



Coos Bay-North Bend-Charleston VCB

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Why a Strategic Plan?



The **Coos Bay-North Bend-Charleston Visitor & Convention Bureau (VCB)** began as the Tourism Marketing Committee back in 1973 when the first lodging tax was put into place. In 2010, the destination was branded as **Oregon's Adventure Coast** and an Intergovernmental Agreement was signed between the Cities of Coos Bay and North Bend and the Coquille Indian Tribe which created the entity we know as the VCB today. In 2022, Coos County was added to the agreement with the addition of lodging tax in the unincorporated Charleston area.

Many years after the initial creation, and several changes to the organization's structure and funding partners, the VCB determined it was in need of a strategic vision to move not only the organization forward but the entire destination.

*What began as a small promotions entity in the 1970s **has grown to a \$1.3 Million entity able to compete** with our neighbors on the Central and North Coast for visitors on a more level playing field.*

As such, the Board of Directors of the VCB instructed the VCB Staff to undertake a **Strategic Planning Process**. In 2022, the VCB hired [WhereAbout](#), a Strategic Planning firm, located in Portland, to lead the process.

What follows is the outcome of that Strategic Planning Process.

The VCB thanks all who participated in this process!

The Process We Undertook

		Mo. 1	Mo. 2	Mo. 3	Mo. 4
Phase I: Discovery & Analysis	Kickoff Meeting (virtual)				
	Data Review				
	Survey Development & Analysis				
	Current State Analysis Report				
Phase II: Strategy Development	Workshop 1: Board Visioning Workshop (in-person)				
	Workshop 2: Staff Workshop (in-person)				
	Workshop 3: Stakeholder Engagement Meeting (in-person)				
	Workshop 4: Strategic Plan Revision (virtual)				
	Workshop 5: Implementation Roadmap (virtual)				
Phase III	Final Plan Documentation				
	Quarterly Check-Ins				

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Overview of Strategic Perspectives

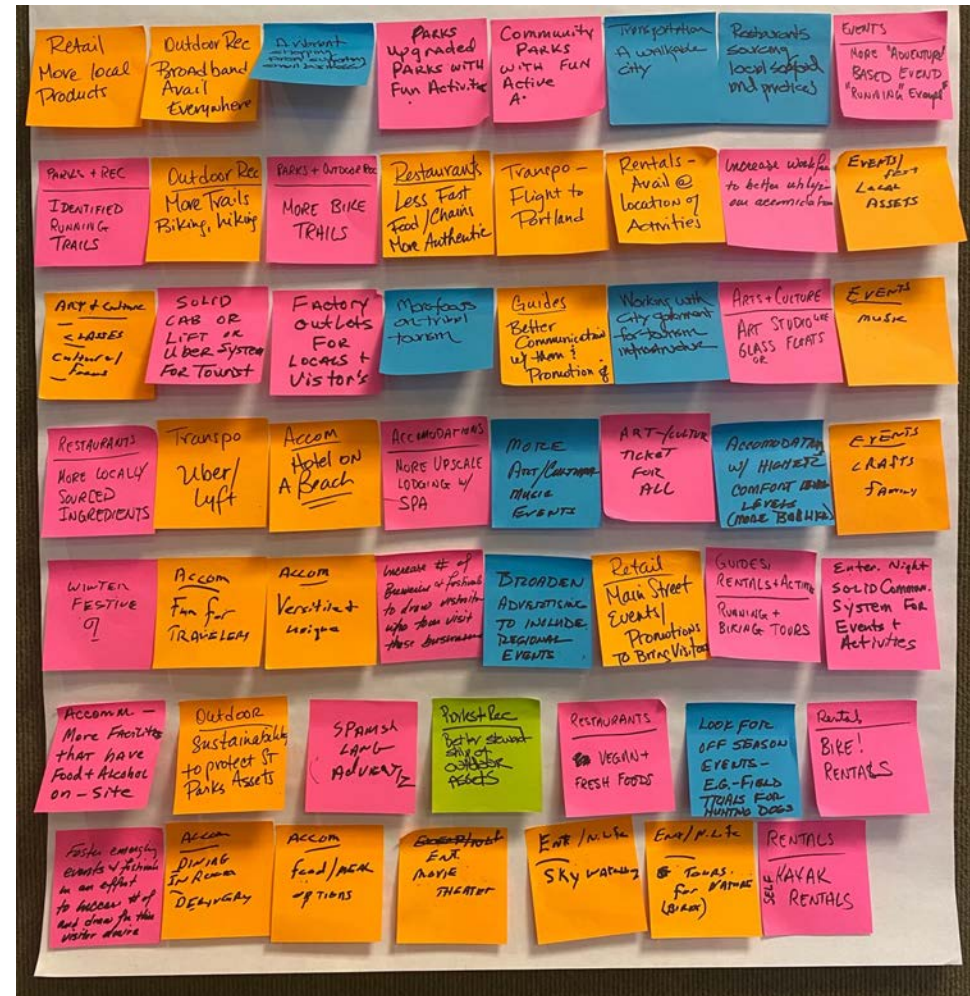
1. The VCB is seen as a strong, effective organization and can leverage its reputation and growing position to accelerate the visitor economy
2. The VCB has an opportunity to bolster stakeholder communications to foster greater industry momentum
3. The VCB area's core assets of natural beauty and outdoor recreation could provide a basis for building up adjacent areas of the visitor economy, thereby better supporting shoulder and off-seasons
4. Social challenges and infrastructure deficits may be limiting the visitor economy in the VCB area
5. Workforce challenges combined with relatively consistent hotel occupancy points toward strategies that bolster the area's already strong length-of-stay
6. Generational and pandemic-influenced shifts in the labor market provide an opportunity for the VCB area to capture remote work stays
7. Generational shifts in traveler expectations mean the VCB needs to be taking meaningful steps on sustainability and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), including the diversification of its visitor base

Destination Vision

How will our destination evolve over time? What will be different from today? What future visitor experience do we intend to create?

Big Ideas:

- More outdoor recreation opportunities, better supported
- Expanded transportation options
- More events, festivals, and family activities
- Diversified accommodations
- Locally-owned restaurants sourcing local food
- Stronger focus on tribal tourism



Destination Vision



By 2032, the Coos Bay/North Bend/Charleston area will have evolved as a destination, bringing in a new demographic of visitors and offering those visitors an enhanced experience.

Our focus on adventure will be expanded, drawing a broader group of outdoor recreation and adventure travelers who take part in running, biking, fishing, golf, hiking, and watersports. An expanded trail network will leverage our running heritage to draw runners and running events, while equipment rentals for items like bikes and kayaks will be available in close proximity to where visitors use them—enabling greater access to these activities.

Our region will also be host to a greater number of arts, cultural, and outdoor adventure events. Events such as a winter festival or a brewery festival will draw visitors in the off-season, and our summer and shoulder seasons will be filled by music festivals and outdoor adventure competitions and gatherings. These events will be supported by a more robust promotion and communication system and partnerships with the cities and other entities that will foster the continued growth of these visitor-attracting events. Visitors will also be able to procure a “master pass” enabling them to visit multiple arts & cultural attractions while they are here, and connections with our Indigenous communities will enhance the visitor experience and deepen the benefits that the tribes receive from tourism.

Our local businesses will thrive in this expanded visitor economy, with a mix of locally-owned restaurants serving local seafood and produce, catering to every palate and price point. A thriving brewery scene will complement the outdoor recreation and adventure attractions we have, while vibrant shopping areas showcasing local wares will draw foot traffic and Main Street events and promotions will attract and keep visitors in these commercial areas.

Our accommodations offerings will be more diverse—we’ll still have the mix we have today, but more boutique offerings, upscale hotels, and small lodging operators will round out the mix and add variety. Visitors will find places to stay at every price point, and will find amenities they want at many of our accommodations, including things like more food and beverage options in-house, spa services, or beachfront access at the hotels.

The infrastructure in our region will better support the visitor economy we seek—widely available and robust broadband will support local businesses and remote workers alike, aviation connections to Portland and beyond will allow for easier access, local rideshare options will enable visitors to get around more easily, and enhanced walkability and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes in the commercial areas of our cities will encourage visitors to linger longer and engage with our small businesses.

The benefit of all this activity will be readily apparent to both our residents and our elected officials, as they will see not only the economic impact but also the quality-of-life improvements that a healthy and thriving visitor economy can bring.

Mission

How would we succinctly describe the purpose of the VCB today?

To inspire visitors and create desire to explore the region, and to contribute to our visitor economy through creative marketing, effective communication, and destination stewardship



Values – A.W.E.

What core, shared beliefs drive the way we work together?

ACCEPTANCE

Our trust, care, and mutual respect enable us to bring our whole selves to work

WONDER

We never lose sight of the privilege it is to work in this industry and in this place

ENGAGEMENT

Our dedication, ownership, and focus on continuous improvement keeps our eyes on the prize



Objectives

What major bodies of work will we undertake to make our Vision a reality?

1. Drive visitation and length of stay
2. Deepen community engagement and education
3. Nurture and promote a sustainable, diverse, and welcoming community
4. Advocate for asset and infrastructure improvements
5. Build our organizational capacity



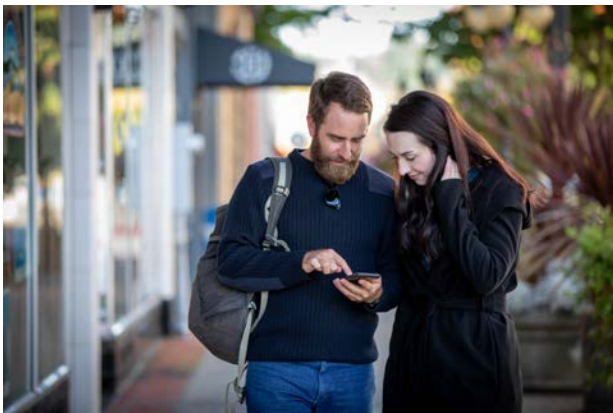
Objective 1: Drive visitation & length of stay

INDICATORS

- Raise length of stay to 3.75 days within 3 years
- Year-over-year growth in total visitation

STRATEGIES

- Identify partner organizations to foster education & voluntourism
- Develop consistent hotel partner packages & promotions
- Create a cultural asset passport program and sell tickets through VCB
- Focus marketing efforts on high-return verticals such as running and events
- Develop remote work + play promotions



Objective 2: Deepen community engagement and education

INDICATORS

- Improve stakeholder survey score on VCB communication
- Year-over-year growth in attendance of Tourism Week Luncheon
- Year-over-year growth of customer service score on visitor survey

STRATEGIES

- Institute annual Tourism Week Luncheon for stakeholders
- Deepen engagement and relationship-building with local businesses and tourism stakeholders, including front-line recognition program
- Adopt and deploy customer service curriculum for tourism businesses
- Partner with BACC on business education
- Translate Board reports into regular industry newsletter



Objective 3: Nurture and promote a sustainable, diverse, and welcoming community

INDICATORS

- Year-over-year growth in visitor perception of destination sustainability
- Year-over-year growth in perception of welcome on visitor survey

STRATEGIES

- Launch and sustain annual visitor survey
- Engage VCB in being “at the table” on local conversations and planning around sustainability and diversity
- Develop a sustainable tourism section on the VCB website
- Lead the creation of a DEI plan for the local tourism industry



Objective 4: Advocate for asset and infrastructure improvements

INDICATORS

- Three-year improvement in aggregate multi-modal transportation score on stakeholder survey
- Increase in commuter flights to our airport
- Year-over-year increase in average tourism infrastructure score on visitor survey

STRATEGIES

- Develop a prioritized list of transportation gaps for the visitor economy and advocate for strategies to solve them
- Create an asset map for adventure equipment rentals, including access opportunities for persons with disabilities
- Advocate to expand the geography and quality of broadband access in our region, including our State Parks



Objective 5: Build our organizational capacity

INDICATORS

- Year-over-year growth in volunteer headcount
- Year-over-year growth in open rate on our stakeholder emails
- Growth in general satisfaction score on stakeholder survey

STRATEGIES

- Hire PR contractors for visitor facing content and to broaden our capacity for stakeholder communication
- Perform a skills and capabilities gap assessment for the staff
- Formalize a professional development plan for staff
- Enhance volunteer recruitment





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SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

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