

# Tourism Report & 2018 Marketing Plan

2017-2018

*Augusta*  
CONVENTION &  
VISITORS BUREAU



VISITAUGUSTA.COM

# Augusta's Brand Story

# 125+

For over 125 years, hospitality has been at the heart of Augusta, and that heart beats strong amid the ingenuity and innovation of today's prosperous and thriving community. There are those drawn to the city's history and heritage, but alongside the banks of the Savannah River they also discover an Augusta that is alive for a new generation: one that celebrates the city's arts and culture, flourishes with its dynamic recreational opportunities, revels in the renewed appreciation of the region's storied past, and pulses with a contagious vitality that promises a bright tomorrow for the new Augustan.

## Augusta Convention & Visitors Bureau

### What the Community's Saying

**“I have never seen Augusta like this. It feels like we're on the verge of something big!”**

“It feels like we've finally found the right balance.”

“There is already so much going on, like festivals, concerts, etc.”

“There seems to be an excitement about Augusta for the first time I can remember.”

“I grew up here, and I hardly recognize it now.”

“There are great things happening here.”

“There's so much good stuff to be proud of.”

“A vibrant downtown helps us get and keep the best talent available.”

“There is so much going on for Augusta. We're so much more than the Masters, Medical, and Military.”

Source: First Community Development Feasibility Study

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## Visitor Impact



VISITOR SPENDING BREAKDOWN

**\$532.3**  
MILLION

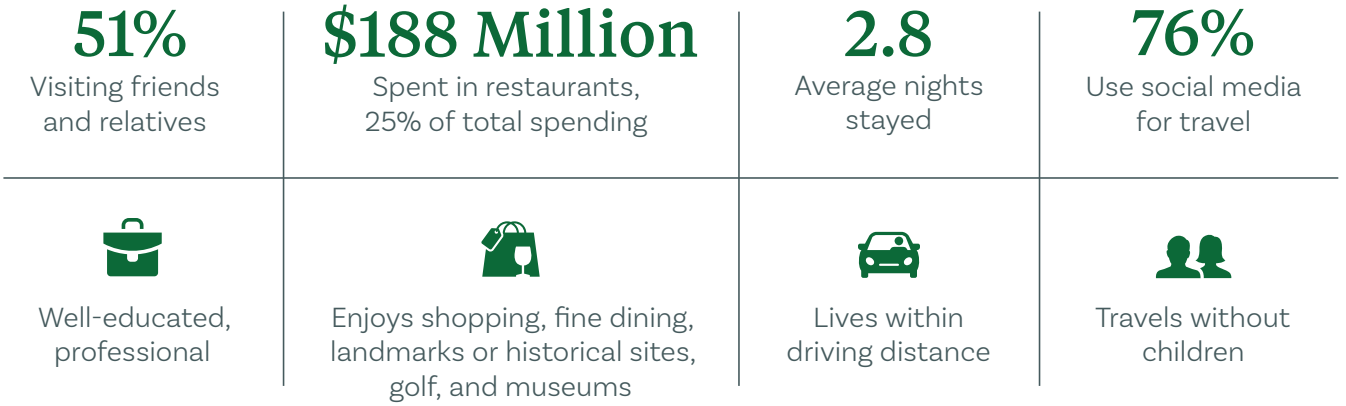
## Economic Impact



Source: Georgia Department of Economic Development

## Visitor Profile

### Who is the Augusta Traveler?



## Target Audiences



## Top Interests of Millennials



Source: Longwoods Travel USA, Augusta 2015 Visitors Report

# Marketing & Guest Experiences

Position and promote the region as a preferred destination for leisure and meeting travel.

## 2018 Marketing Objectives

- Utilize locals to tell Augusta's story
- Engage new target audiences through innovative and interactive digital strategies
- Take advantage of new, emerging technologies
- Enhance and expand social media marketing
- Strengthen and expand collaborations and partnerships with local industry and economic development partners

**IN 2018**

The Augusta CVB will expand its video production and marketing efforts to position and promote the area as a unique visitor destination across all digital platforms.

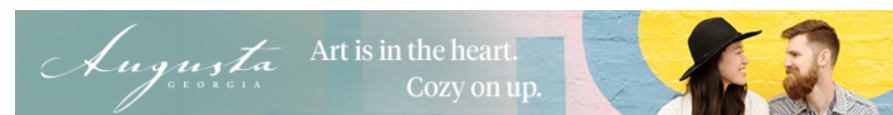


YouTube.com/VisitAugusta



# Advertising Samples

Print



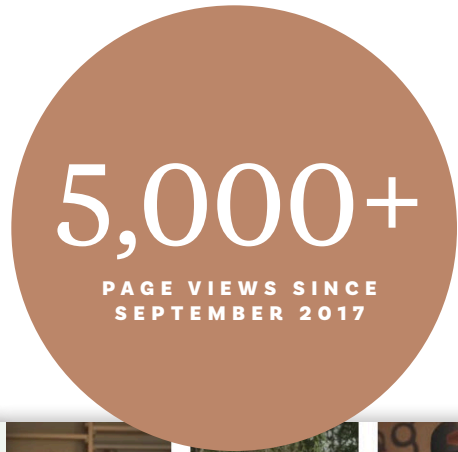
Digital

# 2018 Media Plan

Augusta CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU	Culinary			Outdoor			Arts & Events			History/Heritage		
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Augusta CVB 2018 Leisure Media Plan												
Atlanta Magazine - June						Full Page Ad						
Southbound Magazine - April				Full Page Ad								
Southbound Magazine - October										Full Page Ad		
Food Network Magazine	1/6 Page Ad											
FACEBOOK + INSTAGRAM	Newsfeed (Single, Carousel + Video) / Right Side / Retargeting											
HUDDLED MASSES - Programmatic - Banner + Video	Desktop + Mobile / Banners + Video											
MOBILEFUSE - Programmatic - Banner + Video	Banners + Video			Banners + Video			Banners + Video			Banners + Video		
TRAVELSPIKE - Travel Network - Banner + In-Image				Desktop + Mobile / Banners + In-Image								
QUANTCAST - Programmatic - Banner + Video	Desktop + Mobile / Banners											
Georgia Tourism - eNewsletter (bi-monthly delivery)			Ft. Content Partner			Ft. Content Partner			Ft. Content Partner			Ft. Content Partner
AdServing Fee	AdServing											
Augusta CVB 2018 Meetings Media Plan												
Orange142				Desktop + Mobile / Banners								
Georgia Society of Association Executives	1/6 Page Ad											
Augusta CVB 2018 Co-op Media Plan												
Georgia Travel Guide - 2019												1/2 Page (x2)
Southbound Magazine - April				Full Page Ad								
FACEBOOK + INSTAGRAM	Newsfeed (Single, Carousel) / Right Side											
HUDDLED MASSES - Programmatic - Banner + Video	Desktop + Mobile / Banners + Cinemagraph											
AdServing Fee	AdServing											

# The New Augustan

Launched NewAugustan.com:  
A Digital Celebration of Augusta's  
River Region

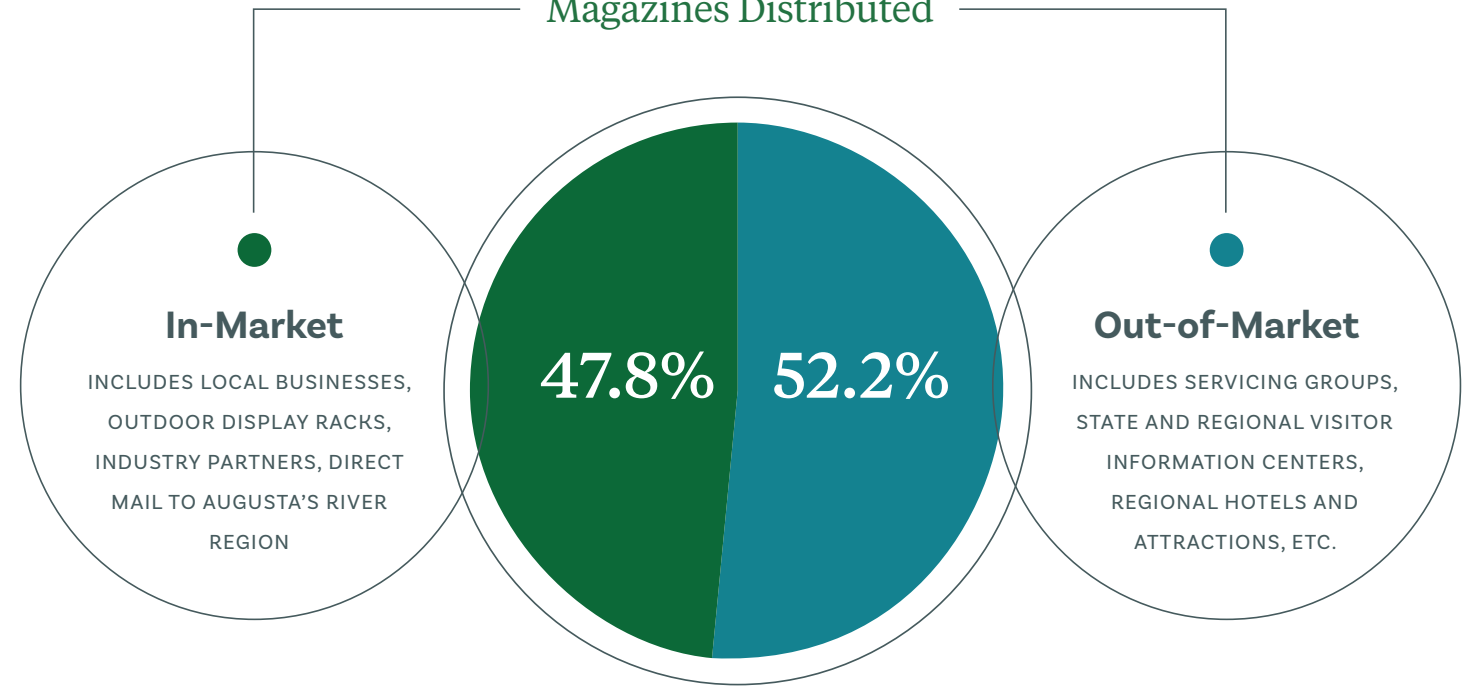


A celebration of the spirit of Augusta's River Region, *The New Augustan* magazine is the authority on our distinctive style of Southern life—offering an ongoing narrative of her charm and energy, and giving our readers a novel look into the area's history and culture. Whether you're a local or guest, *The New Augustan* offers stirring narrations of the diverse places and personalities that make Augusta and Augusta's River Region so captivating.

2017

# 62,396

Magazines Distributed



**“Congrats on another outstanding issue of *The New Augustan*. This is the city of Augusta I know and love, and this is the way we should be telling our story. Bravo!”**

—Shell B.

**“Love the work you’re doing on *The New Augustan*. I’ve seen quite a few CVB publications, and nothing comes close.”**

—Former Travel & Leisure Writer

The fifth issue of *The New Augustan* will be released in March 2018.

# VisitAugusta.com

Total Sessions

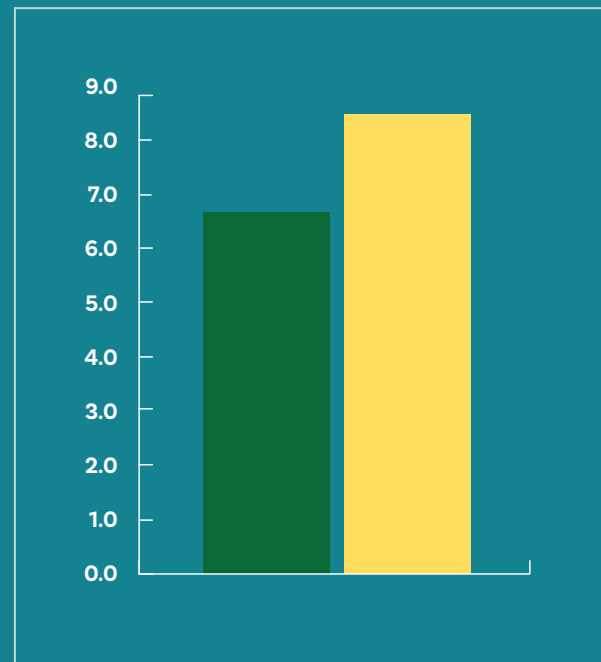
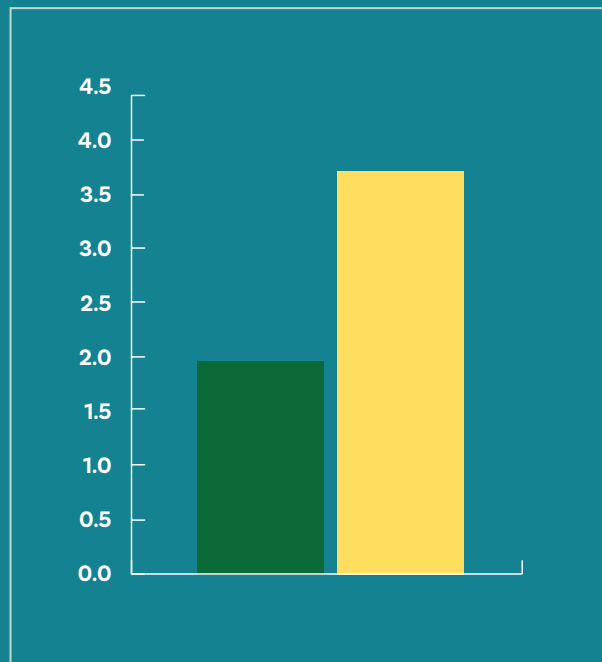
377,985

Time on Site: 1:56

Page Views

872,515

Pages Per Visit: 2.31



Source: Google Analytics and Simpleview Inc. ● 2016 ● 2017

# VisitAugusta.com Top 5 Pages Visited

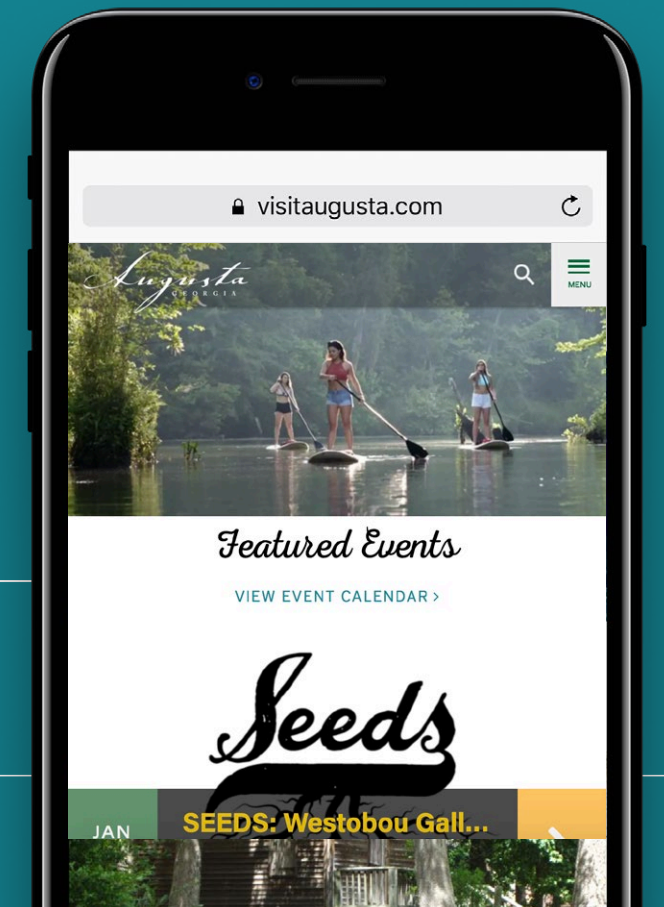


## VisitAugusta.com Top States of Origin



68%

68% of website visits were from a mobile device.



# Social Media


[visitaugustaga](#) / 
 [f visitaugusta](#) / 
 [visitaugusta.com/blog](#) / 
 [@ visitaugusta](#) / 
 [v visitaugusta](#)


**HIGHLIGHT**  
 40+ Blogs  
 written/created on  
 VisitAugusta.com/blog


NUMBER OF  
**#LoveAugusta**

TAGS ON INSTAGRAM & TWITTER

4,100+ (2017)    2,300+ (2016)    Increase of 78%

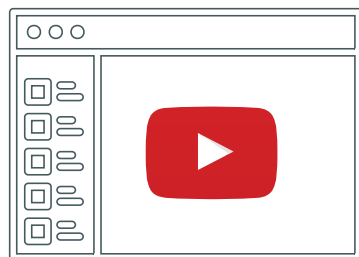
  
**Twitter Followers**  
**3,421**  
 (2017)  
 INCREASE OF  
**14%**

  
**Facebook Fans**  
**9,396**  
 (2017)  
 INCREASE OF  
**15%**

  
**Instagram Followers**  
**3,568**  
 (2017)  
 INCREASE OF  
**81%**

**Twitter Impressions**  
**282,868** (2017)  
 Increase of 145%

**Facebook Organic Reach**  
**695** (2017)  
 Increase of 3%



**New YouTube Videos Added**  
**20+** (2017)  
**Campaign and New Augustan**

# Public Relations

## Total Number of Impressions

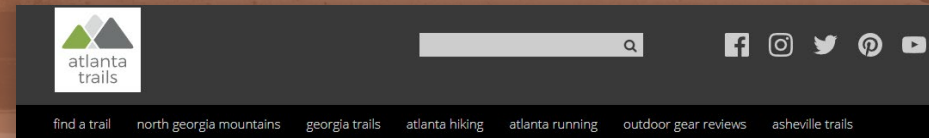
**449,753,837**

Print 5,952,388    Digital 442,524,949    Social 1,276,500

  
**Travel Writers Hosted**  
**12**

  
**Advertising Equivalency**  
**\$504,745**

  
**Stories Generated**  
**123**



**AUGUSTA TRAILS**  
**Pinizy Swamp Nature Park: Boardwalk a**  
 Hike the ultra-scenic boardwalk trails at Pinizy Swamp Nature Park in Augusta, Georgia. Spanish moss near the banks of the Savannah River.  
 1.1 MILES (ROUND TRIP)    EASY    DOG-FRIENDLY  
 LOCATION: Augusta, Georgia (maps & directions)  
 GEAR: REI Flash 18 Backpack w/ our favorite hiking gear list and Canon 6D Camera





# Guest Experiences

## 2018 Objectives

- Leisure, convention and sports market development
- Improve guest experiences through creative group and leisure services
- Increase the number of attendees serviced

2017 Total Estimated Economic Impact\*

# \$64,072,246

From Conventions, Events, and Sports

Groups Serviced

## 208

Total Attendees

## 280,697

### 2018 Trade Show Schedule

**EMERGE Religious Conference Management Association Trade Show**  
Omaha, NE

**Connect Marketplace** Salt Lake City, UT

**Connect Georgia** Atlanta, GA

**Georgia Society of Association Executives Trade Show** Sandestin, FL

Trade Shows Attended **5**

Site Visits **27**

\*Total Estimated Economic Impact (EEI), the sum of all the direct, indirect, and induced spending estimates, is calculated based on research commissioned by both the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEd) and Destinations International in conjunction with globally recognized research vendors, the U.S. Travel Association, and Tourism Economics. Tourism Economics, a partner company of Oxford Economics, created the industry standard in event economic impact analysis by using localized metrics that are updated annually.

# Community Engagement

## 2018 Objectives

- Strengthen partnerships with similar regional organizations
- Increase community outreach during National Travel and Tourism Week
- Increase presence and participation at local events to educate the community about the CVB's role
- Explore and execute the use and promotion of a comprehensive community calendar
- Create a local campaign to promote community assets and attractions to residents

## 200+

People attended the annual State of Tourism Luncheon

## 100+

Champions\* honored at the State of Tourism luncheon

### Highlight

Destination Blueprint was rolled out and highly visible on the 2017 community speakers circuit

\*Augusta Champions assist the Augusta CVB in bringing meetings and events to the community. These individuals played a direct part in stimulating the economy of Augusta by influencing groups to visit the area.

## Masters of Hospitality

This service recognition program allows hotel and attraction guests to nominate hospitality staff members for providing excellent customer service.

## 21

In 2017, twenty-one hotels and attractions participated

## 125+

Over 125 frontline hospitality staff nominated



# Destination Development

Enhance the visitor experience through destination development and visitor services.

## 2018 Objectives

- Implement Destination Blueprint projects
- Design and build new Visitor Experience Center
- Implement personal transportation vehicle tours and shuttle services



## 2018 Film Objectives

- Expand film services and marketing efforts
- Provide first-class and proactive client support services to production companies
- Foster regional collaboration to ensure unified recruitment and servicing efforts
- Recruit and secure new productions to the region
- Maximize membership in the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI)



# Operations and Governance

Function as a fiscally responsible and productive team.

## 2018 Objectives

- Oversee construction of the new office and visitor center
- Pursue sponsorships and funding partners for Destination Blueprint
- Generate new and renewable investment revenue
- Enhance human resource development and productivity

### HIGHLIGHT

Phil Wahl accepts position as Chair of the 2018 CVB Board of Directors



# 2018 Staff and Board Directory

The Augusta CVB is governed by a board of directors that represents a cross section of business and hospitality industry partners. Board meetings are held monthly and are open to the public.

## Augusta CVB Staff

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Brenda Atkins</b><br>Administrative Assistant<br>brenda@visitaugusta.com<br>706.849.3245                     | <b>Jay Markwalter</b><br>Director of Sales<br>jay@visitaugusta.com<br>706.823.6605                          |
| <b>Jennifer Bowen</b><br>Vice President of Destination Development<br>jennifer@visitaugusta.com<br>706.823.6613 | <b>Merissa O'Reilly</b><br>Community Engagement Manager<br>merissa@visitaugusta.com<br>706.849.3246         |
| <b>Michelle Bovian</b><br>Manager of Group Experiences<br>michelle@visitaugusta.com<br>706.823.6616             | <b>Ashton Randall</b><br>Electronic Media Manager<br>ashton@visitaugusta.com<br>706.823.6607                |
| <b>Marjorie Chambers</b><br>Visitor Information Specialist<br>marjorie@visitaugusta.com<br>706.724.4067         | <b>Mary T. Sahn</b><br>Visitor Information Specialist<br>mary@visitaugusta.com<br>706.724.4067              |
| <b>Lindsay Fruchtl</b><br>Vice President of Marketing & Sales<br>lindsay@visitaugusta.com<br>706.823.6606       | <b>Toni Seals-Johnson</b><br>Visitor Center Manager<br>toni@visitaugusta.com<br>706.724.4067                |
| <b>Iman Hill</b><br>Manager of Group Experiences<br>iman@visitaugusta.com<br>706.823.6615                       | <b>Trent Snyder</b><br>Vice President of Finance & Administration<br>trent@visitaugusta.com<br>706.823.6610 |
| <b>Carolyn Patricia Lewis</b><br>Visitor Information Specialist<br>carolyn@visitaugusta.com<br>706.724.4067     | <b>Keaton Thurmond</b><br>Marketing Manager<br>keaton@visitaugusta.com<br>706.823.6604                      |
|   | <b>Barry White*</b><br>President/CEO<br>barry@visitaugusta.com<br>706.823.6611                              |

## Board of Directors

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Phil Wahl</b><br>Chairman<br>Security Federal Bank                       | <b>Nancy Glaser</b><br>Augusta Museum of History          |
| <b>Joel Hortenstine</b><br>Vice Chair<br>Singh Investment Group             | <b>Velvet Perry*</b><br>Perry Broadcasting of Augusta     |
| <b>Krista Wight</b><br>Secretary/Treasurer<br>Frog Hollow Hospitality Group | <b>T. R. Reddy*</b><br>Power Control Systems              |
| <b>Sue Parr</b><br>Augusta Metro Chamber of Commerce                        | <b>Stacie Adkins</b><br>Ex-Officio Augusta Sports Council |
| <b>Dayton Sherrouse</b><br>Augusta Canal National Heritage Area             | <b>Scott Lewis</b><br>Legal Counsel<br>Fulcher Hagler     |
| <b>Eddie Bussey*</b><br>State Farm Insurance                                |   |
| <b>Mary Davis</b><br>Augusta Commission                                     |   |
| <b>Bill Fennoy*</b><br>Augusta Commission                                   |   |

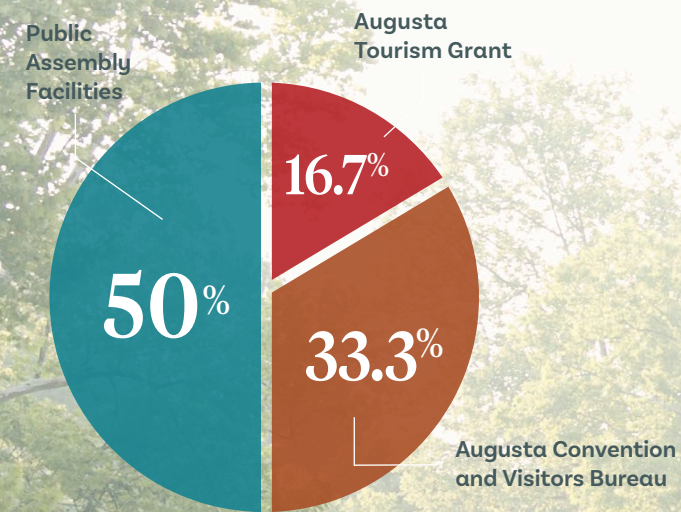
\*AT TIME OF PRINTING

### 2018 Board Meeting Dates

January 18	May 17	September 20
February 15	June 21	October 18
March 15	July 19	November 15
April 19	August 16	December 20

# The Augusta CVB

The official destination marketing and management organization enhancing the region's economy by positioning Augusta as a preferred visitor destination.



## Hotel Tax Allocations

Primary funding is derived from a portion of a six percent hotel tax. The CVB receives 33.3 percent of the hotel tax, which is designated for marketing and promotions. The CVB administers a tourism grant with an additional hotel tax restricted for that purpose. The CVB also receives a portion of the mixed drink tax from Augusta to operate the Visitor Center.

The Augusta Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc. (CVB) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(6) corporation responsible for promoting tourism in the Augusta area. This destination marketing organization is Augusta's exclusive provider of tourism promotion services.

Augusta's first CVB was established in 1980 as a department of the Metro Augusta Chamber of Commerce. In 1988, the city and county created the Augusta-Richmond County Convention and Visitors Bureau as a joint entity of the two governments. On January 1, 1997, Augusta CVB, Inc. was created

and entered into a service agreement with the city of Augusta.

The primary objective of the CVB is to look beyond daily occupancy rates of hotels and position Augusta as a destination by developing an image that will attract visitors. This is accomplished through effective strategies, aggressive advertising and public relations campaigns, sales efforts within the convention and meeting markets, and destination development. The Augusta CVB also operates the Visitor Center, which is located inside the Augusta Museum of History.

# Augusta's River Region

## Together, We Have a Lot More to Offer

Beyond the city of Augusta lies the larger and more diverse area we call Augusta's River Region, which encompasses the Savannah River and neighboring cities in both Georgia and South Carolina, including Aiken, Columbia County, Edgefield, and North Augusta.

Augusta's fascinating River Region has all the flavors of the South, with a growing culture of artists, foodies, athletes, adventurers, historians, and families. You can experience everything from horse racing to barhopping, from textiles to kayaking along the region's waterways. Working together, we are spreading the word about the rich experiences awaiting visitors to the River Region.

*Augusta*  
CONVENTION &  
VISITORS BUREAU

1450 Greene Street • Suite 110 • Augusta, GA 30901

**VISITAUGUSTA.COM**