

destination

2028

MISSION

To promote a welcoming destination experience for visitors, enhance the lives of residents, and strengthen economic opportunity.

VISION

Experience Champaign-Urbana will be a connected and collaborative leader in promoting the region as an extraordinary destination to visit, work, and live.

VALUES

- **Spark**—We are tenacious and spirited in our pursuit of impact.
- **Illumination**—We shine an optimistic light on all of our communities.
- **Brilliance**—We bring joy and an innovative mindset to all our work.

POSITION

Experience Champaign-Urbana tells the stories of the area like no one else can, and nurtures our college town and broader destination through:

- Inspired marketing that speaks to multi-cultural and multi-faceted audiences both at home and afar
- Generating excitement for the community through unwavering support and pursuit of events, conferences, festivals, sports, and filmmaking
- Collaboration with like-minded partners who are seeking an enhanced potential for current and future residents, students, and visitors
- Personable connections that ensure everyone is welcome to the region

GOAL 1: Enhance our destination and community engagement

- Foster better decision-making in the destination experience among stakeholders and business owners
- Develop internal destination development review process and support system
- Continue collaboration on enhanced transportation efforts
- Develop and execute a strategy for supporting events & festivals

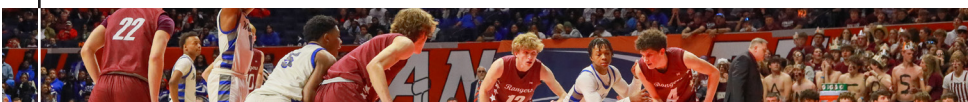


KEY RESULTS

- Increased number of hotel room stays and visitor spending
- Consistent project support through staying true to mission
- Realization of future shuttle system between hotels and districts
- Increased room nights attributable to events & festivals over 2025 baseline

GOAL 2: Structure partnership/supporter program to strengthen economic opportunity

- Deepen ECU's communication and collaboration with destination partners
- Develop a donor database and data-driven development strategy
- Undertake a Tourism Improvement District (TID) feasibility study
- Establish a sustainable funding model for community-based initiatives



KEY RESULTS

- Funding growth by 10% in 2025 dollars
- Increase in number of donors for community-based initiatives
- Implementation of TID feasibility study
- Creation of funding model supporting film, event bids, attraction development, talent retention

GOAL 3: Amplify our stories

- Create visual stories through video, photography, and testimonials to show the vibrant reality of people, places, and events
- Create awareness strategy to highlight community creators & innovators
- Partner with various facets of our community to tell their stories through customized community-oriented marketing strategies



KEY RESULTS

- Increased inquiries through New Resident webpages with increased engagement through Champaign Welcome Crew
- Experience pass created focused on innovation at Illinois
- Additional and ongoing outreach with businesses and events in regional areas

GOAL 4: Build a high-performance sales program

- Identify and target key event stakeholders to increase viable sales leads for sports, meetings, and group tour opportunities
- Strengthen relationship with hotel and venue partners
- Use destination services to engage sports, meetings, and group tour planners



KEY RESULTS

- Year-over-year growth of active leads/RFP's and booked business
- Increased participation in hotel partner meetings
- Year-over-year growth in use of immersive itineraries

GOAL 5: Strengthen our organization, team, and boards

- Enhance structural scope and business processes for best-in-class destination experience organization
- Strategically invest in professional development opportunities
- Develop more intentional role and objectives of volunteer boards



KEY RESULTS

- Fill 80% of gaps in skills and capabilities matrix by 2028
- Enhanced specific skill sets to create more staff capacity
- Fill 65% of identified gaps in skills and capabilities on the ECU Foundation Board



Stay updated on our progress to **Destination 2028** by reviewing our quarterly and annual reports.

experiencecu.org

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