



WHAT'S NEW IN COLUMBUS?



Convention Center

- A [\\$140 million renovation and expansion project](#) at the Greater Columbus Convention Center and connecting Hyatt Regency Downtown is now complete. The 22-month project, highlighted by 373,000 square feet of contiguous exhibit space, was completed on schedule. 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 800-space, \$18 million parking garage that opened in February 2016 is now connected to the center by skybridge.
- Greater Columbus Convention Center food-service provider Levy Restaurants has installed a “smart farm” 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 100 pounds of vegetables and herbs per week, with plans to donate unused items to local charities.



Hotels

- Hotel LeVeque, an [Autograph Collection hotel](#), has opened in downtown’s historic LeVeque Tower. The 149-room celestial-inspired 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.
- The first-ever dual-branded Marriott property is being built near The Ohio State University. To be complete in August 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- The [Moxy Columbus Short North](#), a “boutique hotel with the social heart of a hostel” by Marriott, is set to open in spring 2019 with 118 guest rooms, meeting space and a rooftop restaurant.
- A [167-room Canopy by Hilton](#) is set to open across from the Greater Columbus Convention Center in early 2019. The hotel will feature a total of 3,000 square feet of meeting space, including a rooftop bar and outdoor patio.





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Transportation

- Free, on-demand transportation is now available through the Short North Arts District and downtown Columbus on all-electric [Hopper Carts](#) and FreeRide Columbus' open-air golf carts.
- [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.

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 City of Columbus has begun a [staggered streetscape improvement of High Street](#) in the Short North that will make accessing the area's 100+ restaurants, galleries and boutiques much easier. Phase 1, from Vine St. to Goodale St. in front of the convention center, is scheduled to be complete in September 2017.
- 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 November 2017, followed by rotating AMNH exhibitions in 2018.
- [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.





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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](#)

July 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](#).