO in 2009 to a successful government DMO. One comment received in the feedback fully encapsulated the overall thought of community stakeholders: **“We are at a Tipping Point. This is our Moment.”**

TDC Review of Opportunities

TDC discussions during the first half of the Strategic Planning Workshop focused on potential opportunities expressed during the extensive intelligence gathering and were developed for further consideration in the list below in no particular order. This list of opportunities served as a guide for discussion with prioritization indicated on the following page.

- Convention Center
- Performing Arts Venue
- Shuttle/Trollies
- Increase Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee Marketing Budget
- Further develop the Destination's Calendar of Events
- Increase Outreach & Coordination with Tourism Industry and Residents
- National Tournament-Grade Sports Complex and developing emerging sports leagues
- Advocate for New Product Development
- Visitor Information Center on I-10 / Mobile Visitor Information Center
- Wayfinding Signage/Entryway Enhancement
- Work with FSU/ACC and FAMU/MEAC on Event Scheduling
- Review all vendor and grantee contracts for upgrades and ROI

Using a prioritization tool designed by Stanford researcher B.J. Fogg, the TDC then ranked each opportunity based upon impact and difficulty. After averaging the responses, the following visual representation was created.



The point of the exercise was to identify those opportunities that were deemed too difficult or not important enough (ideas that would fall to the left of the diagonal line) in order to focus on those things of more importance (those ideas to the right of the diagonal).

In this instance, one of the identified opportunities (Performing Arts Center) ended up to the left of the diagonal. While such a venue could significantly enhance the magnetism of the destination, TDC members collectively agreed that much like the Convention Center, the County did not have the resources to take the lead on this initiative. The TDC will encourage other interests to take the lead on enhancing Leon County’s Arts and Cultural offerings.

The need for an additional National Tournament-Grade Sports Complex and supporting emerging sports was seen as very important by the TDC. However, the perceived level of difficulty at this point in time, given other priorities, resulted in the TDC choosing to explore various options rather than taking the initiative on as a goal and will defer to the Tallahassee Sports Council for recommended actions to move ahead.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This document is divided into three main sections. The first section is the Executive Summary of the TDC's Strategic Plan. This section can be shared to partners and stakeholders, as appropriate.

The second section, beginning on Page 7, contains the full Strategic Plan and identifies the program of work for the TDC and senior organizational management for its long-range future and includes suggested tactics. As some of these are competitively and politically sensitive, this section is not expressly intended to be actively distributed outside the organization.

The final section, beginning on page 14, contains a recap of the Board and Stakeholder surveys, community leader interviews, public meetings/focus groups and the discussions from the Strategic Planning Session, laying the groundwork for the Plan's Goals and Objectives. This section can be utilized for clarification or rationale for particular opportunities.

Once the TDC and BOCC has reviewed and adopted the final version of the Strategic Plan, the TDC may consider establishing a Work Group or Task Force for deeper analysis and implementation on any of the goals. This working document, reflecting the ideas and opportunities before the organization and the destination, can be used as a roadmap to guide the TDC's future work on behalf of Leon County.



FY 2019-2021 Strategic Plan

GOAL 1 - Advocate For Destination Enhancing Development

Objective A

Serve as the Voice of the Visitor and the Hospitality Industry in development discussions

Suggested Tactics:

- Regularly monitor and support progress on the region's Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency project plans
- Review consumer research for potential asset development opportunities that would make the destination more attractive to visitors
- Serve as the County's trusted expert on tourism and destination marketing
- Continue to serve the public as the voice of the region's hospitality industry, explaining the positive impacts of tourism on the county

Objective B

Serve as a Trusted Resource to potential developers of destination enhancing public assembly facilities

Suggested Tactics:

- Provide research and information about the Leon County visitor economy to assist developers to meet the needs of the destination, such as (but not limited to):
 - Meeting space that is required to effectively compete with other Florida or regional destinations
 - Sports facility design that qualifies for NCAA-level competition
- Advise FSU on their interest in Convention Center development

Objective C

Advocate for new and expanded Festivals and Events that position Tallahassee as the Event Capital of the Southeast

Suggested Tactics:

- Analyze the potential ROI of events that can effectively power visitation during shoulder seasons, such as (but not limited to):
 - America's First Christmas Event (not necessarily at the historic site) and the Site when it is ready
 - The city's upcoming Bicentennial (2024)
 - Others, as identified
- Continue to review and enhance the guidelines behind all Event grants funded by TDT to ensure the highest possible ROI

GOAL 2 - Enhance The Awareness, Interest and Support of Leon County's Visitor Economy

Objective A

Develop Messages that resonates with Policy Makers, the Business Community, Tourism Industry and Residents

Suggested Tactics:

- Promote the "traditional" impact statistics (e.g., jobs, taxes generated, spending totals)
- Identify other impacts made by tourism businesses
 - Connect visitation to the health of restaurants, nightspots, retail and attractions that residents enjoy
 - Communicate the property and sales taxes generated by tourism businesses (and what the residential tax burden would be without the Visitor Economy)
 - Communicate the percent of local residents that derive a paycheck from the Visitor Economy
 - Establish the relationship between destination image, visitation and corporate investment (utilize Longwoods International's "Halo Effect" Study)
 - Develop talking points for the TDC and Staff that translates the direct connection to the average citizen's quality of life
- Develop a series of videos to better explain the importance of the Visitor Economy and Visit Tallahassee's role in its maintenance and growth
 - Identify and utilize multiple distribution channels for the videos (Social Media, local Cable Channel, etc.)

Objective B

Work with area media outlets to tell the broader story of how the destination is evolving, highlight hidden gems, and the connection between the Visitor Economy, Economic Vitality and Quality of Life

Suggested Tactics:

- Schedule regular visits with Owners, Managers and Editors of local media outlets
 - Encourage an understanding of the community's need for media to be part of the solution in creating the kind of pride that will attract investors
- Build relationships with Social Media influencers in the community
- Share more impact and success stories through news conferences and media releases (more than just the announcements of "big wins")
- Use "real life" stories to connect the dots for local media, bloggers and businesses
- Continue to work with the local media (i.e. Tallahassee Democrat) to establish a regular column and/or coverage on destination products, the TDC and the Visitor Economy

Objective C

Utilize TDC Members and Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee Staff as Destination Brand and DMO Ambassadors to Communicate the Importance of the Visitor Economy

Suggested Tactics:

- Stage celebratory events for Visitor Industry workers and Economic Development leaders
 - Service Industry events
 - Breakfasts and Lunches for Community Leaders
- Look for opportunities to co-op events with other Community Development Organizations, including the Office of Economic Vitality and Chambers of Commerce.
- Encourage individual TDC Members to accompany staff when briefing elected officials, the media and others on the importance of the Visitor Economy

Objective D

Strengthen collaboration with other Community Development and Tourism Promotion agencies throughout the region

Suggested Tactics:

- Search for opportunities to build support and advocacy for each other's agendas
 - Be willing to take a stand for what is right for the region
- Build integrated local communications strategies for coordinating priority messages among partner agencies
- Identify ways that the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee's marketing and sales efforts could complement the work of others
 - Continue to support the marketing efforts of Choose Tallahassee
 - Work with OEV to coordinate messaging in their target markets with the Leon County Division of Tourism / Visit Tallahassee convention sales targets
 - Work with FSU, FAMU and TCC to place students in hospitality industry work environments

Objective E

Enhance Networking with and between Industry Partners

Suggested Tactics:

- Consider staging meetings between Industry Partners and the TDC in months in which the TDC does not meet (e.g., Attractions in February, Hotels in April, Arts & Culture in June, etc.)
- Analyze opportunities to bring all partners together for a Tourism Summit in addition to the Annual Marketing Roll-out.

Objective F

Search for mutually beneficial Partnerships with education and businesses

Suggested Tactics:

- Identify messages and market segments in which local companies have a mutual interest (e.g., Healthcare companies and the support of a healthy lifestyle through marketing of Trailahassee.com)
- Work with FSU (and the ACC) and FAMU (and the MEAC) on the critical need for more collaborative scheduling
- Consider ways to partner with Business and Hospitality Schools

GOAL 3 - Work To Enhance The Visitor Experience Throughout Leon County

Objective A

Analyze the most effective ways to personally deliver Visitor Information

Suggested Tactics:

- Consider the future of Visitor Information Centers
 - Along I-10
 - At high traffic areas such as Cascade Park
 - A Mobile Visitor Center at events and on the road
 - Partnering with other organizations to provide service on the weekends
 - Evaluate highest and best use of current Tourism building
- Work to engage those that directly interact with visitors to be Destination Ambassadors and distribute Leon County Division of Tourism / Visit Tallahassee information
 - Hotel Front-Desk
 - Servers and Bartenders
 - Uber and Taxi Drivers
 - Airbnb Hosts
 - Others, as identified

Objective B

Enhance the comprehensive destination-wide Calendar of Events

Suggested Tactics:

- Build partnerships between entities that are currently producing online Calendars of Events to gain wider use for the calendar posted on VisitTallahassee.com
- Identify ways to enhance the Calendar for expanded use by consumers and benefit to businesses, events rights holders, etc.

Objective C

Suggest opportunities to enhance the region's infrastructure to better welcome visitors and investors

Suggested Tactics:

- Support efforts to develop the numerous Districts (i.e., Gaines Street, Midtown, Uptown, etc.) throughout the destination
- Advocate for more effective destination wayfinding signage
 - Destination Welcome Signs
 - Directions to Attractions, Major Parks/Greenways & Neighborhoods/Districts
 - Trailhead Signage
 - Parking Signage

Objective D

Work to enhance the Service Culture of the Destination

Suggested Tactics:

- Consider ways to offer Customer Service training to employees of industry partners
 - Analyze opportunities to develop partnerships with area Hospitality programs (FSU's Dedman School, Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association)
 - Investigate National Training programs
- Consider developing a video series for front-line staff to better educate them on all the attractions and experiences Tallahassee has to offer

GOAL 4 - Analyze Opportunities To Increase The Marketing Budgetary Resources

Objective A

Work to revise State Statutes to include Leon County in the High Tourism Impact Tax Legislation for the proposed Convention Center

Suggested Tactic:

- Work with the area's Legislative Delegation to support efforts to expand the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee Budget

Objective B

Review new revenue streams being successfully utilized across the nation

Suggested Tactics:

- Consider developing programs for destination businesses to secure enhanced visibility
- Expand sponsorship opportunities, especially in the Sports Market
- Consider ways to monetize the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee Website and Visitor Center

Objective C

Continue to ensure that TDT revenues are targeted toward the highest possible ROI

Suggested Tactics:

- Continue to review all facets of the uses of TDT
- Regularly review Grant guidelines for ROI
- Explore opportunities to achieve higher ROI through policy changes

SUMMARY OF TOPICS DISCUSSED AT THE PUBLIC MEETINGS

With almost 300 points of view registered in the preliminary intelligence gathering phase, two comments from the online survey stood out as the call to action for the TDC and Leon County:

“We are at a Tipping Point. This is our Moment.”

“Tallahassee is Hungry to Win; Hungry to Love Itself; Hungry to Show Off.”

Destination Opportunities:

- To develop a “Sense of Place” that is a source of pride for residents.
- Convention / Conference / Full-Service Hotel complex.
- More culinary and nightlife options.
- The Programming of Cascades could be so much more than it currently is.
- Encourage better Customer Service.
- Put a Visitor Center on I-10.
- Creation of a more comprehensive online Calendar of Events.
- Market our Neighborhoods / Districts as an asset.
- We need more pedestrian friendly areas; an Arts & Heritage District.
- Can we be the Festival Capital of the Southeast? Can we be America’s First Christmas?
- Can we turn our 70,000 students into Brand Ambassadors.
- How to maximize 400,000 FSU Alumni. 500 Campus visits/day in Summer.
- How to get parents & graduates to return.
- Expand efforts to build a Tournament economy to Student-run and non-traditional sports events.

Destination Weaknesses:

- Lack of Airlift
- Transportation, Congestion and Parking in and around the county
- The trolley system is invisible to visitors and doesn’t stop at several attractions.
- Lack of a Convention Center
- Destination Wayfinding and Welcome points are a huge issue.
- Lack of a higher concentration of Full-Service Hotels
- Blight (and a lack of zoning enforcement) along the major corridors into our city.
- A perceived lack of things to do to retain Young Professionals.
- A Downtown that is designed for business and not as a gathering place.
- A Downtown Visitor Information Center that is closed on weekends
- A Destination Website that doesn’t tell the Tallahassee Story; doesn’t inspire.
- The lack of growth in the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee Budget while being faced with increasing expectations

Community Challenges:

- The community operates in a myriad of Silos, both relational and informational.
- We don't network well. We need to get the hospitality industry more unified
- We are a community that still struggles with Segregation and Diversity.
- We are socially and economically divided.
- We could be a hotbed for Music...but existing venues don't pay performers well enough.
- Lack of Performance venues. We are losing our top talent to other cities for lack of a place to perform.
- Local Media hurts our efforts. Hurts FSU's efforts. Hurts everybody. Our image impacts everyone.
- High rents are killing the entrepreneurial spirit here.
- Getting past our traditional attitude that everything here is "good enough."

The Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee:

- Needs a more robust budget and additional professional staff.
- Needs more local visibility. Locals don't have a clue as to the importance of its work.
- The Hospitality Industry needs and wants more interaction with Professional Staff.
- Hotels need more communication on Group Status, Lost Business, ROI, IDSS, etc.
- Needs better coordination with OEV.
- Needs to be more entrepreneurial.
- Needs to be included in all community development conversations.
- Needs to be more of a "story-teller" and less of a list of things to do.
- Needs to provide assistance to develop better hotel packaging.
- Needs to better highlight the region's Arts, Cultural and Heritage offerings.

The Sports Market:

- A concern that the destination is facing a capacity issues with hotels that may block further growth in this market
- A suggestion that the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee should focus on emerging and non-traditional sports such as Disc-Golf, Mountain Biking and Student-run Tournaments are a huge opportunity.
- Could Leon County become the "Outdoor Sports Capital of Florida?"

Requests of the TDC:

- The TDC should be an Advocate for Destination Development
- Be more engaged in the current conversations surrounding branding but from a tourism destination perspective.
- Continue to review and update Event Grant rules and guidelines to achieve the highest ROI
- Fight harder against any use of the TDT that does not produce a higher ROI.



*Visit
Tallahassee*

**LEON COUNTY
Tourist Development Council**

2021 Proposed Meeting Schedule

Thursday, January 21, 2021

Thursday, March 11, 2021

Thursday, May 6, 2021

Thursday, July 15, 2021

September 9, 2021
(Labor Day is on Monday, September 6, 2021)

Thursday, November 4, 2021

MULTIPURPOSE ROOM



CASCADES AMPHITHEATER SUPPORT SPACE
LEON COUNTY and CITY OF TALLAHASSEE PRNA

September 11, 2020



BOARDROOM



CASCADES AMPHITHEATER SUPPORT SPACE
LEON COUNTY and CITY OF TALLAHASSEE PRNA

September 11, 2020



GREENROOM



CASCADES AMPHITHEATER SUPPORT SPACE
LEON COUNTY and CITY OF TALLAHASSEE PRNA

September, 2020



EXPLORE FLORIDA & The Caribbean

A South Florida Sun Sentinel
and Orlando Sentinel publication

PEAK EXPERIENCES

**KNEE DEEP
IN THE
EVERGLADES**

**ORLANDO'S
HIDDEN
PARADISE**

**POSTCARDS
FROM
THE EDGE
IN THE KEYS**

**ADVENTURE
WITH A BUTLER
IN ST. LUCIA**

**THE SEARCH
FOR THE
BIRTHPLACE
OF THE CUBAN
SANDWICH**

**STATEWIDE
EVENT CALENDARS**

THE **ZIMMERMAN** AGENCY

(continued)



A scenic overlook on the Lake Overstreet trails provides a place for hikers and bikers to stop in Tallahassee.

Trailahassee

Bike, hike, paddle, drive North Florida's hundreds of miles of trails

By Patrick Connolly

“Not all of Florida is flat!” reads a map detailing Tallahassee’s network of trails. That becomes apparent when driving there, entering a city that has inclines and slopes very unlike other parts of the Sunshine State.

The terrain becomes even more obvious when muscling up a steep ascent on a mountain bike. But that’s just part of the fun when delving into offerings surrounding “Trailahassee,” the nickname given to Florida’s capital for its hundreds of miles of paths to explore.

“The official account is 742 miles of total trails in our area. That includes our kayaking trails, biking trails, hiking trails, walking trails,” said Scott Lindeman, marketing communications director at Visit Tallahassee. “We just say over 700 because the number changes almost every week.”

Tallahassee has long been known as a college and government town, but the North Florida city is now taking on a new identity with more local businesses and eco-tourism.



The Red Bug Trail at Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park provides 5.5 miles of more challenging terrain for mountain bikers in Tallahassee.



"We're not the beach communities, we're not the theme parks ... Our trails and all of our natural resources are woven into everything we do," Lindeman said. "The potential is there to become an eco-tourism destination. We have the support of the community at large, as well as our elected officials. We're not Orlando, and we're not trying to be."

Mountain biking, Florida style

On a sweltering summer day, I got a glimpse at North Florida's mountain bike trails with Jimmy Card, president of the Tallahassee Mountain Bike Association. Taking off from downtown, we followed tree-lined paved trails before reaching an extensive network of off-road biking opportunities.

"We have a saying here, it's ride to the ride. We hate seeing people put bikes on their cars and driving to a trailhead," Card said.

We rode along several miles of urban single-track before reaching **Tom Brown Park** (442 Easterwood Drive, Tallahassee), a haven for mountain bike enthusiasts. Darting between towering trees, which provided much-needed shade, I followed Card as we whisked along the Magnolia Trail. Hopping over ruts and roots, shredding through downhill sections and jumping off clay berms made my heart race with joy and adrenaline.

Marked by rusty cars and hubcaps, the Cadillac Trail yielded challenges and terrain that can't be experienced in many other parts of the state. We decompressed during a shady jaunt around Piney Z Lake before rolling along a scenic boardwalk and covered bridge that crossed railroad tracks.

Then it was a race back to town to beat Florida's afternoon storms, which we narrowly avoided. Despite a broken spoke and sweat-soaked shirt, the smile never left my face.

The next day, I checked out the **Red Bug Trail** (4488 N. Meridian Road, Tallahassee), considered among the city's most trying mountain bike trails. Roots jutted out at every turn and rock gardens proved challenging to navigate, while switchbacks and wooden features keep riders on their toes.

For beginners, **Munson Hills** in the Apalachicola National Forest (5057 Woodville Highway, Tallahassee) gives families and casual riders a laid-back scenic ride.

As a lobbyist by trade, Card has worked hard during his two years as TMBA president, petitioning to expand the town's network of trails for the association's hundreds of members and the general public.

"We've probably had just shy of a million dollars in bike-related expenditures in the last two or three years, which is tremendous," he said, adding that additional tax dollars in the decades to come will be



Jimmy Card hits a wooden feature at Tom Brown Park.



Alfred B. Maclay Gardens State Park.

allocated for parks and trails. "Just dust the old bike off. If there's a trail near you where you can ride your bike safely, you're much more likely to do it than if you're riding on a road."

Tallahassee is also hoping to become certified as an International Mountain Bike Association Ride Center, with 72 miles of trails considered for mountain bike usage. The designation points out destinations with extensive trail networks and infrastructure to support off-road cycling, such as bike shops and breweries.

"We're just trying to make this a riding destination. It already is, we're just trying to make it better," Card said. "We're a powder keg ready to explode. It's a pretty special time here ... It's just a matter of getting it known outside of here."

A walk through the park

Although mountain biking is one focus of the "Trailahassee" mantra, hiking and running opportunities are plentiful surrounding the state's capital. In fact, many trails used by off-road cyclists are multi-use and can be enjoyed by hikers, trail runners and horseback riders as well.

Take a short drive north to **Alfred B. Maclay Gardens State Park** (3540 Thomasville Road, Tallahassee) to explore manicured gardens on the grounds once owned by the New York businessman. A short walk yields views of Lake Hall, a secret garden, a reflection pool and hundreds of camellias and azaleas.

The park also provides access to the multi-use Lake Overstreet trails with scenic overlooks and birding opportunities along the way. Across the street, wander the 670-acre **Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park** (4600 N. Meridian Road, Tallahassee), which gives hikers and trail runners the chance to experience more than seven miles of dedicated footpaths.

Lafayette Heritage Trail (4900 Heritage Park Blvd., Tallahassee) and **J.R. Alford Greenway** (2500 Pedrick Road, Tallahassee) present many miles of trails for running or hiking with shady canopies and waterfront views.

When taking off from the city, paved walkways in **Cascades Park** (1001 S. Gadsden St., Tallahassee) and the **St. Marks Trail** (4778 Woodville Highway, Tallahassee) give recreationists more than 20 miles of trail to explore.

Paddling the Panhandle

On a mild Panhandle evening, the majesty of the misty **Wacissa River** revealed itself to me. I launched my kayak near the cool headsprings that flow into the river right as a thin fog began to form, likely a result of warm humid air mixing with chilled waters.

I first paddled north to see rustic fish camps alongside cardinal flowers and cypress trees, scenes harkening back to old Florida.

A kayak paddle on the Wacissa River.



A little blue heron on the Wacissa River.



Heading south, numerous side springs, including Big Blue Spring and Garner Springs, show themselves to curious recreationists exploring the hidden paths.

Like many of North Florida's rivers, the waterway eventually joins the Gulf. The Wacissa later meets the Aucilla River and the float could be turned into a multi-day camping adventure. Launch at 433 Wacissa Springs Road in Greenville.

The Wakulla, St. Marks, Ecofina, Sopchoppy and Ochlockonee rivers offer similarly wild and beautiful opportunities for water-based recreation within an hour of Tallahassee.

For urban, easily accessible day trips, consider the Lafayette Passage Paddling Trail on Lake Lafayette and Piney Z Lake, Lake Jackson, Lake Hall or the Bradford Chain of Lakes.



Canopies by car

Some of Florida's roads are lined with ancient oaks that stretch their branches over cars, reaching for their siblings on the other side. In Tallahassee, there is a designation for these types of motorways: canopy roads. These **seven selected driving trails** encompass 78 miles lined with live oaks, sweet gums, hickory trees and pines that provide shade and scenery.

Each road has a tree protection area that includes all land within 100 feet of the road's centerline.

Take Meridian Road north from the city to find serenity among the canopy, or get away from town by taking Centerville or Miccosukee roads northeast. To Tallahassee's southeast, take a jaunt along Old St. Augustine Road.

However you choose to travel, "Trailahassee" provides no shortage of options for exploring Florida's natural side. And while social distancing has provided a surge of interest in trails and outdoor recreation, some think this trend is here to stay.

"We're so uniquely positioned, especially right now. When the rest of the world is shutting down, like theme parks, we didn't really shut down here," said Visit Tallahassee's Lindeman. "People are getting out and exploring. You get people out on these trails and they're not going to abandon it once things get back to a sense of normal."

Visit trailahassee.com to find trails for paddling, hiking, running, cycling, horseback and more.

Find me on Twitter @PConnPie, Instagram @PConnPie or send me an email: pconnolly@orlandosentinel.com.

okra.

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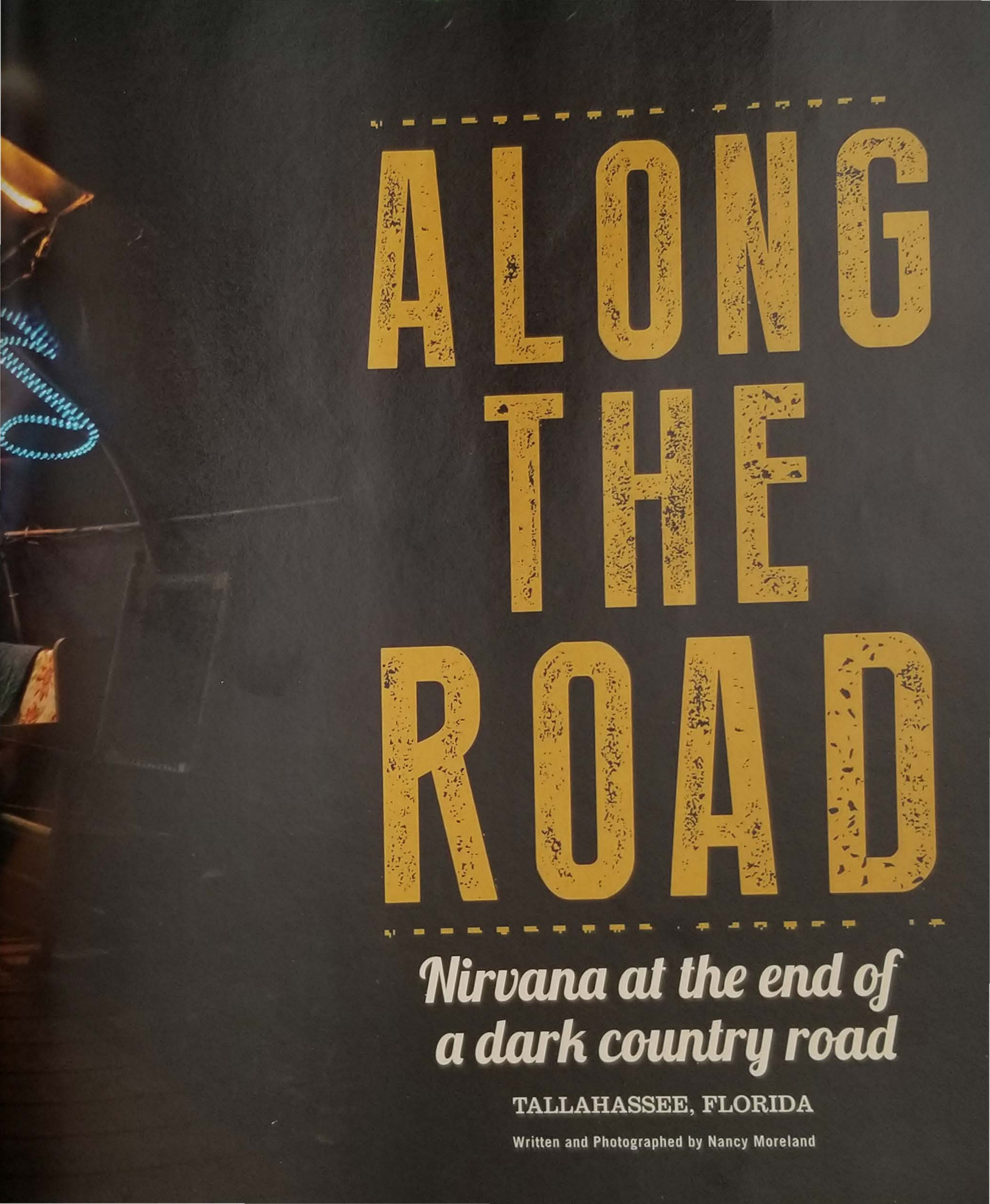
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53>





This page: The tunnel entrance to Tallahassee's Bradfordville Blues Club protects patrons from rain and ushers them into another era.

A dark, grainy photograph of a road at night. On the left side, there is a blue neon sign that appears to be a stylized letter 'S' or a similar shape. The road surface is visible in the lower part of the image, and the overall atmosphere is dark and moody.

ALONG THE ROAD

*Nirvana at the end of
a dark country road*

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

Written and Photographed by Nancy Moreland

“THE BRADFORDVILLE BLUES CLUB IS HUMBLE YET HALLOWED GROUND FOR PURISTS SEEKING A MUSICAL PATINA THAT’S FAST FADING INTO MEMORY.”

As darkness gathers in the woods outside of Tallahassee, Florida, I turn onto Moses Lane. Slowing my car to a mule cart's pace, I steer between pot holes, guided by my headlights and a few tiki torches. Just when I've surely lost my way, the object of this pilgrimage appears: a cinder-block roadhouse illuminated by a roaring pallet fire.

Ever since I moved to Tallahassee, locals had urged me to visit Bradfordville Blues Club. “The BBC” as it's locally known, is one of only two Florida sites on the Mississippi Blues Trail, which highlights locations linked to the genre. “James ‘Super Chikan’ Johnson told me it's one of the last juke joints in the country. That's high praise, coming from a musician from Clarksdale, Mississippi,” says Mike Bass, a patron from Georgia. Lil' Ed Williams, a Chicago blues guitarist, echoes the sentiment. “You only find clubs like Bradfordville here and there. I love that club and hope it never closes down.”

The BBC is a vestige of the Chitlin' Circuit, a string of Southern venues deemed safe for Black musicians during the Jim Crow era. In Tallahassee, the Circuit included the now-defunct Red Bird Café. When the Café closed at 2 a.m., musicians like B.B. King and Ray Charles made their way to Moses Lane by moonlight. Arriving at a shack that served as a store by day and roadhouse by night, they sat in with local bands, picking and singing 'til sunrise.

A VENERABLE LANDSCAPE In 1964, Allen Henry, Jr. built the cinder-block building on his family's land, naming it the C.C. Club after the segregated C.C. Saints baseball team that played in an adjacent field. Allen ran the club with his wife Marion and sister Inez. Eventually, they leased the building to David Claytor who attracted acts like Percy Sledge. In 2001, Claytor turned his lease over to Gary Anton and the BBC was born. “The first time I drove up Moses Lane, it was like turning the clock back. I knew I'd found nirvana,” Anton says.

Beyond blues fans, what keeps the club kicking is something every true Southerner clings to: continuity. It sits on land owned by the Henry family since the 1880s. Descendants of enslaved people, the Henrys have held gatherings here for generations. Every fall, they still grind sugar cane into syrup. “It's quite the tradition. Friends and family gather and throw a

Southern feast the last weekend of the grinding,” Anton says.

Ernest Henry, the self-proclaimed “Keeper of the Flame,” lives on the property with his brothers. When the octogenarian isn't piling pallets on the bonfire, he's heating up the dance floor. During set breaks, the bands and fans gather around his handiwork. They feast on catfish fried in an open-air shack by the appropriately named Ernestine Fryson, affectionately known as “Miss Ernestine.”

A MUSICIAN'S MECCA When I turned down Moses Lane, I left the pavement and 21st century behind. Parking in the field that once rang with cries of “Batter out!” I walk past oaks planted before the Civil War. The club sits at the end of a tarpaulin tunnel that's part rain shield, part portal to the past. Inside, the one-room juke joint pulses with 4/4 rhythm. Picking my way past patrons seated at tabletops grinning with the portraits of past performers, I take my seat. Dancers shuffle and sway under the neon blue light. “A lot of souls passed a lot of good times here,” says musician John “JB” Babich.

For Babich and others like him, the BBC is a gig prized for its place in blues history, even if it's off the beaten path and below pay grade. “Musicians come from all over the world to play here,” Babich says.

Kati Schardl, who covers music for the Tallahassee Democrat, recalls a band from Scotland falling “crazy in love” with the club. “They were in town performing at a festival and wanted to experience real roots music. As their de facto tour guide, that's what I gave them. That was in 2012 and they're still talking about that night at the BBC.”

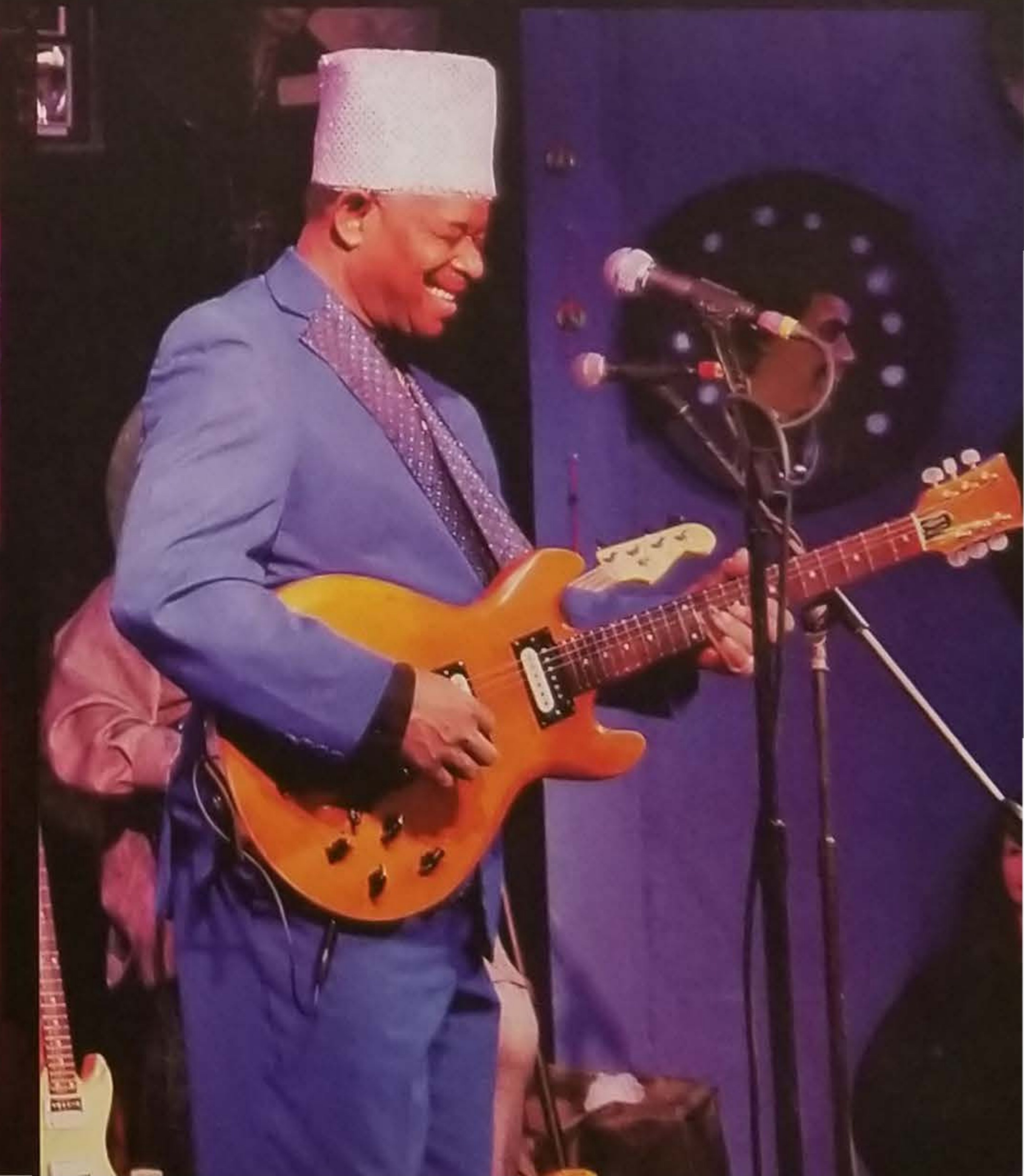
Tallahassee native Katie Skene played her first gig here. She now lives in Los Angeles and has performed with members of the Grateful Dead. “Gary gives musicians the freedom to try anything they like,” Skene says. At a recent show, Skene sang Rita Coolidge's tribute to Robert Johnson. She received a tearful standing ovation from Coolidge, who happened to be in the audience.

It was another of those

Top: Chicago musicians, Lil' Ed and The Blues Imperials, traveled to Tallahassee to play at Bradfordville Blues Club.

Bottom left: A camper creates a themed decoration to dress the table for the end of the week Friday banquet.

Bottom right: Lil' Ed of Chicago's Blues Imperials band flashes his signature smile at the BBC.



"you had to be there" moments regulars rave about. As Kati Schardl comments, "Sometimes a place is more than just a place. The BBC is woven into the fabric of Tallahassee's music scene like a wild red thread. It's essential to the history of the community and the music community in particular."

SUSPENDED IN A STARRY NIGHT When the band takes a break, I step into the damp chill of a North Florida night. I head for the bonfire and Miss Ernestine's catfish, fried one filet at a time to succulent perfection. So perfect, I let it linger on my tongue before mingling the flavor with the cold tang of beer. Tonight's fireside chats lean more toward soccer games and film festivals than farming and baseball. Even so, the scene is a microcosm of all that Southerners hold dear: food, fellowship, mu-

sic, and tradition.

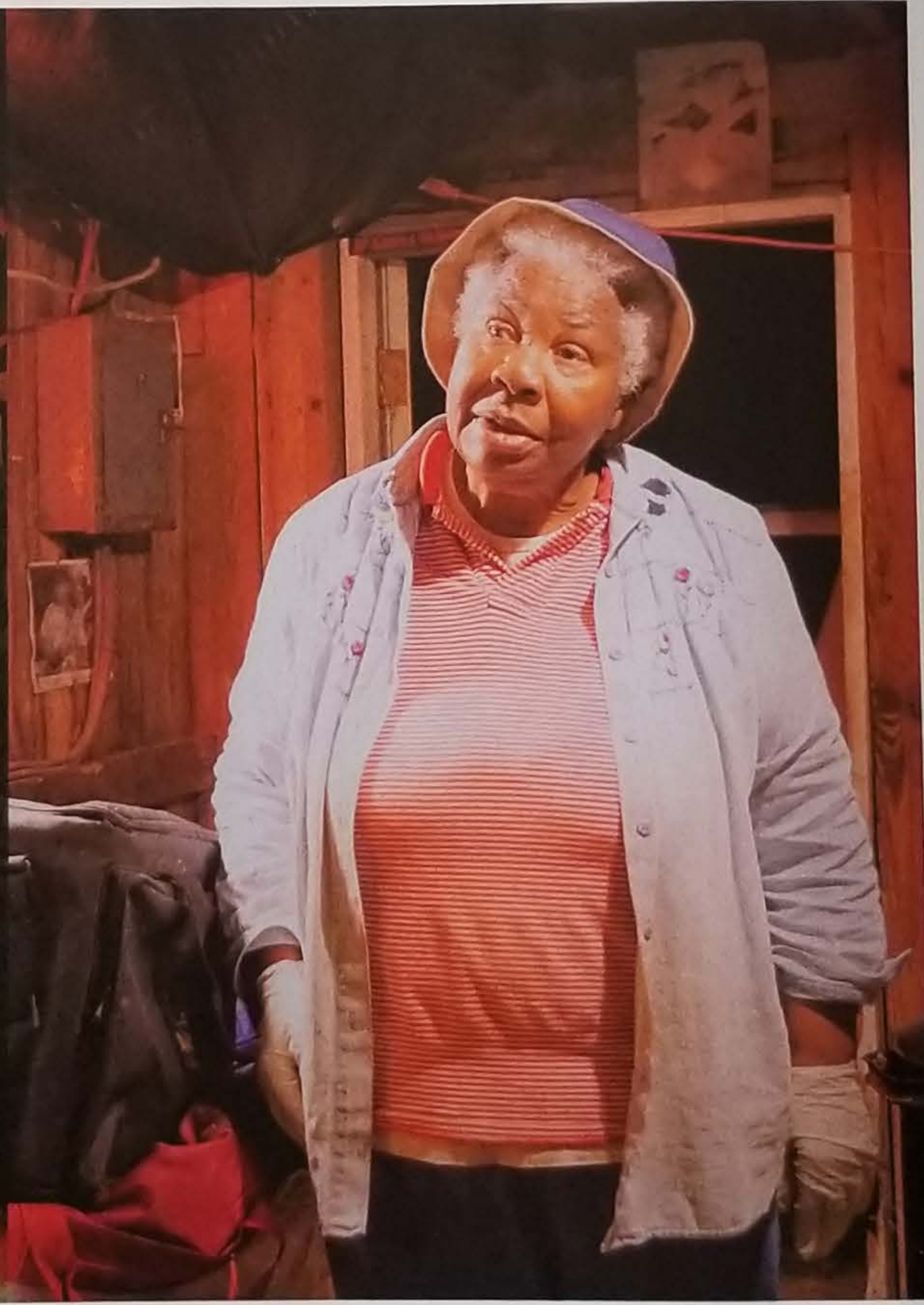
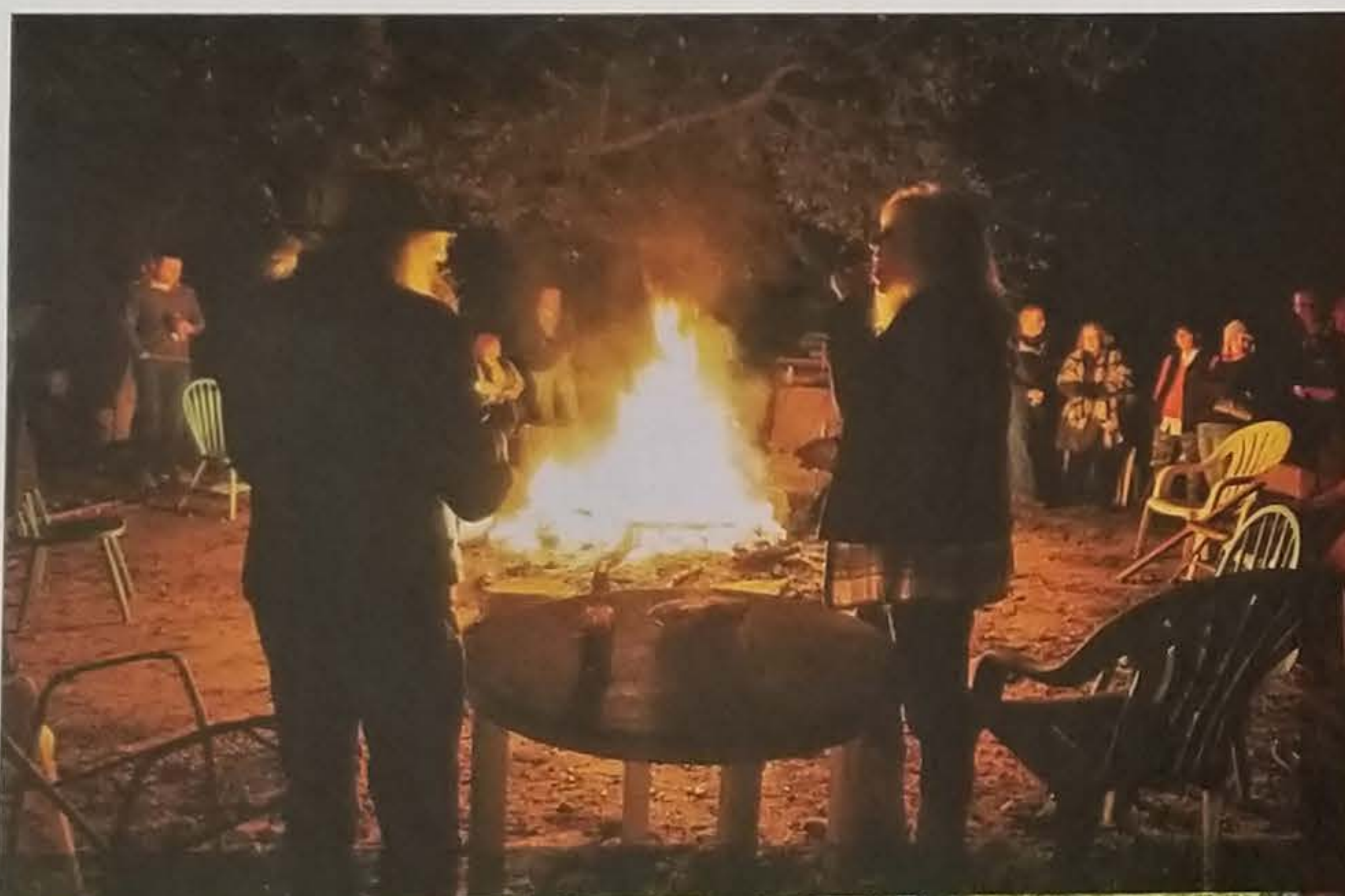
Katie Skene calls blues music "raw and real, a living, breathing thing." The same can be said of Bradfordville Blues Club, a quirky holdout in a world hurtling toward gentrification.

Suddenly, a slide guitar beckons me back to the dance floor. Drifting from the fire, I glance up. The night sky, draped in a mantle of Milky Way, seems to hover just overhead. It's like being inside a snow globe, if snow globes contained beer, cigarettes, and wood smoke.

Let the outside world rush toward an uncertain future. For now, I'll dance with all whoever relished the raw beauty of the blues in a tiny juke joint at the end of a dark country lane.

bradfordvilleblues.com

This page top left: Every weekend, a bonfire burns in the same spot as it has for generations, thanks to Ernest Henry, a descendant of people who have owned the land since the 19th century. **This page bottom left:** Built in 1964, the one-room cinderblock juke joint sits under 250-year-old oaks. **This page right:** Miss Ernestine Fryson (her real name) serves fried catfish by the bonfire every weekend. **Opposite top:** Miss Ernestine's cook shack serves some of the best fried catfish found in Tallahassee, Florida. **Opposite bottom:** Eddie Shaw, who began his career playing with Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf, personifies the quality of acts playing the BBC. Photo: Colin Hackley





“ THE FIRST TIME I DROVE UP MOSES LANE,
IT WAS LIKE TURNING THE CLOCK BACK.
I KNEW I'D FOUND NIRVANA. GARY ANTON ”



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THE **ZIMMERMAN** AGENCY
(continued)



THE ZIMMERMAN AGENCY
(continued)



road trip

This fall, take a trip to 13 drivable destinations
that are sure to cure your wanderlust.

by the editors

PHOTO BY VISUALS UNLIMITED.COM AND SHUTTERSTOCK

Florida

Tallahassee

Don't skip a trip to Tallahassee: Florida's best kept secret. The area's deep-rooted history and vibrant art scene make it a true bucket-list location. Enchanting outdoor excursions—like Maclay Gardens and Wakulla Springs—abound, as does the Spanish moss that drapes the city's winding roads. An emerging culinary scene includes the charming Table 23 (@table23tally)—where Southern cuisine is served under a sprawling canopy of moss-covered oak trees and sparkling chandeliers—and Eve on Adams (@eveonadams_tallahassee), an upscale cocktail lounge that boasts unique sculptures and skyline views. Serving as the perfect base camp for your stay is the brand-new Hotel Indigo (@indigotally), which sits at the center of the city's art, fashion and music scene.

This stunning view of the reflecting pool in Alfred B. Maclay Gardens State Park is unmatched.

Black Southern Belle

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TERRIANNA MCCULLOUGH / OCTOBER 25, 2020 / TRAVEL

Black Food Heritage: Tallahassee Black-Owned Foodie Travel Guide



Tallahassee Black Owned Foodie Travel Guide



Intro/History of Food in Tallahassee

Florida is one of many states that provides a variety of food choices. From their navel oranges to their freshwater largemouth bass, Florida is held at the top of the list for foodie travelers. Tallahassee, which is also Florida's state capital,



Gullah-Geechee Folk Rituals: Hoodoo, Voodoo, and Conjuring



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Intro/History of Food in Tallahassee

Florida is one of many states that provides a variety of food choices. From their navel oranges to their freshwater largemouth bass, Florida is held at the top of the list for foodie travelers. Tallahassee, which is also Florida's state capital, demonstrates what all travelers are looking for; mouthwatering Florida cuisine, comfort food with exquisite taste, or eateries with delicious desserts. With a local SouthSide Farmers Market containing fresh food for the Tallahassee community and the pride the State of Florida takes in agriculture, Tallahassee truly has the most diverse and delicious cuisine to offer. From travelers to local HBCU students of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU), Tallahassee has enough food to share for any food lover.

Farming

Tallahassee, which is an Apalachee word for "abandoned fields" or "old town," dates back to the 17th century and represents an area where there was the ability to farm and serve as agriculturist. With many Apalachee Indians flourishing in the area early on and displaying a flair for agriculture, Tallahassee continues the legacy that was left behind and remains steadfast to farming, growing produce, and creating a way for food to be enjoyed. Tallahassee has grown its agriculture resourcefulness and has numerous farms that allows for restaurant owners to bring the farm straight to the table. Farming in Tallahassee has reshaped the way in which food is presented to local HBCU students, community members, and travelers. With so many ingredients being locally grown, restaurant owners and business owners are providing the best quality of food to their community and travelers.

Restaurants

Restaurants in Tallahassee are expected to have delicious cuisine and appetizing treats. With produce being grown fresh and locally in their back yard or neighborhood, enjoying a flavorsome dish is what all locals, students, and visitors can expect. If it's classic american dishes with sweet assortments or savory soul food with heavenly beverages, individuals traveling near and far can find a restaurant, eatery, shop, or cafe that fits their needs. Tallahassee, Florida has many places to choose from and today I am going to provide a few Black Owned eateries to add to your foodie list.

Black Owned Guide

Enjoying food while traveling is a requirement for any family, Southern Belle, or Southern Beau. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the staple restaurants and eateries in the area in which you are traveling and if you are traveling to Tallahassee, Florida, then this Black Owned Foodie Travel Guide will get you through your journey smoothly. From restaurants to shops, Tallahassee has a plethora of places for travelers, local community members, or collegiate students to enjoy.

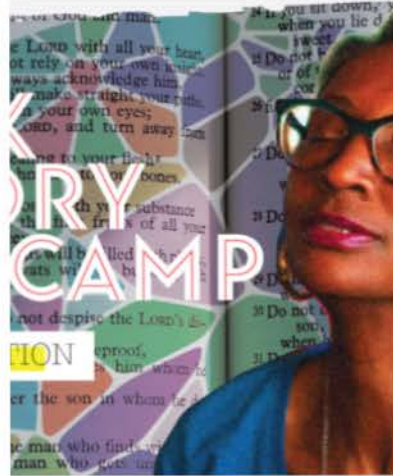
Gurlies Lemonade & Sweets

If you are a foodie who enjoys sweets along with more sweets, Gurlies Lemonade & Sweets, is the dessert shop you must try in Tallahassee. Demetrius Murray and Marquis Williams, two African American local business mens, started this idea by selling ice-cold lemonade on a street corner in Tallahassee. The lemonade recipe, from Maquis grandmother, Gurlie Wells, was a hit in the community. Through continuous support and love of lemonade, the entrepreneurs were able to raise enough money to begin their business, Gurlies Lemonade and Sweets. Now known for serving their classic fried Oreos, vanilla ice cream with multiple toppings, and Gurlies Famous lemonade, the eatery is a place that everyone enjoys. Besides the sweet drinks and treats Gurlies Lemonade and Sweets provide, they also believe in investing into the youth. Once a month, the dessert shops invest \$1,000 into a local young entrepreneur through their World Changers Mentorship Program in hopes to build stronger kids to help build a stronger Tallahassee community.



Owners of Gurlies Lemonade and Sweets

RECENT STORIES



SHOP OUR FAVORITES





Owners of Gurlies Lemonade and Sweets

The Chocolate Dandies

Another organization known for their sweets is The Chocolate Dandies. This new brownie company was developed by three young African American entrepreneurs. Noble who is 13, Royal who is 12, and Knight who is 10 created The Chocolate Dandies and named it after their great-grandfather Noble Sissle, who co-wrote a musical entitled "The Chocolate Dandies." With The Chocolate Dandies being so popular to the Tallahassee community, travelers can anticipate to enjoy a sweet array of brownies with flavors ranging from fudge and nuts to red velvet and peanut butter fudge. Currently, the company is offering pickup and delivery with the hopes to raise \$10,000 for their very own food truck to meet the brownie demands of locals and travelers.



Owners of The Chocolate Dandies



Bourne Brilliant

Bourne Brilliant is a new vegan eatery created by the Leo sisters aged 13, 12 and 9. These three sisters offer home-made baked goods, such as cupcakes, cookies and bread, along with herbal teas, fresh fruit juices and preserves. Lyrica, Zaira and Nadira Leo launched the food business several years ago, catering and selling their food at local festivals, farmers' markets and events, and recently opened their physical shop in town. With new cookies including the chocolate caramel brites, red velvet brites, and lemon poppy seed brites, one can see that the Leo sisters are expanding their menu and remaining focused on using natural ingredients. Despite the economic effects of COVID-19, the Leo family felt confident in the opening of their new eatery and are expected to see much growth in their business.

Choco Chip Brites Lemon Poppy Seed Brites

SHOP OUR FAVORITES



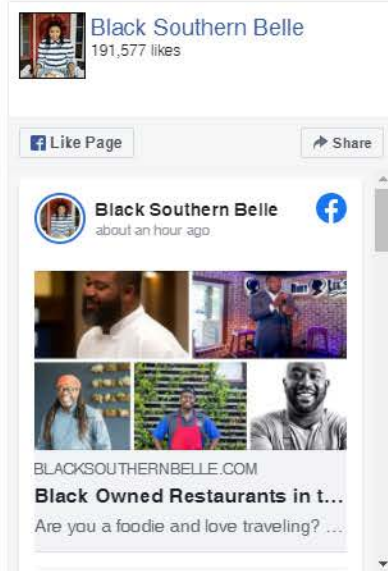
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EXPLORE OUR PINS!

Bourne Brilliant

Bourne Brilliant is a new vegan eatery created by the Leo sisters aged 13, 12 and 9. These three sisters offer home-made baked goods, such as cupcakes, cookies and bread, along with herbal teas, fresh fruit juices and preserves. Lyrica, Zaira and Nadira Leo launched the food business several years ago, catering and selling their food at local festivals, farmers' markets and events, and recently opened their physical shop in town. With new cookies including the chocolate caramel brites, red velvet brites, and lemon poppy seed brites, one can see that the Leo sisters are expanding their menu and remaining focused on using natural ingredients. Despite the economic effects of COVID-19, the Leo family felt confident in the opening of their new eatery and are expected to see much growth in their business.

Choco Chip Brites Lemon Poppy Seed Brites



The Leo Sisters-Founders of Bourne Brilliant

Steph's Southern Soul Restaurant at Florida's Sports Coast – Dade City, Fla.

Steph's Southern Soul Restaurant provides authentic southern fare, prepared with a touch of soul and served with warm welcoming hospitality (as one would only expect from the South). Owned and operated by chef Stephanie Reaves, Steph's offers only the best in traditional southern style soul food, from liver and onions to battered chicken to meatloaf and more. Dessert is a must here whether it be a scoop of banana pudding or a slice of one of several varieties of cakes. In the words of Steph, "I love to cook as God uses and guides my mind and my hands to prepare delicious food." For more information visit www.stephssouthern soul.com.

As you can see, Tallahassee has a variety of black owned restaurants, eatiers, shops, and companies to partake in. Whether it's sweet desserts or southern style soul food, Tallahassee, Florida prides themselves on creating and serving quality food. So use this Black Owned Foodie Travel Guide to explore the Tallahassee community and the great food it has to offer.



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Tallahassee

Breakfast: Canopy Road Cafe

Try the signature plate-sized blueberry cobbler pancakes or some classic biscuits and gravy at this AAA Approved eatery.

Do: Tallahassee Museum

Explore 52 acres of Florida flora and fauna at this outdoor museum. There's even a zip line and ropes course with more than 70 obstacles.

Lunch: Midtown Caboose

This AAA Approved restaurant creates some of the most daring burgers in town. Enjoy one on the patio or get it to-go for a picnic in nearby Lake Ella Park.

Do: Miccosukee Canopy Road Greenway

Hike, bike and stroll uniquely canopied trails, open pasture and forested woodlands alongside Miccosukee Canopy Road.

Dinner: Andrew's Downtown

Unwind with a pan-seared grouper etouffee and a side of atmosphere at this AAA Approved capital city icon.

Dessert: Lofty Pursuits

This 1950s throwback serves up 50 flavors of ice cream, plus malts, egg creams and sodas.

Stay: Aloft Tallahassee Downtown

This AAA Three Diamond hotel delivers on style and fun, with a contemporary-industrial design, minimalist decor and a pool table in the lobby.



Every hotel and restaurant in the AAA Diamond Program has met AAA's high inspection standards. Use the "Best of Housekeeping" filter to find hotels in the top 25% for cleanliness and condition. Scan to get started.



Sweet treats from Lofty Pursuits (above); Miccosukee Canopy Road (below).



Remember to call ahead to the places you plan to visit to confirm their hours of operation. And thank you for continuing to follow all state and local COVID-19 guidelines.