

NEW SMYRNA BEACH AREA LEAVE NO TRACE INITIATIVE

Five Year Stewardship Action Framework | 2024-2029





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OVERVIEW



How to Use This Framework

This plan provides a "compass bearing," composed of imperative areas, intentional outcomes, activations, and evaluation considerations.

During the strategic planning workshop held on January 4, 2024, staff from the New Smyrna Beach Area Visitors Bureau, Leave No Trace, and Relebrand discussed several important goals of a stewardship framework:

- Help the New Smyrna Beach Area Visitors Bureau team make progress toward attaining achievable goals.
- Reduce any confusion about the activation and/or outcomes associated with implementing a Leave No Trace education campaign.
- Activates staff resources at all levels to help progress the plan.
- Create a resource that guides efforts with operational clarity, not a plan that sits on a shelf.

Four imperatives are at the center of the Stewardship Action Framework. Each of these four imperatives is supported by outcomes (long-term and short term) and the activations:

1. Reach the Visiting Public with Consistent Leave No Trace Messaging.
2. Reduce Negative Impacts to Beaches, Blue Ways, and Trails.
3. Engage a Passionate Coalition of Local Stakeholders, Businesses, and Communities.
4. Lead By Example: New Smyrna Beach Area Emerging Destination Leader

Each of the imperatives is described in the following pages. A high-level strategic dashboard can be found on page 15 of this document. Additional resources have been included for the internal team that will be seeing the work through over the next 5 years.



Strategic Clarity





IMPACT

The impact of this initiative is that visitors and residents discover, protect, and share New Smyrna Beach's natural and cultural assets.

This initiative impact compliments the New Smyrna Beach Area's vision as a vibrant coastal community that celebrates its diverse local experiences, business, and unique charms.

Assets in the New Smyrna Beach Area communities that will benefit from responsible visitor and resident actions include:

- Aquaculture
- Beaches
- Trails
- Waterways
- Art District
- Fishing
- Surfing
- Restaurants
- Marine Life
- Wildlife



REPUTATION

The New Smyrna Beach Area will be known for:

- Clear and actionable messaging that helps the visiting public better engage with outdoor spaces and reduce their own negative impacts.
- Reducing the impact of visitors to local area communities in New Smyrna Beach, Edgewater, Osteen, Port Orange, and Oak Hill.
- A community of actively engaged businesses and organizations that believe in the value of promoting responsible visitor practices and guidelines.
- Visitor audiences that feel good about the positive impacts they are having on the community by practicing Leave No Trace.
- Its leadership in Florida—and beyond—for promoting destination stewardship to visitors, residents and the greater travel and hospitality industry.



RESOURCES

Initiative Partners:

New Smyrna Beach Area Visitors Bureau (NSBAVB)

Leave No Trace

Creative and Communications Agency Partners:

Relebrand

Strategic Vision:

New Smyrna Beach Area Destination Master Plan

Marketing Channels:

Social channels

NSABVA website

Paid media outlets

Media contacts

Initiative Resources:

New Smyrna Beach Area Leave No Trace Principles

Gold Standard Vacation Rental Program

Stakeholder Partner Program

Online Education and Virtual Workshops

Partner Toolkit and Assets

Research and Evaluation:

Stakeholder Research and Listening Sessions

Annual evaluation and metrics

Websites:

NSBAVB website

Strategic Imperatives



1. Reach the Visiting Public with Consistent Leave No Trace Message.

PRIMARY OUTCOME

- Visitors and residents practice Leave No Trace when spending time in outdoors spaces and communities in the New Smyrna Beach Area.

PRIORITIES

Education campaigns reach visitors and residents ahead of their visit to the New Smyrna Beach Area. Leave No Trace messaging can make a tremendous impact when it reaches people ahead of trips to outdoor spaces and our destinations. In fact, it's essential. The trip planning phase, no matter how long or short it may be, is a crucial time for people to understand how to reduce their potential negative impacts to the area's beaches, waterways, trails and adjacent community spaces. Throughout the initiative, making visitors more aware of negative impacts, their importance, and practical ways to help will be a consistent over the next five years. Developing campaigns that increase visitor/resident awareness, as well as promoting accessible solutions to those impacts, will be the cornerstone of messaging. A challenge and opportunity will be engaging people with "why this matters to them."

Media outlets share stories about the New Smyrna Beach Area Leave No Trace Initiative. While the New Smyrna Beach Area Visitors Bureau's reach is extensive, media outlets at the local, regional and targeted national market level will play a significant role over the next several years to spread greater awareness of the initiative, its goals, and its positive impact on natural resources and adjacent communities.

Education messaging reaches visitors while they recreate in New Smyrna Beach Area beaches, parks, and open spaces. Leave No Trace is a values-based framework that promotes respect, responsibility, and care for the outdoors. One "dose" of these values may not modify someone's behavior. However, reaching people multiple times while they are on-site at local beaches, parks, and open spaces complements the outreach efforts that take place before they arrive. Tactics may include signage, interactions with park personnel, interpretive programs, public events consistent across parks and open spaces, and other opportunities at the discretion of beach and land management partners.

Education messaging reaches visitors through their interactions with New Smyrna Beach Area businesses and organizations. The more exposure that visitors can have to the New Smyrna Beach Area Leave No Trace education messaging, the more likely they will be to put responsible visitation practices into place. New Smyrna Beach Area businesses like hotels, vacation rental, restaurants, retailers, guides and outfitters, and any other establishments that serve the visiting public will help be a megaphone for responsible visitor messaging.

2. Reduce Negative Impacts to Beaches, Blue Ways, and Trails.

PRIMARY OUTCOME

- Beaches, waterways, trails, and wildlife in the New Smyrna Beach Area are healthier because the visiting public practices Leave No Trace.

PRIORITIES

Education messaging targets visitors and residents with essential impact issues.

Primary impact issues are inter-sectional in nature (e.g. crowding and litter have related behaviors at play), however taking these topics on in a phased approach will help to make the new Leave No Trace guidelines more relate-able and visible. For instance, prioritizing trash + litter, parking issues near recreation areas, conflicts between competing user groups, and impacts to wildlife are ideal starting places for the initiative in its first year.

Collaborate with land managers and other stakeholders to determine new indicator metrics to evaluate natural resources.

The digital world of impressions tells us some of the story, but more data is needed to understand the true successes of the initiative. There are many types of impact indicators, yet the feasibility of monitoring and collecting that data must be determined with county beach and park managers. Over the next eight months, the team supporting the New Smyrna Beach Area Leave No Trace initiative should work with beach and park managers to develop simple, turn key methods to record observations about visitor behavior when visiting parks within the county (e.g. how much litter is being collected in area receptacles?).

Work in collaboration with Volusia County Beach and Park Managers. An enhanced working partnership between natural resource managers and the New Smyrna Beach Area Visitors Bureau will be an essential element for sustaining the responsible visitation initiative into the future.

Digital and print assets allow beach and parks managers to consistently message to the visiting public. These creative assets—including the New Smyrna Beach Area Leave No Trace Seven Principles themselves—allow beach and park managers the flexibility to promote Leave No Trace digitally through reservation systems, websites, and social media. Land managers can also determine which resources may be used on-site at beaches, trailheads, parking areas, fee booths, and other areas.

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3. Engage a Passionate Coalition of Local Stakeholders, Businesses, and Communities.

PRIMARY OUTCOME

- New Smyrna Beach Area businesses, organizations, and agencies promote consistent and frequent Leave No Trace messaging to the visiting public.

PRIORITIES

Partner resources and PR supports local business engagement and participation.

Businesses from every industry that serve visitors and residents can be essential to the Leave No Trace initiative. Their participation—including hoteliers, city government, restaurants, retail shops, visitor centers, guides and outfitters, and many others—radically increases the frequency of responsible visitation messaging that reaches the visiting public before—and during—their visit to the New Smyrna Beach Area. Digital outreach campaigns can help engage businesses by: introducing the initiative; promoting the value of the partner program and ease of using assets from the partner toolkit; promoting virtual education and professional development opportunities; and celebrating partner success stories.

Education and professional development engage and support business partners.

Businesses and their staff participating in virtual and in-person workshops will have a greater understanding of the initiative and feel more confident to educate their patrons about Leave No Trace. These education opportunities will be particularly meaningful for the hospitality and retail industries where promoting a consistent message of responsible recreation and visitation may be a new aspect of the customer-interaction experience.

Media outlets share stories about the New Smyrna Beach Area Leave No Trace Initiative.

Media outlets at the local, regional, and targeted national market levels will play a significant role to spread greater awareness about these business and communities partners and the role that they play to protect the outdoors by actively promoting the Leave No Trace initiative to their patrons.

Approach stakeholders who would be first to raise their hands. Based off an exercise during strategic planning, it is clear that potential is very high for local businesses, organizations and city governments to play a role in the initiative (image below; names have been removed from yellow notes). Further grouping all stakeholders into the top right quadrant of the model will be an opportunity through this strategy.



4. Lead By Example: New Smyrna Beach Area Emerging Destination Leader

PRIMARY OUTCOME

- The New Smyrna Beach Area is a leading, popular voice for promoting responsible visitation to Florida's Atlantic coast.

PRIORITIES

A responsible visitation message that is recognized by a large audience. While the ultimate success of the New Smyrna Beach Area Leave No Trace initiative will come from the linkages between modifying visitor/resident behavior and reducing impacts on beaches, blue ways, and trails, another level of success will also emerge. Favorable sentiment toward the initiative and its inclusive and accessible messaging will be a strong indicator that the program is making a difference at the community level: the visiting public, stakeholders, beach and park managers, and community residents.

Recognition from the Florida travel industry and beyond. A bi-product of a successful initiative is recognition from the Florida travel industry, the larger U.S. travel industry, and beyond. Recognition not only helps amplify the spotlight on the great things happening in the New Smyrna Beach Area, it also has the potential to inspire new potential visitors whose travel decisions are influenced by responsible practices championed by New Smyrna Beach Area.



Using This Framework



IMPLEMENTATION

Bringing the strategic framework to life in the New Smyrna Beach Area means putting trust into this resource. To begin implementing the framework:

- Ensure that everyone has read through the framework document. Discuss any questions that arise.
- Think of the ACTIVATIONS section of the internal team dashboard like a to-do list for the 12 month period.
- Some ACTIVATION items require further development, while others might be ready to deploy.
- Create a quarterly calendar for the ACTIVATION items and assign roles and responsibilities to the entire team, as well as timelines. Planning for evaluation and metric gathering should be included in the timeline as well.
- Tracking of various ACTIVATIONS can take place in a common document that the entire team can access.
- It's a good idea to weave strategic check-ins into your team's schedule at least once per-quarter (you may decide to have more frequent check-ins which is also great).

SHARING THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

This strategic framework was written so that it can be shared with stakeholders, public officials, residents, and board members. Utilize pages 1-14 of the framework as your public-facing document. Note: it is completely up to you and your team if you would like to also share the internal team dashboard for public view.

REVIEW AND NEXT STEPS

At the 10-11 month mark, bring the team back together to begin debriefing the current 12 month period. If this is the first year of the initiative, your team will be debriefing the internal team dashboard found in this document. By this time your evaluation data and metrics should be helping to inform you about the year's outcomes. This is also a good time to check in with the entire team about process and what you've learned from the last year.

Once the review of the current 12-month period is complete, your team can shift it's energies toward developing a *new* internal team dashboard. A template of the internal team dashboard can be found later in this section. Tips for developing the next 12-months of activations:

- Determine what your short term outcomes will be. If you feel like the current period's short term outcomes have not been reached, you may decide that your team will use the same verbiage. Remember that the best outcomes are actually measurable goals that allow us to cause and effect relationship over time.
- Once you have your stated outcomes, move on to your new activations. In some cases, these activations will be versions of their previous iterations (e.g. you are still going to utilize digital communications to reach visitors with Leave No Trace messaging, however, this time you may decide to focus on promoting a *new* area of the New Smyrna Beach Area Leave No Trace Principles.
- After documenting your new updated internal dashboard, make any necessary adjustments to the public facing strategic framework dashboard and begin the implementation process from the beginning.

