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Experience Columbus Applauds City Proposals

New Investment Will Drive Economic and Job Growth Through Visitor Industry

COLUMBUS, OH (Nov. 13, 2012) – As the Columbus hospitality industry continues to grow, changes in the City's Bed Tax formula proposed by Mayor Michael B. Coleman and City Council President Andrew J. Ginther will mean new investment in 2013 and 2014 that will spur economic growth. Experience Columbus and the Greater Columbus Sports Commission applaud City leaders for engaging with the industry, carrying out detailed analysis of the competitive situation, and investing in the Destination Columbus Plan through the 2013 budget process.

"The Mayor and City Council are key partners in our work and putting a sustainable and predictable funding formula in place shows that they are serious about helping Columbus reach its potential in a competitive industry," said Lisa Hinson, Board Chair of Experience Columbus. "We applaud all the partners who worked on this issue and who will continue to carry forward our momentum in 2013 and beyond."

Mayor Coleman unveiled elements of the plan to stakeholders this week in anticipation of the 2013 General Fund Budget which will be presented to City Council on November 15. The proposal will drive new investment to Experience Columbus, the Greater Columbus Arts Council and local human services agencies historically funded by bed tax revenues paid by visitors. These changes will mean increased funding for national sales and marketing efforts by Experience Columbus and Greater Columbus Sports Commission to attract more business to Columbus and an estimated \$689 million impact from increased visitor spending.

"After years of discussion and the work of the Finance Review and Advisory Committee, the City is taking action that will benefit the entire region's economy, improve our national image and improve the financial stability of our partners in the arts and human services," said Paul Astleford, president and CEO of Experience Columbus. "The two-phase approach to begin enacting elements of the FRAC plan, including bed tax formula reform, is an important step. Over the next five years, this will allow our team to win bigger events, bringing millions of additional visitors and business travelers to Columbus to discover one of the nation's best cities."

As the convention and visitors bureau for Ohio's capital city, Experience Columbus' mission is to sell, market and promote the best of the destination to visitors. For more information about all Columbus has to offer for leisure visitors, sports, meetings, conventions and trade shows, go to experiencecolumbus.com or call 800-354-2657.

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