

CHICAGO'S METRO WEST  
**DUPAGE** COUNTY  
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

**RELEASE DATE:**

April 20, 2017

**CONTACT:**

Sarah Kollmorgen or Andrew Mack  
Mack Communications  
info@mackcommunications.com  
630-357-7552

**DuPage Tourism Plan Moves Forward**  
*GPS: A Tourism Roadmap calls for collaboration*

OAK BROOK— It's official: DuPage County is about to get a boost to its already successful tourism economy, courtesy of the DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau (DCVB) and its new strategic plan. Yesterday at its April board meeting, the DuPage DCVB Board of Directors unanimously voted to adopt GPS: A Tourism Roadmap, a new strategic plan to grow and guide the tourism industry in DuPage County over the course of the next few years.

“It was very gratifying to have the board's unanimous approval for the strategic plan after what has been a methodical process,” said Beth Marchetti, DCVB executive director. “The entire tourism industry has worked tirelessly to put together a plan for DuPage County that will promote our industry. I look forward to working with leaders throughout the county to put this plan into action.”

The new strategic plan aims to fulfill three general goals—to Grow, Prosper, and Share tourism in DuPage. As such, the plan will maximize partnerships, resources, and opportunities to keep DuPage County a top destination in the state. Tactics are recommended in the plan to maintain DuPage County's strong base in the business market, while building in the leisure market. The strategic plan also aims to better position the DCVB as a destination architect by packaging product offerings, including outdoor recreation, exceptional athletic facilities, and DuPage County's unique science laboratories.

The strategic plan emphasizes collaboration among industry organizations and the 38 communities that make up DuPage County in order to achieve greater success. Currently, the county must compete with markets such as Indianapolis, St. Louis, and even Las Vegas. Earlier this year, the Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation (DGEDC) joined DCVB. The bureau is also currently in talks to develop a partnership with the Forest Preserve District.

“This strategic plan is for the entire county, not just the DCVB,” Marchetti said.  
“Everyone needs to come together in order to become a more competitive market.”

Work on the strategic plan began in early 2016, after the DCVB hired Nichols Tourism Group, a nationally renowned consulting team. Last summer Nichols Tourism Group with DCVB led three public workshops in order to gain industry and public input on tourism in the county. From there, the Nichols Tourism Group worked with DCVB to develop the strategic plan.

“DuPage County is unique in that it has a great diversity of attractions already and a solid 15,000 hotel room base,” said Mitch Nichols, president of Nichols Tourism Group. “However, the industry is fiercely competitive, and other markets receive significant resources. Right now, DuPage County is fragmented. It must see collaboration and investment in order to compete.”

The DCVB began the rollout of certain measures of the plan early this year, such as strategic hires and a focus on the international market. In a few months it will unveil a rebrand.

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*The DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau is the official sales and marketing organization for DuPage County. The DCVB was formed to attract business and leisure travelers to DuPage County's 38 communities and is responsible for generating billions of dollars in revenue every year in the form of hotel nights, tourist attractions, meals and more. The DuPage CVB is the only Illinois State certified not-for-profit organization authorized to represent DuPage County's tourism and convention business.*