



**STRATEGIC PLAN
2025-2028**



OVERVIEW

The tourism industry is one of the strongest economic drivers on the Oregon Coast, and touches communities along its 300+ miles. Beloved by visitors near and far, the Oregon Coast attracts a mix of families, outdoor recreation enthusiasts, beach lovers, and those seeking a change of pace and scenery. Yet, as important as the tourism industry is to the coast, there are multiple facets to monitor and nurture to ensure that tourism truly benefits those who live and work on the coast.

This Three-Year Strategic Plan sets a course for the organization to continue to inspire travel and strengthen collaboration towards a sustainable coast economy. Our planning effort began in March 2024 in collaboration with Whereabout, a destination consulting firm focused on stewardship. The process of crafting this Strategic Plan included:

- » Reviewing numerous background reports and the biannual Tourism Industry Partner Survey to best understand the current state of the tourism industry along the coast.
- » Interviewing 19 individuals representing diverse perspectives from the coast. These were balanced between those living or working in North, South, and Central Coast, and also included OCVA staff and some statewide partners.
- » Creating a Strategic Perspectives Report that presented ten key themes from the discovery work. This report served as the foundation of the strategic planning process by gathering insights on the current state of the industry and identifying opportunities and challenges. The ten key themes from this report are:
 1. Tourism infrastructure is interdependent with community infrastructure
 2. While summer at the beach is the star, the supporting actors need some limelight
 3. A tale of three coasts
 4. There is always room for enhancing strengths of convening and collaboration
 5. Many hands make light work
 6. There is no agreement on what OCVA's mission is
 7. Strategic clarity and focus will minimize unnecessary chop
 8. Is there a playbook for seafood?
 9. A sharper definition of OCVA's role in climate change may spur broader stakeholder support
 10. Investing in internal operations will help OCVA be successful
- » Meeting via zoom in June 2024 with OCVA staff to explore and define the organization's core values.
- » Convening a two-day Strategic Planning Team Retreat + Work Sessions in June 2024. Held at the Overleaf Lodge & Spa, the Planning Team reviewed the Strategic Perspectives Report; jointly crafted a Vision, Mission, and Position Statement for the organization; reviewed the staff-created Values statement; then identified four key areas of focus (Objectives) for the next three years. For each Objective, the Team identified indicators by which to measure success towards the Objective, and 3-5 Strategies to accomplish the Objective.



NORTH STAR

VISION

An enriched coastal experience for all

MISSION

Through innovation, stewardship, and strategic investments, OCVA inspires travel and strengthens collaboration towards a sustainable coastal economy.

VALUES

WE BELIEVE IN:

AGILITY—We are nimble, responsive to regional needs, and good at navigating change

SPARK—Our servant leadership and innovative mindset are catalysts for bold moves and positive impact

CONNECTION—We are down to earth, curious, and genuine in our relationships

COMMUNITY—We are thoughtful conveners and champions for inclusive collaboration

STEWARDSHIP—We view care for communities and ecosystems as a core responsibility

POSITION

The Oregon Coast Visitors Association is the only coast-wide organization established for the purposes of:

- » Inspiring travel and recreation by cooperatively developing comprehensive marketing, advertising, public relations, and sales programs that will advance the general welfare and prosperity of the entire Oregon Coast; and
- » Centrally managing tourism investments to achieve maximum, measurable benefits for the Oregon Coast's economy while considering and proactively addressing challenges to mitigate adverse impacts on quality of life and coastal natural resources; and
- » Stimulating resilient economic development through the use of technical assistance programs and workforce development designed to strengthen and expand the existing business base and to create opportunities for new business development; and
- » Monitoring and sharing industry trends, data, and insights with partners; and
- » Serving as a convener and conduit to speak with one voice to strategically express concerns or opportunities relevant to the tourism economy in Oregon's coastal communities.



OBJECTIVE 1: ELEVATE OUR PROFILE AND DEEPEN INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

INDICATORS

Grow OCVA engagement score on Biennial Tourism Industry Partner Survey

Year-over-year increase in number of OCVA stories shared across platforms e.g. LinkedIn, news media, partner newsletters

Increase stakeholder visitation to OCVA website

STRATEGIES

1.1 Build PR plan to effectively communicate OCVA programs and wins. One of the consistent themes in the interviews held was a lack of awareness of OCVA programs and successes. To address this, OCVA will build a plan to guide how to communicate its activities to stakeholders—looking at different media for sharing the message, multiple channels for distribution, and otherwise raising awareness and recollection of what OCVA is doing to support tourism.

1.2 Invest in professional development honing writing, storytelling, and communication skills. Compelling stories have a greater likelihood of being shared and distributed beyond their first share, and thus reach a broader audience. Through execution of this strategy, OCVA staff will have the opportunity to take professional development training sessions to grow their communications skills and enrich their writing and storytelling capabilities in service of elevating the organization's profile and enhancing industry engagement.

1.3 Create a partnership strategy for raising awareness of the OCVA industry brand. By crafting and executing a strategy to collaborate and leverage its partners' communication channels, OCVA can raise awareness of its brand and what it does for the tourism industry. This strategy could include looking at joint marketing, sharing messages with partners' audiences, and seeking mutual cross-promotion of stories across platforms.



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ARROWHEAD

OBJECTIVE 2: EXPAND AND AMPLIFY OUR VISITOR MESSAGE

INDICATORS

Year-over-year growth in economic impact at or above state average

Growth in percentage of respondents indicating the right amount of visitors in winter on biannual Tourism Industry Partner Survey

STRATEGIES

2.1 Identify opportunities to communicate a 4-season strategy. Each of the three coastal regions experience their own ebbs and flows of visitation, with crests in the summer months, and troughs in the winter. In this strategy, OCVA will drill into destination offerings specific to region and season to share new messages with visitors describing why it is worth visiting in low and shoulder seasons.

2.2 Find and activate alignment opportunities for regional messaging and promotion. As a regional destination, the whole of the Oregon Coast is greater than the sum of its parts. OCVA will strengthen its role as a convener, highlighting opportunities for multiple partners to align messaging for mutual impact.

2.3 Create a network of diverse influencers. OCVA has been working with social media influencers to message across a variety of channels to a variety of target markets. This can be enhanced to shine a spotlight on the coastal experience through non-traditional lenses. In this strategy, OCVA will actively seek out and begin partnering with new influencers—for example, those whose audiences are concerned with destination accessibility—to further the reach of its messaging.

2.4 Develop creative assets to effectively market OCVA-funded destination development and stewardship projects. A stronger approach to marketing the work OCVA does on destination development and stewardship will achieve a few key goals: it will grow visitor spend at the coast as more attractions are shared; it will expand the overall economic impact of tourism; and it will elevate OCVA's profile by spotlighting its successes and its investments in tourism.



OBJECTIVE 3: ENHANCE AND DEVELOP OUR DESTINATION

INDICATORS

Increase in satisfaction among coastal respondents in the Travel Oregon Tourism Industry Partner Survey regarding overall destination development

Count of experience and infrastructure gaps closed over 2024 baseline gap analysis

STRATEGIES

3.1 Institute a consolidated coast-wide gap analysis. To inform OCVA's Travel Oregon RCTP planning, the organization will initiate a consolidated coast-wide gap analysis of destination development needs. This will include both experiential gaps and infrastructure gaps. Since no such analysis currently exists, the first step in this will be to identify those categories of experience and/or infrastructure that should be addressed directly, and those that OCVA can influence.

3.2 Analyze coast visitor transportation needs. Getting to and around the coast has some challenges including gaps in transit provision, congestion during peak times, and climate impacts. To address this, OCVA will first document coastal visitor transportation needs, then convene partners to develop a visitor transportation plan

that prioritizes key opportunities to address these needs. In many cases, OCVA may play a supporting, rather than a lead, role in implementing recommendations arising from this plan.

3.3 Develop a seafood business plan. OCVA has been involved and leading the charge on the importance of local seafood for economic development and tourism development. The organization has raised the awareness of the issue—that local seafood is not often the seafood sold or served at the coast, and the attendant lack of dollars going back into local economies—and has sought to implement solutions such as the support of teaching fish butchery in coastal high schools. In this strategy, OCVA will write out a business plan for its involvement with local seafood promotion that talks about the work to be done, needed marketing, and an exit strategy detailing how OCVA will ultimately hand off the seafood work to other organizations..

3.4 Implement a welcoming strategy to encourage diverse groups of visitors to come to the coast. By State statute, the Oregon Coast is accessible to everyone—its beaches are public domain. Yet, access does not always translate into picturing oneself there, feeling invited, and coming to the coast. In this strategy, OCVA will develop a welcoming strategy to encourage diverse groups of visitors to come to the coast. This will integrate with other strategies in this plan, such as storytelling and working with new influencers.

3.5 Build and begin the implementation of an action plan as part of the 2024 update of the Mitigation, Adaptation, and Resiliency Plan (MARP). OCVA wrote the first iteration of a Mitigation, Adaptation, and Resiliency Plan in 2022 and is about to publish a 2024 update. To see more results come out of MARP, OCVA will build and implement a supporting action plan to guide the collaborative work that brings the plan to life.



OBJECTIVE 4: FOSTER A HEALTHY TOURISM NETWORK

INDICATORS

Increase # of Intent to Collaborate documents between OCVA and partner organizations

Increase # of industry-trained individuals through OCVA-supported programs over 2024 baseline

Increase staff scores in Organizational Assessment survey related to processes and procedures from 3.5 to 4.0 in three years

STRATEGIES

4.1 Identify and implement opportunities to streamline processes and systems. Staff surveys—and coastal partner input as voiced through interviews—highlight some points of friction with OCVA's processes and systems. To address this, OCVA will do a deeper dive to specifically identify and understand these gaps, determine which are the highest priority to address, examine options to address the issue, then implement solutions.

4.2 Identify and support industry and educational programs that develop a stable workforce. With tourism as one of the most important industries at the coast, it is paramount to have a stable workforce that can engage with the industry and contribute to its success. OCVA will collaborate with its workforce development partners to identify education programs and other related resources that contribute and invest in a stable workforce. This could mean specific courses at the secondary and post-secondary level, and industry-specific training offerings.

4.3 Develop a systematized approach to attracting, retaining, and developing a diverse group of partners. The Oregon coast, like many rural areas, is challenged by having the same type of complex issues that urban areas have, but with far less financial and human resource available to address the issues. Since OCVA considers the entire coast as its service area, it is often asked to address coast-wide issues, even if they are not tourism-related issues. To take some of that pressure off OCVA, it will look at how it can attract, develop, and retain other partners that have the capacity and ability to address coast-wide issues with success.



NEXT STEPS

OCVA will communicate the adoption of this Strategic Plan to its coastal partners using a variety of channels—its newsletter, LinkedIn, face-to-face conversations, and hyperlinks to this document. OCVA will also share how broad stakeholder input influenced this plan and was considered in the formulation of the Objectives and Strategies. OCVA will likely need to do this a few times to ensure broader reach, as not all partners tune in to all channels of communications.

The first step in implementing this Strategic Plan is to identify an individual who can act as Plan Manager. This person is not necessarily responsible for the work of each strategy; rather, they are responsible for keeping track of overall progress on the plan, supporting those individuals who are leading individual strategies, providing periodic updates on overall progress to the Board, and tracking and presenting indicator measurements once a year.

Next, OCVA will want to identify the first set of strategies to begin to implement. These may be those that need to happen first, strategies that are prerequisites for other strategies, or those that are early easy wins. As a guideline, this should include between one third and one half of the strategies described in this Plan. For each strategy, OCVA will want to have a single person act as its project manager. With a project team, this person will be in charge of crafting a work plan, building timelines, identifying and engaging with partners both in and outside of the organization, specifying financial needs for executing the strategy, and finally, implementing that plan of action.



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PLANNING TEAM:

Justin Aufdermauer, Tillamook Chamber
Joe Benetti, Mayor of Coos Bay
Jeremy Burke, Oregon Coast Aquarium
Harry Dalgaard, Travel Oregon
Ashley Espinoza, Lane Workforce Partnership
Nathan Kahler, Bandon Dunes
Claudine Rehn, Tillamook Estuaries Partnership
Drew Roslund, Overleaf Lodge and Spa
Jeremy Strober, Heartfelt Hospitality

OREGON COAST VISITORS ASSOCIATION:

Marcus Hinz, Executive Director
Arica Sears, Deputy Director
Jesse Dolin, Central Coast Destination
Coordinator
Lynnee Jacks, Industry Communications
Coordinator
Finn Johnson, North Coast Destination
Management Coordinator
Dave Lacey, South Coast Destination Coordinator
Patty Martin, Climate Scientist
Thomas McLanahan, Finance & Contracts
Manager
Karen Olson, Communications Director
Stacey Gunderson, Marketing Coordinator

CONSULTING TEAM:

Matthew Landkamer, Whereabout
Stacy Humphrey, Whereabout
Sawyer Cleveland, Whereabout





 WHEREABOUT

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