



# BRANSON/LAKES AREA DESTINATION STRATEGIC PLAN

A Strategic Direction for the Region's Visitor Economy



The Destination Strategic Plan sets a new direction for the Branson region's visitor economy. It is the outcome of a community-driven process initiated by the Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce & CVB and guided by a Steering Committee of community leaders.

**Our vision is to build a more attractive, vibrant, and prosperous region.**

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## A MESSAGE FROM

### Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce & CVB

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2021 was a milestone year in Branson, as the region welcomed 10 million visitors, and overall tax revenues reached an all-time high, exceeding 2019 which was the previous best year in history. The City of Branson sales tax and tourism tax, the Tourism Community Enhancement District Tax, Taney County Tax, and Stone County Tax all increased an average of 24.81% over 2019, making it a tremendous year across the board.

But now is not the time to be resting on our laurels. As destinations across the world reopen their visitor economies, the competition for visitors and the economic impacts they bring will be fierce.

We need to be thoughtful about how we continue to develop and enhance the Branson experience to align with evolving traveler expectations; about the kinds of visitors who would most appreciate the region's character and deliver the most value to our community; and how we can grow our tourism industry for the benefit of all in our region.

This destination strategy is a long-term initiative, to help our region and tourism industry focus on a collective vision and action plan to achieve short-, mid- and long-term goals to drive a sustainable and thriving visitor economy.

This plan is the beginning of a dialogue. So far, there has been tremendous support for this plan, as well as enthusiasm to collaborate on its realization.

Working together, we can build a stronger tourism industry, we can achieve a new vision for our region, and we can create exceptional and original experiences for our visitors.

Sincerely,



Jason Outman  
President & CEO  
Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce & CVB





## An Increased Focus on Destination Development

The biggest shift in the global visitor industry today is the growing focus on destination development, which provides a strategic framework that informs smart growth and investment decisions for stakeholders and residents. Destination development is the mechanism whereby the natural life cycle of tourism (e.g., development, stagnation, decline, and rejuvenation) is managed to ensure a destination evolves to remain “desirable” for the ever-changing consumer and hence, competitive in its target markets.

The overarching purpose is to increase destination competitiveness and visitor spend, protect the character of the local community and the environment that surrounds them, provide more opportunities for local businesses and residents, and improve overall quality of life. Protecting the authentic character of the Branson region is of paramount importance to everyone who participated in this project.

Destination development happens when industry and government plan and work together to enhance the quality of the visitor’s experience by ensuring tourism products, services, amenities, and practices meet and exceed visitor expectations over the long term.

Tourism has two primary revenue drivers — supply and demand (Figure 1 below). Destination development focuses on the supply side of tourism by creating a compelling visitor experience to attract new visitors and entice repeat visitation. Arguably, in this age of near instantaneous sharing of experiences via social networks and third-party platforms, which allow the traveler to review and share their experience, the quality of the destination and the experiences it offers is now an essential element of the marketing toolbox.







## Our Objectives

The ultimate objectives of the Destination Strategic Plan are aligned around elevating the long-term viability of the local economy, maintaining the community's authentic character, protecting the environment, and improving the overall destination experience for both visitors and residents.

1

Maximize the value of tourism to the region, economically, socially and environmentally

2

Deliver a balanced year-round visitor economy

3

Deliver exceptional and authentic experiences for our visitors and residents

4

Enhance the region's reputation as a place to live, work, and visit





## Project Approach

This Destination Strategic Plan was initiated by the Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce & CVB in 2021. The 10-month process began with an empirical destination assessment based on a comprehensive survey of public and private stakeholders. The results identified opportunities and challenges for the community, through the lens of tourism, and provided a series of prioritized action items.

Following the destination assessment, the planning team conducted a robust series of community engagement sessions that included a variety of 1-on-1 interviews, focus groups, surveys, and visioning workshops with industry and community leaders. Engagement was supplemented with an extensive review of existing research and planning documents to ensure the strategies in this plan

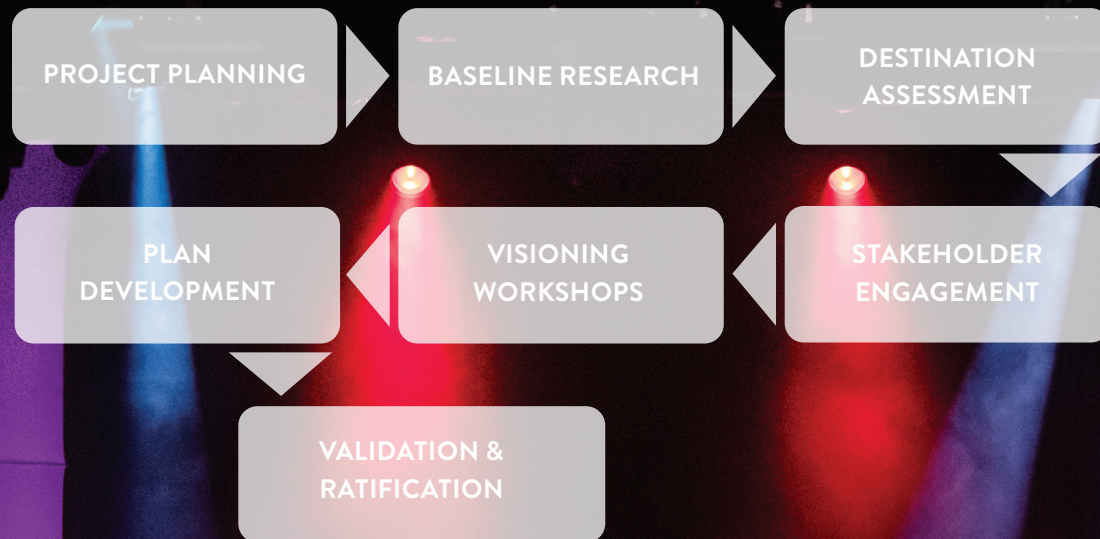
align with and support other plans.

The Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce & CVB is poised to have a role in coordinating the next phase of the Destination Strategic Plan. Because this is a strategy with ideas that transcend the tourism industry, initiative planning and implementation will be shared responsibilities among the tourism industry, the City of Branson, Taney County, Stone County, and various organizations within the region.

The strength of engagement and alignment between all stakeholders is the key element toward building a successful destination strategy. It is a journey that the people of the Branson region will take together, and one that will benefit residents, businesses, and visitors for years to come.



## Destination Strategic Planning Process







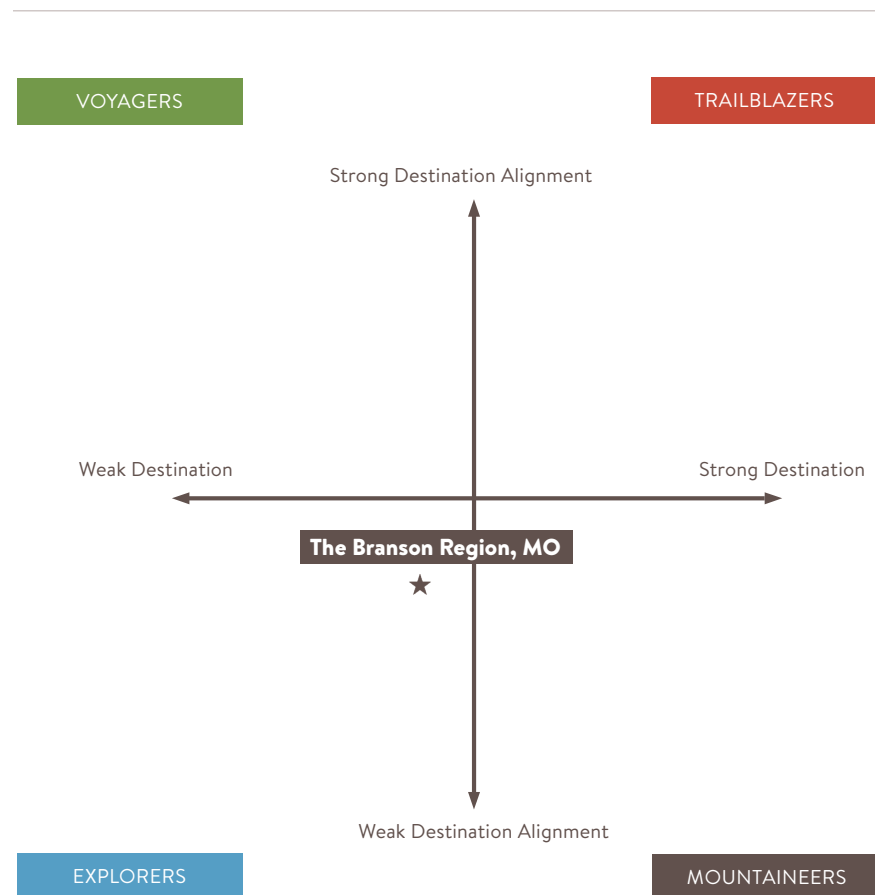
## Engagement & Research Findings

The development of the Destination Strategic Plan engaged many community and industry leaders throughout the process to ensure the widest breadth of input and collaboration as possible.

### DESTINATION ASSESSMENT

MMGY NextFactor conducted a comprehensive DestinationNEXT assessment survey with local elected officials, community leaders and industry stakeholders. The survey asked participants to rank the overall strength of the destination's experience and the level of community alignment around 24 key variables. The data was aggregated and plotted in the scenario model below comparing the community against a global industry average.

The Branson region plotted slightly below the industry baseline for overall experience, and below average relating to community alignment. The data results also showed that stakeholders felt the biggest challenges were related to four specific variables out of the 24: Mobility & Access, Workforce Development, Funding Support & Certainty, and Government Support.







## Community Engagement

The initial step of community engagement was the creation of a Steering Committee, consisting of residents in the public, private, and civic sectors. The committee was consulted throughout the development of the plan.

The MMGY NextFactor project team also facilitated 14 focus groups and conducted several individual interviews and with an equally diverse scope of residents, elected officials, community leaders, and industry stakeholders. In addition, more than 650 residents of the region participated in a community survey.

Stakeholders and local community members in the Branson region were aligned around the below opportunities and challenges impacting the region's visitor economy and quality of life for residents.

### OPPORTUNITIES

#### Enhance the Destination Experience

- Ensure the theatre industry remains a driver of visitation in the future
- Further develop visitor experiences for growing consumer segments, including outdoor recreation, events and festivals, nightlife, culinary, etc.
- Expand the region's tourism success beyond the peak seasons and create a year-round visitor economy

#### Diversify Visitor Markets

- Expand sports tourism offerings and facilities
- Develop experiences which appeal to Millennials and Gen Z
- Target meetings and conventions market to fill shoulder seasons

#### Improve Livability

- Prioritize the development of a more diverse local economy, vibrant public spaces, and access to the outdoors
- Develop public-private partnerships to enhance workforce development initiatives revolving around housing, transportation, and childcare
- Public investments in infrastructure and public places will drive increased economic vitality and improve the livability of the region

### CHALLENGES

#### Workforce & Housing

- Issues of affordable housing and the impact on workforce are a top priority
- Access to public transportation and childcare facilities further compound workforce concerns
- Staff shortages are impacting region's hospitality reputation and hindering its ability to support a year-round, 24/7 visitor economy

#### Mobility & Transportation

- Air access to the region is limited and prohibits the growth of certain markets, particularly the meetings and events market
- Improved public transportation is needed to distribute visitors and residents across the region
- Greater regional connectivity is necessary, particularly to and from the Springfield-Branson National Airport and the Branson Airport

#### Aligning Vision & Priorities

- Stronger collaboration is needed between the public and private sectors
- Diversity of views among stakeholders regarding the region's future
- Funding and governance challenges limit CVB effectiveness



# TOURISM IS WHAT BUILT BRANSON.

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**Without tourism, Branson would still be a community of 3,000 residents. But we also need a year-round economy that improves the standard of living for locals. And to do so, we have to start looking toward the future and finding ways to evolve our community while maintaining the experiences and sense of hospitality that made Branson what it is today.**

- Branson resident



# OUR VISION

A destination vision is an aspirational and inspirational future state for the region designed to rally stakeholders and residents around a common purpose. Three unique destination signatures emerged during the development of the Destination Strategic Plan:

1

A legacy of delivering world-class live entertainment, mainly in the form of theatre shows

2

A strong pride in local hospitality, community values and multi-generational family gatherings

3

A deep appreciation for the natural environment and recreational activities in the Ozarks

## Our vision for 2030

### In 2030 the Branson region is...

a welcoming and vibrant destination driven by our world-class entertainment, genuine Ozarks hospitality, and deep-rooted connection to the outdoors.



## Strategic Pillars

The core deliverable for the Destination Strategic Plan is a new strategic framework with six high-level goals and actionable initiatives for each to accomplish the destination vision for the Branson region. The goals are interdependent and designed to collectively optimize the year-round economy and enhance the local community character and cultural DNA. All of the strategies are the result of extensive community input collected during the many individual consultations and group sessions conducted specifically for this plan.

1

Leverage and Ensure a Thriving Live Entertainment Industry

2

Enhance and Diversify the Branson Regional Experience

3

Prioritize Livability and Community Well-being

4

Strengthen Awareness and Perception of the Branson Place Brand

5

Improve Access, Mobility, and Connectivity

6

Foster Greater Stakeholder Alignment and Collaboration







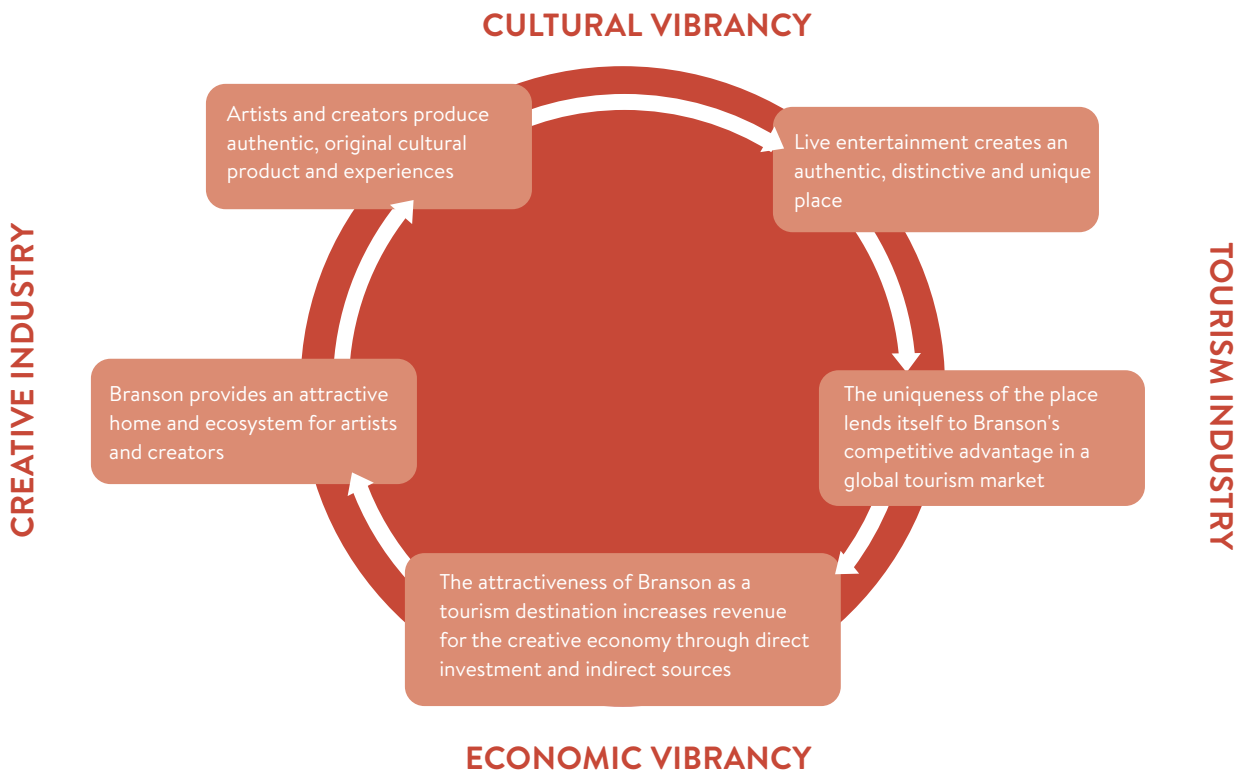
## Leverage and Ensure a Thriving Live Entertainment Industry

### WHAT IT MEANS

Live entertainment is a key component of the tourism ecosystem. Whether an active part of a trip – such as going to a theatre show – or something that enhances one’s experience in the background – such as a jazz pianist at a local restaurant – live entertainment is embedded in tourism, and as such should be strategized more across this ecosystem. Live entertainment integrates well into creating experiences that focus on cultural heritage, diversity and local engagement. It also embeds well into both heritage tourism and the exploration of living culture, across communities.

Branson’s live theatre and music ecosystem created a direct economic impact of 1,915 jobs, \$33 million in earnings and \$105 million in economic output in 2016, according to the 2020 Branson Theatre Health & Needs Analysis. The total number of jobs generated and supported by the music sector in the area was 2,288, which accounted for 8.96% of employment in Taney County. The total earnings generated within the Branson Performing Arts and Music Ecosystem totaled \$44 million.

Beyond the direct economic impacts, Branson’s live entertainment helps create an authentic, distinctive and unique sense of place for the destination. This uniqueness of place provides a competitive advantage for Branson in a global tourism marketplace, which further enhances the vibrancy and economic resiliency of the destination.





## WHAT IT MEANS FOR OUR DESTINATION

Live entertainment, mainly in the form of theatre shows, has been central to Branson's heritage since the 1960s and has attracted millions of visitors to the region each year. It continues to be a top driver of visitation for the Branson region.

However, changing consumer and market trends, new visitor travel patterns, a lack of best practice guidelines, and loose regulations around licensing for theatres, shows and ticket sellers have placed Branson's reputation as the "Live Entertainment Capital of the World" at risk.

Throughout the engagement process, there was general consensus from stakeholders, including show owners and operators, that Branson's live entertainment must continue to evolve and innovate.

*The Branson Theatre Health & Needs Analysis* conducted by Sound Diplomacy in 2020 provides a path forward to enhance and evolve Branson's existing offering, leverage it as a talent attraction and retention pipeline, increase the economic benefit of and for the local theatre industry, and ensure that the theatre industry remains a driver of visitation for many years to come.

## HOW IT WILL BE ACHIEVED

- Set forth a clear vision and direction for the evolution of Branson's live entertainment industry
- Partner with the theatre industry in the development of an ongoing research aimed at understanding current and future entertainment preferences amongst visitors
- Develop a financial assistance program that provides incentives to new and existing venues to invest in infrastructure and capital costs associated with live entertainment
- Collaborate on ways to re-imagine entertainment experiences centered on contemporary programming and participative learning that engages new audiences
- Explore the development of a signature event that celebrates the region as the "Live Entertainment Capital of the World"
- Explore opportunities to integrate Branson's musical heritage and live entertainment throughout the visitor experience, beyond the theatres
- Work with investors to establish a major new outdoor event space for the region
- Improve the walkability of the Entertainment District to encourage more pedestrian traffic
- Advocate for the City of Branson and State of Missouri to include a regulation in third-party ticket seller licenses that restrict the use of the label "welcome center" or "visitor center"
- Advocate for the City of Branson and State of Missouri to require third-party ticket sellers to conspicuously display their license that identifies them as a third-party ticket outlet and clearly informs the consumer that they are not at an official box office







## Enhance and Diversify the Branson Regional Experience

### WHAT IT MEANS

Tourism is undergoing a transformation in how it is developed, marketed, and managed, driven by rapidly changing visitor expectations. The increasing emphasis being placed on experiences by consumers is far more than a shift in terminology or a fad; it is a well-researched and quantifiable trend.

Delivering a more diverse experience is critical for attracting high-value visitors, who spend more, stay longer, explore more of the destination, and align with local community values. This target customer can also mean people who visit in shoulder season or mid-week.

Research shows that successful destinations provide visitor experiences that meet the visitors' needs and expectations and are true to the promises of their brand. They continuously maintain and enhance their existing products and where there are gaps or opportunities, they invest in new products, infrastructure, services, and amenities that strengthen the destination's appeal and competitiveness.

More diversified experiences also have vast and far-reaching benefits for local residents and for attracting new residents, investors, and organizations to the Branson region. Meaning, a more highly diversified visitor experience is directly related to higher quality of life for residents and higher tax revenues for the City of Branson, Taney County and Stone County.

### WHAT IT MEANS FOR OUR DESTINATION

A recent general population survey from the Branson Chamber of Commerce and CVB showed that visitors feel the destination lacks "fresh, new experiences." To maintain and grow its positive image and to achieve tourism objectives, the Branson region must focus on 'cutting through' the 'noise' of other destinations in the global destination marketing arena. We must provide experiences that will appeal to potential visitors, satisfy consumer segment needs and force them to reappraise Branson as a destination.

The Destination Strategic Planning process unveiled three key opportunities to enhance and diversify tourism experiences within the Branson region that meet the needs of these contemporary travelers.





### **Outdoor Recreation**

In 2020, 53% of Americans ages 6 and over participated in outdoor recreation at least once, the highest participation rate on record. As the COVID-19 pandemic impacted communities and forced a nationwide shutdown, outdoor spaces became places of refuge to safely socialize, improve physical and mental health, connect with family and recover from screen fatigue. Remarkably, 7.1 million more Americans participated in outdoor recreation in 2020 than in the year prior. And while pandemic restrictions have dwindled, this newfound desire for the outdoors amongst travelers remains. 42% of travelers indicated they are more interested in visiting outdoor destinations than they were pre-pandemic, according to Destination Analysts' State of the American Traveler research.

Neighboring communities such as Bentonville, Arkansas have utilized their strengths in outdoor recreation to fuel broader economic development. In fact, according to a 2019 report from Headwaters Economics, counties with outdoor recreation economies are more likely to attract new residents with greater wealth and have faster-growing wages than their non-recreation counterparts, particularly for areas with less than 50,000 residents.

### **Sports Tourism**

Sports tourism is one of the fastest growing segments in the visitor economy today due to continually growing demand for amateur tournaments and a dire lack of capacity to host regional events. Destinations of all sizes across North America are investing heavily in new indoor facilities and outdoor sports fields based on the immediate impact they have, to bring in new revenue and taxes for the community.

Sports tourism is about more than just hosting great events. It generates economic development through visitor spending as well as raising the profile of the destination and inspiring leisure tourism. Sports tourism also creates social and community benefits, such as youth development, increased fitness levels and health, and community and cultural celebration. Some of these benefits occur at the time of the event, but most are legacies and will return value to the community over many years.

### **Events & Festivals**

Vibrant events and festivals enable communities to feel connected, with a sense of pride in where they live, work and play. They encourage residents to discover unique aspects of their own community and can be powerful tools for delivering new visitors and economic benefits.

A diverse roster of events and festivals gives visitors a variety of different experiences every time they visit. They encourage visitors to extend stays and fill gaps in the offseason and mid-week periods, driving more sustainable impact across a destination. Events can also bring people together for shared experiences, promote human understanding and inclusion of diverse people, and ensure stewardship of the environment.

Finally, community-based and regional festivals and events deliver benefits for travel, accommodation, restaurants, and retail establishments, as well as local governments through income and sales taxes.



## HOW IT WILL BE ACHIEVED

### Outdoor Recreation

- Conduct an outdoor recreation audit in the Branson region with the goal of determining activities, experiences, organizational and community-wide opportunities, as well as gaps that may limit growth
- Support the development of a trail master plan for trail and greenway development, with the goal of connecting a system of trails from Springfield to Bentonville
- Invest in trail maintenance and amenities to support outdoor recreation, including parking, signage, restrooms, bike racks, bike repair stations, etc.
- Explore opportunities to improve lake access to resident and visitors
- Connect public places to surrounding areas with sidewalks and pathways to increase pedestrian and cyclist mobility and public access

### Sports Tourism

- Commission a region-wide facility master plan, pulling together existing county and city plans to identify areas of need, costs, and potential impacts
- Identify funding sources to support investment in sports facility enhancement and development
- Work with local jurisdictions and sports organizers to assess community desire and readiness for growth in various sports categories
- Explore opportunities to attract sporting events which utilize public spaces, i.e., adventure racing
- Communicate the benefits of sports tourism and facilities to the general public

### Events & Festivals

- Identify event and festival opportunities to drive offseason visitation
- Further invest in attracting and hosting events and festivals that position Branson on the national and global stages and demonstrate alignment with Branson's place brand, particularly live entertainment
- Identify potential venue development opportunities to support new and existing events and festivals
- Advocate for headquarter hotel and convention center expansion to make the facility potentially viable for larger meetings and conventions
- Explore opportunities to connect local makers and entrepreneurs with regional events and festivals
- Identify and articulate detailed funding and organizing responsibilities for events and festivals







## Improve Livability and Community Well-being

### WHAT IT MEANS

The most sustainable and prosperous destinations have long ago developed beyond "tourism destinations." They're just outstanding destinations, period. Local leaders focus on enhancing the high quality of life by bringing together all types of people to celebrate the local lifestyle and community values.

This focus on creating a more livable community helps fuel both tourism and broader economic development. Repeat visitors don't return to a destination to feel like a tourist. For many, they return because they want to feel like they're part of the local community where they share the same values, passions and like-minded interests. The identity of a particular neighborhood, defined by its lifestyle, way of life, community and cultural DNA, etc., is the destination's competitive advantage to help drive incremental repeat visits.

### WHAT IT MEANS FOR OUR DESTINATION

One of the most important intended outcomes for diversifying and optimizing the local economy is to provide greater opportunities for full-time residents of the Branson region. Due to rising costs of living, it is increasingly challenging for hospitality and tourism professionals and young residents seeking professional development opportunities. To have a thriving community, it is imperative that people across all social and economic segments have pathways for achieving their goals so they can afford to stay in the community.

Stakeholders shared their belief that a strong sense of community with a vibrant social fabric, which includes people of all ages, contributes to overall quality of life. Equally important, a significant percentage of full-time residents living within the community is critical for the success of local businesses throughout the year. And, a variety of home ownership options at approachable price points helps ensure that more families and professionals believe they can remain in the community.

By far, the lack of housing diversity for full-time residents in the Branson region was the most discussed challenge among the community during the development of this plan. Housing diversity impacts almost every other issue in the area, including economic diversity, new talent and investment attraction, labor shortages, business closures, etc. It also impacts Branson's ability to develop a tax base to cover the increasing cost of public services and amenities year-over-year.

### HOW IT WILL BE ACHIEVED

- Expand public-private partnerships to enhance workforce development initiatives revolving around housing, transportation, and childcare
- Incentivize commercial and residential landowners to develop affordable housing
- Provide reliable and competitive broadband service to citizens, businesses, and vendors
- Invest in childcare and family support services for local workforce
- Develop co-working and co-living/learning spaces to attract remote professionals, digital nomads, startups, investors and local professionals
- Develop more evening experiences and experiment with extending business hours to provide more experiences for younger generations
- Prioritize placemaking initiatives and the development of a more diverse local economy, vibrant public spaces, and access to the outdoors





## Strengthen Awareness and Perception of the Branson Place Brand

### WHAT IT MEANS

In a world where the movement of people, capital, and ideas is more fluid than ever, a strong place brand is more important than ever.

A strong place brand helps a place compete in the global marketplace. A business or a potential resident or a visitor can go anywhere they want today, so articulating differentiating and unique characteristics is important to attracting investment, people, and capital to your place.

A well-articulated place branding strategy strengthens a community's sense of place, because it creates alignment between the language and messages created for and by business, community, and visitors.

Best of all, it helps destinations chart not only who they are but who they want to become. That's part of its power. A place brand reflects what a place currently is and inspires what it can be in the future.

### WHAT IT MEANS FOR OUR DESTINATION

In a recent survey of the general population in key source markets, 60% of non-visitors had a "somewhat or very positive opinion" of Branson, placing it 9th amongst destinations list and well behind competitive destinations such as Destin, Florida, the Wisconsin Dells, and Pigeon Forge. The top reasons for non-visitors to choose other destinations were they felt Branson was "not for me," they preferred other places, or they thought Branson was "a bit too cheesy/hillbilly for our liking."

Interestingly, the sentiment amongst visitors to the destination was much different. Nine out of 10 respondents said they will likely return to Branson within the next year. By bringing visitors to our region, we are able to shift their perceptions and create new advocates for the destination. In fact, most of those surveyed said they didn't stay long enough.

Activating the place brand strategy and communicating Branson's unique story requires an ongoing, participative effort from a multitude of stakeholders from both the public and private sectors. Only by working in a constant and coordinated manner will we be able to build a reputation that gives added value to all residents of the region and positions our destination as a desirable place to live, work, visit, learn, and invest.

### HOW IT WILL BE ACHIEVED

- Continue to articulate the region's unique sense of place through the co-creation a common storytelling strategy for the region
- Amplify local ambassadors, creatives, entrepreneurs, and influencers by curating and promoting their passionate and authentic stories
- Further integrate the connection to the Ozarks and outdoor recreation into the region's brand identity
- Align regional efforts to develop a holistic strategy for positioning the region as a place to live, work and visit
- Monitor the effectiveness of the place brand through on-going consumer research and resident surveys





# Improve Access, Mobility and Connectivity

## WHAT IT MEANS

A vibrant visitor economy must contain connections that are equally vibrant. These connections should create a sense of continuity of the visitor experience from one destination to another.

Mobility and connectivity support greater opportunities for visitors, residents and industry stakeholders. Removing friction between how visitors and local businesses connect, both physically and digitally, is proven to drive higher conversion and increase incremental sales.

## WHAT IT MEANS FOR OUR DESTINATION

As Branson's visitor economy grows to its anticipated level of over 10 million visitors, how those visitors move around our region needs to evolve to meet the needs of travelers and respond to changing contexts and technologies.

We must ensure that the visitor perspective is considered in transportation planning, including:

- connectivity between the destination and the rest of the world, including air access as well as road;
- connectivity between visitor activities within a destination; and
- the modes of transportation that help visitors connect to places and to one another.

## HOW IT WILL BE ACHIEVED

- Support of the development and implementation of an air service strategy for Branson Airport
- Grow the Risk Mitigation Fund necessary to expand existing service or bring new service to Branson Airport
- Advocate for a direct shuttle between the Springfield-Branson National Airport and downtown Branson
- Improve multi-modal connectivity to, from, and within the Branson region
- Advocate for public transportation to connect downtown Branson with the Entertainment District and alleviate some of the traffic congestion on 76 Country Blvd.
- Expand commuter options for workforce living outside of Branson
- Develop infrastructure for the surging national growth of electric vehicles, e-bikes and other e-mobility options
- Ensure the visitor perspective is considered in transportation planning and alignment occurs between transportation plans and the Destination Strategic Plan





## Foster Greater Stakeholder Alignment and Collaboration

### WHAT IT MEANS

Destinations of all sizes are more competitive in the global visitor economy when government, community and industry priorities are aligned as much as possible. A whole-of-destination approach, where the public, private and civic sectors are all speaking to each other, creates stronger communities that elevate the visitor experience, support sustainable and economic development across all sectors, and improve the quality of life for residents.

Every destination is made up of interconnected networks and complex systems. A visitor will encounter and patronize many of those, spanning a range of industry stakeholders, community organizations and events, small businesses, and all of the infrastructure that connects a destination. The leisure or business traveler isn't generally aware of how they are navigating so many of these interrelated elements that make up a destination, but all of them impact and influence the visitor in some way.

Therefore, how well government, community, and industry leaders work together influences how well visitors will experience the destination. It impacts where visitors travel in the region and for how long, when they go and why, how much they spend, what types of businesses they patronize, and what they share on social media, etc. It impacts why they even show up in the first place.

Because of COVID-19, there is now much greater awareness of how and why governments, community organizations and the visitor industry are all linked. And, furthermore, the pandemic showed how they all share many like-minded goals for each of their audiences related to community and neighborhood development, equitable workforce development, small business and priority sector growth, etc.

### WHAT IT MEANS FOR OUR DESTINATION

Guided by this plan for the advancement of our destination, the Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce & CVB will continue its work of uniting the industry and advancing our collective goals, leading to countless benefits for residents and visitors, including infrastructure development, job creation, economic spending, major event attraction and accessibility to grassroots sport and cultural events.

By fostering stakeholder alignment and collaboration, this community will strengthen and grow for the betterment of both our residents and visitors. This also means supporting our partners as they advance their work. We will continue to provide leadership to the industry through leveraging effective partnerships, communicating relevant and timely information and sharing useful research insights. We will also advance our efforts through educational programs and supporting skill and product development within our industry and community.

Ultimately, the success of this strategy will come from meaningful, mutually beneficial participation and alliances with our stakeholders and industry partners. By working together, we will achieve more for the benefit of our citizens and visitors to our region.





## HOW IT WILL BE ACHIEVED

- Support the development and implementation of a program to encourage front-line staff members to explore the various experiences and businesses in the region
- Enhance and promote awareness of hospitality culture training programs in collaboration with local educational institutions and industry partners
- Build industry engagement with organizations and networks responsible for planning and policy decision making that impacts the visitor economy
- Develop community-wide programs to increase awareness and support of tourism and hospitality as a key economic driver that provides growth opportunities for all locals and small businesses
- Develop a more expansive resident sentiment survey program that measures and tracks support for the local visitor economy, and publish the results on a regular basis for ongoing conversation
- Invest in data management platforms and community crowd-sharing tools to ensure intelligent, data-driven decision making across all levels of the public and private sectors



## Next Steps

Throughout the planning process, our community demonstrated an overwhelming willingness to come together and develop a shared vision for the Branson region's visitor economy. That collaborative spirit will be needed once again as we aim to bring this vision to life. No single individual or organization will be able to implement this plan alone. It will require the support of a broad-reaching group of contributors and a collaborative mindset.

The Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce & CVB will champion this strategy, at times leading initiatives, at times supporting others in their pursuits and at all times advocating for the strategic development of our visitor economy for the benefit of residents and visitors.

When appropriate, project teams will be recruited and tasked with developing strategic initiatives and collaborative metrics, guiding and aiding implementation, reviewing success measures and ensuring the lasting relevance of the work.

Many of the strategic initiatives resulting from this plan will be incorporated into the Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce & CVB's strategic plans, ensuring the work plan becomes a natural part of the organization's values and operations, not a one-time activity.







# Branson<sup>TM</sup>

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