

Orange County Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Regional Activation Plan



FINAL REPORT

September 2026

By Zoot Velasco, Lead Consultant



ORANGE COUNTY
BUSINESS COUNCIL

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements		Page 3
Executive Summary		Page 4
Introduction		Page 6
Strategy 1: Create Work-Based Learning Opportunities in High-Demand Industries.		Page 9
Strategy 2: Grow Mid-Level Technical Jobs and Develop Training Programs.		Page 14
Strategy 3: Expand Awareness of Diverse Employment Opportunities.		Page 16
Strategy 4: Foster Innovation and Sustainable Development.		Page 17
Highlights & Surprises		Page 18
Conclusion		Page 19
Appendix A: The Octave Network		Page 20
Appendix B: Outdoor Recreation Industry Data		Page 28
Appendix C: Innovation in Tourism and Outdoor Recreation		Page 30
Appendix D: OCTAVE Newsletters Archive		Page 31

Acknowledgments

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OCTAVE STEERING COMMITTEE

- Jon Benson, General Manager, Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach Resort and Spa
- Patrick Brien, President & CEO, Arts OC
- Anthony Brenneman, Executive Director, OC Sports Commission
- Shant Boodanian Business Development Manager, City of Anaheim
- James Canfield, CEO, OC Fair
- Brian Chuan, Director of Travel Trade Development, South Coast Plaza
- Nancy Cook, Executive Director, OC Workforce Dev Board
- Danny Fierro, Executive Director, OC Hotel & Lodging Association
- Eric Freed, Deputy Airport Director, John Wayne Airport
- Wendy Haase-Roberts, President & CEO, Travel Santa Ana
- Matt Hicks, VP, Public Affairs, H&S Ventures/ OC Vibe
- Ellen Kim, Professor, Center for Entertainment and Hospitality Management, CSUF
- Jim Lake, Director, CSUF Center for Entertainment & Hospitality Management
- Marco Lucero, Workforce Development Manager/ Executive Director, Anaheim Workforce Dev Board
- Tom Morton, Executive Director, Anaheim Convention Center
- Sergio M. Rameriez, Director Economic Development, City of Anaheim
- Shaheen Sadeghi, Founder/CEO, LAB Holding LLC
- Kyle Simpson, Chapter President, OC Restaurant Association

FISCAL AGENT: Orange County Business Council

CONSULTANT TEAM:

- Jesse Ben-Ron, Vice President of Business Initiatives
- Dr. Wallace Walrod, Chief Economic Advisor
- Zoot Velasco, Lead Consultant, Tourism & Outdoor Recreation (2025-26)
- Jack Toan, Lead Consultant, Tourism & Outdoor Recreation (2024-25)

See Our Complete Network in Appendix A

Executive Summary

The **OC Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Activation Plan** was developed to establish a coordinated framework to strengthen Orange County's tourism and outdoor recreation economy, support workforce development under the **California Jobs First** Initiative, expand opportunities for underrepresented populations, and identify strategies to address emerging industry needs.

Over a two-year implementation period beginning in fall 2024, the OCTAVE tourism collaborative completed the 68-page Activation Plan, established an industry leadership network and steering committee, conducted a comprehensive community assessment, launched pilot initiatives, and created mechanisms for continued collaboration and implementation.

Major Accomplishments (with corresponding plan elements)

- Built a comprehensive **tourism leadership network**. This involved identifying and cataloguing **259 Orange County tourism leaders and organizations**, including employers, destination marketing organizations, labor organizations, educators, associations, nonprofits, service clubs, funders, and other industry partners (1.1).
- Established an industry steering committee. Recruited **18 senior tourism and community leaders** to advise the project, support collaboration, and provide industry expertise throughout the planning and implementation process (1.1).
- Completed a countywide tourism community assessment. Conducted **interviews with more than 50 industry leaders** (of the 259 identified) to identify industry strengths, challenges, workforce needs, skills gaps, emerging trends, and opportunities for improvement (1.2).
- Funded and evaluated **four tourism pilot projects** led by **Cooperación Santa Ana, Store One, and RevHub**. The pilots focused on innovation, microtourism, entrepreneurship, workforce development, and opportunities for underrepresented populations (1.3).
- Created the **OCTAVE Newsletter and Collaborative**—the Orange County Tourism Associates Virtual Exchange. OCTAVE provides a collaborative network and newsletter through which tourism leaders can share research, best practices, emerging trends, resources, and opportunities. It also provides an ongoing vehicle for implementing and communicating the Activation Plan (1.4).

259 Leaders in
Network

50+ Interviews

18 Steering
Committee Members

4 Pilot Programs

Executive Summary (Continued)

- **Advanced workforce & innovation strategies:** Our pilot projects and network supported mid-level technical training and employment, increased awareness of diverse tourism career opportunities, promoted innovation ecosystems, and identified resources addressing transportation, housing, technology, sustainability, and workforce challenges (2.0 & 3.0).
- **Developed a pilot Tourism Resource Hub.** RevHub's Tourism Business Navigation and Support Pilot provides a model for connecting tourism businesses and entrepreneurs with resources, technical assistance, and support (4.1 & 4.2).

Key Outcomes and Impact

Through **OCTAVE**, **new countywide networking infrastructure** was established to sustain collaboration among OC tourism stakeholders.

The principal impact is the creation of a connected tourism leadership network, a documented assessment of industry needs, an actionable strategic plan, pilot programs that demonstrate potential solutions, and a newsletter and this report documenting the work and findings. Together, these assets provide Orange County with a stronger foundation for workforce development, entrepreneurship, innovation, sustainability, housing, and inclusive economic growth (4.3- 4.6).

The project also translated planning into implementation. Pilot programs, OCTAVE communications, and the emerging Resource Hub have provided practical mechanisms for advancing specific Activation Plan strategies rather than leaving the plan as a standalone document.

What's Next? Future Ownership by CEHM

A key requirement of the project is to ensure that the collaborative network and communications infrastructure continue beyond this set period now ending.

The Center for Entertainment & Hospitality Management (CEHM) at California State University, Fullerton will assume responsibility for the OCTAVE newsletter and collaborative network. CEHM provides a strong institutional platform for the next phase of the initiative through its connections with students, employers, industry leaders, and academic resources.

Submitted by:

Zoot Velasco, Consultant
CA Jobs First Initiative/ OC Business Council
September 1, 2026



Introduction

BACKGROUND

California Jobs First is a statewide economic development initiative designed to promote inclusive, equitable, and sustainable economic growth. Its goals include creating quality jobs, strengthening regional economies, supporting historically disadvantaged communities, and preparing regions for long-term economic and workforce changes.

The initiative operates through **13 regional collaboratives**, including Orange County. These collaboratives bring together business, labor, government, education, workforce, community, and environmental partners to develop locally informed economic strategies. It evolved from the **Community Economic Resilience Fund (CERF)**, established in 2021 to support economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic and strengthen regional resilience. In 2023, CERF became part of the California Jobs First framework through the **Regional Investment Initiative (RII)**, integrating regional economic planning with broader state workforce, economic, and climate priorities.

The initiative emphasizes three core objectives:

Economic Resilience	Quality Jobs	Equity & Inclusion
Prepare regional economies for climate change, technological transformation, and changing market conditions.	Expand access to well-paying, sustainable employment in priority sectors.	Increase participation and economic opportunity for historically disadvantaged communities.

The program also seeks to align public, private, philanthropic, and other investments to strengthen regional strategies and maximize long-term impact.

GOVERNANCE & FUNDING

The California Jobs First Council, established in 2024, coordinates economic and workforce development efforts across state agencies. The initiative has progressed through three primary funding phases:

- 1. Planning:** Formation of regional collaboratives and development of economic strategies.
- 2. Catalyst:** Support for project development, feasibility, partnerships, and readiness.
- 3. Implementation:** Competitive funding for projects aligned with regional strategies.

These investments are intended to create jobs while strengthening regional capacity, expanding workforce pathways, and preparing communities for a changing economy and transition to a carbon-neutral future.

Introduction (Continued)

THE OC TOURISM ACTIVATION PLAN

Tourism and outdoor recreation emerged as priority economic sectors in nine of California's 13 regions, with each region developing an activation plan tailored to its assets and opportunities. [The Orange County Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Activation Plan](#) provides a framework for strengthening this sector as a contributor to economic growth, workforce development, and community prosperity. Orange County's assets include nearly 42 miles of coastline, extensive parks and natural areas, major cultural and entertainment destinations, and internationally recognized attractions across its three Service Planning Areas. Tourism has also long provided accessible employment and significant visitor-driven economic activity. Visitor levels and travel-related spending have recovered substantially since the pandemic, creating an opportunity to build on that recovery while addressing workforce, business, environmental, and community needs.

OUTREACH & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community and industry engagement were central to the development of the Activation Plan. Input was gathered from businesses and organizations, public agencies, educational institutions, workforce partners, community-based organizations, and other regional stakeholders. Engagement also sought perspectives from communities historically underrepresented in tourism planning and economic development. These perspectives helped identify workforce barriers, business opportunities, community priorities, and strategies for expanding participation in the tourism economy. The plan incorporates input from colleges and universities, workforce and job-training programs, environmental and ecology organizations, community organizations, and partners serving underrepresented populations.

CONTEXT

OC's tourism economy benefits from its diverse assets, while also facing changing visitor behavior, workforce shortages, skills gaps, housing/ transportation challenges, technological change, climate pressures, and increasing competition among destinations. The Plan places these issues within the broader Jobs First framework and focuses on opportunities to strengthen economic resilience, workforce development, innovation, sustainability, and inclusive participation.

KEY TRENDS

Changes in visitation, employment, travel spending, technology, and destination development point to continued opportunities for growth and diversification. Outdoor recreation and emerging forms of travel—including ecotourism, active lifestyles, microtourism, technology-enabled experiences, and social enterprise—are expanding the range of tourism opportunities. These trends create opportunities to improve visitor experiences while supporting local businesses, workforce development, environmental stewardship, and economic resilience.

Introduction (Continued)

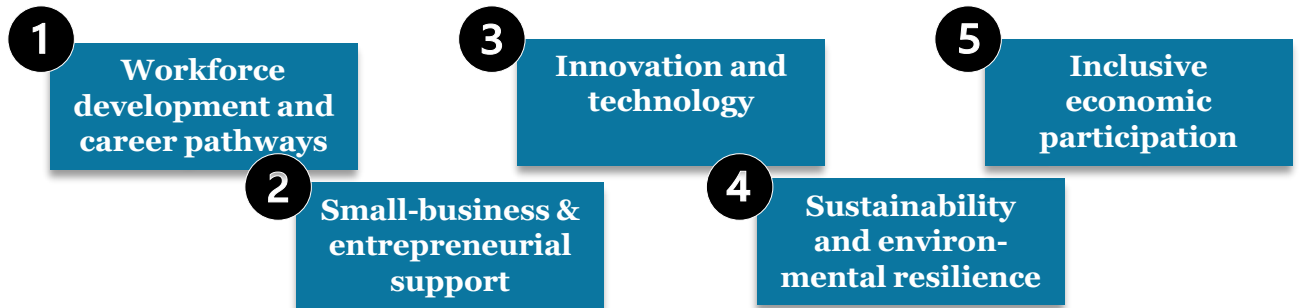
HISTORICALLY DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES & POPULATIONS

Expanding access to economic opportunity is a central objective of the **Activation Plan**, which considers the needs of historically disinvested communities, including communities of color, immigrant populations, system-impacted individuals, and low-income neighborhoods. The strategies seek to expand career pathways, support entrepreneurship and small-business development, and increase opportunities for cultural representation and participation in Orange County's tourism economy.

METHODOLOGY

The Activation Plan combines quantitative research, stakeholder engagement, trend analysis, and sector benchmarking. Research included economic and labor market data, industry studies, stakeholder interviews, community input, and consultations with public, private, educational, workforce, and community partners. This mixed-methods approach was designed to identify industry strengths and challenges and to ground recommendations in both data and local experience.

FIVE TARGET SECTORS & STRATEGIES



The strategies include tactics to strengthen mid-level technical employment, increase awareness of tourism career opportunities, support emerging businesses and innovation ecosystems, address workforce and infrastructure challenges, and expand participation in the tourism economy.

Successful implementation depends on continued collaboration among industry, education, workforce, government, community, and other regional partners.

Strategy 1: Create Work-Based Learning Opportunities in High-Demand Industries.

STEP 1.1: Recruit and build an industry workforce working group to develop recommendations and best practices, identify emerging trends, assess future workforce needs, identify skills gaps, and select a model to pilot in a training program.

A countywide industry working group

We recruited 18 senior leaders representing lodging, attractions, arts, sports, retail, transportation, workforce development, education, destination marketing, restaurants, government, and community partners.

A network designed to last

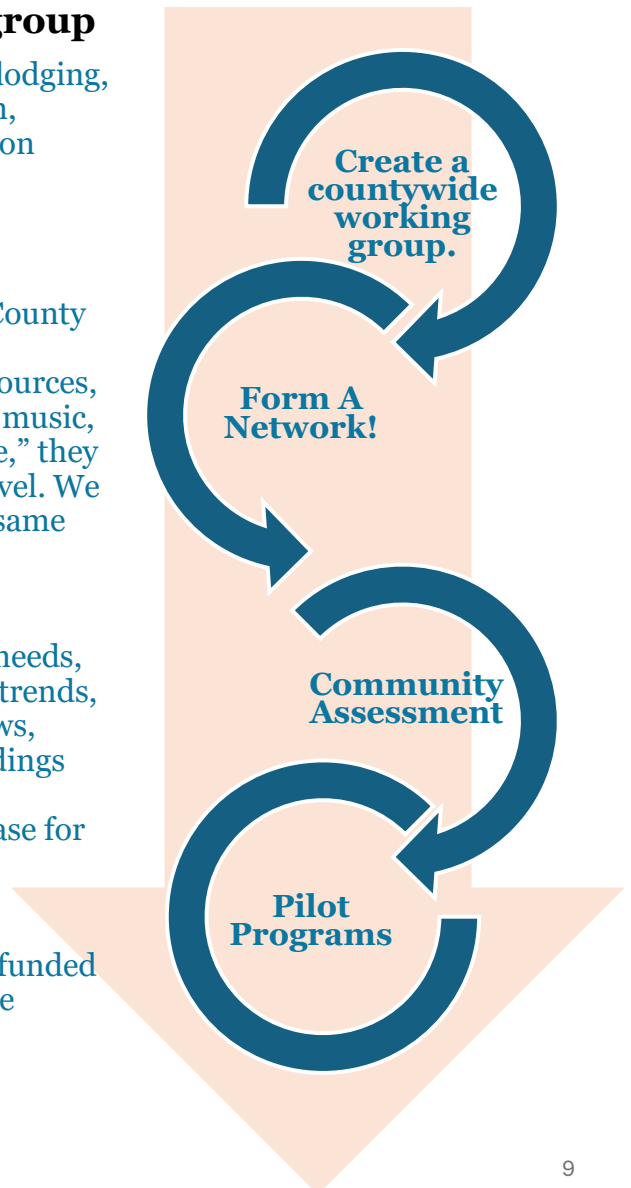
Our group founded OCTAVE — the Orange County Tourism Associates Virtual Exchange — as a continuing network for sharing research, resources, opportunities, and implementation ideas. In music, when a musician or singer “goes up an octave,” they are playing the same music but at a higher level. We hope that by communicating, we can do the same with OC Tourism.

A Community Assessment

Together we assessed successes, challenges, needs, best practices/ recommendations, emerging trends, and skills gaps. We did this through interviews, online evaluation, and focus groups. Our findings were communicated through the OCTAVE newsletters, creating a shared information base for the sector.

Pilot Programs

Through a competitive grant process, OCBC funded four pilot programs in Tourism that showcase community-based approaches to workforce development.



Strategy 1: Create Work-Based Learning Opportunities in High-Demand Industries.

(Continued)

STEP 1.2: Conduct a community Needs Assessment

Include Everyone

Together, we identified and created a repository (database) of hundreds of:

- Currently available industry training programs
- Educational institutions
- Nonprofit community-based programs
- Local employers
- Destination Marketing Organizations
- And funders of workforce programs in tourism.

See **Appendix A** for the complete list.

Expand The Community Assessment

We reached out to the leaders of these programs through interviews, focus groups, and surveys, gathering their successes, challenges, needs, recommendations/best practices, emerging trends, future workforce needs, and skills gaps. We added this information to what we gathered from our leadership and built fully researched newsletter articles.

Expand Outreach Through Partners

Through our partners and pilots, we expanded outreach to underserved or disinvested communities to encourage development.

Report Out through Newsletters

We reported on employer engagement, internship program best practices, corporate initiatives, green initiatives, housing, transportation, and funding.



Strategy 1: Create Work-Based Learning Opportunities in High-Demand Industries.

(Continued)

STEP 1.3: Pilot Work-based Learning Opportunities Training Program for Entry-level Workers.

Develop Pilot Programs

We developed and piloted FOUR work-based learning opportunity training programs for entry-level workers, building on existing models of success, while incorporating Digital Literacy and Technology training.

Cooperación Santa Ana	La Colmena
	Mercado
Anaheim	Store One
RevHub	Tourism Business Navigation and Support Pilot



store {ONE}



See spotlight articles on our pilots in the September OCTAVE Newsletter.

Strategy 1: Create Work-Based Learning Opportunities in High-Demand Industries.

(Continued)

STEP 1.4 & 1.5: Connect The Community & Employers

Community Collaboration (1.4)

We worked across a countywide partner list to identify training opportunities, job fairs, internships, apprenticeships, and design practices that employers and training providers can use.

Employer-Led Training (1.5)

Focus groups identified job-specific skills gaps and training needs, including employer-sponsored apprenticeships, on-site certification, and better-designed internships

Academic Partnership

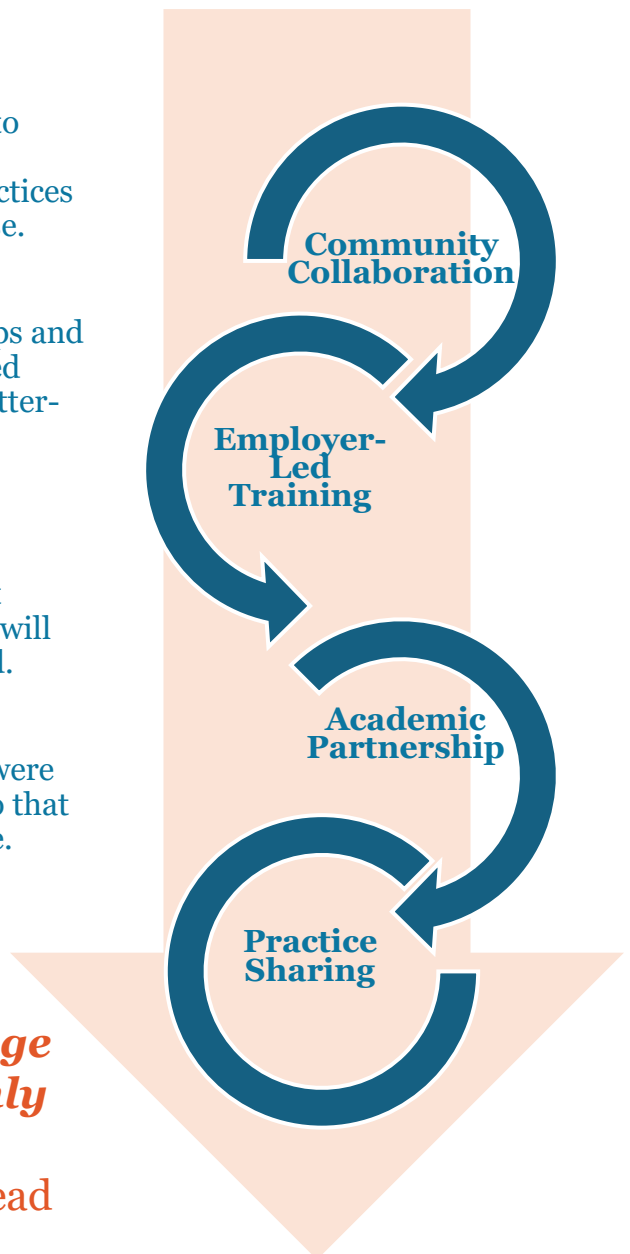
The project partnered with the Center for Entertainment & Hospitality Management at California State University, Fullerton, which will carry OCTAVE forward after the grant period.

Practice Sharing

Employer engagement and training models were documented and shared through OCTAVE so that useful practices could reach a wider audience.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”

— Margaret Mead



Strategy 1: Create Work-Based Learning Opportunities in High-Demand Industries.

(Continued)

STEP 1.6 - 1.8: Expand Access & Investment

Reach underserved and disinvested communities (1.6)

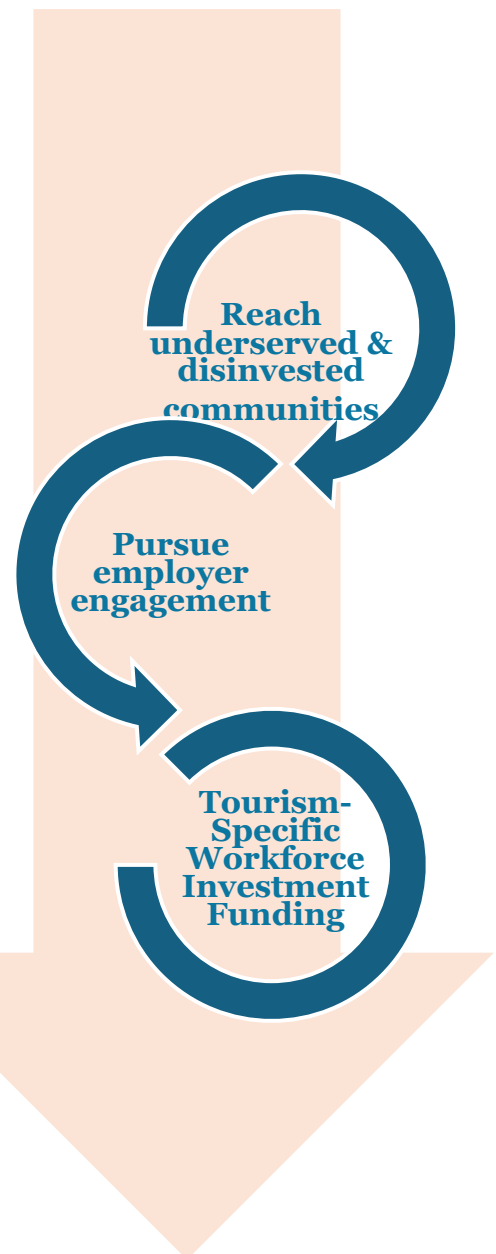
The project assessed multilingual resources, local service providers, community-based training events, and job fairs, then highlighted these resources through OCTAVE.

Pursue employer engagement (1.7)

Partners and pilots encouraged employers and development projects to engage local businesses and workers, with microtourism identified across all four pilots to uplift small enterprises.

Tourism-Specific Workforce Investment Funding (1.8)

The project identified federal and state funding supporting apprenticeships and workforce facilities and reported on changes affecting the sector's funding environment.



“Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness.”

– Mark Twain

Strategy 2: Grow Mid-Level Technical Jobs and Develop Training Programs.

STEP 2.1: Map The Pipeline: On-Ramps & Elevators for Tourism Careers

We identified tourism job pipelines, entry-level on-ramps, advancement pathways, skills gaps, and training requirements.

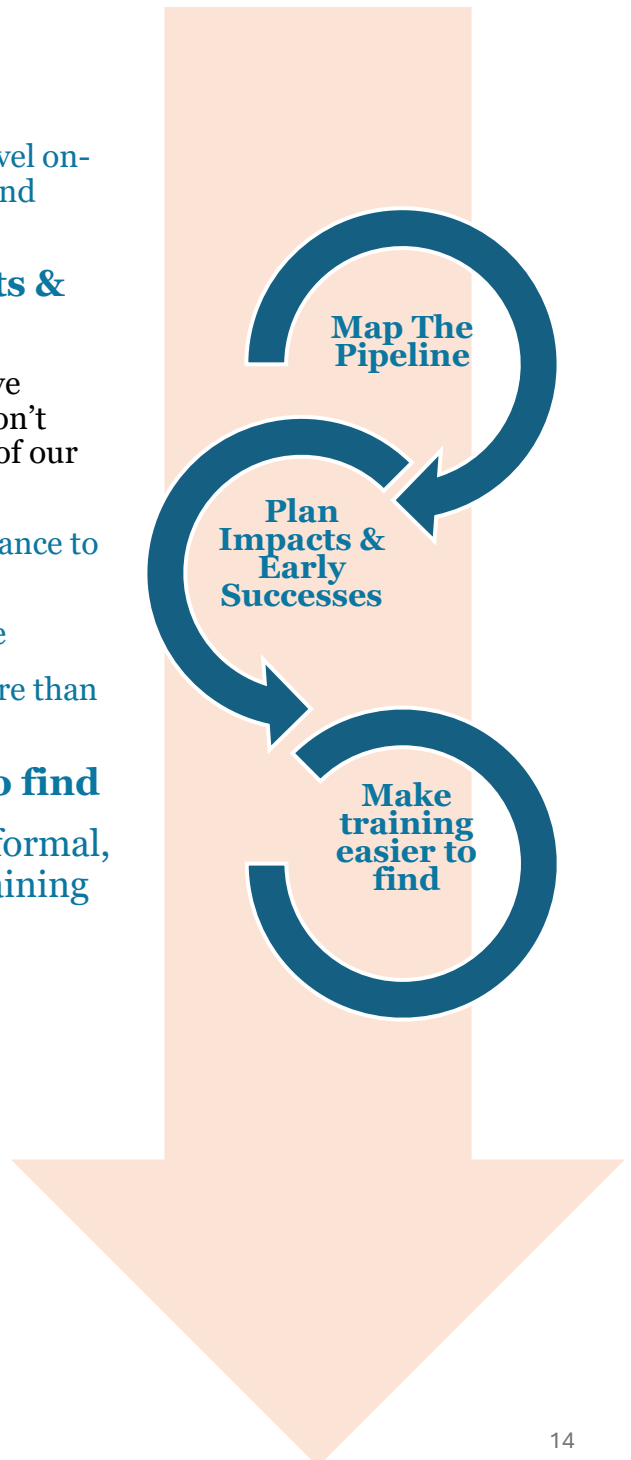
STEP 2.2: Activation Plan Impacts & Early Signs of Success

We track our pilot programs and collaborative efforts, which are still in their infancy. We won't know the full impact for years to come. Two of our projects are still under construction.

- RevHub reports providing technical assistance to 50 new business enterprises
- La Colmena marked its first year of service
- And OCTAVE retained a readership of more than 100 tourism leaders.

STEP 2.3: Make training easier to find

We compiled locally- based formal, informal, scholarship, and community-based training resources.



Strategy 2: Grow Mid-Level Technical Jobs and Develop Training Programs.

(Continued)

STEP 2.4: Career Advancement Pathways

OCTAVE reported on job-to-career pipelines, model internships, microbadging, and other emerging trends.

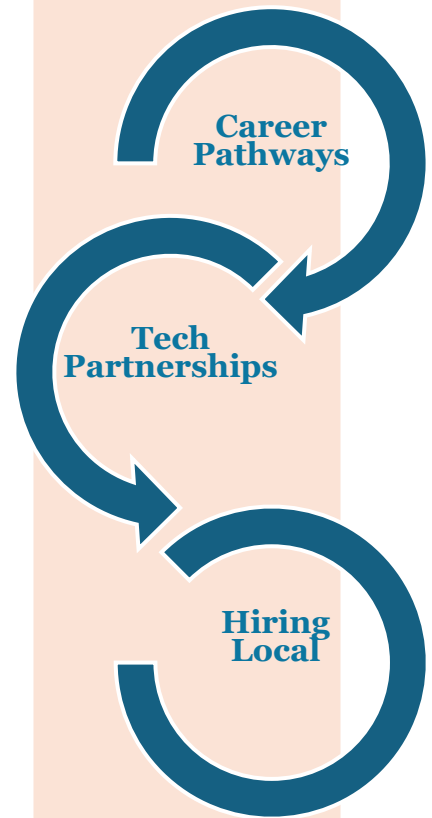
STEP 2.5: Tech Partnerships

The project highlighted emerging fields and worked with technology partners such as RevHub to design training modules around commonly used digital tools and systems.

STEP 2.6: Hiring Local

Through our OCTAVE steering committee and newsletter, we encouraged local employers, as well as new developments such as *DisneylandForward* or *OC Vibe*, to create local hiring agreements or workforce development partnerships that prioritize residents in nearby communities. Conversations also include developing a transportation stipend or assistance program for local workers hired by these developments to reduce environmental impacts and commuting costs.

Simultaneously, we work with RevHub and nonprofit community partners to develop and highlight opportunities for local entrepreneurs to start their own businesses and become employers.



“It’s a recession when your neighbor loses their job; it’s a depression when you lose yours.”

– Harry S Truman

Strategy 3: Expand Awareness of Diverse Employment Opportunities.

STEP 3.1: Exposure to High-quality Jobs

Worked with Destination Marketing Organizations, local chambers of commerce, schools, and community organizations to find and promote sector-specific career fairs and other workforce events featuring employers, training providers, and mentorship opportunities.

STEP 3.2: Equity in Job Development

We highlight the efforts of organizations that excel in equitable job development practices and showcase success stories such as Cooperación Santa Ana, DisneylandForward, and OCvibe in OCTAVE Newsletters.

Through our pilot at RevHub, we create new opportunities for equitable local businesses to get started.



“The only thing worse than training your employees and having them leave is not training them and having them stay.”

– Henry Ford

Strategy 4: Foster Innovation and Sustainable Development.

STEP 4.1: Mapping The Existing Ecosystem

We reviewed and assessed the existing small business ecosystem to understand the resources available.

STEP 4.2: Strategic Partnerships

Community-based organizations, ethnic chambers, universities, and other trusted partners can provide one-on-one counseling and targeted technical Assistance.

STEP 4.3: Concentrated Innovation Ecosystems

RevHub's Tourism Business Navigation and Support Hub strengthens the tourism-focused small-business ecosystem providing technical assistance to 50 new business enterprises. CEILO, another nonprofit partner, is doing similar work, including a childcare pilot under another area of CA Jobs First.

4.4: Advisory Council or Working Groups

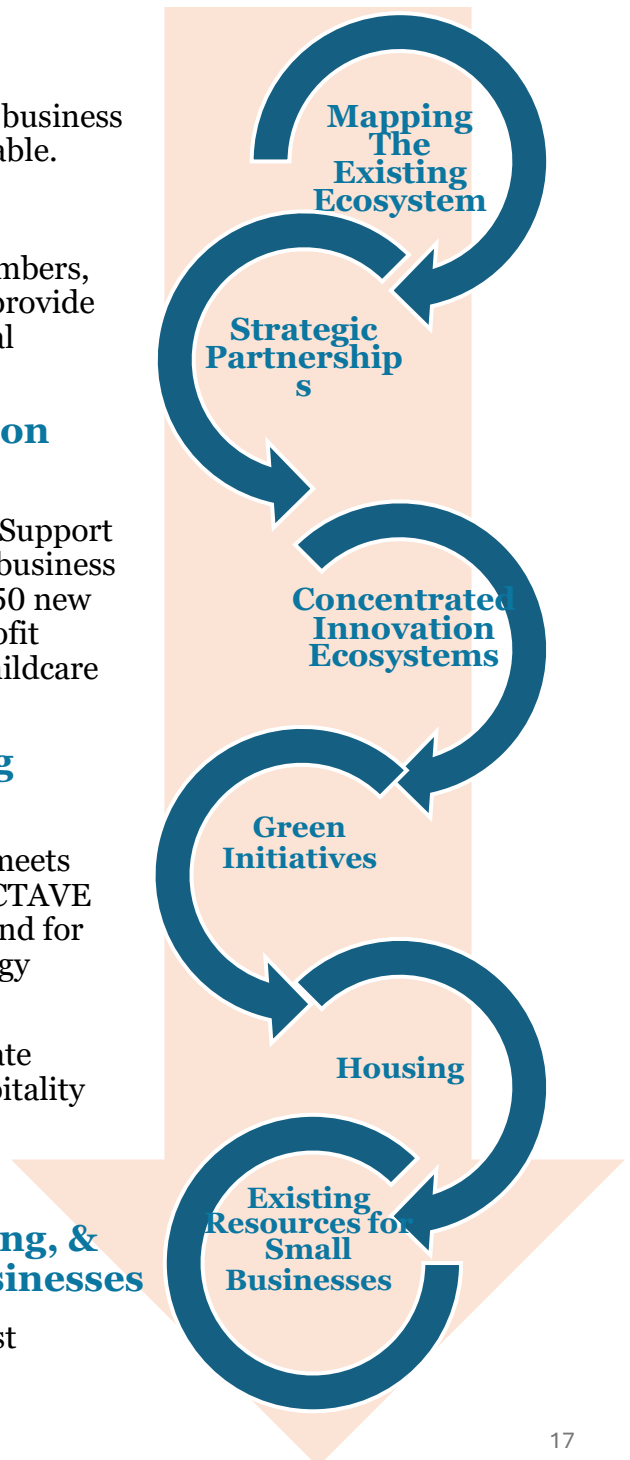
The OCTAVE Network Steering Committee meets quarterly, and newsletters are monthly. It OCTAVE provided a channel for actionable feedback and for sharing sustainable practices, including energy efficiency and eco-friendly tourism services.

It will continue under the auspices of Cal State Fullerton's Center for Entertainment & Hospitality Management.

4.6: Affordable

4.5- 4.7: Green Initiatives, Housing, & Existing Resources for Small Businesses

All three were researched and featured in past OCTAVE newsletters.



Highlights & Surprises



A Sustainable Network & Leadership Group

We built OCTAVE, a stronger tourism network with connections to 259 organizations, led by our 20-member steering committee.



A Community Assessment

We assessed the community and reported our findings through the OCTAVE Newsletters (13 published as of now) on best practices, needs, and gaps to the tourism leadership and our larger network.

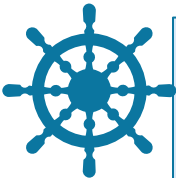


Pilot Successes

All four of our pilots are finding equitable and sustainable ways to increase tourism business through microtourism.

- Anyone can go visit La Colmena now. It is open daily in Santa Ana, with a great report on their first year of operation.
- RevHub is expanding upon their success with new grants.
- Store One will soon be open in Anaheim.

See the articles on it in the September [OCTAVE Newsletter](#).



New Leadership

Through our network, we found a partner who can sustain our efforts and build on them. Cal State Fullerton's Center for Entertainment & Hospitality Management will be an ideal successor for OCTAVE and will build on it. We could not ask for a better partner.



Statewide Recognition

As part of a statewide coalition in Tourism & Outdoor Recreation, we met with state officials in Sacramento. There we showcased our successes in “the room where it happens” with the Governor’s staff. We were invited to present at another statewide meeting on our microtourism successes.

What Stands Out

The project did not simply identify needs; it created relationships, pilots, communications, and a successor that can continue the work.

Conclusion

The **Orange County Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Activation Plan** established a countywide framework, strengthening a major regional economic sector while improving workforce pathways, small-business opportunity, innovation, sustainability, and inclusive participation.

What was built?

- A 259-member OCTAVE network
- An 18-member steering committee with quarterly meetings, available as an advisory board
- A countywide needs assessment
- Four pilot programs- two complete (and growing) and two in progress
- One of these being a tourism business-navigation model
- OCTAVE communications digital newsletters (13 published thus far)

What Continues

The Center for Entertainment & Hospitality Management will continue OCTAVE, providing a platform for employer engagement, workforce connections, shared learning, and implementation beyond the Jobs First timeline.

The next phase is less about creating something else and more about using the infrastructure now in place to drive job growth and quality for OC's most vulnerable. The network, pilots, resource inventories, and communication channels provide a practical foundation for continued collaboration and longer-term measurement of workforce and economic outcomes.

Final Message

Orange County's advantage is not only the scale of its tourism assets. It is the capacity of its people and institutions to work together around shared economic, workforce, and community goals.

Appendix A- The OCTAVE Network

The CA Jobs First/OCBC OCTAVE Network

Steering Committee

1. Jesse Ben-Ron, VP- Bus Initiatives, OC Business Council
2. Jon Benson, General Manager, Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach Resort and Spa
3. Anthony Brenneman, Executive Director, OC Sports Commission
4. Patrick Brien, President & CEO, Arts OC
5. Shant Boodanian, Business Development Manager, City of Anaheim
6. James Canfield, CEO, OC Fair
7. Brian Chuan, Director of Travel Trade Development, South Coast Plaza
8. Nancy Cook, Executive Director, OC Workforce Dev Board
9. Danny Fierro, Executive Director, OC Hotel & Lodging Association
10. Eric Freed, Deputy Airport Director, John Wayne Airport
11. Wendy Haase-Roberts, President & CEO, Travel Santa Ana
12. Matt Hicks, VP, Public Affairs, H&S Ventures/ OC Vibe
13. Ellen Kim, Professor/Past Director, Center for Entertainment and Hospitality Management, CSUF
14. Jim Lake, Director, Center for Entertainment and Hospitality Management, CSUF
15. Marco Lucero, Workforce Development Manager/ Executive Director, Anaheim Workforce Dev Board
16. Tom Morton, Executive Director, Anaheim Convention Center
17. Kyle Simpson, Chapter President, OC Restaurant Association
18. Sergio M. Rameriez, Director, Economic Development, City of Anaheim
19. Shaheen Sadeghi, Founder/CEO, LAB Holding LLC
20. Zoot Velasco, Consultant, CA Jobs First- Tourism Initiative, OC Business Council

Appendix A- The OCTAVE Network

PAGE 2

College & University Programs

1. Orange Coast College, Food & Beverage Management
2. Orange Coast College, Hospitality, Travel & Tourism
3. Saddleback College, Travel & Tourism
4. Saddleback College, Hospitality Management
5. Cypress College, Hospitality Management
6. Cypress College, Travel/Tourism
7. CSUF, Entertainment & Hospitality Management
8. Santa Ana College, Culinary Arts/Hospitality Management
9. Golden West College, Personal & Culinary Services/Culinary Arts
10. CSULB, Hospitality Management
11. CPP, Collins College of Hospitality Management
12. Unite Here Union, Hospitality Training Academy

Most Vulnerable Populations- Education Programs

1. Santa Ana College (SAC), SAC Rising Scholars Program
2. NOCE, Rising Scholars Program
3. Cypress College, Rising Scholars Program
4. CSUF, Guardian Scholars
5. CSUF, Project Rebound
6. Saddleback, SC Rising Scholars Program
7. Project Kinship

Enterprise & Business Programs

1. UC Irvine (Paul Merage School), Master of Innovation & Entrepreneurship (MIE)
2. California State University, Fullerton, Conrey Center for Entrepreneurship (Mihaylo College)
3. Chapman University, Leatherby Center for Entrepreneurship
4. Saddleback College, Entrepreneurship (School of Business & Industry)
5. Irvine Valley College, Entrepreneurship (Business / Entrepreneurship Dept)
6. Orange Coast College, Entrepreneurship / Business Management path
7. Santa Ana College, Entrepreneurship & Innovation / Global Business & Entrepreneurship (GBE) Dept
8. Coastline College, Business / Entrepreneurship-related offerings (online-focused community college)

Appendix A- The OCTAVE Network

PAGE 3

Charter High School Programs

1. Nova Academy
2. Orange County School of the Arts
3. California Online Public Schools (TK-12)
4. OC Acad of Arts & Sciences (OCASA)
5. Citrus Springs Charter School
6. College and Career Preparatory Academy
7. Ednovate
8. EPIC Charter School
9. Explore Academy
10. Orange County Classical Academy
11. Orange County Workforce Innovation HS
12. Samueli Academy
13. Scholarship Prep - Orange County
14. Suncoast Preparatory Academy
15. Sycamore Creek Community Charter School
16. Vista Meridian Global Academy
17. Magnolia Science Academy
18. Kidworks Community Development Corp

Community-Based Organizations in Workforce Development- Disability Services

1. Korean American Special Education Center
2. The Blind Childrens Learning Center of Orange County
3. Regional Center of Orange County
4. Dayle McIntosh Center for the Disabled
5. Hope Center for the Arts
6. Westview Services Inc
7. Orange County Adult Achievement Center
8. OC Bridges
9. YMCA of OC (New Horizons)
10. Helping Hands for Better Living
11. Adult Enrichment Center
12. Arc Los Angeles and Orange Counties

Appendix A- The OCTAVE Network

PAGE 4

Community-Based Organizations in Workforce Development- Foster Care

1. ABC Foster Family Agency Inc
2. Court Appointed Special Advocate
3. Crittenton Family Services
4. Olive Crest Abused Childrens Foundation
5. Royal Family Kids Inc
6. Olive Crest
7. Orangewood Foundation

Community-Based Organizations in Workforce Development- Unhoused Services

1. OC Rescue Mission
2. Illumination Foundation
3. HIS-OC
4. Family Promise of OC
5. HomeAid
6. Marys Shelter
7. Grandmas House of Hope
8. Mercy House Living Centers
9. Catholic Charities of Orange County
10. Thomas House Temporary Shelter
11. Veterans First

Community-Based Organizations in Workforce Development- Housing Services

1. Orange County Community Housing Corp
2. Habitat for Humanity International Inc
3. Orange County Fair Housing
4. Intercontinental Affordable Housing Inc
5. The Kennedy Commission
6. Jamboree Housing
7. So Cal Assoc of Nonprofit Housing (SCANPH)

Appendix A- The OCTAVE Network

PAGE 5

Community Collaboratives

1. OC Nonprofit Central
2. Case Manager Brown Bag Lunch
3. Collaborating Organizations Active In Disaster (Coad)
4. Anaheim Homeless Collaborative
5. Collaboration To Assist Motel Families (CAMF)
6. Placentia Collaborative
7. Fullerton
8. La Habra
9. ACT Anaheim

Service Clubs

1. Rotary Club of Anaheim, California
2. Rotary Club of Buena Park, California
3. Rotary Club of Dana Point, California
4. Rotary Club of Fullerton, California
5. Rotary Club of Garden Grove, California
6. Rotary Club of Irvine, California
7. Rotary Club of La Habra, California
8. Rotary Club of Laguna Beach, California
9. Rotary Club of Laguna Niguel, California
10. Rotary Club of Laguna Woods, California
11. Rotary Club of Lake Forest, California
12. Rotary Club of Mission Viejo, California
13. Rotary Club of Newport Beach, California
14. Rotary Club of Newport-Irvine
15. Rotary Club of Orange, California
16. Rotary Club of Placentia, California
17. Rotary Club of San Clemente, California
18. Rotary Club of San Juan Capistrano, California
19. Rotary Club of Santa Ana, California
20. Rotary Club of Seal Beach, California
21. Rotary Club of Tustin, California
22. Rotary Club of Villa Park, California
23. Rotary Club of Westminster, California

Appendix A- The OCTAVE Network

PAGE 6

Service Clubs (Continued)

1. Rotary Club of Yorba Linda, California
2. Kiwanis Greater Irvine
3. Kiwanis Lake Forest
4. Kiwanis Newport Beach-Corona Del Mar
5. Kiwanis Orange
6. Kiwanis Aliso Viejo, California
7. Kiwanis Greater Anaheim
8. Kiwanis Costa Mesa
9. Kiwanis Fountain Valley
10. Kiwanis Huntington Beach
11. Kiwanis Laguna Niguel
12. Kiwanis Mission Viejo
13. Kiwanis San Clemente
14. Kiwanis Santa Ana
15. Kiwanis Tustin
16. Ebell Society of the Santa Ana Valley
17. The Korean American Federation of Orange County
18. Vietnamese League of Orange County
19. Union of the Vietnamese Student Assoc Southern California
20. West Coast Islamic Society, Anaheim, California

Tourism Funders

1. Dana Point Harbor Partners
2. Orange County Tourism Business Improvement District
3. City of Anaheim Community Services Department
4. City of Santa Ana Arts & Culture Office
5. City of Laguna Beach Arts Commission
6. City of Huntington Beach Community Services Department
7. Orange County Board of Supervisors
8. Visit California
9. California Arts Council
10. California Office of the Small Business Advocate
11. California Jobs First / CERF Program

Appendix A- The OCTAVE Network

PAGE 7

Tourism Funders (Continued)

1. U.S. Economic Development Administration
2. National Endowment for the Arts
3. Orange County Small Business Development Center
4. Orange County Community Foundation
5. Samueli Foundation
6. Impact100 Orange County
7. Anaheim Ducks Foundation
8. Cox Charities
9. Arts Orange County

Destination Marketing Organizations

1. Visit Anaheim (Anaheim/Orange County Visitor & Convention Bureau)
2. Visit Buena Park
3. Travel Costa Mesa (Costa Mesa Conference & Visitor Bureau)
4. Visit Huntington Beach (also referred as Huntington Beach Conference & Visitors Bureau)
5. Visit Laguna Beach (Laguna Beach Visitors & Conference Bureau)
6. Visit Newport Beach (Newport Beach & Company)
7. Visit Dana Point
8. Destination Irvine (Irvine Chamber / CVB)
9. Travel Santa Ana

Other Travel Advocacy

1. CA Jobs First Recreation & Tourism Cohort
2. California Travel Association
3. Destinations International

Ethnic Chambers of Commerce

1. Chinese American Chamber of Orange County
2. Korean American Chamber of Orange County
3. OC Iranian Chamber of Commerce
4. Orange County Black Chamber
5. Orange County Hispanic Chamber
6. Vietnamese Chamber of Orange County
7. Arab American Business Chamber
8. German American Business Association (GABA)
9. Santa Ana Chamber

Appendix A- The OCTAVE Network

PAGE 8

Other Support Organizations

1. DisneyForward HR
2. Unite Here Union
3. Orange County Coastkeeper
4. OC Parks
5. Disneyland
6. Fashion Island
7. Knott's Berry Farm
8. Irvine Spectrum Center
9. Huntington Beach
10. Crystal Cove SP
11. Newport Beach
12. Honda Center
13. OC Fair
14. San Clemente (Casa Romantica)
15. Buena Park Collaborative

Hotels

1. 24seven Hotels
2. Pacific Hospitality Group
3. Evolution Hospitality
4. Parable Hospitality
5. BroughtonHOTELS
6. Atlas Hospitality
7. DKN Hotels

259 total in the network.

Appendix B - Outdoor Recreation Industry Data

Sector: Outdoor Recreation (NAICS 713)

With nearly 42 miles of beautiful coastline, many nature preserves, protected areas, and wetlands, Orange County's natural beauty has served as a significant draw for residents and tourists alike. These natural amenities and nearly year-round beautiful weather encourage active, outdoor lifestyles and have turned the region into a hub for many recreational activities, including surfing, hiking, golfing, fishing, and many others.

Orange County's unique south-facing beaches allow for strong, year-round surfing and even made Huntington Beach home to the U.S. Open of Surfing, a major draw for the city and region. Surfing at the 20th Olympic Games in Los Angeles (LA28) will take place at Lower Trestles (Trestles Beach) within San Onofre State Beach near San Clemente, California.

Perhaps the primary draw of visitors, Orange County is also home to several amusement parks, including Disneyland, which not only serves to draw visitor spending but also provides the region with a significant number of jobs at all skill levels. Recently, Disneyland announced plans for its *Disneyland Forward* Project, a minimum \$1.9 billion investment in new theme park and lodging experiences in its first 10 years. This project will include \$30 million for affordable housing projects, \$8 million in improvements outside the Anaheim Resort Area for parks, playgrounds, sports courts, walking trails, and sitting areas, and \$85 million for improved traffic and pedestrian safety, all while creating nearly 5,000 new operations jobs and nearly 9,000 construction jobs for development.

OC Vibe, another major Orange County development approved in 2022, estimated at \$4 billion, will add 20 acres of parks and open space, nearly 900,000 square feet of entertainment space, such as concert halls and amphitheaters, and over 35 restaurants, all with access to the ARTIC transit hub. Additionally, continuing health trends have also spurred job growth in fitness and other recreational sports. With no shortage of sports parks, gyms, and wellness centers, Orange County remains uniquely positioned to further drive growth in this sector.

As Orange County's population continues to grow older, improving the already strong Outdoor Recreation sector in the region will not only help to keep Orange County healthy and active but will also provide a steady supply of employment opportunities. The Outdoor Recreation was prioritized for immediate implementation for the following reasons:

- Orange County's Outdoor Recreation industry increased by 12,273 jobs (32 percent) between 2013 and 2023, going from 38,315 to 50,588. As part of the broader Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation industry, Outdoor Recreation accounts for nearly 80 percent of that total industry's occupations, while accounting for 84 percent of that industry's job growth since 2013.
- Between 2023 and 2033, employment in Outdoor Recreation is expected to increase by 11,622 or by 23 percent, accounting for 87 percent of Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation employment growth.

Appendix B - Industry Overview

Impact on job creation related to Tourism and Outdoor recreation shows a positive projection across interrelated industries. Collectively, these industries are projected to increase employment opportunities by 10% (adding 25,236 jobs), projected from 2024 (12248,357 jobs) to 2034 (275,593 jobs).

These job opportunities are made possible by 10,449 local establishments (identified as of 2023), ranging from small to large. Details on how each of these related industries contributes are disaggregated based on data from Lightcast.

- Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries (NAICS: 711) is projected to increase employment opportunities by 11% (adding 1,309 jobs), from 2024 (12,406 jobs) to 2034 (13,715 jobs). This industry has a notable representation in Orange County with an employment concentration of 1.22. These job opportunities are made possible thanks to 861 local establishments (identified as of 2023), ranging from small to large.
- Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institutions (NAICS: 712) is projected to increase employment opportunities by 11% (adding 1,309 jobs), from 2024 (678 jobs) to 2034 (751 jobs). This industry has modest representation in Orange County with an employment concentration of 0.36. These job opportunities are made possible by 35 local establishments (identified as of 2023), ranging in size from small to large.
- Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries (NAICS: 713) is projected to increase employment opportunities by 17% (adding 9,281 jobs) from 2024 (53,216 jobs) to 2034 (62,497 jobs). This industry has a notable representation in Orange County with an employment concentration of 2.81. These job opportunities are made possible by 909 local establishments (identified as of 2023), ranging in size from small to large.
- Accommodation (NAICS: 721) is projected to increase employment opportunities by 15% (adding 4,085 jobs), from 2024 (26,907 jobs) to 2034 (30,992 jobs). This industry has a notable representation in Orange County with an employment concentration of 1.46. These job opportunities are made possible by 600 local establishments (identified as of 2023), ranging in size from small to large.
- Food Services and Dining Places (NAICS: 722) is projected to increase employment opportunities by 7% (adding 10,486 jobs) from 2024 (155,150 jobs) to 2034 (165,636 jobs). This industry has a notable representation in Orange County with an employment concentration of 1.20. These job opportunities are made possible by 8,044 local establishments (identified as of 2023), ranging from small to large.

Collectively, these industries contribute \$18.4 billion to Orange County's Gross Regional Product (GRP) (based on 2023 figures from Lightcast), including \$10.7 billion in earnings, \$4.4 billion in property income, and \$3.4 billion in taxes.

Staffing patterns in these industries offer upward economic mobility, with 41.35% of jobs requiring a high school diploma or equivalent, 6.02% requiring an Associate's degree, and 27.57% requiring a 4-year degree or higher. Opportunities are also prevalent, with 86.72% of the jobs not requiring prior experience and 58.40% requiring no or short-term on-the-job training.

Appendix C - Innovation in Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

Orange County, California, stands out as a dynamic hub of tourism innovation, driven by its unique mix of world-class attractions, natural beauty, and a thriving economy. A major contributor to this innovation is the presence of globally renowned destinations such as Disneyland Resort and Knott's Berry Farm, which are among the largest employers in the county. Disneyland, in particular, attracts over 18 million visitors annually (pre-pandemic) growing to 26.5 million in 2025, making it one of the most visited theme parks in the world. As a pioneer in immersive entertainment, Disneyland utilizes cutting-edge technologies such as augmented reality and interactive storytelling in attractions like Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge. Surrounding these attractions, businesses such as Anaheim Brewery, The Fifth Rooftop Restaurant, and numerous boutique hotels have grown, creating a vibrant local ecosystem that serves millions of tourists annually.

Orange County's stunning 42-mile coastline provides another key advantage. Coastal cities such as Newport Beach, Laguna Beach, San Clemente, and Huntington Beach attract millions of visitors annually with their pristine beaches, luxury resorts, and eco-tourism activities. Huntington Beach, branded as "Surf City, USA," hosts the Vans U.S. Open of Surfing, drawing nearly 500,000 spectators each year. The city also supports businesses like Jack's Surfboards and Huntington Surf and Sport, which cater to both locals and tourists, capitalizing on the surf culture that defines the area. Meanwhile, Laguna Beach, known for its artsy vibe, is home to the Festival of Arts and Pageant of the Masters, events that attract over 140,000 visitors annually. Crystal Cove State Park, with its 2,400 acres of hiking trails and tide pools, offers eco-friendly tourism activities that blend natural beauty with innovative features like interactive digital maps and guided nature apps. State parks collectively draw over 18 million tourists annually.

Orange County's proximity to Los Angeles and Silicon Valley also fuels innovation within its tourism industry. The integration of technology, such as virtual and augmented reality, is increasingly seen in attractions, travel services, and hospitality experiences. For example, The Great Wolf Lodge in Garden Grove, a family resort with an indoor waterpark, uses wristband technology that allows guests to unlock rooms, make purchases, and track their activities seamlessly. Local tech companies, such as VIZIO (headquartered in Irvine), partner with tourism businesses to enhance visitor experiences through smart technology, while the region's growing tech startup community advances travel apps, AI-powered concierge services, and virtual tour platforms. Furthermore, Orange County's connection to the entertainment industry supports unique tourism draws, such as hosting the Newport Beach Film Festival and leveraging partnerships with Hollywood studios for movie-themed attractions.

Culinary tourism is another area where Orange County excels. The region's cultural diversity is reflected in its vibrant food scene, which includes authentic ethnic cuisines in districts like Little Saigon in Westminster, home to the largest Vietnamese-American population in the U.S., and Anaheim's Packing District, which features over 50 artisan eateries housed in a restored citrus packing house. The county is home to 33 Michelin-recognized restaurants, including 2024 Michelin Star additions of Hana re and Knife Pleat in Costa Mesa and RJO-Rebel Omasake in Laguna Beach, which attract food enthusiasts from around the world. Additionally, the craft brewing scene has flourished, with breweries like The Bruery in Placentia and Bottle Logic Brewing in Anaheim offering unique experiences that blend local culture with innovative flavors. Events like the OC Brew Ha Ha Festival further highlight the region's growing reputation as a destination for food and drink tourism. Food tourism leads to microtourism. You can read about that in the [OCTAVE Newsletters](#).

Sustainability is a growing focus in Orange County's tourism industry. Businesses like The Resort at Pelican Hill in Newport Beach and Montage Laguna Beach have implemented eco-friendly practices, including LEED-certified building designs, water conservation efforts, and the use of locally sourced materials. Coastal cities have embraced sustainable tourism by promoting marine conservation through organizations such as the Newport Bay Conservancy, which offers educational programs and eco-friendly tours of the Upper Newport Bay Nature Preserve. Additionally, Orange County's public transit system, OCTA, has adopted clean energy buses to reduce its carbon footprint while improving accessibility for tourists. John Wayne Airport (SNA) also plays a role in sustainability, offering electric vehicle charging stations and streamlining operations to reduce energy consumption. See the article on OC Coastkeeper's ecotourism in the [OCTAVE Newsletters](#).

Collaborative efforts between public and private entities further drive tourism innovation in Orange County. Organizations like Visit Anaheim and the Orange County Visitors Association (OCVA) use data-driven marketing campaigns to attract both domestic and international travelers. Visit Anaheim, for instance, reported that tourism generated \$13 billion in economic impact for the county in 2022, with over 50 million visitors contributing to the region's economy. Events such as the Laguna Beach Festival of Arts, Newport Beach Film Festival, and Dana Point Festival of Whales continue to showcase Orange County's creativity and cultural diversity, drawing thousands of visitors each year while supporting local businesses.

Appendix D – OCTAVE Newsletters Archive

- Mar 3, #01.** [The OC Tourism Landscape](#)
- Title Article
- Mar 17, #02.** [The World Comes to Us](#)
- *A new chapter for Regional Collaboration*
 - *Connecting The Dots: OC's Role in the Olympics & World Cup*
 - *Legislating Tourism*
- Mar 31, #03.** [Emerging Trends: Tourism's Future](#)
- *The Future of Tourism*
 - *AI in the OC Tourism Landscape*
- Apr 14, #04.** [Educational Challenges \(Part 1\)](#)
- *Serving OC's Most Underserved*
 - *Can the Restaurant Industry Be a Model for Onboarding Staff Soft Skills?*
- Apr 28, #05.** [Earth Day Issue- Green Initiatives](#)
- *Cash not Trash: Reducing Food Waste and Single-Use Plastic in Catering and Restaurants*
 - *GREEN INITIATIVES: Balancing Access and Conservation in California State and Local Parks*
 - *SPOTLIGHT: OC COASTKEEPER*
- May 12, #06.** [Cultural Tourism & Microtourism](#)
- *Cultural Tourism: An OC Economic and Artistic Force*
 - *EMERGING TRENDS: Microtourism & Cooperative Enterprises*
- May 26, #07.** [Educational Challenges \(Part 2\)](#)
- *The Career Ladder*
 - *The Digital Landscape of Tourism Education*

Appendix D – OCTAVE Newsletters Archive (Continued)

Jun 9, #08.

CSR in OC Tourism

- *The Four Ps, If you Please*
- *Designing The Perfect Internship*

Jun 23, #09.

Tracking The Hard To Track

- *Measuring Visitor Use Across OC's Open Spaces*
- *Avatars Visit Us*

NOTE: Starting in July, we switched to a monthly newsletter at CEHM's request, as they take over leadership of OCTAVE with student support.

Jul 7, #10.

Educational Challenges (Part 3)

- *Passing The Baton: OCTAVE Welcomes New Leadership*
- *The Tourism Training Dilemma*
- *Soft Skills Through Plays & Picks: Arts & Youth Sports as Models for Soft Skills Development*

Aug 4, #11.

Housing & Transportation

- *Transportation Issues for Hospitality Workers*
- *Accommodations for The Accommodating*

Sep 1, #12

CA Jobs First Pilot Programs

- *A Hive of Activity: Two Santa Ana Pilot Projects Aim to Build an Inclusive Visitor Economy*
- *STORE ONE: Centering Local Communities in Anaheim's Culinary Tourism Future*
- *REXHUB's Tourism Business Navigation and Support Pilot: Building a More Inclusive Tourism Economy in Orange County*

Oct 6, #13

Introducing (New Leadership) (TBD)