

# Tourism Action Plan: Progress Report and Update



Prepared for the Spartanburg  
Convention and Visitors Bureau

by:

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# Strategy Board: Spartanburg Tourism Action Plan Update

Strategy	Successes	Recommendations
Organizational Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reinvigorated the Spartanburg CVB.</li> <li>Stronger integration into the Economic Futures Group and Chamber organizational structure.</li> <li>Stronger community engagement.</li> <li>Increased organizational funding.</li> <li>Developed baseline measures of tourism and using those metrics as measures of success.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore long term funding through partnerships with major industry stakeholders.</li> <li>Use convention sales and prospects as indicator of success.</li> <li>Contemplate additional staff solely focused on high level sales.</li> <li>Partner with the Chamber of Commerce to develop convention lead generation through University Contacts.</li> <li>Continue social media engagement.</li> <li>Host a regional tourism summit/fam tour for SCPRT, and Counties in NC and SC (as component of broadening partnerships in general).</li> </ul>
Visitor Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inventoried visitor attractions throughout Spartanburg.</li> <li>Placed these in GIS systems at the County and publicizing them through the CVB website.</li> <li>Improved corridors and gateways to the community (Pine Street and W.O. Ezell Boulevard).</li> <li>Developed “cue cards” with top things to do in Spartanburg.</li> <li>Implemented numerous tours, brochures, and information pieces that profile tourism product in the County.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to target corridor and gateway improvements with a focus on Church Street and Interstate 85.</li> <li>Partner with institutions of higher education on a Certified Ambassador program for professionals engaged in tourism industry in the community (perhaps modeled after a Leadership Spartanburg program)</li> <li>Develop Spartanburg Area Visitors Center in Downtown.</li> <li>Explore ways to partner with state Visitors Centers.</li> </ul>
Marketing and Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopted brand.</li> <li>Partnered with Spartanburg Parks to use brand.</li> <li>Developed branded collateral in many forms (typical to unique such as Geocache coins.</li> <li>Developed internal tourism targeted to build local pride/knowledge.</li> <li>Launched external marketing.</li> <li>Partnered with others to launch marketing pieces.</li> <li>Deployed aggressive social media campaign.</li> <li>Launched new website and annual visitor guide updates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue tracking social media/web metrics to measure success.</li> <li>Differentiate Spartanburg from “peer” communities focusing on unique attributes such as sports, recreation, and heritage.</li> <li>Continue “brand assessment” on a regular basis to test the market’s familiarity with Spartanburg.</li> <li>Over time contemplate specific messaging focusing on differentiating Spartanburg: creative, outdoors, higher education.</li> <li>Work with County on wayfinding system.</li> </ul>
Product Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opened Tyger River Park</li> <li>Developing Blueway System</li> <li>Opened Revolutionary War Trail</li> <li>Croft State Park Marketing</li> <li>Sculptour</li> <li>Underground Guide</li> <li>Textile Guide</li> <li>Cultivated existing groups as partners in the industry.</li> <li>Developed curriculum and book focusing on history for students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to develop sports tourism venues per recommendations in the Parks Enhancements Plan.</li> <li>Explore partnership with Northside Harvest Park to promote food related tourism/agritourism.</li> <li>Develop retail marketing strategy as Bass Pro comes online.</li> <li>Meet with Upward to explore marketing partnerships.</li> <li>Continue Blueways as a unique attribute of Spartanburg.</li> <li>Explore partnerships through Landrum and other municipalities to capitalize on Equestrian tourism.</li> <li>Leverage <i>existing</i> organizations for product development while CVB focuses on marketing these venues and products.</li> </ul>

# 10.0 Conclusion

By almost any metric, the tourism industry in Spartanburg has undergone a dramatic change since the inception of the 2009 Spartanburg Tourism Action Plan.

- The accommodations and hospitality industries have seen marked revenue growth in the last five years.
- As a result public revenues tied to these industries (Accommodations and Hospitality Tax) have increased.
- Local perception and engagement with Spartanburg's tourism industry has increased dramatically as the marketing, social media, and web page metrics indicate.
- This local perception has begun to grow in regional and national recognition also reflected in increased travel to the community.
- Partners have been engaged to understand their role in supporting a vibrant tourism industry in Spartanburg.

Looking ahead, the community must continue to tell the story of the offerings that make it unique. Spartanburg County is a collection of remarkable resources, the community has a tremendous track record of cultivating these resources for economic benefit. The coming five years will see tourism continue to grow as an industry for the community.

