

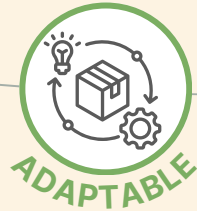
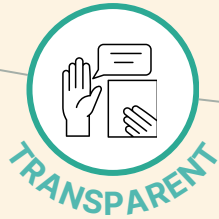
# STRATEGIC PLAN SCHEMATIC

FISCAL YEARS 2024 - 2025

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2025



# VALUES



## PURPOSE & DIRECTION



### VISION

Visit Howard County is the official organization to market and develop the county as a premier leisure and business travel destination.



### MISSION

To serve Howard County tourism businesses and organizations through marketing that showcases all of Howard County while being a credible resource and advocate.

## CULTURE



### PARTNER PROMISE

We commit to collaborating with Howard County's tourism community to facilitate opportunities that drive new and existing visitor demand while being a credible resource and advocate.



### VISITOR PROMISE

We commit to providing quality information on the unique experiences and amenities offered in Howard County and the greater region.

GOAL:  
DRIVE NEW AND CURRENT DEMAND

STRATEGIES:  
HOW WE DO IT / ACTION

KPIS:  
HOW WE MEASURE IT

Leverage special interest/niche tourism market opportunities

- Identify niche tourism opportunities using research
- Create content on VHC website
- Create marketing campaigns that raise awareness and engagement with existing and potential consumers

- 3-4 niche opportunities
- Quantity of new content added
- Quantity of marketing impressions
- Quantity of engagement: Reactions, shares, session duration, comments, click-throughs

Leverage pre-and-post marketing research

- Analyze media partner research reports, Google analytics, Zartico data, Meta ad reports
  - Pre-marketing - use data to make informed ad placement decisions
  - Post-marketing - use data to determine effectiveness

- Increase overnight stays (Zartico)
- Increase average daily room rate (Zartico)
- Increase Visitor Spending (Zartico)

Drive Corporate Meeting Demand

- Annual Meetings Matter in Howard County Expo
- Dedicated marketing budget
- Attend 2-3 corporate industry marketplace events

- Increase attendance at annual Meetings Matter Expo
- Run 2-3 targeted campaigns annually
- Establish National prospect list of planners

Steer events to need times to maximize hotel tax revenue

- Identify needs times based overnight visitation
- Solicit need times to promoters of new events
- Educate partners on need times
- Research STR report options (more detailed)

- Follow through on strategies and report out

Collaborate with surrounding region

- Continue and strengthen relationships with DMOs
- Continue and strengthen relationships with industry organizations

- Play an active role on various boards and committees
- Attend marketplaces and sales missions in collaboration with surrounding DMOs

Position VHC as the one-stop-shop for information on all things to see and do

- Maintain and improve VHC website (current, relevant, accurate, engaging)
- Produce official visitors guide annually
- Position Howard County Welcome Center as in-person resources for information
- Position VHC social channels as official resource for all things to see and do
- Facilitate Tourism Attraction Corridor Signage Program in partnership with County and State Highways

- Website sessions duration (YoY increases)
- Pageviews
- Organic traffic for both web and social
- Visitors guide distribution & reach
- Welcome Center Foot Traffic
- Welcome Center Survey Responses
- Complete TAC Program

STRENGTHEN THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

GOAL: **SUPPORT**  
**DESTINATION PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT**

STRATEGIES:  
**HOW WE DO IT / ACTION**

KPIS:  
**HOW WE MEASURE IT**

Market the county as a whole	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify niche tourism opportunities using research</li><li>• Create content on VHC website</li><li>• Create marketing campaigns that raise awareness and engagement with existing and potential consumers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Designated geographic districts</li><li>• Quantity of geographic districts marketed in content</li><li>• Annual Zartico map update</li><li>• Annual welcome center exhibit report</li></ul>
Investigate need and viability (or support) for larger event facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore feasibility study options</li><li>• Determine the length of the entire feasibility study project</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow through on strategy</li></ul>
Facilitate land availability opportunities to add athletic complexes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partner with Economic Development Authority on land availability</li><li>• Familiarize with HoCo by Design</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow through on strategy</li></ul>
Investigate mobile welcome center experience and/or satellite Welcome Center sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitor the progress of the proposed Lakefront Library</li><li>• Facilitate discussion of visitor services in proposed Lakefront Library</li><li>• Research options for company vehicle and / or rental</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Active communication on Lakefront Library</li><li>• Report on options for company vehicle and/or rental</li></ul>

GOAL: COMMUNICATE RELEVANCY & VIABILITY	STRATEGIES: HOW WE DO IT / ACTION	KPIS HOW WE MEASURE IT
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Develop and implement community relations plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuation of Districts Meetings</li> <li>Determine strategic partners / build and maintain database</li> <li>Facilitate and strengthen relationships with strategic partners</li> <li>Regular communications and touch points with local and state legislators</li> <li>Develop and deploy regular updates for members and strategic partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold quarterly districts meetings</li> <li>Strategic partners</li> <li>Quantify engagement with strategic partners</li> <li>Quantify communications with local and state legislators</li> </ul>
Develop and implement branded visitor service training program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine a tourism ambassador program</li> <li>Develop a curriculum to include onsite learning opportunities</li> <li>Provide opportunities for members to volunteer at tabling events and at the Welcome Center</li> <li>LHC scholarship program for members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow through on strategy</li> </ul>
Maintain engaged Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and maintain a calendar of meetings and events</li> <li>Activate board members through task forces and committees</li> <li>Host annual Board Orientation for new and existing members</li> <li>Develop a platform for shared access to board documents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow through on strategy</li> <li>Attendance records</li> </ul>
Develop and implement a system to measure and present KPIs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce annual report with strategic plan KPIs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow through on strategy</li> </ul>
Monitor and collaborate on specific community based legislative issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in New HoCo Business Association Meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow through on strategy</li> </ul>
Develop and implement inclusivity statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research inclusivity statements and develop an appropriate statement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow through on strategy</li> </ul>

# SUSTAINABILITY OF VHC II

GOAL:  
COMMUNICATE RELEVANCY & VIABILITY

STRATEGIES:  
HOW WE DO IT / ACTION

KPIS  
HOW WE MEASURE IT

Strategic plan priorities determination and associated budget allocations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create an annual fiscal year budget according to strategic plan priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow through on strategy</li> </ul>
Develop and implement Crisis/Emergency Preparedness Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a robust crisis plan</li> <li>Implement plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow through on strategy</li> </ul>
Sustain and Improve flagship Welcome Center and office location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure multi-year lease</li> <li>Secure funding for renovations</li> <li>Partner with county on design plans</li> <li>Partner with county on contractors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow through on strategy</li> </ul>
Expand funding opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve and Expand Cooperative Marketing Program</li> <li>Maximize existing grant programs</li> <li>Stay abreast of new grant opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased co-op marketing revenue</li> <li>Sustained or increased existing revenue</li> </ul>
Evaluate grant programs ROI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess staff time element versus results at the end of grant cycle(s)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow through on strategy</li> </ul>
Increase membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work through District Meetings on new members in each district</li> <li>Facilitate or attend community information meetings</li> <li>Continued outreach through community events and partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10% Annual Increase in Membership</li> </ul>
Annual assessment of Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schedule End of FY Team Check-in</li> <li>Annual Check-ins during November Board Retreats</li> <li>Board Executive Committee Feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review results of each strategy to determine success of Strategic Plan</li> </ul>
Develop and Implement programs to support wellbeing of staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess how “wellbeing” is defined internally and externally</li> <li>Full analysis of Employee Benefits</li> <li>Determine demand for a program</li> <li>Create a program that aligns with organization Culture and member offerings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employee Retention</li> <li>Percent of program usage</li> <li>Evaluate the impact on the Organization and members</li> </ul>