

# Peter F. Bowden

President & CEO

VISIT Columbus, The Convention & Visitors Bureau

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For more than two decades, Peter F. Bowden has been instrumental in growing all aspects of convention and tourism industry in Columbus. He has been president & CEO of Visit Columbus, The Convention & Visitors Bureau, since May 2003, managing a staff of 8 associates. With an annual budget of \$1.5 million, Visit Columbus is responsible for marketing Columbus as a convention and leisure destination. Under Bowden's leadership, Columbus has set new tourism records for the last 15 years, culminating with a record 1.9 million total visitors for each year for the past two years, who spent more than \$352 million dollars in FY 2018 alone. Tourism spending has generated over \$5.2 billion for Columbus since FY 2003.

Bowden has led the work on two city-wide branding campaigns, the latest as a part of Columbus 2025. He has rebranded the Convention & Visitors Bureau, now called Visit Columbus Ga. Bowden and his team have recently re-dedicated a completely renovated Visitors Center in Uptown Columbus, making it again a major anchor destination within the Uptown area, and has worked to assemble a robust team as head of the Columbus Film Commission to position Columbus as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Film Hub in Georgia.

He has served on several boards to include the Columbus Cultural Arts Alliance, Past President of the Presidential Pathways Travel Association, Past President of the Georgia Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus, Southeastern Tourism Society Advisory Board, GA Dept of Economic Development's Tourism Advisory Board, and others.

Other points to note: VisitColumbusGa was the first to be accredited in Georgia by Destination International and the GA Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus; it has been re-accredited by both organizations. 2008 Excellence in Tourism 2011 by GACVB. Credentials include Destination International's Certified Destination Marketing Executive, GA Assoc. of Convention & Visitors Bureaus' Leadership Excellence Certification, and Southeast Tourism Society's Tourism Marketing Professional.