

TRAVEL OREGON 2023–2025 STRATEGIC PLAN LOOKBACK REPORT

Oregon Tourism Commission



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The 2023-2025 Strategic Plan Lookback Report has been developed for the Oregon Tourism Commission with the intention of providing insight into progress made toward Travel Oregon's [10-Year Strategic Vision](#) during the 23-25 biennium. This report should be viewed as a supplemental review of the [2023-2025 Strategic Action Plan](#), in which you can find more detailed strategy information.

Using feedback from our [Tourism Industry Partner Survey](#) (TIPS) and in alignment with agency goals and staff capacity, Travel Oregon decided to focus on seven of the 19 strategies identified in the 10-Year Strategic Vision during this biennium. This adjustment allowed for deeper focus and stronger cross-functional execution. Planning teams, or Action Plan teams, were created for these seven strategies to expand existing work and/or kickstart new programs, and the remaining strategies were integrated into the agency's core delivery work.

In the following pages, you'll find key highlights from progress made on the seven strategies listed below. It's important to note this report is not meant to be an exhaustive list of work planned and implemented during the biennium, but rather to offer a snapshot of strategy milestones completed over the course of the past two years.

2023-2025 Action Plan Strategies

1. Advance perception of tourism value
 - Improve perception of the value of tourism and increase advocacy among industry workforce, residents and policymakers.
2. Attract and retain tourism workforce
 - Utilize partnerships to advance educational and career opportunities to develop, attract and retain Oregon's tourism workforce.
3. Assist communities in crisis
 - Provide resources and assistance to tourism-related businesses, organizations and communities that are experiencing, or have experienced, crises (e.g., wildfires, drought, global pandemic).
4. Expand destination management engagement and reduce high visitation pressures via niche product investment
 - Expand opportunities for residents and tourism partners to actively engage and collaborate in destination management processes; provide timely feedback loops.
 - Reduce high visitation pressures and increase community livability by investing in the development of niche tourism product that is based on growing visitor demand and Oregon's competitive advantage (e.g. outdoor recreation, culinary, agritourism, arts and culture).
5. Support development of experiences for underserved communities
 - Support the development of new and existing tourism-related facilities and products (e.g., visitor experiences, attractions, and public spaces) to better serve historically and currently underserved and under-resourced communities.
6. Elevate the voices of underserved communities
 - Foster deep relationships with and elevate the voices of historically and currently underserved and under-resourced communities.
7. Integrate DEI agencywide
 - Ensure diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is emphasized and integrated agencywide, from programming and procurement to employee recruitment and training.

2023–2025 STRATEGIC PLAN LOOKBACK

OBJECTIVE: OREGON'S TOURISM ECONOMY IS THRIVING

Strategy: Advance Perception of Tourism Value

Improve perception of the value of tourism and increase advocacy among industry workforce, residents and policymakers.

Wins:

- Implemented a strategic outreach campaign that resulted in more than 6,000 respondents to the [2024 Resident Sentiment survey](#), with representation from all of Oregon's 36 counties. The high number of responses allowed us to create a separate [Tourism Workforce Sentiment Study](#) for the first time.
- Data from both studies allowed us to set baseline scores for support for tourism development and perceptions of tourism's social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts.
- Developed the Policy Maker Outreach Score, a tracking tool that measures engagement between Travel Oregon staff and policy makers by capturing dates, contact methods, audiences, topics and outcomes.
- Increased policy engagement from the tourism workforce via industry training on policy topics and activations such as National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW).
- Created a [Transient Lodging Tax \(TLT\) 20th Anniversary Video](#) as an industry and community education tool to showcase the value of tourism.
- Used findings from workforce and resident sentiment data to inform the Improve Visitor Behavior action plan for the 2025-2027 biennium.

OBJECTIVE: OREGON DELIVERS REMARKABLE EXPERIENCES

Strategy: Attract and Retain Tourism Workforce

Utilize partnerships to advance educational and career opportunities to develop, attract and retain Oregon's tourism workforce.

Wins:

- Established and cultivated relationship with five of the nine local workforce boards, building awareness about the value of tourism jobs. These include East Cascades Work, Clackamas Workforce Partnership, Worksystems, Rogue Workforce Partnership, and Eastern Oregon Workforce Board. Additionally, relationships with the remaining four workforce boards have been cultivated by the Oregon Hospitality Foundation in close partnership with Travel Oregon. These include Northwest Oregon Works, Lane Workforce Partnership, Southwestern Oregon Workforce Investment Board and Willamette Workforce Partnership.
- Refined TIPS by adding workforce-specific questions that enabled us to gather tangible feedback on what our industry needs.
- Sponsored the annual WORKing Together conference and led a panel presentation on hospitality.
- Created a [Travel Oregon 101 video](#) to advance agency education, training and workforce development efforts. The video serves as an introduction to the industry, describing how the agency is funded, how we work with industry partners and the resources and services we provide.
- Increased industry employment by 480 travel-generated jobs, bringing the total travel-generated employment to 121,020 jobs for 2024.





Travel Portland

Strategy: Assist Communities in Crisis

Provide resources and assistance to tourism-related businesses, organizations and communities that are experiencing, or have experienced, crises (e.g., wildfires, drought, global pandemic).

Wins:

- Developed a Crisis Communication Plan for the agency and industry in consultation with other state tourism boards, Oregon state agencies and Travel Oregon's communications/PR firm of record.
- Recognized the need for a plan inclusive of the industry as a whole, rather than solely for the agency, and subsequently formed an industry task force with representatives from each region.
- Supported region that did not have existing crisis communications plans (5/7) by enlisting our PR agency of record and investing action plan funds to support the creation of regional crisis communications, including sub-regions of Portland, that align with the Travel Oregon plan.
- In alignment with the recommendations from Governor Kotek's Central City Task Force, Travel Oregon granted \$600,000 to Travel Portland to assist with Portland's recovery, and gave another \$300,00 in contracts with 6 destination-based organizations.

Strategy: Expand Destination Management Engagement + Reduce High Visitation Pressures Via Niche Product Investment

Expand opportunities for residents and tourism partners to actively engage and collaborate in destination management processes; provide timely feedback loops.

Reduce high visitation pressures and increase community livability by investing in the development of niche tourism product that is based on growing visitor demand and Oregon's competitive advantage (e.g., outdoor recreation, culinary, agritourism, arts and culture).

Wins:

- Hosted the Central Oregon Destination Management Studio (CODMS) to provide planning assistance, training and resources to develop a long-term strategy for managing tourism while enhancing regional livability.
 - Built a collaborative foundation by spending nine months working with a diverse steering committee to set priorities and shape the strategy.
 - The engagement phase included six community sessions designed to build trust, raise awareness, surface shared priorities, and educate partners to drive action.
 - Over 150 partners participated in these events, representing a broad cross-section of the region.
 - Built a strong, engaged leadership core that blended tourism, community development and economic development perspectives. The core team included destination organizations, while the broader leadership group ensured representation across most communities in the region. By and large, consistent engagement has been maintained throughout the process.
 - Established quarterly convenings with extended leadership team and project partners to keep communication and alignment strong.
- Set Resident Sentiment and TIPS baselines to better understand the tourism ecosystem and any pressure points that could provide learnings for the management studio.
- Signed a contract with the Travel Foundation, a leading international sustainable tourism organization, to help us lead the development of a common understanding and sample case studies of Destination Management tactics that could be applicable in Oregon. We then held two sessions



at Destination Bootcamp on these topics, a multi-day event designed to bring together Oregon's tourism industry leaders focused on destination development, management, and stewardship.

Strategy: Support Development of Experiences for Underserved

Support the development of new and existing tourism-related facilities and products (e.g., visitor experiences, attractions, and public spaces) to better serve historically and currently underserved and under-resourced communities.

- Partnered with Wheel the World (WTW) to assess accessibility across Oregon, making the state the first to be Accessibility Verified.
 - 328 businesses in 21 communities assessed and listed on WTW's platform, with tailored accessibility improvement reports provided to each.
 - Oregon now has 750+ accessible business listings on WTW, spanning 43 destinations statewide.
 - Collaboration included all eight State Welcome Centers and key regions not yet verified, expanding statewide accessibility coverage.
 - Businesses, DMOs, and communities benefit through greater visibility, training resources, and customized landing pages on WTW's platform.
 - Seven regional landing pages in development to showcase accessibility verified businesses, modeled after the Oregon Coast example.
 - Cross-functional Travel Oregon teams are integrating verified listings into TravelOregon.com and the OTIS platform, enhancing accessibility resources for travelers.
- A marketing and PR campaign launched Sept. 22, 2025, announcing Oregon as the first Accessibility Verified state, positioning it as a leader in inclusive travel.
- Travel Oregon introduced Recreation Ready in 2024 to help Oregon communities develop outdoor recreation experiences that boost local economies, foster equity, and protect natural resources. The program provides early-stage project planning, technical assistance, and targeted investments to build inclusive and sustainable visitor experiences.
 - Over Phase 1, Travel Oregon and consultant teams worked with local steering committees to assess project feasibility through research, planning, and partner engagement. Phase 2 offers technical support and funding to advance projects that demonstrate strong viability and alignment with program goals.
 - Four rural communities (McKenzie River Valley, Cave Junction, La Grande, and Newberg) were awarded in the 2024 cohort. Their projects focus on water recreation, trail development, and dark sky tourism — efforts designed to enhance community livability and attract sustainable visitor growth.
 - Travel Oregon partnered with Empowering Access, experts in disability, equity, and inclusion, to ensure each project integrated accessibility goals from the outset. Through consultations, best practices, and lived experience, Empowering Access helped elevate the voices of individuals with disabilities and embed inclusive design into planning.

OBJECTIVE: OREGON IS STRIVING TO BE A PLACE OF EQUITY

Strategy: Elevate Voices of Underserved Communities

Foster deep relationships with and elevate the voices of historically and currently underserved and under-resourced communities.

Wins:

- Defined underserved and under-resourced communities as they relate to tourism. While we will continue to look toward the [state's definition](#) of underserved and under-resourced communities as a guidepost, the Executive Team has approved definitions for these communities that are intended to help teams outline specific work plan activities:
 - Underserved: communities that have limited or no access to tourism professional assistance and/or additional tourism products and services
 - Under-resourced: communities that have limited or no access to tourism-related investments
- Held monthly virtual meetings with Oregon's nine Tribes to discuss defined strategic priority areas and special projects such as signage, Oregon Guide to Indian Country, asset development and communications while also allowing space for guest speakers and problem solving.
- Additionally, we held bi-yearly in-person meetings with Oregon's nine Tribes to deepen relationships and understanding of culture and heritage, with time to work or define specific projects.
- Developed partnerships with 18 Pride festivals across the state, totaling \$68k in sponsorship dollars.

- The Strategy, Research, and Analytics team is now working more closely with the Industry Relations team to collaborate with Tribes on agency research studies, resulting in more engagement with agency TIPS survey.
- Highlighted underserved communities at the Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism.
- Hosted three She LEADS events across the state Celebrating Women in Tourism & Hospitality.

Strategy: Integrate DEI Agencywide

Ensure diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is emphasized and integrated agencywide, from programming and procurement to employee recruitment and training.

Wins:

Over the past year, Travel Oregon has made meaningful strides in building a more inclusive and equitable organization. Upon the arrival of the Director of People and Culture supporting integration of DEI agency wide, the strategy focused on recruitment. Here are a few highlights we're proud to share with you:

- All hiring teams completed the ITBOM Unconscious Bias Training, a structured module that equips staff to recognize bias and make equitable hiring decisions.
- When interviewing, staff employed a standard rubric to ensure that each candidate received equal consideration. This coupled with a more diverse candidate base resulted in an increase in diverse hires to the agency.



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

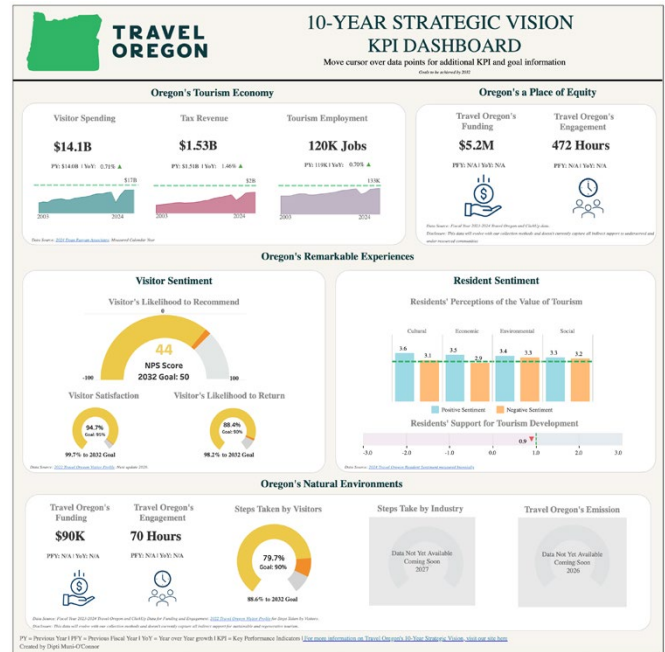
While the original biennial plan included detailed measures of success for four strategies, we later determined that aligning each strategy's success metrics with the key performance indicators (KPIs) in the 10-Year Strategic Vision would ensure better strategic coherence, so we adjusted accordingly.

Over the course of the biennium, the team made immense progress in cementing our KPIs, tracking KPI baselines and establishing goals for our KPIs. At the time of this writing, we have 16 of 18 KPIs baselined and 13 of 18 KPIs with goals established. Additionally, the team has created the new [10-Year Strategic Vision Dashboard](#) to help both the agency and the industry track progress towards our shared goals.

Measuring KPIs against goals, we've identified the following areas of success and areas for improvement for the coming biennium:

1. We've met our Resident Sentiment goals for overall perception of tourism, with continued opportunity to improve perceptions among specific community groups—particularly residents of color, whose views tend to be less favorable towards tourism than the general population.
2. While our economic prosperity indicators such as visitor spending and tax revenue are showing positive growth, the pace will need to accelerate to meet current 2032 targets—highlighting a key area of strategic focus going forward.
3. Visitor sentiment KPIs remain strong across the board, although they are still slightly below long-term goal targets.
4. We have more work to do in the next biennium to complete baselining and establish goal targets for our "Oregon Respects Its Natural Environment" KPIs.

These KPI focus areas are being addressed in the 2025-2027 biennium through action plan work and other strategic initiatives within the organization. We remain confident in our ability to shift KPIs closer to goal targets over the next two years, while maintaining KPIs that are currently meeting goals.



CONCLUSION

We're proud of what we've been able to achieve over the course of the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan and the progress we've made toward realizing our vision of Oregon as a welcoming place where tourism drives economic prosperity, benefits the natural environment and celebrates rich, diverse cultures. Looking back not only affords us the opportunity to celebrate milestones, but to gain knowledge and insight on what we can do better, or differently, going forward. Learnings from this past biennium will inform the work we do—and how we do it—during this biennium. As we embark on the 2025-2027 Strategic Plan, Travel Oregon staff remain committed to collaborating with industry partners toward fulfillment of our shared 10-Year Strategic Vision. Thank you for joining us on this journey.



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