



Tourism Strategic Plan Progress Update

April 2, 2025

Background and Strategic Framework

Tourism's Role: Supports quality of life, attracts businesses, and boosts local economy.

Plan History: Initial Strategic Plan was adopted in 2018. The plan was revised with input from EDTAC and community stakeholders, and approved by the Board of Supervisors on December 6, 2023.

Vision: Fluvanna will be recognized as a welcoming destination, preserving small-town charm, rich history and natural beauty.

Mission: Leverage natural, historic, and recreational assets to create economic benefits.

Key Focus Areas: Marketing, Infrastructure Development, Business Capacity Building, and Communication and Awareness.



Goal 1: Build upon successful tourism marketing strategies and branding, e.g., tourism logo, rack card, and video.

1. Enhance the county's brand as an accessible adventure and event destination. Leverage the County's considerable outdoor recreational assets. Focus specifically on the Rivanna & James River experiences for visitors and residents.
2. Identify and secure funding for materials and programs above to be used in specific marketing and outreach, e.g. rack cards, website and social media.

Progress made:

- ✓ Established the Find Fluvanna brand integrating outdoor recreation, history and cultural tourism to include:
 - Find Fluvanna website
 - Rack Cards
 - Visitor Guide
 - Social Media (Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest)
 - Find Fluvanna tourism video
- ✓ Applied for and received additional \$18,000 in Virginia Tourism Corporation marketing leverage grants to further expand on the Find Fluvanna marketing efforts



Goal 2: Evaluate needs of tourism infrastructure opportunities by focus areas: Outdoor Recreation, Arts, History, Black History and Culture, and Agribusiness.

1. Design consistent signage at county gateways (and crossways) denoting tourism opportunities. (e.g., Rivanna River Kayaking Trips, Rosenwald Schools, etc.) Seek grant (and/or sponsorship) funding to pay costs.
2. Research B&Bs ordinance updates, and pursue changes if needed. Provide listings.
3. Complete broadband in County. Firefly currently at approx. 80% completion. Will be complete by 2025, dependent on Dominion. Funding secured.
4. Update county website with tourism dedicated webpage.

Progress made:

- ✓ EDTAC Presented the Gateway Sign Proposal to Board of Supervisors for consideration in February 2025, next step is to secure funding to create a VDOT Master Plan for Design and Signs, to include gateway and Tourist Oriented Destination Signs (TODS)
- ✓ Short Term Rental Ordinance adopted by BOS in July 2024
- ✓ [Find Fluvanna](#) website was created in October 2023



Goal 3: Increase the capacity of businesses and tourism activities in Fluvanna County.

1. Conduct an organizational review to include comparisons of similar organizations.
2. Perform an analysis of staff time, personnel costs, advertising and overhead expense to recommend if more staff are needed, e.g. PT Coordinator, Partnership with Chamber, etc.
3. Earmark portion of meals and/or lodging tax collected to offset funds for tourism staff to implement tourism strategies.
4. Research grant opportunities through Rural Development, Virginia Tourism Corporation, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, etc. for product development and thematic programming.
5. Leverage local and regional community and governmental partnerships with, but not limited to: Chamber, Rotary, Historical Society, Rivanna Conservation Alliance, Master Naturalist, and local Scout groups.

Progress made:

- ✓ Small Business Development and Tourism Specialist position was created and funded in the FY 24 budget
- ✓ Transient Occupancy Tax implemented in January 2024. \$35,729 was collected in calendar year 2024
- ✓ Applied for and received \$79,000 in Virginia Tourism Corporation grants:
 - 2022 ARPA Tourism Recovery Program \$60,000
 - 2024 Spring Marketing Leverage Grant \$13,000
 - 2024 Fall Microbusiness Marketing Leverage Grant \$5,000



Goal 3: Increase the capacity of businesses and tourism activities in Fluvanna County.

Progress made - continued:

- ✓ Leveraged and Formed New Local and Regional Partnerships:
 - Partnered with Fluvanna Historical Society to request General Lafayette Trail Markers and promoting events in Wilmington and Columbia resulting in more than 500 attendees, with some coming from outside the area and state
 - EDTAC partnered with the Historical Society to support the restoration of the Courthouse project
 - Economic Development provided visitation and trend data for the successful VA250 preservation grant request
 - New regional partnership to create a new Virginia Tourism Corporation central Virginia tourism region
 - Partnered with Arts of Fluvanna to secure Virginia Tourism Grant Funding for new website and marketing materials to support growth of Studio Tour
 - Partnered with Palmyra Arts Fest and the Fluvanna Historical Society to promote and grow festival and tours of the Courthouse, Old Stone Jail and Historic Palmyra Village
 - Partnered with Fluvanna Family Fall Festival to support and promote new event
 - Partnered with RVA Racing to support and promote State Mountain Bike Championship
 - Established new relationship with Historic Bremo stewards to explore future opportunities for partnerships



Find Fluvanna Promoted Events

The image is a promotional advertisement for the Virginia State MTB Marathon Championship. It features a professional cyclist in mid-air, performing a jump on a mountain bike through a dense forest. The cyclist is wearing a white and red helmet, a white and red jersey, and white and red shorts. A race number '29' is visible on the front of the jersey. The background is a lush green forest. To the right of the cyclist, the event's logo is displayed in large, bold, green letters: 'VIRGINIA STATE MTB MARATHON CHAMPIONSHIP'. Below the logo, the text 'October 4, 2024 | Pleasant Grove Park | Culpeper County, VA' is written. A stylized graphic of a black mountain biker riding a bike is shown above the text. The word 'TWO' is written in large, bold, grey letters across the middle of the page. Below 'TWO', the text 'BIKES, FAMILY, FRIENDS, + FUN' is written in a bold, black font. Below that, 'OCTOBER 5-6, 2024' is written in a smaller, bold, black font. In the bottom right corner, there is a QR code with the text 'SIGN UP!' above it. A blue curved arrow points from the bottom left towards the 'LET'S RACE!' text. Another blue curved arrow points from the bottom right towards the QR code. At the very bottom, the text 'bike races built by bike racers!' is written in a small, blue font, and 'RVARACING.COM' is written in a small, blue font at the bottom right.

A poster for the Fluvanna Family Fall Festival. The top right corner features the text "SPONSORED BY" above the "FLUVANNA" logo, which includes a sun icon. To the right of the logo are three smaller logos: "Fluvanna County Rotary Club", "Economic Development Authority", and "Buckingham County". The central image is a wooden barrel overflowing with autumnal items like gourds, pumpkins, and a red apple. The text "FLUVANNA FAMILY" is written in a stylized font above the word "FALL", and "FESTIVAL" is written below it in large, bold letters. Below the barrel, the text "SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28TH" and "12:00 PM - 5:00 PM" is displayed. The bottom left corner shows a cluster of acorns, and the bottom right corner features a yellow flower and a QR code with a blue "f" icon.

ARTS
of **FLUVANNA**
COUNTY

STUDIO TOUR
October 19 & 20
10am-5pm
RAIN OR SHINE

A poster for the Fluvanna County Arts Council's 2024-2025 season. It features a large title at the top and a grid of nine performance details below. Each detail includes a small image, the name of the act, the date, and the time. The acts listed are: Tom Readley's Jazz Soundscape (September 14 at 7pm), Chicken Head Blues Band (October 12 at 7pm), Reindeer Roasted (November 25 at 8pm), Horace Sonjge (December 7 at 7pm), Empowered Playgroup (Dove 6 at 3pm, Dove 14 at 3pm), Carysbrook Performing Arts Center (8880 James Madison Hwy, Fork Union), For Tickets: www.Carysbrook.org, Chikabang (February 10 at 7pm), Robert Joseph Quartet (March 22 at 7pm), and Dirty Laundry (April 26, May 3, May 10). The poster has a red and green color scheme with a decorative border.

A poster for an event. The top half features the text "FLUVANNA COUNTY PRESENTS" in blue, bold, sans-serif capital letters. Below it is a large, stylized blue "G" with a musical note inside its loop. To the right of the "G", the words "Live Music" are written in a smaller blue font. The word "Groovin'" is written in blue, slanted capital letters, with "at the" in smaller blue letters above "GROVE". Below "GROVE" is the text "Pleasant Grove Park" in blue. The bottom half of the poster has a background of blue and yellow diagonal stripes. The text "Dan and the Fam" is in large, bold, black, sans-serif capital letters. Below it, "Saturday, July 13th, 5-7 PM" is in a smaller, black, sans-serif font.

Goal 4: Create increased opportunities for current and potential tourism small businesses in the county through more effective and broader communication and awareness campaigns.

1. Provide training for businesses to learn how to master social media, website and other marketing techniques. Find communication specialist to do workshops to enhance business owners' skillset for effective marketing and increased sales.
2. Encourage use of a community calendar, e.g., "FindFluvanna.org", as a county-wide resource to promote the activities and events of tourism focused businesses, including hospitality and retail. Encourage residents to use the calendar as a first look to find things to do across the county.
3. Create tourism newsletter to highlight and promote tourism focused businesses and activities in Fluvanna County. Continue outreach to residents by promoting the newsletter in, and encourage sign ups to FAN mail (**Fluvanna Area News**), a weekly email featuring local events.
4. Provided assistance to coordinate marketing/advertising within cross themed programming among entities in the county and facilitate tours and events when possible.

Progress made:

- ✓ Partnered with Dorazio Communications to host Marketing Your Business workshops hosted by: Hardware Hills Winery, Women in Business, Cunningham Creek Winery
 - Working on new workshops this year to include AI for Business Owners, Review Management, and Websites
- ✓ Find Fluvanna website includes an events calendar
- ✓ Created monthly newsletter in April 2024



Tourism Impact in Fluvanna County

Tourism Direct Impacts on Fluvanna's Economy in 2023*

\$10.5M Direct Visitor Spending (up .5% from 2022)

77 Jobs Supported by Tourism

\$.5M Local Taxes Generated

*Source: Virginia Tourism Corporation/Tourism Economics

2024 Event Attendance:

County Fair Paid Guests: 7,887

Palmyra Arts Fest: 2,164

Groovin' at the Grove: 1,160

Fluvanna Family Fall Festival: 1,150

State Mountain Bike Championship: 179 racers, 110 spectators

Arts of Fluvanna Studio Tour: 173

2024 Transient Occupancy Tax Collected: \$35,729



Looking Forward – Next Steps and Priorities

Expand Marketing Efforts: Build on Find Fluvanna success and pursue new grants.

Strengthen Infrastructure: Secure funding for VDOT Master Plan to complete the Gateway Signs project.

Boost Business Capacity and Community Engagement: Expand training and partnerships for growth.

New Tourism Assets and Events: Develop self-guide tours, agritourism, and local events.

Continual Review: Monitor progress and adjust strategies to meet evolving community and visitor needs. Plan for comprehensive review and update of the strategic plan within three years.





QUESTIONS?



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