



NORTH MYRTLE BEACH
STRATEGIC PLAN
2024-2026





*Our mission is to advance the prosperity of
North Myrtle Beach*

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2026

Executive Summary

Destination North Myrtle Beach is the local chamber of commerce and destination marketing organization for the city of North Myrtle Beach. As a dually accredited organization with a 5-Star Accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Accredited with Distinction through Destinations International, the organization fulfills the chamber and destination management/marketing functions in one organization.

Destination NMB develops plans for strategic initiatives that when implemented benefit the community at large. Our plans are developed with input from stakeholders, professional staff, industry standards and benchmarks, and are research based. Our board of directors convene multiple meetings with experts to ask questions and develop strategies that will serve our community's needs.

The guiding principles for the planning process include:

- Serve as the voice of business
- To grow the North Myrtle Beach visitor and destination market
- Communicate our stories
- Align our programs with business and resident needs and values
- Focus on our customers

As an organization, we undertake programs, projects, and initiatives that make our community a better place to live, work, and play. We work hard knowing that together we make a difference. We operate collaboratively with our community businesses, residents, elected officials, and our local and regional governments. There are five chambers of commerce in Horry County South Carolina, we participate with the other chambers for joint programming and communications that serve our region as well as operating individually to differentiate our community from other coastal communities in the southeastern United States.

Our local economy is tourism based and growing with more industry as our population swells following the COVID-19 pandemic. There are new opportunities and challenges facing our community with the rapid growth over the past few years and the projected growth yet to come. Our community desires planned growth that supports maintaining our quality of life.

With the guiding principles and the local sentiment for a vibrant local economy, our strategic plan is a resource for our organization to focus, prioritize our funding resources, and implement initiatives that are responsive to the current community and building what we need for a prosperous future.

This multi-year strategic plan will be supported by annual tactical business and marketing plans. The strategic plan will also seamlessly connect to the destination master plan components that have been adopted for Destination NMB to champion.

VISION: Destination North Myrtle Beach is an inclusive community champion and future-focused organization working toward a vibrant business environment through economic development, tourism promotion, and advocacy. The vital programs and services implemented ensure that the voice of business and marketing initiatives reflect the community's values.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

As the dynamic hub and voice of business in North Myrtle Beach, Destination North Myrtle Beach is an indispensable partner. Focused on **economic development** for business retention and recruitment through **destination promotion** and community development, leading **advocacy** initiatives, and serving as a community resource, while providing strategic programming to drive our mission “to advance the prosperity of North Myrtle Beach”. We are the nexus where local businesses and residents unite, we champion a pro-business environment that builds a quality of life our residents expect and enjoy. As a leader, we coordinated the development of a destination master plan (DMP) that defines our role and initiatives that over the course of several years will come to fruition. For this plan, we have incorporated short-term initiatives from the DMP implementation strategies as they relate to our strategic direction.

The destination master plan short-term objectives that are meant for Destination NMB to champion have been incorporated into the strategic initiatives rather than separate them from the program pillars. Initiatives that are consistent with our role to advocate, convene, and facilitate to pursue the support of the overall implementation of the plan are included as well as the development of programs and services related to tourism and destination development. The **Cherry Grove Sunrise Color** is used for the numbers related to the DMP.

Based upon the DestinationNEXT community assessment, the destination master plan community input, and review of best practices, the Destination NMB board of directors identified three strategic initiatives that cascade from the strategic pillars and align with the program pillars of economic development, destination promotion, and advocacy.

1. **Economic Development** – Serve as a community resource with market intelligence and research demonstrating what businesses, residents, and visitors want and aligning the objectives with the community's values to contribute to a robust local and visitor economy and resident quality of life.
2. **Destination Promotion** – Implement a comprehensive marketing plan to attract visitors throughout the year, increase visitor spending, and enhance the visitor

experience through differentiating North Myrtle Beach from other coastal communities.

3. **Advocacy** – Advocate for a positive business environment supporting quality, preferred development that expands the local economy and cultivates strategic partnerships within the community to align with residents.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Serve as a community resource with market intelligence and research demonstrating what visitors and residents want and aligning the objectives with the community's values to contribute to a robust local and visitor economy and resident quality of life.

1. Maintain visitor and resident research to identify unmet needs and opportunities for growth and improvement of the destination to remain a great place to live and visit.
2. Create a multifaceted committee to support economic development, convening regular conversations with economic development representatives from the MBREDC, city officials, business leaders, and CCU to discuss and explore ways to ensure NMB has

addressed workforce, education, and quality of life challenges and opportunities that may impact business retention and recruitment.

3. Support the conservation and state park development of Waites Island.
4. Actively participate with the Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Corporation to support business retention and recruitment.
5. Build awareness and network of support to help the community and businesses develop workforce housing.
6. Learn and understand barriers to health care providers for a growing and aging resident base as well as access to care for visitors.
7. Explore requirements to meet standards for attracting businesses with green technology and environmental priorities.
8. Survey businesses for diverse characteristics.
9. Develop programming to discover the remote workers and skills they have within our community.
10. Join Leave No Trace.
11. Expand placemaking in neighborhoods.

Success Measure:

- Research and benchmarking data available and shared
- Programs and meetings supporting economic development through business retention and recruitment
- Economic Development Committee meetings and actionable next steps
- Program implementation utilizing Leave No Trace resources
- Database inclusive of diverse business characteristics

Industry/Community Indicators will also be tracked:

- Overall improvement in workforce housing options
- Age and diversity of workforce
- Transportation options connecting residents to work sites
- Growing, thriving health care options for residents and visitors

DESTINATION MARKETING

Implement a research based comprehensive marketing plan that is proactive, nimble to respond to market trends to increase visitation through year-round visitation and driving demand to elevate visitor spending.

1. Differentiate North Myrtle Beach as a community that has fun and relaxing coastal experiences that flow naturally.
2. Drive visitation in off-peak periods focusing on leisure getaways, event promotions, and holiday offerings.

3. Utilize leading edge tools to target our preferred audiences who will respect our community values, spend time and money here, and become advocates – telling others about their experiences.
4. Position NMB as welcoming to all people.
5. Support and service group opportunities through motorcoach and small/midsized meetings, family reunions, etc. including tournament recruitment coordinated by NMB City Parks and Recreation.
6. Utilize public relations to promote destination experiences to lifestyle and travel writers to earn media coverage and reach key markets augmenting the advertising and marketing initiatives of marketing plan.
7. Incorporate an accessibility program for hospitality industry to assess, improve, and welcome visitors of all abilities, prepare content to market to travelers with accessibility needs.
8. Explore and pursue funding options to support expanded tourism marketing and destination master plan initiatives through diversified funding.
 - In conjunction with city and state leaders, pursue funds suitable to expand tourism promotion funding and support the implementation of destination master plan initiatives that restricted tourism funds may not finance.
 - Expand the fundraising for destination master plan initiatives and provide private sector matches for grants, etc.
 - Utilize the NMB Chamber Foundation fundraising to support community initiatives and community grants.
 - Build demand and scarcity for overnight accommodations to help drive rates and increase visitor tax contributions for tourism promotion.
9. Develop year-round experiences, cultural and event offerings:
 - Develop a NMB specific experiential hospitality training program and certification.
 - Develop strategic alliance with arts and cultural groups to learn and understand their needs and ensure local offering in NMB.
 - Assess and develop new visitor experiences bringing culture, local notables, neighborhoods, beach music, shag, and golf to the forefront.

Success Measure:

- Meet and/or exceed industry benchmarks for advertising attribution, website analytics, and advertising engagement
- Growth in off-peak season visitor spending
- Participation of businesses in visitor experience initiatives

Industry Indicators will also be monitored:

- Overall visitor spending
- Accommodations occupancy, demand, and rate

ADVOCACY

Cultivate relationships with business leaders, elected officials at the local, regional, state, and national levels to advocate close partnership with them for a positive business environment and the continued improvement of North Myrtle Beach and its residents quality of life.

1. Utilize committees, input sessions, surveys, and other programs to gather insights and understand business needs, real and perceived obstacles to prosperity, and opportunities for solutions to enhance the business environment.
2. Retain legislative monitoring and lobbying support as legislative needs require.
3. Support a public relations and communications program at Destination NMB as the “voice of business”.
4. Underwrite civic, cultural, scientific, and educational programs through the North Myrtle Beach Chamber Foundation.
5. Align our sustainable practices with business and residents in concert for the community of the future.
6. Form a resident advisory council, inclusive of HOAs and individual residents.
7. Develop a consistent approach to communicating the value of tourism to residents.
8. Develop a new-resident focused tourism education program.
9. Advocate for fairness and level playing field for businesses.
10. Advocate for positive solutions to vacation rental issues, oppose bans, and advocate for local contact requirements.
11. Advocate for places to sit along commercial corridors, bus stops, and scenic vistas while not providing benches suitable for sleeping.
12. Advocate for placemaking to ensure neighborhoods attract a diverse community population.
13. Advocate for wayfinding and themes at beach access points.
14. Advocate for public art and physical attributes to differentiate neighborhoods.

Success Measure:

- Survey results and measures
- Success in legislative agendas
- Community engagement levels
- Implementation of communications tools measures of engagement
- Outcomes defined in conjunction with the resident panel

Industry/Community Indicators:

- Positive business environment
- Resident awareness of the importance of tourism
- Placemaking adopted as a principle in planning for North Myrtle Beach
- Level playing field for businesses
- Neighborhoods that are differentiated, including neighborhoods that are future developments

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

The strategic initiatives include programming that may require funding, for the purpose of the timeline, all funding is assumed to be secured. The key to the implementation status indicates the status of whether the initiatives are ongoing = O, beginning = B, and finished during the year by = W for it's a wrap.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC INITIATIVES		2024	2025	2026
1.	Maintain visitor and resident research to identify unmet needs and opportunities for growth and improvement of the destination to remain a great place to live and visit.	O	O	O
2.	Create a multifaceted committee to support economic development, convening regular conversations with economic development representatives from the MBREDC, city officials, business leaders, and CCU to discuss and explore ways to ensure NMB has addresses workforce, education, and quality of life challenges and opportunities that may impact business retention and recruitment.	B	O	O
3.	Support the conservation and state park development of Waites Island.	O	O	O
4.	Actively participate with the Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Corporation to support business retention and recruitment.	O	O	O
5.	Build awareness and network of support to help the community and businesses develop workforce housing.	B	O	O
6.	Learn and understand barriers to health care providers for growing and aging resident base as well as access to care for visitors.		B	O
7.	Explore requirements to meet standards for attracting businesses with green technology and environmental priorities.		B	W
8.	Survey business for diverse characteristics.	B	O	O
9.	Develop programming to discover the remote workers and skills they have within our community.		B	O

10. Join Leave No Trace.			B	O
11. Advocate for placemaking in neighborhoods.	O	O	O	O
DESTINATION MARKETING STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	2024	2025	2026	
1. Differentiate North Myrtle Beach community that has fun and relaxing coastal experiences that flow naturally.	O	O	O	O
2. Drive visitation in off-peak periods focusing on leisure getaways, event promotions, and holiday offerings.	O	O	O	O
3. Utilize leading edge tools to target our preferred audiences who will respect our community values, spend time and money here, and become advocates – telling others about their experiences.	O	O	O	O
4. Position NMB as welcoming to all people.	O	O	O	O
5. Support and service group opportunities through motorcoach and small/mid-sized meetings, family reunions, etc. including tournament recruitment coordinated by Parks and Recreation.	O	O	O	O
6. Utilize public relations to promote destination experiences to lifestyle and travel writers to earn media coverage and reach key markets augmenting the advertising and marketing initiatives of marketing plan.	O	O	O	O
7. Incorporate an accessibility program for hospitality industry to assess, improve, and welcome visitors of all abilities, prepare content to market to travelers with accessibility needs.		B	O	
8. Explore and pursue funding options to support expanded tourism marketing and destination master plan initiatives through diversified funding. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In conjunction with city and state leaders, pursue funds suitable to expand tourism promotion funding and support the implementation of destination master plan initiatives that restricted tourism funds may not finance. 	B	O		W

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the fundraising for destination master plan initiatives and provide private sector matches for grants, etc. Utilize the NMB Chamber Foundation fundraising to support community initiatives and community grants. Build demand and scarcity for overnight accommodations to help drive rates and increase visitor tax contributions for tourism promotion. 			
<p>9. Develop year-round experiences, cultural and event offerings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a NMB specific experiential hospitality training program and certification. Develop strategic alliance with arts and cultural groups to learn and understand their needs and ensure local offering in NMB. Assess and develop new visitor experiences bringing culture, local notables, neighborhoods, beach music, shag, and golf to the forefront. 	O	B B O	O O O
ADVOCACY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	2024	2025	2026
1. Utilize committees, input sessions, surveys, and other programs to gather insights and understand business needs, real and perceived obstacles to prosperity, and opportunities for solutions to enhance the business environment.	O	O	O
2. Retain legislative monitoring and lobbying support as legislative needs require.	O	O	O
3. Support a public relations and communications program at Destination NMB as the “voice of business”.	O	O	O
4. Underwrite civic, cultural, scientific, and educational programs through The North Myrtle Beach Chamber Foundation.	O	O	O
5. Align our sustainable practices with business and residents in concert for the community of the future.	B	O	O

6. Form a resident advisory council, inclusive of HOAs and individual residents.	B	O	O
7. Develop a consistent approach to communicating the value of tourism to residents.		B	O
8. Develop a new-resident focused tourism education program.		B	O
9. Advocate for fairness and level playing field for businesses.	O	O	O
10. Advocate for positive solutions to vacation rental issues, oppose bans, and advocate for local contact requirements.	O	O	O
11. Advocate for places to sit along commercial corridors, bus stops, and scenic vistas while not providing benches suitable for sleeping.	O	O	O
12. Advocate for placemaking to ensure neighborhoods attract a diverse community population.	O	O	O
13. Advocate for wayfinding and themes at beach access points.		B	O
14. Advocate for public art and physical attributes to differentiate neighborhoods.		B	O