

LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

»» Division of Tourism

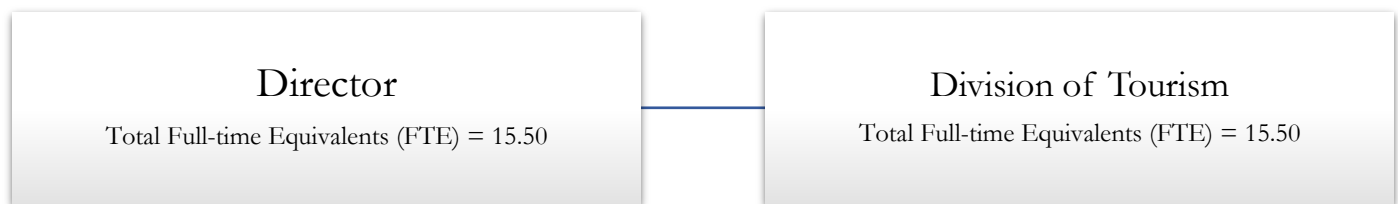
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LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

» Division of Tourism

Organizational Chart



LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

» Division of Tourism

Executive Summary

The Division of Tourism, also known as Visit Tallahassee, drives economic impact for Leon County through destination marketing, tourism sales, public relations, visitor services, strategic partnerships, and research initiatives funded entirely through Tourist Development Tax (TDT) collections. Through targeted marketing efforts, event recruitment, community partnerships, and destination development initiatives, the Division continues to strengthen Tallahassee-Leon County's position as a premier destination for sports, meetings, outdoor recreation, arts and culture, and leisure travel.

Leon County's annually updated five-year planning cycle ensures continued alignment between the Board of County Commissioners' strategic priorities and the Division's marketing and sales initiatives. The FY 2022 – FY 2026 Tourism Strategic Plan and annual Marketing & Sales Plan guided the Division's efforts throughout the fiscal year, aligning tourism investments with measurable economic outcomes, destination growth, and community impact.

Highlights

The Division continued to advance Leon County's Bold Goal of generating \$5 billion in economic impact, achieving the milestone in less than four years while supporting major strategic priorities and numerous target initiatives. During FY 2026, the Division awarded \$800,000 in Tourism Grant funding to support 87 festivals and events throughout the destination. Additional Sales Sponsorship funding supported 17 more events during the first half of FY 2026, including the historic World Athletics Cross Country Championships held in January 2026 at Apalachee Regional Park.

Through the Council on Culture & Arts (COCA) Cultural Grant and Tourism Marketing Programs, nearly \$2 million in Tourist Development Tax funding supported an additional 72 arts, cultural, and tourism-related programs and events. The Division also continued activation of the County Concert Series at the Adderley Amphitheater, hosting six major concerts featuring Gladys Knight, the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra's John Williams concert, TOTO, Lake Street Dive, Earth, Wind & Fire, and Alabama Shakes. Tourism concluded 2025 by presenting its second annual New Year's Eve Celebration featuring live entertainment and dual fireworks displays that attracted thousands of residents and visitors to downtown Tallahassee.

Sports tourism remained a major economic driver for Leon County as the Division strategically targeted a full array of amateur, collegiate, and championship sporting events. In April 2026, Tallahassee hosted the week-long United States Bowling Congress (USBC) Mixed Championships, further broadening the destination's sports tourism offerings. The Division also hosted the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) Cross Country State Championships for the 14th consecutive year and the FHSAA Beach Volleyball State Championships for the fifth consecutive year.

With nine major events taking place at Apalachee Regional Park during the fall and winter of 2025-2026, the venue welcomed more than 7,000 runners and coaches and approximately 25,000 attendees. These events continue to reinforce Tallahassee's reputation as one of the nation's premier destinations for cross country and outdoor sports tourism.

A defining milestone for the community was the successful hosting of the 2026 World Athletics Cross Country Championships, the most prestigious cross-country event in the world. The championship welcomed professional and amateur athletes representing 48 countries and drew more than 15,000 attendees while generating over \$6 million in estimated economic impact. The event marked the first-ever world championship sporting event hosted in Tallahassee-Leon County and only the third time the championships have been held in the United States.

Beyond the significant economic benefits, the event elevated Tallahassee's international visibility and further solidified Apalachee Regional Park's status as one of the most iconic cross-country venues in the world. The successful execution of the event showcased the community's ability to host large-scale international sporting events and demonstrated the strength of partnerships between local government, tourism, sports organizations, educational institutions, and community stakeholders.

The destination continued to experience growth in meetings, conferences, and innovation-focused events. The Division supported several meetings and conventions throughout the fiscal year, including the FIRST Robotics Competition hosted at Florida A&M University's Al Lawson Center. In partnership with the Office of Economic Vitality, the Division also helped secure and support the Motor Drive Systems & Magnetics Conference for the second consecutive year, continuing to strengthen Tallahassee's identity as the "Magnetic Capital of the World."

The Division also continued to leverage Leon County's extensive outdoor and natural assets to attract new visitor markets. In FY 2026, Tallahassee secured the Kayak Adventure Series (KAS) Bass Tournament, further positioning the destination as an emerging leader in paddle sports and outdoor recreation tourism. The success of the event generated additional opportunities within the fishing

and outdoor recreation sector, directly contributing to the recruitment of future events, including the Florida B.A.S.S. Nation Kayak Series Tournament scheduled for FY 2027.

To stimulate economic activity during traditionally slower summer months, the Division continued expanding targeted seasonal campaigns designed to encourage local exploration and support area businesses. Programs such as Beyond Your Block and the Summer Reunions Incentive Program continued driving visitation, supporting local hotels, restaurants, attractions, and retail establishments during the off-peak season.

A major new initiative launching in FY 2027 is Tallahassee Restaurant Week, a collaborative destination-wide culinary promotion designed to highlight the community's growing food scene while increasing foot traffic and economic activity for local dining establishments. These initiatives reflect the Division's ongoing commitment to supporting local businesses while enhancing quality of life for both residents and visitors.

The Division also anticipates a significant operational milestone with the return of its headquarters, tourism offices, and primary Visitor Information Center to the historic Amtrak Building on Railroad Avenue. This transition marks the Division's return following nearly two years of displacement caused by the 2024 tornadoes and represents an important investment in visitor services, destination visibility, and downtown activation. The restored facility will centralize tourism operations in a highly visible and historic location while enhancing accessibility for visitors and residents alike.

As the Division concludes the FY 2022 – FY 2026 Tourism Strategic Plan, focus now shifts toward development of the next five-year roadmap in alignment with Leon County's updated strategic planning process. Building upon recent momentum, the Division remains committed to strengthening Tallahassee-Leon County's position as a leading destination for sports, culture, outdoor recreation, meetings, and leisure travel while continuing to drive sustainable economic growth and long-term increases in Tourist Development Tax collections.

LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

» Division of Tourism

Business Plan

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Leon County Division of Tourism is to spearhead and coordinate the tourism marketing and management of the destination through the coordination of the hospitality industry, local governments, and the business community to sustain and grow visitor spending and job creation in the Leon County/Tallahassee region.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

ECONOMY



EC1 - Do well-designed public infrastructure which supports business, attracts private investment, and has long term economic benefits.



EC4 - Grow our tourism economy, its diversity, competitiveness, and economic impact.

QUALITY OF LIFE



Q5 - Promote livability, health and sense of community by supporting strong neighborhoods, enhancing mobility, encouraging human scale development, and creating public spaces for people of all ages.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

ECONOMY

1. (EC4) Implement the Division of Tourism's Strategic Plan. (2022-5)
2. (EC4) To further promote Leon County as a biking community, pursue the State's "Trail Town" designation and continue to coordinate with the City, Blueprint, State, and U.S. Forest Service to leverage capital improvements in pursuit of the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) designation. (2022-7)
3. (EC4) Continue to build upon the reputation of Apalachee Regional Park as a destination venue for cross-country athletes by securing state, regional and national competitions. (2022-6)
4. (EC4) To celebrate Leon County/Tallahassee Bicentennial in 2024, the County will implement the Leon County Bicentennial organizational management plan and facilitate the Bicentennial Steering Committee to lead the community planning efforts with government agencies, businesses, organizations, and citizens. (2023-44)
5. (EC1) Open and activate the newly renovated Amtrak facility as the visitor center and destination hub for Leon County. (2023-45)
6. (EC4) As part of the Bicentennial year and beyond, expand outreach and promotion of the County's new Visitor Information Center at the Historic Amtrak Station. (2024-68)
7. (EC4) Implement the statewide planning, coordination, and fundraising efforts to successfully host the 2026 World Cross Country Championships at Apalachee Regional Park. (2024-69)
8. (EC4) Explore opportunities to attract Top 100 Billboard artists for concerts and performances at various local venues throughout the year. (2025-88)
9. (EC4) Evaluate recreational amenities in Southwest Leon County, including Lake Talquin, J. Lewis Hall Sr. Park, and the St. Marks Trail, for opportunities to host annual events and competitions. (2025-89)

10. (EC4) Initiate the FY 2027 – 2031 Division of Tourism’s Strategic Plan to establish the County’s tourism priorities, economic goals, and efforts to further grow the region’s visitor economy and quality of life over the next five years. (2026-103)
11. (EC4) Support Florida’s coordinated U.S. Semi quincentennial (250th) campaign by aligning County communications and event planning with national and state messaging, leveraging local history and assets to drive engagement and visitation. (2026-104)
12. (EC4) Evaluate the feasibility of a Leon County film incentive program by analyzing peer models, projected economic impacts, administrative requirements, funding options, and performance metrics. (2026-105)
13. (EC4) Establish Leon County’s Apalachee Regional Park as the permanent home of the World Athletics Cross Country Championships by building on the defining success of the 2026 Championships and strengthening the County's relationship with World Athletics to position the global showcase of Leon County’s natural beauty and world-class facilities as a catalyst for continued growth in sports tourism. (2026-106)

ACTIONS

ECONOMY

1. The Board approved the Division’s Plan on March 8, 2022. The Division of Tourism provided an annual report to the TDC in the fall of 2023 and 2024, and 2025. (Ongoing)
2. a) Blueprint provided information on future bicycle and pedestrian facility construction to TLCPD and Tourism staff for inclusion in applications for the "Trail Town" designation application, and will assist further, as needed. (Completed)
- b) Stakeholder meetings were held to coordinate action items in the Rock Solid Master Plan to achieve IMB Designation. (Completed)
- c) Parks staff has reviewed the Mountain Bike Road Map and met with Tourism staff to discuss the next steps towards optimizing points for the IMBA Designation. Parks staff will be focusing on the JR Alford single-track trail development in FY26. (Completed)
- d) Tourism efforts to connect and enhance trails for this project have been halted due to funding cuts to the National Forest Services. Tourism Staff continue to work with Parks staff on trail development with in the Mountain Bike Road Map. (In Progress)
3. a) In July 2022, the County was awarded the bid to host the 2026 World Athletics Cross Country Championship to be hosted at ARP. (Ongoing)
- b) Hosted 6 Cross Country Championship events at the ARP Cross country course. Tourism Staff met with key stakeholders, local, national and World Athletics leaders in preparation of hosting the 2026 World Athletics Cross Country Championships. The Division helped develop the logo for the Championships as well. (Complete)
- c) Signed extension for NAIA Cross Country (XC) Championships for 2028. Signed 5-year agreement with FHSAA XC State Championships and a 3-year agreement for the SWAC XC Championships. Secured 2027 NJCAA XC National Championships. (Complete)
- d) Entry lists published by World Athletics confirmed 485 athletes from 52 countries/federations were entered for the 2026 Worlds XC Championships, reinforcing the event’s breadth and international representation. (Complete)
4. a) Bicentennial Steering Committee established and held first meeting in March 2023. (Complete)
- b) Coordinated/Participated in over 200 Bicentennial Events(Complete)
- c) Multiple Taskforces created and activated beginning in April 2023 and Continuing on through FY2024 and 2025 (Complete)
- d.) Create book documenting the activities and historic celebration of the Bicentennial (Complete)
5. a) Packing offices for move in early April. (Complete)
- b) Moved offices in April. (Complete)
- c) Held a May Grand opening for New Facility and Visitor Information Center. (Complete)

- d) Continued the "Stop at the Station" collaboration effort until May of 2024. In May of 2024 the Amtrak facility had to be closed due to damage sustained from the May 10 tornados. Damage assessments, engineering plan and insurance claim processing were initiated to restore the building and enable the Visitor Center to reopen. (Complete)
- e) Construction bid was awarded to H.A. Contracting Corp. and work has begun to repair damage. (In Progress)
- f) Repairs underway and progressing on schedule (In Progress)
- 6. a) Through the creation of the Stop at the Station First Friday events monthly, VIC began hosting musicians, artists, and poets as entertainment. Advertising through social and printed media to increase awareness and broader reaching promotion of Visitor Services. (Ongoing)
- b) Had record breaking sales and visitor services efforts due to the promotion of the new Visitor Information Center until its closing in May 2024. At its closing in May of 2024, the Division of Tourism implemented messaging for the closure of the Amtrak Visitor Information Center and heavily promoted the Cascade Visitor Information Center. Curated an additional 6 local authors and 8 new local artists and suppliers for retail items in the storefront. (Ongoing)
- 7. a) Conducted 28 internal and external WXC preparation meetings (Complete)
- b) Team of 4 went to Serbia to activate and announce Tallahassee as the 2026 Host (Complete)
- c) Entry lists published by World Athletics confirmed 485 athletes from 52 countries/federations were entered for the Championships, reinforcing the event's breadth and international representation. (Complete)
- 8. Tourism Staff is actively engaging in high level talks with key stakeholders to discuss potential availability, operational, and physical plant capabilities for collaboration opportunities. (In Progress)
- 9. a) In light of significant tornado damage, Parks staff will be transforming the former Williams Campground into a dedicated boat trailer parking area, as Williams Landing is the most popular access point to the lake for County residents. This upgrade will create approximately 15 additional parking spots for boat trailers. It will also help support future tourism related to fishing tournaments. (In Progress)
- b) Tourism Sales efforts have uncovered and enticed 2 fishing tournaments to hold their events at Lake Talquin in FY 2026. Secured a relationship for USSS baseball to use the J. Lewis Hall Sr. Park on an ongoing basis. (In Progress)
- 10. Tourism will follow the county timeline for development of the FY 2027-2031 and anticipate initiating the process in the Fall of 2026. (In Progress)
- 11. The Tourism Marketing team has been actively supporting and promoting the America 250 initiative, especially the Florida visitor-focused "America 250 Florida Road Trip." (In Progress)
- 12. Staff analyzed six peer programs both in state and out of state as well as information from the Florida Department of Commerce to develop a feasibility recommendation to be brought before the County Commission. (Complete)
- 13. Staff met with WA staff to discuss the potential of hosting WXC again. WA expressed strong interest in returning to Tallahassee in the future; however, as cross country is currently being considered for inclusion in the 2030 Winter Olympics, decisions regarding future event locations are on hold until a determination is made at the World Athletics Council meeting in late June 2026. (In Progress)

BOLD GOALS & 5-YEAR TARGETS



Bold Goal: Grow the five-year tourism economy to \$5 billion. (BG1)

	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026*	TOTAL
Tourism Economic Growth (billions)	\$1.15	\$1.25	\$1.29	\$1.47	\$1.48	\$6.64

Note: Leon County currently contracts with the research firm Downs & St. Germain for tourism research services, including determining the quarterly tourism economy. Since the start of the County's five-year plan, Downs & St. Germain estimated the total economic impact of tourism in Leon County at \$1.15 billion for FY 2022, \$1.25 billion for FY 2023, \$1.29 billion for FY 2024, and \$1.47 billion for FY 2025. For the first two quarters of FY 2026, Downs & St. Germain has estimated the economic impact of tourism in Leon County at \$740 million/billion, which brings the total tourism economy over the last four and a half years to \$5.9 billion, 118% of the County's five-year Bold Goal.



Target: Attract 100 state, regional, or national championships across all sports. (T1)

	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026*	TOTAL
Championships Attracted	21	23	19	10	20	93

Note: The Division of Tourism's continued success with sporting event bidding, leveraging community assets related to sports tourism, and strengthening partnerships with local universities, clubs and community organizations, drives the County's progress in securing and hosting youth and adult sport competitions. Since the start of the County's five-year plan, 21 championship sporting events were held in Leon County in FY 2022, 23 additional championship sporting events were held in FY 2023, 19 additional championship sporting events were held in FY 2024, and 10 additional championship sporting events were held in FY 2025. Since the start of FY 2026, 10 additional championship sporting events have been held bringing the total to 83 championships since the start of the County's five-year plan, 83% of the County's five-year Target. Events hosted in FY 2026 include National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Cross Country National Championships, the Florida High School Athletic Association Regional Wrestling Championships, and the Southwestern Athletic Conference Cross Country Championships.



Target: Support 900 community events, sporting competitions, festivals, performances, and cultural programming. (T10)

	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026*	TOTAL
Events Supported	135	111	404	170	160	980

Note: In FY 2022, the County hosted 135 events, sporting competitions, festivals, performances, and cultural programming with Tourism Development Tax (TDT) funds. The County hosted an additional 111 events in FY 2023, 404 events in FY 2024, and 170 events in FY 2025. Within the first half of FY 2026, the County hosted an additional 137 events bringing the total to 957 events hosted, 106% of the County's five-year Target.



Target: Host 100,000 residents and visitors through County-supported performances at the Amphitheater. (T12)

	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026*	TOTAL
Concert Series Attendance	23,500	25,000	25,000	31,000	25,000	129,500

Note: In FY 2022, nearly 23,500 residents and visitors attended County-Supported Performances at the Amphitheater in Cascades Park across 11 County-supported performances. In FY 2023, an additional 11 County-supported performances were hosted with over 25,000 residents and visitors in attendance. In FY 2024, an additional 12 County-supported performances hosted over 25,000 residents and visitors. In FY 2025, an additional 11 County-supported performances hosted over 31,000 residents and visitors. Since the start of FY 2026, over 10,000 residents and visitors have hosted County-supported performances including Gladys Knight, the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra John Williams Concert, TOTO, Lake Street Dive, Earth Wind & Fire, and Alabama Shakes. To date, the County has achieved 114% of the County's five-year Target.

***Bold Goal & Target figures for FY 2026 are estimates. Actuals for FY 2026 will be reported at the Annual Board Retreat in January 2027.**

LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

»»» Division of Tourism

	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2028
Budgetary Costs	Actual	Adopted	Continuation	Issues	Budget	Budget
Personnel Services	1,500,256	1,745,509	1,821,403	-	1,821,403	1,874,457
Operating	3,618,487	5,064,081	4,389,858	75,751	4,465,609	4,691,887
Grants-in-Aid	3,394,139	2,933,581	2,936,431	180,000	3,116,431	3,116,431
Total Budgetary Costs	8,512,882	9,743,171	9,147,692	255,751	9,403,443	9,682,775
Appropriations	Actual	Adopted	Continuation	Issues	Budget	Budget
Division of Tourism	8,512,882	9,743,171	9,147,692	255,751	9,403,443	9,682,775
Total Budget	8,512,882	9,743,171	9,147,692	255,751	9,403,443	9,682,775
	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2028
Funding Sources	Actual	Adopted	Continuation	Issues	Budget	Budget
001 General Fund	150,000	150,000	150,000	-	150,000	150,000
160 Tourism	8,362,882	9,593,171	8,997,692	255,751	9,253,443	9,532,775
Total Revenues	8,512,882	9,743,171	9,147,692	255,751	9,403,443	9,682,775
	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2028
Staffing Summary	Actual	Adopted	Continuation	Issues	Budget	Budget
Division of Tourism	14.00	14.50	14.50	-	14.50	14.50
Total Full-Time Equivalents (FTE)	14.00	14.50	14.50	-	14.50	14.50
	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2027	FY 2028
OPS Staffing Summary	Actual	Adopted	Continuation	Issues	Budget	Budget
Division of Tourism	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Total OPS Full-Time Equivalents (FTE)	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00

LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

» Division of Tourism

Division of Tourism Summary

Budgetary Costs	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
Personnel Services	1,500,256	1,745,509	1,821,403	-	1,821,403	1,874,457
Operating	3,618,487	5,064,081	4,389,858	75,751	4,465,609	4,691,887
Grants-in-Aid	3,394,139	2,933,581	2,936,431	180,000	3,116,431	3,116,431
Total Budgetary Costs	8,512,882	9,743,171	9,147,692	255,751	9,403,443	9,682,775

Appropriations	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
1 Cent Expenses (160-305-552)	547,488	-	-	-	-	-
Administration (160-301-552)	647,246	862,365	858,694	-	858,694	883,092
Advertising (160-302-552)	1,239,451	1,500,000	1,500,000	125,000	1,625,000	1,625,000
COCA Contract (001-888-573)	150,000	150,000	150,000	-	150,000	150,000
Council on Culture & Arts (COCA) (160-888-573)	1,902,639	1,897,150	1,900,000	-	1,900,000	1,900,000
Marketing (160-303-552)	3,312,915	4,533,656	3,938,998	(49,249)	3,889,749	4,144,683
Special Projects (160-304-552)	713,142	800,000	800,000	180,000	980,000	980,000
Total Budget	8,512,882	9,743,171	9,147,692	255,751	9,403,443	9,682,775

Funding Sources	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
001 General Fund	150,000	150,000	150,000	-	150,000	150,000
160 Tourism	8,362,882	9,593,171	8,997,692	255,751	9,253,443	9,532,775
Total Revenues	8,512,882	9,743,171	9,147,692	255,751	9,403,443	9,682,775

Staffing Summary	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
Administration	3.50	4.25	3.75	-	3.75	3.75
Marketing	10.50	10.25	10.75	-	10.75	10.75
Total Full-Time Equivalents (FTE)	14.00	14.50	14.50	-	14.50	14.50

OPS Staffing Summary	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
Administration	0.10	0.10	0.10	-	0.10	0.10
Marketing	0.90	0.90	0.90	-	0.90	0.90
Total OPS Full-Time Equivalents (FTE)	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00

LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

 Division of Tourism

Division of Tourism - Council on Culture & Arts (COCA) (160-888-573)

Budgetary Costs	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
Grants-in-Aid	1,902,639	1,897,150	1,900,000	-	1,900,000	1,900,000
Total Budgetary Costs	1,902,639	1,897,150	1,900,000	-	1,900,000	1,900,000
Funding Sources	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
160 Tourism	1,902,639	1,897,150	1,900,000	-	1,900,000	1,900,000
Total Revenues	1,902,639	1,897,150	1,900,000	-	1,900,000	1,900,000

This funding is for the COCA re-granting program which includes the expense of the 1-cent of the Tourism tax as specified in the contract for re-granting.

LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

» Division of Tourism

Division of Tourism – (160-301,302,303,304,305-552)

Goal	The goal of the Division of Tourism is to enhance the local economy and quality of life through the benefits associated with a strong visitor industry by maximizing the number of visitors, length of stay of visitors, and the economic impact of visitors to Leon County.
Core Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maximize dollars available to market the destination. 2. Support programs and facilities that draw overnight visitors and maximize the return on investment. 3. Increase visitation during times of the year when there is low or decreased activities. 4. Provide effective and efficient visitor services programs. 5. Increase the awareness of the importance of the tourism industry to local residents.
Statutory Responsibilities	Florida Statute, Chapter 125.0104 "Procedure for Levying Tourist Development Tax, Authorized Uses for the Tax, and Enforcement of Collection"; Leon County Code of Laws, Chapter 11, Article III "Tourist Development Tax."
Advisory Board	Tourist Development Council

FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan

	Bold Goals & Five-Year Targets	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026⁵ Estimate	TOTAL⁵
	Grow the five-year tourism economy to \$5 billion. (BG1) ¹	\$1.15	\$1.25	\$1.29	\$1.47	\$1.48	\$6.64
	Attract 100 state, regional, or national championships across all sports. (T1) ²	21	23	19	10	20	93
	Support 900 community events, sporting competitions, festivals, performances, and cultural programing. (T10) ³	135	111	404	170	160	980
	Host 100,000 residents and visitors through County-supported performances at the Amphitheater. (T12) ⁴	23,500	25,000	25,000	31,000	25,000	129,500

Notes:

1. Leon County currently contracts with the research firm Downs & St. Germain for tourism research services, including determining the quarterly tourism economy. Since the start of the County's five-year plan, Downs & St. Germain estimated the total economic impact of tourism in Leon County at \$1.15 billion for FY 2022, \$1.25 billion for FY 2023, \$1.29 billion for FY 2024, and \$1.47 billion for FY 2025. For the first two quarters of FY 2026, Downs & St. Germain has estimated the economic impact of tourism in Leon County at \$740 million/billion, which brings the total tourism economy over the last four and a half years to \$5.9 billion, 118% of the County's five-year Bold Goal.
2. The Division of Tourism's continued success with sporting event bidding, leveraging community assets related to sports tourism, and strengthening partnerships with local universities, clubs and community organizations, drives the County's progress in securing and hosting youth and adult sport competitions. Since the start of the County's five-year plan, 21 championship sporting events were held in Leon County in FY 2022, 23 additional championship sporting events were held in FY 2023, 19 additional championship sporting events were held in FY 2024, and 10 additional championship sporting events were held in FY 2025. Since the start of FY 2026, 10 additional championship sporting events have been held bringing the total to 83 championships since the start of the County's five-year plan, 83% of the County's five-year Target. Events hosted in FY 2026 include National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Cross Country National Championships, the Florida High School Athletic Association Regional Wrestling Championships, and the Southwestern Athletic Conference Cross Country Championships.
3. In FY 2022, the County hosted 135 events, sporting competitions, festivals, performances, and cultural programming with Tourism Development Tax (TDT) funds. The County hosted an additional 111 events in FY 2023, 404 events in FY 2024, and 170 events in FY 2025. Within the first half of FY 2026, the County hosted an additional 137 events bringing the total to 957 events hosted, 106% of the County's five-year Target.
4. In FY 2022, nearly 23,500 residents and visitors attended County-Supported Performances at the Amphitheater in Cascades Park across 11 County-supported performances. In FY 2023, an additional 11 County-supported performances were hosted with over 25,000 residents and visitors in attendance. In FY 2024, an additional 12 County-supported performances hosted over 25,000 residents and visitors. In FY 2025, an additional 11 County-supported performances hosted over 31,000 residents and visitors. Since the start of FY 2026, over 10,000 residents and visitors have hosted County-supported performances including Gladys Knight, the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra John Williams Concert, TOTO, Lake Street Dive, Earth Wind & Fire, and Alabama Shakes. To date, the County has achieved 114% of the County's five-year Target.
5. Bold Goal & Target figures for FY 2026 are estimates. Actuals for FY 2026 will be reported at the Annual Board Retreat in January 2027.

» Division of Tourism

Division of Tourism – (160-301,302,303,304,305-552)

Performance Measures					
Strategic Priorities	Performance Measures	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Estimate	FY 2027 Estimate
	Tourist Development Tax per penny ¹	\$1,839,002	\$1,961,484	\$1,955,456	\$1,975,011
	Percent Change in Tourist Development Tax ¹	8.0%	6.7%	-0.3%	1.0%
	Number of total visitors to Leon County ²	2,485,300	2,620,100	2,614,668	2,632,971
	Percent Change in number of total visitors to Leon County ²	4.0%	5.4%	-0.2%	0.7%
	Total Direct Visitor Economic Impact (billions) ³	\$1.324	\$1.435	\$1.433	1.451
	Percent Change in Direct Visitor Economic Impact ³	6.1%	8.4%	-0.1%	1.2%
	Number of Direct Tourism Related Jobs ⁴	12,200	12,060	12,047	12,192
	Percent Change in the number of Direct Tourism Related Jobs ⁴	-4.6%	-1.1%	-0.1%	1.2%
	Hotel Occupancy ⁵	61%	64.0%	64.0%	64.0%
	Hotel Revenue (millions) ⁵	\$184	\$200	\$195	\$197
	Percent Change in Hotel Revenue ⁵	8.2%	8.8%	-0.3%	1.0%

Notes:

1. The per penny Tourist Development Tax revenue increased by 6.7% in FY 2025; as travel costs continue to increase and economic uncertainty rises, anticipated collections have slowed and will decrease by an estimated -0.3% in FY 2026. FY 2027 is expected to rebound slightly with a modest collection increase of 1.0%.
2. The total number of visitors to Leon County is projected to slightly decrease by -0.2% in FY 2026. Visitation to the area is expected to increase by 0.7% in FY 2027 as travel flattens.
3. Leon County contracts with the consulting firm Downs & St. Germain Research, Inc. to determine the direct visitor economic impact to Leon County. The analysis considers hotel occupancy, reason for visit, origin market, and visitor spending per day (such as accommodations, restaurants, shopping, entertainment, transportation). In FY 2026, the economic impact is projected to be \$1.43 billion, a -0.1% decrease from FY 2025 due to a decrease in visitation and spending.
4. The number of tourism related jobs are projected to decrease by -0.1% in FY 2026. As has been the case throughout the country for the last several years, Leon County is still facing labor shortages in the hospitality industry especially. Maintaining employees in many industries across the U.S. continue to be impacted, including tourism and hospitality and as economic uncertainty grows, businesses have become hesitant to increase staffing levels.
5. The steady hotel occupancy and modestly lower room rates contributed to the decrease in projected hotel revenue in FY 2026 of -0.3% and slight increases are projected in FY 2027 as rates rebound.

LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

 Division of Tourism

Division of Tourism - COCA Contract (001-888-573)

Budgetary Costs	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
Grants-in-Aid	150,000	150,000	150,000	-	150,000	150,000
Total Budgetary Costs	150,000	150,000	150,000	-	150,000	150,000
Funding Sources	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
001 General Fund	150,000	150,000	150,000	-	150,000	150,000
Total Revenues	150,000	150,000	150,000	-	150,000	150,000

The FY 2027 Budget is recommended at the same funding level as the previous year. These costs are related to the management costs of COCA administering the Cultural Grant Program.

LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

» Division of Tourism

Division of Tourism - Administration (160-301-552)

Budgetary Costs	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
Personnel Services	473,210	529,939	515,314	-	515,314	531,539
Operating	174,036	332,426	343,380	-	343,380	351,553
Total Budgetary Costs	647,246	862,365	858,694	-	858,694	883,092

Funding Sources	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
160 Tourism	647,246	862,365	858,694	-	858,694	883,092
Total Revenues	647,246	862,365	858,694	-	858,694	883,092

Staffing Summary	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
Tourism Director	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Tourism Senior Operations Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Senior Administrative Associate	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Administrative Associate - Tourism	-	1.00	0.50	-	0.50	0.50
Visitor Service Representative	0.50	0.25	0.25	-	0.25	0.25
Total Full-Time Equivalents (FTE)	3.50	4.25	3.75	-	3.75	3.75

OPS Staffing Summary	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
TDC Consolidated OPS	0.10	0.10	0.10	-	0.10	0.10
Total OPS Full-Time Equivalents (FTE)	0.10	0.10	0.10	-	0.10	0.10

The major variances for the FY 2027 Tourism Administration Budget are as follows:

Decreases to Program Funding:

1. Realignment of .5 FTE from Administration to Marketing for organizational efficiencies. These cost are offset by increases in the County's portion of retirement rates passed by the Florida Legislature, health insurance premium rates, workers' compensation costs, and funding for 4% raises for all employees.

LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

 Division of Tourism

Division of Tourism - Advertising (160-302-552)

Budgetary Costs		FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
Operating		1,239,451	1,500,000	1,500,000	125,000	1,625,000	1,625,000
	Total Budgetary Costs	1,239,451	1,500,000	1,500,000	125,000	1,625,000	1,625,000
Funding Sources		FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
160 Tourism		1,239,451	1,500,000	1,500,000	125,000	1,625,000	1,625,000
	Total Revenues	1,239,451	1,500,000	1,500,000	125,000	1,625,000	1,625,000

The major variances for the FY 2027 Tourism Advertising Budget are as follows:

Increases to Program Funding:

1. Costs associated with a three-year Film and Television Incentive Pilot Program.

LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

»» Division of Tourism

Division of Tourism - Marketing (160-303-552)

Budgetary Costs	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
Personnel Services	1,027,046	1,215,570	1,306,089	-	1,306,089	1,342,918
Operating	2,205,000	3,231,655	2,546,478	(49,249)	2,497,229	2,715,334
Grants-in-Aid	80,869	86,431	86,431	-	86,431	86,431
Total Budgetary Costs	3,312,915	4,533,656	3,938,998	(49,249)	3,889,749	4,144,683

Funding Sources	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
160 Tourism	3,312,915	4,533,656	3,938,998	(49,249)	3,889,749	4,144,683
Total Revenues	3,312,915	4,533,656	3,938,998	(49,249)	3,889,749	4,144,683

Staffing Summary	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
Senior Sports Sales Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Marketing Communication Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Events & Grants Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Sports Sales Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Assistant Sport Sale Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Visitor Services Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Senior Marketing Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Meeting & Convention Sale Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Public Relations & Marketing Specialist	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Digital Content Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	-	1.00	1.00
Administrative Associate - Tourism	-	-	0.50	-	0.50	0.50
Visitor Service Representative	0.50	0.25	0.25	-	0.25	0.25
Total Full-Time Equivalents (FTE)	10.50	10.25	10.75	-	10.75	10.75

OPS Staffing Summary	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
TDC Consolidated OPS	0.90	0.90	0.90	-	0.90	0.90
Total OPS Full-Time Equivalents (FTE)	0.90	0.90	0.90	-	0.90	0.90

The major variances for the FY 2027 Tourism Marketing Budget are as follows:

Increases to Program Funding:

1. Costs associated with increases in the County's portion of retirement rates passed by the Florida Legislature, health insurance premium rates, workers' compensation costs, and funding for 4% raises for all employees.
2. Realignment of .5 FTE to Marketing from Administration for organizational efficiencies.

Decreases to Program Funding:

1. Cost associated with hosting the World's Cross Country event in FY 2026. Offset by increases in promotional items to increase visibility of the County and further increase tourism in the area.

LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

 Division of Tourism

Division of Tourism - Special Projects (160-304-552)

Budgetary Costs	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
Grants-in-Aid	713,142	800,000	800,000	180,000	980,000	980,000
Total Budgetary Costs	713,142	800,000	800,000	180,000	980,000	980,000
Funding Sources	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
160 Tourism	713,142	800,000	800,000	180,000	980,000	980,000
Total Revenues	713,142	800,000	800,000	180,000	980,000	980,000

This funding is for special events which includes sports and legacy events.

LEON COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2027 ADOPTED BUDGET

 Division of Tourism

Division of Tourism - Council on Culture & Arts (COCA) (160-888-573)						
Budgetary Costs	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
Grants-in-Aid	1,902,639	1,897,150	1,900,000	-	1,900,000	1,900,000
Total Budgetary Costs	1,902,639	1,897,150	1,900,000	-	1,900,000	1,900,000
Funding Sources	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Adopted	FY 2027 Continuation	FY 2027 Issues	FY 2027 Budget	FY 2028 Budget
160 Tourism	1,902,639	1,897,150	1,900,000	-	1,900,000	1,900,000
Total Revenues	1,902,639	1,897,150	1,900,000	-	1,900,000	1,900,000

This funding is for the COCA re-granting program which includes the expense of the 1-cent of the Tourism tax as specified in the contract for re-granting.