

# VISIT COLORADO SPRINGS 2025-2028 STRATEGIC ROADMAP

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## PROJECT TEAM

### VISIT COLORADO SPRINGS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Chair** Michelle Talarico, Picnic Basket Catering Collective
- Vice-Chair** Megan Leatham, Colorado Springs Sports Corp.
- Treasurer** Marisa Wigglesworth, U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Museum
- Secretary** Ed Okvath, Springhill Suites/Element

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- Curtis Bova, Hotel Polaris
- Scott Flexman, The Broadmoor
- Jenifer Furda, University of Colorado Colorado Springs
- Torie Giffin, Buffalo Lodge Bicycle Resort
- Christina Haywood, Garden of the Gods Foundation
- Rob Henderson, Space Foundation
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- Crystal LaTier, El Paso County
- Dan LeClerc, Ent Credit Union
- Dave Leinweber, City of Colorado Springs
- Wendy McHenry, Flying Horse Resort & Club
- Lisa Neener, U.S. Air Force Academy
- Jenny Sherman, Odyssey Gastropub
- Dr. Cary Snow, Pikes Peak State College

### VISIT COLORADO SPRINGS EXECUTIVE TEAM

- Doug Price, President & CEO
- Amy Long, Chief Development Officer
- Melissa Williams, Director of Marketing
- Alexea Veneracion, Director of Communications
- April Perez, Director of Finance
- Dina Worthen, Director of Sales

### ROADMAP WORKING GROUP

#### CORE TEAM

- Doug Price, Visit Colorado Springs, President & CEO
- Co-Chair** Amy Long, Visit Colorado Springs, Chief Development Officer
- Co-Chair** Crystal LaTier, El Paso County Economic Development, Executive Director

#### MEMBERS

- Dani Bolling, Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC
- Alex Kovacs, Colorado Springs Airport
- Becky Leinweber, Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Alliance
- Wendy McHenry, Flying Horse Resort & Club
- PK McPherson, Pikes Peak Region Attractions Association
- Alexea Veneracion, Visit Colorado Springs, Director of Communications
- Marisa Wigglesworth, U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Museum
- Melissa Williams, Visit Colorado Springs, Director of Marketing

#### ROADMAP CONSULTANT

- Cathy Ritter, Better Destinations LLC, CEO



# WHAT GUIDES US

## DESTINATION VISION

Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region will be the leading U.S. destination for experiential travel, inspired by the majesty of Pikes Peak; iconic, accessible natural wonders; and the Olympic & Paralympic spirit.

## STRATEGIC PILLARS



The 2025-2028 Strategic Roadmap builds upon a foundation created in 2018 by the [Colorado Springs Destination Master Plan](#). These ideas and concepts, developed in collaboration with our community and tourism partners, will continue to inspire and guide our work through 2028.

# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Visit Colorado Springs is proud to revisit and refresh our 10-year Destination Master Plan with a new roadmap to guide our strategy for a strong, resilient, and healthy visitor economy through 2028. Developed in 2018, our Destination Master Plan set forth ambitious goals that remain highly relevant today.

Our 2025-2028 Strategic Roadmap builds on the momentum of the past seven years while creating a sharp focus on how to make the most of the next three years.

This work represents the shared commitment of our community, steering tourism in ways that improve local quality of life. The planning process brought together our Board of Directors, 11 dedicated members of the Roadmap Working Group, and our VCOS leadership team. All have been deeply engaged in shaping a plan that responds to today's needs and tomorrow's opportunities.

### Together, we identified three top priorities:

- 1. Secure additional promotional funding** for Visit Colorado Springs to build year-round visitation and increase the length of overnight stays.
- 2. Grow overnight visitation** in the off-season to create a more balanced and sustainable visitor economy.
- 3. Increase the average length of stay** to enhance economic impact and better support local businesses.

To measure success, we will track the growth of four key resources: the City of Colorado Springs Sales and Use Tax collections, Lodgers and Automobile Rental Tax (LART) revenues, overnight visitation, and the VCOS operating budget. Each of these indicators reflects how tourism acts as a powerful resource that benefits people across our region.

This roadmap arrives at a time of significant change and challenge. Global competition is intensifying, and uncertainty continues to shape the international travel landscape. But through collaboration, thoughtful planning, and community support, we have the opportunity to rise to the moment.

We believe tourism is more than an industry. It's a force that brings people together, supports local families, and builds a stronger sense of place. We appreciate the support of our partners, elected leaders, and residents as we work to create a welcoming destination where everyone feels involved, valued, and inspired.

Let's move forward — **together** — with purpose, pride, and a shared belief in what we can build for a promising future.



Doug Price, President & CEO  
Visit Colorado Springs

**SUPPORTED BY THE LART**  
**OUR VALUED PARTNERSHIPS**

The strength of our visitor economy rests upon a growing collaboration among our city and county governments, our fellow Tourism Sector Entities (TSEs) in Colorado Springs, and the hundreds of businesses and nonprofits in Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region with a stake in supporting the tourism sector.

This partnership is funded primarily by the City of Colorado Springs’ long-time tourism tax, known as [the Lodgers and Automobile Rental Tax \(LART\)](#). Ever since creating the LART in 1968, the City has collected a 1% vehicle rental tax and a 2% lodging tax, which stands today as one of the lowest in the U.S. The City’s \$941.2 million budget for 2025 includes \$10.5 million in LART revenues. Half — \$5.25 million — is allocated to Visit Colorado Springs to develop and manage a tourism economy that generated \$3.1 billion in visitor spending in 2024.

As stated in the City’s 2025 budget: “Use of LART revenue is limited to tourism promotion and visitor attraction as well as for economic development activities.” By generating tourism and business activity, the LART supports a virtuous cycle that creates earnings for businesses and workers and ever more revenues for the City to invest in local quality of life, which in turn makes our community a better place to live, work, and visit. This is why it is so important to reinvest LART in activities that “fund the fund.”

Visit Colorado Springs acknowledges and thanks the City of Colorado Springs and El Paso, Teller and Fremont Counties for their ongoing support of the tourism industry and our organization as we work together to create economic vitality for the Pikes Peak Region.



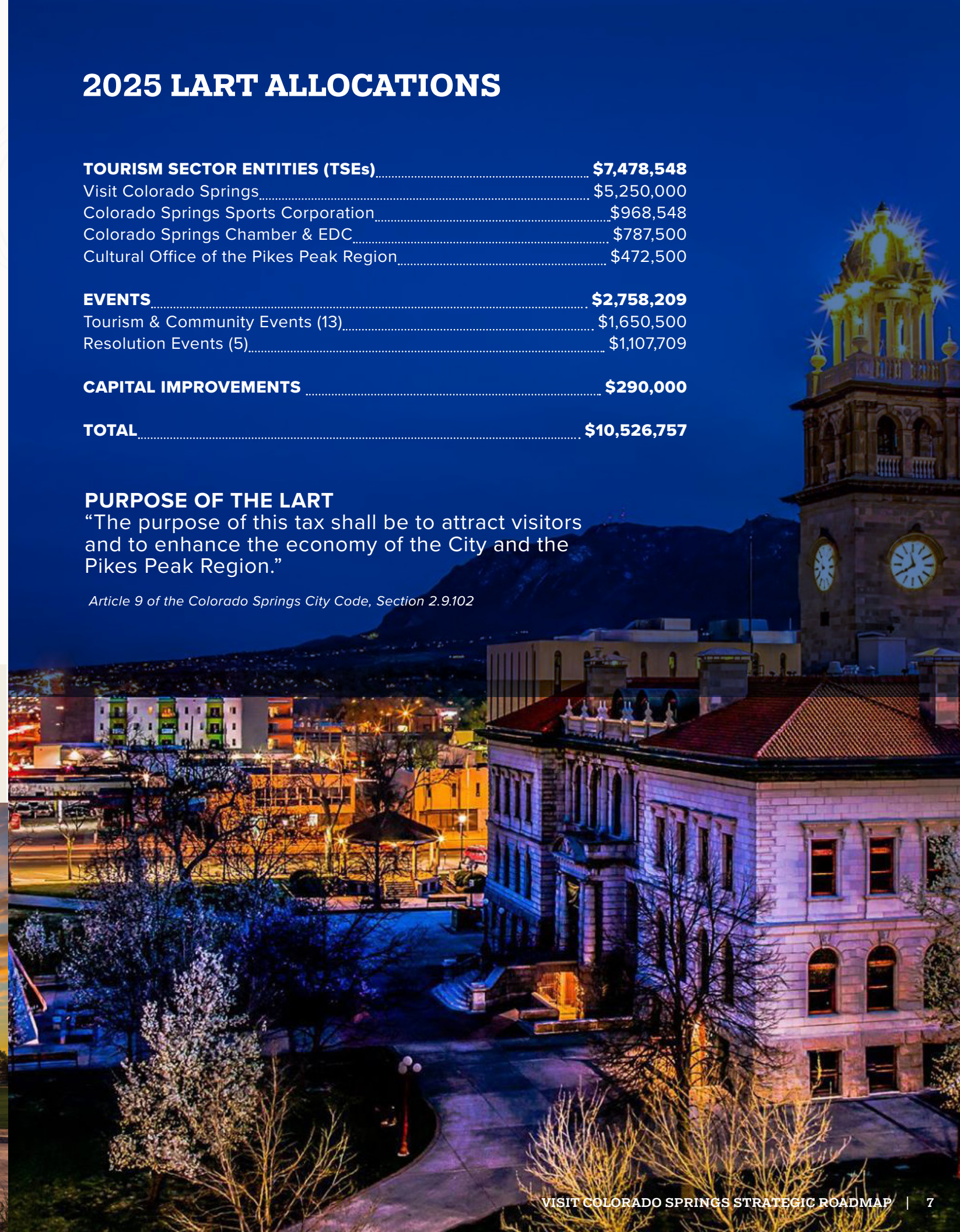
**2025 LART ALLOCATIONS**

<b>TOURISM SECTOR ENTITIES (TSEs)</b> .....	<b>\$7,478,548</b>
Visit Colorado Springs.....	\$5,250,000
Colorado Springs Sports Corporation.....	\$968,548
Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC.....	\$787,500
Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region.....	\$472,500
<b>EVENTS</b> .....	<b>\$2,758,209</b>
Tourism & Community Events (13).....	\$1,650,500
Resolution Events (5).....	\$1,107,709
<b>CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS</b> .....	<b>\$290,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b> .....	<b>\$10,526,757</b>

**PURPOSE OF THE LART**

“The purpose of this tax shall be to attract visitors and to enhance the economy of the City and the Pikes Peak Region.”

*Article 9 of the Colorado Springs City Code, Section 2.9.102*



## UNTAPPED POTENTIAL

# HOW TOURISM FUELS THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region have a powerhouse tourism economy that in 2024 attracted 25.5 million visitors, including 11.1 million who stayed overnight. These visitors injected \$3.1 billion in cash into local businesses, attractions, and government tax coffers.

Colorado Springs has the LART tourist tax, among the lowest in the U.S., which yielded \$10.5 million for the City's budget in 2025. But travelers' biggest contribution to City finances often goes unrecognized. A Visit Colorado Springs expert resource has estimated that approximately 50% to 55% of the City's Sales and Use Tax Revenue comes from visitors.

**In 2025, sales taxes generated \$261.5 million, the City's largest revenue source by far. Research shows at least \$130.75 million — or 13.7% of the City budget — came from the millions who visited.**

With its iconic natural wonders and major attractions, Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region attract an oversized share of Colorado's travelers. The region's three counties — El Paso, Teller and Fremont — drew more than a quarter

of the state's 93.3 million visitors and 39.5 million overnight visitors in 2023. But the economic impact of the region's visitors is far less than might be expected.

**Although the three-county region attracts more than 25% of Colorado's travelers, it typically captures only a little more than 10% of the state's visitor spending.**

This imbalance is due to many factors. About 57% of the region's visitors come only for the day, and they spend far less per trip than overnight visitors. On top of this, many of the region's major attractions are free or low-cost, so visitors pay little for admission.

Finally, overnight visitors don't tend to stay long. In 2024, about 43% stopped for just one night, while 26% stayed for two. At the same time, the average length of stay increased from 2.2 nights in 2023 to 2.7 nights in 2024. To generate more economic impact from tourism, it is vital to create promotional campaigns and policies targeting visitors who stay longer.



## OVERNIGHT VISITORS



## DAY VISITORS



## MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since Visit Colorado Springs created its Destination Master Plan in 2018, the Colorado Springs visitor economy has boomed. New or improved attractions, a nearly 20% increase in hotel room inventory, new meeting spaces, new direct flights, major new events and sports competitions, and many other factors are creating significant opportunities for tourism to play an ever more powerful role in driving the local economy.



### NEW OR IMPROVED MAJOR ATTRACTIONS

- Colorado Springs Convention Center at The Broadmoor, 2020
- Hybl Sports Medicine & Performance Center, 2020
- U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Museum, 2020
- Broadmoor Manitou and Pikes Peak Cog Railway, 2021
- Weidner Field, 2021
- Ed Robson Arena, 2021
- Pikes Peak Summit Visitor Center, 2021
- Ford Amphitheater, 2024



### GROWING TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE

- A 19.6% increase in hotel inventory — from 11,967 rooms in 2018 to 14,313 in 2024
- 20-year extension of the Trails, Open Space, and Parks sales and use tax, 2023
- New meeting space at Polaris Hotel, 2024
- Free Zeb Bus along Tejon Street
- Mountain Metro routes to the top of Pikes Peak
- PikeRide e-bike rentals connecting Colorado Springs to Old Colorado City and Manitou Springs



### SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- Department of Defense Warrior Games, 2018, 2025
- U.S. Senior Open, 2018, 2025
- U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Museum Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, 2025
- Colorado Governor's Conference on Tourism, 2025



### AIRPORT RENOVATION

In 2023, the Colorado Springs Airport embarked on a multi-year Concourse Modernization project that will be completed in 2026. In addition to providing passengers with additional and improved amenities, the modernization will increase terminal sustainability and improve accessibility for individuals with disabilities. One of the new amenities is The Lounge Colorado Springs, part of the Global Lounge Network. The lounge features comfortable seating, complimentary food and beverages, high-speed WIFI, and outlets for charging devices.



### NEW DIRECT FLIGHTS

#### Delta Air Lines

- Minneapolis-St. Paul. Seasonal service launched in June 2023 and has returned each summer.

#### Allegiant Airlines

- Mesa AZ. Launched seasonal service in Feb 2025.
- St. Petersburg-Clearwater and Santa Ana-John Wayne, Feb 2025.

#### Southwest Airlines

- Dallas-Love Field, Denver, Las Vegas, Midway-Chicago, Phoenix. March 2021.
- Houston-Hobby. Seasonal service launched Nov 2021 and went full-time in Nov 2023.
- San Antonio. Seasonal service launched Nov 2021.
- San Diego. Seasonal service launched in Nov 2022 and will be full-time in Oct 2025.
- Baltimore-Washington. June 2024.
- Cancun. Launches in June 2025.



### MAJOR MARKETING INITIATIVES

- VCOS fall marketing campaign, 2020
- VCOS multi-year meetings email & advertising campaign, 2023-2024
- VCOS winter leisure marketing campaign, 2025
- VCOS winter meeting incentives program, 2026-2028
- USOPM/USOPTC Podium Pass, 2022



### STEWARDSHIP

- VCOS Partnership with Leave No Trace, 2018
- VCOS Partnership with Wheel the World, 2024
- VCOS Destination Stewardship Group for Pikes Peak Region, 2024
- VCOS Resident Sentiment Survey, 2024

Even more major attractions are anticipated to be open by 2028, including the famed and renovated U.S. Air Force Academy Cadet Chapel, the USAFA's Hosmer Visitor Center along Interstate 25, and the long-awaited "Ring the Peak" trail.

The region's hotel room inventory is on track to keep growing as well, with 1,500 more rooms expected in 2025 and about 4,500 more in the construction pipeline. This rapid inventory growth has impacted annual occupancy, which was down from 68.9% in 2018 to 63.5% in 2024. However, both average daily room rates and RevPAR (revenue per available room) have climbed steadily over the same period. Both are strong indicators of a healthy overall hotel industry.

## CREATING THE ROADMAP

While the region's thriving tourism economy is already delivering strong economic results, its continuing growth and expansion hold untapped potential for even greater returns.

To identify the most promising opportunities for generating positive results from tourism, the 2025-2028 Roadmap draws insights from numerous resources. These include independent research into visitor interests and resident perceptions of tourism, as well as insights from members of a multi-faceted Roadmap Working Group and the Visit Colorado Springs Board of Directors.

Based on this valuable input, the Roadmap prioritizes actions that are most likely to generate the strongest benefits for local quality of life, the visitor experience, the business sector, and local government finances.

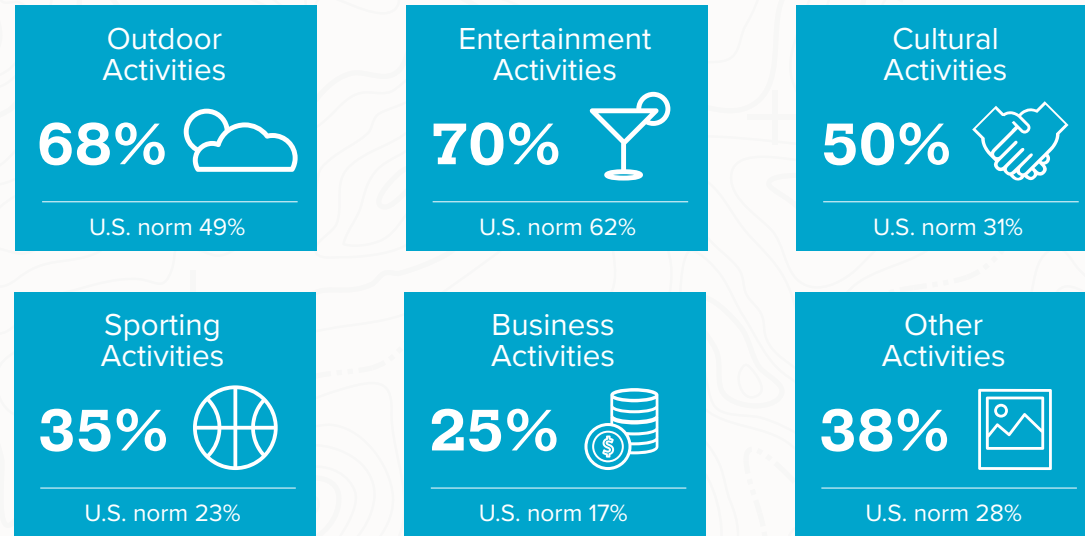
## THE PROCESS

- 5. Finalizing The Roadmap.** In May 2025, the Working Group and Board reviewed a draft action plan identifying 13 initiatives, 36 tactics, and 4 overarching measures of success. The full Roadmap won Board approval in June 2025.
- 4. Roadmap Survey.** Members of the Working Group and the VCOS Board of Directors took a survey in April 2025, prioritizing 13 key initiatives for action through 2028.
- 3. Opportunities Assessment.** Both the Working Group and the Board met in March 2025, identifying highly similar priorities: Increased funding, filling hotels year-round, and attracting more overnight visitors.
- 2. Progress Report.** The Working Group's first assignment was to assess the progress of the Destination Master Plan's 31 Key Initiatives. Only one was deemed complete, while most were judged as being on target or needing refinement.
- 1. First Steps.** VCOS recruited a Working Group in February 2025 to share insights for the Destination Master Plan update. Participants were drawn from the VCOS Board of Directors and Executive Team and from partner organizations. Independent research yielded even more valuable insights.

**INSIGHTS**

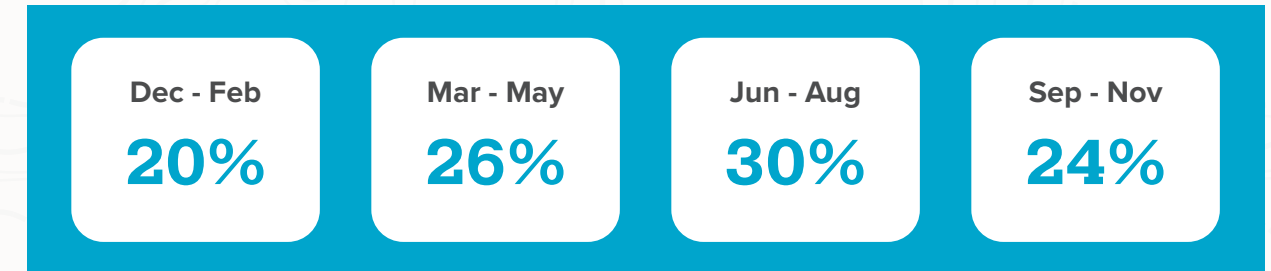
**Pikes Peak Region Visitors**

The latest Longwoods International study shows that Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region are attracting a well-rounded mix of travelers. They enjoy everything the region has to offer, at levels well above the national norms.



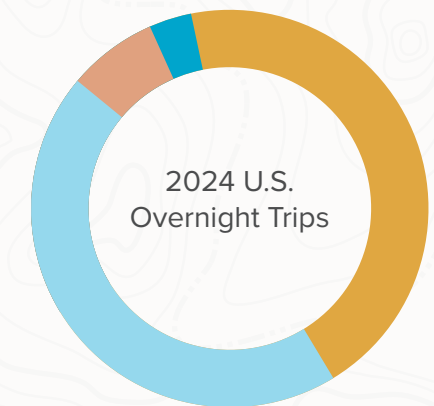
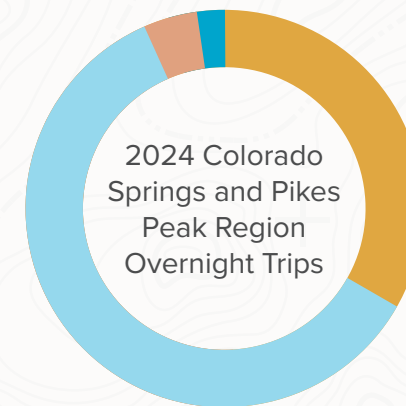
While the region attracts travelers across all four seasons, lower visitation from November to March impacts hotels and restaurants and their workers as well.

Season of Trip Total Overnight Person-Trips



The good news is the region has an unusually large share of “discretionary” overnight travelers — 58% compared with 48% nationally. Because they are not traveling for business or to visit family, they go where they like, and their behavior is influenced by marketing.

The 2024 study also points to challenges. Most of the overnight visitors are spending only part of their trip in the region, and 69% are staying only one or two nights.



- Visiting Friends/Relatives
- Marketable
- Business
- Business-Leisure

Source: Longwoods International Travel USA Visitor Profile, 2024

## INSIGHTS

# THE RESIDENT PERSPECTIVE

Visit Colorado Springs has taken many steps since 2018 to position tourism as a positive contributor for those who live in the region. It was among the first destinations in the U.S. to partner in Colorado's ground-breaking partnership with Leave No Trace to educate travelers on caring for our destination. In 2024, the organization commissioned both a random survey and focus groups to gain even deeper insights into resident attitudes toward tourism.

One outcome was the creation of a "Local's Corner" on VCOS.com in 2025, pointing residents to special deals and opportunities to experience their own backyard.

## KEY FINDINGS

A large majority (78%) saw increased tourism as a way of enhancing economic opportunity. Nearly all respondents were highly aware of the economic benefits of tourism.

Perceptions about the negatives of tourism centered primarily on traffic, congestion and crowding, with smaller numbers citing littering and environmental impacts. Other possible negatives — including homelessness, population growth, a housing crisis — drew little response.

In both the survey and focus groups, about half of the participants expressed concerns about the impacts of increased tourism on local infrastructure. Opinion was mixed — slightly more negative (39.5%) than positive (32.8%) — about impacts on local quality of life.

The survey also showed strong support (65.2%) for visitors to pay "a tourism tax that adequately compensates for the impact they create on our infrastructure and outdoor recreation areas."

Respondents also strongly support (80%) the idea that the tourism industry should educate visitors on how to be responsible and respectful travelers.

Most focus group participants assumed that about half of Colorado Springs "tourists" were visiting local family or friends. They were surprised that only about one-third fell into this category.



**78%**

of survey respondents saw increased tourism as a way of enhancing economic opportunity.



**60%**

of survey respondents agreed the positive impacts of tourism outweigh the negatives. Only 17.2% disagreed.

## PURPOSE OF THE ROADMAP: TO MAKE A THRIVING ECONOMY EVEN STRONGER

In many ways, Visit Colorado Springs is revisiting its 2018 Destination Master Plan from a position of strength. The latest Longwoods study reports record-high visitation and traveler spending, with 25.5 million visitors injecting \$3.1 billion into the local economy in 2024.

**The local tourism economy is booming.** Since 2018, the region has seen a nearly 20% increase in hotel inventory, the construction of important new attractions and venues, and the launch of direct flights connecting Colorado Springs to more than a dozen additional destinations from coast to coast. The airport is in the midst of a modernization project, new transit systems have emerged, and the recent 20-year extension of the Trails, Open Space, and Parks (TOPS) tax will fund improvements to outdoor infrastructure for years to come.

**Visit Colorado Springs has launched important new marketing initiatives.** It has moved steadily toward a four-season marketing strategy. Building on the success of its fall marketing campaign, it is launching its first winter campaign this year to generate more overnight stays during the historically slowest time of the year. To attract more meetings and conferences, Visit Colorado Springs created a multi-year meetings campaign in 2023 and recently developed a winter meeting incentives program.

**The region is blessed with residents who see the benefit of tourism.** Visit Colorado Springs 2024 research showed that a large majority of residents are well aware of the economic benefits of

tourism. The study also found 60.3% of Colorado Springs residents agreeing that the positive impacts of tourism outweigh the negatives, while just 17.2% disagreed.

**Yet challenges remain.** When invited to revisit the Destination Master Plan, discussion turned quickly to the three biggest pain points: A lack of funding for effective marketing and product development, a slow winter tourism season with lower earnings and even layoffs for tourism businesses and workers, and the need to attract more overnight visitors year-round to generate more spending and fill the rapidly growing hotel inventory.

**Those three concerns were strongly validated** in an online survey completed by members of the Roadmap Working Group and Board. Now known as the “Three Imperatives,” they provide a sharp focus for Visit Colorado Springs’ efforts through 2028.

**Chief among these is Imperative 1: Securing additional promotional funding.** Motivating visitors to choose the Pikes Peak Region as their winter destination and to stay an extra night or two year-round generates far more Sales and Use Tax as well as LART. But inspiring visitors to think of Colorado Springs differently will require investment in compelling, strategic marketing campaigns. As countless marketing studies have shown, the returns will far outpace the investment.

## THE THREE IMPERATIVES

Discussions with the Roadmap Working Group and the Board of Directors identified three main areas of focus through 2028. Survey findings identified each as “Extremely Important.”

1. Secure additional promotional funding for Visit Colorado Springs to build year-round visitation and increase the length of overnight stays.
2. Grow overnight visitation in the off-season to create a more balanced and sustainable visitor economy.
3. Increase the average length of stay to enhance economic impact and better support local businesses.

## WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

Acting on each of the 3 Imperatives will yield measurable annual improvement for these four Measures of Success:

Growth in LART revenues\*

Growth in local Sales Tax Revenue\*

Growth in overnight visitors

Growth in the Visit Colorado Springs budget

*\* Especially between November and March*

## 13 KEY INITIATIVES

### THE TOP PRIORITIES 2025-2028

To identify the top priorities through 2028, members of our Board and Working Group were surveyed to rate the importance of acting on each of the 31 Key Initiatives in the 2018 Destination Master Plan. A total of 13 initiatives rose to the top as “Extremely Important” or “Very Important” priorities.

#### THAT VISIT COLORADO SPRINGS WILL LEAD

1. **FUNDING.** Lead development of a shared strategy to increase the LART.
2. **YEAR-ROUND AND ICONIC ADVENTURES.** Build the brand on the region’s strongest attributes.
3. **GROW OFF-PEAK VISITATION.** Name a Winter/Spring Task Force to create a shared strategy.
4. **STEWARDSHIP.** Advance destination stewardship to ensure the long-term viability of tourism.
5. **ACTIVITY PACKAGING.** Collaborate to develop experiential packages for targeted travelers.
6. **CTO COLLABORATION.** Collaborate to establish an official Colorado Welcome Center on I-25.
7. **CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE.** Focus outreach for meetings and conferences on local superlatives.
8. **COORDINATED PLANNING.** Seek out ways to drive tourism through other regional initiatives.

#### THAT VISIT COLORADO SPRINGS WILL SUPPORT AND ADVOCATE

9. **INCREASED AIR SERVICE.** Support the Airport’s work to develop, expand and retain flights.
10. **SIGNATURE EVENTS.** Collaborate on a year-round events strategy to drive overnight stays.
11. **ARTS & CULTURE.** Collaborate with promoters and lodgers to offer experiential packages.
12. **PARKS, TRAILS & ROADWAYS.** Support connecting visitors with iconic outdoor experiences.
13. **SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT.** Support creation, expansion and retention of key venues.

While Visit Colorado Springs will prioritize action on the following high-potential initiatives through 2028, it will also keep sight of the plan’s other Key Initiatives as opportunities and challenges arise. A list of all Key Initiatives is provided on pages 30-31.

# THE 2025-2028 ROADMAP ACTION PLAN

## INITIATIVES THAT VISIT COLORADO SPRINGS WILL LEAD

2025-2028 Roadmap Actions & Tactics	2026	2027	2028
<b>1. FUNDING.</b> The City's exploration of increasing the LART represents the single-best opportunity in decades for VCOS to increase its funding. To secure the vital support of the lodging sector and in partnership with other organizations, VCOS will lead development of a shared strategy to EARN support for a LART increase generating significant new funding for tourism promotion and development of tourism offerings and amenities.			
a. Convene and lead regional tourism partners and other LART contracted entities to develop a shared position on a LART ballot increase for the City and Council's consideration.	X	X	
b. Lead development of a communication plan for highlighting the value of tourism and continue expanding the "Locals First" initiative.		X	
c. Continue monitoring and sharing resident sentiment toward tourism.	X	X	X
d. To underscore the value of tourism, consider engaging a respected expert resource to verify the percentage of local sales taxes generated from visitors.	X		
e. Propose draft ballot language for a LART increase.	X		

2025-2028 Roadmap Actions & Tactics	2026	2027	2028
<b>2. YEAR-ROUND AND ICONIC EXPERIENCES.</b> To build the strength of the region's tourism brand for overnight and long-haul travelers, secure a brand and positioning study to identify the most powerful positioning for marketing and promotional outreach.			
a. Secure an expert resource to identify the most powerful positioning for the VCOS brand and for valued visitor segments, including outdoor, cultural, sport, and meetings.	X		
b. Use findings to refine and guide outbound communications, including marketing, PR, web, social channels, promotions, and other communications.		X	X
c. Consider potential of marketing to targeted niche audiences.		X	X
<b>3. OFF-PEAK MARKETING.</b> to energize a balanced year-round tourism economy, establish a Winter Tourism Task Force to generate collaboration around a strategy and actions to drive increased overnight travel during off-peak periods.			
a. Convene a task force of regional tourism partners to collaborate in developing and implementing a comprehensive strategy to drive off-peak visitation, whether through development of travel packages, events, and experiences or attracting meetings and conferences.	X		
b. Develop a Pikes Peak Region Winter Guide and web presence to inspire more off-peak visitation and serve as a call to action.	X	X	X



# THE 2025-2028 ROADMAP ACTION PLAN

## INITIATIVES THAT VISIT COLORADO SPRINGS WILL LEAD

2025-2028 Roadmap Actions & Tactics	2026	2027	2028
<b>4. STEWARDSHIP.</b> To strengthen resident support for tourism and position the region more effectively for valued visitors, advance destination stewardship strategies to safeguard and improve natural and cultural resources and ensure the long-term viability of key tourism assets, the region's tourism economy, and the VCOS organization.			
a. Consider positioning Visit Colorado Springs as either a Destination Marketing and Management Organization or a Destination Stewardship Organization to signal a commitment to guiding tourism in ways that improve the destination.	X		
b. Continue expanding and publicizing the benefits of the "Local First" initiative.	X	X	X
c. Continue monitoring, sharing and responding to resident sentiment.	X	X	X
d. Support efforts that improve both local quality of life and the visitor experience, such as the Downtown Partnership's "Clean & Safe" initiative.	X	X	X
e. Steer the regional Destination Stewardship Council in alignment with the CTO's statewide strategy.	X	X	X
<b>5. ACTIVITY PACKAGING.</b> To drive longer stays and off-peak visitation, collaborate with partners to develop experiential packages for targeted traveler segments.			
a. To inspire longer stays, develop experiential packages for targeted visitor segments (outdoor, cultural, event, sports) outlining Day 1/Day 2/Day 3 activities and incorporating lodging opportunities.	X	X	X
b. To inspire stays during Winter and Spring, promote packages offering multiple days of activities paired with special lodging rates.	X	X	X
<b>6. CTO COLLABORATION.</b> Collaborate with USAFA and CTO on establishing an official Colorado Welcome Center in the new USAFA Hosmer Visitor Center.			
a. Co-Lead discussions with the U.S. Air Force Academy to explore the mutual benefits of designating the new visitor center as an official Colorado Welcome Center guiding travelers to the Pikes Peak Region.	X	X	
b. Explore staffing the Welcome Center through a local partnership.		X	X

# THE 2025-2028 ROADMAP ACTION PLAN

## INITIATIVES THAT VISIT COLORADO SPRINGS WILL LEAD

2025-2028 Roadmap Actions & Tactics	2026	2027	2028
<b>7. CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE.</b> Sharpen Colorado Springs' appeal for business meetings and conferences by leading a strategy to focus recruitment and outreach on the region's Centers of Excellence, including space, cybersecurity, technology, sports, education, and outdoor experiences.			
a. Collaborate with local partners — including the Chamber & EDC, Sports Corp, and UCCS — to identify a prospect list of businesses and industry associations aligned with the region's known Centers of Excellence.	X	X	X
b. Develop and deploy an outreach strategy to inspire practitioners in targeted sectors to hold meetings, conferences and retreats in the Pikes Peak region, especially during off-peak seasons.	X	X	X
c. Identify new funding to support meeting incentives.		X	X
<b>8. COORDINATED PLANNING.</b> Seek out opportunities to build the region's visitor economy by participating in other significant regional initiatives.			
a. Partner with COPPR and the Local Organizing Committee for the America 250/Colorado 150 commemoration celebrations to highlight opportunities to celebrate the region's vitality.	X		
b. Support the Downtown Partnership "Clean & Safe" Initiative.	X		
c. Partner with the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Museum to activate opportunities for leveraging the impact of the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles.	X	X	X
d. Strategize with Sports Corp to formalize division of responsibilities for recruiting and supporting attraction of sports events.	X		



# THE 2025-2028 ROADMAP ACTION PLAN

## INITIATIVES THAT VISIT COLORADO SPRINGS WILL SUPPORT AND ADVOCATE

2025-2028 Roadmap Actions & Tactics	2026	2027	2028
<b>9. INCREASED AIR SERVICE.</b> Continue supporting the Colorado Springs Airport's work to develop, expand, and retain new direct air routes.			
a. In collaboration with the airport and local partners, support and advocate for strategies to support development, expansion, and retention of air service for high-potential destinations.	X	X	X
b. Work with the airport on strategies to inspire passengers to explore the region and come back again.	X	X	X
<b>10. SIGNATURE EVENTS.</b> To generate greater economic impact and tax revenues from Colorado Springs tourism, collaborate with the City's LART Committee and other partners to develop a year-round special events strategy to increase overnight travel, especially during off-peak times of year, and to ease congestion during times of visitor compression.			
a. Working in collaboration with key partners and decision-makers, assess potential for either creating new events or shifting timing of events to drive a more balanced year-round tourism economy.	X		
b. Prioritize VCOS event marketing support to drive overnight visitation, especially during off-peak times of year. Consider refraining from marketing events at peak visitation times.	X	X	X
c. Explore potential for incentivizing organizations to reschedule popular events for less-busy times of the year, both to ease visitor compression and support a more balanced tourism economy.	X	X	X

2025-2028 Roadmap Actions & Tactics	2026	2027	2028
<b>11. ARTS &amp; CULTURE.</b> Collaborate with promoters and lodging partners to offer experiential packages for concerts, performances, exhibits, and cultural events.			
a. Leverage the region's growing live music scene to inspire overnight stays with tickets-plus-lodging offers.	X	X	X
b. Develop seasonal multi-day experiential packages to connect travelers with the region's unique cultural experiences.	X	X	X
<b>12. PARKS, TRAILS &amp; ROADWAYS.</b> Support the Outdoor Pikes Peak Initiative and other partners on strategies to connect visitors with the region's iconic outdoor experiences and build the Pikes Peak Region's reputation as a premier outdoor destination.			
a. Advocate for OPPI efforts to expand the region's infrastructure for outdoor visitors and recreationists, especially new iconic attractions such as "Ring the Peak."	X	X	X
b. Support PPORA's efforts to develop a Regional Trail Master Plan.	X	X	
b. Collaborate with PPORA to incorporate its web content into VCOS.com to optimize the experience for visitors and web traffic for both organizations.	X		
<b>13. SPORTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT VENUES.</b> Join in support of development, expansion and retention of sports and entertainment venues positioned to generate longer overnight stays and fill off-peak availability.			
a. Advocate for development of venues supporting a year-round sports tourism strategy.	X	X	X

## APPENDIX

# STRATEGIC GOALS and KEY INITIATIVES OF THE 2018 DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Following is a listing of all Strategic Goals and Key Initiatives identified in the [Visit Colorado Springs Destination Master Plan](#), completed in 2018. The 13 Key initiatives prioritized in the 2025-2028 are designated by gold text. Please note that wording of some Key Initiatives has been revised to reflect current priorities.

### STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Provide Unique Experiences that reflect the authentic nature of the region, helping to extend the length of stay.

- A. **Signature Events:** Expand existing events and introduce new signature events to activate all four seasons.
- B. **Iconic Trail Systems:** Complete the iconic Pikes Peak “Ring the Peak” trail system.
- C. **Olympic Experiences:** Animate downtown Colorado Springs by using the U.S. Olympic Museum as a catalyst to develop unique, connected experiences.
- D. **Experiential Tours:** Continue building inventory of multi-seasonal experiential tours.
- E. **Unique Performance Venues:** Develop more venues for music and other arts/cultural events and performances.
- F. **Centers of Excellence:** Attract meetings and conferences by leveraging interest in space, cybersecurity, IT, Olympic sports, the outdoors, and physical accessibility.
- G. **Multi-Generational Travel:** Increase multi-generational family travel by identifying activities and choices for all ages and interests.

### STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Deliver Priority Infrastructure that serves current needs and anticipates future demand.

- A. **Parks & Trails Maintenance:** Improve funding for maintenance and sustainability of regional and city parks and trails.
- B. **Sports & Entertainment Venues:** Pursue development of indoor and outdoor venues for sports events, festivals and entertainment.
- C. **Basecamp Facility:** Develop a Pikes Peak basecamp facility as a hub for connecting visitors with the region’s outdoor experiences.
- D. **Convention Center:** Determine the feasibility of a public or private downtown Colorado Springs convention center.
- E. **Stewardship:** Develop short- and long-term solutions to ensure the region’s viability as a visitor destination and safeguard resident support for tourism.
- F. **Pikes Peak Planning:** Ensure Pikes Peak – America’s Mountain is further planned and utilized as a significant visitor asset.
- G. **Arts & Culture:** Build Colorado Springs’ reputation as a cultural center by connecting and coordinating the region’s music, arts and culture experiences.

### STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Improve Connectivity for trails, roads, transportation systems and online communication.

- A. **Regional Transportation Improvements:** Create a comprehensive Front Range and Pikes Peak Region transportation system.
- B. **Internet Connectivity:** Increase reliable cellular service and Wi-Fi coverage throughout the region.
- C. **Biking & Hiking Trails:** Complete a biking and walking trail system that connects Colorado Springs to the region’s key outdoor experiences.
- D. **Public Transit:** Establish sustainable intra-regional public transit options, such as shuttles and bus routes, to reduce congestion.
- E. **Wayfinding:** Develop a branded wayfinding signage system to stimulate visitor engagement with attractions.
- F. **Air Service:** Continue to support increased air access at the Colorado Springs Airport.

### STRATEGIC GOAL 4: Strengthen the Destination Brand to ensure the region is top of mind with potential visitors in a positive way.

- A. **Olympic City USA Brand:** Further establish and leverage the Olympic City USA brand.
- B. **Year-Round & Iconic Experiences:** Position Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region as a dynamic four-season destination with iconic, must-visit outdoor experiences.
- C. **Shoulder & Off-Season Marketing:** Elevate perceptions and awareness of winter and spring travel opportunities to build off-peak visitation.
- D. **Funding:** Increase tourism promotion funding to build year-round visitation.

### STRATEGIC GOAL 5: Enhance Regional Collaboration through stronger partnerships and cooperation.

- A. **Coordinated Plans:** Align Destination Master Plan initiatives with existing and emerging city and regional plans.
- B. **Parks & Roadway Connectivity:** Collaborate with outdoor recreation, parks and roadway agencies to enhance access and the visitor and resident experience.
- C. **Olympic Experience Coordination:** Partner with Olympic organizations to coordinate and enhance the Olympic experience for visitors.
- D. **U.S. Air Force Academy Experience Coordination:** Partner with USAFA to enhance the visitor experience, especially through the new visitor center.
- E. **Activity Packaging:** Collaborate to drive longer stays and off-season visitation through package experiences.
- F. **CTO/DMO Collaboration:** Continue partnering with the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) and other Colorado DMOs to stimulate long-haul markets.
- G. **Military Installations:** Build relationships with local military installations to connect visitors and military families with the region’s experiences.



THANK YOU

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