



## WHAT'S NEW IN COLUMBUS?



### Convention Center

- A [\\$125 million renovation and expansion project](#) at the Greater Columbus Convention Center and connecting Hyatt Regency Downtown is now more than 80% complete, on schedule to be finished by July 2017. The project is highlighted by 373,000 square feet of contiguous exhibit space, which will make it the 4<sup>th</sup> largest in its competitive set. The extensive upgrades and additions will improve the guest experience with hotel-grade finishes, an extensive local art collection and local food and beverage selections.
- The new, 800-space, \$18 million parking garage adorned with local art that opened in February 2016 is now connected to the renovated center by sky bridge.
- Levy Restaurants, in partnership with Cameron Mitchell Restaurants, one of Columbus' most successful and respected restaurateurs, is now the food-service provider for the Greater Columbus Convention Center. Cameron Mitchell Restaurants will help Levy distinctively provide restaurant-quality food and service, an innovative approach, access to signature chefs and a local network of suppliers, from which 85% of all products used by Levy are sourced.



### Hotels

- Hotel LeVeque, an [Autograph Collection hotel](#), has opened in downtown's historic LeVeque Tower. The 149-room boutique property features unique collaborations, including uniforms designed by local fashion designers, the scent of custom-blended bergamot and lavender candles made locally by The Candle Lab, as well as soaps and amenities by Columbus' own Cliff Original.
- A 135-room Courtyard by Marriott is now open at the Grandview Yard, alongside the 13,000-square-foot Grand Event Center, which connects to the hotel via a courtyard featuring a fire pit, and offers full catering capabilities in its three meeting rooms and ballroom for 300-400 people.
- The first-ever dual-branded Marriott property is being built near The Ohio State University. To be complete in June 2017, the new [\\$50 million twin-brand Marriott and Residence Inn](#) will feature a 240-room, full-service Marriott Hotel and a 114-room Residence Inn and include 12,000 square feet of meeting and event space.
- [A 167-room Canopy by Hilton](#) is set to open across from the Greater Columbus Convention Center in 2018. The hotel will feature a total of 3,000 square feet of meeting space, including a rooftop bar and outdoor patio.
- The [Moxy Columbus Short North](#), a "boutique hotel with the social heart of a hostel" by Marriott, is set to open in 2018 with 119 guest rooms, meeting space and a rooftop restaurant.
- The area near Ohio State University is expected to get a 167-room Aloft hotel, with slightly less than 2,000 square feet of meeting space, in late 2018.





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### Transportation

- All-electric [Hopper Carts](#) now offer free, on-demand rides throughout the Short North and downtown.
- [Southwest has added once-weekly direct flights](#) from Columbus to New Orleans.
- John Glenn International Airport has been [named the most improved airport in North America for 2016](#) by the Airports Council International based on survey administered to airport visitors over a year.
- The AirConnect express circulator runs every 30 minutes between John Glenn International, the Greater Columbus Convention Center and downtown hotels.

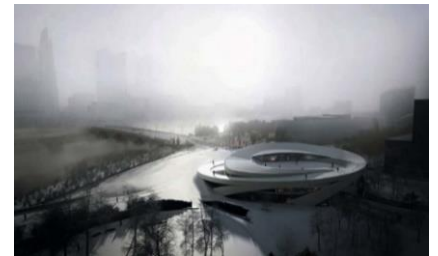


### Off-Site Venues

- By October, the iconic Smith Bros. Hardware Building in downtown Columbus will have a new, four-season, 12,000-square-foot event venue on the roof of the six-story structure.
- [Recently opened Flowers & Bread](#) offers a café, bakery, floral studio and private event space perfect for any offsite gathering or team-building function.
- Sparkspace, a one-of-a-kind Arena District meeting space, has collaborated with three other area business for [new team bonding experiences](#) to provide added value to groups: an escape room set up by Trapped Columbus, a food scavenger hunt at the North Market and board games at Kingmakers.
- Watershed Distillery has opened an on-site restaurant that seats 70 inside and 30 outside, with separate event space capable of seating 40 to 50.
- Middle West Spirits' newly renovated 16,000-square-foot, open-air distillery is the perfect space for small groups of 6-40 people, with the option for tours or tastings inside the distillery itself or on a second-level tasting floor.

### Entertainment

- A new [Made in CBUS Trail](#) helps visitors easily experience the wealth of locally owned business, restaurants, shops and attractions available throughout the city.
- [The National Veterans Memorial & Museum](#) is currently under construction on downtown Columbus' Scioto peninsula, to be complete by mid-2018. This museum will be the only place where the stories of our veterans, their families and the Fallen – across all branches of service and all eras of conflict – will be told together.
- COSI, the Center of Science and Industry, has entered into a first-of-its-kind partnership with the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) for a new 22,000-square-foot exhibit dedicated to prehistoric artifacts. A dinosaur gallery will open in 2017, followed by rotating AMNH exhibitions beginning in 2018.
- The City of Columbus is set to undergo a staggered streetscape improvement of High Street in the Short North Arts District that will make accessing the area's 100+ restaurants, galleries, and boutiques by foot much easier.







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### Noteworthy Events

- Columbus has been chosen to host the [American Society of Association Executives \(ASAE\) 2019 Annual Meeting & Exposition](#). Over 5,000 attendees will convene at the renovated Greater Columbus Convention Center in August 2019, filling 16,800 hotel rooms.
- The who's who of the library world met in Columbus for the [International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions \(IFLA\) World Library and Information Congress](#), August 13-19, 2016 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. More than 4,000 attendees from 120 countries utilized more than 11,000 hotel room nights.
- Columbus has been named the site for the [2018 NCAA Women's Final Four](#). The tournament is expected to generate an estimated \$20 million in visitor spending in the area, while attracting more than 40,000 fans to its Nationwide Arena from March 30-April 1.
- The [2018 National Urban League Conference](#) will be held in Columbus in August of that year and is expected to bring 5,000 visitors to the city and add \$3.6 million to the local economy. The booking represents the latest under Experience Columbus' "Make it Columbus" initiative designed to encourage locals with connections to national associations to bring their groups to Columbus.
- Multiple medical groups have chosen Columbus for their annual conventions, including, the American Dental Hygienists Association in 2018, the American Psychiatric Nurses Association in 2018, the American Academy of Audiology in 2019 and the American Association of Physicists in Medicine in 2021.

### Recent Accolades

- *J.D. Power 2016 Destination Experience Satisfaction Study*, "[Highest in Visitor Satisfaction in the Midwest](#)"\*
- *Expedia*, [17 Places You Must Visit in 2017](#)
- *Smart Asset*, [The Best Cities for Conferences in 2016](#) (No. 6)
- *TIME*, [6 Best Big Cities](#)
- *Smart Meetings*, [15 Great Cities to Meet In](#)
- *Connect*, [Come One, Come All: 6 LGBT-Friendly Cities](#)
- *Smart Meetings*, [Hot Cities for Cool Downtown Meetings](#)
- *TIME*, [Best Cities for Millennials](#) (No. 3)
- *Huffington Post*, [The Top Ten Cities for Creatives](#) (No. 6)
- *Intelligent Community Forum*, [Columbus, Ohio, USA 2015 Intelligent Community of the Year](#)
- *American Way*, [Fashion in the Heartland](#)
- *The Wall Street Journal*, [Why Small Cities are the Best Places to Eat in America](#)

May 2017

\*Columbus, OH received the highest numerical score among 8 cities in the Midwest in the J.D. Power 2016 Destination Experience Satisfaction Study, based on 26,124 total responses, measuring the experiences and perceptions of travelers who visited a top 50 U.S. destination, surveyed February-July 2016. Your experiences may vary. Visit [jdpower.com](#).