



## **Columbia County Tourism Development Council Unveils a New Look**

*North Florida destination known for abundant freshwater springs unveils new brand following a record-breaking visitation year*

**COLUMBIA COUNTY, Fla.** (June 3, 2022) — Columbia County, located in central north Florida, recently unveiled their new tourism branding: Lake City, Florida's Springlands. This rebrand exemplifies the outdoor adventure found in Columbia County, a unique destination where crystal-clear springs flow in abundance, the most noteworthy being Ichetucknee Springs State Park. Branding includes a new moniker, website, logo and collateral.

The county's new consumer-facing branding was developed in partnership with its agency of record, Paradise Advertising & Marketing, one of the country's foremost experts in destination marketing. The Paradise team was quick to seize on the welcoming personality of Columbia County, and plans to work it into their promotional efforts for the brand.

Columbia County Tourism Development Council Executive Director Paula Vann unveiled this and future destination marketing plans during the TDC meeting on Wednesday, June 1. During the meeting, she shared, "Our goal was to ensure that our new brand encapsulates who we are as a destination. Following a year of extensive research, consumer surveys and creative input we listened and learned to fully understand who we are, from a local and visitor standpoint, and from there, identified our new brand."

Over the course of the year, survey participants were shown potential logos and presented a series of questions to aid the brand identification process. Responses echoed a similar sentiment for Columbia County, leading to the name: Lake City, Florida's Springlands. All emphasized the authentic, honest and welcoming voice of the destination, in addition to the unparalleled natural surroundings, especially the abundance of crystal-clear springs. Columbia County's convenient location and natural waterways, parks, historic sites, eclectic dining and unique boutiques provide everything visitors need for a memorable getaway.

"Visitors don't solely visit a county, but rather a destination. We are fortunate enough to be conveniently and centrally located in the state, off a major artery with a high volume of transient travel. By highlighting Lake City, the heart of the county, and Florida, followed by Springlands, this helps potential visitors identify us and creates a sense of familiarity and differentiation from other destinations," explained Vann.

The logo, with a kayak at its center, expresses the connection to the springs and the lively font aligns with the plethora of activities Lake City has to offer visitors.

The rebrand signals a continued wave of visitation growth for the destination. Earlier this year, Vann shared that the county experienced over \$1.9 million in rolling revenue from February 2021 through January 2022. Compared to pre-COVID-19 revenues, a 23.9% increase — a

significant leap for the county and testament to visitors' desire for destinations with abundant outdoor recreation opportunities.

Lake City and the surrounding communities of Columbia County house an enchantingly diverse ecosystem, with over 350 miles of rivers, 1,500 miles of trails, aquatic caves, nine state parks, waterfalls and 300 documented natural springs that offer cave diving, tubing, paddle boarding, kayaking, hiking, birdwatching and spring hopping that can't be found anywhere else in the United States.

"With our new brand, our goal for the remainder of 2022 is to further amplify the availability of outdoor adventure available here in Columbia County, especially the stellar springs offerings," said Vann. "In addition, we'll look to extend visitors' time spent in-destination, allowing them to explore and discover our fantastic local restaurants and events."

"This is a place that's easy to get to, but even easier to get along *with*," explained Tom Merrick, Chief Creative Officer for Paradise. "They have everything someone needs for an unforgettable vacation, all in a place you immediately feel comfortable visiting. That friendly feel and welcoming vibe is just as much a part of Florida's Springlands as the springs themselves – and we can't wait to tell their story!"

Over the next year, the Columbia County TDC and Paradise will incorporate the new brand into all touch points of the visitor experience, starting with a revitalized website in July. They will also bring the brand to life in the Visitor Center lobby and office space, signage and social media platforms.

**Images (photo credit: Columbia County Tourism Development Council)**

[LOGO](#)

[GENERAL](#)

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### **Visit Columbia County (Columbia County, Fla.)**

Conveniently located between Jacksonville and Tallahassee, Columbia County, Florida, has been known as the "Springs Capital of the United States" for decades. This unique central north Florida destination is a subtropical paradise of lush tall pine forest, crystal blue natural springs, world-class sporting facilities, historic downtown and lively communities. Here nature inspires art – all centered around the heart of the county, Lake City.

Bisected by Interstate 75 and located on the southern border of Georgia, Columbia County has served as a gateway to Florida, welcoming visitors with Southern hospitality and natural beauty since 1832. Part of Osceola National Forest and home to the renowned Southside Sports Complex and prehistoric Ichetucknee Springs State Park, Columbia County offers eclectic dining, boutique shopping, historical sites and itinerary jewels ranging from music festivals to sporting events that encourage travelers to stop, stay, and dive into the realm of adventure North Central Florida has to offer.



Offering a taste of the mountains in Florida, Big Shoals State Park features the largest whitewater rapids and the only Class 3 rapids in the state. An enchantingly diverse ecosystem makes the destination a natural theme park for outdoor adventure with over 350 miles of rivers, 1,500 miles of trails, aquatic caves, nine state parks, waterfalls and 300 documented natural springs that offer cave diving, tubing, paddle boarding, kayaking, hiking, birdwatching and spring hopping that can't be found anywhere else in the United States.

To learn more about Columbia County, visit: [www.springsrus.com](http://www.springsrus.com).

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