

MAY 23, 2018

VISIT SLO CAL

DESTINATION
MANAGEMENT
STRATEGY

STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT

SUMMARY
ISSUES &
OPPORTUNITIES



The following material is a summary of issues and opportunities identified in the Stakeholder Conversations conducted in SLO County by Resonance Consultancy during the week of May 14th and additional calls held on May 11th and 30th. Approximately 130 stakeholders participated in 35 sessions.

The issues and opportunities are listed in alphabetical order, since there is no groupings or prioritization generated at this time.

- Adventure Tourism
- Affluent Market
- Airbnb and Vacation Rentals
- Airlift Development
- Amtrak Train Service
- Authenticity and Affordability
- Avila Beach
- Bike Tourism
- Budget Priorities
- Cal Poly
- Cal Poly Graduates and Alumni
- Cannabis Tourism
- Community / County Balance
- Community Perception
- Convention / Conference Center
- Cross Fertilization and Clusters
- Cuesta and Cal Poly
- Cultural & Social Diversity
- Destination Weddings
- Diablo Canyon Power Plant
- Distribution of Wealth
- Diversity of Tourism Product, Experiences and Regions
- Downtown SLO Retail
- Equestrian Tourism
- Events and Festivals
- Family Friendly Activities
- High End Hotels and Restaurants
- Highway 1
- Hospitality Development
- Housing Supply and Affordability
- Industry Promotion
- Infrastructure
- Maker Movement
- Marine Tourism
- Morro Bay
- Morro Bay Power Plant
- Music, Entertainment, Museums and Performing Arts
- Nightlife
- Oceano Dunes
- Open Space and Parks
- Over Tourism
- Parking
- Paso Robles Airport
- Paso Robles Hotel Development
- Placemaking
- Planning and Implementation
- Private Events
- Regional Overlap
- Regional Transportation
- Retiree Mentality
- Seasonality
- SLO CAL Brand
- SLO County Economic Development
- SME Marketing and Social Media
- Sports Tourism
- Tourism Customer Service
- Tourism Management
- Unincorporated Areas of SLO County
- Universal Brand
- Value of Tourism
- Visit Duration
- Visitor Management
- Visit SLO CAL Website
- Voluntourism
- Vulnerable Communities
- Wellness Tourism and Ecotourism
- Wine Industry
- Wine Region Branding
- Workforce Housing

The following table illustrates whether the item identified in the Stakeholder Conversations is considered an Issue or Opportunity, and whether the item is related to SLO County residents' Quality of Life, the Visitor Experience or both.

	ISSUE	OPPORTUNITY	QUALITY OF LIFE	VISITOR EXPERIENCE
Adventure Tourism				
Affluent Market				
Airbnb and Vacation Rentals				
Airlift Development				
Amtrak Train Service				
Authenticity and Affordability				
Avila Beach				
Bike Tourism				
Budget Priorities				
Cal Poly				
Cal Poly Graduates and Alumni				
Cannabis Tourism				
Community / County Balance				
Community Perception				
Convention / Conference Center				
Cross Fertilization and Clusters				
Cuesta and Cal Poly				
Cultural & Social Diversity				
Destination Weddings				
Diablo Canyon Power Plant				
Distribution of Wealth				
Diversity of Tourism Product, Experiences and Regions				

	ISSUE	OPPORTUNITY	QUALITY OF LIFE	VISITOR EXPERIENCE
Downtown SLO Retail				
Equestrian Tourism				
Events and Festivals				
Family Friendly Activities				
High End Hotels and Restaurants				
Highway 1				
Hospitality Development				
Housing Supply and Affordability				
Industry Promotion				
Infrastructure				
Maker Movement				
Marine Tourism				
Morro Bay				
Morro Bay Power Plant				
Music, Entertainment, Museums and Performing Arts				
Nightlife				
Oceano Dunes				
Over Tourism				
Open Space and Parks				
Parking				
Paso Robles Airport				
Paso Robles Hotel Development				
Placemaking				
Planning and Implementation				
Private Events				

	ISSUE	OPPORTUNITY	QUALITY OF LIFE	VISITOR EXPERIENCE
Regional Overlap	Green	White	Green	Green
Regional Transportation	Green	White	Green	Green
Retiree Mentality	Green	White	Green	Green
Seasonality	White	Green	White	Green
SLO CAL Brand	Green	White	White	Green
SLO County Economic Development	Green	White	Green	White
SME Marketing and Social Media	White	Green	White	Green
Sports Tourism	White	Green	Green	Green
Tourism Customer Service	Green	White	White	Green
Tourism Management	Green	White	Green	Green
Unincorporated Areas of SLO County	Green	White	White	Green
Universal Brand	White	Green	White	Green
Value of Tourism	Green	White	Green	White
Visit Duration	White	Green	White	Green
Visitor Management	White	Green	White	Green
Visit SLO CAL Website	Green	White	White	Green
Voluntourism	White	Green	Green	Green
Vulnerable Communities	Green	White	Green	Green
Wellness Tourism and Ecotourism	White	Green	Green	Green
Wine Industry	White	Green	White	Green
Wine Region Branding	White	Green	White	Green
Workforce Housing	Green	White	Green	White

ADVENTURE TOURISM

Stakeholders have reported that adventure tourism activities (ziplining, sky diving, etc) are in great demand and trending, but government regulations (municipalities, county and state) are limiting and sometimes preventing new development.

AFFLUENT MARKET

Stakeholders have suggested that SLO County is becoming a more affluent destination and that future tourism marketing and product development efforts should take this trend into consideration.

AIRBNB AND VACATION RENTALS

Stakeholders have reported that Vacation Rentals have operated in SLO County for decades without any issues, but that recent growth and the new popularity of Airbnb has made homeownership more expensive, reduced the amount of monthly rentals available for full-time residents, and reduced the quality of life for community residents. Stakeholders have suggested that SLO County and industry stakeholders should review county, municipal and unincorporated area policies, legislation, regulation, ordinances, fees, licensing, renewals, terminations and taxes, and consider revisions, updates and enhancements that might better serve the communities, residents, industry, stakeholders and visitors better, while protecting the long lasting responsible vacation rental community that actively contributes to the county's tax base.

AIRLIFT DEVELOPMENT

Stakeholders have reported that the new SLO County Regional Airport has significantly improved commercial air service to important non-stop destinations. Stakeholders have suggested that additional direct service is needed to San Diego, Orange County, Dallas, Salt Lake City and Las Vegas.

AMTRAK TRAIN SERVICE

Stakeholders have reported that there are very few visitors using Amtrak to visit SLO County. The difficulty of booking and limited itineraries (arrivals and departures) make Amtrak an unattractive transportation option. Stakeholders have suggested that the train stations may be a hidden tourism asset, not yet fully considered or developed to its full tourism potential.

AUTHENTICITY AND AFFORDABILITY

Stakeholders reported that as tourism continues to grow, there is the potential to lose the authenticity of place and affordability of experience that San Luis Obispo County has enjoyed.

AVILA BEACH

Stakeholders have expressed deep concern about limited carrying capacity, excessive vacation rentals, limited parking, over sold concerts, limited resident services and significant community disruption associated with over tourism to the unincorporated community of Avila Beach. Stakeholders have reported that brokering agreement to fix these challenges between the responsible and affected parties has been nearly impossible.

BIKE TOURISM

Stakeholders reported that Bike Tourism (road, trail, and mountain biking) is becoming increasingly popular in SLO County, but that in many cases the infrastructure (dedicated bike lanes and trails), safety, amenities (repair stations, comfort stations, etc), wayfinding, maintenance, activities and events, marketing and promotion, connections to airports and train stations, and information (trail listings etc) are insufficient to capture the full potential that Bike Tourism could bring to the County. Stakeholders reported that there are a number of individual city biking plans and a county-wide plan, but funding and implementation have not been the highest priority. Stakeholders have suggested that connecting all the missing segments of the Bob Jones City-to-Sea Trail should be a high priority and delivering a coordinated county-wide bike trail development effort is key.

BUDGET PRIORITIES

Some stakeholders have suggested that some tourism-generated funding should be shifted from marketing purposes to destination development purposes such as infrastructure, maintenance, parks, visitor experience, hiking trails, and the beach. They suggest that there are so many supply side issues, that creating more demand may be unproductive.

CAL POLY

Stakeholders have reported that Cal Poly is one of the greatest things that is happening in SLO County and the university is making significant investments in the community. Stakeholders mentioned that the SLO HotHouse Incubator is an excellent example of how Cal Poly is providing leadership to promote economic growth and development.

CAL POLY GRADUATES AND ALUMNI

Stakeholders have reported that Cal Poly graduates and alumni are a promising market segment of educated and successful professionals upon which SLO County could build a stronger more vibrant tourism industry, community and economy. Stakeholders reported there is a significant opportunity to reach out to alumni, after they have established their experience in the world, and draw them back to SLO CAL to live and invest in businesses and the community.

CANNABIS TOURISM

Stakeholders have suggested that efforts in Grover Beach to grow the cannabis industry could provide new tourism product development opportunities for SLO County.

COMMUNITY / COUNTY BALANCE

Stakeholders have reported that they worry about the balance between local community control, tourism branding, tourism marketing and destination development, and what is done and provided at the county level. Stakeholders reported regional tourism branding and marketing efforts in development that had yet to be aligned to an overarching SLO CAL county message, as well as the potential for customer confusion.

COMMUNITY PERCEPTION

Stakeholders have reported that the SLO County community is particularly focused on residents' quality-of-life and keeping development, congestion, and pace in check. They suggested that residents are particularly focused on beach activities, outdoor activities, wine and biking.

CONVENTION / CONFERENCE CENTER

Stakeholders are split on the need for and desirability of a Convention / Conference Center in SLO County. Stakeholders who support the concept argue that the County is perfectly situated between San Francisco and Los Angeles for groups to “meet in the middle” and are currently turning away business, which could help midweek and low-season hotel occupancy levels and replace future lost business travel associated with the decommissioning of Diablo Canyon Power Plant, while dissenters argue that current challenges associated with employee supply, public transportation issues, degraded infrastructure and increasing congestion already pose challenges to SLO County's future meetings business.

CROSS FERTILIZATION AND CLUSTERS

Stakeholders have suggested that SLO County's tourism industry could benefit from cross fertilization of visitor activities and experiences, making sure for example that wine tasting employees know where to send their customers for family activities like the Charles Paddock Zoo. Stakeholders have also suggested that cooperation between industry clusters such as wellness establishments or agricultural operators for example, would greatly impact the success of building those sectors.

CUESTA AND CAL POLY

Stakeholders have suggested that Cuesta plays a particularly important role in the provision of well educated labor for SLO County's tourism industry, while Cal Poly's Experience Industry Management program offers a unique leadership building program for SLO County and other destinations around the world. Stakeholders have reported that the re-institution of Cuesta's Hospitality

Program in the fall of 2018 will be welcomed by the tourism industry and provide much needed labor, internships and apprenticeships in SLO County's hospitality establishments.

CULTURAL & SOCIAL DIVERSITY

Stakeholders have suggested that SLO County and countywide tourism needs to fully embrace cultural diversity in its policies, destination management, product development and operations in order to promote a high quality of life and effectively compete for future visitor business. Additionally, Stakeholders have suggested that the lack of social diversity in SLO County may have a negative impact on attracting younger millennial visitors to the destination. They have also suggested that Visit SLO CAL may not sufficiently convey a socially diverse message in their marketing materials.

DESTINATION WEDDINGS

Stakeholders have reported that destination weddings in SLO County are becoming more and more popular and bringing big business to the place. Destination weddings may be a hidden tourism asset that has not yet reached its potential nor are fully promoted.

DIABLO CANYON POWER PLANT

Stakeholders have indicated that the closing of the Diablo Canyon Power Plant will significantly impact their transient business travel demand, which will have a major impact on their bottom-line business results. Stakeholders have suggested that closing the Plant and opening the facility's 900 acres for residents and visitors may be one of the most important destination development opportunities for California ever presented. Stakeholders have also suggested that there needs to be a state funding grant to buy the Diablo property and conserve it for all.

DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH

Stakeholders have reported that SLO County suffers from significant segregated distribution of wealth, as evidenced by the small number of "head of household jobs" and disparities with high cost of housing.

DIVERSITY OF TOURISM PRODUCT, EXPERIENCES AND REGIONS

Stakeholders have reported that the diversity of SLO County tourism product, experiences and regions is a double edged sword, which on one hand allows the destination to offer a full range of experiences to a wide range of visitors, but also poses the challenge to effectively and efficiently focus marketing efforts and maintain a high quality of product offerings.

DOWNTOWN SLO RETAIL

Stakeholders have reported that retail shops in downtown SLO and other communities do not fully deliver the shopping experience (especially hours) that both residents and visitors enjoy, with many closing at 6pm.

EQUESTRIAN TOURISM

Stakeholders have reported that the new Cal Poly Oppenheimer Family Equine Center, combined with the Paso Robles Horse Park, have the potential for making SLO County a major West Coast / California destination for equestrian events and tourism.

EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

Stakeholders have suggested that county-wide management and collaboration of events and festivals (scheduling, incubation, development, marketing, organization, transportation planning, operations, and performance assessment) would have a significant impact on enhancing visitor volume and spending, the visitor experience, enhance the quality of life for residents and increase the economic impact of tourism to SLO County. They have also suggested that better marketing and promotion of events would serve as a trigger for repeat visitors as well as increase residents' quality of life.

FAMILY FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

Stakeholders have reported that there is a lack of family friendly activities in SLO County compared to other competing destinations.

HIGH END HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS

Stakeholders have suggested that there is a market for additional high end hotels and restaurants in SLO County.

HIGHWAY 1

Stakeholders have reported that the Highway 1 experience is one of the premier SLO County attractions for international visitors and others traveling between San Francisco and Los Angeles. They suggest that in many cases, the hardest part of Highway 1 business is convincing visitors to stop along the drive and get out of their cars, and that the appearance, signage and overall attractiveness of places along the highway are key to stopping visitors. In general, stakeholders failed to mention the contribution of Hearst Castle to SLO County tourism, which was a surprise. Stakeholders did note the impacts of HWY 1 closures on tourism in particular communities was significant, and many expressed the need for greater regional support of these communities during periods of road closure.

HOSPITALITY DEVELOPMENT

Stakeholders have reported that they face significant regulatory hurdles, long lead times and high costs associated with bringing new hospitality developments to fruition. They suggest that this effort slows growth and reduces the opportunity for SLO County to realize the potential of the Travel & Tourism industry. Other stakeholders have suggested that lacking infrastructure, water and labor make slower growth necessary.

HOUSING SUPPLY AND AFFORDABILITY

Stakeholders were universal and consistent in reporting that residents of SLO County are experiencing a crisis of housing supply, quality and affordability, making it difficult, if not impossible, for the Travel & Tourism industry, among other sectors, to find lower- and mid-wage labor for their businesses.

INDUSTRY PROMOTION

Stakeholders have suggested that Visit SLO CAL does not sufficiently promote all tourism sectors including, but not limited to, small hotels, inns, B&Bs, performing arts and art-related venues.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Stakeholders have reported that there little appetite for infrastructure development, maintenance and funding that are normally consistent with a growing and developing county.

MAKER MOVEMENT

Stakeholders have suggested that SLO County has the potential to build its artisanal, “made local” or “maker movement” opportunity, which is attractive to visitors, but lacks the infrastructure and focus to make it happen. Stakeholders suggested that wineries do a terrific job of cultivating “made local” and their success is a good case study to build upon.

MARINE TOURISM

Stakeholders have suggested that there may be an opportunity in SLO County to build marine tourism associated with the proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary, sportfishing, whale watching and seafaring history.

MORRO BAY

Stakeholders have suggested that the growing cluster of marine research and aquatic activities in Morro Bay is creating a destination for beach, bay, harbor, waterfront, coastal, marine, research, aqua-culture, recreational fishing, maritime and aquarium activities that is unique and concentrated for SLO County.

MORRO BAY POWER PLANT

Stakeholders have suggested that the Morro Bay Power Plant could serve as a significant tourism asset (hospitality, retail, park and recreation, visitor activity,

etc) and dramatically increase the potential tourism opportunity for Morro Bay. They acknowledge that conversion from power plant to tourism asset would be a major effort and investment, and would take considerable time and resources.

MUSIC, ENTERTAINMENT, MUSEUMS AND PERFORMING ARTS

Stakeholders have reported that there is a lack of high quality music, entertainment and performing arts venues, investment and promotion in SLO County. Stakeholders have also reported that these activities do not receive the attention they need (marketing, promotion, communications and financial support) to attract residents and visitors and build strong supporting audiences. They have also suggested that the high cost of housing and living has made it difficult for artists and performers to live locally in SLO County, which is a limiting factor for building a “creative class”. Stakeholders noted that creating affordable artist studios and housing could be an opportunity for the region.

NIGHTLIFE

Stakeholders have suggested that greater attention to developing and managing nightlife activities might benefit SLO County tourism.

OCEANO DUNES

Stakeholders have reported that there are growing concerns (residential) and focus on environmental issues (state) associated with ATV and vehicle use of the Oceano dunes. Stakeholders suggest that better management and capacity planning of the dunes may be necessary to prevent a future shutdown. Stakeholders also noted the importance of the generational visitors who use the dunes and their value to the tourism economy.

OPEN SPACE AND PARKS

Stakeholders have reported that some of the great assets of SLO County for both residents and visitors are open space and parks. Stakeholders noted recent developments such as the Pismo Preserve as well as future potential developments in open space surrounding Diablo Canyon and the Morro Bay Power Plant. Connectivity, promotion, and maintenance were noted as key areas

to consider to ensure open space, the outdoors and parks are preserved as an asset for all.

OVER TOURISM

Stakeholders have reported that several visitor destinations within SLO County (Avila Beach, Pirates Cove, Avila Beach Golf Resort, Shell Beach, Oceano Dunes and others) suffer from Over Tourism, which has caused traffic congestion, business disruption, noise and environmental issues, safety and security issues and resident complaints. Stakeholders have suggested that destination management attention should be directed to these destinations, with strategies and plans developed and put in place to address and fix these situations.

PARKING

Stakeholders have suggested that parking can sometimes be a detracting factor in downtown SLO City, while others report that garage parking is almost always available but not well advertised or promoted. Stakeholders have also reported that parking in places like Paso Robles, Pismo Beach, Avila Beach and other places is sometimes problematic depending on time of day, day of the week or during events and festivals. Stakeholders report that bus and trolley service is sometimes available to correct for limited parking, but is not always available, sufficient, convenient, well used or well known.

PASO ROBLES AIRPORT

Stakeholders have suggested that the Paso Robles Airport may be a hidden tourism asset not yet fully considered or developed to its full tourism potential.

PASO ROBLES HOTEL DEVELOPMENT

Stakeholders have expressed concern about the number of new hotel projects and rooms (approximately doubling the existing inventory) that have been approved / proposed for Paso Robles. The concern is associated with infrastructure, carrying capacity, character, labor, quality, parking and pricing.

PLACEMAKING

Stakeholders have reported that placemaking initiatives have increased, but significantly more effort to improve the quality of place is needed in SLO County. Stakeholders have also reported that placemaking initiatives in the unincorporated areas is particularly problematic with a severe lack of funding and political will.

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Stakeholders have suggested that there is no lack of excellent planning efforts, projects and reports for development in SLO County, but that the county, the municipalities and unincorporated areas have not had sufficient focus, resources and funding to implement the plans.

PRIVATE EVENTS

Stakeholders have reported that some private events (weddings, concerts, parties) taking place at wineries, golf courses, on agricultural land or other private venues, in unincorporated communities, may be causing disruption and are detracting from residents' quality of life. Stakeholders have also suggested that there may be some non-compliance of ABC laws by some venues.

REGIONAL OVERLAP

Stakeholders have suggested that there may be an overlap of branding and competition between: Share SLO, SLO Happenings, Visit SLO and Visit SLO CAL.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION

Stakeholders have suggested that regional transportation is not attractive to visitors nor particularly programmed for visitor or workforce commuter transportation needs. They report that multimodal connections between trains, buses, ground transport, airports and communities are not well structured. Stakeholders have also suggested that regional transportation is not always appropriate to the needs of Travel & Tourism industry employees. Stakeholders have suggested that more "special purpose" visitor transportation (trolley) running special routes at special times, could alleviate carrying capacity

limitations and connect places for visitors to enjoy (eg West and East Grand Avenue from Grover Beach to AG Village or Cal Poly to Avila Beach).

RETIREE MENTALITY

Stakeholders have reported that many new residents have come to SLO County later in life, bringing their equity and wealth, but are not particularly tied to the growth of the community. Their general preference is to keep things status quo, and enjoy a small town quality of life.

SEASONALITY

Stakeholders have suggested that greater attention should be paid (marketing, conferences and conventions, events and festivals, sports tourism) to growing business and leisure travel during the off-season, shoulder and mid-week periods to maximize value and minimize resident impact.

SLO CAL BRAND

A minority of stakeholders raised concern about whether the SLO CAL brand was representative of all places in the County and felt that it may be confusing to some who think SLO CAL refers to San Luis Obispo City or “SLOCALS” - the term used by young people growing up in San Luis Obispo City. The majority of stakeholders reported that the SLO CAL brand has been effective for the County.

SLO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Stakeholders have reported that SLO County has taken a “no growth” perspective and has been mainly passive in implementing the “The Economic Strategy for San Luis Obispo County” (November 2010). However, there have been several recent successes including the opening of the new San Luis Obispo Airport and important new technology companies. Stakeholders also identified the opportunity to attract digital nomads and entrepreneurs, but expressed the need for additional flexible office space, permitting and infrastructure to improve, in order to make growth in this sector sustainable.

SME MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Stakeholders have suggested that many tourism related SME's would benefit from marketing and social media training and capacity building.

SPORTS TOURISM

Stakeholders have suggested that greater attention should be paid (marketing and sales, venue development and coordination, and events) to Sports Tourism opportunities. Stakeholders reported that few know that the SLO Marathon is a qualifying event for the Boston Marathon. Stakeholders have suggested that existing and future sports venues in Arroyo Grande and Grover Beach could provide the scale necessary to build a tourism sports effort. Stakeholders noted the asset of the Morro Bay Harbor as a potential hidden asset for developing a sailing regatta tourism sector in the county.

TOURISM CUSTOMER SERVICE

Stakeholders have reported that Tourism Customer Service in SLO County suffers from workforce shortages resulting from housing supply / affordability, overall cost-of-living, limited public transportation and immigration policy issues, as well as limited education and skills training opportunities. Stakeholders have suggested that SLO County tourism customer service is “hit or miss” and needs to “step up its game”. Stakeholders have also suggested that recognizing (annual awards) quality customer service (individuals and businesses) would serve the county well and incentivize workers and businesses to do better.

TOURISM MANAGEMENT

Stakeholders have suggested that greater attention should be paid to managing visitor flows, activities, traffic, events and festivals during peak visitor periods.

UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF SLO COUNTY

Stakeholders from the Unincorporated Areas of SLO County have reported that they do not receive the same level of master planning, tourism attention, focus and funding (marketing, destination development, infrastructure, wayfinding, gateway monuments, visitor centers, beautification, maintenance and upkeep)

as the incorporated cities and municipalities of SLO County. Stakeholders from the unincorporated areas suggest that they need a united funding mechanism to support special districts, like the Port of San Luis, to improve their outdoor experience assets. Stakeholders have also reported that it is sometimes problematic if not impossible to create proper wayfinding in unincorporated communities due to county, Caltrans or state restrictions.

UNIVERSAL BRAND

Stakeholders have reported that there is no “universal brand” that unites the tourism industry, economic development, talent and investment promotion and communities (municipalities and the unincorporated areas). Visit SLO CAL has been successful in regard to building a county-wide tourism brand, but other sectors and communities have not yet followed suit.

VALUE OF TOURISM

Stakeholders have reported that community residents do not sufficiently recognize the value of tourism to the community, economy, employment, cultural experience and activities. The lower perceived value of tourism may have negative or limiting repercussions associated with growing the industry or delivering quality product, services and experiences to visitors.

VISIT DURATION

Stakeholders have suggested that greater attention should be paid (marketing and product development) to extend the duration of visitor stay in SLO County.

VISITOR MANAGEMENT

Stakeholders have suggested that SLO County would benefit from a real-time visitor management tool (countywide concierge) that provides options and opportunities to visitors and directs visitors to experiences and activities in response to carrying capacity issues, weather issues, special events and festivals, etc.

VISIT SLO CAL WEBSITE

Stakeholders have reported that the Visit SLO CAL website is a major improvement in presentation of SLO CAL tourism over what existed before. Some stakeholders have suggested that the website is not well designed for accommodation searches. Others have suggested that the website does not do a good job promoting arts and entertainment opportunities or events and festivals. Others have suggested that the visuals do not reflect the places they are supposed to represent, such as beaches being shown near wine country messaging. Others have suggested that the visuals are not sufficiently diverse. Stakeholders have offered to contribute content and photography to the website that they believe better reflects their destinations. Stakeholders have suggested that telling stories about the people of SLO County would connect well with visitors.

VOLUNTOURISM

Stakeholders have suggested that there may be a market for voluntourism in SLO County associated with conservation, sustainability, beach cleanup and stewardship.

VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

Stakeholders have reported that homelessness is increasing in SLO County and, if it hasn't already, has the potential to negatively impact the visitor experience. Stakeholders have also reported that homeless camping and loitering has increased their costs associated with cleaning, maintenance and security.

WELLNESS TOURISM AND ECOTOURISM

Stakeholders have suggested that SLO County could become as well known for its wellness tourism or ecotourism experience as it has for its wine experience. They have suggested that specific focus on product development and new marketing will be necessary to build this growing sector.

WINE INDUSTRY

Stakeholders have reported that SLO County’s wine industry has had significant success in recent years, delivering a quality experience for SLO County visitors and helping to build and diversify the economy. Some wine-related stakeholders suggest that they are not receiving the destination development attention, focus and marketing efforts that are reflective of their significant contribution to SLO County tourism. Stakeholders have reported that the lower end of the wine visitor market is declining and the upper end, especially for wine tasting events, is becoming more affluent.

WINE REGION BRANDING

Stakeholders have reported that the Paso Robles branding for wine and wineries is strong and growing, but tends to overshadow the branding, wine and wineries found in the Central Coast and SLO Wine Country. Some stakeholders expressed a need to promote and differentiate county wide wine trails highlighting the opportunities and differences of Paso Robles, Edna Valley and South County wine trails.

WORKFORCE HOUSING

Stakeholders have suggested that incentives or requirements for creating workforce housing for tourism related enterprises, especially hospitality companies, may be necessary to improve the outlook for attracting and retaining a viable industry workforce. Stakeholders have also suggested that SLO County should begin to explore new housing models, like backyard houses, dorm-style housing for adults, shared common housing, etc.



XXX RESONANCE

VANCOUVER

801-602 Hastings St W
Vancouver, BC V6B 1P2
info@resonanceco.com
+1.604.681.0804

NEW YORK

110 East 25th
New York, NY 10010
info@resonanceco.com
+1.646.233.1383

CALIFORNIA

120 Newport Center Dr.
Newport Beach, CA 92660
info@resonanceco.com
+1.949.887.4476