

WHAT'S NEW IN COLUMBUS?



CONVENTION CENTER

- A [\\$140 million renovation and expansion](#) of the Greater Columbus Convention Center is now complete. The 22-month project, highlighted by 373,000 sq. ft. of contiguous exhibit space, was completed on schedule and the extensive upgrades and additions will improve the guest experience with hotel-grade finishes. Additional highlights include:
 - New show offices overlooking exhibit halls.
 - Creation of a Nursing Mothers Room.
 - Nine new meeting rooms with outside windows, for a total of 75 meeting rooms in the facility.
 - A prominent new two-level open atrium entrance on the north end to better connect the convention center to the Short North Arts District.
 - An 800-space, \$18 million parking garage connected to the renovated center by skybridge.
 - Local food and beverage concepts as well as more than 150 pieces of local art displayed on the interior and exterior of the building and parking garages to give attendees a better sense-of-place while they are in the center.
- An interactive 14-foot sculpture titled “As We Are” is now on display in the convention center’s north atrium. Conceived by local artist Matthew Mohr, the piece, shaped like a universal human head, is made from ribbons of ultrabright LED screens and equipped with a photo booth capable of taking 3-D portraits, which are then projected on the face of “As We Are.”
- Greater Columbus Convention Center food-service provider Levy has installed a Smartfarm at the center’s new Discovery Café. As the first convention center in the country with an indoor hydroponic vertical farm, the team expects to yield about 5,000 pounds of produce per year, and donates unused items to local charities.



TRANSPORTATION

- Free, on-demand transportation is now available throughout the Short North Arts District and downtown Columbus on all-electric [Hopper Carts](#) and FreeRide Columbus’ open-air golf carts.
- The AirConnect express circulator runs every 30 minutes between John Glenn Columbus International Airport, the Greater Columbus Convention Center and downtown hotels.



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HOTELS

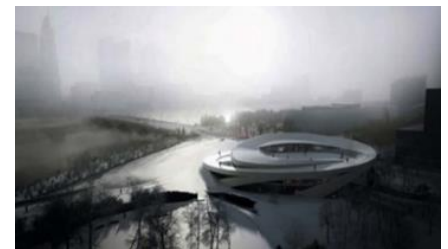
- An [expansion has been proposed for the Hilton Columbus Downtown](#), a headquarter hotel of the Greater Columbus Convention Center, that would bring the total number of convention hotel rooms on the property to 1,002. The concept still requires approval by the city and the county, but the current design calls for a new 22-story tower to be built adjacent to the convention center, across from the existing Hilton Columbus Downtown. If all goes according to plan, ground could break as early as this fall, with the new convention hotel section opening late 2021.
- [A 168-room Canopy by Hilton](#), featuring a total of 3,000 sq. ft. of meeting space, including a rooftop bar and outdoor patio, is set to open across from the Greater Columbus Convention Center in early 2019.
- The Moxy Columbus Short North, a “boutique hotel with the social heart of a hostel” by Marriott, is set to open summer 2019 with 118 guest rooms, meeting space and a rooftop restaurant.
- Coming late 2018, BrewDog will open the world’s first craft beer hotel and sour brewery. The project will have 50 rooms and cost about \$6 million, and will be part of the brewery’s only U.S. location in Canal Winchester, southeast of downtown Columbus.
- A 171-room Graduate Hotel with two food and beverage outlets and 4,000 sq. ft. of meeting space will open in Columbus’ Short North neighborhood in spring 2019.
- A new development breaking ground soon on Park Street across from the North Market in downtown Columbus includes plans for a 163-room AC Hotel by Marriott.

OFF-SITE VENUES

- The iconic Smith Bros. Hardware Building near the convention center in downtown Columbus now offers a four-season event venue on the roof of the six-story structure. Featuring a retractable roof and walls, the venue offers approximately 5,200 sq. ft. of space inside, and 2,000 sq. ft. outside.
- By May, The Candle Lab will have a new 5,000-sq.-ft. store directly across from the Greater Columbus Convention Center. It will be specifically designed to handle group business and have basement event space with catering and a liquor license that can accommodate up to 150 guests.

ENTERTAINMENT

- [The National Veterans Memorial & Museum](#) is currently under construction on downtown Columbus’ Scioto peninsula, to be complete by late 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.
- Come May 2018, the Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens will have a new experience for families. The 2-acre Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation Children’s Garden will feature 16 different interactive experiences celebrating the Ohio landscape and focus on introducing and connecting children to the natural world.
- Through a unique and groundbreaking relationship with the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), COSI, the Center of Science and Industry, now features a permanent, 22,000-sq.-ft. AMNH Dinosaur Gallery, and the first AMNH Special Exhibition Gallery exhibit, Traveling The Silk Road, is now open through September 2018.





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NOTEWORTHY EVENTS

- Columbus has been chosen to host the [American Society of Association Executives \(ASAE\) 2019 Annual Meeting & Exposition](#). More than 5,000 attendees will convene at the renovated Greater Columbus Convention Center in August 2019, filling 16,800 hotel rooms.
- Columbus is set to host more than 80,000 fans at Nationwide Arena for the [2018 NCAA Women's Final Four](#), March 30-April 1, 2018.
- Avon's 2018 Repfest will bring 5,000 attendees, totaling 8,571 room nights, to the Greater Columbus Convention Center this July.
- The [2018 National Urban League Conference](#) will be held in Columbus in August of this 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.
- 2,750 attendees of the CNH Industrial 2019 Parts and Services Expo will fill 11,935 room nights in Columbus next January.
- 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

- *Architectural Digest*, [15 Most Noteworthy Museums Opening This Year](#) (National Veterans Memorial & Museum)
- Airbnb, [Hottest Destinations of 2018](#)
- TripAdvisor, [30 Top USA Cities to Visit in 2018](#)
- Expedia, [America's 16 Most Tourist Friendly Cities](#)
- *Wall Street Journal*, [50 Best Places in the World to Eat Your Vegetables](#) (Little Eater)
- Trivago, [10 Under the "Gaydar" LGBTQ Cities](#)
- Realtor.com, [Top 10 Cities for New College Grads](#)
- Travel Channel, [Best Botanical Gardens in the U.S.](#) (Franklin Park Conservatory & Botanical Gardens)
- J.D. Power 2016 Destination Experience Satisfaction Study, ["Highest in Visitor Satisfaction in the Midwest"](#)*
- *TIME*, [6 Best Big Cities](#)
- *Conde Nast Traveler*, [The 18 Most Underrated Cities in the U.S.](#) (No. 7)
- Orbitz, [Top 10 Best U.S. Cities for a Long Weekend](#)
- *Smart Meetings*, [15 Great Cities to Meet In](#)

March 2018

*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](#).