

RESOLUTION NO. 77-18

A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE CITY COUNCIL'S  
SUPPORT FOR THE COLORADO SPRINGS  
CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU'S ADOPTION  
OF THE 2018 DESTINATION MASTER PLAN FOR  
COLORADO SPRINGS AND THE PIKES PEAK REGION

WHEREAS, tourism is a major economic engine for Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region; and

WHEREAS, the City of Colorado Springs ("City") supports tourism promotion by providing significant funding for the Colorado Springs Convention and Visitors Bureau ("CVB"); and

WHEREAS, the CVB has prepared a "Destination Master Plan" that is a long-term view on how to improve the experience of visitors to Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region, thereby generating economic benefits for the region, and is intended to ensure that Colorado Springs has the necessary attributes to compete in the future; and

WHEREAS, by developing a Destination Master Plan, local stakeholders can work together effectively to craft the future of travel and tourism in the Pikes Peak Region; and

WHEREAS, a steering committee, including representatives of the City, oversaw the development of the 2018 Destination Master Plan with input from members of the City Council, the Mayor and City staff.


**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS:**


Section 1. The City Council of the City of Colorado Springs supports the Colorado Springs Convention and Visitors Bureau's adoption of the 2018 Destination Master Plan, which is attached hereto as Exhibit A, to support the future of tourism in the Pikes Peak Region.

Dated at Colorado Springs, Colorado this 10<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2018.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Council President

ATTEST:

  
Sarah B. Johnson, City Clerk



# **Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region**

.....  
DESTINATION MASTER PLAN



# Steering Committee

**Barry Brown**  
Vice President of Sales and  
Marketing  
The Broadmoor Hotel  
CVB Board Chair

**Andy Vick**  
Executive Director  
Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak  
Region  
CVB Board Vice Chair

**Peter Udall**  
International Vice President / IET  
Executive Officer  
The Navigators  
CVB Board Treasurer

**Susan Davies**  
Executive Director  
Trails and Open Space Coalition  
CVB Board

**Jill Gaebler**  
City Council President Pro-tem  
City of Colorado Springs  
CVB Board

**Steve Kanatzar**  
Owner  
The Airplane Restaurant  
CVB Board

**DeAnne McCann**  
Executive Director  
El Paso County Economic  
Development  
CVB Board

**Andy Neimas**  
Owner  
Echo Canyon River Expeditions  
CVB Board

**Ed Okvath**  
General Manager  
Hotel Elegante Conference &  
Event Center  
CVB Board

**Eric Olson, Ph.D.**  
Interim Dean, College of Business  
and Administration and Graduate  
School of Business Administration  
University of Colorado Colorado  
Springs  
CVB Board

**Kevin Penn**  
Chief of Business Operations  
U.S. Olympic Committee  
CVB Board

**Greg Phillips**  
Director of Aviation  
Colorado Springs Airport  
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**Kimberly Tbrugge**  
Director of Strategic  
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U.S. Air Force Academy  
CVB Board

**Tammy Fields**  
Senior Vice President, Economic  
Development  
Colorado Springs Chamber &  
EDC

**Steve Kitzman**  
Director of Marketing & Events  
City of Cripple Creek

**Carly Kobasiar**  
Special Events Supervisor, Parks &  
Recreation and Cultural Services  
City of Colorado Springs

**Leslie Lewis**  
Executive Director  
Manitou Springs Chamber of  
Commerce, Visitors Bureau &  
Office of Economic Development

**Tyler Stevens**  
Former Mayor  
Green Mountain Falls  
General Manager  
Complete Kitchens

# Project Team

**Colorado Springs Convention &  
Visitors Bureau**

**Doug Price**  
President & CEO

**Jim Cassidy**  
Chief Financial Officer

**Amy Long**  
Chief Innovation Officer

**Pam Sherfese**  
Vice President of Sales

**Christy Long**  
Director of Visitor Services

**Gaby Stephenson**  
Executive Assistant to President/CEO and CFO

**InterVISTAS Consulting Inc.**

**Paul Ouimet**  
Consultant

**Paul Clark**  
Consultant

**Doris Mak**  
Consultant

**Jordan Young**  
Consultant

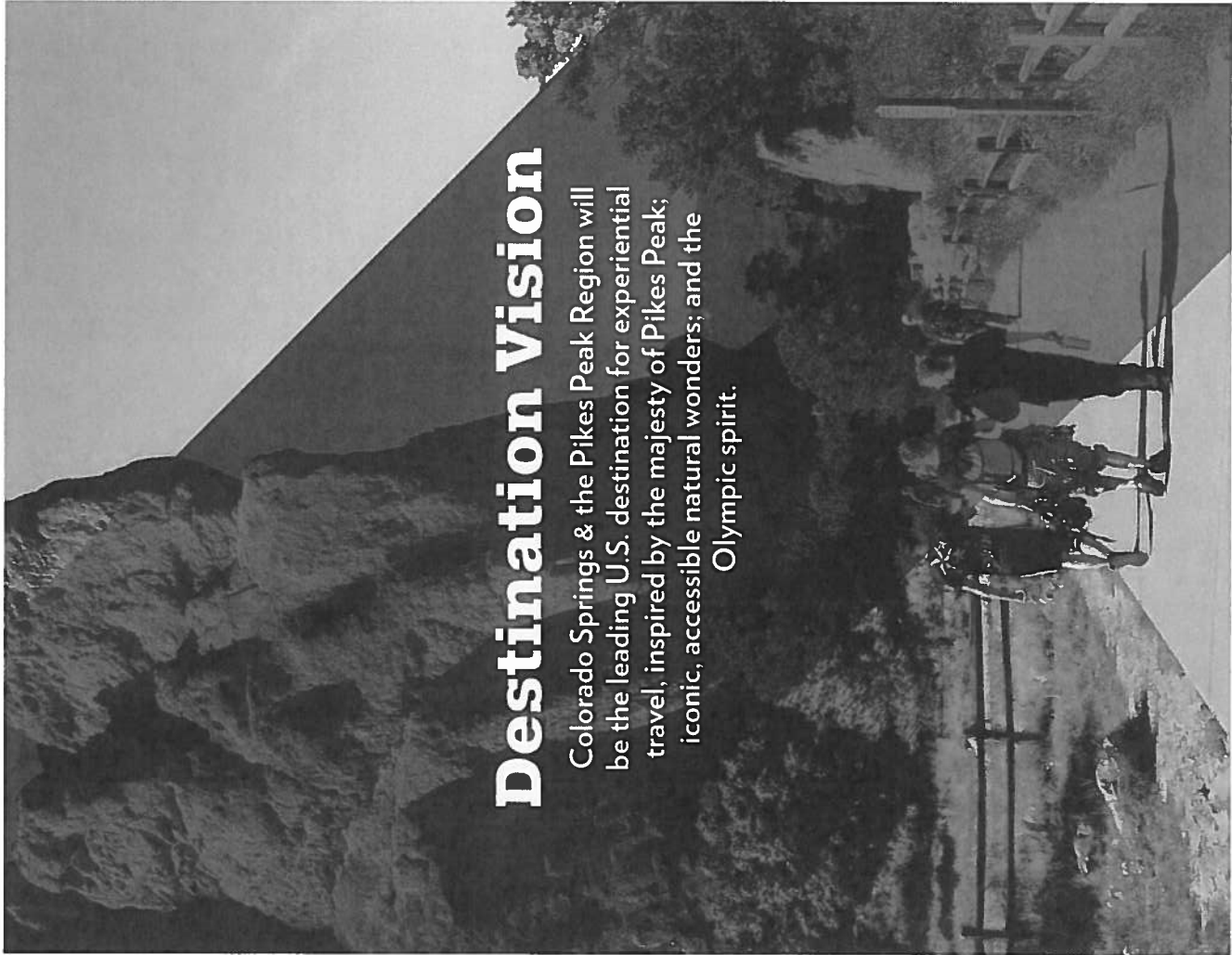
**Noel Szelewski**  
Consultant

**Brooks Lai**  
Graphic Designer

**GainingEdge**

**Paul Vallee**  
Consultant



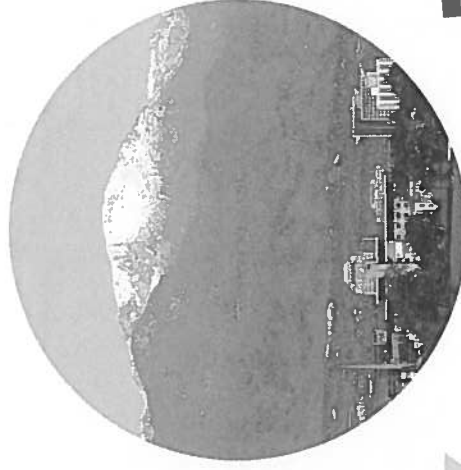


# Destination Vision

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 spirit.

# Strategic Goals

To drive the Destination Vision, five strategic goals have been established to position, support and sustain Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region as a thriving, unique and compelling leisure, group and event destination.





# Imagine it's 2028

Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region has emerged as the leading destination in the U.S. for experiential travel, connecting visitors to our history, people and culture. From a vibrant and animated downtown anchored by the U.S. Olympic Museum, and new event facilities delivering signature experiences to the unparalleled accessibility of our spectacular outdoors, we have established our region as a thriving destination for visitors, groups and events.

The region now attracts a greater number of visitors from long-haul markets, who spend significantly more and stay longer. With a focus on visitor spending rather than just volume, the destination has grown in a sustainable manner that is supported by residents. The increased spending has helped ensure our natural attractions, parks and open spaces are well maintained and protected for locals and visitors alike.

The overall economy of the region has continued to grow with the enhanced stature of the destination. This heightened awareness has encouraged a greater number of people to move here, locate businesses and invest in the region. With new venues and additional hotels, the region now hosts a series of unique events that draw regional, national and international visitors throughout the year.

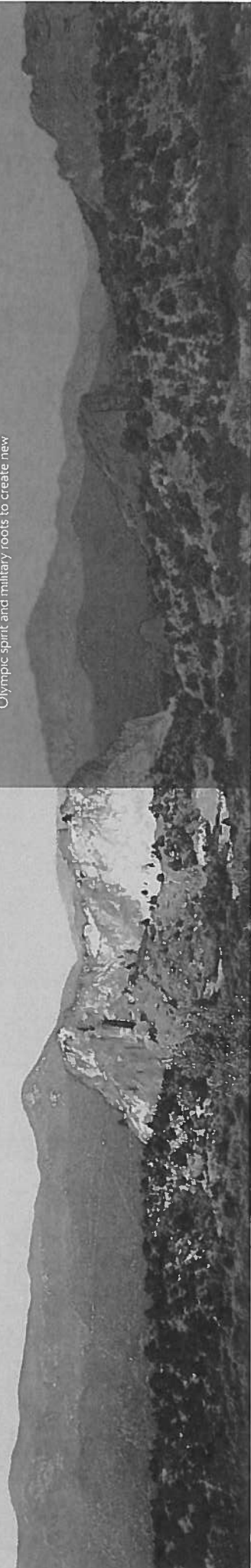
The region continues to leverage its western values, Olympic spirit and military roots to create new

and unique experiences and attractions. A network of internationally renowned cultural institutions is collaborating to position the region as a top destination for cultural experiences.

The region's success has been significantly enhanced by the Olympic City USA brand and the iconic features of Pikes Peak – America's Mountain and Garden of the Gods Park. Outdated perceptions have been altered, and Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region is now top of mind as a place with exceptional quality of life and desirable amenities – still a gem, but no longer hidden.

The region has achieved its vision through the dedicated work of a wide range of stakeholders willing to leverage the opportunities of the Destination Master Plan. With a commitment to ensure local support for the tourism industry's aspirations, the community has developed the destination to enhance the visitor and resident experience. The collaborative culture demonstrated in 2018 has only been strengthened in the 10 years hence, serving as an exceptional example of effective planning and proactive, managed development.

And now that it is 2028, it is time to look back at what was co-created in 2018 by the public and by private sector stakeholders in Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region...



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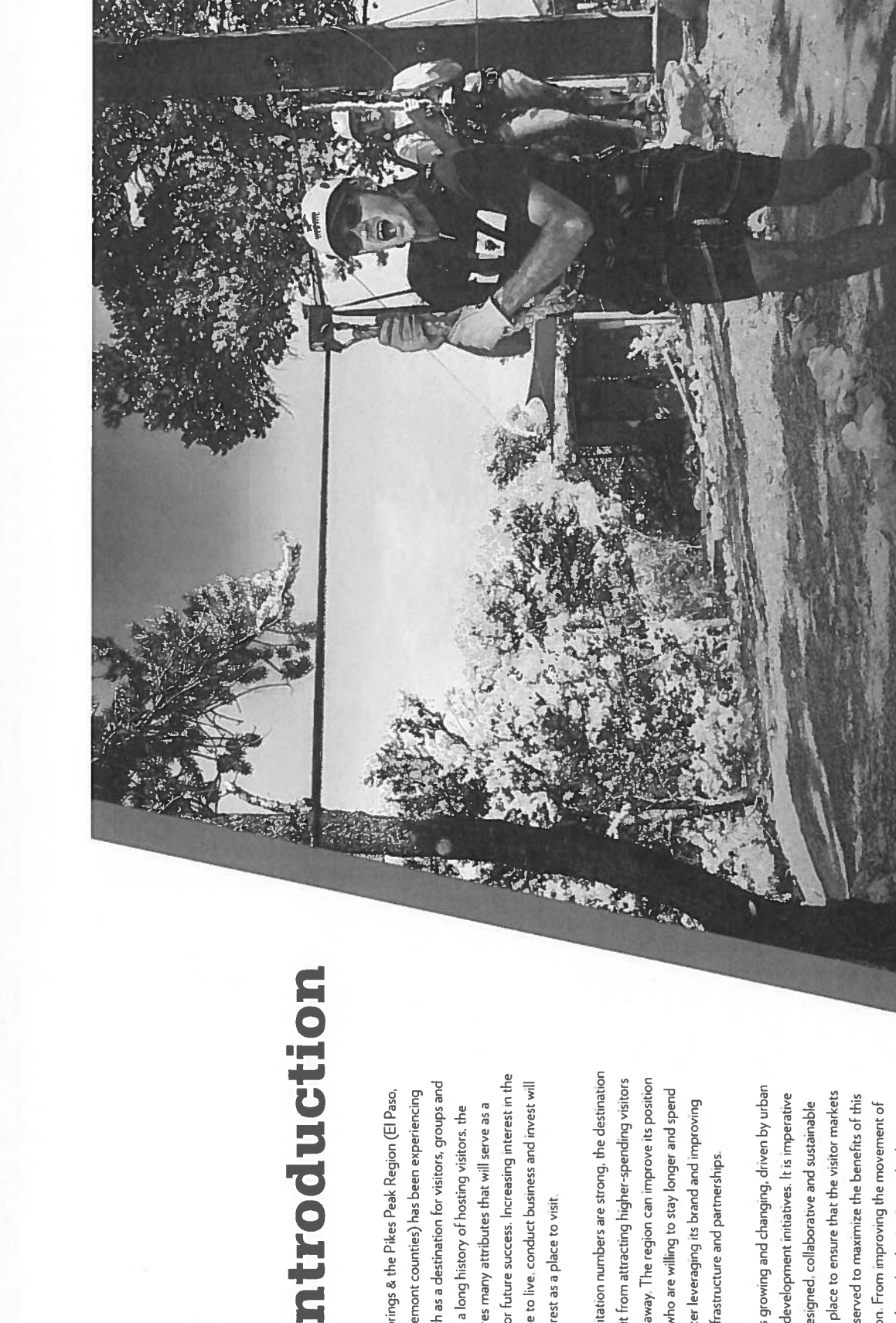
# Introduction

## Overview

Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region (El Paso, Teller and Fremont counties) has been experiencing robust growth as a destination for visitors, groups and events. With a long history of hosting visitors, the region features many attributes that will serve as a foundation for future success. Increasing interest in the city as a place to live, conduct business and invest will also fuel interest as a place to visit.

Although visitation numbers are strong, the destination would benefit from attracting higher-spending visitors from farther away. The region can improve its position with visitors who are willing to stay longer and spend more by better leveraging its brand and improving amenities, infrastructure and partnerships.

The region is growing and changing, driven by urban renewal and development initiatives. It is imperative that a well-designed, collaborative and sustainable plan is put in place to ensure that the visitor markets are properly served to maximize the benefits of this transformation. From improving the movement of people throughout the destination and enhancing facilities to leveraging experiences and creating demand generators, now is the time for Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region to enhance its leisure, group and event travel offerings to ensure long-term economic vitality.



*"The future looks bright for tourism here in Olympic City USA. As our city grows, we need to be smart in planning infrastructure for both residents and visitors. The Destination Master Plan will provide a valuable road map for the future."*

**Mayor John Suthers**  
City of Colorado Springs



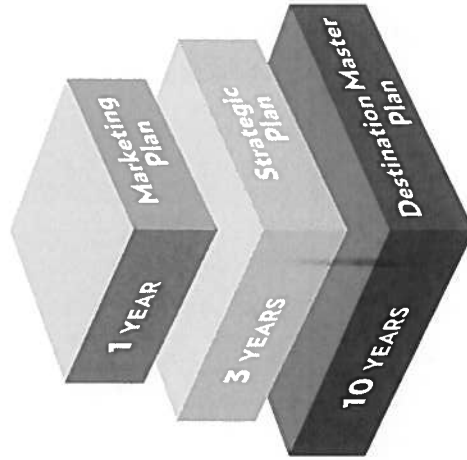
### Destination Master Plan

Destination promotion is an engine of economic development for cities and regions around the world. Tourism, conventions and events help raise the quality of life for residents, raise the profile of the community, help attract strategic events and build transportation networks as well as other critical infrastructure. Destinations throughout the U.S. are taking notice that a comprehensive destination master plan contributes to job creation and business investment. Because of fierce competition in the industry and changing demands of customers, it is crucial to do this type of work now and in the years to come – destinations cannot take a healthy tourism industry for granted.

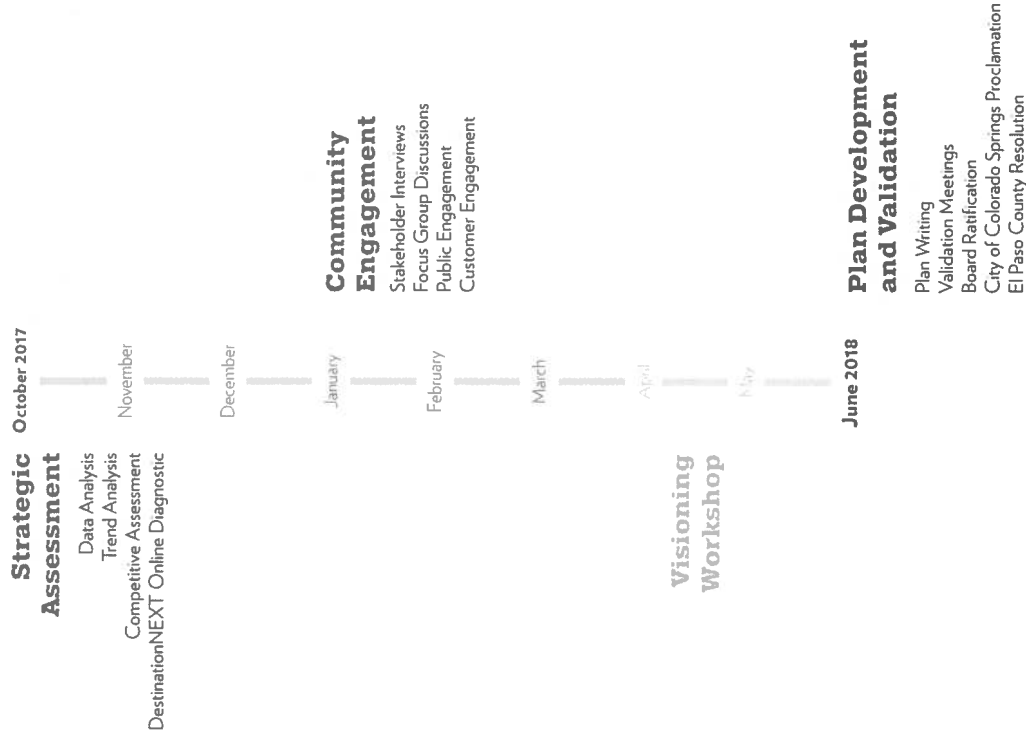
The intent of this project is to co-create a 10-year destination master plan that will further develop Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region as a leading destination to attract leisure visitors.

sports events, groups and meetings. It establishes a destination vision that has been articulated by industry and stakeholders and identifies strategic goals, targets and actionable initiatives. The focus is on infrastructure, facilities, services, attractions and events needed to improve the overall visitor experience.

The region's Destination Master Plan process featured extremely strong engagement and interest from a wide range of stakeholders. Industry, government and community groups eagerly participated in the discussions, providing their views and insights on how they think the destination should evolve. Layered with customer feedback, as well as extensive input from residents, the plan reflects a comprehensive view of the aspirations of Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region as a must-visit destination.



## Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region Destination Master Plan Timeline



### Approach

The region's Destination Master Plan is a 10-year roadmap that includes a vision, goals and strategic initiatives. It is an ongoing platform that will be used to cooperatively fulfill the vision for Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region. It will be the foundation for future engagement, sustainable business success and a long-term competitive advantage for the region.

This plan is based on extensive research, analysis and community engagement. Input from tourism industry leaders, elected officials, residents, visitors and clients, as well as involvement from the next generation of tourism industry and community leaders, was instrumental in creating the plan's recommendations. The Destination Master Plan also considers key recommendations found in other regional planning initiatives that are underway or were recently completed.

The Colorado Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau (CSCVB) is poised to have a role in coordinating the next phase of the Destination Master Plan. Because this is a regional road map with ideas that transcend the tourism industry, initiative planning and implementation will be shared responsibilities among the tourism industry economic development organizations, the three counties and the various municipalities in the Pikes Peak Region. The effective engagement and alignment of all stakeholders is the key element in the journey of a successful destination master plan. It is a journey the region will take together, and one that will benefit residents, businesses and visitors for years to come.

### Strategic Assessment

 1,000+ Pages of Documents and Data Summaries Review

 National & International Trend Analysis

 DestinationNEXT Online Diagnostic Review


 Visitor & Industry Research

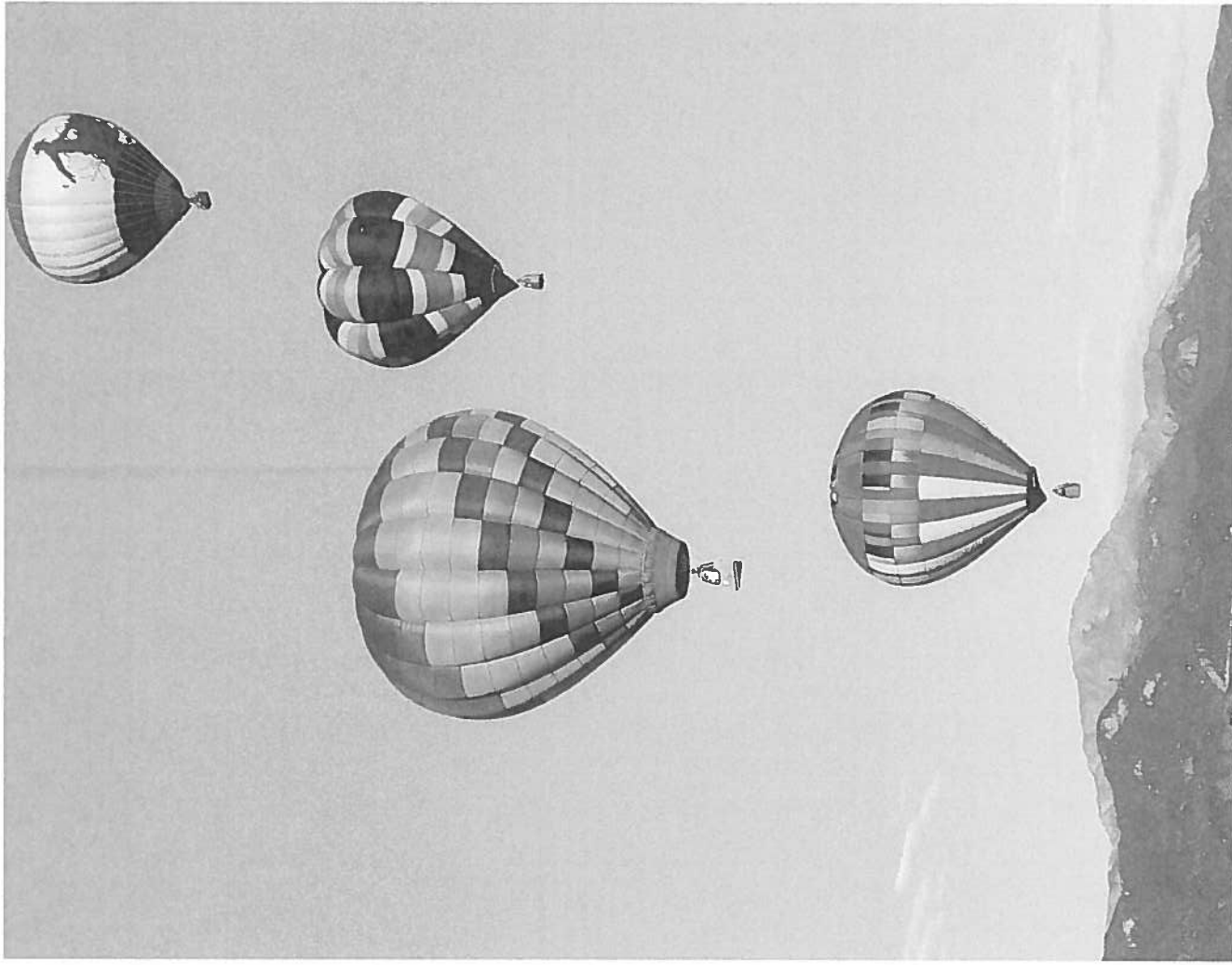
### Community Engagement

 14 Focus Groups

 Key Meeting Planners, Travel Trade & Sports Organizers Survey Responses

 30+ One-on-One Interviews

 2,400+ Public Sentiment Survey Responses



# Colorado Springs Today

Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region attracted 23 million visitors in 2017, with 13 million on day trips and 10 million visitors staying at least one night in the region. These visitors spent \$2.3 billion throughout the region, a growth of 3% over 2016. This growth rate is in line with state and national travel statistics.

The vast majority (90%) of travelers are drawn by the leisure assets and opportunities in the region, with 43% stating they took an independent leisure trip, with an equal percentage stating they enjoyed a leisure trip visiting friends and relatives. Ten percent of visitors are business travelers, with the remaining four percent combining business with leisure travel.

Eighty percent of day visitors originated from within Colorado, with notable percentages from California (6%), New Mexico (2%) and Texas (2%) on regional day trips as part of multi-day tour itineraries of Colorado and neighboring states. Among the key overnight-visitor sector, more than half (52%) originate from the top-five markets of Colorado (22%), Texas (11%), California (9%), Kansas (5%) and Florida (4%).

Reflecting the richness and diversity of experiences available, overnight visitors stay 2.8 nights on average in the region, somewhat shorter than the U.S. average of 3.7 nights. With all there is to see and do, there is ample opportunity to increase revenue by extending time spent in the region. There is a clear opportunity to further increase yield, with visitor spending in Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region averaging \$162 per person, well below the U.S. average of \$255 per person.

Source: Longwoods International, Pikes Peak Region 2017 Visitor Research Report

**"To compete in the international visitor market, our region will need to play to our strengths to remain relevant, and the Destination Master Plan should help us solidify those strengths and play to them over the next 10 years."**

**DeAnne McCann**  
Executive Director  
El Paso County Economic Development

## Key Industry Trends

In setting the stage for the Destination Master Plan, several important trends must be considered

### Continued Strong Outlook for Tourism

The tourism industry has experienced record growth during the past six years. The outlook remains strong, with experts predicting continued growth, albeit at slower rates. Efforts to improve the destination can be rewarded with an increase in visitation and visitor spending.

### Demand for Authentic, Experiential Travel

Travelers are looking for individualized, local experiences that connect them to a destination's history, people and culture. They want authentic engagement with the community, and they are largely willing to pay for it. This has caused a rise in demand for niche travel and customized experiences.

### Fierce Competition for Conventions & Groups

Many cities are upping their game to win business for conventions, meetings and events. They are making significant investments in new and updated meeting facilities, lodging, infrastructure and amenities. They are marketing more and connecting attendees to local experiences.

### Shared Economy Solutions to Satisfy Tourism Needs

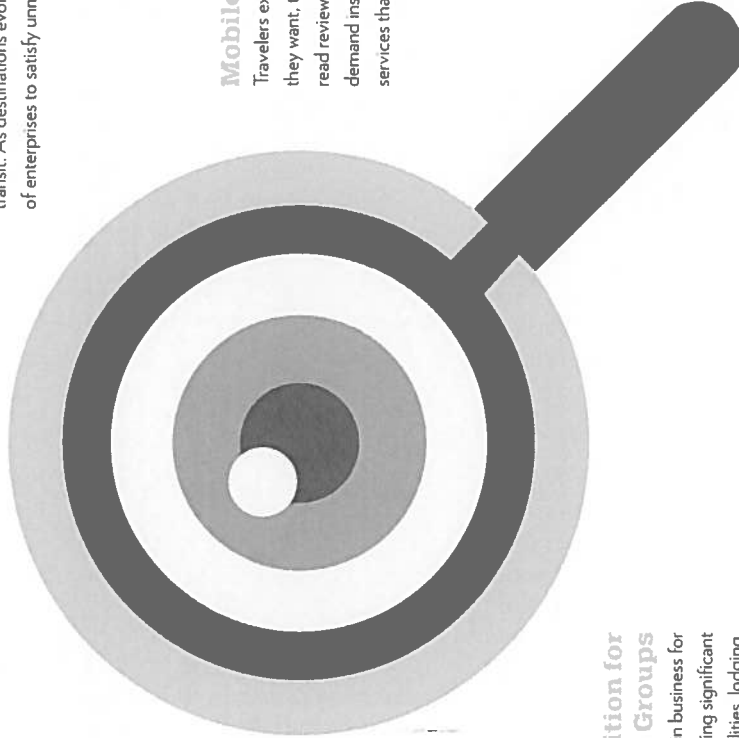
Increasingly, travelers are seeking collaborative consumption services such as Uber, Lyft and AirBnB to experience destinations. Other services are also on the rise, such as Bridj, which provides on-demand mass transit. As destinations evolve, they need to work closely with these types of enterprises to satisfy unmet demand.

### Mobile Technology and Social Media

Travelers expect to have internet connectivity, wherever and whenever they want, to share their travel experiences, get recommendations and read reviews across multiple social media platforms. Today's travelers demand instantaneous communication from the destinations and tourism services that are of interest to them.

### Brand Shaped by Customers

The brand of a destination is becoming less shaped by marketers and more by those who visit the destination, such as meeting attendees and leisure travelers. The proliferation of peer-to-peer sharing sites is playing a key role in shaping a destination's brand.



## DestinationNEXT

Destinations International (formerly Destination Marketing Association International) developed DestinationNEXT as a future-oriented view of destinations in the competitive world of tourism and meetings. The purpose of DestinationNEXT is to provide a destination marketing organization (DMO), like the CSCVB, with practical actions and strategies for sustainable success in a dramatically changing world.

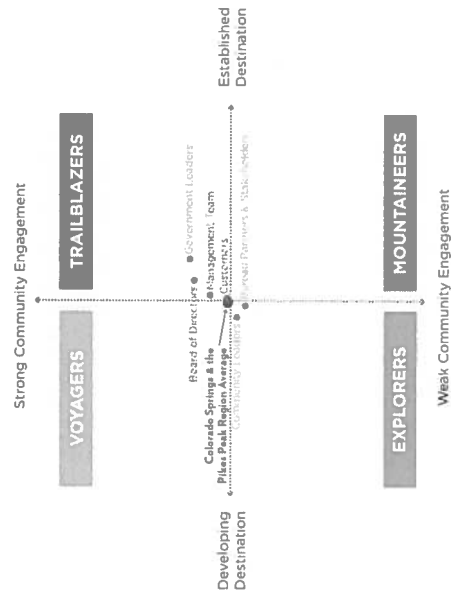
The DestinationNEXT tool is built on two key inputs:

1. An assessment of how important each variable is to the destination; and
2. An assessment of the destination's perceived performance across each variable.

As a critical input to developing its Destination Master Plan, the CSCVB conducted a DestinationNEXT assessment in August 2016.

More than 100 people took the survey, with representation from all tourism sectors within the region as well as customers who provided an outsider's voice. The results of this assessment place Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region in the "Voyager" category, with slightly below-industry-average destination strength and slightly above-industry-average community support and engagement. A "Voyager" destination has a tourism vision and a community mandate to get it done. Survey participants note that destination strength variables like "attractions & entertainment" and "air access" are significantly important to the destination in attracting visitors.

The plot below shows where Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region is compared to the industry average. One of the key takeaways from this assessment is how there were differing perceptions of the destination among the different stakeholder groups.



Key issues and takeaways from the DestinationNEXT assessment included:

- Establishing diverse, high-quality shopping opportunities
- Improving domestic air access to and from the Colorado Springs Airport (COS)
- Heightening the brand of the region to be known as an international tourism destination
- Establishing public Wi-Fi for visitors to use and broadcast their experience through social media
- Increasing convention & meeting space capacity
- Improving public transportation and mobility throughout the region

## Other Consultations

In addition to the extensive consultations with stakeholders, the views of clients, visitors and residents were gathered through a combination of interviews and surveys:

- 40+ meeting professionals, travel trade and sports event organizers surveyed
- 2,400+ responses to a public survey, with 60% from the counties of El Paso, Fremont and Teller

The feedback from these consultations is consistent with input from the stakeholder discussions. This feedback forms the basis of various priorities identified later in this report. Although the reflections from clients and residents touch on many subjects, the following highlights the most important findings from each group:



### Meeting Professionals

Areas to improve include the need for a downtown convention center with an attached brand hotel. They also have an interest in a convention center, hotel and stadium as part of an entertainment district. As well, these clients highlight the need for better accommodation options for attendees.



### Sports Event Organizers

Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region lacks a sufficient number of indoor venues, which is a considerable limitation in attracting sports events. Given the Olympic connection, this is an issue that requires close attention.



### Leisure Travel Trade

A major concern is that the region is regarded as only having enough to offer for short trips. Strategies need to focus on encouraging trade professionals to create longer-stay packages. Other feedback is that the destination is the "real Colorado," reflective of Colorado's culture and way of life.



### Public

Locals have a strong understanding of the significance of tourism in the region. Ninety-one percent of residents who responded to the public sentiment survey feel that visitors and conventions are important to the region's economy. Outdoor recreation, parks/trails and restaurants/dining are viewed as strengths, while getting around is seen as an opportunity.



### Key Takeaways

The analysis and consultations reveal six main takeaways that were considered in developing Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region's Destination Master Plan.



Impressive natural assets provide a tremendous foundation for the destination. Icons like Pikes Peak – America's Mountain and Garden of the Gods Park can be leveraged to attract visitors from around the world.



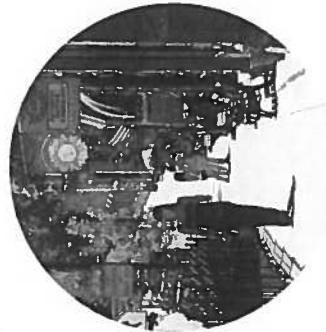
From local stakeholders to clients, it is agreed that the region should plan for and invest in its venues to serve meetings and sports groups. A comprehensive needs assessment should be completed to ensure the destination develops the right venues for these markets.



The Olympic City USA brand is gaining traction. In moving forward, it is extremely important that the destination comes together with a unified brand to ensure consistency in messaging and adherence to brand standards.



Although the region has a willingness and desire to work together, collaboration would be enhanced through more stakeholder networks and greater regional cooperation.



The region's population is projected to continue to grow rapidly. As plans are made to ensure local needs are met in the future, it is a pivotal time to ensure visitor needs are also taken into consideration.



The U.S. Olympic Museum is an exciting initiative that will lay the groundwork for a transformed downtown. The tourism industry needs to ensure that it has a seat at the table as downtown planning occurs.

# Vision

A destination vision is an aspirational statement that sets the roadmap for where a destination wants to be in the future. This vision is not an advertising slogan, but an expression of the intent of the stakeholders as to what they want to achieve together.

The vision for Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region emanates from two unique signatures for the area. The region has many assets, of which two rise to the top in importance:

1. Natural experiences attractive to visitors from throughout the U.S. and around the world that are not only spectacular icons, but also easy to get to.
2. The Olympic connection is a special and unique aspect of Colorado Springs. It will help define the future direction of the destination as a place to visit and hold events.

The vision is as follows:

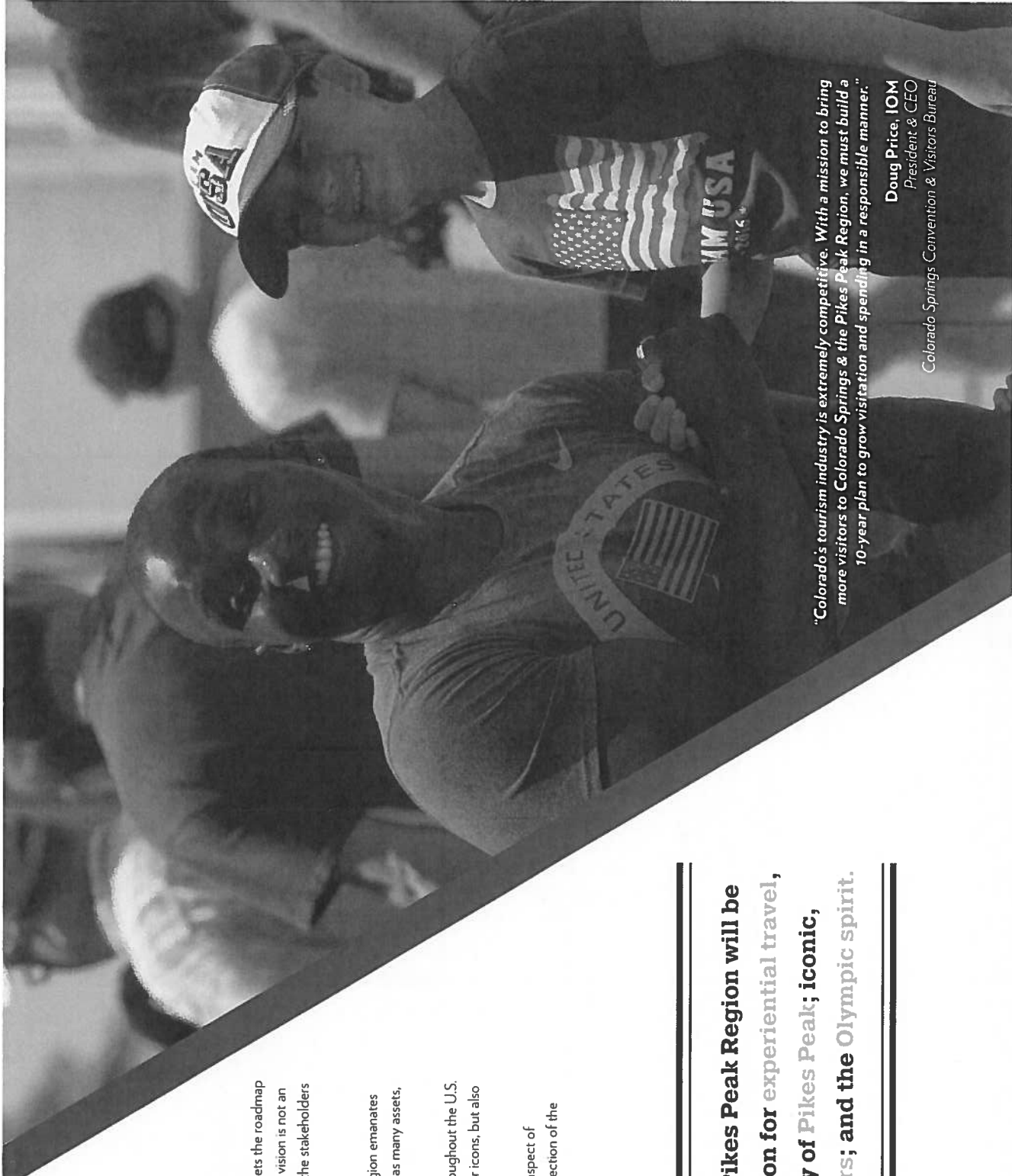
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**Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region will be the leading U.S. destination for experiential travel, inspired by the majesty of Pikes Peak; iconic, accessible natural wonders; and the Olympic spirit.**

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*"Colorado's tourism industry is extremely competitive. With a mission to bring more visitors to Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region, we must build a 10-year plan to grow visitation and spending in a responsible manner."*

**Doug Price, IOM**  
President & CEO  
Colorado Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau

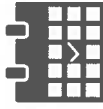


# BIG IDEAS

To help Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region achieve its vision, the broader, bigger ideas in this plan include:

## Develop the right sports-event and meeting venues for the city and region to attract out-of-town events.

Compared to other mid-size cities in the U.S., Colorado Springs lacks venues to compete effectively in the future. There is a need to continue to evaluate options with the goal to develop facilities that can accommodate more sports events and meeting groups.



## Make Colorado Springs & the Pikes Peak Region the most desirable place for urban and outdoor experiential travel in the U.S.

The destination has a strong position in the outdoor travel market, given its proximity to iconic mountains, trails and rivers. To step up its urban experiences, the region will need to consider year-round usage in its development of attractions, festivals, facilities and events.



## Make the region the place for four-season arts, culture and festivals in Colorado.

The region has a vibrant arts & culture scene, though it is sometimes overshadowed by other better-known attributes. Through enhanced collaboration among facilities, organizers and other groups, this sector of the tourism industry can take its rightful place as a leader of visitation - not only in the region but at the state level as well.



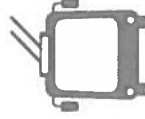
## Further leverage the presence of the Olympic organizations and the new U.S. Olympic Museum.

It is often a challenge for destinations to develop unique man-made assets. The region clearly has this level of asset with its Olympic connection. This opportunity needs to be leveraged, particularly with the potential of the new museum to be a catalyst for development and further animation of downtown Colorado Springs.



## Establish a regional, sustainable transportation system.

Getting around the region is one of the biggest issues facing the development of tourism today. In most competitive destinations, transportation connectors are helping visitors and residents to easily travel to key attractions, airports and other locations throughout the region. A regional system, including public transit solutions, would improve the destination experience and contribute to increased spending and length of stay.



# Goals & Initiatives

To achieve the vision of being the leading U.S. destination for experiential travel, inspired by the majesty of Pikes Peak, iconic, accessible natural wonders, and the Olympic spirit, five overall goals have been developed for the region's Destination Master Plan.

These goals and initiatives consider the numerous consultations that helped define where the region wants to go. Each goal was carefully crafted and validated by the community, building upon the current product offering within the region to deliver a memorable tourism experience. The five goals include:

1. **Provide Unique Experiences** that reflect the authentic nature of the region, helping to extend the length of stay.
2. **Deliver Priority Infrastructure** that serves current needs and anticipates future demand.
3. **Improve Connectivity** for trails, roads, transportation systems and online communication.
4. **Strengthen the Destination Brand** to ensure the region is top of mind with potential visitors in a positive way.
5. **Enhance Regional Collaboration** through stronger partnerships and cooperation.

The following pages outline specific initiatives that need to be completed to realize the vision.



 Provide Unique Experiences

 Enhance Regional Collaboration



 Deliver Priority Infrastructure

 Improve Connectivity

 Strengthen the Destination Brand