LEON COUNTY
Tourist Development Council

Thursday, November 12, 2026, 9:00 a.m.
Leon County Courthouse – 5th Floor
County Commission Chamber
301 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee FL 32301

MEETING AGENDA

I. Call to Order – **Chair**

II. Request for Additional Agenda Items – **Chair**

III. Public Comment

IV. Items for Consent Approval – **Chair**
- September 10, 2026, Meeting Minutes (T1)
- Financial Reports: Division Budget FY 2026 YTD and the Tourism Development Tax Collections and Smith Travel Report (T2)
- Marketing Communications and Agency Activity, Visitor Services, Meetings & Group Sales, and Sports Sales Staff Reports (T3)

V. General Business – **Chair**
- Downs & St. Germain Research Presentation: FY26 Economic Impact Report (T4)
- FY27 Emerging Event Grant Recommendations (T5)
- Nominations for FY27 TDC Chair
- Proposed FY27 TDC Meeting Dates (T6)
- Incentive for Marquee Events at Collegiate Venues for Tourism (IMPACT) Program Guidelines (T7)
- Concert Update
- 2029 World Athletics Cross Country Championships (WXC29) Bid Update
- Tallahassee Sports Council Update & Amended Grant Recommendations (T8)
- Grant Applications in DEI Review Update
- Update on COCA FY27 County Funding Agreements and FY28 Revised County Funding and Service Structure
- COCA FY27 Amended Cultural Grants Recommendations and Update

VI. Executive Director's Report – **Kerri Post**
- Amtrak Office Building Opening Update
- Recent Awards & Accolades

VII. Additional Business: "For the Good of the Cause" – **Chair**

Next TDC Meeting:

LEON COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, September 10, 2026, 9:00 a.m.
County Commission Chambers – Leon County Courthouse, 5th Floor
301 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32301

The Leon County Tourist Development Council met for a regular meeting with Vice Chair County Commissioner Bill Proctor presiding. Council members present were Mayor Pro Tem Curtis Richardson, Joshua Brock, Carolanne Savage, Emily Johnson-Truitt and Matt Thompson, Liaison Amanda Heidecker, and Liaison Kathleen Spehar, City Commissioner Dianne Williams-Cox joined telephonically, Michelle Personette and Russell Daws were absent.

Tourism Staff present: Kerri Post, Jon LaBarre, Scott Lindeman, Genesis Leggett, Taylor Wheaton, Renee Jones, Bryan Smith, Janet Roach, Julie Trezek, Vivian Chen and Shelby Bishop.

The Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

The Vice Chair entertained a motion for City Commissioner Williams-Cox to participate telephonically.
Mayor Pro Tem Curtis Richardson moved, seconded by Joshua Brock for approval of City Commissioner William-Cox to participate telephonically. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Request for Additional Agenda Items: None

Public Comment:
The following speakers provided in-person public comments**:**
-Donna Marie Nudd, Mickee Faust Performance Club, Inc. regarding the Marketing Plan and DEI.
-Ben Gunter, Theater with a Mission, Inc. regarding history, vocabulary and prosperity.
-Lililita Forbes, regarding the Sankofa Concert, Cool Breeze Jazz Festival and Caribbean Heritage Music Festival funding.
-Stephen Knight, regarding the Tallahassee St. Maarten Foundation's sister-city relationship.

Consent:
Vice Chair Commissioner Proctor entertained a motion for approval for the three items on Consent:
1. Meeting Minutes from May 7, 2026.
2. Financial Reports: Division Budget FY 2026 YTD and the Tourism Development Tax Collection and Smith Travel Report
3. Marketing Communications and Agency Activity, Visitor Services, Meetings & Group Sales, and Sports Sales Staff Reports

Mayor Pro Tem Curtis Richardson moved, seconded by Emily Johnson-Truitt, for approval of the items on Consent. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

General Business:
Downs & St. Germain Research (DSG) Presentation: FY26 Q3 Visitor tracking and Tourism Economic Impact Report, and 2026 Spring Events Economic Impact Report
Jordan Turner presented the FY 2026 Q3 Economic Impact Report. Visitors, room nights, and occupancy were down year-over-year, but spending is up compared to two years ago, and the destination continues to attract a loyal visitor base with strong repeat visitation rates. The report highlighted an increase in drive-market visitors and an emphasis on cost saving for travelers. Event highlights for the quarter included Word of South Festival, Chain of Parks Art Festival, 3 Concerts

in Cascades, Emancipation Day, Juneteenth, ASG Capital Cup and Spring Graduation. Data on spring events showing over $11.8 million in economic impact across nine events, with increases in direct spending and room nights in comparable events year over year.

College Town Update Presentation

Mr. Thompson introduced Mr. Jamie Thomas, College Town Asset Manager and Coordinator of College Town Block Parties, to provide an update on upcoming events, including a major free concert for Homecoming featuring a national act and partnerships with local businesses to bring in visitors. Mr. Thomas highlighted efforts to partner with regional entertainment brands to book bands for College Town events and engaging local acts for additional local draw and band exposure. Discussion ensued.

FY2027 Tourism Marketing Plan Presentation

Scott Lindeman presented the FY27 Tourism Marketing Plan, reinvesting in awareness focusing on core audiences, new origin market expansions, digital advertising strategies, and AI Innovation including a successful partnership with Expedia that generated $1.3 million in direct hotel bookings year-to-date. Discussion ensued.

FY2027 Tourism Special Event Grant Award Recommendations

Matt Thompson commended staff and noted this was the easiest round of Grant Review he's been involved with, and scoring was more intuitive emphasizing "heads in beds". Public meetings were conducted efficiently, and overall tourism grant funding levels were the highest to date. Ms. Post added Section 125.595 Florida Statute impacted several programs' eligibility assessments and recommended to move forward with those deemed eligible. Commissioner Proctor asked if the Committee used a DEI filter when reviewing applications. Ms. Post indicated the staff reviewed applications for eligibility first; only eligible applications advanced to the review committee to be scored. Those identified to have potential DEI eligibility concerns are under review with the CAO. Discussion ensued.

Mayor Pro Tem Curtis Richardson moved, seconded by Emily Johnson-Truitt for approval of the eligible FY2027 Tourism Special Event Grant Award Recommendations. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Tallahassee Sports Council – FY2027 Sports Grant Award Recommendations

Amanda Heidecker presented the FY2027 Sports Grant Award Recommendations stated that out of 39 applications 29 are deemed eligible totaling $105,698, and 10 are currently under review with CAO due to DEI considerations. Most of the ineligible applications are due to "single gender" issues.

Mayor Pro Tem Curtis Richardson moved, seconded by Joshua Brock for approval FY2027 Sports Grant Award Recommendations. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

COCA – FY2027 Cultural Tourism Marketing Grant Award Recommendations

Kathleen Spehar presented the FY2027 Cultural Tourism Marketing Grant Award Recommendations for 35 applications with 100% funding. Ms. Post confirmed all Tourism Marketing Grant Recommendations are eligible for funding.

Mayor Pro Tem Curtis Richardson moved, seconded by Carolanne Savage for approval FY2027 Cultural Tourism Marketing Grant Award Recommendations. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

COCA – FY2027 Cultural Grant Award Recommendations

Kathleen Spehar presented the FY2027 Cultural Grant Award Recommendations. There were thirty-six (36) Cultural Grant applications reviewed and recommended for funding by the COCA Board of Directors. All grants of $10,000 or less were fully funded and those over were funded utilizing a progressive distribution structure. Ms. Post pointed out only twenty (20) were confirmed eligible for funding by County review and 16 were identified as potentially incompatible with Section 125.595 Florida Statute and sent for legal review by the County Attorney's Office. Discussion ensued. Ms. Spehar requested that an amendment process be followed for an additional 6 organizations which

have events prior to the Statute taking effect. Ms. Post recommended COCA utilize 2 contracts for 6 additional organizations with possible conflicts with 125.595 F.S., and which have programming between October 1 and December 31, 2026 (Q1, FY27), Ms. Spehar advocated for all grants to be approved for funding with the expectation of amending the remaining term of the contracts to accommodate for any conflicts that are determined after legal review. Discussion ensued. Emily Johnson-Truitt recommended to allow the applicants with events prior to January 1, 2027, to amend their applications into 2 applications, one for October 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026, and one for January 1, 2027, through September 30, 2027.

Mayor Pro Tem Curtis Richardson moved, seconded by Joshua Brock for approval of the FY2027 Cultural Grant Award Recommendations. Emily Johnson-Truitt offered a friendly amendment to the motion to approve the 20 Grant award Recommendation adding the approval of the 6 organizations with possible conflicts with 125.595 F.S. and events occurring between October 1, 2026, and December 31, 2026 (Q1) with the requirement they amend their applications, requesting prorated the funding only for these Q1 events. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

New Tourism Incentive Programs – Film Production and Collegiate Partnerships

As briefed at the May TDC meeting Ms. Post presented 2 BOCC directed how Tourism Incentive Programs including the Film & Television Production Incentive Pilot Program funded annually at $125,000 in TDT as a 3-year Pilot Program; and the Incentive for Marquee Event Partnerships (I.M.P.A.C.T.) promoting partnerships with local Colleges and Universities to host large scale marquee events funding allocated is $250,000 in TDT with maximum incentive award of $50,000 per event. Discussion ensued.

Concert Updates

Ms. Post presented concert updates for Scott Carswell Presents, Inc. stating there are four upcoming concerts: Gov't Mule with Ziggy Marley, Jubilee Music Festival III with Tye Tribbett, Common with the TSO and the Revivalists. She reported Scott Carswell is continuing work on securing the Spring concerts. Discussion ensued.

2029 World Athletics Cross Country Championships Bid Update

Amanda Heidecker provided an update on the bid to bring the 2029 World Athletics Cross Country Championships back to Tallahassee. She reported that the team received a positive reception from World Athletics leadership during a recent County leadership visit to Eugene, Oregon, where discussions focused on establishing a long-term agreement to bring the World Cross Country Championships back to Tallahassee in 2029 and beyond. Discussion ensued.

Sports Council Update

Fall cross country season is underway with an anticipated 9 events this fall at Apalachee Regional Park.

Executive Director Report

For the sake of time, Ms. Post gave an abbreviated report announcing that staff offices will be moving back into the Train Station on October 1, 2026. Additionally, COCA and Visit Tallahassee staff have been working on updates to the FY27 COCA contract and anticipate a final one-year extension of the current agreement.

Additional Business: "For the Good of the Cause"

Commissioner Proctor reminded the TDC members of the need for a Conference Center in Leon County.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Attest: Bill Proctor, Vice-Chairperson

Attest: Shelby Bishop, Witness

Next TDC Meeting:
Thursday, November 12, 2026, 9:00 A.M.
Leon County Commission Chambers
5th Floor

Leon County Tourist Development Council
Statement of Cash Flow
Period Ending September, 2026

4-Cents Collections

Acct #	REVENUES		YTD Actuals	September Actuals	FY 2025/26 Budget	% Revenue Received	Variance
312100	Local Option Tax (4-cents)	1	$ 7,533,273.24	$ 742,470.24	$ 7,218,100.00	104%	315,173
312110	Local Option (1 -cent)	2	$ 1,880,912.33	$ 185,617.56	$ 1,897,150.00	99%	(16,238)
361320	Tax Collector FS 219.075		$ 15,623.78	$ -	$ -	0%	15,624
361111	Pooled Interest Allocation		$ 30,656.52	$ 5,351.17	$ 236,550.00	13%	(205,893)
365000	Merchandise Sales		$ 25,142.88	$ 1,330.95	$ 9,795.00	257%	15,348
366500	Special Event Grant Reimbursements		$ -	$ -	$ 150,000.00	0%	(150,000)
366930	Other Contributions/Partnerships		$ -	$ -	$ -	0%	-
361300	Interest Inc/FMV Adjustment		$ -	$ -	$ -	0%	-
369900	Miscellaneous Revenue	3	$ 701,079.10	$ 21,372.44	$ 407,550.00	172%	293,529
399900	Appropriated Fund Balance		$ 303,197.00	$ -	$ 303,197.00	100%	-
							-
	Total Estimated Receipts		$ 10,489,884.85	$ 956,142.36	10,222,342	103%	267,543

Acct #	EXPENDITURES	YTD Actuals	September Actuals	FY 2025/26 Adopt. Budget	FY 2025/26 Adj. Budget	% Budget Spent	Under/ (Over)
	Administration (301)/Marketing (303)						
51200	Salaries & Wages	$ 979,186.93	$ 105,027.98	$ 1,016,532.00	$ 1,010,014.00	97%	$ 30,827
51250	Regular OPS Salaries & Wages	$ 94,798.93	$ 9,861.18	$ 210,042.00	$ 189,570.00	50%	94,771
51500	Special Pay	$ 30.28	$ -	$ 3,600.00	$ 3,700.00	0%	3,670
52100	FICA	$ 77,226.03	$ 8,201.48	$ 91,224.00	$ 92,614.00	83%	15,388
52200	Retirement Contributions	$ 177,034.85	$ 18,526.24	$ 199,159.00	$ 198,949.00	89%	21,914
52210	Deferred Compensation	$ -	$ -	$ 1,566.00	$ 1,566.00	0%	1,566
52300	Life & Health Insurance	$ 222,641.60	$ 28,332.42	$ 244,421.00	$ 242,307.00	92%	19,665
52400	Workers Compensation	$ 1,454.40	$ 157.21	$ 4,606.00	$ 3,789.00	38%	2,335
53400	Other Contractual Services	$ 959,169.04	$ 500.00	$ 643,711.00	$ 1,139,711.00	84%	180,542
54000	Travel & Per Diem	$ 21,331.92	$ 4,105.73	$ 108,890.00	$ 116,590.00	18%	95,258
54100	Communications Services	$ 909.74	$ (25.78)	$ 9,600.00	$ 9,600.00	9%	8,690
54101	Communications - Phone System	$ 19.00	$ -	$ 102.00	$ 102.00	19%	83
54200	Postage	$ 40.02	$ -	$ 15,000.00	$ 15,000.00	0%	14,960
54400	Rental & Leases	$ 33,019.00	$ -	$ 31,090.00	$ 31,090.00	106%	(1,929)
54505	Vehicle Coverage	$ 873.00	$ -	$ 747.00	$ 873.00	100%	-
54600	Repair & Maintenance	$ -	$ -	$ 6,597.00	$ 6,597.00	0%	6,597
54601	Vehicle Repair	$ 1,077.48	$ -	$ 1,136.00	$ 1,125.00	96%	48
54700	Printing	$ 1,995.06	$ -	$ 10,000.00	$ 30,000.00	7%	28,005
54800	Promotional Activities	$ 54,603.43	$ 9,183.42	$ 41,299.00	$ 41,299.00	132%	(13,304)
54860	TDC Direct Sales Promotions	$ 22,669.00	$ -	$ 73,958.00	$ 98,958.00	23%	76,289
54861	TDC Community Relations	$ 26,638.25	$ -	$ 54,632.00	$ 94,632.00	28%	67,994
54862	TDC Merchandise	$ 3,794.37	$ -	$ 41,254.00	$ 41,254.00	9%	37,460
54900	Other Current Charges	$ 2,773,855.57	$ 117,236.59	$ 1,609,720.00	$ 2,430,189.00	114%	(343,667)
54948	Other Current Chrg - Amphitheater	$ 556,628.44	$ 63,000.00	$ 598,780.00	$ 598,780.00	93%	42,152
55100	Office Supplies	$ 242.02	$ 11.56	$ 12,692.00	$ 12,692.00	2%	12,450
55200	Operating Supplies	$ 4,459.27	$ -	$ 16,625.00	$ 16,625.00	27%	12,166
55210	Fuel & Oil	$ 32.81	$ -	$ 498.00	$ 335.00	10%	302
52250	Uniforms	$ 155.49	$ 113.05	$ 6,000.00	$ 11,000.00	1%	10,845
55400	Publications, Memberships	$ 23,439.98	$ 660.00	$ 49,296.00	$ 49,296.00	48%	25,856
55401	Training	$ 3,250.00	$ -	$ 13,000.00	$ 13,000.00	25%	9,750
56400	Machinery & Equipment	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%	-
58160	TDC Local T&E	$ 5,294.84	$ 386.31	$ 3,500.00	$ 3,500.00	151%	(1,795)

Acct #	EXPENDITURES *Administration (301)/Marketing (303)*	YTD Actuals	September Actuals	FY 2025/26 Adopt. Budget	FY 2025/26 Adj. Budget	% Budget Spent	Under/ (Over)
58320	Sponsorship & Contributions	$ 81,347.50	$ 20,000.00	$ 86,431.00	$ 86,431.00	94%	5,084
	Advertising/Public Relations (302)						
53400	Other Contractual Services	$ 1,769,816.41	$ 133,302.28	$ 1,500,000.00	$ 1,965,000.00	90%	$ 195,184
54900	Other Current Charges & Obligations	$ 24,945.26	$ -	$ -	$ 150,000.00	17%	$ 125,055
55408	Machinery and Equip 1,000-19,999	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%	$ -
	Special Events/Grants (304)						
58300	Grants & Aids	$ 769,361.88	$ 48,645.45	$ 800,000.00	$ 800,000.00	96%	30,638
	Welcome Center CIP (086065)						
56200	Building	$ 260,680.77	$ 252,905.78	$ 208,101.00	$ 208,101.00	125%	(52,580)
56410	Intfstructure Less Than 200,000	$ -	$ -	$ 50,000.00	$ 50,000.00	0%	50,000
	Countywide Automation (470)						
54110	Com-net Communications	$ 11,958.00	$ -	$ -	$ 11,958.00	100%	-
54600	Repairs and Maintenance	$ 7,015.00	$ -	$ -	$ 7,015.00	100%	-
	Risk Allocations (495)						
54500	Insurance	$ 12,924.00	$ -	$ -	$ 12,924.00	100%	-
54506	Property Insurance	$ 7,171.00	$ -	$ -	$ 7,171.00	100%	-
	Indirect Cost (499)						
54900	Indirect Cost Charges	$ 374,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ 374,000.00	100%	-
	Line Item Funding - (888)						
58214	Cultural Facilities Grant Program	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -		-
58215	Local Arts Agency Program	$ 1,404,252.25	$ -	$ 1,679,693.00	$ 1,897,150.00	74%	492,898
	Transfers (950)						
591001	Transfer to Fund 001	$ 30,759.00	$ 2,579.91	$ -	$ 30,959.00	$ -	200
591305	Transfer to Fund 305	$ 470,000.00	$ 39,166.66	$ -	$ 470,000.00	$ -	0
	Salary Contingency (990)						
59900	Other Non-operating Uses	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -		-
	Reserve for Fund Balance	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -		-
	Total Expenditures	$ 11,270,101.82	$ 861,877.47	$ 9,443,502	$ 12,575,466	90%	(1,305,364)

Acct #	EXPENDITURES *(305)*	YTD Actuals	September Actuals	FY 2025/26 Adopt. Budget	FY 2025/26 Adj. Budget	% Budget Spent	Under/ (Over)
58100	Aids to Government Agencies	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 547,561.00	0%	547,561
	Total Expenditures	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 547,561.00	0%	547,561

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT
As of September 30, 2026

REVENUES

[1] - Revenue for the 4-cent collections $ 7,533,273.24 Collections met budget though collections are down (3%) compared to FY25

[2] - Revenue for the 1-cent collections $ 1,880,992.33

[3] - Revenue collected in Advance reached $ 701,079.10 and is a combination of World XC and other Sports related revenue $300,000 from Florida Sports Foundation Grant and $ 287,183.51 from World Athletics Event Reconciliation.

EXPENSES

World XC are reflected in Other Contractual Services (302-53400 and 303-53400) and Other Current Charges (303-54900).

Leon County Tourist Development Council
Local Option Tourist Development Tax Collections
(Bed Tax Revenues)

	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	Totals
FY2021/2022 (3-cents)	**369,226.11**	**476,937.04**	**389,494.17**	**296,423.63**	**364,996.61**	**408,289.23**	**424,815.31**	**480,785.08**	**349,360.01**	**359,333.87**	**369,813.17**	**442,474.54**	**4,731,948.78**
(1-cent - 4th Penny)	123,075.37	158,979.01	129,831.39	98,807.88	121,665.54	136,096.41	141,605.10	160,261.69	116,453.34	119,777.96	123,271.06	147,491.51	1,577,316.26
(1-cent - 5th Penny)	123,075.37	158,979.01	129,831.39	98,807.88	121,665.54	136,096.41	141,605.10	160,261.69	116,453.34	119,777.96	123,271.06	147,491.51	1,577,316.26
Total	615,376.85	794,895.07	649,156.95	494,039.39	608,327.68	680,482.05	708,025.51	801,308.46	582,266.69	598,889.79	616,355.29	737,457.57	7,886,581.30
Gain/Loss - Month: 3 cent	101%	130%	122%	72%	100%	84%	44%	32%	24%	8%	6%	5%	
Gain/Loss - YTD: 3 cent	101%	116%	118%	107%	106%	102%	90%	78%	71%	62%	55%	49%	
Year to date: 3-cent	369,226.11	846,163.15	1,235,657.32	1,532,080.96	1,897,077.56	2,305,366.79	2,730,182.10	3,210,967.18	3,560,327.19	3,919,661.06	4,289,474.24	4,731,948.78	
Year to date: 1-cent (4th)	123,075.37	282,054.38	411,885.77	510,693.65	632,359.19	768,455.60	910,060.70	1,070,322.39	1,186,775.73	1,306,553.69	1,429,824.75	1,577,316.26	
Year to date: 1-cent (5th)	123,075.37	282,054.38	411,885.77	510,693.65	632,359.19	768,455.60	910,060.70	1,070,322.39	1,186,775.73	1,306,553.69	1,429,824.75	1,577,316.26	
FY2022/2023 (3-cents)	**453,134.99**	**526,249.19**	**436,616.96**	**292,669.34**	**366,445.39**	**390,021.67**	**554,820.97**	**442,251.68**	**469,912.57**	**371,463.79**	**324,449.23**	**479,915.40**	**5,107,951.16**
(1-cent - 4th Penny)	151,045.00	175,416.40	145,538.99	97,556.45	122,148.47	130,007.22	184,940.32	147,417.23	156,637.52	123,821.26	108,149.74	159,971.80	1,702,650.39
(1-cent - 5th Penny)	151,045.00	175,416.40	145,538.99	97,556.45	122,148.47	130,007.22	184,940.32	147,417.23	156,637.52	123,821.26	108,149.74	159,971.80	1,702,650.39
Total	755,224.98	877,081.98	727,694.93	487,782.24	610,742.33	650,036.12	924,701.61	737,086.13	783,187.61	619,106.31	540,748.72	799,859.00	8,513,251.95
Gain/Loss - Month: 3 cent	23%	10%	12%	-1%	0%	-4%	31%	-8%	35%	3%	-12%	8%	
Gain/Loss - YTD: 3 cent	23%	16%	15%	12%	9%	7%	11%	8%	10%	10%	8%	7.9%	
Year to date: 3-cent	453,134.99	979,384.18	1,416,001.13	1,708,670.47	2,075,115.86	2,465,137.54	3,019,958.50	3,462,210.18	3,932,122.75	4,303,586.53	4,628,035.76	5,107,951.16	
Year to date: 1-cent (4th)	151,045.00	326,461.39	472,000.38	569,556.83	691,705.29	821,712.52	1,006,652.84	1,154,070.06	1,310,707.59	1,434,528.85	1,542,678.59	1,702,650.39	
Year to date: 1-cent (5th)	151,045.00	326,461.39	472,000.38	569,556.83	691,705.29	821,712.52	1,006,652.84	1,154,070.06	1,310,707.59	1,434,528.85	1,542,678.59	1,702,650.39	
FY2023/2024 (3-cents)	**501,642.16**	**641,951.80**	**474,424.27**	**337,883.86**	**445,931.47**	**449,321.58**	**432,559.64**	**414,883.62**	**521,518.88**	**425,752.72**	**359,424.47**	**511,712.17**	**5,517,006.63**
(1-cent - 4th Penny)	167,214.05	213,983.93	158,141.42	112,627.95	148,643.82	149,773.86	144,186.55	138,294.54	173,839.63	141,917.57	119,808.16	170,570.72	1,839,002.21
(1-cent - 5th Penny)	167,214.05	213,983.93	158,141.42	112,627.95	148,643.82	149,773.86	144,186.55	138,294.54	173,839.63	141,917.57	119,808.16	170,570.72	1,839,002.21
Total	836,070.26	1,069,919.66	790,707.12	563,139.76	743,219.11	748,869.30	720,932.74	691,472.70	869,198.13	709,587.87	599,040.78	852,853.62	9,195,011.05
Gain/Loss - Month: 3 cent	11%	22%	9%	15%	22%	15%	(22%)	-6%	11%	15%	11%	7%	
Gain/Loss - YTD: 3 cent	11%	17%	14%	14%	16%	16%	9%	7%	7%	8%	8%	8%	
Deposit 5-cent @97%	810,988.15	1,037,822.07	766,985.91	546,245.57	720,922.54	726,403.22	699,304.76	670,728.52	843,122.19	688,300.23	581,069.56	827,268.01	8,919,160.72
Year to date: 3-cent	501,642.16	1,143,593.95	1,618,018.22	1,955,902.08	2,401,833.55	2,851,155.13	3,283,714.77	3,698,598.39	4,220,117.27	4,645,869.99	5,005,294.46	5,517,006.63	
Year to date: 1-cent (4th)	167,214.05	381,197.98	539,339.41	651,967.36	800,611.18	950,385.04	1,094,571.59	1,232,866.13	1,406,705.76	1,548,623.33	1,668,431.49	1,839,002.21	
Year to date: 1-cent (5th)	167,214.05	381,197.98	539,339.41	651,967.36	800,611.18	950,385.04	1,094,571.59	1,232,866.13	1,406,705.76	1,548,623.33	1,668,431.49	1,839,002.21	
FY2024/2025 (3-cents)	**537,896.80**	**584,930.03**	**543,621.40**	**361,296.11**	**397,692.70**	**484,782.70**	**608,732.11**	**496,679.60**	**490,647.83**	**444,026.75**	**368,454.83**	**565,690.90**	**5,884,451.77**
(1-cent - 4th Penny)	179,298.93	194,976.68	181,207.13	120,432.04	132,564.23	161,594.23	202,910.70	165,559.87	163,549.28	148,008.92	122,818.28	188,563.63	1,961,483.92
(1-cent - 5th Penny)	179,298.93	194,976.68	181,207.13	120,432.04	132,564.23	161,594.23	202,910.70	165,559.87	163,549.28	148,008.92	122,818.28	188,563.63	1,961,483.92
Total	896,494.66	974,883.39	906,035.66	602,160.19	662,821.17	807,971.16	1,014,553.52	827,799.34	817,746.38	740,044.59	614,091.39	942,818.16	9,807,419.61
Gain/Loss - Month: 3 cent	7%	(9%)	15%	7%	-11%	8%	41%	20%	(6%)	4%	3%	11%	
Gain/Loss - YTD: 3 cent	7%	(2%)	3%	4%	1%	2%	7%	9%	7%	7%	6%	7%	
Deposit 5-cent @97%	869,599.82	945,636.89	878,854.59	584,095.38	642,936.53	783,732.03	984,116.91	802,965.36	793,213.99	717,843.25	595,668.65	914,533.62	9,513,197.02
Year to date: 3-cent	537,896.80	1,122,826.83	1,666,448.23	2,027,744.34	2,425,437.04	2,910,219.74	3,518,951.85	4,015,631.45	4,506,279.28	4,950,306.04	5,318,760.87	5,884,451.77	
Year to date: 1-cent (4th)	179,298.93	374,275.61	555,482.74	675,914.78	808,479.01	970,073.25	1,172,983.95	1,338,543.82	1,502,093.09	1,650,102.01	1,772,920.29	1,961,483.92	
Year to date: 1-cent (5th)	179,298.93	374,275.61	555,482.74	675,914.78	808,479.01	970,073.25	1,172,983.95	1,338,543.82	1,502,093.09	1,650,102.01	1,772,920.29	1,961,483.92	
Notes:													
FY2025/2026 (3-cents)	**480,715.46**	**586,961.78**	**423,119.67**	**341,271.11**	**492,973.52**	**537,352.73**	**474,589.84**	**513,094.67**	**492,973.52**	**376,128.69**	**445,653.33**	**556,852.68**	**5,721,687.00**
(1-cent - 4th Penny)	160,238.49	195,653.93	141,039.89	113,757.04	164,324.51	179,117.58	158,196.61	171,031.56	164,324.51	125,376.23	148,551.11	185,617.56	1,907,229.00
(1-cent - 5th Penny)	160,238.49	195,653.93	141,039.89	113,757.04	164,324.51	179,117.58	158,196.61	171,031.56	164,324.51	125,376.23	148,551.11	185,617.56	1,907,229.00
Total	801,192.44	978,269.63	705,199.45	568,785.19	821,622.53	895,587.88	790,983.07	855,157.78	821,622.53	626,881.15	742,755.55	928,087.80	9,536,145.00
Gain/Loss - Month: 3 cent	(11%)	0%	(22%)	(6%)	24%	11%	(22%)	3%	0%	(15%)	21%	(2%)	
Gain/Loss - YTD: 3 cent	(11%)	(5%)	(11%)	(10%)	(4%)	(2%)	(5%)	(4%)	(4%)	(5%)	(3%)	(3%)	
Deposit 5-cent @97%	777,156.67	948,921.54	684,043.47	551,721.63	796,973.85	868,720.24	767,253.58	829,503.05	796,973.85	608,074.72	720,472.88	900,245.17	9,250,060.65
Year to date: 3-cent	480,715.46	1,067,677.24	1,490,796.91	1,832,068.03	2,325,041.54	2,862,394.27	3,336,984.11	3,850,078.78	4,343,052.30	4,719,180.99	5,164,834.32	5,721,687.00	
Year to date: 1-cent (4th)	160,238.49	355,892.41	496,932.30	610,689.34	775,013.85	954,131.42	1,112,328.04	1,283,359.59	1,447,684.10	1,573,060.33	1,721,611.44	1,907,229.00	
Year to date: 1-cent (5th)	160,238.49	355,892.41	496,932.30	610,689.34	775,013.85	954,131.42	1,112,328.04	1,283,359.59	1,447,684.10	1,573,060.33	1,721,611.44	1,907,229.00	

Notes:	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September

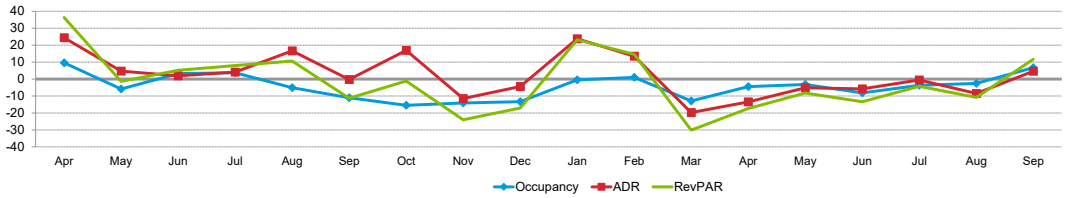
Tab 2 - Trend Leon County, FL

Visit Tallahassee

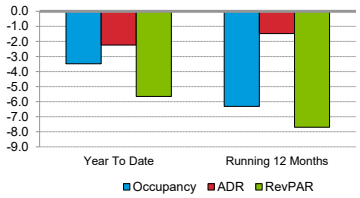
For the Month of September 2026

Currency: USD - US Dollar

Monthly Percent Change



Overall Percent Change



Occupancy (%)	2025									2026									Year To Date			Running 12 Months		
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	2024	2025	2026	2024	2025	2026
This Year	67.1	61.4	67.9	59.8	64.6	55.4	63.1	59.7	52.1	61.1	74.2	66.5	64.1	59.5	62.4	57.6	63.0	59.1	62.6	65.2	62.9	61.3	65.9	61.8
Last Year	61.2	65.3	65.8	57.7	68.1	62.2	74.7	69.4	60.1	61.4	73.5	76.3	67.1	61.4	67.9	59.8	64.6	55.4	63.1	62.6	65.2	61.9	61.3	65.9
Percent Change	9.6	-5.9	3.2	3.7	-5.1	-11.0	-15.5	-14.1	-13.3	-0.5	1.0	-12.9	-4.5	-3.2	-8.1	-3.7	-2.6	6.8	-0.8	4.1	-3.5	-1.0	7.6	-6.3

ADR	2025									2026									Year To Date			Running 12 Months		
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	2024	2025	2026	2024	2025	2026
This Year	138.75	140.31	111.94	104.33	146.73	149.62	161.06	132.16	108.93	141.33	151.37	124.98	120.04	133.05	105.50	103.79	134.28	156.53	124.12	133.21	130.22	129.34	133.55	131.58
Last Year	111.54	133.96	109.86	100.20	125.81	150.01	137.73	149.37	113.92	114.16	133.37	155.79	138.75	140.31	111.94	104.33	146.73	149.62	120.56	124.12	133.21	122.37	129.34	133.55
Percent Change	24.4	4.7	1.9	4.1	16.6	-0.3	16.9	-11.5	-4.4	23.8	13.5	-19.8	-13.5	-5.2	-5.8	-0.5	-8.5	4.6	3.0	7.3	-2.2	5.7	3.3	-1.5

RevPAR	2025									2026									Year To Date			Running 12 Months		
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	2024	2025	2026	2024	2025	2026
This Year	93.14	86.21	76.05	62.38	94.85	82.82	101.69	78.84	56.75	86.41	112.33	83.09	76.99	79.12	65.85	59.76	84.57	92.50	77.71	86.86	81.95	79.25	88.05	81.28
Last Year	68.32	87.42	72.29	57.77	85.70	93.34	102.89	103.73	68.48	70.14	97.98	118.91	93.14	86.21	76.05	62.38	94.85	82.82	76.08	77.71	86.86	75.72	79.25	88.05
Percent Change	36.3	-1.4	5.2	8.0	10.7	-11.3	-1.2	-24.0	-17.1	23.2	14.6	-30.1	-17.3	-8.2	-13.4	-4.2	-10.8	11.7	2.1	11.8	-5.7	4.7	11.1	-7.7

Supply	2025									2026									Year To Date			Running 12 Months		
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	2024	2025	2026	2024	2025	2026
This Year	192,300	198,710	192,300	198,710	198,710	192,300	198,710	192,300	193,750	193,750	175,000	196,664	190,320	196,664	190,290	196,633	196,633	190,290	1,790,811	1,746,390	1,726,244	2,384,179	2,335,850	2,311,004
Last Year	197,100	203,670	196,410	201,407	203,794	197,220	199,609	191,730	198,121	196,850	177,800	198,710	192,300	198,710	192,300	198,710	198,710	192,300	1,745,016	1,790,811	1,746,390	2,335,870	2,384,179	2,335,850
Percent Change	-2.4	-2.4	-2.1	-1.3	-2.5	-2.5	-0.5	0.3	-2.2	-1.6	-1.6	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	2.6	-2.5	-1.2	2.1	-2.0	-1.1

Demand	2025									2026									Year To Date			Running 12 Months		
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	2024	2025	2026	2024	2025	2026
This Year	129,092	122,086	130,633	118,814	128,443	106,442	125,456	114,718	100,930	118,464	129,860	130,752	122,060	116,946	118,770	113,211	123,844	112,454	1,121,198	1,138,744	1,086,361	1,460,824	1,540,081	1,427,465
Last Year	120,717	132,916	129,237	116,115	138,811	122,713	149,111	133,143	119,083	120,938	130,622	151,674	129,092	122,086	130,633	118,814	128,443	106,442	1,101,268	1,121,198	1,138,744	1,445,413	1,460,824	1,540,081
Percent Change	6.9	-8.1	1.1	2.3	-7.5	-13.3	-15.9	-13.8	-15.2	-2.0	-0.6	-13.8	-5.4	-4.2	-9.1	-4.7	-3.6	5.6	1.8	1.6	-4.6	1.1	5.4	-7.3

Revenue	2025									2026									Year To Date			Running 12 Months		
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	2024	2025	2026	2024	2025	2026
This Year	17,911,774	17,130,186	14,623,521	12,396,407	18,847,037	15,926,284	20,206,069	15,160,877	10,994,511	16,742,339	19,657,170	16,341,757	14,652,130	15,559,680	12,530,201	11,750,213	16,630,073	17,602,702	139,165,802	151,691,292	141,466,264	188,944,491	205,682,393	187,827,720
Last Year	13,464,900	17,805,531	14,198,241	11,634,403	17,464,142	18,407,722	20,536,822	19,887,756	13,566,524	13,806,719	17,420,705	23,628,657	17,911,774	17,130,186	14,623,521	12,396,407	18,847,037	15,926,284	132,766,664	139,165,802	151,691,292	176,872,122	188,944,491	205,682,393
Percent Change	33.0	-3.8	3.0	6.5	7.9	-13.5	-1.6	-23.8	-19.0	21.3	12.8	-30.8	-18.2	-9.2	-14.3	-5.2	-11.8	10.5	4.8	9.0	-6.7	6.8	8.9	-8.7

Census %	2025									2026								
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Census Props	66	66	66	66	66	66	66	66	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65
Census Rooms	6410	6410	6410	6410	6410	6410	6410	6410	6250	6250	6250	6344	6344	6344	6343	6343	6343	6343
% Rooms Participants	93.0	93.0	93.0	93.0	93.0	93.0	93.0	93.0	95.4	95.4	95.4	95.5	95.5	95.5	95.5	95.5	95.5	95.5

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MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

September 2026

Scott Lindeman, Senior Marketing Director
Genesis Leggett, Marketing Communications Director
Bryan Smith, Digital Content Director
Renee Jones, PR & Marketing Specialist

AT A GLANCE

FY 2026 Media Value
YTD: $7.2 Million

Media Value September
$736,000

Earned Media Stories
362

Media Stories September
30

Social Media Followers
Facebook: 132,000
Instagram: 41,785

Consumer E-Newsletters
Sent: 1 YTD: 14



Launched the Southside Cultural Corridor brochure and mobile app itinerary to boost local tourism and celebrate the Southside's heritage. The guide connects public art, sculptures, murals, and cultural landmarks to dining, retail, and entertainment destinations.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Secured Board approval to launch the **Incentive for Marquee Event Partnerships at Colleges/Universities for Tourism (IMPACT) Program**, an initiative that attracts major concerts, sporting championships, and conventions to local collegiate stadiums (such as Bragg Memorial and Doak Campbell) to drive tourism and economic growth.
- Scott Lindeman and Genesis Leggett conducted a collaborative **tourism marketing workshop with the Council on Culture & Arts (COCA)** to assist local cultural grant recipients and arts partners. Staff highlighted upcoming digital and PR promotional channels and actionable strategies to expand their regional footprint and drive visitor engagement.
- Scott Lindeman and Genesis Leggett participated in the **Choose Tallahassee quarterly board meeting**, providing tourism data, destination insights, and marketing resources to support ongoing partner initiatives and regional economic messaging.
- Genesis Leggett attended the third **Tallahassee Coca-Cola Ambassador** meeting.
- Visit Tallahassee staff officially completed their **relocation back to the historic Railroad Avenue train station** following a 2.5-year displacement caused by the May 2024 tornadoes. Administrative and visitor operations are expected to be fully operational in the coming weeks.
- Presented at the **Grant Implementation Workshop**, providing event grant recipients with actionable marketing strategies, co-op advertising opportunities, and destination promotional guidance.
- Scott Lindeman joined Commissioner Nick Maddox to **present to Leadership Tallahassee Class 44** on the economic drivers behind sports and entertainment tourism. The briefing and Q&A session detailed how high-profile athletic championships and entertainment events generate hotel room nights, support local businesses, and strengthen the community's economy.
- Visit Tallahassee generated notable national editorial visibility following hosted press trips in September. Coverage included an ecotourism itinerary for ***Birds & Blooms*** Senior Editor Megan White focusing on fall migration at Maclay Gardens, alongside an ***Adventurist*** feature by Eric Barton spotlighting the culinary community. Together, the features **reached an audience of over 4.6 million readers**.

Digital Marketing Highlights



Social Content Spotlight: Tallahassee's Fall Season Events Lineup

Highlighting Tallahassee's diverse autumn calendar showcased the capital city's dynamic seasonal appeal, featuring high-profile gatherings such as The Adderley Amphitheater concert series, Zoobilee, FAMU Homecoming, and fall celebrations. The cross-platform campaign across Instagram and Facebook delivered significant reach, generating 120,000 total views, over 700 interactions, and 42 new followers. The content successfully drove audience engagement while positioning Tallahassee as a must-visit regional hub for live entertainment and fall festivals.

Southside Cultural Corridor Guide Launch Drives Targeted Community & Visitor Engagement

Spotlighting the rich heritage and independent businesses of Tallahassee's Southside, a joint social campaign with KCCI promoted the launch of the new Southside Cultural Corridor guide. Shared across Instagram and Facebook, the collaborative content accumulated 6,800 total impressions, guiding followers toward an interactive landing page that achieved more than 300 guide opens. This effort reinforced ongoing destination development along the FAMU Way, Cascades Park, and Railroad Square corridors while driving measurable traffic to local creatives, restaurateurs, and cultural venues.



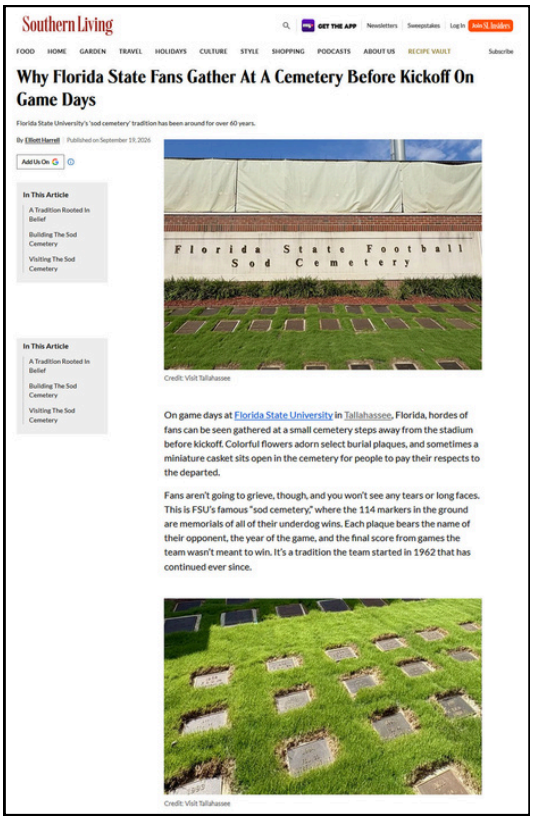
DIGITAL MARKETING KPI

2025/2026 GOALS	ANNUAL GOAL	MONTHLY RESULT	% OF GOAL
Maintain an average open rate of over 35% for consumer email campaigns.	35%	51%	N/A
Net increase annual Facebook followers by 25,000	25,000	118	35%
Net increase annual Instagram followers by 2,500	2,500	177	189%
Increase annual Mobile App downloads by 1,000	1,000	105	188%

Public Relations

- A cumulative audience of more than **580.7 million people** was reached within FY2026, **valued at $5.4 million**.
- Tallahassee was spotlighted in **Southern Living** through a dedicated feature titled "Why Florida State Fans Gather at a Cemetery Before Kickoff on Game Days," which includes a direct link to Visit Tallahassee's website. An interview with Sod Cemetery keeper, Doug Mannheimer, was coordinated to support the article.
- The Southern Living article on FSU's Sod Cemetery was syndicated to **Yahoo! Sports and AOL**, which further expanded the story's reach by millions nationwide.
- Tallahassee's **parks and trails were highlighted within a digital Good Grit article** which includes an itinerary of outdoor activities with complementing restaurant recommendations.

Southern Living


Southern Living

Why Florida State Fans Gather At A Cemetery Before Kickoff On Game Days

Florida State University's 'sod cemetery' tradition has been around for over 60 years.

Credit: Visit Tallahassee

On game days at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida, hordes of fans can be seen gathered at a small cemetery steps away from the stadium before kickoff. Colorful flowers adorn select burial plaques, and sometimes a miniature casket sits open in the cemetery for people to pay their respects to the departed.

Fans aren't going to grieve, though, and you won't see any tears or long faces. This is FSU's famous "sod cemetery," where the 114 markers in the ground are memorials of all of their underdog wins. Each plaque bears the name of their opponent, the year of the game, and the final score from games the team wasn't meant to win. It's a tradition the team started in 1962 that has continued ever since.

Credit: Visit Tallahassee

Good Grit

yahoo!sports

TheAdventurist
Your guide to everywhere.

AOL

PUBLIC RELATIONS KPI		
2025/2026 GOALS	**% COMPLETE**	**YTD**
18 National features spotlighting the destination in roundup or dedicated articles	100%	18
12 Hosted Media and Content Creator Experiences - proactively secured by Zimmerman as well as opportunistic leads in collaboration with Visit Florida	92%	11
Negotiate 6 Radio, TV, social and/or in-book promotions in key markets	50%	3
Secure 3 Dedicated Top Market Placements (eg. South Florida, Texas, Atlanta etc.)	100%	3
Secure 5 Niche Articles – spotlighting outdoor (birding, biking, hiking), food & beverage, and accessible travel.	120%	6

MEETINGS & GROUP SALES
FY25-26 Year End Review

Janet Roach, Meetings & Group Sales Director

GOAL AT A GLANCE

Meetings & Groups FY 2026 Room Nights Goal: **14,000**

Meetings & Groups YTD Room Nights: **14,300**

PARTNER OPPORTUNITY

FLORIDA ENCOUNTER
Florida's Official Meetings Show

Visit Tallahassee will I be attending **Florida Encounter**, January 24-26 in Kissimmee, FL and **Rendezvous South**, March 1-3, 2026 in Montgomery, AL to meet with desicion makers from around the US. We are excited to offer a co-op opportunity for one partners at each show to join the team in showcaseing Meetings and Conferences.

Rendezvous SOUTH

MISSION STATEMENT

Promoting meetings, conventions, and group travel through strategic engagement with planners, decision makers, and targeted audience segments, while collaborating with local industry partners to create memorable experiences for group visitors to positively impact the local economy.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Visit Tallahassee Sales Department assisted several meetings, conferences, and events** that were held in Leon County in September including:

World Cube Association & Southeast Cubing – Florida Championship 2026 (September 5–6, 2026) – Attracting 250 visitors and showcasing competitive problem-solving and STEM-related skills.

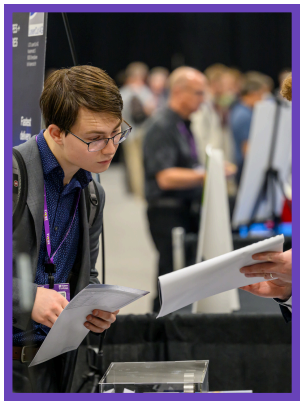




Florida Brownfields Association Annual Conference (September 14-17, 2026) – Bringing environmental and economic development professionals together to discuss redevelopment, sustainability, and community revitalization.

YEAR END HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2026, the **Meetings and Group Department supported over 65 events** strengthening Leon County's position as a destination for meetings, conferences, and events including:



Motor Drives Systems & Magnetic Conference and Exhibition (March 2–5)– Generated 600 room nights.

International Association of Wildland Fire – 4th International Smoke Symposium (March 23–26)– Welcomed 80 visitors to Tall Timbers Research Station for the training.

Desert of Florida Conference and Gala Day (May 27–31) –With over 700 attendees.

SPORTS
FY 25-26 Year End Review

Taylor Wheaton, Senior Sports Director
Taylor Walker, Sports Director
Bailey Geason, Assistant Sports Director

GOAL AT A GLANCE

FY 2025-2026

Room Nights Goal: 25,000

Room Nights: 50,087

Direct Spend: $16,250,834

Economic Impact: $25,810,003

Out & About



The sports team hosted its first sports conference in Tallahassee, the 2026 Sunshine Sports Council Think Tank at Hotel Indigo. Welcoming our peers from across the state for two days of networking, education, and sharing ideas to help make Florida #1 in Sports Tourism.



Launched a new social media series spotlighting local partners and their impact on Tallahassee sports tourism.

September 2026

- Hosted the **3rd Annual HOKA x Nights of Thunder XC Fest**
- Supported the **2026 FSU Pre-Regional XC Meet**
- The **FY26-27 Visit Tallahassee Sports Grant Program** received 39 applications, with a potential for over 10,000 room nights.

FY 25-26 Year End Review

- Staff worked diligently to revitalize fishing events hosted in our community and kicked of the year with the Kayak Adventure Series. This opened doors for future events and publications features.
- Staff participated in multiple guest speaking engagements for the FSU Dedman College of Hospitality, discussing Sports Tourism and Customer Service.
- Successfully hosted the **2026 World Athletics Cross Country Championships**, welcoming more than **15,000 attendees**, including over **10,000 visitors** from outside Leon County.



- Through WXC legacy efforts staff were able to present a **$10,000 legacy donation** to Leon County Schools to support local middle and high school cross country and track & field programs.
- Hosted the **FHSAA Cross Country State Championships** for the 14th consecutive year. The sports sales team worked to secure a 5-year agreement 2026-2029 with an optional 3-year extension after 2030.
- Hosted the **FHSAA Beach Volleyball State Championship** for the 5th consecutive year at the FSU Beach Volleyball facility.

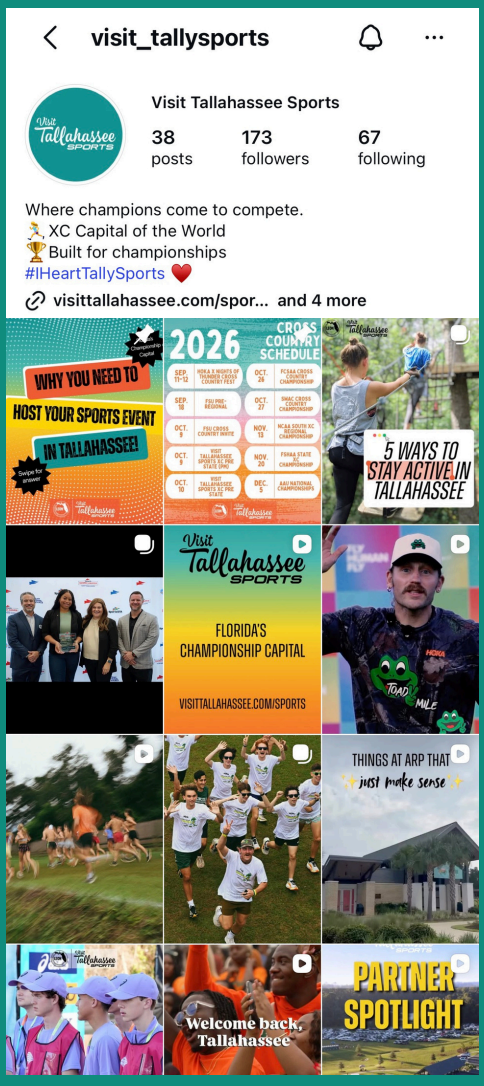
SPORTS
FY 25-26 Year End Review

Taylor Wheaton, Senior Sports Director
Taylor Walker, Sports Director
Bailey Geason, Assistant Sports Director

GOAL AT A GLANCE

Social Media

Instagram: @Visit_TallySports
Facebook: Visit Tallahassee Sports



In May 2026, Visit Tallahassee Sports launched Instagram & Facebook channels to strengthen the division's digital presence and provide a centralized platform for promoting hosted events, granted events, partner organizations, destination assets, and sports tourism success stories.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Taylor Wheaton earned the **Sports Tourism Strategist (STS)** professional certification through the Sports Events and Tourism Association education program.
- Celebrated **Sports Day at the Capitol** alongside the Florida Sports Foundation.
- Staff traveled to seven conferences, including the **Sports ETA Women's Summit, Sports ETA Symposium,** & **Florida Sports Foundation Summit,** to network, participate in educational sessions, solicit new business, and conduct business appointments.



- Received statewide recognition at the **Florida Sports Foundation Larry Pendleton Awards:**
  - **Award Winner: Florida's Best Hosted Mid-Market Event-** 2026 World Athletics Cross Country Championships
  - **Finalist: Best Sports Tourism Venue -** Apalachee Regional Park
  - **Finalist: Sports Tourism Professional of the Year Final -** Taylor Wheaton
- Secured three future **USBC Youth Bowling Championships** for years 2027, 2029, & 2031.
- Secured the **Florida B.A.S.S. Nation Kayak Series & Kayak Adventure Series** for 2027.

2024-2026 Visit Tallahassee Sports Economic Impact

2024	Direct Spend	Economic Impact	Events
Sports Grants	$ 1,282,336	$ 2,103,033	33
Bid Pool	$ 4,949,367	$ 8,099,921	21
Total	**$ 6,231,703**	**$ 10,202,954**	**54**
2025			
Sports Grants	$ 4,431,679	$ 7,090,644	42
Bid Pool	$ 7,581,283	$ 12,202,761	27
Total	**$ 12,012,962**	**$ 19,293,405**	**69**
2026			
Sports Grants	$ 3,093,122	$ 4,948,957	43
Bid Pool	$ 13,157,712	$ 20,861,046	31
Total	**$ 16,250,834**	**$ 25,810,003**	**74**
Total	$ 34,495,499	$ 55,306,361	197

VISITOR SERVICES & GRANT MANAGEMENT
FY25-26 Year End Review

Vivian Chen, Visitor Services Director
Julie Trezek, Grants & Contracts Manager

AT A GLANCE

2025-2026 Grant Program

74 Legacy, Special & Sports events held
7 Special & **3** Sports events forfeited
74 Post-Event Reports processed
$764,420 paid of $800,000 grant budget.

2026-2027 Grant Program

78 grant applications submitted during the application window
59 Special & Sports events approved
15 Special/Sports pending legal review
3 Emerging Signature pending review
5 Legacy in Year 3 of current contract

Visitor Services

FY25-26 Visitor Guides Distributed: 46,875

FY25/26 Group Services and Welcome Bags
81 requests servicing **19,701** visitors

FY25-26 Visitor Center Walk-Ins: 3,715
FY25-26 Visitor Center Calls: 1,027

FY25-26 Gift Shop Sales: $25,634.23

HIGHLIGHTS

- Served as a guest speaker for Leon County Senior Outreach's **Lunch & Learn**, introducing Visit Tallahassee, sharing upcoming events and programs, and highlighting books by local authors.
- Total sales from Oct 1, 2025–Sep 30, 2026 **increased 13.7%** year over year, from $22,545.27 to $25,634.23.
- Enhanced the gift shop's locally inspired merchandise selection by featuring products showcasing the artwork and photography of local artists, including Bill Holkham, Max Elton, Sherri DeLane, Erich Martin, and Elizabeth E. George.
- Supported staff development by providing Visitor Services Representatives Susan Jones and Gaby Tribou with a training visit to the Automobile Museum.
- Hosted **FY2026–2027 Grant Orientation and Implementation workshops** for Special Event and Sports Event grant applicants.



New Merchandise by Local Artist Bill Holkham



Senior Center Lunch & Learn

ON THE HORIZON

- Recruit and onboard a new **Visitor Services Representative.**
- Participate in **Spooktacular** and **Market Days** with a Visit Tallahassee outreach table focused on community engagement.
- Host a **grand opening** for the Depot Visitor Information Center.
- Transition to a **new point-of-sale (POS) system** and develop an **e-commerce platform** to streamline sales operations, expand merchandise sales, and provide customers with a convenient online shopping experience.
- Expand the gift shop's merchandise selection by incorporating **prints** from local artists.
- Continue **staff development** through field excursions and training.

LEON COUNTY DIVISION OF TOURISM – VISIT TALLAHASSEE

Fiscal Year 2026 Economic Impact Report



Visit Tallahassee
Pretty. Unexpected.

downs & st. germain RESEARCH

METHODOLOGY



Visitor Tracking Study

- The economic impact of tourism for the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee was based on data from the following sources:
  - 2,399 interviews conducted by Downs & St. Germain Research with visitors to Leon County
  - Twelve (12) monthly STR Reports
  - Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR)
  - Key Data (via Zartico)
  - 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



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FY2026 ECONOMIC IMPACT

Visitor spending generated

$1,484,629,500

in economic impact[1] to Leon County's economy, up 0.3% from FY2025[2]

[1]This economic impact analysis does not account for leakage outside of Leon County.
[2]FY2025 economic impact figures revised due to updates to IMPLAN models and Bureau of Labor Statistics data.



Visit Tallahassee
Pretty. Unexpected.

downs & st. germain RESEARCH

FY2026 TOTAL DIRECT SPEND

Visitors to Leon County spent

$897,695,200

throughout the county in FY2026 on accommodations, transportation, groceries, restaurants, shopping, entertainment, and other expenses, down 0.1% from FY2025



FY2026 VISITORS

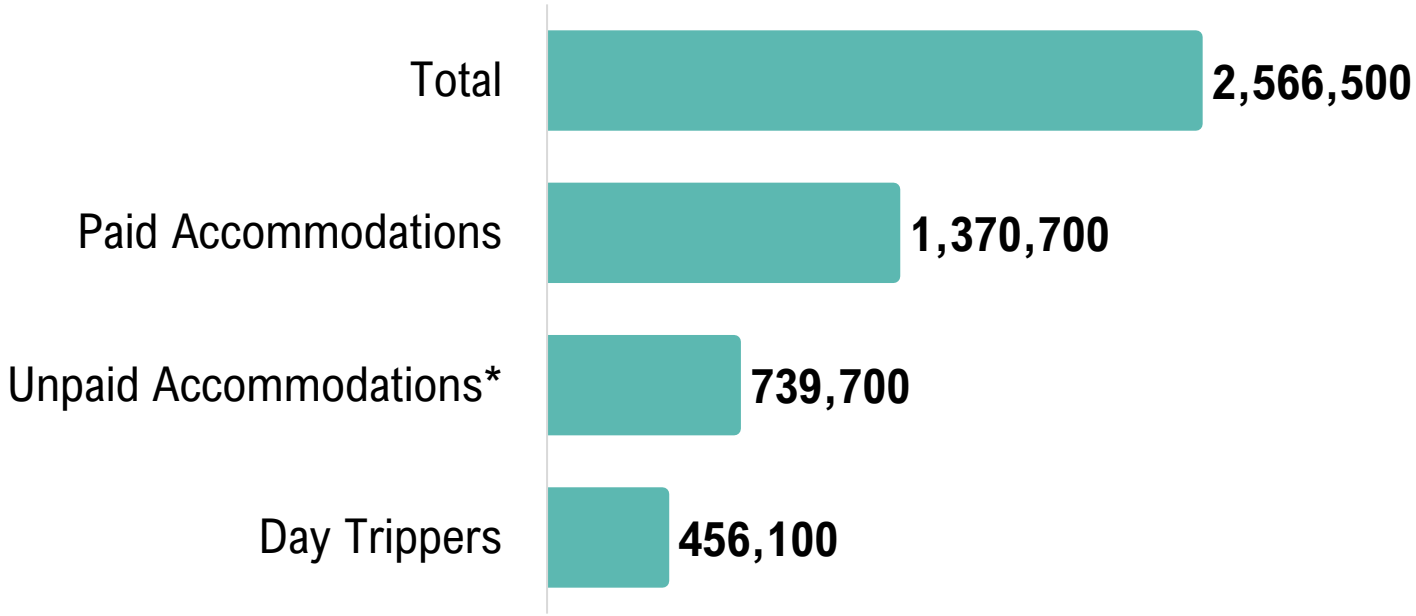
Leon County attracted

2,566,500

visitors in FY2026, down 2.0% from FY2025



FY2026 VISITORS BY TYPE



*Visitors staying in personal second homes or with friends/relatives.

FY2026 TOTAL ROOM NIGHTS

Visitors to Leon County generated

1,483,600

nights in county accommodations throughout FY2026, down 7.4% from FY2025



FY2026 JOBS SUPPORTED

Visitors to Leon County supported

11,020

jobs[1] throughout the county in FY2026, down 2.2% from FY2025[2]



[1]This economic impact analysis does not account for leakage outside of Leon County.
[2]FY2025 economic impact figures revised due to updates to IMPLAN models and Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

FY2026 WAGES SUPPORTED

Visitors to Leon County supported

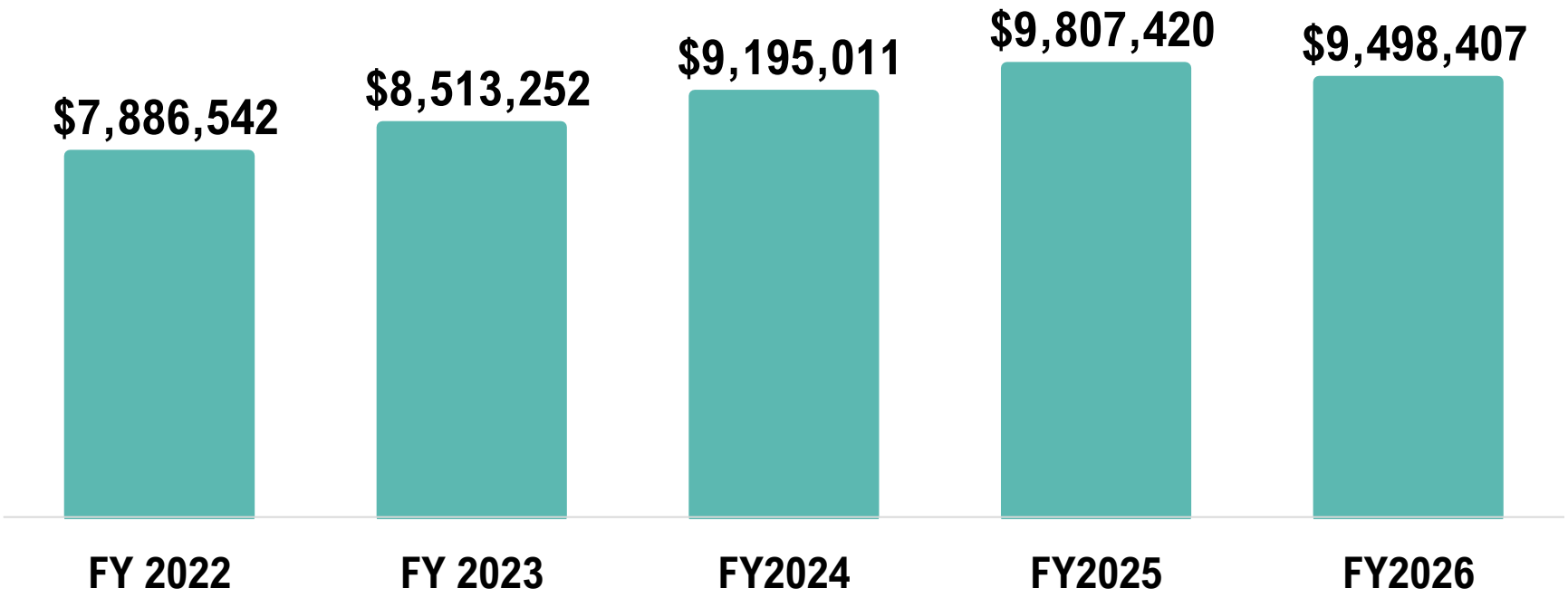
$446,847,600

in wages[1] paid to employees who live in Leon County in FY2026, down 0.2% from FY2025[2]



[1]This economic impact analysis does not account for leakage outside of Leon County.
[2]FY2025 economic impact figures revised due to updates to IMPLAN models and Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

TDT COLLECTIONS
FY2022 – FY2026



FY2026 TOP MARKETS OF ORIGIN

Market	FY2025	FY2026
Surrounding Areas[1]	10.3%	12.0%
Miami-Fort Lauderdale	9.7%	8.2%
Orlando-Daytona Beach-Melbourne	7.0%	7.8%
Atlanta	7.3%	7.5%
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Sarasota	6.6%	7.0%
Jacksonville	5.6%	6.5%
Panama City	5.6%	6.0%
Mobile	3.7%	3.4%
Dallas-Fort Worth	2.9%	2.7%
Gainesville	3.3%	2.4%
Charlotte	1.6%	2.3%
West Palm Beach-Ft. Pierce	2.0%	2.0%

[1]Includes counties surrounding Tallahassee and Thomasville.



DETAILED FINDINGS



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

FY2026 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

	FY2025	FY2026	% Change
Visitors	2,620,100	2,566,500	-2.0%
Direct Expenditures[1]	$898,849,500	$897,695,200	-0.1%
Total Economic Impact[2]	$1,479,743,700[3]	$1,484,629,500	+0.3%
Room Nights Generated[4]	1,601,400	1,483,600	-7.4%
Jobs Supported	11,270[3]	11,020	-2.2%
Wages Supported	$447,762,300[3]	$446,847,600	-0.2%
County Taxes Supported[5]	$53,918,700[3]	$53,042,400	-1.6%
Tourist Development Tax[6]	$9,807,420	$9,498,407.45	-3.2%

[1]Includes spending for: accommodations, restaurants, entertainment, shopping, transportation, groceries, and "other" expenses.
[2]This economic impact analysis does not account for leakage outside of Leon County.
[3]FY2025 economic impact figures revised due to updates to IMPLAN models and Bureau of Labor Statistics data.
[4]From STR, DBPR, and Key Data (via Zartico).
[5]County tax collections supported by tourism.
[6]From Leon County Tax Collector.

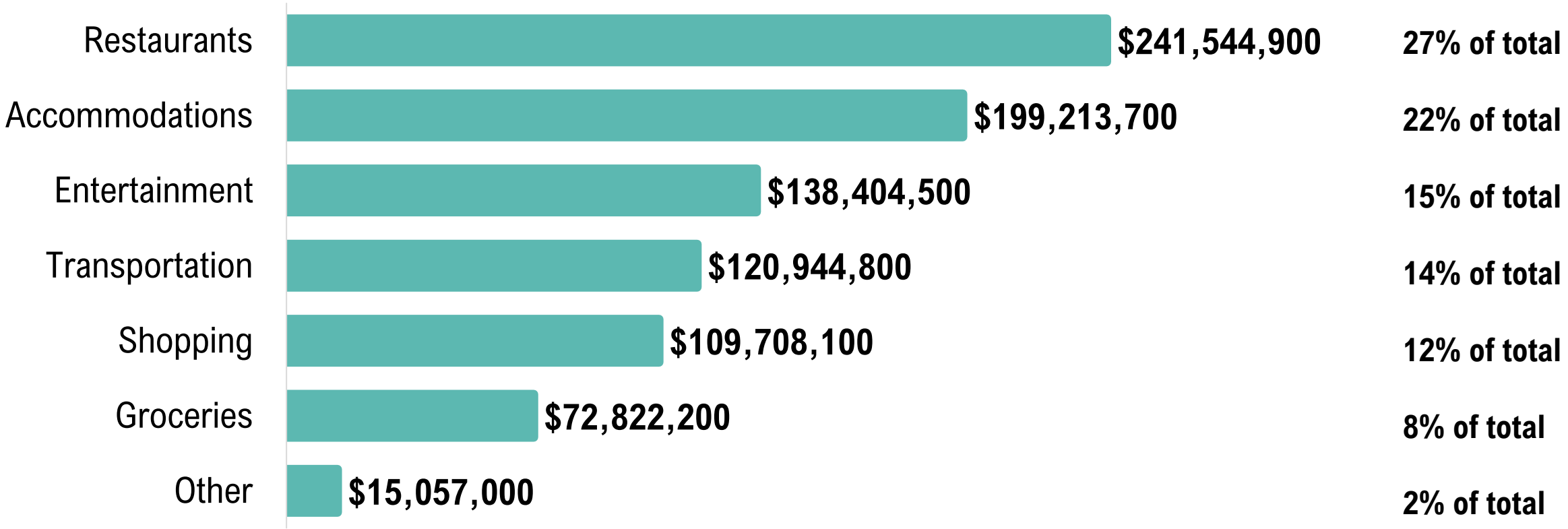
FY2026 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

	FY2025	FY2026	% Change
Occupancy	64.0%	60.6%	-5.3%
Room rate	$134.20	$134.03	-0.1%
Travel party size	2.5	2.5	NA
Nights spent	3.0	2.8	-0.2
Will return	94%	93%	-1% point
Rating of experience[1]	7.9	8.0	+0.1

[1]On a 10-point scale.

FY2026 DIRECT SPENDING BY CATEGORY

Total FY2026 Direct Spend: $897,695,200





KEY QUARTERLY COMPARISONS

FY2026 VISITORS BY QUARTER

Total FY2026 Visitors: 2,566,500



FY2026 DIRECT SPENDING BY QUARTER

Total FY2026 Direct Spend: $897,695,200



FY2026 ROOM NIGHTS BY QUARTER*

Total FY2026 Room Nights: 1,483,600



*From STR, DBPR, and Key Data (via Zartico).

FY2026 QUARTERLY COMPARISONS

	Oct-Dec 2025 (Q1)	Jan-Mar 2026 (Q2)	Apr-Jun 2026 (Q3)	July-Sept 2026 (Q4)
Occupancy	56.6%	65.6%	61.4%	58.7%
Room Rate	$138.30	$141.35	$124.40	$132.04
Travel Party Size	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Mean Nights Stayed	2.7	3.1	2.8	2.7
Median Age	43	43	45	44
Median Income[1]	$89,100	$91,700	$97,500	$93,400
Married	57%	61%	65%	62%
Has Bachelor's Degree	68%	65%	66%	68%
Trade/Technical Degree	2%	2%	4%	2%
From Southeast[2]	34.3%	32.1%	34.8%	31.9%
From Florida	52.5%	47.3%	51.2%	48.6%

[1]Annual household income.
[2]Excluding visitors from Florida.

FY2026 QUARTERLY COMPARISONS

	Oct-Dec 2025 (Q1)	Jan-Mar 2026 (Q2)	Apr-Jun 2026 (Q3)	July-Sept 2026 (Q4)
Planning Cycle	38	42	41	44
Recalled Advertising	6%	10%	14%	16%
Influenced by Advertising[1]	2%	4%	5%	8%
Drove	86%	81%	88%	85%
First-Time Visitor	17%	28%	17%	19%
Overnight Visitor	86%	82%	81%	79%
Used VisitTallahassee.com[2]	1%	3%	2%	4%
Travel Party Spend Per Trip	$850	$903	$753	$818
Rating of Leon County[3]	8.2	8.3	7.9	7.7
Likely to Return	94%	92%	90%	93%

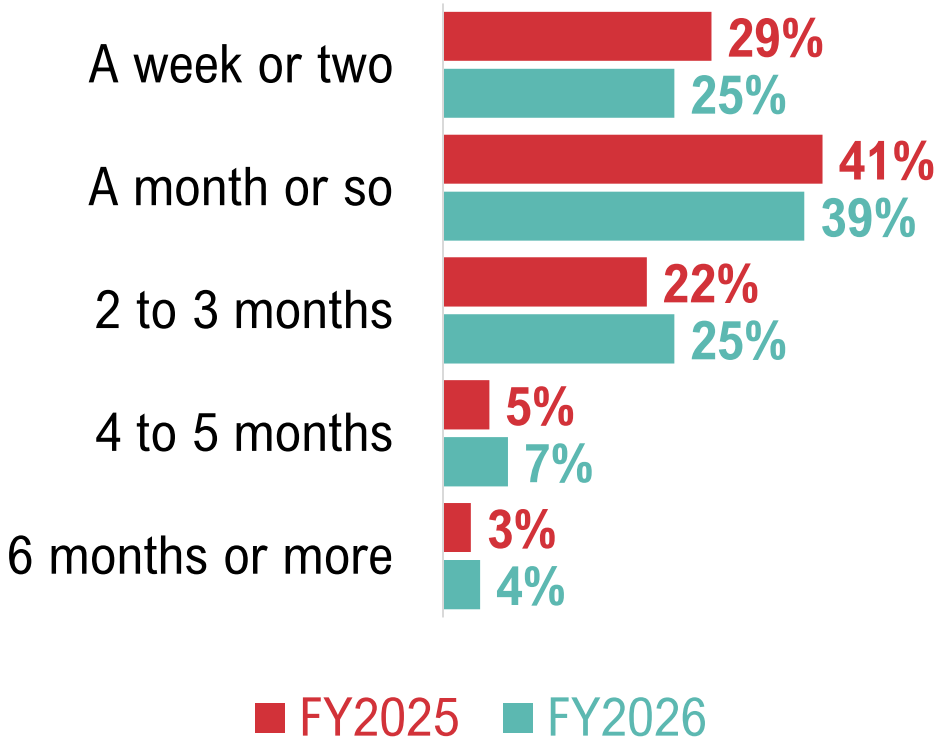
[1]To visit Tallahassee.
[2]On a 10-point scale.
[3]As a trip-planning source.



ANNUAL COMPARISONS

TRIP PLANNING CYCLE FY2026

- Visitors to Tallahassee have a short planning window, as **nearly 2 in 3** plan their trip **a month or less in advance**
- The **average trip planning window** was **41 days** (+3 days from FY2025)



TRIP PLANNING SOURCES[1] FY2026

Nearly half of visitors talked to friends and family while planning their trips (+8% points from FY2025)

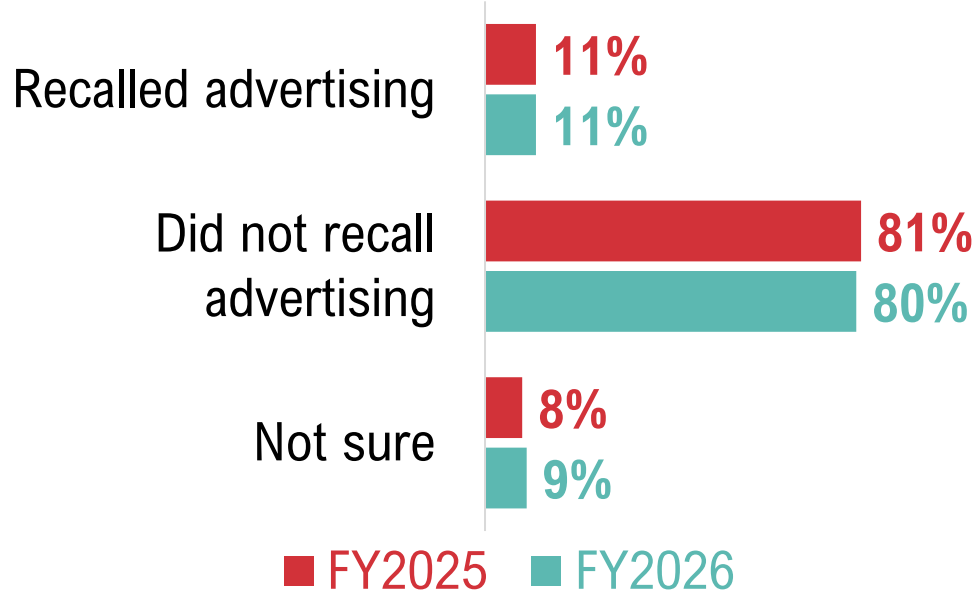
Over 2 in 5 visitors used prior knowledge of the area to plan their trips (+6% points from FY2025)

Trip Planning Sources	FY2025	FY2026
Talk to friends and family	40%	48%
Prior knowledge of the area	37%	43%
Search on Google, etc.	25%	36%
Social media	12%	18%
Airline websites	14%	17%
Online travel agency	12%	15%
Booked through work	12%	11%
Hotel/resort websites	9%	9%
AI (e.g., ChatGPT)	5%	6%
Trip planning app	4%	3%
VisitTallahassee.com	2%	2%
Travel guides	3%	2%
Contact a travel agent	1%	1%
Travel sections of newspapers	2%	1%
Travel magazines	2%	1%
Books about Leon County	1%	<1%
Other	4%	5%

[1]Multiple responses permitted.

ADVERTISING RECALL FY2026

- **11%** of visitors to Tallahassee recalled seeing advertising for the area prior to their trip
- This information influenced **5%** of **all** visitors to come to the Tallahassee area (same as FY2025)



ADVERTISING RECALL SOURCES[1] FY2026

The top source of recalled advertising was personal social media, noted by **4%** of all visitors

Advertising Recall Sources	FY2025	FY2026
Personal social media	3%	4%
Billboard	1%	1%
Television	2%	1%
Video Streaming Services	2%	1%
Radio	2%	1%
Online article	1%	1%
Weather app	1%	1%
Ad on a website	2%	1%
Travel/Visitor Guide	1%	1%
VisitTallahassee.com	1%	1%
Rental agency or other booking websites	<1%	1%
Visit Tallahassee Social Media	1%	1%
Music Streaming Services	<1%	<1%
Brochure	1%	<1%
Newspaper	1%	<1%
Magazine ad	1%	<1%
Magazine article	1%	<1%
Traveler reviews/blogs	1%	<1%
Deal based promotions	<1%	<1%
AAA	<1%	<1%
Other	1%	1%

[1]Multiple responses permitted.
Based on all visitors, including those who did not recall seeing advertising for Tallahassee.

REASONS FOR VISITING[1] FY2026

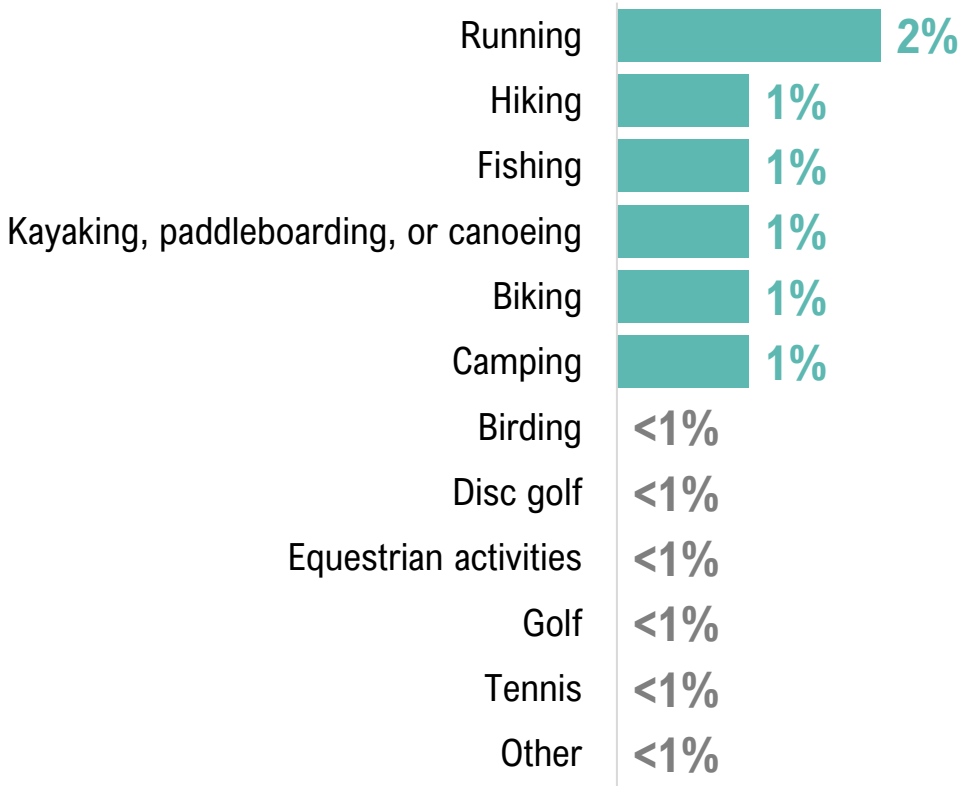
- **Nearly 2 in 5** visitors came to Tallahassee to visit friends and family (+2% points from FY2025)
- **Nearly 1 in 5** came to the area to watch a sporting event (+3% points from FY2025)

Reason For Visiting	FY2025	FY2026
Visit friends and relatives	37%	39%
Watch a sporting event	16%	19%
Special event/festival	11%	16%
Relax and unwind	15%	14%
Business conference or meeting	18%	14%
Special occasion	10%	10%
Education-related	9%	8%
Attractions	7%	8%
Family vacation	8%	7%
Restaurants	5%	5%
Outdoor recreation	5%	5%
Government-related	5%	4%
Shopping	5%	3%
Bars/nightclubs	3%	3%
Participate in a sporting event	4%	2%
Art galleries, museums, etc.	1%	2%
Reunion	2%	2%
Historical sites	2%	1%
Wedding, party, tour, guys/girls trip, etc.	3%	1%
Performance art show	1%	<1%
Spas	<1%	<1%
Other	4%	5%

[1]Multiple responses permitted.

MAIN REASON OUTDOOR REC[1] FY2026

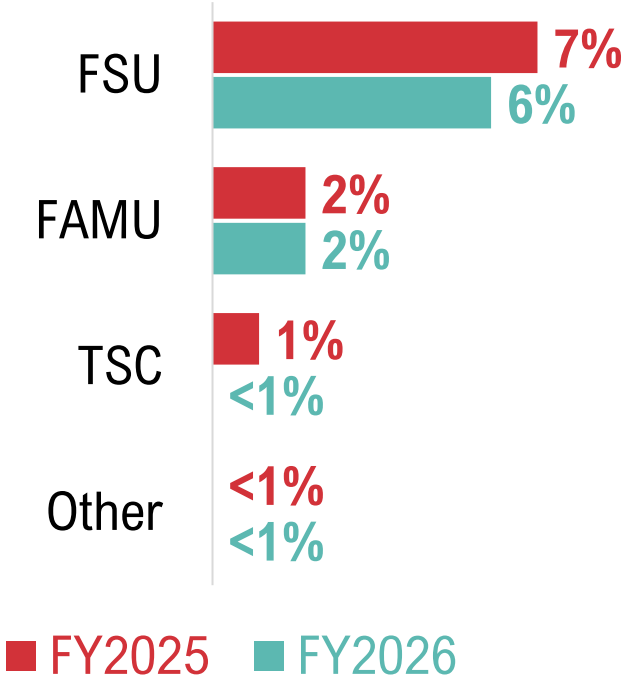
- **2%** of **all** visitors came to the area to run
- **1%** of **all** visitors came to the area to hike, fish, boat, bike, or camp



[1]New survey question added for FY26 as a follow-up for those who selected "Outdoor Recreation" as a main reason for travel.
Multiple responses permitted. Percents out of all visitors.
Results are preliminary and should be interpreted with caution.

EDUCATION-RELATED VISITS[1] FY2026

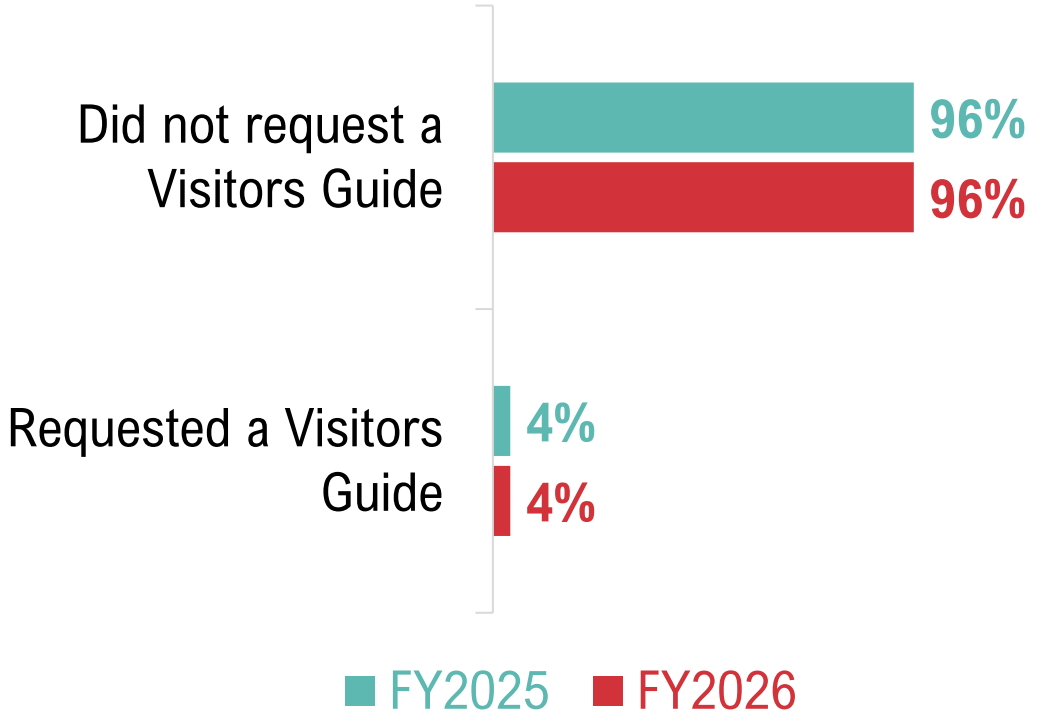
- **7%** of **all** visitors to Tallahassee came to the area for activities related to FSU
- **2%** of **all** visitors came to the area for activities related to FAMU



[1]Multiple responses permitted. Percents based on all visitors.

VISITORS GUIDE FY2026

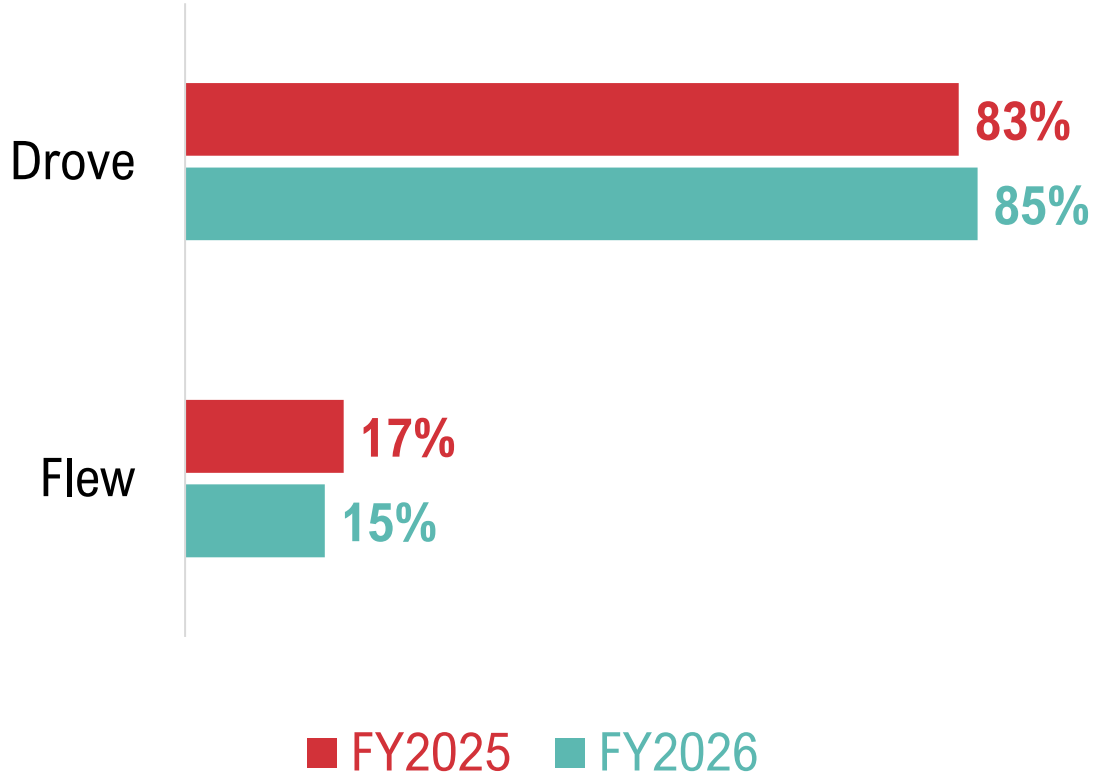
- 4% of visitors requested a Visitors Guide prior to their trip to Tallahassee
- Those who requested a Visitors Guide gave it a rating of 8.0[1]



[1]Rated on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is poor and 10 is excellent.

TRANSPORTATION FY2026

- **Over 4 in 5** visitors drove to Tallahassee
- **91%** of visitors indicated that Tallahassee was the primary destination for their trip (+3% points from FY2025)

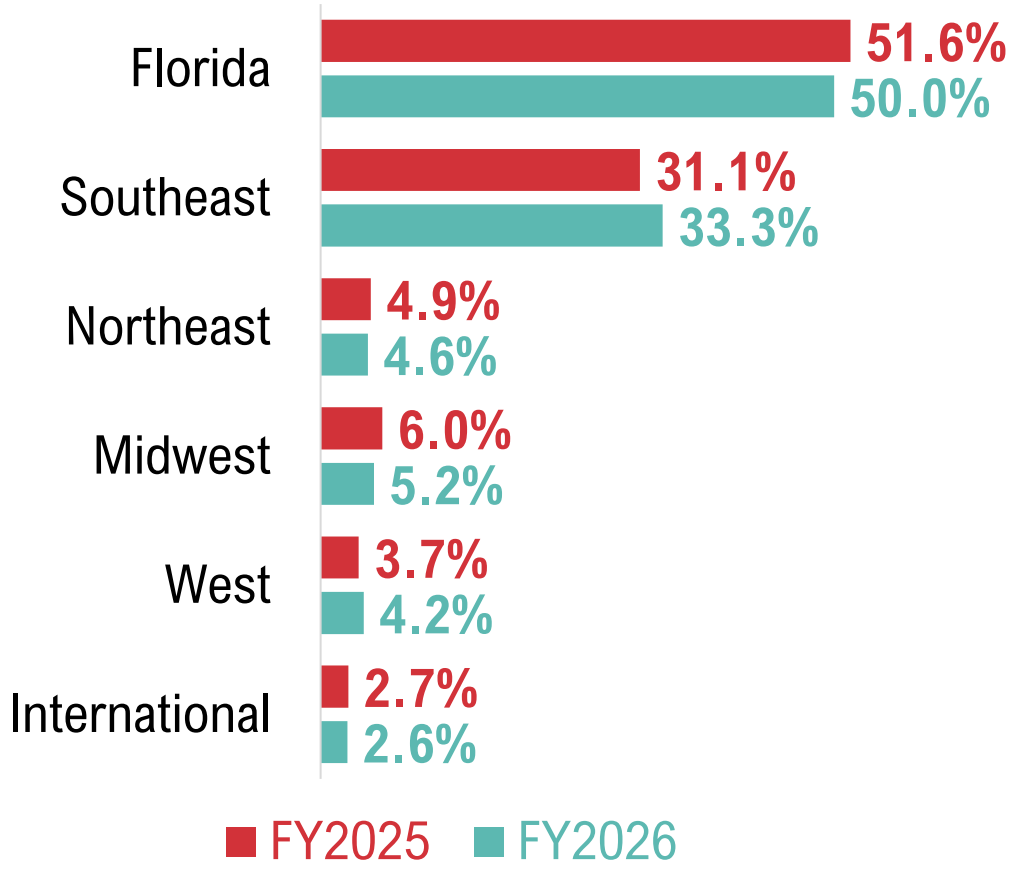


STUDY OBJECTIVES: VISITOR JOURNEY



REGION OF ORIGIN FY2026

33.3% of Tallahassee's visitors came from the **Southeast** (+2.2% points from FY2025)



TOP MARKETS OF ORIGIN[1] FY2026

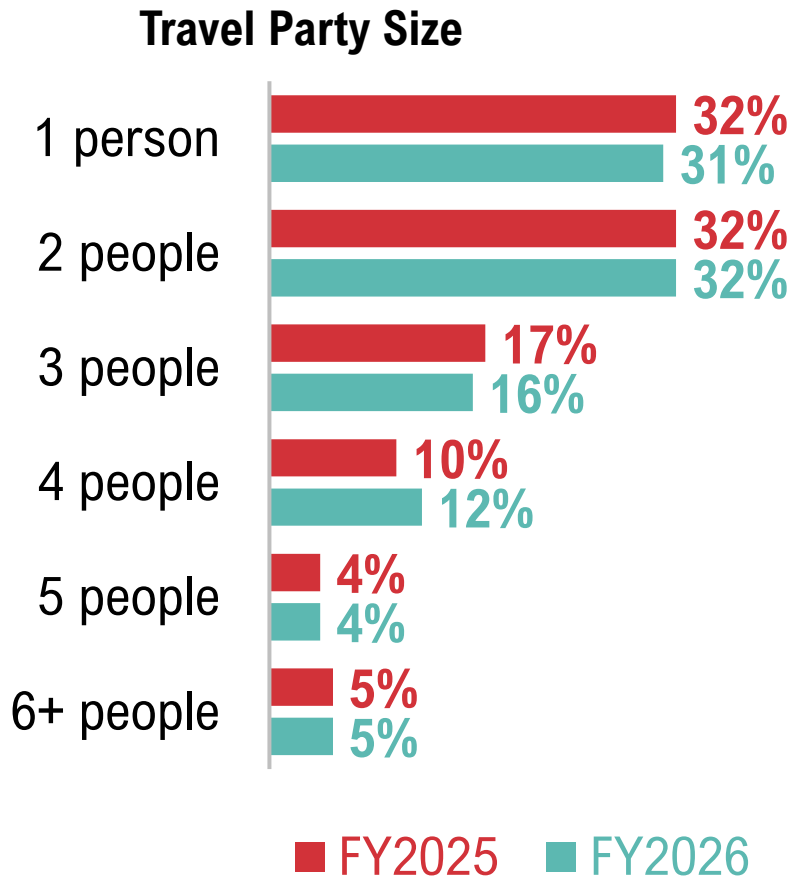
67.8% of Tallahassee's visitors came from **12** markets

Market	FY2025	FY2026
Surrounding Areas[2]	10.3%	12.0%
Miami-Fort Lauderdale	9.7%	8.2%
Orlando-Daytona Beach-Melbourne	7.0%	7.8%
Atlanta	7.3%	7.5%
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Sarasota	6.6%	7.0%
Jacksonville	5.6%	6.5%
Panama City	5.6%	6.0%
Mobile	3.7%	3.4%
Dallas-Fort Worth	2.9%	2.7%
Gainesville	3.3%	2.4%
Charlotte	1.6%	2.3%
West Palm Beach-Ft. Pierce	2.0%	2.0%

[1]Based on DSG Visitor Tracking data and Zartico.
[2]Includes counties surrounding Tallahassee and Thomasville.

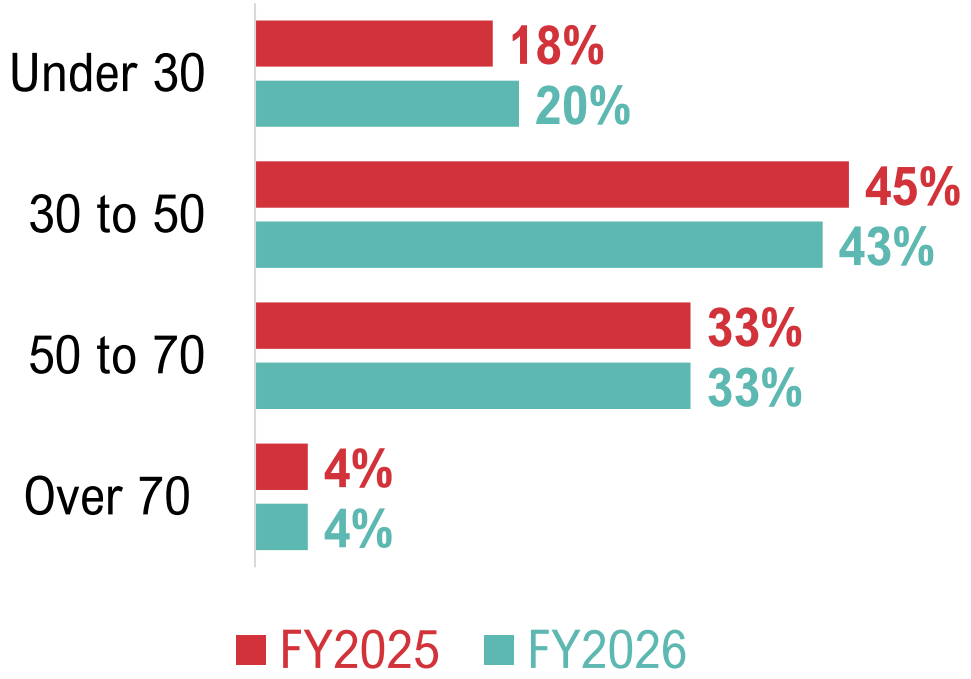
TRAVEL PARTIES FY2026

- Typical visitors traveled in a party of **2.5** people (same as FY2025)
- **29%** of visitors traveled with children aged 20 or younger, while **19%** traveled with children aged 12 or younger



AGE OF VISITORS[1] FY2026

Typical visitors to Tallahassee were 44 years old

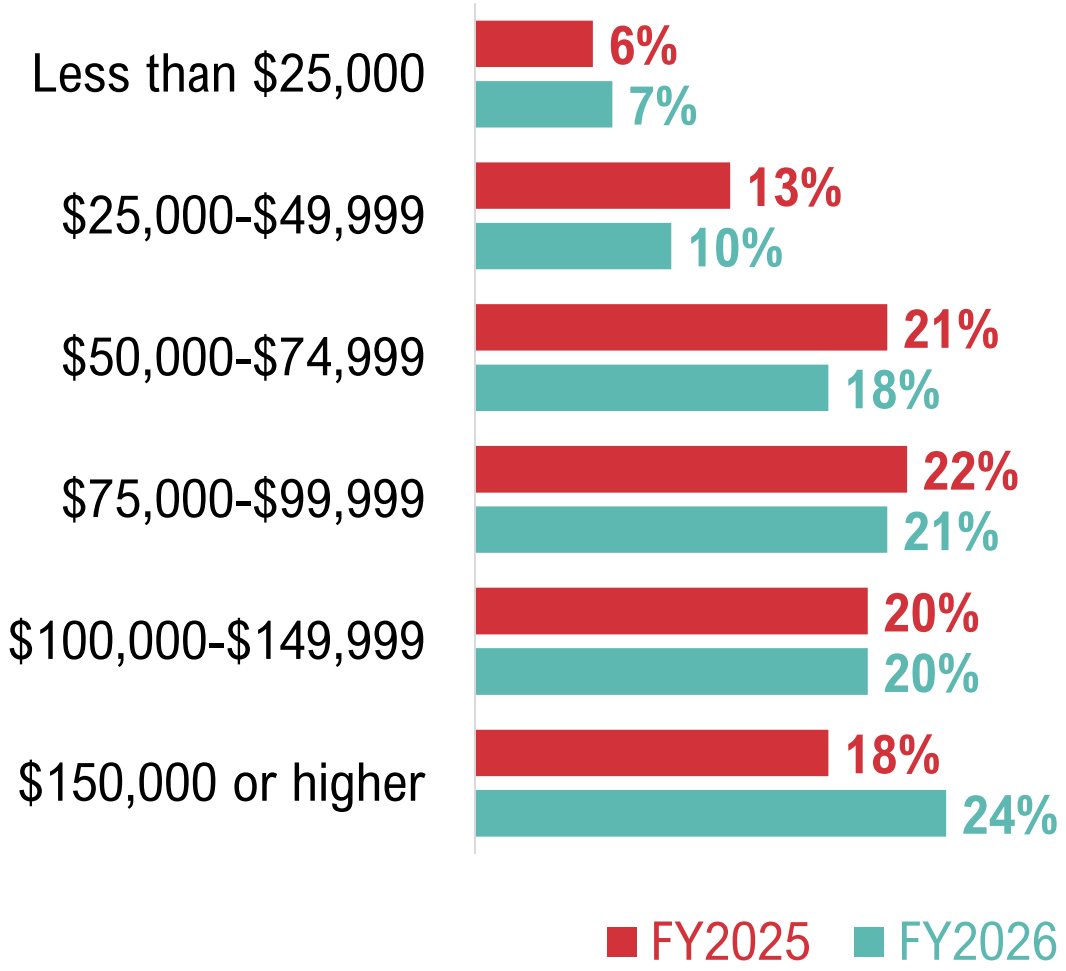


[1]Demographic data reflects the surveyed individual, who may not fully represent the entire travel party or all visitors to the area.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF VISITORS FY2026

Typical visitors to Tallahassee had a median household income of **$92,900** per year (+$6,500 from FY2025)

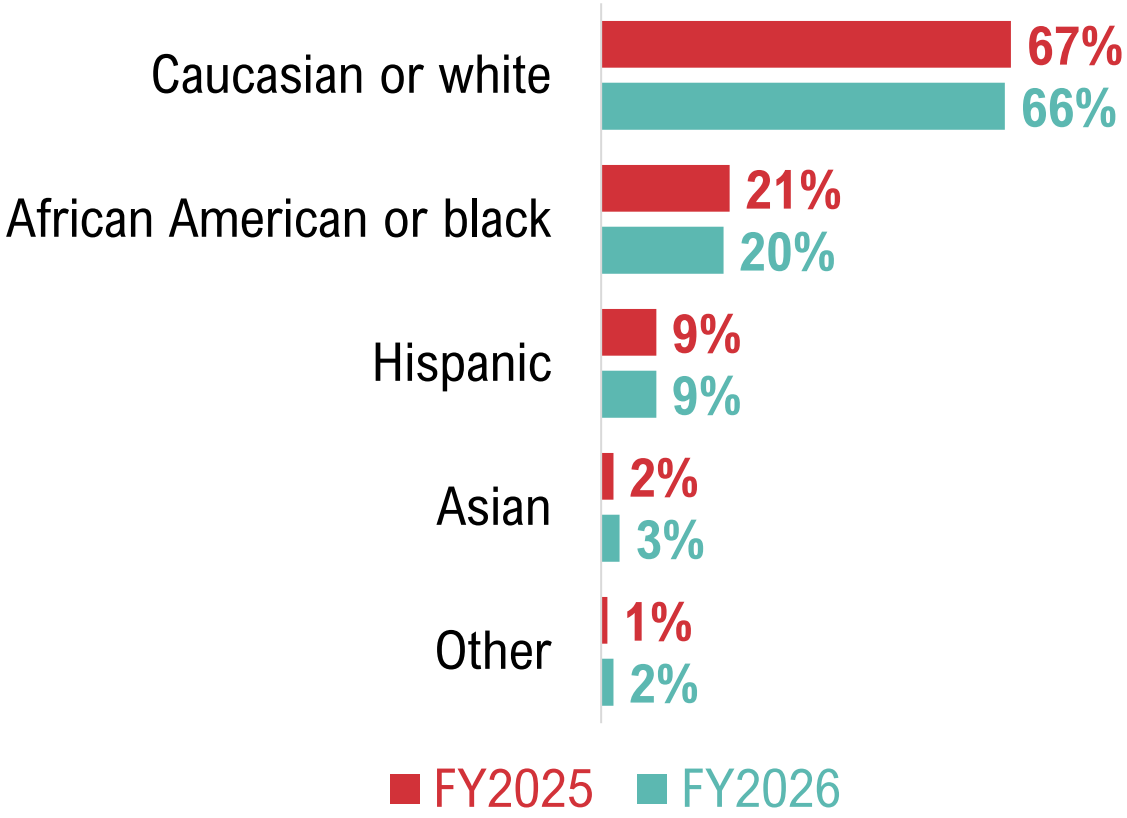
Nearly 1 in 4 visitors earned over **$150,000** per year



RACE/ETHNICITY OF VISITORS[1] FY2026

2 in 3 visitors to Tallahassee were Caucasian

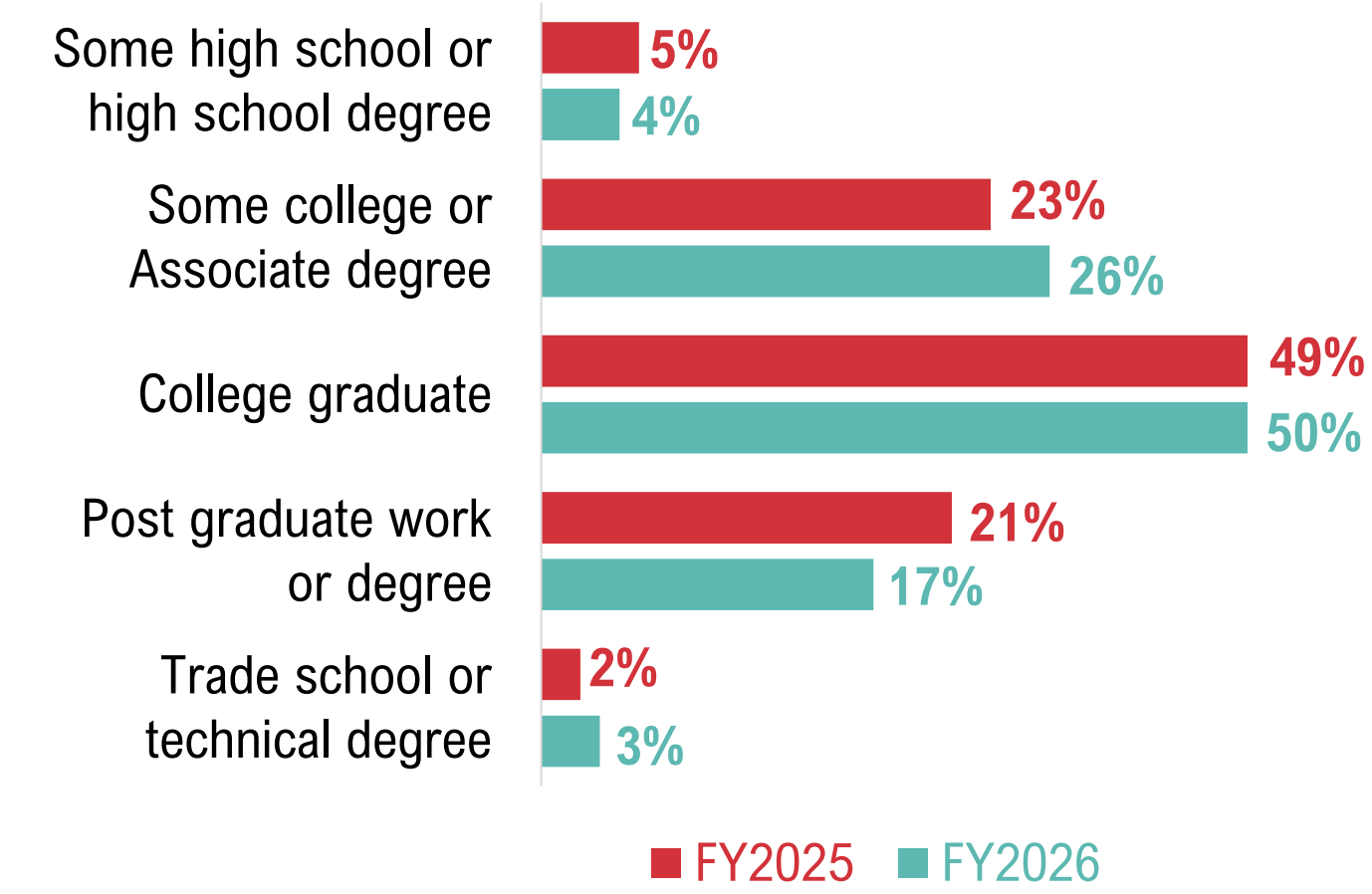
1 in 5 visitors to Tallahassee were African American



[1]Demographic data reflects the surveyed individual, who may not fully represent the entire travel party or all visitors to the area.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF VISITORS[1] FY2026

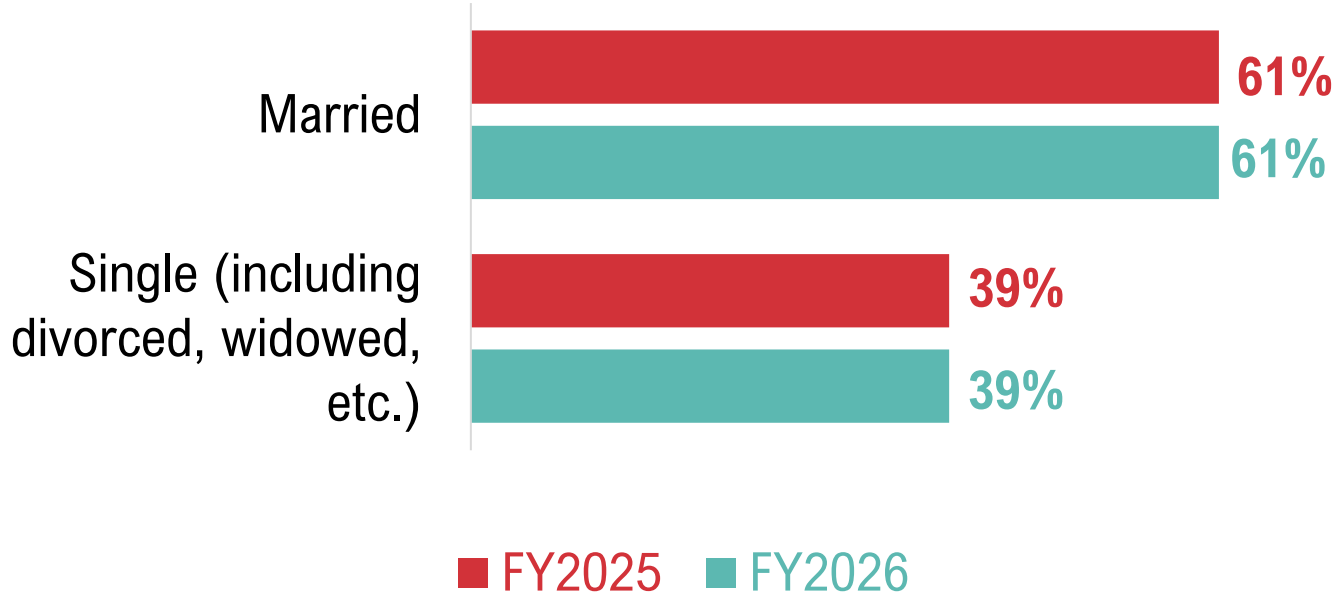
Over 2 in 3 visitors to Tallahassee had a bachelor's degree or higher



[1]Demographic data reflects the surveyed individual, who may not fully represent the entire travel party or all visitors to the area.

MARITAL STATUS OF VISITORS[1] FY2026

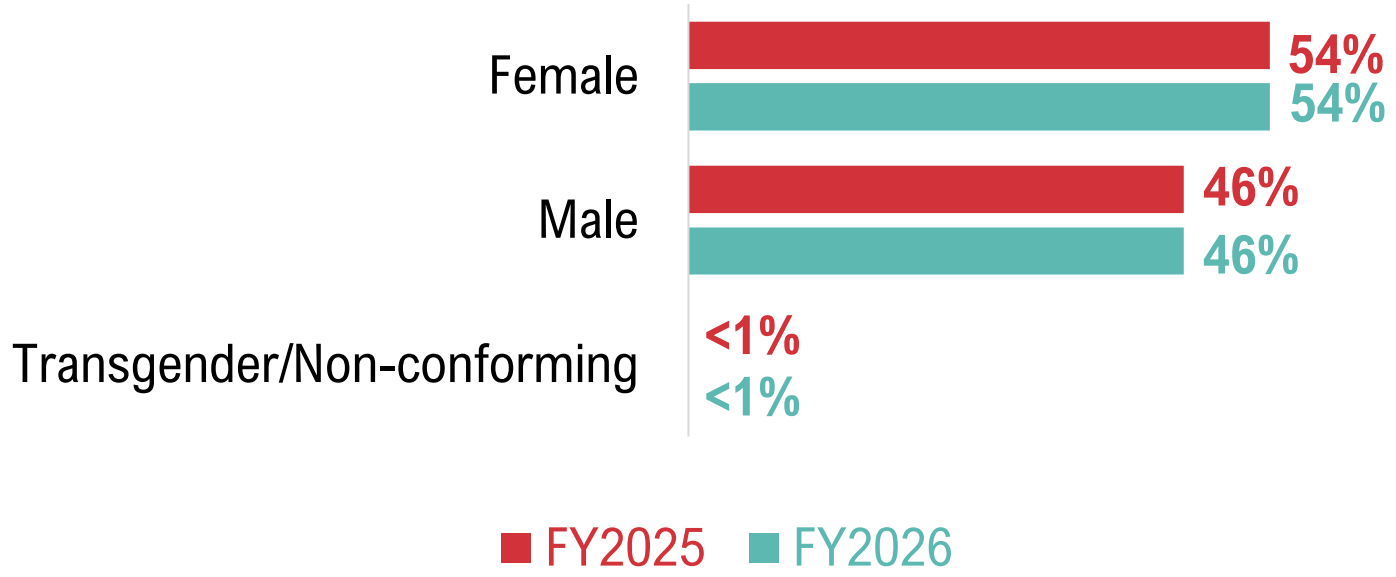
Over 3 in 5 visitors to Tallahassee were married



[1]Demographic data reflects the surveyed individual, who may not fully represent the entire travel party or all visitors to the area.

GENDER OF VISITORS[1] FY2026

54% of visitors to Tallahassee were female



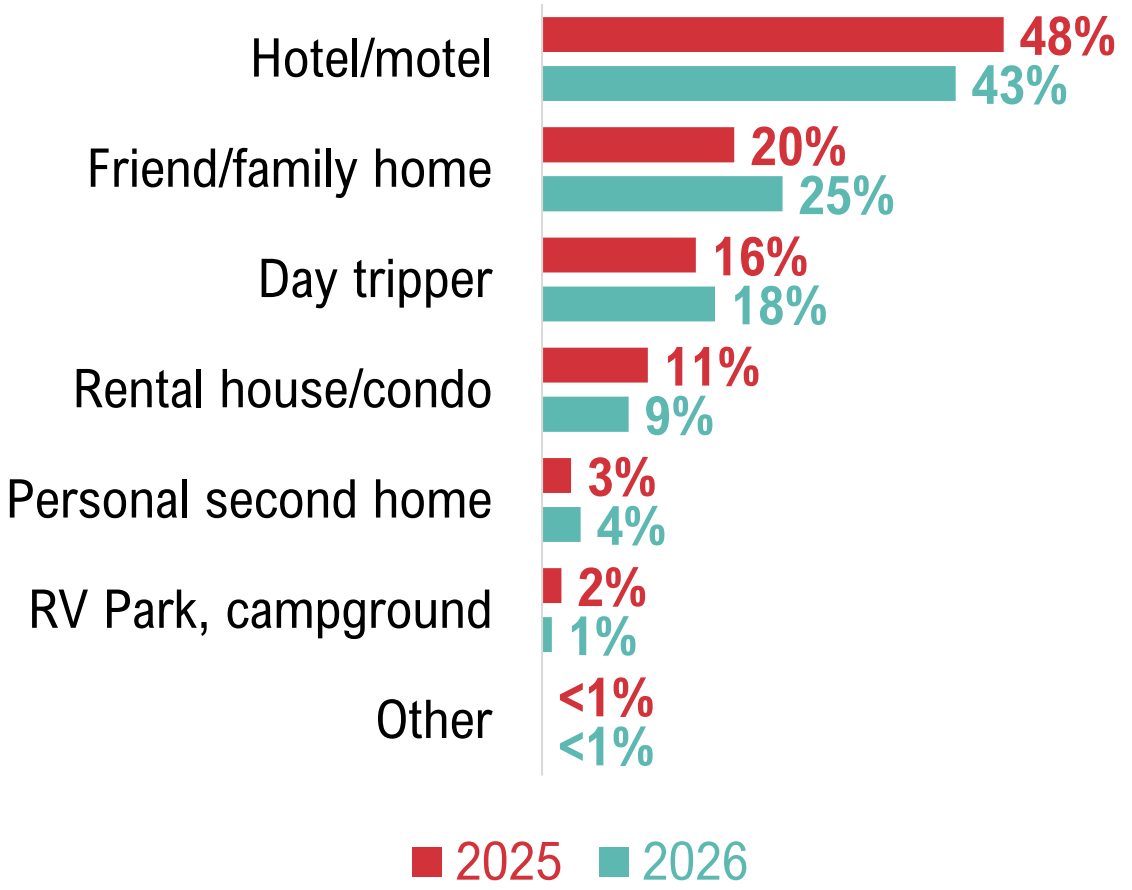
[1]Demographic data reflects the surveyed individual, who may not fully represent the entire travel party or all visitors to the area.

STUDY OBJECTIVES: VISITOR JOURNEY



ACCOMMODATIONS FY2026

- **Over 2 in 5** visitors stayed in a hotel
- **1 in 4** stayed with friends or relatives
- **Nearly 1 in 5** came to the area just for the day



TRAVEL PARTY SPENDING[1] FY2026

Spending per Day	FY2025	FY2026
Restaurants	$75	$79
Accommodations	$75	$72
Transportation	$37	$39
Entertainment	$37	$38
Shopping	$38	$37
Groceries	$21	$28
Other	$7	$5
Total	**$291**	**$296**

[1]Spending per travel party. Includes overnight visitors and day trippers.

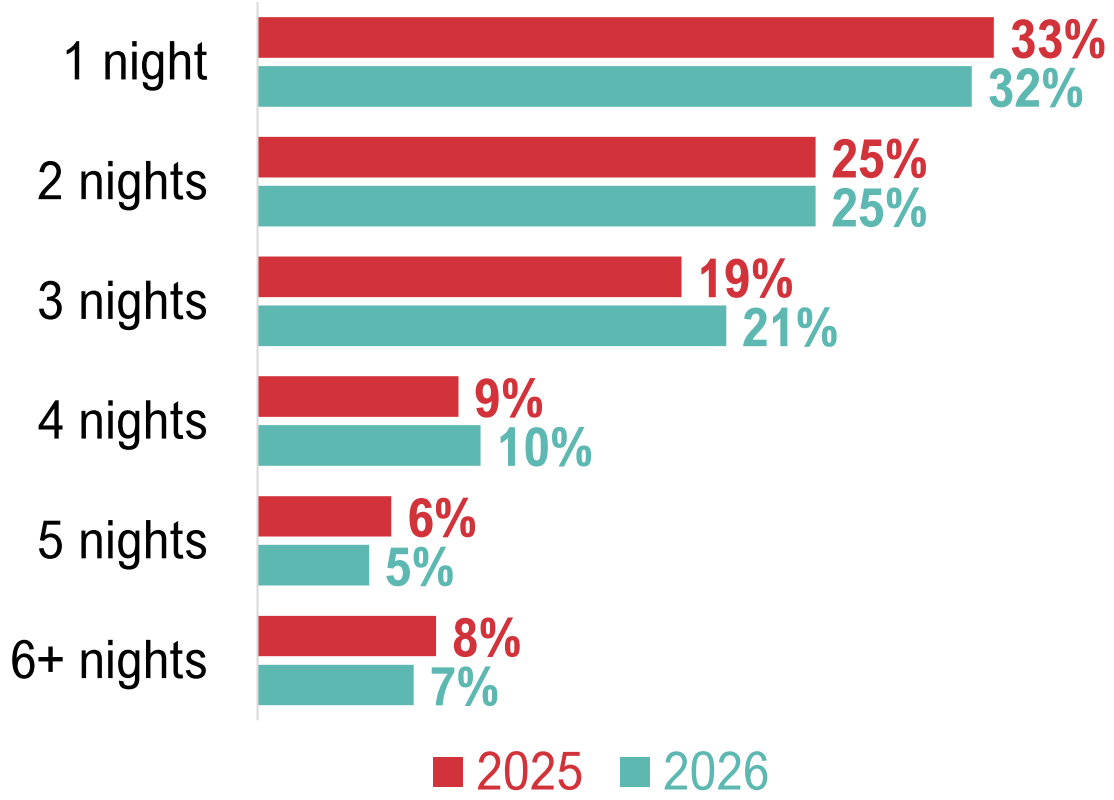
TRAVEL PARTY SPENDING[1] FY2026

Spending per Trip	FY2025	FY2026
Restaurants	$223	$222
Accommodations	$225	$201
Transportation	$100	$109
Entertainment	$89	$106
Shopping	$114	$104
Groceries	$90	$78
Other	$20	$14
Total	**$861**	**$833**

[1]Spending per travel party. Includes overnight visitors and day trippers.

OVERNIGHT VISITORS FY2026

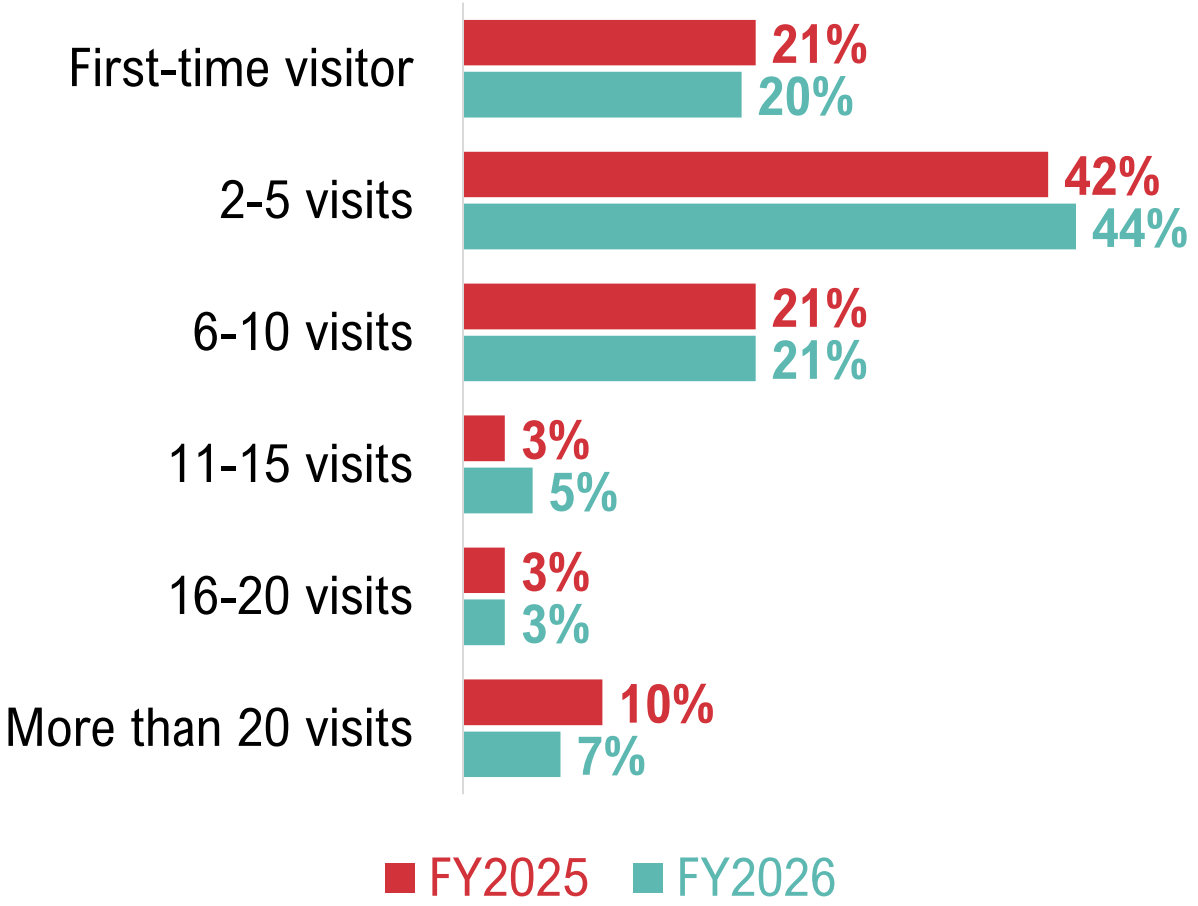
- Typical visitors stayed **2.8** nights in Tallahassee
- **Nearly 1 in 3** visitors stayed only one night in Tallahassee



VISITS TO TALLAHASSEE FY2026

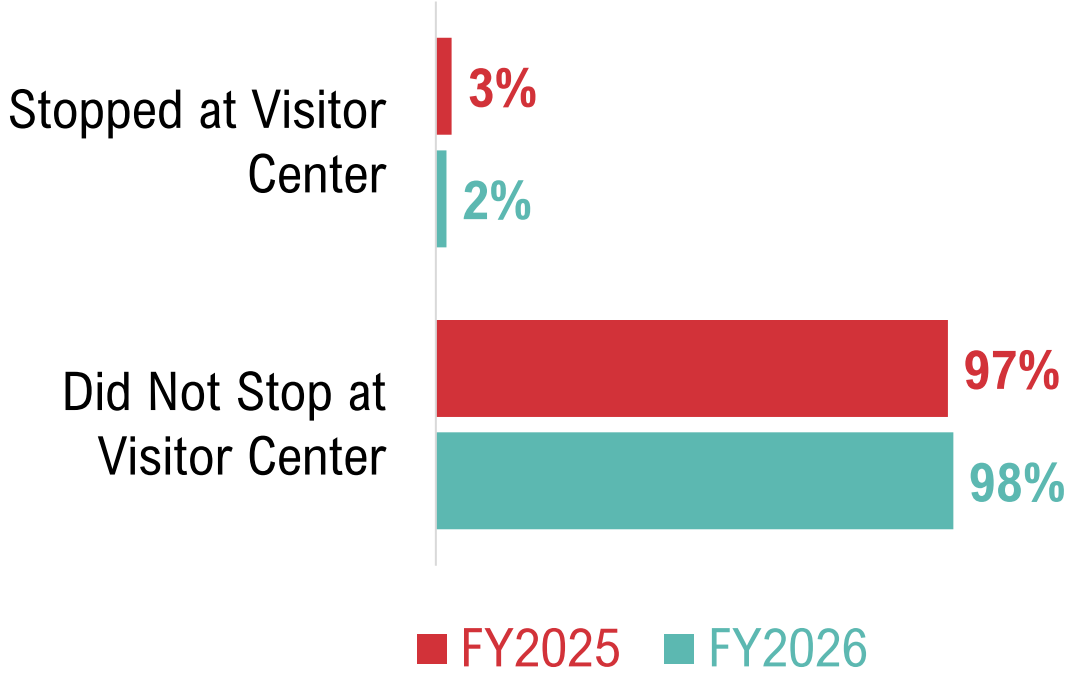
1 in 5 visitors were visiting Tallahassee for the first time

15% had previously visited Tallahassee more than 10 times



VISITOR CENTER FY2026

- 2% of visitors stopped at the Visitor Center[1]
- Those who went to the Visitor Center gave it a rating of 8.5[2]



[1]Refers to the Visit Tallahassee Visitor Center in Cascades Park, as the Railroad Square Visitor Center was closed this year from storm damage.
[2]Rated on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is poor and 10 is excellent.

ACTIVITIES DURING VISIT[1] FY2026

- **Nearly half of visitors** spent time visiting friends and relatives or dined at restaurants during their trip
- **Nearly 2 in 5 visitors** spent time relaxing and unwinding

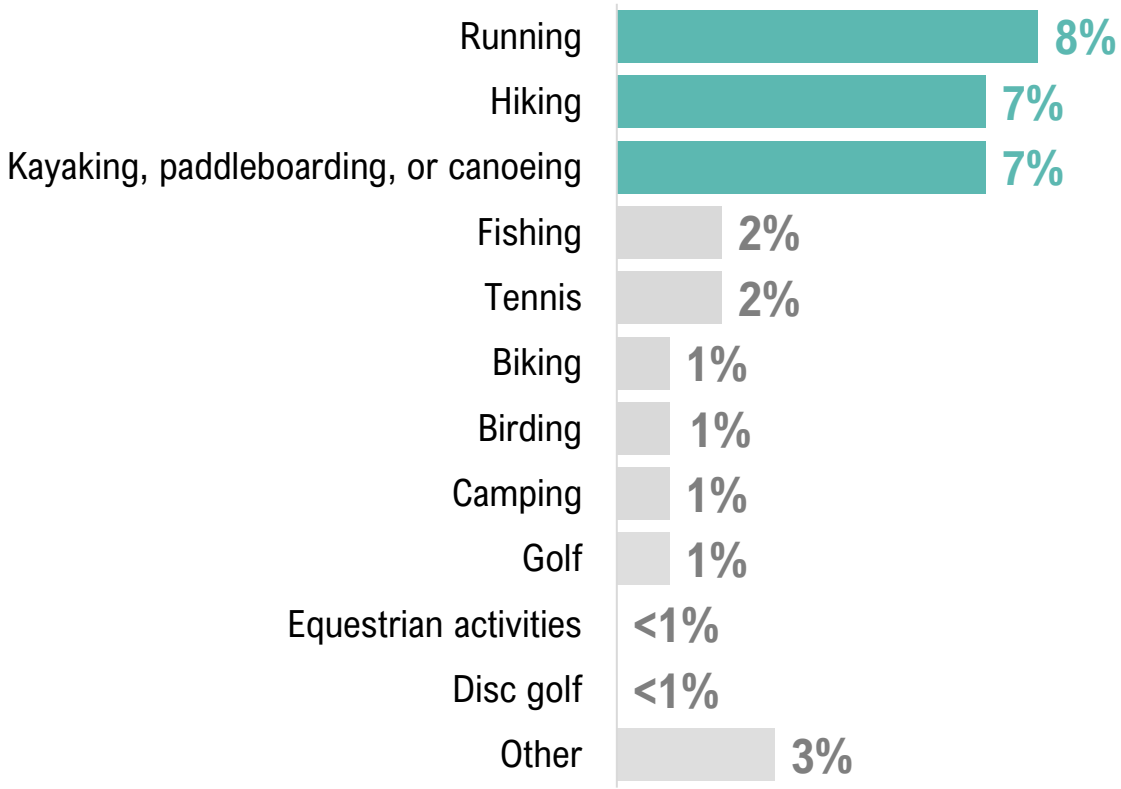
Activity	FY2025	FY2026
Visit friends and relatives	51%	49%
Restaurants	48%	48%
Relax and unwind	40%	39%
Special event/festival	18%	25%
Watch a sporting event	22%	22%
Bars/nightclubs	16%	22%
Outdoor recreation	20%	21%
Attractions	17%	18%
Shopping	19%	16%
Business conference or meeting	18%	14%
Family vacation	19%	13%
Special occasion	15%	13%
Education-related	11%	10%
Government-related	5%	4%
Art galleries, museums, etc.	7%	4%
Historical sites	5%	4%
Participate in a sporting event	5%	2%
Performance art show	2%	2%
Spas	1%	1%
Other	7%	5%

[1]Multiple responses permitted.

LEON COUNTY FLORIDA CAPITAL COUNTY
Visit Tallahassee Pretty. Unexpected.
downs & st. germain RESEARCH

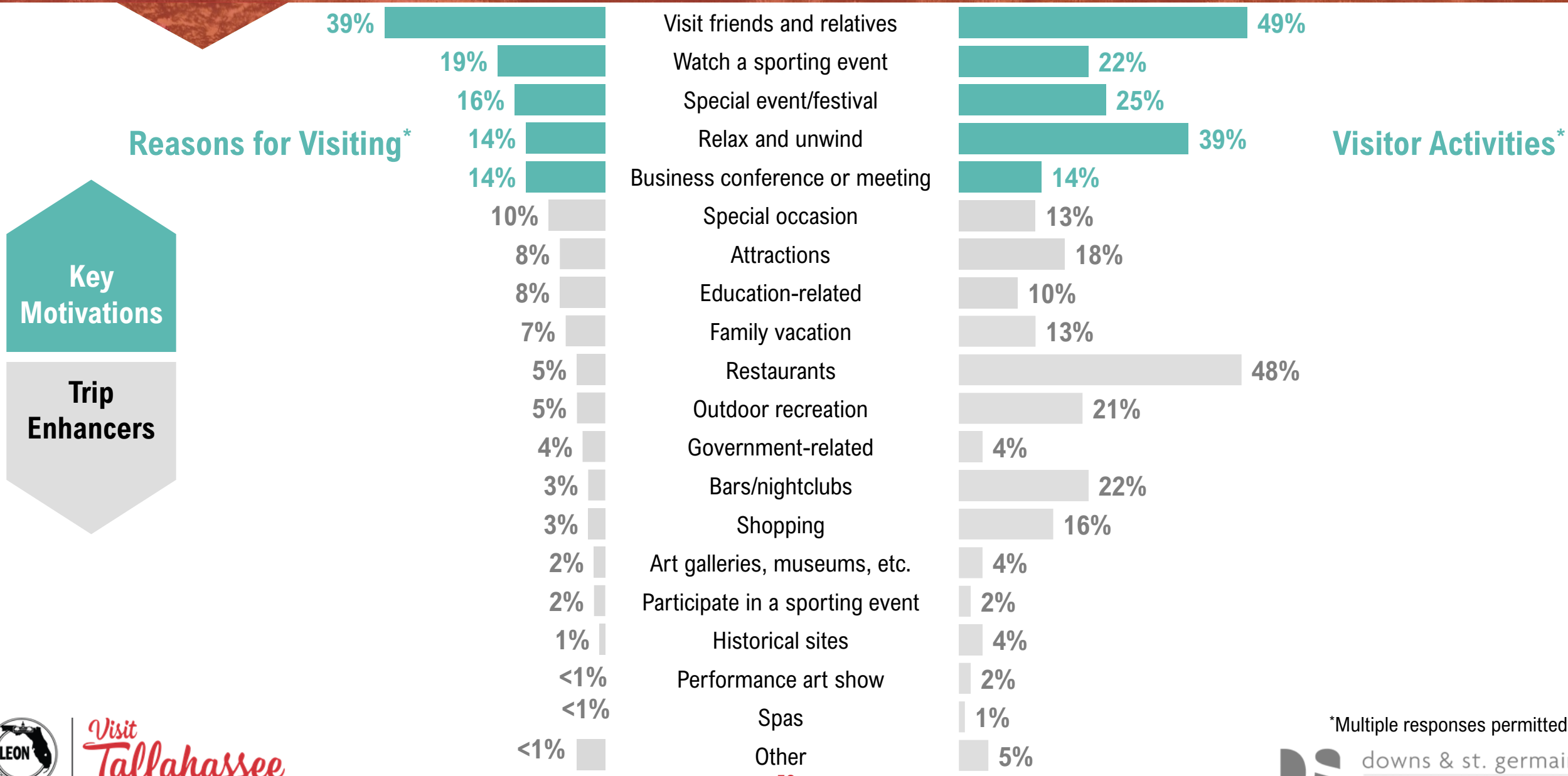
OUTDOOR REC ACTIVITIES[1] FY2026

- 8% of all visitors spent time running while in Tallahassee
- Another 7% went hiking, kayaking, paddleboarding, or canoeing



[1]New survey question added for FY26 as a follow-up for those who selected "Outdoor Recreation" as a trip activity.
Multiple responses permitted. Percents out of all visitors.
Results are preliminary and should be interpreted with caution.

REASONS FOR VISITING VS. VISITOR ACTIVITIES FY2026



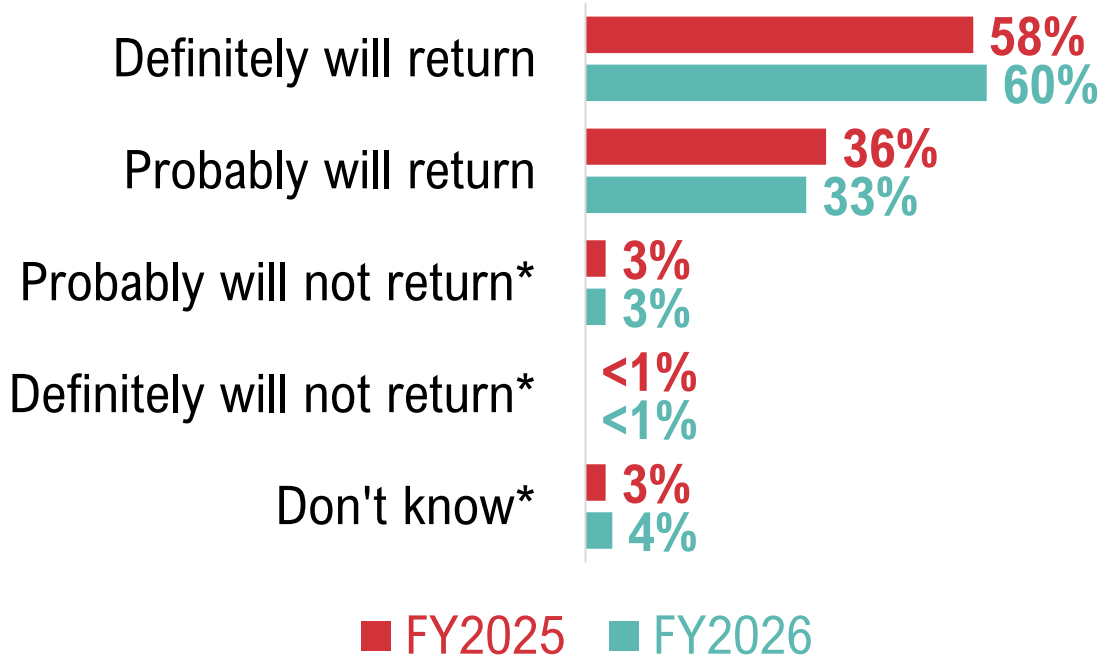
*Multiple responses permitted.

STUDY OBJECTIVES: VISITOR JOURNEY



VISITOR SATISFACTION FY2026

- Visitors gave Tallahassee an average rating of **8.0**[1] as a place to visit
- **93%** of visitors will return (**60%** will definitely return) to Tallahassee for a future visit or vacation



[1]Rated on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is poor and 10 is excellent.
*6% of visitors may not return for the following reasons: Event/occasion for visit is over, not enough to do during the day, or prefer variety in vacation spots.

RATING EXPERIENCES IN TALLAHASSEE FY2026

- Tallahassee's **hospitality, atmosphere,** and **attractions/events** exceeded the expectations of the largest share of visitors
- **Food quality, nightlife,** and **shopping** in Tallahassee were least likely to exceed visitors' expectations

Exceeded + Met Expectations	FY2025	FY2026
Hospitality	97%	96%
Environment, atmosphere	97%	96%
Attractions, events, etc.	95%	96%
Entertainment	95%	95%
Service at hotel	95%	96%
Quality of hotel	96%	95%
Customer service	96%	92%
Food quality	95%	91%
Nightlife	94%	90%
Shopping	92%	90%

PERCEPTIONS: "HOME AWAY FROM HOME" FY2026



- "Tallahassee has that Southern charm that makes it feel like coming home."
- "Everyone seems to be so friendly here!"
- "A city that values community."
- "Slower-paced, small-town feel with friendly people. Always feels like home."
- "Tallahassee somehow feels like home, even if you're not from here."
- "A welcoming city – Southern hospitality at its best."
- "It's a small town, but that's exactly what I love about it!"
- "Beautiful town with interesting things to see, and some of the nicest people in Florida."
- "Kind people and southern charm - it's a peaceful, relaxing place to visit."
- "Very diverse and quiet town - it's a relaxing home away from home with a pleasant vibe."

PERCEPTIONS: "EVERYDAY ADVENTURES" FY2026



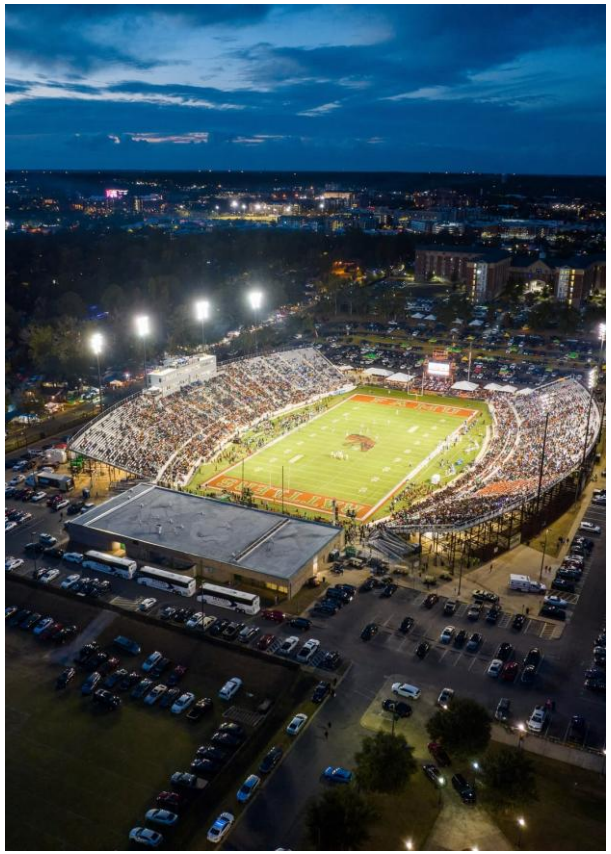
- "It's a great place for sightseeing, with parks, nature, and a refreshing feel."
- "A charming city with a great mix of history, culture, food, and outdoor activities."
- "There's always something to do. We like to come to the museums - the kids love it!"
- "More than just a college town – beautiful parks and cool events year-round."
- "Small-town feel, with college life, football, and nature all in one place."
- "We visited for the mix of Southern history and outdoor fun!"
- "We were here for Black Friday and would recommend the shopping in Tallahassee!"
- "It's a well-rounded city - good food, outdoor activities, and events."
- "Beautiful nature. We especially love Cascades Park!"
- "Great for nature lovers – outdoor activities everywhere you look."

PERCEPTIONS: "THE GREAT OUTDOORS" FY2026



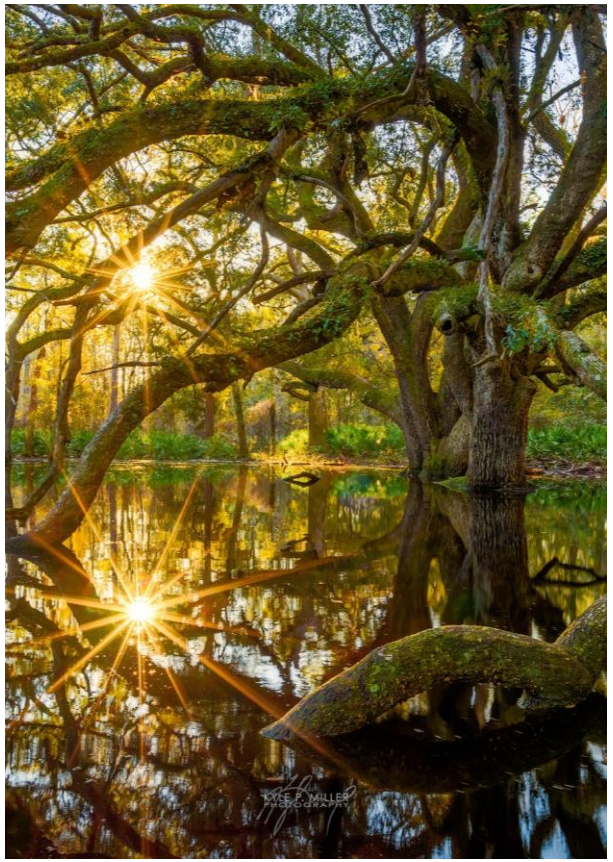
- "Very green, with canopy roads, big trees, and Spanish moss everywhere."
- "Hilly and green. Feels like old Florida!"
- "Great parks, trails, and lakes. Unexpectedly good hiking for Florida."
- "This is a great time of year to get outdoors. Perfect weather."
- "It's a pleasant city with rolling hills and so many trees!"
- "The landscape is different from elsewhere in Florida, and it's a refreshing change."
- "We love the nature and forests here - beautiful scenery!"
- "It's a great place for sightseeing, with parks, nature, and a refreshing feel."
- "The nature is beautiful, with parks and scenic views."
- "Great nature and scenery - it's a different side of Florida than you'd expect!"
- "A small town where the greenery is beautiful and it's easy to relax."

PERCEPTIONS: "COLLEGE TOWN AND SPORTS" FY2026



- "Great college town with young energy, especially during football season."
- "FSU's campus is beautiful, and the game day atmosphere is awesome."
- "Fun college atmosphere with lots of bars, nightlife, and sporting events."
- "Plenty going on in College Town!"
- "Very lively crowds at football games and fun bars."
- "Between sports and other events around the city, there's always something happening."
- "The campuses are beautiful, the bars are fun, and the people are kind!"

PERCEPTIONS: "REWARDING" FY2026



- "Calm, not crowded, and peaceful, a nice change from busy cities."
- "Laid-back Southern charm with everything you need, minus the crazy traffic!"
- It's a peaceful town – good for families."
- "Fewer tourists – much easier to get places than elsewhere in Florida."
- "Tallahassee is convenient and quiet, with a lot to do but none of the crowds."
- "An easy getaway - less traffic, less busy, and always a good time."
- "Convenient location, it's inexpensive, and it's kid-friendly. Always fun coming here."
- "A peaceful escape where you can slow down and unwind with plenty to enjoy."
- "Peaceful, family-friendly, and the traffic is nothing like the rest of Florida."
- "A relaxing place with great nature that isn't overcrowded."

LEON COUNTY DIVISION OF TOURISM – VISIT TALLAHASSEE

Fiscal Year 2026
Economic Impact Report



Kerri Post
Executive Director, Leon County Division of Tourism
Visit Tallahassee
850-606-2313, Kerri.Post@VisitTallahassee.com

Downs & St. Germain Research
850-906-3111 | contact@dsg-research.com
www.dsg-research.com

Visit Tallahassee
Pretty. Unexpected.

downs & st. germain RESEARCH

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 12, 2026

TO: Leon County Tourist Development Council

THRU: Kerri L. Post, Executive Director, Leon County Division of Tourism

FROM: Jonathan LaBarre, Tourism Operations Director; Julie Trezek, Tourism Grants and Contracts Manager

SUBJECT: FY27-FY28 Emerging Signature Event Grant Funding Recommendations

---

This item seeks TDC approval for two-(2) Emerging Signature Event Grant funding award recommendations as a two-year grant program for Terry Long FSU Relays and First Robotics/The Tallahassee Regional. Each Emerging Signature funding award is based upon a two-year funding plan, submitted as part of the application process, and implemented with mutually agreed upon goals and deliverables for each year which will be reviewed by staff annually.

The Emerging Signature and Signature Events Grant Program Guidelines were presented at the May 7, 2026 TDC Meeting extending a two-year grant program for Emerging Signature Events along with a budget for year one of this program, set at a maximum of $90,000.

The Emerging Signature Event grant award recommendations were not presented to the TDC at the September 10, 2026 TDC Meeting due to the additional time required for review of the applications by Tourism staff. The two-year program is similar the Legacy Event grants, with annual performance goals and staff recommended funding levels for each year to then be reviewed by the Tourism Director and forwarded to the TDC for approval.

The recommended Emerging Signature Events (ESE) were identified from the Special and Sports Events Grant programs as events that met the criteria for Emerging Signature Events, have a desire and ability to grow their events. The objective of the Emerging Signature Events Grant program is to provide these events with greater continuity and reliable financial support so these established, high-producing events can better focus on their goals of developing programming and activities which will attract and accommodate more visitors.

As established by the TDC, an applicant must meet the following criteria to qualify for an Emerging Signature Event Grant:

- An event that has taken place in the community for a minimum of three years and can reliably demonstrate generating between 1,250 and 1,499 room nights.
- An event that does not occur during peak visitor periods. Peak visitor periods are generally defined as FSU home football game weekends anticipated to fill existing room inventory, FAMU homecoming weekend, FSU/FAMU/TSC spring graduation weekend, and Monday through Thursday during the state legislative session.

Tourism Staff work together with the applicant to determine the proposed funding based on historic performance of these events and specific event enhancements each year to increase overnight visitation. Both of the recommended events met the criteria for exemption of the requirement to spend 20% of funding on paid, out-of-market advertising by being a sporting event or industry conference which targets a very specific audience and not the general public. They are encouraged to promote the events to encourage local spectators to their events.

Historic performance of the recommended events.

Terry Long FSU Relays			
	Grant Awarded	**Room Nights**	**Visitors**
2024	$10,800	1,164	5,234
2025	$12,000	2,940	3,440
2026	$11,160	2,000	1,941
First Robotics / The Tallahassee Regional			
2024	$17,500	1,129	1,261
2025	$16,962	1,370	1,050
2026	$21,478	1,460	1,300

For FY 2027, event organizers have submitted a two-year funding plan, in addition to providing all other required documentation. Based on the criteria, staff recommendations FY 2027 Emerging Signature Grant funding requests are as follows:

2027 – 2028 Emerging Signature Event Grant Projections			
Terry Long FSU Relays			
	Grant Awarded	**Room Nights**	**Visitors**
2027	$20,000	1,500	3,000
2028	$23,000	2,000	3,500
First Robotics / The Tallahassee Regional			
	Grant Awarded	**Room Nights**	**Visitors**
2027	$24,000	1,557	1,680
2028	$28,000	1,816	1,710

<u>Applications Pending Legal Review</u>

In reviewing grant applications this year a new law Effective January 1, 2027, §125.595 F.S., relating to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, which prohibits County funds to be used to fund or promote

activities relating to designed or implemented with reference to race, color, sex, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

One (1) grant application, The Highland Games, was identified to be potentially incompatible with Statute and the grant application has not advanced for a funding recommendation until eligibility for funding has been confirmed. This applicant has been notified of the status of their application and the next steps in the process.

Should the event be found to comply with §125.595, Florida Statutes, the applicant will be notified, and the application will be advanced and evaluated for funding. Should the event be found incompatible with §125.595, Florida Statutes, the applicant may have the opportunity to revise their application to render the event eligible for funding, recognizing it may not be possible for the event to comply with §125.595, F.S., regardless of changes made to the application. Funding remains set aside to accommodate this event should it be deemed eligible for funding.

DRAFT

FY 2026/2027 EMERGING SIGNATURE EVENT GRANT APPLICATION

A. Contact Information

FIRST NAME: Matt LAST NAME: Kane

EMAIL: mkane2@fsu.edu PHONE: 850-524-8552

B. Organization Information

ORGANIZATION NAME: Florida State University

ORGANIZATION CONTACT: Michael Alford

CONTACT TITLE: Athletic Director

PHONE: 850-644-1079

ADDRESS: 1104 Spirit Way

CITY: Tallahassee STATE: FL ZIP: 32306

NON-PROFIT: YES ○ NO ◉ TAX ID:

INSURANCE PROVIDER:

C. Event Information

EVENT NAME: Terry Long FSU Relays

EVENT DIRECTOR: Matt Kane

EVENT LOCATION: FSU / Mike Long Track Facility

EVENT EMAIL: mkane2@fsu.edu EVENT PHONE: 850-524-8552

EVENT START DATE: 3/25/2026 EVENT END DATE: 3/27/2026

EVENT WEBSITE: seminoles.com

D. Amount Approved Per Agreement Up To $TBD

E. Please Attach Event Budget & Marketing Plan

PDF or Microsoft Word Document format

Application signed by Matt Kane via portal on 8/9/2026

Florida State University / Terry Long FSU Relays

Funding Level	Annual Requested Funding		Event Enhancements (If requesting additional funding ie. out of market advertising, event duration, or new program element.)	Anticipated Goals	Comments/Rationale
	Year 1:	**$20,000**	Increased Marketing Advertising Increased Social Media Food Trucks / Concessions	Room Nights **1,500** Out-of-County Visitors **3,000**	Additional Marketing advertising Coaches social Increased Social Media
	Year 2:	**$23,000**	Increased Marketing Advertising Increased Social Media Food Trucks / Concessions	Room Nights **2,000** Out-of-County Visitors **3,500**	Increased Social Media Increased Advertising

FY 2026/2027 EMERGING SIGNATURE EVENT GRANT APPLICATION

A. Contact Information

FIRST NAME: Wendy **LAST NAME:** Austin

EMAIL: waustin@firstinspires.org **PHONE:** 813-716-0324

B. Organization Information

ORGANIZATION NAME: FOR INSPIRATION AND RECOGNITION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY INCORPORATED

ORGANIZATION CONTACT: Danielle Pliska

CONTACT TITLE: CFO

PHONE: 630-666-3906

ADDRESS: 200 BEDFORD STREET

CITY: MANCHESTER **STATE:** NH **ZIP:** 03101

NON-PROFIT: YES ◯ NO ◯ **TAX ID:** 22-2990908

INSURANCE PROVIDER: United Educators

C. Event Information

EVENT NAME: The Tallahassee Regional

EVENT DIRECTOR: Wendy Austin

EVENT LOCATION: Alfred Lawson Jr. Multicultural Center

EVENT EMAIL: waustin@firstinspires.org **EVENT PHONE:** 407-247-6776

EVENT START DATE: 4/16/2027 **EVENT END DATE:** 4/18/2027

EVENT WEBSITE: firstinspires.org

D. Amount Approved Per Agreement Up To $TBD

E. Please Attach Event Budget & Marketing Plan

PDF or Microsoft Word Document format

Application signed by Wendy Austin via portal on 8/12/2026

First Robotics / The Tallahassee Regional

Funding Level	Annual Requested Funding		Event Enhancements (If requesting additional funding ie. out of market advertising, event duration, or new program element.)	Anticipated Goals	Comments/Rationale
	Year 1:	**$22,000**	As a first-year Emerging Signature Event, our primary focus will be expanding awareness beyond the FIRST community and positioning the Tallahassee Regional as a premier STEM event for the entire region. In addition to promoting the event directly to participating teams, we will implement a broader public marketing campaign that includes billboard advertising, radio promotions, digital and social media outreach, and listings on community event calendars throughout North Florida. We also plan to enhance the overall attendee experience by offering unique educational and networking opportunities that showcase the innovation ecosystem in Tallahassee. Proposed enhancements include a keynote presentation by Dr. Christian Hubicki. Many of our participants are unable to attend Dr. Hubicki's workshops on the practice day because they are either working on the robot or on the drive team. This experience will provide students, mentors, sponsors, and spectators with greater opportunity to attend a longer session with Dr. Hubicki. Last year the Tallahassee Regional had an Economic Impact of $653,400 an increase of 14.6%. One of our thoughts is to include a coupon book of discounts from places like The Tallahassee Museum, Challenger Learning Center and local shops and restaurants. Our goal is to meet or exceed the Economic Impact of our event last year.	Room Nights **1,557** Out-of-County Visitors **1,680**	According to our check in survey and backed up by Downs and St Germain research we created 1460 hotel room nights with 45 teams attending. That was an increase of 6.6%. This year we will max out at 48 teams so if you extrapolate it out, (1460/45 = 32.4 rooms per team. With a max of 48 teams this year (48x32.4 = 1557.33 round down to 1557 room nights) we will create more hotel room nights. With our event being in the middle of the legislative session it would be difficult to bring people in a day early as it would conflict. We are also committing to advertising outside of just our attendees. We plan to purchase billboard space and a few radio ads along with a package from Visit Tallahassee and listings on media community calendars.
	Year 2:	**$26,000**	Currently, most teams arrive in Tallahassee late in the afternoon on our load-in day, primarily to set up their pit areas. Since the 2028 Tallahassee Regional is not held during the legislative session, we will have an opportunity to expand the load-in day into a full day of educational and STEM-focused activities. Our goal is to make arriving a day early a compelling part of the Regional experience rather than simply an additional travel day. We plan to offer participating teams, mentors, students, and guests a variety of behind-the-scenes educational experiences, including tours of the FAMU and FSU campuses, special tours of the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering, and tours of the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory (Mag Lab). We are also exploring the possibility of offering a tour of the Danfoss manufacturing facility to provide students with direct exposure to advanced manufacturing and engineering careers. If this year's presentation by Dr. Christian Hubicki is well received, we will look for opportunities to bring him back for another engaging presentation or similar STEM-focused speaker. We will also continue to identify additional local research, higher education, and industry partners who can provide meaningful experiences for students. These enhancements will accomplish more than simply adding activities to the event schedule. They will expose students and mentors to cutting-edge research, engineering and manufacturing, higher education opportunities, and potential STEM career pathways. By creating a full day of experiences before competition begins, we intend to increase early arrivals, strengthen connections between participating teams and the Tallahassee community, and establish the Tallahassee Regional as a true destination event.	Room Nights **1,816** Out-of-County Visitors **1,710**	If only half of the 48 teams come a day early that is an additional 259.5 rooms.

Leon County Division of Tourism

EMERGING SIGNATURE and SIGNATURE EVENTS

FY27 GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES



APPROVED May 7, 2026

Table of Contents

I. INTRODUCTION 3
II. DEFINITIONS 5
III. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS 6
IV. GRANT EVENT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS 7
V. GRANT POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS 7
VI. GUIDELINES FOR GRANT REQUEST FUNDING LEVELS 15
VII. EMERGING SIGNATURE AND SIGNATURE EVENT ANNUAL GRANT TIMELINE 16
VIII. VISITOR/TOURIST TRACKING 16
IX. POST-EVENT REPORT 17
X. CONCLUSION 18

Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee
Emerging Signature and Signature Event Grant Programs

I. INTRODUCTION

The Leon County Tourist Development Council (TDC) was created in 1986 by the Leon County Board of County Commissioners through a Resolution pursuant to the State of Florida Local Option Tourist Development Act and is codified in Chapter 11, Art. XX, Sec. 11-734 of the Leon County Code. The TDC administers funds collected from a local option tourist development tax (TDT) on transient lodging sales. i.e. hotels/motels, and condominiums. The funds are designated to promote Tallahassee/Leon County as a preferred tourist destination for meetings and conventions, group leisure travel, special events, cultural activities and amateur sporting events.

The intent of the Emerging Signature and Signature Event Grant Program is to provide funding assistance for events that attract overnight tourists to Tallahassee/Leon County and create business for the commercial lodging industry that collect TDT, (hotels/motels, condominiums, short- term vacation rentals), as well as restaurants, retail establishments and other tourism related business activities.

Grant funding is based upon the potential to generate room nights. Per section 125.0104 of the Florida Statutes, to be an authorized use of Tourist Development Tax revenue an event "shall have as one of its main purposes the attraction of tourists as evidenced by the promotion of the activity, service, venue or event to tourists." By Statute, a tourist is a "person who participates in trade or recreation activities outside of the county of his or her permanent residence or who rents or leases transient accommodations" including "any living quarters or accommodations in any hotel, apartment hotel, motel, resort motel, apartment, apartment motel, roominghouse, mobile home park, recreational vehicle park, condominium, or timeshare resort for a term of 6 months or less." By Statute, "Promotion" is defined as "marketing or advertising designed to increase tourist-related business activities".

In 2026 the Florida Legislature passed Florida Statute Section 125.595 prohibiting the use of County funds for the purpose of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion ("DEI") effective on January 1, 2027. As such, all Leon County Tourism Event Grant applications must conform with sections 125.595 and 287.139, Florida Statutes, and applicants must certify that grant awards will not be used to fund or promote DEI programming, treatment, benefits, training and/or activities, as well as certify that applicant does not and will not use county funds in requiring its employees, contractors, volunteers, vendors, or agents to ascribe to, fund, or promote DEI as defined in Section 125.595(1), F.S.. Provisions within Section 125.595 F.S. stipulate certain actions and activities which are expressly permitted under the law including:

- Recognizing or promoting federal holidays and state holidays and special observances;
- Recognizing patriotic observances identified in federal regulations, or events and individuals forming the basis for such observances; and
- Recognizing or honoring individuals and groups honored by state monuments, memorials and museums under state law, or operation federal monuments located in Florida.

Grantees must ensure that all County funds received are expended in compliance with Sections 125.595 and 287.139, Florida Statutes, and all other applicable provisions of Florida law.

The Leon County Division of Tourism annually administers and budgets funds for grant programs for groups and organizations that coordinate local events with a demonstrated history of or significant potential to draw tourists to the area.

The Emerging Signature and Signature Event Grants are for events that have taken place in the community for a minimum of three years that have a broad appeal and have demonstrated an increase in visitation over that period.

Collectively, the Emerging Signature and Signature Event Grants have an award ceiling of $59,999 in annual support for each event. Proposed increases in annual funding requests must document and demonstrate increased event duration and/or significant new or additional program elements that would reasonably be expected to attract an additional audience to the event.

Emerging Signature and Signature Event Grants will only be issued and administered through two-year funding agreements. Each Emerging Signature or Signature Event funding agreement will be based upon a two-year funding plan, submitted as part of the application process, and implemented with mutually agreed upon goals and deliverables for each year, and it will be reviewed annually. The funding agreement will have financial consequences for not obtaining event goals and deliverables and will allow for variances as a result of acts of God (i.e. weather). Once all documentation has been reviewed by staff and approved by the Tourist Development Council, a two-year funding agreement will be executed.

The Leon County Division of Tourism grants programs are funded by the Tourist Development Tax (TDT) to support hosting events that have tourist appeal. Some grant programs administered by the Council on Culture & Arts (COCA) are also funded by TDT revenue and are designed to support year-round arts and culture programming.

Applicants found to have submitted applications to both the Tourism and COCA Grant Programs for the same event, must withdraw the application from either the Tourism or COCA Grant program to continue to be considered for the current cycle of grant funding. Applicants receiving grant funds from the Council on Culture & Arts (COCA) may not receive grant funding for the same event through the TDC. Further, no applicant may apply to TDC and COCA for funding related to the same event or activity. Applicants may make requests for grant funds to the TDC and COCA, but these must be for a different event or activity.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. **Board-affiliated vendor**: A board-affiliated vendor is defined as a vendor partially or fully owned by, employing, or partially or fully controlled by a member of the applicant's governing board or board of trustees, including such member's spouse or child.

B. **Vendor**: A vendor is defined as any entity, corporation, partnership, limited partnership, company, limited liability company, proprietorship, firm, enterprise, franchise, association, self-employed individual, or trust, that provides to a grantee for compensation any of the following: food, goods, commodities, or services (artistic, professional, contractual, or otherwise).

C. **Out-of-market**: Outside of a 30-mile radius from Leon County. This term is used to help describe the parameters of some of the marketing and promotion required by grantees pursuant to these guidelines.

D. **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI):** Is as defined in s. 125.595, F.S., and means any effort to: Promote or provide preferential treatment or special benefits to a person or group based on that person's or group's race, color, sex, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation; or Promote or adopt any training, programming, or activities designed or implemented with reference to race, color, sex, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation. The term does not include the use of equal opportunity or equal employment opportunity materials designed to inform a person about the prohibition against discrimination based on protected status under state or federal law. Additionally, provisions within Section 125.595 F.S. stipulate certain actions and activities which are expressly permitted under the law including:

- Recognizing or promoting federal holidays and state holidays and special observances;
- Recognizing patriotic observances identified in federal regulations, or events and individuals forming the basis for such observances; and
- Recognizing or honoring individuals and groups honored by state monuments, memorials and museums under state law, or operation federal monuments located in Florida.

E. **Emerging Signature Event**: An event that meets the criteria for a Signature Event and is historically and currently on the cusp of generating between 1,250 and 1,499 hotel room nights, but is not yet able to generate the same economic impact as a Signature Event. The event must have been taking place in the community for a minimum of three years with a demonstrated increase in visitation over that period.

F. **Signature Event**: An annual event that takes place over one or more days and can demonstrate the ability to generate a minimum of 1,500 hotel room nights within Leon County. The event is a well-established, larger event that has broad visitor appeal encouraging overnight stays from outside the local market.

III. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The documents listed below are required as part of the Emerging Signature and Signature Event Grant application process:

1. Emerging Signature/Signature grant application form (link to online portal will be sent potential grantees)
2. A two-year funding plan (Attachment A)
3. Affidavit in Compliance with Anti-Human Trafficking Laws (Attachment B)
4. Marketing Plan
5. Event Budget

The following documents are due annually by October 1 of the upcoming fiscal for all Emerging Signature and Signature Grantees. These documents are to reflect the information for the event scheduled for the upcoming fiscal year:

1. Emerging Signature / Signature Grant Application Form
2. Marketing Plan
3. Event Budget

The following documentation is required annually within 60 days of the event date but no later than September 30 of the fiscal year:

1. Post-Event Report that includes all information outlined in Section IX. Post Event Report in these guidelines.

IV. GRANT EVENT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A. The event must be compliant with 125.0104, F.S., as stated on page 3 in Section I. Introduction.

B. The event must be compliant with 125.595, F.S., as stated on page 5 in Section II.D. Definitions – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).

C. Event must take place between October 1 and September 30 of the upcoming fiscal year.

D. The event must have the potential to bring out-of-town tourists that use commercial lodging establishments which are located within Leon County.

E. The event is neither a private nor political event.

V. GRANT POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

A. Grant applications will only be received during the advertised cycle. No applicant may be considered for or receive more than one Emerging Signature or Signature Event Grant per fiscal year, with the exception of a once-a-year event that may coincidently occur within the same fiscal year due to scheduling. An example would be an early October event that is scheduled for late September the following fall, both occurring the same fiscal year. If Tourism staff deems the application does not meet the minimum criteria for Emerging Signature or Signature Event Grant consideration, the application will be transferred to either the Special Event or Sports Event Grant Program for consideration.

B. Organizers must be identified as a qualified applicant by County staff prior to the opening of the grant application window.

C. Events will not be considered for funding if the event occurs during the following peak visitor periods defined for County Fiscal Year 2026-2027:

October 2-3, 2026	FSU Football Game vs. Virginia
October 23-24, 2026	FAMU Football Game (FAMU Homecoming)
October 30-31, 2026	FSU Football Game vs. Clemson
November 20-21, 2026	FSU Football Game vs. NC State (Homecoming)

November 27-28, 2026	FSU Football Game vs. Florida
March 2- May 6, 2027	Florida Legislative Session (Monday – Thursday)
April 29 – May 1, 2027	FSU/FAMU/TSC Graduation
September, 2027	FSU Football Weekends, dates TBD in Feb 2027

D. Emerging Signature and Signature Events must meet community standards and align with the County's Tourism marketing objectives and positioning.

E. Applicant must provide a two-year funding plan for the event, including requested amount for each year, detail new event elements (if any), and event goals for room nights, out-of-county tourists, and total attendance. Proposed increases in annual funding requests must document and demonstrate increased event duration and/or significant new or additional program elements that would reasonably be expected to attract an additional audience to the event.

F. Each year's performance will be evaluated against the established criteria and historic precedent.

G. Applicant budget must reflect at least a 25% dollar-for-dollar match (in-kind services will not be allowed). Applicants should identify the amount of matching funds in the event budget submitted and the amount must be verified and sourced in the Post-Event Report. The grant award may be reduced for the next cycle proportionately to the shortfall of funds raised if the 25% matching funds were not received. Failure to meet the 25% match requirement will be considered a breach of the requirements of the grant award.

H. Grant funds are intended to supplement, not fully fund, the organization's budget for the event referenced in the application.

I. Application must provide a statement of need for grant funding.

J. Grantees are required to spend a minimum of 20% of awarded grant funding on paid out-of-market marketing/advertising for all events (i.e. festivals, concerts, celebrations) with the exception of certain sporting tournaments or events marketed to organizational members as determined by County staff. The remaining 80% of awarded grant funding is available to use on allowable operational expenses as long as such use is consistent with these guidelines and s. 125.0104, Florida Statute. Failure to spend 20% of the awarded grant funding on paid out-of-market marketing/advertising will be considered a breach of the requirements of the grant award.

   a. If an applicant believes their event qualifies for the exemption from the 20% out-of-market advertising, they are to notify the Tourism Grants Manager with an

explanation for why their tournament or event should be exempt prior to the submission of their grant application.

b. The Tourism staff will review the exemption request and determine if the exemption is granted based on the criteria listed above in Subsection V.J of these Guidelines.

c. The applicant will be provided a response to their exemption request within 10 business days of their request.

K. Grant Funding shall not be utilized to support administrative costs. Grantee shall be responsible for all expenses associated with the performance and delivery of Services by this Agreement.

L. **Board-Affiliated Vendor Restrictions:** Grant funds derived from Tourist Development Tax revenues shall not be used to compensate any board-affiliated vendor except when:

a. The goods or services were obtained through a competitive solicitation, and the board member disclosed the conflict consistent with the Grantee's Board By Laws, and abstained from related decisions; or

b. The vendor is documented as a sole source for which the purchase of a commodity, service, equipment, or construction item(s) from only one available practical source of supply because of an inability to obtain competition, proprietary technology, copyright, or a supplier's unique capability.

c. All exceptions require written documentation submitted to the County with Post Event Grant reporting. Details of sole source exemption should include; goods or service required; Board Member affiliated with vendor and explanation of the specialized nature of the goods or service. Details of competitive solicitation award should include; Bid process followed; number of bids received; bid scoring and reason for selecting affiliated vendor. This section applies to all TDT-funded grant programs administered by or on behalf of Leon County.

M. Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee staff will direct the County's marketing research firm of record to conduct an economic impact study at least every other year of events receiving $10,000 or more in grant funding. Event organizers must allow for face-to-face interviews with spectators and participants in order for the marketing research firm to conduct their study and to be eligible for payment of grant funding.

N. Application must provide a statement of sustainability and growth for the event (i.e. How do you define success for the event and what is your long-term plan to sustain and grow the event over the next five years?).

O. Estimates for lodging, attendee and tourist counts must be based on the anticipation of the number of tourists drawn to the event specified in the grant application.

P. Grantees are not eligible to request funding above the projected room nights as outlined in the table on page 15. The Grant Review Committee has the authority to adjust anticipated room nights and funding levels based on the previous record of an applicant and/or event.

Q. The combined Leon County/Visit Tallahassee Logo must be included on all printed and online advertisements and promotional materials for the event.

   a. Promotional materials include: banners, signs, t-shirts, programs, brochures, event website, social media posts, etc. Online material developed for the event must include a link to the VisitTallahassee.com website. Before these materials are produced, a draft or design proof **MUST BE SUBMITTED AND APPROVED** by the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee to assure that the combined Leon County/Visit Tallahassee Logo appears properly.

   b. Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee is dedicated to supporting worthwhile local events through our grant programs and other promotional opportunities but reserves the right to reduce or eliminate grant funding for organizations that do not receive prior approval for the correct logo use. The correct logos are shown below and can be located and accessed at https://visittallahassee.com/visit-tallahassee-logos/ :













R. Private and/or political events are not eligible for grant funding. An event with ticketed or paid admission that is otherwise open and advertised to the general public

is not a Private Event. Allowable Funding uses (described in further detail on page 12) include marketing and promotional efforts, venue/site rentals and costs associated with visiting artists and/or exhibits.

S. Each application will be evaluated against established criteria, past performance and historic precedent. The applicant's performance on past events will also be included as part of the review to award grant funding.

T. It is the intent of the TDC to discourage the support of two competing Emerging Signature or Signature Events. This includes events that take place during the same week/weekend or similarly-themed concerts or festivals.

U. If an event needs to be rescheduled, the new dates must be between October 1 and September 30 of the current fiscal year and follow the grant guidelines to be eligible for reimbursement. The new date must be provided to Visit Tallahassee to verify continued eligibility for the grant award.

V. If an event must be cancelled for any reason other than Force Majeure, as further described herein, event organizers are required to make that determination at least 60 days prior to the event's originally scheduled date. Leon County Tourism will only reimburse for allowable expenses incurred before 60 days prior to the original event date. Any expenses incurred after that date will not be reimbursed.

W. Funding shall be provided as reimbursement for the approved actual expenditures upon completion of the event. Proof of expenditures must be scans, copies, or pictures of the original receipts and invoices provided by a service provider/vendor. Proof of payment must be provided and may be submitted in the form of a vendor receipt and front and back copy of cleared check, credit card receipt, bank or credit card statement, ACH transfer or digital wallet receipts. Cash receipts are allowed for reimbursement; however, a check or credit card is preferred. If only a copy of the front of the cleared check is provided for an expenditure, a written confirmation from that vendor that the expenditure has been paid in full is also required.

X. To be eligible for payment, a completed Post-Event Report must be submitted. The Report should be submitted within 60 days after the event has taken place but in no case shall it be submitted any later than September 30 unless the event has occurred on or after September 20th; in which case the report must be submitted by October 10th. The Report must include tracking statistics regarding out-of-town tourists and their use of transient lodging facilities and occupancy. Failure to submit a complete Post-Event Report in a timely manner may result in disqualification for support. All Post-Event Reports, including requests for reimbursement, must be received no later than September 30 and must include all receipts of expenditures and proof(s) of

payment. Post event report submissions found to be intentionally misrepresented will disqualify grantees from grant reimbursement and future applications.

Y. Allowable expenses include:

- Promotion, marketing and paid advertising/media buys that reach outside Tallahassee/Leon County with potential to drive overnight visitation.
- Event production and technical expenses.
- Site fees/costs (venue rentals, insurance).
- Contract help such as performers, judges, and parking attendants.
- Rights fees, sanction fees, non-monetary awards, and travel expenses for guest speakers, performers, judges, event officials, or referees including lodging.

Note: The applicants are required to describe how the grant funds will be used. Any substantial changes to the items submitted in the application MUST be submitted in writing and approved by the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee office PRIOR to the purchase and the event. Purchases made without PRIOR written approval from staff may not be allowed.

Z. Unallowable expenses include:

- General and administrative expenses.
- Building, renovating and/or remodeling expenses.
- Permanent equipment purchases.
- Debts incurred prior to the fiscal year of the grant period/in which the approved event takes place.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programming, promotion, and material.
- Food or beverage.
- Paid advertising that primarily reaches and targets Tallahassee/Leon County and its residents.
- Lodging or travel expenses for attendees.
- In-kind services.

- Monetary awards.
- Raffle prizes.
- Expenses paid to board-affiliated vendors that do not follow the conditions as stated herein, Section V. Grant Policies And Requirements, Paragraph L on page 9.
- Political events and activities.

AA. Government entities, including public schools, colleges, and universities, must provide the name, title, email, and phone number of the person who is authorized to sign the grant agreement on behalf of the organization in the application. Additionally, documentation from the organization showing the person has designated signing authority is required. This documentation could come in various forms, including through adopted policies or a specific written delegation.

BB. Non-government organizations must be registered with the Florida Department of State, Division of Corporations, through their Sunbiz.org platform, or be able to provide proof of an exemption under law from such registration prior to submitting their application. Additionally, each applicant shall use their organization's legal name, exactly as registered in Sunbiz.org, in their application.

i. The name, title, email, and phone number of one of the organization's officers, listed in the Officer/Director Detail section of the organization's current annual report, is responsible for signing the grant agreement for an awarded grant.

CC. Non-Governmental entities must agree that they do not use coercion for labor or services as defined in 787.06 (14), Florida Statutes 2025, and under penalty of perjury, will attest to such statement through the execution and submittal of a notarized affidavit prior to signing the grant agreement. Failure to provide the notarized affidavit will result in a forfeit of the grant award.

DD. Any funds granted will be subject to audit by Leon County, Florida or their designee.

EE. Indemnity**:** By submitting a Grant Application each applicant agrees that upon final approval of a Grant the applicant/grantee shall indemnify Leon County, Florida, a charter county and political subdivision of the State of Florida (the "County") to the extent provided in their grant agreement which will contain language substantially similar to the following:

a. The applicant agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the County, its officials, officers, employees and agents, from and against any and all claims, damages, liabilities, losses, costs, or suits, of any nature whatsoever arising out of, because of, or due to any acts or omissions of the Grantee, its delegates,

employees, subcontractors, volunteers and agents, arising out of or under this Agreement, including a reasonable attorney's fees. Should the County, as a result of the performance or lack thereof by or on behalf of the Grantee, be required to reimburse any sums to any organization, or reimburse funds to any Federal, State or local governmental entity, contribute funds to the performance of this event for which the Grant was approved, or expend County funds to complete or correct such performance, the Grantee, upon demand by the County, shall refund and reimburse the County for all sums so reimbursed or expended by the County. The County may, at its sole option, defend itself or require the Grantee to provide the defense. The Grantee acknowledges that ten dollars ($10.00) of the amount paid to the Grantee is sufficient consideration of the Grantee's indemnification of the County.

b. If the applicant is a governmental entity or other such organization to which the protection of sovereign immunity is applicable, the indemnification requirements set forth in subparagraph (1) above shall apply to such applicant only to the extent as allowed in Section 768.28. Florida Statutes and nothing herein shall be deemed to be a waiver of such applicant's sovereign immunity beyond those statutory limits provided therein.

c. Grantee shall maintain Insurance with limits no less than the following: **General Liability:** $1,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence for bodily injury, personal injury, and property damage with a $2,000,000 annual aggregate.

FF. Force Majeure**:** By submitting a Grant Application each applicant agrees that upon final approval of a Grant that a Party shall be excused from performance of an obligation under the Grant Agreement to the extent, and only to the extent, that such performance is affected by a "Force Majeure Event" which term shall mean any cause beyond the reasonable control of the Party affected, except where such Party could have reasonably foreseen and reasonably avoided the occurrence, which materially and adversely affects the performance by such Party of its obligation under the Grant Agreement. Such events shall include, but not be limited to, an act of God, disturbance, hostility, war, or revolution; strike or lockout; epidemic; pandemic; fire; hurricane; flood; or other unusually severe weather or natural disaster; or any requirements of law.

GG. If the event for which the Grant was approved is to take place on property owned by the County and/or is sponsored by the County, the applicant shall, in addition to these indemnification requirements, be required to provide to the County a certificate of insurance showing that the applicant has procured insurance against claims for injuries to persons or damages to property which may arise from, or in connection with, the performance by the application, its employees, volunteers, subcontractors, employees of subcontractors, or clientele, of this event for which

the Grant was approved, in the minimum coverage and amounts as follows, and that the County has been named as an additional insured:

i. Commercial General Liability: $1,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence for bodily injury, personal injury, and property damage with a $2,000,000 annual aggregate; and

ii. If applicable, workers' compensation insurance covering all employees meeting statutory limits in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws.

To qualify for reimbursement, proof of liability/medical insurance must be provided by the host organization in the amount of $1 million. The host organization must have proof of liability insurance in effect and the County listed as additional insured.

VI. GUIDELINES FOR GRANT REQUEST FUNDING LEVELS

The following table reflects guidelines for the funding level possible based on the event's estimated number of hotel room nights. **The estimated number of hotel rooms does not guarantee the level of funding at which an event may be approved. The final funding recommendation will be based on Tourism staff's discretion and the funding available.**

Room Nights	Recommended Tourism Emerging Signature Event Funding Levels
1,250 – 1,499	$20,000 - $34,999

Room Nights	Recommended Tourism Signature Event Funding Levels
1,500 – 1,999	$35,000 - $39,999
2,000 – 2,999	$40,000 - $45,999
3,000 – 3,999	$46,000 - $52,999
4,000 – 5,000	$53,000 - $59,999

Organizations are eligible for funding above $60,000, however once recommended by the TDC it would require approval by the Leon County Board of County Commissioners.

VII. EMERGING SIGNATURE AND SIGNATURE EVENT ANNUAL GRANT TIMELINE

July 8, 2026	Grant Application Cycle Opens
July/August, 2026	Mandatory Grant Application Workshops
August 6, 2026	Grant Application Cycle Closes
September 10, 2026	TDC consideration of Grant Funding Recommendations
September 11, 2026	Grantees notified of Grant Awards

Applicants are required to attend the Grant Application Orientation Workshop either in person or online or they will not be eligible for a grant award.

VIII. VISITOR/TOURIST TRACKING

A. To assess the impact of each event on the Tallahassee/Leon County transient lodging industry, the TDC emphasizes the importance of tracking the number of overnight tourists attending the event.

   a. Room block reports from hotels are the preferred method of reporting room data. The information will be used to help track the number of tourists attending the event. Furthermore, this information helps determine the growth of a particular event. Subsequently, an event's growth can impact the future funding level of the grant awarded to the organization.

   b. If your event uses an advanced registration procedure, utilize the **Visitor/Tourist Tracking Form** located on the Visit Tallahassee Grants website to gather the requested information. Each participant/group should sign his or her name, list the hotel in which they are residing, the number of rooms secured, number of days, and the number of guests staying in each room.

   c. Include questions in the event registration form asking if participant will stay overnight in a Leon County lodging, along with number of rooms and nights booked.

   d. Conduct a brief survey at check-in, or on-site to confirm if participant is staying in Leon County lodging, including the number of rooms and nights booked.

B. The County reserves the right to conduct a post-audit of information presented on the **Post-Event Report**. All lodging accommodations listed will be contacted to confirm the number of room nights generated for the event. **ANY MISLEADING OR FALSE INFORMATION PRESENTED CAN AND WILL ADVERSLEY AFFECT FUTURE GRANT AWARDS.**

IX. POST-EVENT REPORT

Funding shall only be provided as reimbursement for approved expenditures upon completion of the event. Reimbursement will not be issued until all necessary post-event information is provided. Such Information is the responsibility of the grantee to provide and includes:

A. An invoice from the awarded organization to the Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee for payment of the awarded grant amount. This invoice must be dated and include an invoice number.

B. Valid invoices for allowable expenses.

    a. Events marketed for general public attendance must include invoices for paid out-of-market advertising (equaling at least 20% of the grant funding unless specifically exempt).

    b. If an expense is from a board-affiliated vendor, it must be noted and explained in the post event report and noted on the invoice. Proof that a competitive procurement process was used following the conditions stated in Section V. Grant Policies and Requirements, Paragraph L on page 9, must be included with the invoice.

        i. If the board-affiliated vendor is a "sole source" vendor, (Paragraph L on page 9) proof that the expense is from a practical source of supply because of an inability to obtain competition, proprietary technology, copyright, or a supplier's unique capability must be included with the invoice.

C. Copy of proof of payments such as cleared checks, or detailed credit card receipts. For all out-of-market media buys equaling 20% of the grant funding, provide tear sheets, copies of advertisements, schedules, and signed station affidavits. Proof of payment must match invoices submitted.

D. The names of contracted hotels used for participants and spectators.

E. Room pick-ups (number of rooms secured, number of days, and the number of guests staying in each room) from each contracted hotel.

F. A written report on how the event measured its success or failure; what were the event goals and what was accomplished.

G. Leon County reserves the right to conduct a post-audit of information presented on the accommodations listed. All properties listed will be contacted to confirm

the number of room nights generated for the event. **Any misleading or false information presented can and will adversely affect future grant awards.**

H. A post event budget showing revenues and expenses**.**

I. Copies of marketing or advertising materials, and social media showing Leon County Tourism/Visit Tallahassee logo usage.

J. Upon receipt and approval of the post event report, Leon County Division of Tourism / Visit Tallahassee will process the reimbursement request for the verified expenses.

X. CONCLUSION

The event director, fiscal administrator or other contact person may be called upon by any one of these groups or their staff at any time during the review process.

For questions or additional information, please contact:

Grant Agreements: Julie Trezek | 850-815-0989 | Julie.Trezek@VisitTallahassee.com
Visitor Services: Vivian Chen | 850-606-2331 | Vivian.Chen@VisitTallahasee.com
Marketing: Genesis Leggett | 850-606-2324 | Genesis.Leggett@VisitTallahassee.com
Hotels/Event Spaces: Janet Roach | 850-606-2320 | Janet.Roach@VisitTallahassee.com

PROPOSED TDC 2027 MEETING DATES

After reviewing the 2027 meeting schedules of the Leon County Board of County Commissioners, Tallahassee City Commissioners, Blueprint, CRA, and COCA, we present this meeting schedule for your consideration. We took into consideration the holiday dates for Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day.

Thursday, February 4, 2027 – 9:00 AM

Thursday, May 6, 2027 – 9:00 AM

Thursday, July 8, 2027 – 9:00 AM

Thursday, September 2, 2027 – 9:00 AM

Thursday, November 4, 2027 – 9:00 AM

All meetings will be held in Room 1858 at the historic train station building at 918 Railroad Avenue.

Visit Tallahassee
Pretty. Unexpected.

INCENTIVE PROGRAM FOR MARQUEE EVENTS AT COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY VENUES FOR TOURISM

IMPACT PROGRAM GUIDELINES FY2027



Table of Contents

I. INTRODUCTION & ADMINISTRATIVE INTERPRETATION ..... Page 3

II. DEFINITIONS ..... Page 4

III. REQUIRED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS ..... Page 6

IV. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY & BASELINE REQUIREMENTS ..... Page 7

V. PROGRAM POLICIES & PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS ..... Page 7

VI. PROGRAM TIERS AND REIMBURSEMENT MATRIX ..... Page 10

VII. TOURISM & ECONOMIC IMPACT SCORECARD ..... Page 10

VIII. POST-EVENT VERIFICATION & AUDIT ..... Page 12

IX. CONCLUSION ..... Page 13

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I. INTRODUCTION & ADMINISTRATIVE INTERPRETATION

The Leon County Tourist Development Council (TDC) administers funds collected from the local option tourist development tax (TDT) on transient lodging sales pursuant to Section 125.0104, Florida Statutes. Authorized under the "Targeted Tourism Industry-Sector Incentive Programs" within the Leon County Tourist Development Plan (Section 11-710, Leon County Code of Laws), this performance-based Pilot Program provides funding assistance for qualified film, television, and media productions that generate verifiable commercial lodging stays and direct economic activity within Leon County.

Per Section 125.0104(5)(a)3., Florida Statutes, to be an authorized use of Tourist Development Tax revenue, an activity "shall have as one of its main purposes the attraction of tourists as evidenced by the promotion of the activity, service, venue or event to tourists". Marquee collegiate events function as premier visitor attractions that draw substantial out-of-market attendance, generate trackable overnight lodging occupancy, and provide high-visibility regional and national promotional exposure showcasing Tallahassee-Leon County as an elite event destination.

Pursuant to Section 125.595, Florida Statutes, all Leon County Tourism Incentive applications must conform with anti-DEI state mandates. Applicants must certify that program awards will not be used to fund or promote prohibited programming as defined by law.

The tier parameters, daily and cumulative attendance thresholds, lodging benchmarks, and individual award caps outlined in these guidelines represent administrative frameworks established by staff and recommended by the TDC. Sourcing, eligibility, and precise final award determinations for all applicants are evaluated and governed strictly under the formalized application, scoring, and post-event verification procedures defined herein.

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II. DEFINITIONS

- **Qualifying In-County Event Spend:** Expenditures made directly within Leon County to registered local vendors, collegiate venue operators, equipment rental houses, staging and audio/visual suppliers, catering companies, and private security/traffic control providers to stage the event.
- **Local Operational Staffing:** Direct compensation paid to verified, documented residents of Leon County contracted for event production, technical operations, logistics, crowd management, and staging support.
- **Out-of-Market:** Outside of a 50-mile radius from Leon County. This term describes the geographical boundary used to verify non-local attendees, ticket purchasers, and targeted promotional advertising.
- **Marquee Event:** A high-profile, time-sensitive, one-time or premier entertainment, sporting, or cultural activation (e.g., major touring artists, headlining music festivals, championship or exhibition sports) capable of attracting substantial out-of-market attendance, distinct from regularly scheduled collegiate athletics or routine campus programming.
- **Collegiate Partner Venues:** High-capacity facilities owned and operated by Florida State University (FSU), Florida A&M University (FAMU), or Tallahassee State College (TSC).
- **Single-Day Attendance:** The total verified number of ticketed attendees, credentialed participants, or turnstile scans entering the event facility during a single operational day.
- **Cumulative Multi-Day Attendance:** The aggregate sum of daily turnstile attendance across all scheduled operational days of a multi-day event (e.g., an event drawing 10,000 turnstile scans per day over three consecutive days represents 30,000 cumulative attendees).
- **Unique Attendee:** An individual spectator or participant counted once over the duration of the event, regardless of whether they purchase a multi-day pass or enter the venue on multiple days.
- **Specific Marquee Property:** A distinct, proprietary, or branded touring production, exhibition show, or IP-driven entertainment showcase (e.g., the Savannah Bananas).

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- **Distinct/Independent Event Activation:** A separate, standalone marquee production, concert tour, or sporting competition featuring its own distinct headlining talent, promoter, sanctioning body, or program content, irrespective of whether it shares a similar genre or utilizes the same collegiate venue as another funded event.

- **Board-affiliated Vendor:** A vendor partially or fully owned by, employing, or partially or fully controlled by a member of the applicant's governing board, including such member's spouse or child.

- **Tourist:** A person who participates in recreation activities outside of the county of his or her permanent residence or who rents or leases transient accommodations for a term of 6 months or less.

- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI):** As defined in Section 125.595, Florida Statutes, any effort to: promote or provide preferential treatment or special benefits to a person or group based on that person's or group's race, color, sex, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation; or promote or adopt any training, programming, or activities designed or implemented with reference to race, color, sex, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation. The term does not include the use of equal opportunity or equal employment opportunity materials designed to inform a person about the prohibition against discrimination based on protected status under state or federal law. Additionally, provisions within Section 125.595, Florida Statutes, stipulate actions and activities expressly permitted under the law, including:

    1. Recognizing or promoting federal holidays, state holidays, and special observances.

    2. Recognizing patriotic observances identified in federal regulations, or events and individuals forming the basis for such observances.

    3. Recognizing or honoring individuals and groups honored by state monuments, memorials, and museums under state law, or operating federal monuments located in Florida.

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III. REQUIRED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

To initiate the formal evaluation and scoring track, the event applicant or collegiate host partner must submit:

1. **Official IMPACT Program Application Form:** Submitted via online portal prior to the execution of the event and public marketing launch.
2. **Event Operations Plan, Facility Lease Intent, & Venue Blueprint:** Formal documentation detailing venue footprint layouts, staging structures, site dates, security plans, and executed collegiate facility use agreements or letters of intent.
3. **Pre-Event Economic Projections & Attendance/Lodging Plan:** An itemized operational budget of qualifying in-county expenses accompanied by a verified attendance and lodging forecast schedule, which must detail:
    - **Daily Estimated Attendance:** Projected ticketed attendance, credentialed participants, and turnstile counts for each distinct operational day of the event.
    - **Cumulative Multi-Day Attendance:** Total aggregated attendance projected across the entire run of the event.
    - **Attendee Composition Breakdown:** Estimated proportion of unique attendees versus multi-day passholders and repeat entries.
    - **Projected Out-of-Market Draw:** Estimated percentage and volume of attendees originating outside a 50-mile radius of Leon County (minimum 20% required).
    - **Lodging Forecast:** Projected trackable room nights within Leon County commercial lodging properties, supported by hotel room block agreements or partner commitments.
4. **Out-of-Market Marketing, Promotional Media & Audience Reach Plan:** A media flight schedule detailing paid advertising targeted outside the 50-mile radius, out-of-market PR distributions, ticket sales outreach, and broadcast/streaming coverage.
5. **Affidavit in Compliance with Anti-Human Trafficking Laws:** Formal executed attestation as mandated by County policy and Section 787.06(14), Florida Statutes.

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6. **Certification of Compliance with Anti-Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Laws:** A signed and executed attestation form from the authorized signatory of the applying organization and the host collegiate institution certifying compliance with Section 125.595 and Section 287.139, Florida Statutes.

IV. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY & BASELINE REQUIREMENTS

To pass initial staff gatekeeper review, a project must meet the following baseline filters:

- **Eligible Event Formats:** Major touring concerts, headlining entertainment productions, national music festivals, championship or exhibition athletic events, and premier multi-day consumer or cultural attractions.
- **Strict Content & Program Exclusions:** Regularly scheduled collegiate athletic competitions; routine campus intramural or student-body programming; academic conferences, lectures, and commencement ceremonies; political advertising, partisan rallies, and campaign events; gambling-related productions; and adult entertainment. Events must not violate non-DEI state mandates pursuant to Section 125.595 and 287.139, Florida Statutes.
- **Eligible Collegiate Partner Venues:** Events must take place at recognized facilities owned and operated by Leon County's collegiate partners, including Florida State University (FSU), Florida A&M University (FAMU) or Tallahassee State College (TSC).
- **Corporate Status:** The applicant or coordinating entity must be an active registered County Vendor in good standing with Sunbiz.org.
- **Physical Footprint:** Primary event operations, venue installations, and staging footprints must be physically located within Leon County.
- **Application Timeline:** Applications must be formally submitted and approved prior to the start of the event.

V. PROGRAM POLICIES & PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

- **Fiscal Year Operational Window:** To qualify for funding, the event must take place between October 1 and September 30 of the active County fiscal year.

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- **Multiple Institutional Applications Allowed:** Collegiate partner institutions (Florida State University, Florida A&M University, and Tallahassee State College) are expressly permitted to apply for and receive incentive awards for multiple events per fiscal year, provided each event occurs between October 1 and September 30 and funding remains available within the annual $250,000 program allocation.

- **Single Instance Limit per Specific Marquee Property:** Only one (1) instance of a specific marquee event or touring property (e.g., the Savannah Bananas) may receive funding in any single fiscal year. A specific branded property cannot receive multiple awards within the same October 1 – September 30 cycle.

- **Distinct and Independent Event Activations Permitted:** Collegiate partners may apply for and receive awards for multiple similar, but distinct and independent events within the same fiscal year. For example, multiple independent stadium concert productions featuring different headline touring artists staged at Doak S. Campbell Stadium or Bragg Memorial Stadium, or separate premier exhibition sporting tournaments, are each eligible to apply and receive independent incentive awards within the same fiscal year, provided each activation independently meets all baseline criteria, attendance thresholds, and lodging benchmarks.

- **Prohibition on Alternative County Funding:** Events receiving funding under the IMPACT Program are strictly prohibited from receiving any concurrent or alternative financial support from other Leon County grant programs for the same event activation.

    - An event funded through the IMPACT Program may not receive grant funding from any program administered directly by the Leon County Division of Tourism / Visit Tallahassee (including Special Events, Sports Events, Emerging Signature & Signature Events, or Legacy Event Grants).

    - An event funded through the IMPACT Program may not receive grant funding from programs administered on behalf of the County by the Council on Culture & Arts (COCA).

    - Applicants found to have submitted applications to both the IMPACT Program and another County grant program (Visit Tallahassee or COCA) for the same event must formally withdraw from the alternative program to maintain IMPACT eligibility. Combining multiple County grant allocations for a single event activation is strictly prohibited.

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- **Reimbursement Only:** No funds shall be distributed upfront. All incentives operate strictly on a single post-event performance reimbursement basis following audit verification of deliverables and qualifying expenses.
- **Administrative Exception Clause:** The Tourism Director maintains administrative authority to grant a one-time scheduling adjustment for documented Force Majeure delays or logistical disruptions, provided written notice is submitted at least 48 hours prior to the original event milestone and the rescheduled dates fall within the active fiscal year (October 1 – September 30).
- **TDC Blackout Dates:** Funding is prohibited for events scheduled during established TDC annual blackout dates when high-demand community events are already projected to fill lodging inventory.
- **Repeat Event & Multi-Year Policy:** The IMPACT Program is designed to secure new, time-sensitive marquee activations. If an event becomes an annually recurring feature, organizers must transition to standard Tourism Event Grant programs. Repeat applications under IMPACT are not guaranteed funding, must observe a one-year funding hiatus after two consecutive funded fiscal years, and must re-qualify under a performance standard proving prior year metrics met or exceeded 100% of out-of-market attendance and room-night benchmarks.
- **Branding Compliance:** All marketing collateral, print advertising, broadcast spots, websites, digital assets, and on-site venue signage must prominently display the official Leon County Tourism / Visit Tallahassee co-branding. Draft design proofs must be submitted to and approved by the Division of Tourism prior to public release.

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VI. PROGRAM TIERS AND REIMBURSEMENT MATRIX

Incentive funding is structured into two competitive performance tiers based on attendance scale and verified lodging generation:

Operational Element	Tier 1: Major Scale Impact	Tier 2: Regional Scale Impact
Maximum Incentive Payout Cap	Up to $50,000	Up to $25,000
Verified Attendance Threshold	30,000+ Single-Day Attendees OR 20,000+ Cumulative Multi-Day Attendees	10,000+ Single-Day Attendees OR 10,000+ Cumulative Multi-Day Attendees
Baseline Lodging Requirement	2,000+ Trackable Hotel Room Nights	1,000+ Trackable Hotel Room Nights

Attendance Evaluation Note: Events qualify through either the single-day threshold or the cumulative multi-day threshold. Multi-day applications must submit both daily turnstile projections and total cumulative attendance counts across all event days to validate tier placement.

VII. TOURISM & ECONOMIC IMPACT SCORECARD

Applications passing the initial baseline checklist must achieve a minimum threshold score of **70 out of 100 points** to secure a funding reservation. Awards are not committed in advance; final amounts are governed through scoring and post-event audit verification.

1. Attendance Scale & Lodging Generation (Max 35 Points)

- **Attendance Scale & Daily Turnstile Feasibility (15 pts):** Graded on projected daily and cumulative attendance volumes, venue capacity utilization, and ticket sales tracking methodology.
- **Trackable Room Night Volume (15 pts):** Graded on verified capacity to generate hotel room nights meeting or exceeding tier thresholds (2,000+ for Tier 1; 1,000+ for Tier 2) within Leon County commercial lodging properties.

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- **Off-Peak / Seasonal Uplift (5 pts):** Awarded if the event is scheduled during destination shoulder periods, summer months, academic breaks, or non-home football weekends.

2. Out-of-Market Audience Draw & Demographics (Max 25 Points)

- **Geographic Attendee Origin (15 pts):** Graded on the projected percentage of ticket purchasers originating outside a 50-mile radius beyond the 20% baseline requirement.
- **Ticketing & Data Infrastructure (10 pts):** Evaluated on the applicant's box office systems, advance reserved ticketing capability, and ability to track visitor zip codes, daily turnstile scans, and unique attendees.

3. Out-of-Market Marketing, Media & Co-Branding (Max 25 Points)

- **Paid Out-of-Market Media Campaign (15 pts):** Graded based on dedicated advertising spend and documented impressions across regional and national media channels outside the local 50-mile radius.
- **Visit Tallahassee Brand Integration (10 pts):** Evaluated on high-visibility co-branding across national broadcast, streaming, digital campaigns, event tickets, and on-site venue signage.

4. Event Feasibility & Operational Execution (Max 15 Points)

- **Promoter Track Record & Financial Solvency (10 pts):** Evaluated on the operational experience of the organizing team, prior successful executions of comparable scale, and evidence of full project financing.
- **Collegiate Venue Coordination (5 pts):** Verification of executed facility agreements, campus public safety coordination, traffic management plans, and institutional logistics.

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VIII. POST-EVENT VERIFICATION & AUDIT

All post-event deliverables, audited expenditure reports, and room night verifications must be submitted to the Division of Tourism within **60 calendar days** following the conclusion of the event, and no later than September 30 of the active fiscal year (or October 10 for events occurring after September 20). No reserved TDT funds will be disbursed until staff completes a final audit of the following verified assets:

1. **Audited Expenditure Report:** A certified ledger of qualified in-county operational expenditures matching paid vendor invoices, canceled checks, or official payment vouchers equaling or exceeding the award amount. Reimbursable items include direct staging, lighting, sound, turf protection, facility rental fees paid to the host collegiate institution, and contracted event safety/logistics personnel. General corporate overhead, university departmental advertising, and unverified costs are strictly ineligible.
2. **Certified Box Office & Attendance Audit:** Official ticketing platform manifests, box-office audits, and turnstile scan reports detailing:
    - Verified daily attendance for each day of the event.
    - Total cumulative multi-day attendance.
    - Breakdown of unique attendees versus repeat daily admissions.
    - Ticket purchaser zip-code analysis verifying that at least 20% of total attendees originated from outside a 50-mile radius of Leon County.
3. **Certified Room Night Documentation:** Official lodging pickup reports, room block audits, or housing software folios verifying the event satisfied its room night benchmarks (2,000+ for Tier 1; 1,000+ for Tier 2) across commercial lodging properties within Leon County.
4. **Third-Party Research Report (Discretionary):** For major tier activations, the Division of Tourism may require an independent market research or economic impact study verifying attendance and overnight visitation.
5. **Marketing Proof-of-Performance:** Comprehensive documentation verifying the execution of paid out-of-market advertising (media invoices, tear sheets, digital analytics) and prominent inclusion of the Visit Tallahassee identifier.

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Failure to achieve the required attendance scale, out-of-market origin metrics, or lodging benchmarks will result in a proportional reduction or total forfeiture of the approved incentive award.

IX. CONCLUSION

The final approval of all applications and the precise amounts of performance-based funding awarded under this program are determined solely by the Tourist Development Council (TDC) and the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), subject to the availability of unallocated funds within the annual $250,000 Tourist Development Tax appropriation. Meeting baseline parameters does not establish an automatic entitlement to the maximum project cap. Final release of reimbursement funds remains strictly subject to a satisfactory post-event performance audit by Division of Tourism staff to verify complete statutory and contractual compliance.

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 12, 2026

TO: Leon County Tourist Development Council

THRU: Kerri L. Post, Executive Director, Leon County Division of Tourism

FROM: Jonathan LaBarre, Tourism Operations Director; Julie Trezek, Tourism Grants and Contracts Manager

SUBJECT: FY2027 Sports Event Grant Funding Recommendations

The Tallahassee Sports Council (TSC) respectfully presents the 2027 Sports grant funding recommendation for the 10 Sports Events that required additional legal review and provided updates to their applications and events to comply with §125.595, Florida Statutes. These are in addition to the 29 Sports Events that were approved for grant funding at the September 10, 2026 TDC meeting.

After carefully considering the 10 event applications and their ability to generate room nights and economic impact for our community, especially in the non-peak times and shoulder seasons, the TSC is recommending funding 10 events for a total of $55,320 from the remaining sports event grant budget of $84,302. The recommended events are anticipated to bring 10,148 visitors to Tallahassee and are projected to generate 2,860 room nights. The remaining $28,982 will be utilized for the second sports grant cycle in December, 2026.

Below you will find the list of events summarizing the TSC recommendations. Thank you for your consideration.

	Name of Event	Total Score	Application Requested Amount	Reviewer Adjusted Funding Request	Recommended Funding
1	FSU Men's Club Ultimate Inc. – Tally Classic XXI	87.67	$8,000	$7,000	$6,137

	Name of Event	Total Score	Application Requested Amount	Reviewer Adjusted Funding Request	Recommended Funding
2	Gym Force, Inc. – 2027 Gym Force Classic Gymnastics Competition	92.00	$10,000	$8,667	$7,973
3	Karter's Legacy Center, Inc. – Hoops for Karter	84.67	$12,999	$6,666	$5,644
4	PSVA Volleyball Academy, Inc. – Tallahassee Invite	89.50	$10,000	$7,500	$6,713
5	Raider Nation Football Booster Club Inc. – Raider Nation 7v7 Tournament	85.33	$6,500	$6,000	$5,120
6	Tallahassee Unconquered Inc – Gulf Coast Championship Series	86.67	$8,000	$7,000	$6,067
7	The School Board of Leon County, Florida / Lincoln High School – Big Bend Brawl Wrestling Tournament	90.00	$6,000	$6,000	$5,400
8	The School Board of Leon County, Florida / Lincoln High School – Capital City Classic Wrestling Tournament	93.00	$4,000	$4,000	$3,720
9	The School Board of Leon County, Florida / Lincoln High School – FHSAA Elite 8 Duals Wrestling Tournament	88.00	$6,000	$6,000	$5,280
10	The School Board of Leon County, Florida / Lincoln High School – FHSAA Regional Wrestling Tournament	93.33	$3,500	$3,500	$3,257
			TOTAL		**$55,320**

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