



LEXINGTON DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN

October 17, 2017

EXTENSIVE OUTREACH

- In-market tours and site reviews.
- Conducted in-person and telephone interviews with more than 80 local stakeholders, tour operators and non-local meeting planners.
- Contacted CVB's, city representatives, downtown authority organizations and/or attraction management in 10 comparable destinations (Little Rock, Fort Wayne, Savannah, Columbia, Greenville, Sonoma County, Asheville, Norfolk, Grand Rapids, Columbus).
- Surveyed more than 40 national Travel Writers.
- Surveyed 275 residents of Lexington-Fayette County region.



STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS



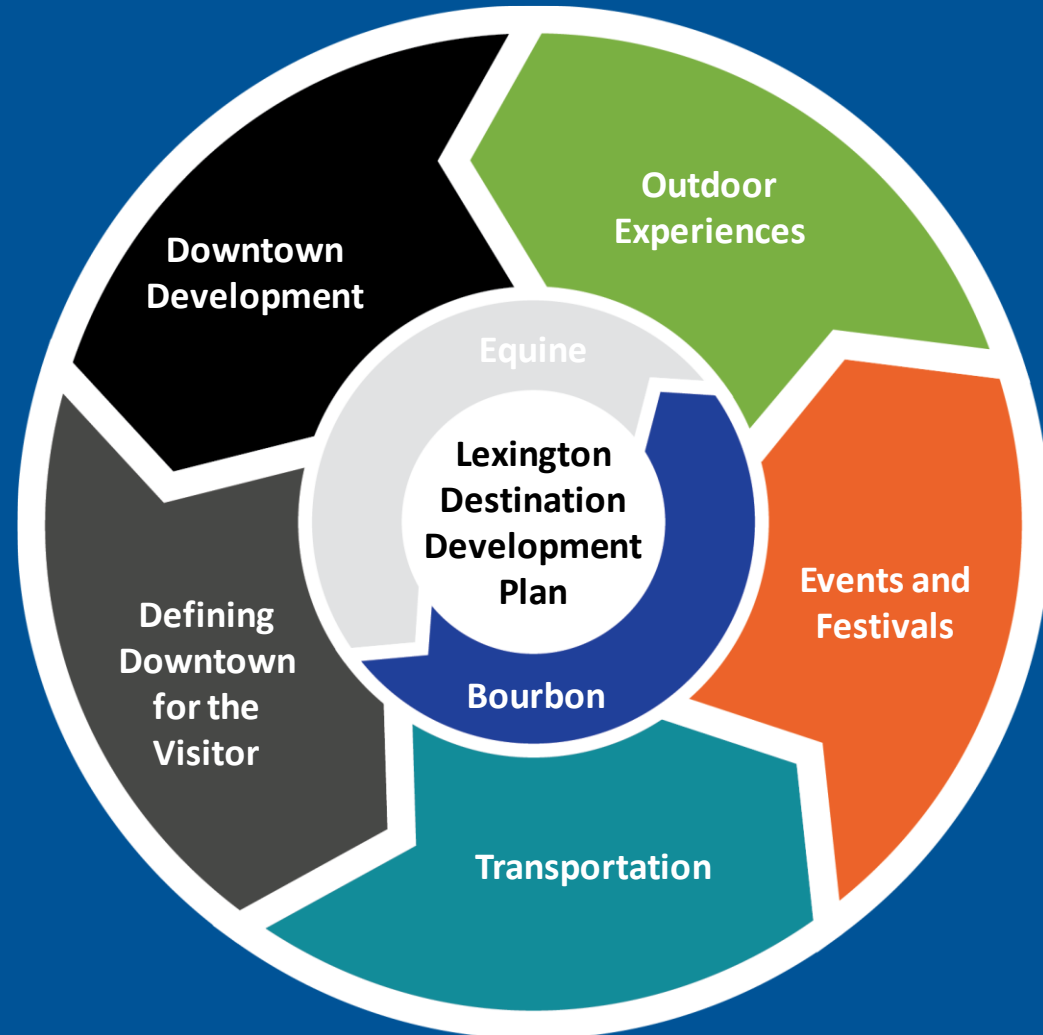
Strengths and Opportunities

- Friendly and sophisticated people and atmosphere
- Beautiful landscape and countryside
- Unique equine destination
- Substantial ongoing investment and planning (Town Branch Commons and Courthouse)
- Proximity to Kentucky Bourbon Trail
- Local increase in breweries/distilleries
- Clean, pristine destination (downtown, parks, countryside)
- Surprising culinary scene
- “Backroad” driving experiences
- Long travel season
- Experience and wherewithal of Visit Lex and Lexington Center staff

Challenges and Threats

- No walkable marquee attractions
- Lack of family-friendly entertainment
- Lack of citywide and downtown events/festivals
- Underleveraged outdoor assets
- Lack of access to the horse farms, limited tour experiences (though this is improving)
- Kentucky Horse Park is underdeveloped
- Lack of “hands on” horse experiences
- Lack of downtown “buzz”
- Lack of public transportation options to travel to/from downtown
- Parking issues in downtown
- Accessibility of Keeneland
- Limited direct air access

OPPORTUNITY AREAS





1. Further Developing Equine Tourism

EXISTING ASSETS

Progressive and creative initiatives in place:

- Horse Country (expected to grow visitor base by 100 percent)
- Growing recognition of tourism opportunities by horse farms
- Developing product – enhanced experiences and horse farms and increased access to the horses themselves
- KHP and Keeneland are world class equine event facilities
- Significant economic impact generated by horse events and horse market



BUILDING ON PROGRESS

1) Themed

- Develop distinctive branding for different types of farms/tours
- Racing, Medical, Hands On, Horse and Ag, Horse and Bourbon

2) Accredited Tour Operations

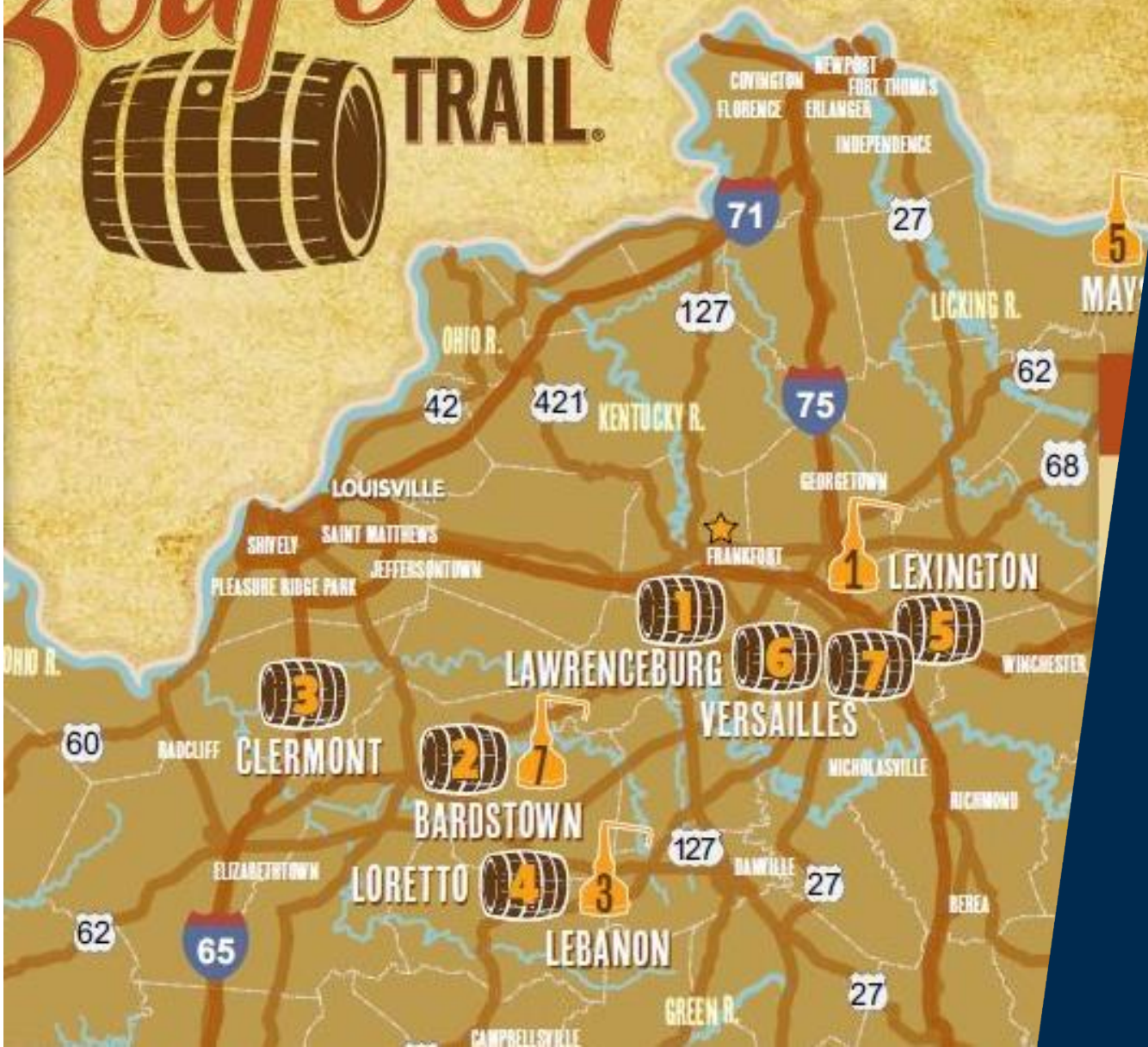
- Training (potential UK partnership) – tour operators and on-site staff
- Central location option
- More frequent/consistent bookings

3) Develop Product

- Educational content
- Hands-on experiences
- Add farms
- Enhance online booking
- Review and refine zoning laws
- Add cafes, bed/breakfasts, spas near sites



KENTUCKY Bourbon TRAIL.



2. Leveraging the Bourbon Industry

BOURBON IN URBAN CORE

- Prioritize recruitment of showrooms, bourbon restaurants, bourbon cooking classes – emphasize authentic
- Develop interactive exhibits tied to bourbon industry (Destination Square)
- Promote and enhance distilleries, breweries and bike/walk trails in and around downtown
- Connect convention groups to the trails and bourbon assets downtown



BOURBON TRAIL

- Encourage onsite amenities
- Consider low interest revolving loan fund
- Tie to Horse Country (combined itineraries)
 - Develop shared website to simplify trip planning
- Assist/support legalization of out of state ecommerce
- Coordinate Trail members to develop Trail logo/stamp to add to international distribution of product





3. Outdoor Experiences

LEVERAGING OUTDOOR OPPORTUNITIES

- Product development
 - Canopy tours (zip lines, ropes courses)
 - Rock climbing at Red River Gorge
 - Trails (Mountain biking, urban/regional bike trails, horseback riding, hiking)
 - Water sports whitewater park (Lock and Dam 10)
 - Overnight stays in Palisades (bed and breakfasts, tree houses)
- Public/Private Partnerships, TIF financing, Tourism Development Fund
- Package existing assets with other attractions
 - Red River Gorge
 - Boone Creek Outdoors
 - Blueway Trail
 - Kayaking at Silver, Otter, and Elk Horn Creeks



4. Events and Festivals

DEVELOP NEW CITYWIDE FESTIVAL

- Opportunity to activate downtown during shoulder season
- Food, concerts, lectures, exhibitions, competitions, parade
- Budget range of \$2 million to \$3 million
- Develop five-year plan to gradually grow the event
- “Theaters” of activity throughout town
- Need “quarterback” to unite various stakeholders and execute event details





5. Transportation

DEVELOP A NEW TRANSPORTATION ASSET

- Current challenge for visitor
- City buses are not effective visitor assets
- Invest in uniquely designed shuttles/trolleys
- Low cost model
- Electric vehicles?
- Needs to be heavily marketed
- Incorporate distillery district / emerging hospitality nodes



A NEW TRANSPORTATION APPROACH



GR:D Bikeshare (Tempe, AZ)



Free Trolley (Charlottesville, VA)



Joyride (Knoxville, Panama City, Nashville, Tuscaloosa, Tallahassee)



Hopper Carts (Columbus, OH)



6. Defining Downtown for the Visitor

NEW DOWNTOWN WAYFINDING

Wayfinding Development Options



Interactive Kiosk:
Denver, CO



Seamless Cleveland:
Cleveland, OH



Informational:
Littleton, CO



Custom/Unique:
Points

DOWNTOWN VIBRANCY

- Current lack of resources
- BID only focused on cleaning/safety
- Increase budget and staff :
 - Planting trees and beautification
 - Add benches/pocket resting areas
 - Enhance streets and sidewalks (Distillery District)
 - Assist with storefront façade improvements
- Consider parking management revenues to fund projects
- Develop public art and regular entertainment programming



CASE STUDIES

Monumental Public Art



Louisville Slugger Bat (Louisville, KY)



Jack Knife (Scottsdale, AZ)



Head of Franz Kafka (Prague, Czech Republic)



Spoon Bridge (Minneapolis, MN)



Charging Bull (New York, NY)



I See What You Mean (Denver, CO)



7. Downtown Development

A DOWNTOWN DESTINATION SQUARE

- Consider themed sections dedicated to bourbon, equine, history, heritage, arts and culture
- Interactive attractions, exhibits, theater, virtual reality, interaction with mobile apps
- Open “Square” – pedestrian center
- Signature storefronts tied to bourbon and other Lex themes
- Transportation hub (bike, regional shuttles, trolley, walking tours)
- Unique restaurants and retail – craft foods/product
- Public Market

CASE STUDIES

Possible Downtown Destination Square Components



Evan Williams Experience (Louisville, KY)



The Brew You Ride (Amsterdam, Netherlands)



Cattle Raisers Museum (Fort Worth, TX)



Downtown Market (Grand Rapids, MI)

DOWNTOWN DESTINATION SQUARE

Possible Destination Square Site



Key	Hotel
1	Hilton Lexington
2	Hyatt Regency Lexington
3	Gratz Park Inn
4	21c Hotel Lexington

Key	Amenity
●	Restaurant
○	Fast Food/Carry-Out
●	Café/Bakery
●	Bar/Lounge/Nightlife

Key	Attractions/Entertainment
1	Downtown Arts Center
2	Explorium of Lexington
3	Gratz Park
4	Lexington Opera House
5	Mary Todd Lincoln House
6	Old Fayette County Courthouse
7	Rupp Arena
8	Town Branch Park
9	Triangle Park

A PUBLIC MUSEUM/ATTRACTION

- Existing inventory of museums includes only modest-sized attractions
- Common opinion that Lexington lacks fun, family-oriented attraction
- Combine elements from children's museums, history museums, science centers and planetariums
- Consider inclusion of downtown public library, Explorium, UK Art Museum and LexArts (each looking for new space)
- Appropriate attractions for area's well-educated local demographic

CASE STUDIES

Public Museum – Grand Rapids, Michigan





VISITLEX

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