

VISIT AUGUSTA

React. Rethink. Recover.

AUGUSTA CO.

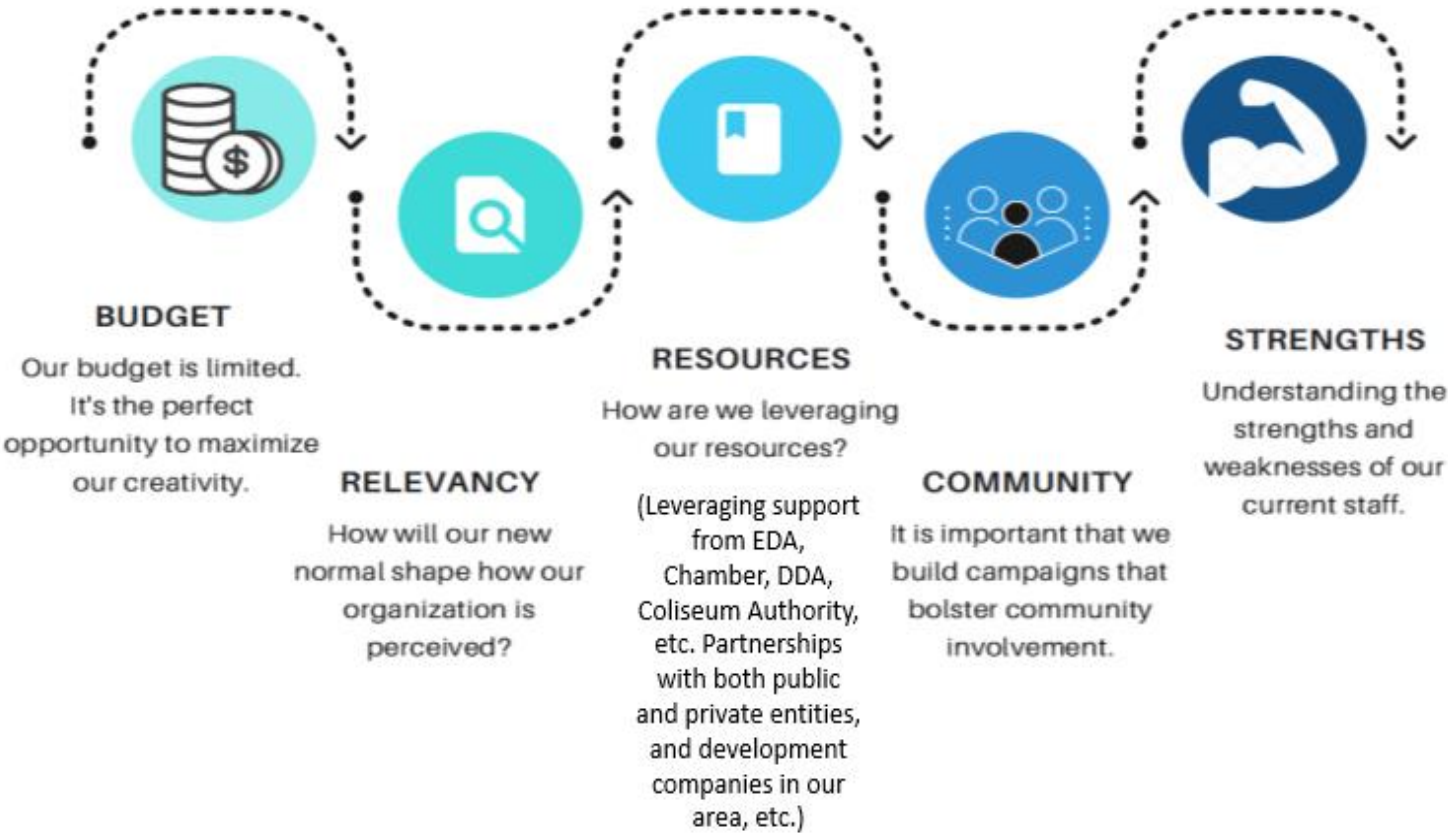
2020-2021

Strategic
Response & Recovery
BUSINESS PLAN

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Things to Consider



ACVB...A Community Cornerstone

We address the need for destination promotion, a common good that is an essential investment to develop opportunities and build quality of life to benefit all residents of the City of Augusta.

ACVB...Our Preferred Future

Have Augusta become a successful visitor destination by guiding the community to believe in the travel and tourism industry as a driver of economic development, community confidence and growth.

Who We Are

Catalyst in making
Augusta better

Brand Ambassador

Augusta's salesperson

Tourism information
provider

RETHINK

What We Do

Lead Augusta's tourism
industry and efforts

Promote EXPERIENCES

Engage with
Stakeholders & the
Community

Have fun

What Excites & Inspires Us?

The spirit of meeting &
connecting with others

Local businesses doing
better

Sharing Augusta's
coolness

Who Depends on Us?

Locals

Visitors

Tourism & Hospitality
Industry

City of Augusta

Anticipated Implementation Outcomes



* **Relevant:** integral – without us something is lost; being helpful and supportive; provider of information; impactful; needed; necessary

Our Purpose

Help the local industry get back to work

Throughout its history, Augusta's resilience is tied to a legacy of creative energy and entrepreneurship. We will focus on and support our unique local businesses, personalities and experiences that are part of the authentic Augusta DNA. That's the way to get people back to work and to get our local economy running at top speed again.

Get early travelers back to the destination

We already know Augusta isn't for everybody. Our focus will be to enhance the way we tell real stories about this soulful, charming and laidback destination and inspire people to visit who feel a kinship to the stories. With the right

connection, they'll respond quickly as they come from near and far.

Elevate community & government support for tourism and the ACVB

To be seen as relevant, we must assert ourselves as the orchestrator of community collaboration. That means being more active in partnering with local individuals, organizations, businesses and government to advance our strategies and initiatives, creating a strong sense of community ownership and accountability. We will be intentional about communicating and demonstrating how the quality of life for residents can be balanced with the quality of the visitor experience.

Build the destination brand

We will be timely, yet speedy, in completing our rebranding project. For the benefit of locals and visitors, the brand will clarify what separates us from other choices and experiences people have in a destination and will speak loudly about what we can authentically promise and deliver to visitors. Plus, our community and our team will benefit from having an exciting and defining identity and campaign to rally behind.

Maintain relationships with meetings/events/film clients

Group business is valued by our convention center, hotels, venues, restaurants, attractions and other tourism businesses. We will identify and prioritize the group markets that can help generate economic impact in the short term. We will also work to book longer term meetings/events as planners gain more confidence in travel and event safety. It's all about keeping our relationships intact and turning that trust into action.

How We Get the Job Done

Broader Economic Development Partnerships

The visitor industry plays an important role in Augusta's local and regional economic health. Collaboration with a variety of public and private sector entities will be necessary to realize the growth potential of Augusta in the visitor industry economy in both the near and distant future. We understand the value of working with our economic development partners to better serve the tourism industry, visitors and the entire Augusta community.

Destination & Product Development

An amazing experience is something that should be easy to remember and hard to forget. Through Destination & Product Development, we desire to create the perfect essence of how both locals and visitors can immerse themselves through hands-on exploration of and engagement with Augusta rather than a passive



observation of our people and places. We will either direct, administer and or champion internal and external resources available for building and growing Augusta's tourism assets.

Branding & Marketing

We need to break the perception that Augusta's River Region is traditional and lacks youthfulness, energy and fun! Our branding research is uncovering that there is something "undiscovered" about Augusta, and we need to use this to our advantage. We will effectively communicate and market our key differentiators to ensure we attract the right audience. Prospective travelers need to understand what Augusta has to offer before deciding to come here. Even though our branding and marketing efforts aim to encourage more meetings and leisure traveling from out of market, we will not be successful without the buy in of our local community.

New Definition of Success

[Key Performance Indicators]

Local Satisfaction

Resident satisfaction is a bold move for this organization. Our locals will reap satisfaction as we (1) create opportunities for businesses and for residents individually, (2) create a better sense of place and quality of life for locals through telling Augusta's story, (3) help residents realize the impact that tourism is making on their lives. Opportunities to gauge satisfaction include surveys, social media posts engagement and response, and other measures.



Visitor Satisfaction

We know the people coming to Augusta are overwhelmingly visiting friends and relatives. So our locals have to be the best ambassadors they can be to visitors coming to this city. As we get more residents to learn about and experience more of their hometown, they become more confident in recommending Augusta as a place to visit, live and work. We can track some visitor satisfaction through Augusta & Co., social media engagement and followers, and community engagement efforts. We can also use mobile data research through the DDA, and our own website traffic to see how visitors are

responding to our marketing invitation to come see us!

Marketing ROI

Marketing and communications efforts support the Augusta brand and help to further change the city's narrative as a place to visit. Our marketing key performance indicators (KPIs) can include Experience Guide requests, roomnights generated from meetings and film recruitment, PR media impressions, ad equivalency, social media engagement, website traffic, e-marketing metrics and sign up, and Augusta & Co. traffic.

Strategic Priorities

[and Objectives]

Community Building

- Expand the content we promote to extend beyond traditional stakeholders and partners, which may include content that is not necessarily visitor-driven but gets back to the focus of telling Augusta's story (i.e. – Amazon relocation; AU taking the lead on covid-19 testing, etc.)
- Play a larger role in building and amplifying community pride
- Play a larger role in event creation to stimulate demand
- Align more closely with the economic development organizations and private sector companies

Customer Engagement

- Evaluate target markets and evolve marketing strategies to attract more resilient travelers (e.g. drive-market, leisure, visiting friends and relatives)
- Expand marketing outreach and campaigns to target local audience within our available resources
- Focus marketing strategies on generating earned media in lieu of paying for media exposure
- Repackage content relevant to new audiences and demands (our new campaign will also use local influencers to introduce itineraries)

Organization Sustainability

- Identify potential reopening and recovery scenarios to guide strategy and priorities. We are aware that businesses are individually opening on their own, but we need to understand how to help drive customers as they're opening.
- Pursue new funding sources (e.g. direct government allocation, government loans, Airbnb revenue, reinstate mixed drink tax payments, private partnerships, etc.)
- Work strategically with hotel partners to ensure industry recovery and resilience; understanding their needs; knowing their safety measures and precautions, etc.
- Serve as the industry voice, while also assuming the role as champion and educator to protect the organization's funding sources and relevance.

Business Plan

Action Items