SPRINGFIELD

COMMUNITY TOURISM PROFILE



Community findings from the
Lane County Destination Master Plan

JLL



Community Tourism Snapshot

Springfield is the second-largest city in Lane County and forms the eastern half of the Eugene-Springfield metro core. It sits between the Willamette and McKenzie Rivers, and is the gateway where the metro area meets the McKenzie River corridor. Its primary visitor role is as a lodging and dining base for metro-area events and an access point to McKenzie River recreation. The Simpsons Mural and the community's river-based recreation access support tourism as well.

The JLL Demand Driver Scorecard shows kayaking, paddleboarding, canoeing and rafting scoring high enough to draw visitors from well beyond the region, a countywide activity score tied to the McKenzie River recreation available in Springfield. Fishing, the McKenzie River corridor, and the Simpsons Mural score high enough to attract visitors specifically to the area, though typically from a more limited geographic radius. The Bob Keefer Center and the community's local breweries offer a modest, standalone reason to visit. The Springfield History Museum, Splash! at Lively Park, and Gateway Mall function mainly as activities for visitors already in the area rather than reasons to travel there in the first place.

Zartico data show 41 percent of Springfield visitors come from out of state. Portland is Springfield's largest origin market by a wide margin, accounting for 40 percent of visitors and 26 percent of visitor spend, followed by Medford-Klamath Falls and Seattle-Tacoma (8 percent of visitors each) and Bend (4 percent); these origin markets are reported as media market areas rather than individual cities. By spend, Medford-Klamath Falls ranks second (12 percent), followed by Seattle-Tacoma (9 percent) and Bend (6 percent). Food and beverage draws the largest share of both visitors (38 percent) and spend (40 percent), followed by accommodations spend (31 percent) and retail (17 percent).

Resident sentiment is largely favorable: 75.5 percent of Springfield respondents rate tourism's overall impact as positive or very positive, and 72.2 percent say they are likely or very likely to recommend Springfield as a destination. Even so, homelessness, litter and general upkeep, and a shortage of things to do dominate resident comments on what would most improve Springfield's image. Stakeholders separately point to an underused Willamette riverfront, thin late-night dining after major events, and The Official Simpsons Mural, a piece of Springfield public art that visitors often miss due to its location.

Strategic Opportunity

Springfield's opportunity lies in converting proximity to the Willamette and McKenzie Rivers and to Eugene's event traffic into visitation that stays and spends locally, while addressing the homelessness, litter and general upkeep, and shortage of things to do that residents raise as barriers to recommending the community to others.

Opportunities

1. Activate the Glenwood Riverfront and Downtown Core

Supports Lane County Destination Master Plan Priorities: Close the Infrastructure Gap • Invest in Tourism that Supports Resident Quality of Life

The Willamette riverfront running through Springfield remains chronically underutilized, and stakeholders describe the Glenwood Riverfront redevelopment, already aligned with the city's own Glenwood Refinement Plan, as the metro area's top infrastructure priority. A multi-use indoor venue is part of the same conversation: the Bob Keefer Center, the community's only comparable facility, already operates at full capacity, and stakeholders have raised both an indoor sports and event venue and a whitewater park concept as ways to give the riverfront a year-round anchor.

This kind of investment gives visitors a reason to stay in Springfield rather than pass through. It also improves the everyday quality of life residents experience in their own downtown.

Recommendations

- Advance the Glenwood Riverfront redevelopment as a public-private opportunity, using its existing alignment with the Glenwood Refinement Plan and Springfield Development Code to shorten the path to approval
- Commission a feasibility study for a multi-use indoor venue that addresses both the sports and event capacity gap and the Bob Keefer Center's current capacity constraints
- Pair riverfront and downtown investment with visible cleanup and safety programming to address the top resident concerns identified in the community survey

2. Direct University and Event Traffic into Springfield

Supports Lane County Destination Master Plan Priorities: Convert University of Oregon Visitors into Lane County Visitors • Champion Strong Regional Branding and Marketing

Stakeholders consistently describe economic leakage from major university and TrackTown USA events: visitors attending events at Hayward Field and similar venues tend to stay within the immediate event footprint and do not patronize businesses beyond it, including those in Springfield. Site visit notes separately flag a broader wayfinding gap, with stakeholders calling for better place-entry signage highlighting Springfield's assets to arriving visitors.

Springfield does not need to compete with Eugene's sports identity. It needs better signage and packaging to capture a share of visitors already in the metro area, including the audience drawn to the McKenzie River's kayaking and rafting assets, and to The Official Simpsons Mural, which scores high enough to attract visitors specifically to the area but is not yet a strong marketing anchor. Where Eugene's own opportunity focuses on capturing event spending near the venues themselves, Springfield's is downstream of that: capturing the lodging, dining, and recreation spending of visitors already in the metro area for those events who have not yet crossed the river.

Recommendations

- Install clearer place-entry and wayfinding signage highlighting Springfield's public art and the McKenzie River corridor for visitors arriving from Eugene event venues
- Develop packaged itineraries pairing UO event weekends with Springfield dining, breweries, and river recreation
- Coordinate with event organizers and Eugene hotel partners on cross-promotion that routes visitors to Springfield during peak occupancy periods
- Use Travel Lane County's countywide brand and marketing platform to promote Springfield's public art, breweries, and McKenzie River access as part of a coordinated regional campaign, with Springfield's own business community driving which local assets and events are featured

3. Improve Regional Connectivity

Supports Lane County Destination Master Plan Priorities: Improve Transportation Around the Region • Close the Infrastructure Gap

Lane Transit District and other operators point to a persistent gap in transit connectivity between Eugene Airport, the metro core, and outlying communities, which limits how easily visitors already in Springfield can reach McKenzie River recreation or other county assets without a rental car.

Solving this transportation gap gives visitors already in Springfield a practical way to reach the rest of the county, reinforcing Springfield's position as a basecamp rather than just a stop.

Recommendations

- Partner with Lane Transit District to establish a dependable shuttle link between Eugene Airport and Springfield's hotel and event corridor
- Explore a subsidized rideshare or shuttle pilot connecting Springfield to McKenzie River recreation sites during peak season

Seasonality Considerations

Stakeholders describe a consistent winter downturn tied to the absence of indoor programming, with midweek and off-season occupancy softening across the Eugene-Springfield hotel base when there's no convention or tournament in town. The CEVA Presidents' Day Volleyball Tournament each February, the only Springfield event scored in the county's event matrix, shows this kind of programming can draw visitors during the slow season.

Recommendations

- Develop indoor, off-season programming such as tournament-ready pickleball or similar multiuse formats that Eugene-Springfield hoteliers and recreation operators have raised as options
- Build on the CEVA Presidents' Day Volleyball Tournament's model to explore additional winter tournaments or events that could fill other off-season weekends

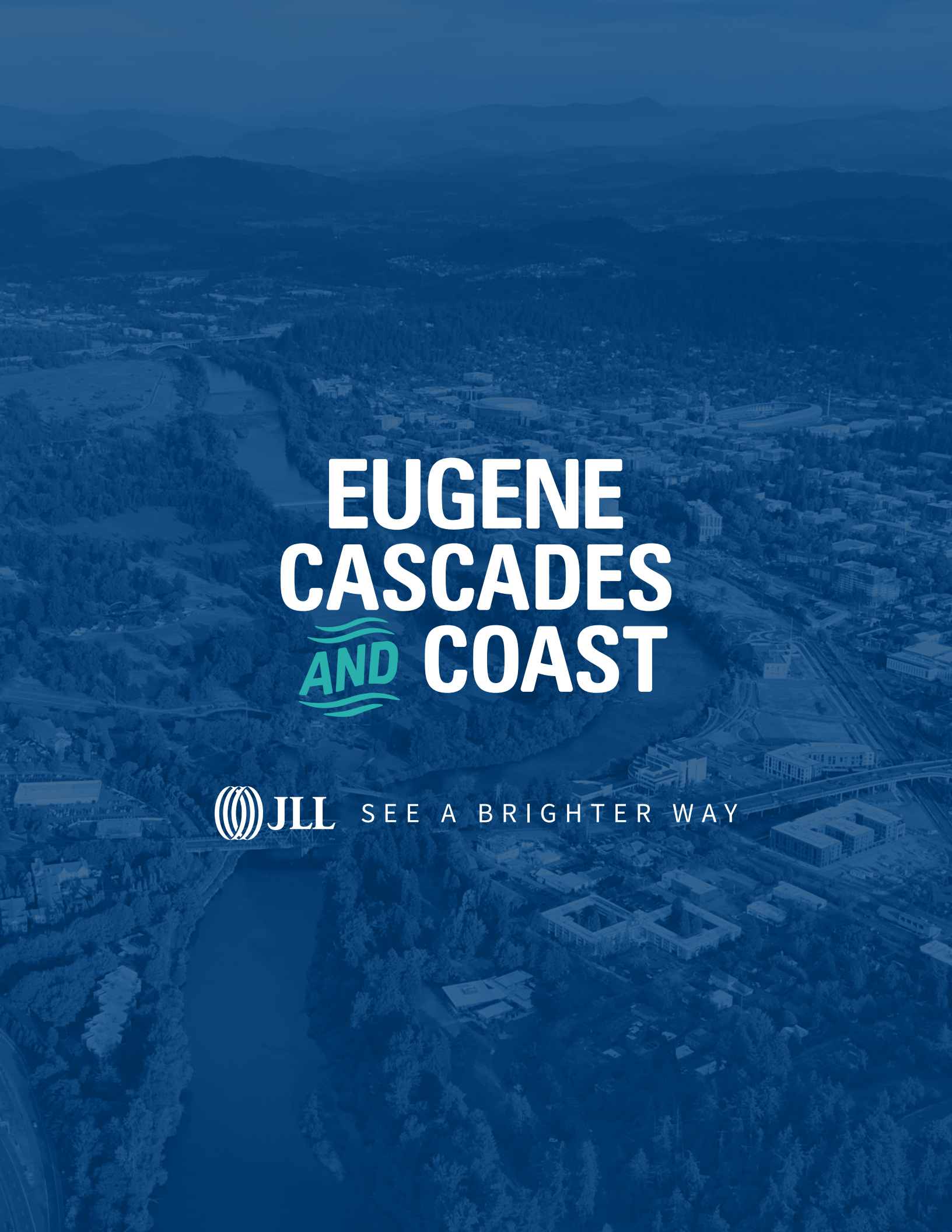
Strategic Outlook

Springfield's tourism growth over the next several years will depend less on new demand generation than on capturing visitors already moving through the metro area and giving them a reason to stay. Riverfront investment, better wayfinding, and off-season programming address the same resident concerns, homelessness, litter and general upkeep, and a shortage of things to do, that currently limit how strongly residents endorse their own community as a destination.

Research Basis

The analysis and recommendations in this profile are synthesized from multiple data sources gathered as part of the Lane County Destination Master Plan planning process. Zartico visitor data reflects figures as of January 2026; other sources were gathered through a research process conducted from October 2025 through July 2026. Sources were reviewed together and interpreted collectively rather than reported individually.

Zartico Visitor Snapshot (Springfield); JLL Demand Driver Scorecard; Lane County Event Matrix; City of Springfield Glenwood Refinement Plan; Resident Survey (community-level results and open-ended responses); Community Survey Results; Stakeholder Engagement Synthesis Report; Lane County Site Visits and Meetings; Lane County Interview Notes Compilation; Lane County Thematic Analysis; Lane County Destination Master Plan.


EUGENE
CASCADES
AND COAST
JLL
SEE A BRIGHTER WAY