



2023-2025 Strategic Plan

Eastern Oregon Visitors Association

Goal 1: Attract visitors to Eastern Oregon

Obj. 1 Grow audience familiarity with Eastern Oregon through marketing in alignment with local values and culture

- Implement marketing to reach potential visitors, pique curiosity & inspire visitation by highlighting the range of offerings in our vast region to the right audiences
- Align marketing messaging to be responsive to local messaging needs
- Leverage statewide campaign opportunities
- Produce and distribute a regional visitor guide
- Attend B2B trade shows (i.e. IPW, Go West) and B2C trade shows (i.e. Spokane Great Outdoors & Bike Expo, Vancouver Outdoor & Adventure Show) to grow audience familiarity
- Strengthen and formalize EOVA's brand
- Maintain consumer website with regular updates and inspiring content
- Produce consumer e-newsletter to increase engagement of the region

Obj. 2 Deepen connection with potential visitors to book overnight stays

- Work with Media (travel writers, KGW, Media Marketplace) to diversify regional storytelling
- Enhance supplier development to increase readiness and opportunities for international travel trade including list of lodging partners and product that are buyer-ready
- Build photo library, using equity lens when procuring photo assets
- Address visitor uncertainty during planning stage to provide confidence to book trips by improving available visitor information regarding amenities, travel advisories, and recommended visitor behaviors
- Explore marketing opportunities that cater to the specific interests and values of target audiences
- Develop itineraries for better visitor distribution across the region
- Identify opportunities to engage in-region visitors

Obj. 3 Measure, evaluate, and optimize strategies

- Establish dashboards and reporting mechanisms to track results

Goal 2: Deliver high quality and place-based visitor experiences

Obj. 1 Lead regional destination planning in partnership with local tourism stakeholders

- Co-create projects and plans with stakeholders that reflect local, regional, and state priorities
- Convene work groups around regional topics and projects (ex: Scenic Byways, Farm Trails, Scenic Bikeways, Winter Rec, Water Rec, Culture, History)
- Promote destination planning that disperses visitors across seasons and communities

Obj. 2 Create and enhance regional experiences for visitors and residents alike based on Eastern Oregon's unique assets and target markets

- Create and enhance experiences in EOVA's three destination development pillars:
 - *Culinary & Agritourism*: Develop experiences highlighting local food and farms
 - *Culture & Heritage*: Expand presence in statewide culture and heritage programming; place-making infrastructure to share local storytelling
 - *Outdoor Recreation*: Dark Skies, Oregon's Signature Trails; Winter Recreation; and Cycling
 - **Full list of specific projects can be found in [EOVA's Destination Development Framework](#)**
- Increase guided experiences in-region by leveraging existing visitor assets

Obj. 3 Support efforts to improve the visitor experience

- Support investments in information and infrastructure that improve the visitor experience
- Coordinate with local Search & Rescue and emergency management to develop strategies to reduce visitor incidents
- Explore strategies to make Eastern Oregon a welcoming and accessible destination
- Provide consistent information and materials across region's main visitor touchpoints

Goal 3: Foster a visitor economy that respects Eastern Oregon's people and places

Obj. 1 Foster a tourism ecosystem that listens and responds to community sentiment

- Collaboratively schedule and host in-person EOVA Quarterly Stakeholder Meetings to discuss tourism with local stakeholders
- Attend stakeholder-led events to better understand local dynamics and priorities, including issues posing risks to tourism in our communities (ex: affordable housing, economic downturn, environmental risks)
- Use Travel Oregon's Stakeholder Survey and Visitor and Resident Sentiment Survey as tools for guiding destination marketing, planning, and management decisions
- Increase outreach to under-engaged stakeholders

Obj. 2 Strive to be a visitor destination embodying sustainable travel principles

- Support sustainable management of areas with high visitor traffic, through planning, infrastructure, visitor messaging, and programming
- Assess car-free and electric vehicle travel options— advocate for infrastructure to fill gaps
- Celebrate regional partners already engaging in sustainable and regenerative travel efforts

Obj. 3 Promote efforts to prevent economic leakage and ensure more revenue from tourism remains in the community

- Prioritize promotion of local businesses and products both in visitor-facing product development and promotions
- Lead programming to increase visitor spending on local food, including inventory, marketing, and annual events to connect regional producers and buyers
- Coordinate with regional workforce boards and local partners to recognize tourism as a key industry sector
- Prioritize local businesses in EOVA's own organizational procurement practices

Goal 4: Support the needs of our industry partners for a stronger regional tourism ecosystem

Obj. 1 Provide leadership and coordination for regional visitor industry issues and communications with statewide partners

- Represent and amplify concerns of Eastern Oregon stakeholders in statewide tourism meetings as Travel Oregon's designated regional destination management organization (RDMO) for Eastern Oregon
- Coordinate with other regional and statewide organizations to improve efficiency in requests, information-sharing and service delivery to local stakeholders
- Respond to Travel Oregon's 2025 RFP for RDMO services

Obj. 2 Provide resources and assistance to industry partners

- Provide technical support for partners in grant writing, marketing, and product development in areas that align with EOVA's key initiatives
- Implement annual Eastern Oregon Regional Grant Program
- Revamp EOVA's industry website to be an up-to-date and helpful resource for partners
- Produce regular industry newsletter to include resources, trainings, and success stories
- Administer EOVA Partner Toolkit to elevate regional marketing

Obj. 3 Foster a strong and engaged network of regional tourism partners

- Host regular meetings for local tourism leaders to encourage cross-regional collaboration and education
- Provide support onboarding local tourism partners with regional and state tourism context to ensure continuity during staff transitions
- Increase local engagement with industry trade groups to focus on areas of improvement in visitor and resident experience (ex: lodging and dining, front-line staff)

Obj. 4 Communicate the value of tourism to policymakers, local residents, and other key stakeholders

- Attend or present at local meetings upon request of DMOs and other stakeholders
- Capture and share value of tourism in Eastern Oregon
- Host EOVA Annual Update event
- Increase consistency and availability of reporting on regional lodging numbers
- Increase earned media for EOVA and tourism-related projects in the region

Goal 5: Increase EOVA organizational capacity and stability

Obj. 1 Strengthen EOVA governance

- Operate under updated Bylaws and Policies & Procedures
- Instate finance and budget committee for financial oversight and guidance
- Identify clear and collective direction for organization's work on equity, inclusion, diversity, and accessibility
- Implement Board on-boarding and recruitment program, including creation of board manual

Obj. 2 Strengthen and support EOVA staff

- Assess staffing and contractor needs to support organization's growth and sustainability
- Develop strong employee value proposition
- Provide professional development opportunities to ensure staff is knowledgeable of current tourism trends and resources

Obj. 3 Improve the operational tools and processes of the organization

- Fully implement new CRM and grants database
- Undertake strategic planning process in advance of 2025-2027 Biennium
- Establish key organizational baselines and benchmarks to track effectiveness

Obj. 4 Build and diversify financial sources of EOVA

- Create and execute funding plan to diversify revenue outside of Travel Oregon's Regional Cooperative Tourism Program (RCTP) funds
- Add financial sustainability planning to EOVA budgeting process to ensure adequate growth and reserves in operating budget

Approved by the EOVA Board of Directors on Tuesday, May 23, 2023.