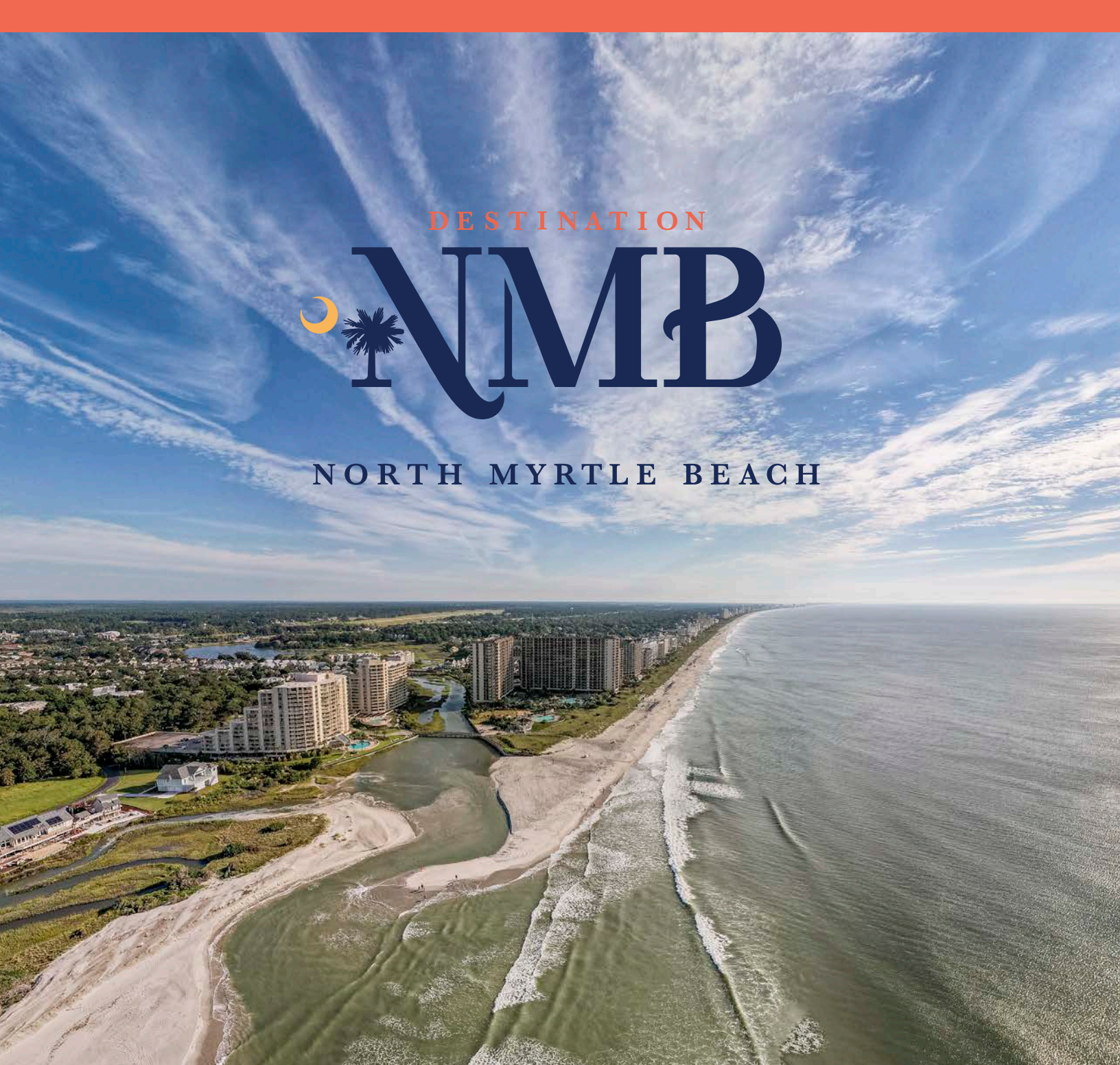


DESTINATION



NORTH MYRTLE BEACH



DESTINATION MASTER PLAN

2023 – 2033



STEERING COMMITTEE

Destination North Myrtle Beach would like to thank the regional community leaders who gave of their time and expertise as they served on the Steering Committee, providing guidance, leadership, and support of the development of the Destination Master Plan.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mendel Bell, Touch MedSpa

Brandon Cox, Elliott Beach Rentals, Inc

Cheryl Y. Kilday, Destination North Myrtle Beach

Brad Alexander, Majestic Design Services

Jim Powalie, Barefoot Landing & Broadway at the Beach

Morgan Jackson, Duplin Winery

Eileen Patonay, SC Department of Commerce

Jim Hanley, Thoroughbreds Chophouse & Seafood Grille

Frank Boulineau, Boulineau's IGA Foods Plus

Monica Vehige, McLeod Health Seacoast

Patrice Gore, State Farm – Jamesha Gore-Coggin

Marilyn Hatley, Mayor, City of North Myrtle Beach

Monroe Baldwin, Myrtle Beach Tours

Stuart Butler, Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce

Billy McGonigal, Best Western – Ocean Sands

James Wood, City of North Myrtle Beach

Cathy Weis, Tidewater Plantation HOA

PROJECT TEAM

We would like to thank the dedicated project team members who worked diligently to move this project forward, from concept to completion. We want to acknowledge the partnership with our project partner, MMGY NextFactor, the lead agency on the project and partnering agencies Better Destinations and Civitas Advisors for their expertise in sustainability and funding models. The depth of knowledge and focus this team brought to the planning process was appreciated. This plan is, by design, a living document that will continue to deliver exceptional value to the community as we journey through the implementation phase and forge new partnerships along the way.

DESTINATION NORTH MYRTLE BEACH:

Cheryl Y. Kilday, Destination North Myrtle Beach

Randy Davies, Destination North Myrtle Beach

Erin Graham, Destination North Myrtle Beach

MMGY NEXTFACTOR:

Paul Ouimet, Partner, President, MMGY NextFactor

Cassandra McAuley, SVP Destination Stewardship, MMGY NextFactor

Teresa Allan, Project Manager, MMGY NextFactor

BETTER DESTINATIONS:

Cathy Ritter, Founder & CEO, Better Destinations

CIVITAS ADVISORS:

Tiffany Gallagher, Vice President of Operations, Civitas Advisors

IMAGINE IT'S THE YEAR 2033

Imagine it's the year 2033. Residents of North Myrtle Beach are benefiting from a robust visitor economy that is supporting jobs, businesses, new infrastructure development, events and activities that have further enhanced quality of life for long-term and new residents.

As always, our beautiful beaches and natural areas remain the top draw for our visitors, and the greatest asset and point of pride for residents. While celebrating our natural assets, North Myrtle Beach has further differentiated itself from other coastal cities along the Grand Strand by enhancing its distinct neighborhoods including Cherry Grove, Ocean Drive, Crescent Beach, and Windy Hill. These neighborhoods have evolved to center around walkability, encouraging visitors and locals to explore as they learn about the history of North Myrtle Beach. Local businesses are benefiting as people are spending more as they take advantage of the ability to move through the walkable neighborhoods, sit on outdoor patios and participate in frequent events that offer live music and other cultural draws. Residents want to live in these areas because of the vibrancy and safety, and visitors want to experience the unique aspects of these interesting, truly local neighborhoods.

The walkable neighborhoods, in addition to other road network improvements, have supported improved traffic flow on North Myrtle Beach roads. Adding connected bike paths and lanes has also reduced the number of vehicles on roads during peak times.

The sports facilities have continued to grow, contributing to consistent visitation numbers through the year. In fact, North Myrtle Beach has become a sought-after destination for sports tournament organizers and families of participants. Local businesses have capitalized on this market, offering services and experiences that meet the needs of this unique visitor group.

North Myrtle Beach has maintained its family-friendly reputation and is still benefiting from return visits from families who have been frequenting the area for generations. This is in part because the community has ensured it is accessible and welcoming to those of all abilities and demographics.

As a destination, North Myrtle Beach is also benefiting from high-spending and environmentally conscious visitors who want to learn from and participate in the community's environmental and coastal conservation efforts. Waites Island has become a State Park, and North Myrtle Beach has aligned with the Leave No Trace program, which has changed how residents and visitors think about environmental stewardship and sustainability.

North Myrtle Beach has never been more attractive to residents and visitors. When local leaders reflect on the changes that set these enhancements in motion, they will credit the community's involvement in this Destination Master Plan as the first step.

A MESSAGE FROM DESTINATION NORTH MYRTLE BEACH

As we launch this plan in 2023, North Myrtle Beach is in the midst of an exciting and pivotal moment. As a community, we're experiencing unprecedented growth in new residents and in visitation. We're seeing an influx of new businesses and attractions and a lot of energy and excitement for the future amongst residents and investors.

At this critical juncture, it has been important to convene community-wide conversations about strategically shaping our future to ensure we're taking a thoughtful approach to the long-term development and health of the community and that we've done everything possible to capitalize on the economic opportunities available to us.

Discussions have been vast and meaningful and have included topics about what we must be fiercely protective of in the next 10 years balanced with what we want to develop, how we ensure we have adequate supply of vacation rental properties, the need for attainable housing options and how residents and visitors can collaboratively care for our environmental assets. The process has been fascinating, important and meaningful. This truly is a stakeholder-led plan for our community.

To give context to how this plan fits with others, I describe the breakdown as follows:

DESTINATION MASTER PLAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamic long-term planning document providing conceptual layout to guide future growth • Sustainability, stewardship, fiscal impacts, formulas, and triggers may be defined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes the connection between buildings, social settings, and their surrounding environment • Collaborative, inclusive of residents, business, municipal partners
STRATEGIC PLAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An organization's process of defining its direction and making decisions on allocating its resource to pursue the goals of the plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically, 3-5 years is considered a strategic plan, looking ahead and making assumptions about future positions, needs, and solutions that drive specific desired results
CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A planning document used for planning for future growth within the city • Provides guidance for policy makers in implementing the plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfills a requirement for municipalities • Based upon the community's vision and guiding principles to consider when defining future goals, objectives, and policies
MARKETING PLAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current situation with tactical plans to meet business objectives • Includes metrics, measures, and goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drives programs and initiatives aimed at specific audiences • Supports the strategic plan goals and objectives and helps define budget priorities

We genuinely look forward to collaborating with community partners and stakeholders to realize this plan for the benefit of North Myrtle Beach, our residents and our visitors. As Warren Buffet said, "Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago."

Sincerely,



Cheryl Y. Kilday, CDME

President & CEO

Destination North Myrtle Beach

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Destination Master Planning is about taking a strategic, rather than organic, approach to defining an overarching long-term vision for our community.

To grow the positive impact of the visitor economy in North Myrtle Beach while also enhancing the quality of life for residents and the quality of the local economy, it must be done with a purposeful approach that considers sustainable growth. That's why we undertook a stakeholder-led approach to our Destination Master Plan. In total, nearly 4,000 residents, industry stakeholders and partners and government officials, had input into this plan.

The strategic goals provide the framework for developing our community for the benefit of our residents and visitors alike. These goals offer guidance on how to achieve the overarching vision to solidify North Myrtle Beach as a destination of choice for visitors, a community of choice for residents and a local economy of choice for businesses and entrepreneurs.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NORTH MYRTLE BEACH

1. Develop year-round experiences, cultural and event offerings.
2. Improve accessibility and connectivity.
3. Ensure economic and environmental sustainability.
4. Expand placemaking in neighborhoods.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NORTH MYRTLE BEACH:

1. Develop year-round experiences, cultural and event offerings

SUPPORT QUALITY OF LOCAL ECONOMY	ENHANCE THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE	ENRICH RESIDENT QUALITY OF LIFE	CONTRIBUTE TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Attract a major year-round attraction that will advance the NMB brand and family-focused reputation. b. Advocate for sports tourism and the development of appropriate year-round facilities. c. Ensure NMB is a tournament-friendly city with the amenities, experiences and support needed to accommodate visiting teams and their families. d. Deliberately pursue retail and dining opportunities that will drive spending by visitor and residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Attract or develop events that will drive overnight visitation and complement existing annual events. b. Pursue agreement on beach ordinances to allow for ease of use, access and major event approval. c. Develop a NMB-specific experiential hospitality training program and certification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a permanent, year-round performing arts venue. b. Develop a strategic alliance with performing and visual arts and culture companies and groups in Myrtle Beach to consistently offer performances in NMB. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Require sustainability strategies for all event organizers.

2. Improve accessibility and connectivity

SUPPORT QUALITY OF LOCAL ECONOMY	ENHANCE THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE	ENRICH RESIDENT QUALITY OF LIFE	CONTRIBUTE TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Advocate for vacation rentals to be incorporated into all zoning & redevelopment. b. Consider grants or incentives for tourism and hospitality-related business owners to support workforce, and support workforce housing and transportation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Incorporate an accessibility program for hospitality industry to assess, improve and welcome visitors of all abilities. b. Develop a visitor-centric transportation system to move people around the area and reduce cars on the roads / in parking lots. c. Add places to sit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Advocate for the completion of connected road networks including I 73, and HWYs 9, 31 and 74. b. Create a trail connecting all NMB neighborhoods highlighted by local art. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop trail networks with connectivity to and between neighborhoods for recreational walking, cycling and e-bikes. b. Build network of EV charging stations.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NORTH MYRTLE BEACH:

3. Ensure economic and environmental sustainability

SUPPORT QUALITY OF LOCAL ECONOMY	ENHANCE THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE	ENRICH RESIDENT QUALITY OF LIFE	CONTRIBUTE TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Recruit businesses and employers that match desired population demographics. b. Adopt a deliberate strategy to welcome diverse business owners and employees, being welcoming of all races, religions, orientations, ages, and abilities. c. Develop reliable understanding of economic impact potential and fiscal impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Advocate for a State Park on Waites Island. b. Partner with existing organizations to develop experiences for visitors to learn and participate in sustainability initiatives (Sea Turtle Patrol, DNR, Parks & Rec, etc). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a new resident-focused tourism education / exploration program. b. Develop a consistent approach to communicating the value of tourism to residents. c. Form a resident advisory council. d. Ensure medical options are sufficient for new residents, aging population and potentially for medically-motivated travel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Join the national Leave No Trace program to align with best practices in travel related to sustainability standards. b. Complete a destination sustainability assessment and address opportunities.

4. Expand placemaking in neighborhoods

SUPPORT QUALITY OF LOCAL ECONOMY	ENHANCE THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE	ENRICH RESIDENT QUALITY OF LIFE	CONTRIBUTE TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Involve local business owners in workshopping options for streetscape design and event participation. b. Create a sense of arrival to NMB. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Showcase the history of the region in gathering spaces and on signage in neighborhoods (Shag, Gullah, family traditions, etc). b. Expand sidewalks for outdoor dining, close streets for weekly markets, rotating late night hours, incorporate lighting or illumination shows for a safe, welcoming atmosphere. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a public art program that is authentically NMB, aligned with the brand promise and showcases each neighborhood, it's history and culture. b. Incorporate playgrounds and green spaces in new neighborhood developments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Add sufficient and visually appealing recycling and trash receptacles in neighborhoods and on beaches. b. Incorporate "adopt-a-park" programs for maintenance.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding the year-long process were four key principles meant to ensure the needs of visitors, residents, businesses, the economy, and the environment were considered and planned for. These principles are not ranked in order of priority or importance.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- QUALITY OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY**
Balancing the long-term vibrancy and sustainability of the economy.
- VISITOR EXPERIENCE**
Providing excellent visitor experiences that highlight what differentiates North Myrtle Beach.
- RESIDENT QUALITY OF LIFE**
Protecting and enhancing the quality of life by mitigating the impacts of tourism while sustaining a thriving economy.
- SUSTAINABILITY**
Implementing sustainability initiatives to secure the environment for the future and dispersing visitors throughout the year and the destination.

STATE OF THE INDUSTRY



Each year, the Grand Strand welcomes over 17 million visitors who spend over \$11 billion in our area. The visitor economy supports more than 80,000 direct and indirect tourism jobs in the Grand Strand, with 80 percent of them year-round and full-time.

In North Myrtle Beach, research and analytics of website traffic indicate that the bulk of our traffic comes from North Carolina, followed by South Carolina, Georgia and New York. In 2021/22, there were over 262 million impressions of the Destination North Myrtle Beach's advertising campaigns.

After a softening in visitation in 2020 due to the global pandemic, visitation to North Myrtle Beach rebounded in 2021 with a banner year in 2022. That resurgence, coupled with the growth in new residents to the Grand Strand has made Horry County the fastest growing county in South Carolina with 30% growth between 2010 and 2020, and one of the fastest growing counties in the nation.

GLOBAL STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

Looking beyond our local region, North Myrtle Beach is one of many competitive beach destinations on a global scale. Our planning process incorporated insights from tourism communities across the globe and from the broader tourism industry.

In 2021, MMGY NextFactor, in partnership with the Destinations International Foundation, conducted the largest global survey of tourism industry leaders, with 709 tourism executives from 50 countries participating. Three transformational opportunities for our industry emerged that all relate directly to the North Myrtle Beach Destination Master Plan – and to the future of our destination:

1. **Destination Alignment:** aligning the public, private and civic sectors to drive destination performance.
2. **Sustainable Development:** destination development should marry people, profit, planet, and policy.
3. **Values Based Marketing:** Community values, goals and energy are the new competitive advantage.

The survey also identified the top strategies and trends in the tourism industry, and many align with the strategic direction for the North Myrtle Beach visitor economy.

AREA CONTEXT



The North Myrtle Beach Destination Master Plan was created within the context of existing City and County plans, policies, and regulations. We recognize and respect the work already done and consider it a strong foundation to build upon. The following is a list of organizations, planning documents and resources referenced during the project engagement:

<p>CITY OF NORTH MYRTLE BEACH 2018 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN</p>	<p>NORTH MYRTLE BEACH RECREATION PARK MASTER PLAN</p>	<p>KEEP NORTH MYRTLE BEACH BEAUTIFUL COMMITTEE</p>
<p>PARTNERSHIP GRAND STRAND</p>	<p>DESTINATION NORTH MYRTLE BEACH RESEARCH, STRATEGIES, AND PLANS</p>	<p>VISIT MYRTLE BEACH RESEARCH, STRATEGIES, AND PLAN</p>
	<p>IMAGINE 2040: HORRY COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN</p>	

FUNDING ANALYSIS



A critical component of any Destination Master Plan is considering the short and long-term funding prospects for the implementation of the strategic recommendations. Destination North Myrtle Beach’s current funding structure does not allow it to contribute to destination development initiatives in a meaningful way, and it is not appropriate to expect the City of North Myrtle Beach to fully fund the implementation of this plan.

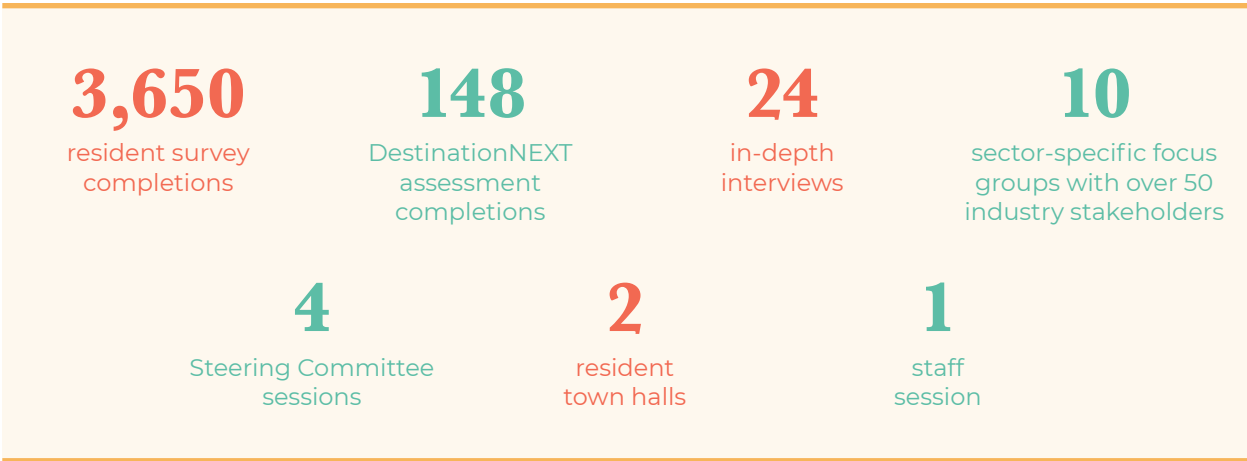
There are multiple options for the diversification of revenue streams for organizations. Private funding through membership, sponsorship, advertising sales, and special events. All of these require a lot of annual time and resources to secure – these options are not reliable. Private funding amounts fluctuate and, in bad economic times, are likely to decrease significantly. Exploring public/private partnership models are becoming a sustainable means to support such initiatives and includes the private sector most directly impacted by the projects to become engaged.

The partnership between destination management organizations, accommodations, stakeholders, and the municipality to collectively leverage funding for programs and increase additional demand for overnight visitation can be achieved. A detailed funding analysis was undertaken by industry experts, Civitas Advisors, and should be further explored. Short and long-term solutions are available to support the implementation of this plan, and the consistency of destination and experience development in North Myrtle Beach.

MASTER PLANNING PROCESS & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

The future success of the visitor economy in North Myrtle Beach depends on the public, private and civic sectors co-creating their shared vision for the future of the region.

With remarkable residential growth, that vision must support a balance of quality of life for new and existing residents, private enterprise growth and job development, and overall quality of experience for all who spend time in North Myrtle Beach. With that guiding principle at the forefront, this master planning process was designed to engage and collaborate with tourism stakeholders, community stakeholders, and residents of North Myrtle Beach.



STEERING COMMITTEE

A Steering Committee of 17 community leaders from the Grand Strand was struck to guide the process, advise on key considerations, ensure alignment with existing strategies and initiatives, and champion the Master Plan both through development and into implementation. The Steering Committee met for four in-person working sessions throughout the process.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

MMGY NextFactor and Better Destinations met with over 50 stakeholders through a series of 10 sector-specific focus groups and conducted 24 in-depth interviews, all which took place between February and October 2022. The primary purpose of this engagement was to identify key opportunities and challenges for the future of North Myrtle Beach as a destination for visitors and a quality place for residents to live, work and play.

INTERVIEWS

24 in-depth interviews were conducted in-person and virtually with key stakeholders who provided specific insights into North Myrtle Beach.

FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups included stakeholders from the following sectors:

- Accommodations
- Attractions
- Commercial Development
- Visitor Experiences
- Restaurants
- Business
- Infrastructure and Government
- Outdoor Recreation
- Retail
- Realtors

DESTINATIONNEXT ASSESSMENT

MMGY NextFactor conducted a detailed assessment of the North Myrtle Beach visitor economy utilizing a comprehensive stakeholder survey that measures perceptions of destination strength and destination alignment, based on a series of 24 variables. The results were then used to plot North Myrtle Beach into a Scenario Model, which shows the specific opportunities to build upon.

DESTINATION STRENGTH VARIABLES



 Attractions and Experiences	 Arts, Culture & Heritage	 Dining, Shopping & Entertainment	 Outdoor Recreation
 Conventions & Meetings	 Events & Festivals	 Sporting Events	 Accommodation
 Local Mobility & Access	 Destination Access	 Communication Infrastructure	 Health & Safety

DESTINATION ALIGNMENT VARIABLES



 Business Support	 Community Group & Resident Support	 Government Support	 Organization Governance
 Workforce Development	 Hospitality Culture	 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion	 Funding Support & Certainty
 Regional Cooperation	 Sustainability & Resilience	 Emergency Preparedness	 Economic Development

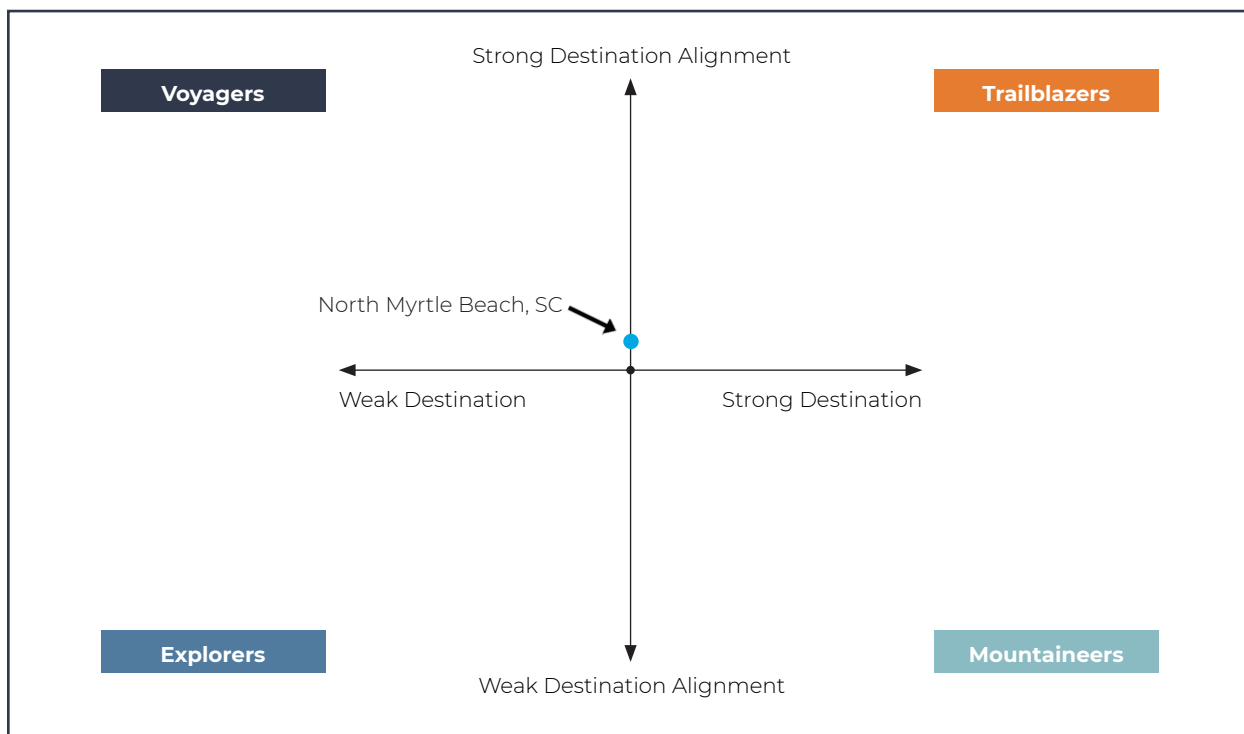
MASTER PLANNING PROCESS & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

148 stakeholders responded to the comprehensive assessment, including those representing the hospitality sector, community leaders, government leaders, healthcare, economic development, accommodations, restaurants, entertainment, business owners, the Destination North Myrtle Beach Board of Directors, staff and customers.

From a destination strength perspective, stakeholders perceive North Myrtle Beach to be strong in dining, shopping and entertainment options, health and safety, accommodations, community infrastructure, and access to the destination. However, they gave lower ratings to festivals and events and local mobility.

Related to destination alignment, North Myrtle Beach stakeholders perceive the community to be strong in emergency preparedness, community group and resident support, sustainability and resilience and equity, diversity and inclusion.

Overall, North Myrtle Beach is in the enviable Trailblazer quadrant of the DestinationNEXT scenario model, meaning the destination has strong assets and experiences and strong community alignment. After assessing nearly 400 destinations, approximately 40% land in this category. To maintain Trailblazer status, North Myrtle Beach must address affordable housing and childcare for workers, public transportation availability and options and walkability.





RESIDENT SURVEYS

In consultation with Destination North Myrtle Beach, MMGY NextFactor and Better Destinations developed an online survey to identify and gauge residents' perceptions on a variety of key characteristics with respect to livability, culture, economy, and sense of place. Two surveys were extended to the community; the first from March 28 – May 23, 2022 garnered 1,915 responses and the second from August 22 to September 26, 2022 which garnered 1,735 responses.

In total, 3,650 residents responded to the surveys, with the results demonstrating overwhelming support for tourism and pride of place as area residents.

Residents love the beaches, the sports complex and other outdoor recreation opportunities that are available in the community. They recognize that tourism supports amenities and attractions beyond what the resident-base alone can support, and they value the business opportunities that stem from the visitor economy.

Residents feel that tourism contributes to traffic congestion and increasing housing prices.

Respondents also identified that fostering greater opportunities for visitors to contribute to the protection of beaches and waterways is important to them.

TOWN HALLS

MMGY NextFactor and Better Destinations facilitated two town hall sessions for residents, offering further opportunity to share their input on the future of the visitor economy in North Myrtle Beach. The first session was hosted in May, 2022, and the second in October, 2022, to give residents the greatest opportunities for participation. These sessions were attended by approximately 20 residents, and both sessions benefited from local media coverage and interviews.

KEY FINDINGS

The compiled data, along with key findings and recommendations, were presented to the Steering Committee in a series of four working sessions throughout the project. Taken together, the sum of all the engagement uncovered 10 key findings.

- #1** Beaches and waterways are essential elements of the North Myrtle Beach experience and critical to development opportunities.
- #2** North Myrtle Beach should further develop its arts, culture and historical offerings.
- #3** Environmental stewardship and conservation experiences represent a significant development and enhancement opportunity.
- #4** North Myrtle Beach is becoming known as a premier sport tournament destination and there is room to grow this market.
- #5** There is an opportunity to enhance the sense of place in North Myrtle Beach, with murals, walkability and events.
- #6** North Myrtle Beach should differentiate and celebrate its unique neighborhoods (Cherry Grove, Ocean Drive, Crescent Beach, and Windy Hill).
- #7** Connectivity, access and wayfinding need to be enhanced.
- #8** Collaboration and active participation amongst stakeholders is high and residents support tourism.
- #9** Collaboration with Myrtle Beach and the greater Grand Strand should be prioritized.
- #10** Funding for destination development must be further explored.

VISIONING

The results and insights gleaned from these research activities were then used in a visioning workshop with the Steering Committee to envision the future of the visitor economy in North Myrtle Beach and to develop priorities to be addressed by the project.

VALIDATION

The results of the workshop were then compiled into a Draft Recommendations Report, which was presented to the Steering Committee and Destination North Myrtle Beach team for feedback and validation.

DESTINATION VISION

The shared vision for North Myrtle Beach is an aspiration for the year 2033.

IN 2033, NORTH MYRTLE BEACH WILL BE...

A year-round family destination known for our collection of distinct neighborhoods and leadership in the care and protection of our beaches and natural areas.

Throughout the Destination Master Planning process, residents and stakeholders alike expressed the importance of protecting the authenticity and identity of North Myrtle Beach. They felt it important to preserve the history of the Indigenous Peoples, Shag, and the traditions of families who have been visiting the area for generations.

There was also an expressed desire to remind visitors that this is a community that residents call home. As one resident said in a town hall session, “I want visitors to know this is our home”. That sentiment is not to dissuade visitors from experiencing North Myrtle Beach, in fact, it’s the opposite. Mayor Marilyn Hatley summed it up by saying “we live it, you’ll love it”.

This vision also expresses the community’s shared aspiration on two fronts.

The first is to be leaders in the care, protection and preservation of the beaches, waterways, and natural areas in North Myrtle Beach.

The second is to celebrate and differentiate the collection of distinct neighborhoods in North Myrtle Beach, including Cherry Grove, Ocean Drive, Crescent Beach, and Windy Hill. This is not meant to be competitive or divisive in the community, rather it is meant to celebrate the unique attributes of the communities that make North Myrtle Beach what it is, to increase economic impact for the local businesses and to encourage visitors and residents to explore the entirety of the destination.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The strategic recommendations provide the framework for decision making regarding efforts and potential investments to enhance the visitor economy in North Myrtle Beach. These goals offer guidance on how to achieve the overarching vision and develop the long-term competitive positioning for the community as a visitor destination and a great place to live.

Each recommendation has been approached through the lens of the four objectives of the Master Plan.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

QUALITY OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Balancing the long-term vibrancy and sustainability of the economy.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Providing excellent visitor experiences that highlight what differentiates North Myrtle Beach.

RESIDENT QUALITY OF LIFE

Protecting and enhancing the quality of life by mitigating the impacts of tourism while sustaining a thriving economy.

SUSTAINABILITY

Implementing sustainability initiatives to secure the environment for the future and dispersing visitors throughout the year and the destination.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NORTH MYRTLE BEACH

1. Develop year-round experiences, cultural and event offerings.
2. Improve accessibility and connectivity.
3. Ensure economic and environmental sustainability.
4. Expand placemaking in neighborhoods.

#1 DEVELOP YEAR-ROUND EXPERIENCES, CULTURAL AND EVENT OFFERINGS



Destinations with the highest quality of life for residents and strong visitor sentiment are those that have a rich variety of cultural events and experiences throughout the year. By further developing these offerings in North Myrtle Beach, we will not only enhance quality of life and experience but bolster the economic impact in our community and support economic and environmental sustainability by leveling out the peaks and valleys of busy visitation periods throughout the year.

SUPPORT QUALITY OF LOCAL ECONOMY

- Attract a major year-round attraction that will advance the NMB brand and family-focused reputation.
- Advocate for sports tourism and the development of appropriate year-round facilities.
- Ensure NMB is a tournament-friendly city with the amenities, experiences and support needed to accommodate visiting teams and their families.
- Deliberately pursue retail and dining opportunities that will drive spending by visitor and residents.

ENHANCE THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

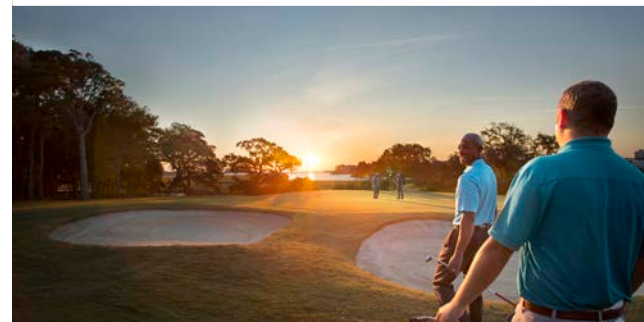
- Attract or develop events that will drive overnight visitation and complement existing annual events.
- Pursue agreement on beach ordinances to allow for ease of use, access and major event approval.
- Develop a NMB-specific experiential hospitality training program and certification.

ENRICH RESIDENT QUALITY OF LIFE

- Develop a permanent, year-round performing arts venue.
- Develop a strategic alliance with performing and visual arts and culture companies and groups in Myrtle Beach to consistently offer performances in NMB.

CONTRIBUTE TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Require sustainability strategies for all event organizers.



#2 IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY



Consistently, comments from residents and stakeholders about the future of North Myrtle Beach were about the accessibility and connectivity of our destination. This includes our road networks, the future of how people will be getting around, and adapting to meet the needs of all abilities of residents and visitors.

SUPPORT QUALITY OF LOCAL ECONOMY

- a. Advocate for vacation rentals to be incorporated into all zoning & redevelopment.
- b. Consider grants or incentives for tourism and hospitality-related business owners to support workforce, and support workforce housing and transportation.

ENHANCE THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

- a. Incorporate an accessibility program for hospitality industry to assess, improve and welcome visitors of all abilities.
- b. Develop a visitor-centric transportation system to move people around the area and reduce cars on the roads / in parking lots.
- c. Add places to sit.

ENRICH RESIDENT QUALITY OF LIFE

- a. Advocate for the completion of connected road networks including I 73, and HWYs 9, 31 and 74.
- b. Create a trail connecting all NMB neighborhoods highlighted by local art.

CONTRIBUTE TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- a. Develop trail networks with connectivity to and between neighborhoods for recreational walking, cycling and e-bikes.
- b. Build network of EV charging stations.



#3 ENSURE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

As a coastal community with beautiful intercoastal waterways, beaches, parks and natural areas, it is critical to actively consider how visitors might positively contribute to the sustainability and stewardship of our environmental assets. This approach complements the need for economic sustainability as we consider the long-term health and appeal of North Myrtle Beach and the ethos and spending potential of environmentally conscious visitors.

SUPPORT QUALITY OF LOCAL ECONOMY

- a. Recruit businesses and employers that match desired population demographics.
- b. Adopt a deliberate strategy to welcome diverse business owners and employees, being welcoming of all races, religions, orientations, ages and abilities.
- c. Develop reliable understanding of economic impact potential and fiscal impacts.

ENHANCE THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

- a. Advocate for a State Park on Waites Island.
- b. Partner with existing organizations to develop experiences for visitors to learn and participate in sustainability initiatives (Sea Turtle Patrol, DNR, Parks & Rec, etc).

ENRICH RESIDENT QUALITY OF LIFE

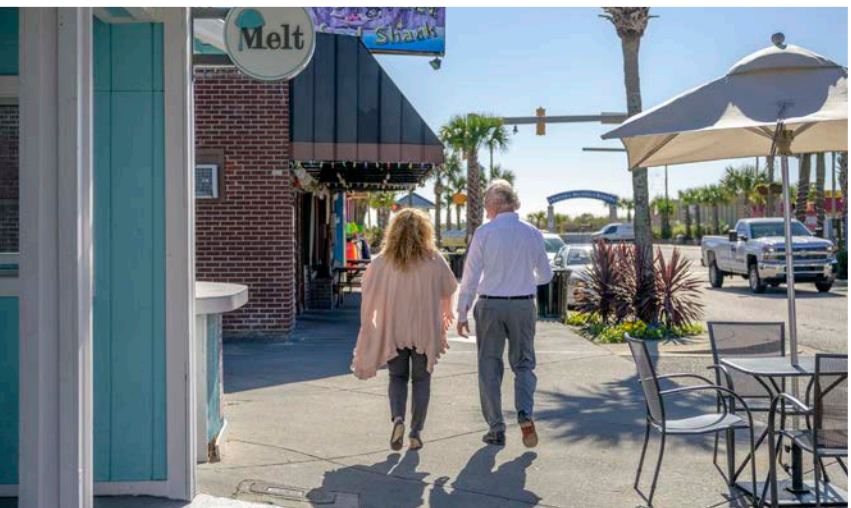
- a. Develop a new resident-focused tourism education / exploration program.
- b. Develop a consistent approach to communicating the value of tourism to residents.
- c. Form a resident advisory council.
- d. Ensure medical options are sufficient for new residents, aging population and potentially for medically-motivated travel.

CONTRIBUTE TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- a. Join the national Leave No Trace program to align with best practices in travel related to sustainability standards.
- b. Complete a destination sustainability assessment and address opportunities.



#4 EXPAND PLACEMAKING IN NEIGHBORHOODS



North Myrtle Beach is rich with a diverse assortment of neighborhoods that contribute to the destination experience. Further development of these key assets through placemaking, storytelling and adding walkability, lighting and safety features will encourage residents and visitors to explore more and to spend more with local businesses.

SUPPORT QUALITY OF LOCAL ECONOMY

- a. Involve local business owners in workshoping options for streetscape design and event participation.
- b. Create a sense of arrival to North Myrtle Beach.

ENHANCE THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

- a. Showcase the history of the region in gathering spaces and on signage in neighborhoods (Shag, Gullah, Atlantic Beach, family traditions, etc.).
- b. Expand sidewalks for outdoor dining, close streets for weekly markets, rotating late night hours, incorporate lighting or illumination shows for a safe, welcoming atmosphere.

ENRICH RESIDENT QUALITY OF LIFE

- a. Develop a public art program that is authentically North Myrtle Beach, aligned with the brand promise and showcases each neighborhood, it's history and culture.
- b. Incorporate playgrounds and green spaces in new neighborhood developments.

CONTRIBUTE TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- a. Add sufficient and visually appealing recycling and trash receptacles in neighborhoods and on beaches.
- b. Incorporate “adopt-a-park” programs for maintenance.



NEXT STEPS

From the outset of the Destination Master Planning process, the community was engaged and excited to support the implementation of the strategic recommendations.

As Destination North Myrtle Beach doesn't own the assets and experiences related to the visitor economy, and therefore, they cannot single-handedly move this Master Plan forward. While an implementation plan has been developed, outlining priority actions, partnerships and success indicators, their roles in the implementation of the Destination Master Plan will take several forms including:

ADVOCATE

There will be instances where Destination North Myrtle Beach will advocate for the advancement of strategic initiatives that will advance the area for the benefit of visitors and residents.

CONVENER

Destination North Myrtle Beach may be the conveners of groups and those in positions to advance initiatives.

LEADER

There will be instances where Destination North Myrtle Beach takes the lead as the organization to advance initiatives.

SUPPORT

Finally, Destination North Myrtle Beach will be the supporting or partnering organization on initiatives with other leading organizations.

Several initiatives within the plan will be incorporated into Destination North Myrtle Beach strategic plan to ensure implementation is giving organizational focus, support, and resources.

It is recommended that subcommittees and working groups be convened with members of the Steering Committee and other community leaders and tasked with guiding implementation, collaborating to execute on initiatives and report on progress and other performance measures.

It is also recommended that North Myrtle Beach consider destination funding options for the continued development of experiences, programs, initiatives and assets against the outcomes of this Master Plan.

With a collaborative, focused and original approach to the implementation of this Destination Master Plan, it will result in the growth of the visitor economy and its widespread benefits for the entire region.

The visitor economy in North Myrtle Beach has unlimited potential and we're excited to welcome more visitors to our great area!