St. Mary’s County Tourism & Hospitality Master Plan Update #4

This is the fourth update on progress of the St. Mary’s County Tourism and Hospitality Master Plan process.

Save the Date
Industry Gathering Set for May 20, 2016, 8 AM-10 AM

Join JLL, the Master Plan Executive Team and the Master Plan Committee, for breakfast and a presentation on results of Phase I and a look at Phase II which will see the actual creation of the Master Plan and the South County Action Plan.

Look for details soon.

We have some news related to Strategic Advisory Group (SAG). Our firm was acquired by Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) effective February 1st and we are pleased to be part of the new team. JLL is an international firm with expertise in commercial real estate, capital markets, project development and many others. Our firm is now part of the Hotels and Hospitality Group of JLL and we believe this positively impacts our ability to offer more in depth implementation services to St. Mary’s County.

As we have said in each of our previous updates, the success of the planning process and subsequent implementation depends on the ongoing input and involvement of the St. Mary’s County community. We appreciate the broad spectrum of input received throughout and look forward to more to come.

Click on the button below to give us any feedback or thoughts you may currently have. If you would like us to reach out to you, please indicate that. We will be happy to follow up.

Talk to Us

Here is information on what we have accomplished thus far and what is coming next.
Recent Actions

Development of the Draft Situation Analysis - Tourism Asset Review
We are nearing completion of the draft Situational Analysis which focuses on research and analysis of all tourism-related activities and assets in St. Mary’s County. It also includes a look at national trends and target audiences as they relate to St. Mary’s County. This was an extensive process that has shed light on key issues and opportunities that need to be addressed in order to create a successful tourism and hospitality master plan.

Meetings with Stakeholders

Regulatory Issues
Regulatory concerns have been raised in a variety of areas. These include the Critical Area Law and how to comply with the intent of the law while creating a clear path to encourage future investment by new or current business owners. Meetings with regulatory experts included a February 5 meeting with representatives of St. Mary’s County Land Use and Growth Management, the St. Mary’s County Health Department, the St. Mary’s County Metropolitan Commission, and the Tourism Master Plan Committee.

Small Meetings Market and Meetings Venues
A group of stakeholders representing existing meeting venues that cater to local businesses and community groups met with JLL and the Master Plan Executive Team on March 1, to discuss the viability of attracting meeting groups from outside the area. Participants for the most part felt there was adequate space to meet local business needs versus that which would serve outside markets. Participants discussed what would be needed to market existing venues to outside meeting planners and provided thoughts as to the type and location of any future conference facility.

Heritage Tourism - Experiential Opportunities
JLL visited St. Mary’s County on February 10-12. We toured Sotterley Plantation, Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Historic Park, and St. Clement’s Island Museum. JLL then met with the directors of those sites and the directors of Historic St. Mary’s City and the Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium to discuss resources needed to enhance the visitor experience at their respective sites. During the visit, JLL also toured Point Lookout State Park and the Patuxent River Naval Air Museum, and met with top leadership of both sites.

The Youth Sports Market - A Sports Complex
Leaders representing various local sports segments, representatives of the St. Mary’s College Department of Athletics, and representatives of the County’s Departments of Parks and Recreation, and Public Works and Transportation, met with JLL and the Master Plan Executive Team on March 16. The group discussed the state of youth sports and facilities in St. Mary’s County and what steps would need to be taken to position the county as a competitive contender in attracting tournament play. The discussion included appraising need for and type of sports facility or complex, and enlarged to consider competitive sports opportunities beyond youth play.

Tourism Master Planning Committee - Situational Analysis Review
The Tourism Master Planning Committee and other experts and stakeholders have reviewed the draft Situational Analysis. Their comments are now being incorporated into the final document.
Next Steps

Areas of Focus and Best Opportunities Review
The final step in Phase I will grow from the Situational Analysis. The Areas of Focus and Best Opportunities Review will identify best prospective markets, key demand generators, and the products, projects, programs and assets that if strategically developed, will make St. Mary's County a vibrant and sustainable visitor destination.

All Phase I reports are expected to be completed by the end of April and will be posted at http://www.stmarysmd.com/ded/THMP.asp

Industry Gathering
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Timeline
The timeline below shows where we are in the Master Planning process.