

NEWS RELEASE

February 2, 2017



Contacts:

Barry White
Augusta Convention and Visitors Bureau
President and CEO
(706) 823-6600
Barry@VisitAugusta.com

Jennifer Bowen
Augusta Convention and Visitors Bureau
Vice President of Destination Development
(706) 823-6613
Jennifer@VisitAugusta.com

Augusta CVB unveils Destination Blueprint at 2017 State of Tourism luncheon

Augusta, GA – The Augusta Convention & Visitors Bureau unveils Destination Blueprint at the 2017 State of Tourism address. Destination Blueprint is a strategy to build Augusta as a destination city. The Augusta Convention & Visitors Bureau (ACVB) partnered with Conventions, Sports & Leisure (CSL) in 2016 to analyze existing tourism project concepts, compare Augusta to competitive destinations, and make recommendations for both new products and services to improve our appeal as a preferred visitor destination.

Some of the recommended projects include a river destination center located on the Savannah River creating a place for people to gather at a café, book kayak expeditions, rent personal watercraft, paddleboards and/or canoes, water shuttle, a retail store and exhibits interpreting the significance of the river to Augusta. Additionally, expanding the Augusta Common towards the River, defining the downtown districts, a state of the art visitor center, golf car tours and transportation, public art sculpture gardens, trails and monumental art, first-class festivals, an outdoor adventure center, and additional amateur sports fields. A few highlights of key projects are below. Today's presentation can be found online at DestinationBlueprint.com.

Destination Blueprint was crafted with significant research and input. CSL interviewed more than 130 local and regional organizations, distributed surveys to over 25,000 residents, 500 travel writers, interviewed local and non-local sports organizations and contacted comparable destinations. Additionally, a broad-based task force reviewed seven existing local plans including Westobou, the Augusta Sustainable Development Agenda, Augusta Canal's Master Plan, and the Laney Walker Bethlehem and identified more than 70 existing projects for consideration.

Fostering implementation of Destination Blueprint is one of ACVB's strategic objectives. The timeline for these recommendations is between 5 and 10 years. For more information about Destination Blueprint please visit DestinationBlueprint.com.

About Conventions, Sports & Leisure: Founded in 1988, Conventions, Sports & Leisure International (CSL) is a leading advisory and planning firm specializing in providing consulting services to the convention, sport, entertainment and visitor industries.

CSL was established for the specific purpose of providing a source of focused research and expertise in these industries. Services include new/expanded event facility feasibility studies, organizational reviews/performance enhancement studies, destination master planning, industry benchmarking, negotiation assistance and related services.

With offices located in the Minneapolis and Dallas metro areas, we assist our clients from the earliest stages of project planning, ensuring that all decisions are informed ones. Our consultants provide in-depth information, creative solutions to underlying issues, a thorough analysis of financial implications, and various measurements of risk and return surrounding alternative courses of action.

With a staff of nearly 30 professionals, CSL has completed over 500 consulting engagements throughout North America and abroad, focusing on a variety of event facility planning, strategic advisory services and economic development issues.

Leading the Industry, CSL has conducted Tourism –Destination Strategic Planning in cities such as San Antonio, TX, Osceola County -Orlando, FL, Palm Springs, CA, Cape Cod, MA, Louisville, KY, Arlington, TX, Kansas City, MO, Oklahoma City, OK, and Reno, NV.

River Destination Center

- Café and bar
- Outfitter booking kayak expeditions or canoe excursions
- Rentals: canoes, kayaks, personal watercraft
- Water shuttle service
- Retail store
- River interpretative exhibits



Expanded Augusta Common to River

- Creates a grand promenade by escalating to the height of the levee and the Riverwalk
- Focal point for river activity
- A signature water feature
- Companion development on both sides



Trademark Transportation

- Golf car shuttles throughout downtown connecting districts
- Authentic to Augusta 85% of the world's golf cars are manufactured here
- Working in many cities across the country including several in Tennessee and expanding to Athens, GA in 2017



Visitor Center

- 1010 Broad Street – central, visible location
- Creative, authentic, interactive elements showcasing the uniqueness of the region
- Rent golf cars for self-guided tours



###