



Visit San Luis Obispo Strategic Plan Update

City of San Luis Obispo
Tourism Business Improvement District

resonance

AUGUST 2024

We can't wait to work
with you again in
San Luis Obispo.

“We'll bring together our collective
expertise in strategy, tourism,
marketing, and economic development
to help you chart a more prosperous and
sustainable future for your destination.”

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01

Letter of Intent

Visit San Luis Obispo
990 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo
CA 93401

AUGUST 2, 2024

Re: Visit San Luis Obispo Strategic Plan Update

Dear Jacqui Clark-Charlesworth,

It's our pleasure to submit this proposal to create a Strategic Plan for the San Luis Obispo TBID.

Our firm, Resonance, is a leader in tourism development and management, with more than a decade of strategic planning experience working with countries, regions, and cities of all sizes in the U.S. and around the world, including San Luis Obispo, Los Angeles and San Diego in California.

Like our previous work with Visit SLO CAL and the City of San Luis Obispo, our process will deliver important insight into how the San Luis Obispo TBID should invest in and manage its assets, resources, products and services to grow visitation to the region, while also enhancing quality of life for local communities. Based on our work in the county, we would value the opportunity to work with your team and stakeholders in this continued initiative for one of the most desirable destinations in California.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at your convenience. We look forward to discussing our proposal with you in the near future.

Sincerely,



Christopher Fair
President & CEO, Resonance Consultancy

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175 Varick St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10014

02

Experiences & Expertise

Resonance: Empowering Places

Resonance creates transformative strategies, plans, brands and campaigns that help destinations, cities and communities realize their full economic potential.

Our diverse, multidisciplinary team of planners, economists, strategists, storytellers, creatives and account leaders have completed over 200 visioning, strategy, marketing and branding projects for cities, districts and destinations throughout the country and around the world—ranging from Corporate Strategies for Destination Canada to Tourism Plans for Los Angeles, San Diego, Pittsburgh, Portland, and San Luis Obispo.

Our approach to planning for destination marketing organizations like the SLO TBID is rooted in thoroughly understanding the goals and aspirations of the destination, its visitors, industry stakeholders and the local community to create a plan that will guide the long-term sustainable development, marketing and management of the destination in a manner that generates both economic benefits and enhances quality of life for local residents. Our areas of expertise include:

01
Destination Development

We help cities, regions and countries improve the performance and sustainability of their visitor economy with strategic planning, destination master planning and brand strategy.

02
Economic Development

We help regions and cities plan and articulate their economic development roadmaps with strategies that align with government priorities, community aspirations and investor needs.

03
Urban Development

We help forward-looking cities, districts and developers to envision, activate and shape the future of downtowns, districts and new developments with market analysis, placemaking strategies, and branding.

For more information, please visit: resonanceco.com



Chris Fair President & CEO

As President of Resonance, Chris leads a team of leading global advisors on placemaking, branding and marketing for destinations, cities, districts, and developments around the world. Chris holds a Master's degree in Studies of the Future and specializes in trend analysis, visioning, strategic planning and marketing for destinations, cities and communities.

In 2016, he designed the *World's Best Cities* rankings to define and benchmark the performance of more than 400 cities around the world, and he is a frequent speaker and commentator on global tourism, real estate and urban development trends.

Chris is a past Chairman of the Urban Land Institute's Travel Experience & Trends Council, a member of the Project for Public Spaces Leadership Council, and instructor in Placemaking at New York University.

EDUCATION

Master's of Science (Studies of the Future),
University of Houston
Bachelor of Arts (Journalism), Concordia
University, Montréal, Quebec

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Destination Canada Strategic Plan
San Diego Tourism Master Plan
Pittsburgh Tourism Development Plan
Ottawa Strategic Plan
City of Los Angeles Tourism Master Plan
San Luis Obispo Tourism Plan
Failte Ireland Regional Development Strategy



Tim Hasid Director of Destination Strategy

As Director of Destination Strategy, Tim has shaped the future of destinations across the globe for the past decade—from countries to urban centres. An expert placemaker, Tim leads the strategic planning and destination development practice at Resonance and holds a Master's degree in Urban Planning and Sustainable Development from the University of Bordeaux, and a BSc in Civil & Environmental Engineering from the University of Cardiff Engineering School.

He has worked with clients ranging from Destination Canada to the Republic of Ireland, all the while providing deep data insights that surface the vital signals from the noise and provide organizations with target market behaviours that take the guesswork out of planning.

EDUCATION

Master's of Science in Urban Planning and
Sustainable Development, University of Bordeaux
Bachelor of Science in Civil & Environmental
Engineering, University of Cardiff

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Bellevue (WA) Destination Stewardship Plan
Destination Canada Strategic Plan
Ottawa Destination Stewardship Plan
Pittsburgh Tourism Development Plan
Scottsdale Tourism & Events Plan
San Luis Obispo Tourism Plan



Kyla Egan

Destination Stewardship Consultant

Kyla Egan is an experienced consultant in destination development and sustainability. She leans into her background in research and community engagement in Central America and the Caribbean to provide inclusive economic opportunities to communities through tourism.

Before joining Resonance, Kyla worked on Vancouver Island as 4VI's Director of Sustainability. She was responsible for managing 4VI's sustainable development initiatives, including the organization's commitment to the Glasgow Declaration and Biosphere Certification. Kyla's passion for environmental justice and climate action has shaped her career for the past decade.

EDUCATION

Master's in Social Geography, University of Toronto
Bachelor of Arts, Humanities/Humanistic Studies,
University of Toronto

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Saint John Destination Stewardship Plan
Vancouver Island Tourism GHG Inventory
Vancouver Island Climate Action Plan

Experience

City of Bellevue
City of Brampton
City of Charlottesville
City of El Paso
City of Goodyear
City of Greenville
City of Guelph
City of Los Angeles
City of Lynchburg
City of North Vancouver
City of Olathe
City of Prince George
City of San Luis Obispo
City of Scottsdale
City of Tucson
Calgary Municipal Land Corporation
Christchurch NZ
Coastal Mississippi & Mississippi Gulf Coast Regional Convention & Visitors Bureau
Cordillera Metropolitan District
Curacao Tourist Board
Department of Culture and Tourism Abu Dhabi
Destination Canada (Canadian Tourism Commission)

Destination Cleveland
Destination El Paso
Destination Madison
Destination Toronto
Destination Vancouver
District of West Vancouver
Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association
Fayetteville Convention & Visitors Bureau
Finger Lakes Wine Country Tourism
Greater Topeka Partnership
Houston First Corporation
Houston Theater District
Illinois Council of Convention & Visitor Bureau
Lower Lonsdale Business Improvement Association
New York City Economic Development Corporation
Office du tourisme de Québec
Ottawa Tourism
Richmond Region Tourism
Salmon Arm Economic Development Society
San Diego Tourism Authority

Singapore River One BID
Snohomish County Office of Economic Development
South Bend Elkhart Regional Partnership
Town of Milton
Tourism Vancouver
Tourisme Montreal
Travel Manitoba
Travel Portland
Tulsa Regional Chamber
Urban Redevelopment Authority
Singapore
Visit Bellevue
Visit Denver
Visit Oakland
Visit Pittsburgh
Visit Quad Cities
Visit SLO CAL
Visit Tampa Bay
Visit Tucson
Visit Tulsa
VisitColumbusGA
West Harlem Community Preservation Organization



San Luis Obispo

A DESTINATION TO LIVE, WORK,
PLAY AND PROTECT

A Balanced Destination Management
Strategy Between Preservation and
Tourism Development

Org.: Resonance

Date: 2018-2019

Client: Visit SLO CAL

Services: Destination Management Strategy

[Extended Case Study](#)

Reference:

Chuck Davison, ex-President & CEO
Visit SLO CAL
chuck@tourismeconomics.com
+1-805-541-8000

CONTEXT

Resonance Consultancy was engaged by Visit SLO CAL to help San Luis Obispo County community leaders understand the key competitive advantages and weaknesses for tourism, and quality of life for local residents in order to create a Destination Management Strategy intended to guide the planning, product development, programming, policy and promotion of SLO CAL as a destination to live, work, play and visit.

APPROACH

The approach was to create a shared vision for the future by defining the destination as more than the sum of its parts. While the Destination Management Strategy addresses critical hardware, such as transportation or a potential conference center, required to achieve SLO CAL's goals, it also addresses the software of relationships and programming required to foster the quality of life, culture and experiences necessary to create a unique and compelling sense of place.

This project required a careful balance between natural environmental protection and preservation, and tourism development. Residents in San Luis Obispo shared through the survey that they care deeply about their natural environment and that they prioritize this as a driving force for developing SLO County as a destination. They understand the impact tourism is having on their communities, economically and with regard to quality of life, and want to make sure that both are balanced in the Destination Management Strategy.

IMPACT

We continue to work with San Luis Obispo County on a Destination Stewardship Plan for Oceano Dunes, a natural preserve and oceanfront sand dune destination for outdoor adventures.



Los Angeles

AN OLYMPIC EFFORT TO GROW TOURISM

A plan to prepare the City of Los Angeles for the 2028 Olympic Games and grow from welcoming 50 million to more than 70 million visitors a year.

Org.: Resonance

Date: 2019-2020

Client: City of Los Angeles

Services: Consulting, Tourism Master Planning, Strategic Planning

[Extended Case Study](#)

Reference:

Doane Liu, Chief Tourism Officer
City of Los Angeles, City Tourism Department
doane.liu@lacity.org
+1-213-765-4249

CONTEXT

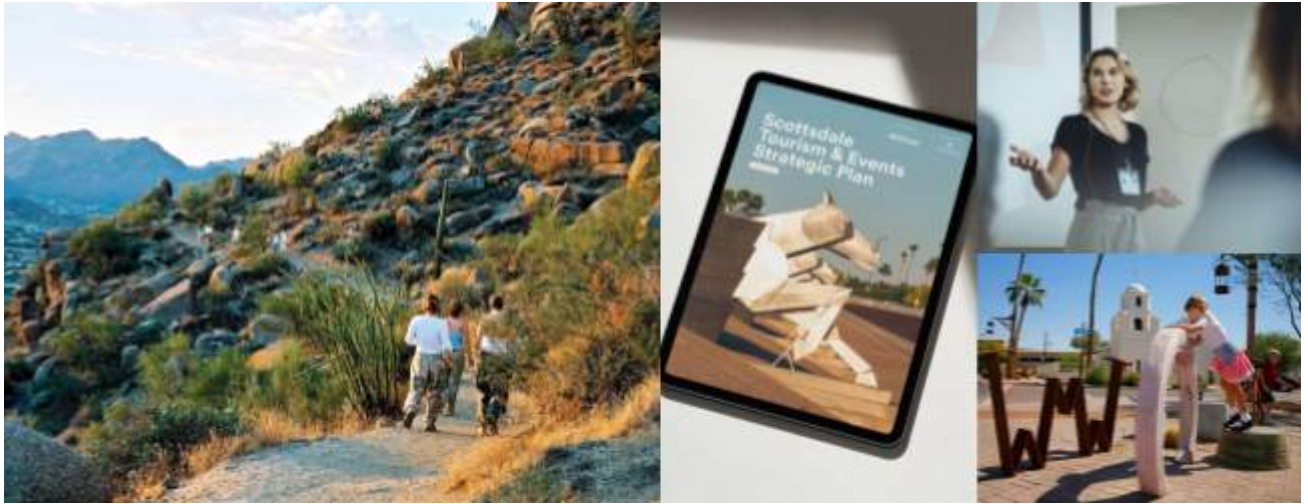
In 2018, the Los Angeles travel and tourism industry generated a record \$36.6 billion in total economic impact. With an upcoming Super Bowl, World Cup and Olympic Games, L.A. planned to host 70 million visitors a year by 2030, which would create more than 400,000 additional jobs and create as much as a billion dollars a year more in tax revenue for the city. The City of Los Angeles engaged Resonance and HVS to develop a Tourism Master Plan to prepare for this growth in a way that would deliver a positive experience for visitors while also enhancing quality of life for local residents.

APPROACH

Our team engaged hundreds of tourism stakeholders in L.A., including convention planners, hotel owners, more than 1,000 residents and 1,500+ past visitors. With the input from stakeholders, the public, boards and steering committees, Resonance created a final report that orders and contextualizes the findings and lays out a path of action for the CTD and the City of Los Angeles.

IMPACT

While the Tourism Master Plan addresses critical hardware—such as transportation or the Los Angeles Convention Center—required to achieve the City of Los Angeles' goals, it also addresses the software of relationships and programming required to foster the quality of life, culture and experiences necessary to create a unique and compelling sense of place for visitors and residents. As a result of Resonance recommendations, Mayor Eric Garcetti signed his 33rd Executive Directive, which creates the City of Los Angeles Tourism Cabinet, a group of department general managers to support growth in the tourism and hospitality sectors in Los Angeles. The Executive Directive also calls for the creation of a Chief Tourism Officer and implementation of the recommendations laid out in the City's Tourism Master Plan.



Scottsdale

A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S MOST AFFLUENT DESTINATIONS

Charting a sustainable future for a destination that marries culture and outdoor recreation.

Org.: Resonance

Date: 2021-2022

Client: City of Scottsdale Tourism & Events Department

Services: Consulting, Tourism Master Planning, Strategic Planning

[Extended Case Study](#)

Reference:

Rachel Pearson, Vice President of Government Affairs, Experience Scottsdale
rpearson@experiencescottsdale.com
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CONTEXT

The Tourism & Events Department of the City of Scottsdale engaged Resonance, in partnership with Experience Scottsdale, in the development of the strategic plan to guide the post-pandemic recovery and growth of the industry over the next five years.

APPROACH

As one of the country's most recognized and desirable destinations, Scottsdale welcomes visitors from around the world who come to enjoy an urban sanctuary in the heart of the Sonoran desert. From hiking trails to shopping safaris, sports to arts and culture, Scottsdale offers a wealth of experiences that attracts active adventurers, urban enthusiasts, business meetings and world-class events throughout the year. The strategic plan provides a framework for decision making regarding efforts and investments to enhance Scottsdale's visitor economy. The planning effort was overseen by a Steering Committee consisting of representatives from the hotel industry and key anchor attractions within the destination. As part of our process, we conducted extensive engagement that included the Mayor & City Council, City Manager's Office, various city department leadership, hoteliers, property owners, retailers, restaurants, art galleries, and other partners and stakeholders.

IMPACT

The framework developed a clear and shared vision of tourism to help Scottsdale grow sustainably as one of the country's most desirable destinations by positioning it as a luxury destination in the heart of the Sonoran Desert. The framework was guided by the specific experience principles that aided in the understanding of the facilities, programming and events that would be required to enrich both the visitor and resident experience that would minimize the impact of tourism on the environment while maximizing its economic benefits for the city.



Destination Canada

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF TOURISM IN CANADA

The development of Destination Canada's 2030 Strategy and forward-thinking measurement framework to define Canada's performance.

Org.: Resonance

Date: 2021-Present

Client: Destination Canada

Services: Tourism Strategy, Research

[Extended Case Study](#)

Reference:

Meaghan Ferrigno, Chief Data Analytics Officer
 Destination Canada
 ferrigno.meaghan@destinationcanada.com
 +1 604-638-8378

CONTEXT

What will tourism look like after the pandemic? From a virtual industry-wide shutdown to unprecedented demand for leisure travel in some destinations in the space of just two years, the pandemic upended the long-term plans of Canada's national, provincial, and municipal destination marketing organizations. Destination Canada needed to develop a shared strategy to drive the recovery of travel and tourism and plan for long-term growth and resilience.

APPROACH

Resonance is leading the way in helping the Canadian tourism industry recover post-pandemic and plan for a more resilient future as part of the development of Destination Canada's 2030 Resilience Strategy. To develop the strategy, our team led internal and external engagement to co-develop the strategy with partners, developed future scenarios for the tourism sector, built an innovative and centralized measurement framework, and organized key meetings with industry stakeholders and government officials.

IMPACT

The 2030 Strategy has unified stakeholders and partners behind a common aspiration – tourism generates wealth and wellbeing for all of Canada and enriches the lives of our guests – with shared objectives and targets. To track the impact of the Strategy, Resonance was engaged to develop The Wealth & Wellbeing Index for the organization. The Index provides a strategic benchmarking tool to track progress in economic, social, and environmental sustainability and resilience at all levels – from national to provincial, and municipal tourism by identifying the key strengths and development opportunities to support long-term industry advancement.



Ottawa

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR TOURISM IN CANADA'S CAPITAL

Research reveals surprising insight about the national capital's strengths and opportunities.

Org.: Resonance

Date: 2021-2022

Client: Ottawa Tourism and Convention Authority, Inc

Services: Tourism Strategy, Research

[Extended Case Study](#)

Reference:

Mary Sayewich, PMP, Director, Strategy and Project Management, Ottawa Tourism
msayewich@ottawatourism.ca
+1-613-696-8824

CONTEXT

The pandemic greatly affected Ottawa's tourism industry, revealing the need for a reconsideration of the city's audiences and offerings. Resonance was engaged by Ottawa Tourism to help define a new vision for tourism in Canada's capital and create a roadmap that would ensure both recovery in the short-term and the long-term sustainability and growth of Ottawa as a national and international destination.

APPROACH

In Ottawa, the Destination Stewardship Plan was developed with and shared by stakeholders. While Ottawa Tourism is guiding the plan, the implementation of the recommendations and initiatives relies on other partners such as the City of Ottawa and Invest Ottawa. We engaged over 100 stakeholders, surveyed more than 1,700 visitors from across Canada and 1,000+ local residents to understand the current state of tourism, define the visitor of the future, and compare how Ottawa ranked against 14 other cities, including eight peer Canadian cities. We combined insights to produce experience principles that included voicing reconciliation to living for the great outdoors to celebrating neighborhoods and loving our terroir.

IMPACT

Our work resulted in a new 5-year [Strategic Plan](#) for Ottawa Tourism as an organization and longer-term [Stewardship Plan](#). It was a unique opportunity to tie long-range destination planning for Ottawa's tourism industry to a shorter-term organizational strategy for Ottawa Tourism itself. To ensure long-term implementation, the development of the Strategic Plan helped define the resources and structures required for Ottawa Tourism to implement key strategies. The shared action plan supported the integration and mapping of partner responsibilities across these strategies.

03

Methodology & Approach

Our Approach in Short

Our approach is designed to be agile and help stakeholders articulate and share a clear vision for the future. The strategic planning will follow the engagement schedule and will be divided into four phases to ensure all stakeholders are empowered in the development of the vision and the five-year strategy map.

	TASKS	TIMELINE
PHASE 01 Kick-Off & Strategic Review	1.1 Project Set Up 1.2 Strategic Review 1.3 Market & Trends Analysis	WEEKS 01-04
PHASE 02 Stakeholder Engagement	2.1 Stakeholder Engagement 2.2 SWOT Analysis	WEEKS 02-05
PHASE 03 Strategic Sessions	3.1 Strategic Workshop (Retreat) 3.2 Recommendations & Consultation	WEEKS 06-10
PHASE 04 Strategic Plan	4.1 Strategic Plan 4.2 Action Plan	WEEKS 11-16

Bi-weekly calls will be scheduled to manage the project, consult with the project team, and review key deliverables.

Phase 1: Kick-Off & Strategic Review

1.1 PROJECT SET UP

The project kick-off will be an opportunity to align on the methodology, and project governance and discuss the stakeholder and community engagement process. We will align on the overall approach, define roles and responsibilities, validate collaborative tools, and platforms. We track and share regular progress reports and up-to-date budget reports in all projects.

The project kick-off (virtual) will take place with SLO TBID and will include:

- Introductions, orientation, and project kick-off between our team and the SLO TBID team;
- Detailed project planning between our team and the SLO TBID staff to coordinate future phases;
- Strategic review of previous plans and studies;
- Scan of other inter and extra-regional strategic plans; and
- Analysis and selection of stakeholders to engage.

We will perform a strategic review of existing research, audiences, current business development efforts, and future projects, including regional and provincial plans.

1.2 STRATEGIC REVIEW

Our team will review and synthesize past and existing reports, analysis, and information made available by SLO TBID and its industry partners. The review is intended to provide our team with a baseline understanding of existing research inputs that can be leveraged and enable us to identify key ongoing development projects/tourism and hospitality initiatives, recent labor/workforce challenges, and existing tourism programs and policies that will impact destination development. In addition, it provides a baseline understanding of organizational frameworks and existing resources that shape the current state of tourism in San Luis Obispo.

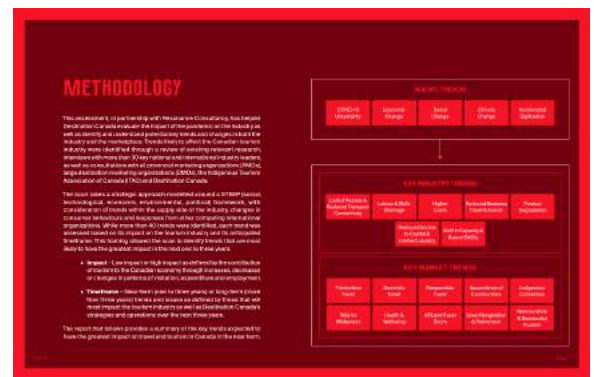
1.3 MARKETS & TRENDS ANALYSIS

We have been collecting key tourism trends around the world to help inform large-scale tourism policy and product development. Our team monitors key trends within the supply side of the industry, changes in consumer behaviours, and responses from other competing destinations.

We will identify and report on key potential trends in each area that could have implications for the future of Leisure Travel, Corporate Travel, and Destination Development. We will review and evaluate the information collected to produce an environmental scan that identifies the key trends, issues, and opportunities that SLO TBID should consider and evaluate. A summary and draft prioritization of key trends will be shared during the planned engagement sessions to identify the most relevant/highest impact trends that SLO TBID should consider in its strategic planning process. These will be documented through a detailed and visual presentation that will present the insights and detail the trends.

Sample: [Big Shift Trends Report](#)

Destination Canada commissioned Resonance to conduct an extensive scan and assessment to identify key trends that are most likely to have the greatest impact on the travel and tourism industry in Canada. Long-term trends were also identified as part of the process to anticipate adaptive measures for the industry moving forward.



PHASE 01

Key Activities

Project Set Up & Stakeholder Analysis

Trends Analysis

PHASE 01

Deliverables

Trends Summary

Phase 2: Stakeholder Engagement

2.1 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

We will develop the stakeholder engagement plan, including developing the interview guide. The stakeholder engagement stage will include a series of interviews with representatives of destination. Interviews will be held online, we will meet with stakeholders in individual and small group sessions ranging from 30-60 minutes each to discuss:

- The trends/events impacting the destination and its tourism industry and the threats and opportunities they represent;
- SLO TBID's current activities and their perceived impact on the destination's economy, employment, tourism quality, environment, and quality of life;
- The relationship between SLO TBID and its partners/stakeholders in building and marketing the destination; and
- The nature and role of the Board, Staff, and Members, as well as local tourism partners and supporters.

Stakeholders will include public organizations, lodging industry, key attractions, tourism infrastructure and others with interest in/influence over tourism to discuss the SWOT and trends analysis, as well as core priorities.

2.2 ASSESSMENT & SWOT ANALYSIS

The insights shared by stakeholders will be summarized in a SWOT Analysis. The internal strengths and weaknesses, and external opportunities and threats will be shared and validated by SLO TBID.



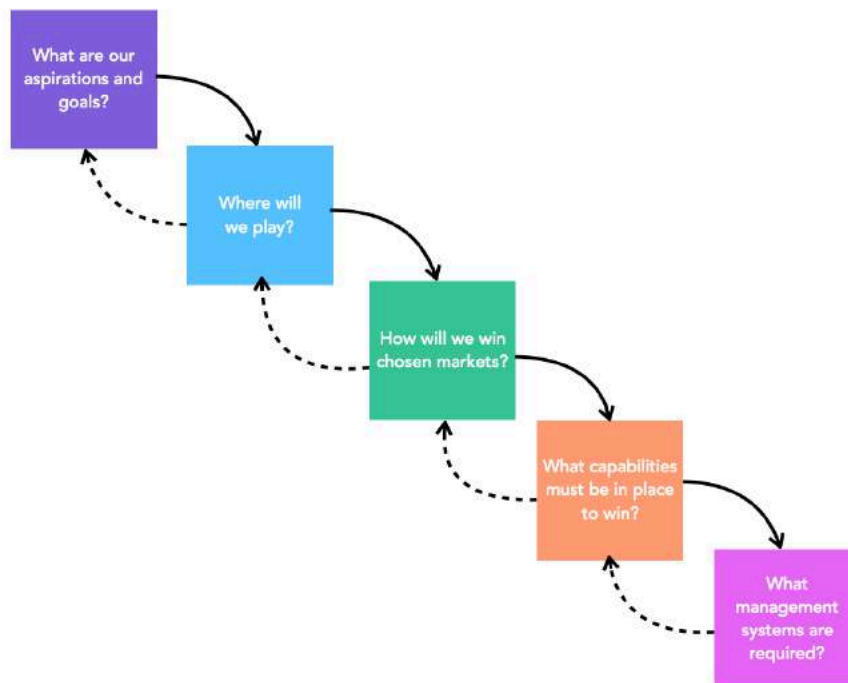
Phase 3: Strategic Sessions

3.1 STRATEGIC WORKSHOP

The strategic planning workshop will encourage open dialogue from participants to gain meaningful input into the establishment of the mission, vision and goals for the next five years. Both the Trends Analysis and the SWOT Analysis will inform the process of establishing core priorities, goals, and KPIs for the organization. Our approach to scenario planning and workshop facilitation is differentiated by three core beliefs:

- Engaging a diverse range of participants in the process;
- Shifting the dialogue from focusing on “What is” to “What could be,” through the use of future techniques and methodologies; and
- Utilizing graphic facilitation methods and imagery in strategic exercises to illustrate ideas that are more robust than can be expressed by words alone

During the workshop, participants will be asked to identify and prioritize opportunities for the organization. Our team has successfully followed the Play-to-Win framework to establish strategic priorities for organizations.

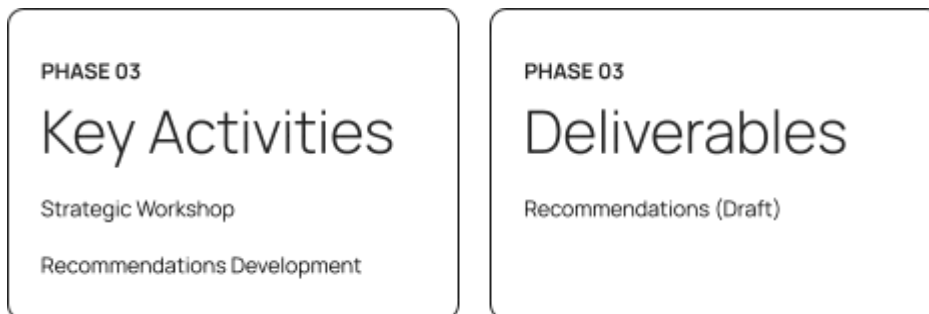


The framework involves five key steps:

- Decide where to play: Determine which markets or segments to compete in;
- Understand how to win: Identify the unique capabilities and advantages that will allow you to succeed in those chosen markets;
- Assess core capabilities: Evaluate your organization's strengths and weaknesses to determine if you have the necessary capabilities to win;
- Develop the right to win: Invest in and develop the capabilities needed to succeed in chosen markets; and
- Manage for results: Implement processes and systems to ensure ongoing performance and adaptability to changing market conditions

3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS DEVELOPMENT

Based on the destination vision established with stakeholders in the workshops, and informed by insights gleaned in the previous phases, our team will develop an initial draft of strategies across several areas. After refinement of the strategies, the vision and recommendations will be shared back for additional input. The consultation phase will focus on the relationships between key players, including Board engagement and staff engagement, alignment with business targets and objectives, and exploring areas of greater efficiency and opportunity. The draft strategic plan will be presented to the SLO TBID Board at an offsite planning session.



04

Project Timeline & Budget

Timeline

TASKS / WEEKS

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

STRATEGIC PLAN															
Kick-Off & Strategic Review															
Project Set Up		• Kick-off													
Strategic Review															
Market & Trends Analysis															
Stakeholder Engagement															
Stakeholder Engagement															
Assessment & SWOT Analysis															
Strategic Sessions															
Strategic Workshop															
Recommendations & Consultation															
Strategic Plan															
Strategic Plan															
Action Plan															

Fee Schedule

STRATEGIC PLAN

1. Kick-Off & Strategic Review	\$15,000.00
Project Set Up	
Strategic Review	
Market & Trends Analysis	
2. Stakeholder Engagement	\$12,000.00
Staff Engagement	
SWOT Analysis	
3. Strategic Sessions	\$24,400.00
Strategic Workshop	
Recommendations & Consultation	
4. Strategic Plan	\$19,250.00
Strategic Plan	
Action Plan	
SUB-TOTAL	\$70,650.00
ESTIMATED TRAVEL EXPENSES	\$3,650.00
PROJECT TOTAL	\$74,300.00

We can't wait
to work with you
in San Luis Obispo.

CONTACT

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