

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR TOURISM



**COLLEGE
STATION**

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**COLLEGE
STATION**

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JLL PROJECT TEAM



**COLLEGE
STATION**



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WE KNOW DESTINATIONS

100+ Tourism & destination planning clients

42 Public-private and governance advisory projects

35 Multi-jurisdictional destination plans



Global Partners



National Clients



Team's Midwest Experience



Global Clients



Planning Process

How We Got Here

The Four Phases



LISTEN

- 7 focus groups with 35 participants
- 28 individual stakeholder interviews
- Tourism Committee meetings
- 2 comprehensive site visits



ANALYZE

- Tourism Readiness Index across 70 indicators
- Demand Driver Scorecard of 24 attractions
- Event Matrix evaluation of 29 events
- Lost Business Analysis (2022-2024)



STRATEGIZE

- 6 strategic pillars developed
- University destination benchmarking
- Organizational structure design



ACTIVATE

- 3-year implementation timeline
- Performance-driven hiring plan
- Financial sustainability model

What is the goal of the DMP?

1. Set a strategic vision for the destination
2. Create a 3-year roadmap
3. Enhance College Station's competitive positioning
4. Find balance with residents, businesses & visitors



Market Study Overview

Tourism Readiness Index

- College Station classified as "Dawning Developer"
- Strong in: hotel supply, meeting space, low congestion
- Underperforming in: leisure concentration, urban readiness, visitor spending

Demand Drivers

- 10 regional attractors identified (Kyle Field, Bush Library, Northgate)
- 54% of assets are family-friendly
- Visitors focused on single events, missing broader city experience

Event Portfolio

- 29 events evaluated - only 25% drive regional demand
- Major gaps: January-March, September
- Aside from TAMU sports, no signature leisure events

Lost Business

- \$27.6M in missed economic impact (2022-2024)
- \$4M+ lost in academic conferences
- 59% lost to committee votes (not facility issues)



Recommendations and Strategies

The 6 Strategic Pillars

- **PILLAR 1:** Position College Station as Premier Academic Conference Destination
- **PILLAR 2:** Create TAMU-City Event Management Partnership
- **PILLAR 3:** Enhance Student and Family Visit Experience
- **PILLAR 4:** Enhance Faculty and Staff Recruitment Experience
- **PILLAR 5:** Joint Marketing Strategy for University-Community Synergy
- **PILLAR 6:** Leisure Events Strategy



Position College Station as Premier Academic Conference Destination

Current Landscape:

- TAMU excels in agriculture, engineering, veterinary medicine, military sciences
- Faculty overwhelmed balancing conference planning with teaching/research
- No centralized sourcing for external conferences
- Lost \$4M+ in winnable academic business

Strategies:

- Inventory TAMU's 10,000+ potential conferences tied to academic excellence
- Create "Academic Ambassadors" program with influential faculty
- Develop specialized sales team focused exclusively on university conferences
- Build integrated conference packages (venue + hotels + dining + attractions)

Key Performance Targets:

- 6-8 additional academic conferences hosted annually
- 12,000 additional hotel room nights generated
- 12-15% booking conversion rate



Create TAMU and Visit College Station Event Management Partnership

Current Landscape:

- TAMU Special Events: 6 people handling 300-400 events/year
- No capacity for external sourcing
- Fragmented booking process across multiple departments
- "Preferred Access Agreement" creates scheduling uncertainty
- \$27.6M lost due to coordination failures

Strategies:

- Formalize Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with revenue
- Elevate university liaison position with direct scheduling authority
- Create unified calendar system (adopt platform like 25Live)
- Expand labor pool beyond student workers for year-round capacity
- Develop "Venue Needs Assessment Tool" for seamless planner experience

Key Performance Targets:

- MOU signed by Q2 Year 1
- 8-10 external events booked annually
- 60% reduction in city-university scheduling conflicts



Enhance Student and Family Visit Experience

Current Landscape:

- 84,000 campus visitors annually (30% stay overnight)
- Families "wandering" after events, unaware of city attractions
- High stress, limited information during peak weekends
- No coordinated visitor resources

Strategies:

- Partner with TAMU Admissions to share visit registration data
- Send tailored pre-arrival itineraries ("Aggie Weekender," "Family Food Crawl")
- Deploy QR codes in hotels/admissions offices linking to real-time event calendars
- Include College Station community info in recruitment videos
- Develop customized digital tools and curated itineraries

Key Performance Targets:

- Increase overnight stays from 30% to 40%
- 3,000+ curated itinerary downloads annually
- Generate 5,000 additional hotel room nights



Enhance Faculty and Staff Recruitment Experience

Current Landscape:

- 300+ faculty visits per year (3-5 candidates per hire)
- Inconsistent visit experiences across departments
- Candidates leave thinking "nothing to do" in College Station
- Faculty choosing to commute from Houston

Strategies:

- Position Visit College Station as "destination experience experts"
- Form "Community Expert Network" matching candidates with local ambassadors
- Create custom "Life in College Station" itineraries highlighting schools, neighborhoods, culture
- Build comprehensive "Move to College Station" digital guide
- Integrate with Economic Development's Talent Attraction strategy

Key Performance Targets:

- 150+ faculty candidates receiving customized itineraries annually
- 60% of recruiting departments utilizing services
- 25 Community Expert Network members recruited



Joint Marketing Strategy for University Community Synergy

Current Landscape:

- University and city market separately - "bifurcated brand"
- Visitors see trips as "one-dimensional" (game only, leave immediately)
- Local businesses unable to capture university event traffic
- Limited cross-promotion between cultural assets and entertainment districts

Strategies:

- Develop joint campaigns highlighting university-community connections
- Create "Aggie Gameday+" packages (pre-game and post-game itineraries)
- Bundle athletic tickets with hotel stays, dining vouchers, attraction tickets
- Establish "Restaurant Week" and "Local Restaurant Passport" programs
- Integrate community event calendars into official TAMU mobile apps

Key Performance Targets:

- 3-4 joint marketing campaigns annually
- 1,500+ integrated visitor packages sold
- Increase average stay for athletic attendees by 0.5 nights



Leisure Events Strategy

Current Landscape:

- Only 25% of events drive regional demand
- Critical gaps: January-March, September
- Limited music/entertainment venues
- Events are locally-focused, not overnight drivers
- Need signature anchor event

Strategies:

- Adopt Event Matrix as standard funding evaluation tool
- Require Event Impact Calculator reporting for grant recipients
- Establish Signature Event Task Force to develop new anchor within 3 years
- Hire Leisure Events Contractor to recruit/create regional events
- Create "Event-in-a-Box" service packages for organizers
- Develop "Target Event Calendar" with incentive funding for need periods

Key Performance Targets:

- Increase regional-impact events from 25% to 40%
- Generate 15,000 hotel room nights from leisure events annually
- Recruit/create 2-3 new demand-driving events
- Launch one signature anchor event





Implementation

Implementation Plan & Resourcing Timeline

Three-Year Timeline: Year-by-year hiring sequence, role priorities, dependencies

Funding Strategy:

- Year 1: Strategic reallocation of underperforming event grants + marketing budget
- Year 2+: HOT revenue growth from Year 1 bookings funds expansion
- MOU Revenue Share: TAMU partnership creates sustainable funding stream
- Performance-Contingent: Each phase must hit targets before next investment

Implementation Principle: No additional hires until prior year's KPI targets are met



Specialized Roles for Performance

PRIORITY 1:

- Director of University Strategy & Partnerships (City Position) - Strategic bridge between TAMU and city
- Assistant Director of University Sales (Academic & Corporate) - Revenue generation hunter
- Leisure Events Contractor Firm - Create signature events and fill calendar gaps

PRIORITY 2:

- Assistant Director of University Event Strategy - Develop TAMU venue business
- Marketing Manager - Academia & leisure events focus

PRIORITY 3:

- Business Development Coordinator - Research and pipeline support
- University Event Strategy Manager - Operational excellence
- Destination Experience Manager - Family and faculty services

PRIORITY 4:

- Sales Manager (Academic & Corporate) - Scale successful programs



Each hire contingent on prior phase success



Year 1 Implementation

- Core strategic hires (Priorities 1)
- MOU negotiation with TAMU
- Academic conference pilot programs (2-3 events)
- Signature event concept development
- Establish baseline metrics

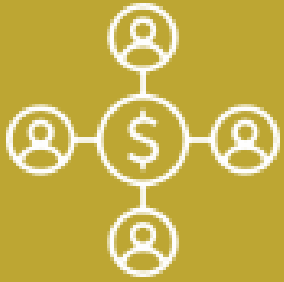
Quarterly reporting to Tourism Committee at each phase



Year 2 Implementation

- Marketing and support roles (Priorities 2)
- Full academic sales rollout
- Launch joint marketing campaigns
- Faculty recruitment program university-wide
- Event Matrix adoption for grants

Quarterly reporting to Tourism Committee at each phase



Year 3 Implementation

- Destination experience and coordination roles (Priorities 3)
- Launch signature anchor event
- Scale successful conference programs
- Mature all six pillars
- Evaluate expansion capacity

Quarterly reporting to Tourism Committee at each phase

What Success Looks Like

ACADEMIC CONFERENCES:

- 6-8 additional conferences hosted annually
- 12,000+ additional hotel room nights generated
- 12-15% conversion rate on qualified leads

FAMILY & FACULTY EXPERIENCE:

- Campus visitor overnight rate: 30% → 40%
- 150+ faculty candidates receiving customized support
- 5,000 additional room nights from extended family stays

LEISURE EVENTS:

- Regional-impact events: 25% → 40% of portfolio
- 15,000 room nights from new leisure programming
- One signature anchor event launched

ECONOMIC IMPACT:

- Capture previously lost \$4M+ academic segment
- Year-round demand stabilization
- Reduced reliance on football-dependent economy



Why Now?

COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE:

- Peer universities already investing in specialized academic sales teams
- Competitor destinations formalizing university partnerships now
- Penn State, Wisconsin, Madison generating \$8-20M annually from this model

OPPORTUNITY WINDOW:

- 10,000+ potential conferences aligned with TAMU strengths
- 59% of lost business was winnable with proper sales execution
- Infrastructure exists - we need specialized sales capacity

COMMUNITY BENEFITS BEYOND TOURISM:

- Supports TAMU faculty recruitment and retention
- Fills off-season hospitality employment gaps
- Elevates College Station's profile as academic destination
- Creates year-round economic stability for local businesses

RISK OF INACTION:

- Permanent market disadvantage as peers capture TAMU-aligned conferences
- Continued \$4M+ annual losses in academic segment
- Missed opportunity to leverage university's global brand



Conclusion & Recap

THE OPPORTUNITY:

- \$27.6M in documented lost economic impact (2022-2024)
- 10,000+ potential conferences aligned with TAMU's academic strengths
- Infrastructure exists - we need specialized sales capacity

THE SOLUTION:

- 6 interconnected strategic pillars
- Phased, performance-based implementation over 3 years
- Self-funding model through HOT revenue growth

THE RESULTS (Year 3 Targets):

- 6-8 additional academic conferences annually = 12,000+ room nights
- 40% campus visitor overnight rate (up from 30%)
- 15,000+ room nights from new leisure events
- Year-round economic stability

THE IMPERATIVE: Peer destinations are implementing these strategies now. The cost of inaction is permanent competitive disadvantage.





COLLEGE STATION

Thank you

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