



Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority

Fiscal Year 22/23 – 24/25 Strategic Plan

Introduction

The Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority (RSCVA) management team and Board of Directors developed this 3-year strategic plan for the organization.

Throughout the process in 2021-22, a diverse range of industry and community stakeholders were consulted to provide critical insight about opportunities and challenges related to the future of Washoe County's visitor economy. That input was used as a foundation to develop the Plan's strategic road map, which will guide Reno Tahoe's evolution as a vibrant destination for leisure, sports, convention and business visitors into the future.

The elements of the strategic plan include:

- A comprehensive DestinationNEXT assessment of Reno Tahoe's destination strengths and stakeholder alignment
- Key takeaways from industry and community stakeholder consultations
- A comprehensive strategic framework with new organization goals, actionable initiatives, and specific tactics
- New targets and timelines to ensure accountability
- Updated vision, mission and organization values



This strategic plan was produced by MMGY NextFactor:

- Paul Ouimet, Partner & President
- Greg Oates, SVP, Innovation
- Shirin Jafari, Director, Destination Development

DestinationNEXT

Developed by MMGY NextFactor, the comprehensive DestinationNEXT Assessment Tool and Scenario Model identifies how a specific destination's visitor economy is performing based on 24 variables.

The methodology incorporates an in-depth survey of government officials, tourism and business event leaders, community organizations, and other key stakeholders. The survey data is then plotted into a 4-quadrant scenario model that compares the destination with more than 300 DestinationNEXT assessments in other communities. That provides empirical business intelligence highlighting the greatest opportunities and challenges relating to the local visitor economy.

The DestinationNEXT survey questions are organized by:

- 12 variables related to destination strength, which gauge the quality of infrastructure, amenities, services, and the overall visitor experience
- 12 variables related to destination alignment, which identify the degree of industry and community stakeholder support for the organization

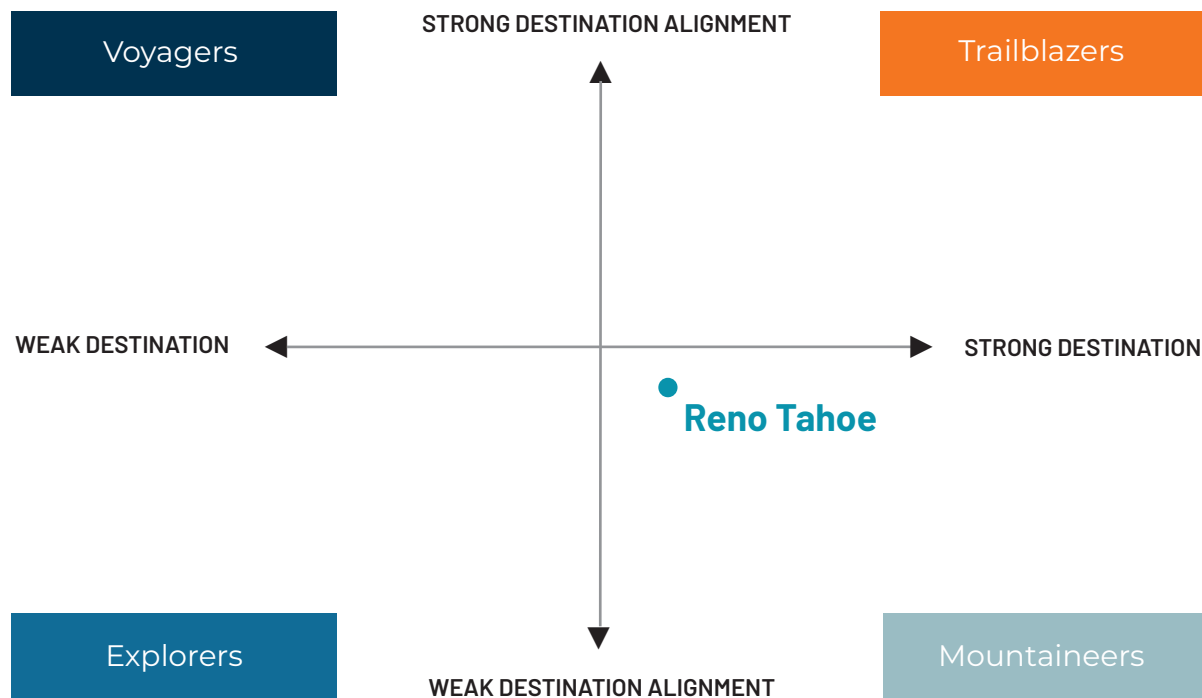
Destination Strength

- Accommodations
- Attractions & Experiences
- Arts, Culture & Heritage
- Communication Infrastructure
- Destination Access
- Dining, Shopping & Entertainment
- Health & Safety
- Events & Festivals
- Local Mobility & Access
- Meetings & Conventions
- Outdoor Recreation
- Sports Tourism & Events

Destination Alignment

- Business Support
- Community & Resident Support
- Economic Development
- Emergency Preparedness
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
- Funding Support & Certainty
- Government Support
- Hospitality Culture
- Organization Governance
- Regional Cooperation
- Sustainability & Resilience
- Workforce Development

A total of 416 local industry/community stakeholders and industry customers, participated in the Reno Tahoe DestinationNEXT survey in Q3 2021. The results placed Reno Tahoe in the “Mountaineers” quadrant, showing a higher than industry average ranking for Destination Strength, and slightly lower than average for Destination Alignment. The crosshairs of the X/Y axes below is the average of 300+ destination assessments conducted by the MMGY NextFactor project team.



The 416 participants in the Reno-Sparks DestinationNEXT survey represent a broad cross-section of the region's visitor economy:

- 43.2% — Customers
- 30.4% — DMO Industry Partners
- 12.1% — Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority
- 9.3% — Community Leaders
- 3.7% — Government Leaders
- 1.3% — Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority Board of Directors

Stakeholder Feedback

The MMGY NextFactor project team conducted 26 one-on-one interviews with community and industry stakeholders in Reno Tahoe's public and private sectors. The questions were designed to find stakeholder consensus around:

- The most significant opportunities for the destination and local visitor economy
- The most significant challenges for the destination and local visitor economy
- What stakeholders believe should be priorities for the RSCVA

The thematic responses to those questions are categorized below by frequency. The left columns are those topics discussed with the highest frequency among stakeholders. The right columns highlight other responses that were provided less often, but which still deserve attention over the long-term.

Opportunities for the Destination

High Frequency Responses

- There's already a strong recovery to build upon
- Heightened demand for outdoor recreation is expected to continue
- Strong economic development indicators and the growth of new key sectors are bringing new investment and energy to Reno Tahoe
- An enhanced brand should define a more nuanced and updated destination narrative
- More and expanded business events and major festivals are needed

Other Responses

- Capitalize more on West Coast drive market
- Local arts, culture, maker and entertainment scene provide new visitor experiences
- The food and beverage scene is underleveraged
- Collaboration with educational institutions and community organizations can bring more people and partnerships into the visitor economy

Challenges for the Destination

High Frequency Responses

- Air service is lacking for more distant U.S. source markets
- Downtown appearance and homelessness are hurting the destination's reputation
- Lack of workforce, childcare and affordable housing is a crisis
- Lack of Board alignment has been a long-term challenge
- Brand doesn't extend beyond gaming enough
- Mobility, access and public transit options are limited or dated

Other Responses

- Lack of a shared long-term vision among elected, industry and community leaders
- Unwillingness to update local zoning and housing regulations
- Lack of support for local arts, culture and entertainment scene
- Gaming community not willing to evolve and diversify like Las Vegas
- Gaming community not involved enough in supporting upgrades downtown

Priorities for the RSCVA

High Frequency Responses

- Improve alignment between public, private and civic sectors
- Ensure the Board aligns around a shared vision for the future
- Increase leadership in the community beyond tourism promotion
- Improve community support and increase engagement
- Address industry fragmentation and polarization
- Expand storytelling beyond gaming

Other Responses

- Expand collaboration with Lake Tahoe and other regions
- Expand marketing efforts nationally into new markets
- Reno Tahoe is a bit weird, and that's a good thing. Reno Tahoe needs to embrace its brand, and that's not about the newest, happy shiny thing

Strategic Framework

The MMGY NextFactor project leaders facilitated an “Ideal Future” exercise with the RSCVA management team to identify the most significant goals for the organization that will have the greatest impact on improving the local visitor economy. The management team was then asked to prioritize their recommendations on a scale of 1-10. The resulting data was aggregated to help prioritize strategic decision-making and determine where best to allocate efforts and resources.

Strategic Goal	Score
Establish a unified, impactful brand of the destination	9
Lead a rebranding/renaming of the organization	9
Develop a long-term facilities plan	8.71
Identify, develop and serve the ideal customer base of the future	8.28
Align sales strategy with key stakeholder priorities	8.14
Promote the redevelopment of downtown	8.14
Work with airport to expand air service development	8.14
Promote improvements to the convention center district	7.85
Identify new and expand existing annual events for Washoe County	7.85
Update organization structure to support new roles	7.28
Review Board structure and governance	7.14
Improve resident and community support	6.71
Create a research and business intelligence unit to provide key insights	6.28
Capitalize on new market opportunities	6.14
Support workforce development in Washoe County	6
Develop a regional DMO network	5.85

Once the RSCVA management team identified and prioritized the set of strategic goals, each of the goals were bucketed into three pillars: Sales & Marketing, Destination Management and Destination Alignment. Organizing the goals this way provides a clear and approachable structure for implementing initiatives to achieve the goals. It also helps determine which RSCVA department and staff members are responsible for leading the initiatives, and how best to develop targets and timelines.

#1 Sales & Marketing

More of Reno Tahoe's target audiences are visiting as a result of a clear and unified brand that inspires visitors and partners.

- Establish a unified, impactful brand of the destination
- Lead a rebranding/renaming of the organization
- Identify, develop and serve the ideal customer base of the future
- Align group sales strategy with key stakeholder priorities
- Identify new and expand existing annual events for Washoe County
- Capitalize on new market opportunities

#2 Destination Management

Reno Tahoe's reputation as an excellent meetings and leisure destination is a result of more air service, a vibrant downtown, and dynamic convention experiences.

- Develop a long-term facilities plan
- Promote the redevelopment of downtown
- Work with airport to expand air service development
- Promote improvements to the convention center district
- Support workforce development in Washoe County

#3 Destination Alignment

The organization is seen as a leader driving the community's reputation as an in-demand destination with amazing assets and special events.

- Update organization structure to support new roles
- Review Board structure and governance
- Improve resident and community support
- Create a research & business intelligence unit to provide key insights
- Develop a regional DMO network

Strategic Goals, Initiatives & Tactics

Sales & Marketing

Sales and marketing are the most critical roles for the Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority to increase visitor dollars coming into the destination. The initiatives below delineate how the organization will approach different audience segments and promotional efforts.

Initiatives

Group Sales — *Lead: M. Larragueta*

Align and adapt to key stakeholders' sales strategies and priorities so that the organization is targeting properties' priority customers through group sales.

Tourism Sales — *Lead: A. Jimenez*

Align and adapt to key stakeholders' sales strategies and priorities so that the organization is targeting properties' priority customers through tourism sales.

Organization & Destination Brand — *Lead: C. Erny*

Assess need to rebrand the organization so our community and clients are clear about who we are. Redefine the destination brand.

Visitors — *Lead: C. Erny*

Identify, develop and serve the ideal customer base of the future so that we are attracting more affluent visitors who want to stay longer and visit more frequently.

Events — *Lead: C. Erny*

Identify new, and evaluate opportunities to expand existing, annual events for Washoe County to generate additional room nights and economic impact.

KPIs

1. **Number of visitors**
2. **Produced room nights**
3. **Economic impact**
4. **Cash Occupancy**

Tactics

Group Sales: Align and adapt to key stakeholders' sales strategies and priorities so that the organization is targeting properties' priority customers through group sales.

1. Communicate to the RSCVA Sales team each properties' midweek and weekend group room night goal strategies
2. Complete an assessment of all major stakeholders' ideal group requirements
3. Implement an annual hotel engagement program

FY/23 — FY/25

FY/23 — FY/23

FY/23 — FY/23

Tourism Sales: Align and adapt to key stakeholders' sales strategies and priorities so that the organization is targeting properties' priority customers through tourism sales.

1. Deploy Partnership Marketing program, targeting needs periods, with key OTA, GDS, Receptives, Tour Operators and Airlines to prominently promote Reno Tahoe in the decision-making, planning and booking cycle
2. Refine multi-faceted sales platforms to include Travel Advisor Training, Communications, Sales Missions, FAMs, and Tradeshow
3. Implement programs utilizing actualized travel data, preparing prospecting reports for hotel partners, identifying true sellers of Reno Tahoe and supporting the improvement of partnership marketing programs

FY/23 — FY/25

FY/23 — FY/25

FY/23 — FY/25

Organization & Destination Brand: Assess need to rebrand the organization so our community and clients are clear about who we are. Redefine the destination brand.

1. Audit, evaluate and establish clear name guidelines
2. Develop and deploy organizational brand, updating necessary documents, systems and collateral
3. Communicate and collaborate with stakeholders, staff and community to unify organizational and destination brand

FY/23 — FY/23

FY/23 — FY/24

FY/24 — FY/24

Visitors: Identify, develop and serve the ideal customer base of the future so that we are attracting more affluent visitors who want to stay longer and visit more frequently.

1. Align vision with stakeholders to identify and develop the ideal future customer for leisure, sports, events, meetings and conventions, and travel trade
2. Execute and analyze Visitor Profile Studies, developing strategies to identify and target updated audience profiles within leisure, events, sports, meetings and conventions, and travel trade segments
3. Conduct effectiveness studies to refine our reach and messaging to new target audiences

FY/23 — FY/24

FY/23 — FY/25

FY/24 — FY/25

Events: Identify new, and evaluate opportunities to expand existing, annual events for Washoe County to generate additional room nights and economic impact.

1. Evaluate and update current guidelines of the Special Events Partnership Funding Program
2. Work with community partners to identify and vet new event opportunities
3. Identify resources needed to direct the new funding program and attract new events, and event producers, to Washoe County

FY/23 — FY/23

FY/23 — FY/25

FY/23 — FY/24

Timeline

Destination Management

Destination Management focuses on enhancing the supply side of the city's visitor economy. These initiatives are focused on how the RSCVA collaborates with public and private partners to inform and support product, service and experience development.

Initiatives

Facilities Plan — *Lead: T. LaFerriere*

Develop a long-term facilities plan so that RSCVA-managed facilities are efficiently operated. Complete Plan in FY23.

Air Service — *Lead: C. Erny*

Work with RTAA to maintain and expand year-round air service so that visiting and holding meetings in Reno Tahoe is easy and convenient.

Downtown — *Lead: C. Harris*

Encourage the redevelopment of downtown so that the visitor experience includes a walkable, vibrant downtown.

Convention Center District — *Lead: M. Larragueta*

Encourage improvements to the Convention Center District so that it meets attendee expectations for walkability, dining, shopping.

KPIs

1. **Visitor satisfaction survey**
2. **Facilities' client satisfaction**
3. **Resident sentiment**

Tactics

Timeline

Facilities Plan: Develop a long-term facilities plan so that RSCVA-managed facilities are efficiently operated. Complete Plan in FY23.

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Maintain facilities and equipment, promote long-term cost-savings and greatly improve the customer experience | FY/23 — FY/25 |
| 2. Acquire, retain and engage staff, ensuring appropriate staffing levels and a high sense of employee responsibility and satisfaction | FY/23 — FY/23 |
| 3. Implement training schedules and procedures in an effort to promote staff safety, facility efficiency and the lifespan and durability of equipment and capital improvements | FY/23 — FY/25 |

Air Service: Work with RTAA to maintain and expand year-round air service so that visiting and holding meetings in Reno Tahoe is easy and convenient.

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Maintain and expand air service through sales, tourism, and media promotions | FY/23 — FY/25 |
| 2. Take an active approach to airline relations, and a leading role in the advancement of RASC | FY/23 — FY/25 |
| 3. Encourage and assist airlines in their efforts to increase service and enhance destination partnerships | FY/23 — FY/25 |

Downtown: Encourage the redevelopment of downtown so that the visitor experience includes a walkable, vibrant downtown.

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Convene Downtown Reno organizations, hotels and small businesses to identify and prioritize needed upgrades, based on leisure and event planner/attendee feedback | FY/23 — FY/23 |
| 2. Establish or give greater support to a Downtown Reno taskforce to continually identify and aggregate potential funding sources for redevelopment | FY/23 — FY/25 |
| 3. Collaborate with City/County governments to establish short-term beautification, placemaking and security initiatives | FY/23 — FY/24 |

Convention Center District: Encourage improvements to the Convention Center District so that it meets attendee expectations for walkability, dining and shopping.

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Commission a case study to identify and prioritize necessary development surrounding the Convention Center District | FY/23 — FY/24 |
| 2. Establish a Convention Center District Improvement Committee comprised of board members, community partners and staff | FY/23 — FY/23 |
| 3. Develop sales and marketing strategies to promote the development of the district | FY/23 — FY/25 |

Destination Alignment

Destination Management focuses on enhancing the supply side of the destination's visitor economy. These initiatives are focused on how the RSCVA collaborates with public and private partners to inform and support product, service and experience development.

Initiatives

Community Engagement — *Lead: B. McDonald*

Improve resident and community awareness of tourism and the organization so that residents understand our mission and are active ambassadors of tourism.

DMO Network — *Lead: A. Jimenez*

Develop a regional DMO network to share information and strategies to strengthen the region's brand.

Organization Structure — *Lead: C. Jaeger*

Update the organization's structure to support new roles so that the organization is able to achieve its strategic initiatives and KPIs.

Board — *Lead: C. Harris*

Review Board structure and governance so that best practices align with the organizational goals.

Research Unit — *Lead: C. Erny*

Create a research and business intelligence unit to provide key insights so that data is centralized, shared and utilized in making decisions.

Financial — *Lead: C. Jaeger*

Policies are in place to ensure long term financial sustainability for the organization.

KPIs

1. Improved DNEXT score from 2021
2. Expanded business intelligence
3. Expanded Special Event Funding
4. Expanded reserve funding

Tactics

Community Engagement: Improve resident/community awareness of tourism and the organization so residents understand our mission and are active ambassadors.

1. Audit and expand community outreach and engagement
2. Be active in the planning and promotion of community improvement initiatives, product development, and messaging related to goals identified by stakeholders, Washoe County, the City of Reno, the City of Sparks, Incline Village/Crystal Bay, Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority, Travel Nevada, RTC, NDOT, regional DMOs, and more
3. Continue proactive storytelling, public relations and informational campaigns throughout the destination

FY/23 — FY/25

FY/23 — FY/25

FY/23 — FY/25

DMO Network: Develop a regional DMO network to share information and strategies to strengthen the region's brand.

1. Administer regularly scheduled programming to enhance partnerships with regional Destination Marketing/Management Organizations
2. Create Marketing Alliance Committee
3. Build stronger relationships and expedite information sharing to maximize Reno Tahoe's ability to reach a broader audience and increase visitation

FY/23 — FY/25

FY/24 — FY/25

FY/23 — FY/25

Organization Structure: Update the organization's structure to support new roles so that the organization is able to achieve its strategic initiatives and KPIs.

1. Review organizational chart to ensure staffing resources are appropriately allocated
2. Establish a range of compensation levels for each position and classification
3. Audit and refine the performance review process, encouraging staff engagement, professional development and growth within the organization

FY/23 — FY/25

FY/23 — FY/25

FY/23 — FY/25

Board: Review Board structure/governance so Board aligns with organizational goals.

1. Facilitate sessions with individual Board members to understand their motivations for being on the Board, and where they see opportunities to better align Board
2. Diversify Board with civic sector leaders outside of tourism and business events
3. Create a process for stakeholders to provide feedback about Board's effectiveness

FY/23 — FY/23

FY/23 — FY/25

FY/23 — FY/23

Research Unit: Create a research and business intelligence unit to provide key insights so that data is centralized, shared and utilized in making decisions.

1. Hire staff to support development of a Business Intelligence unit
2. Ensure budget is sufficient to support new research efforts
3. Communicate insights to the organization, community and DMO Network

FY/24 — FY/24

FY/24 — FY/25

FY/24 — FY/25

Financial: Establish policies to ensure organization's long-term financial sustainability.

1. Strive toward an unassigned General Fund balance goal of 15-17% of expenditures, and maintain up to \$2M in the Rainy Day Fund
2. Dedicate up to 10% of annual room tax collections towards capital expenditures, and maintain a minimum of 1% of annual room tax collections as capital reserves up to \$1M
3. Maintain appropriate allocations for existing Board initiatives, including: Up to \$1.5M for Air Service annually, up to \$1M for Special Event Funding annually

FY/24 — FY/25

FY/23 — FY/25

FY/23 — FY/25

Vision, Mission & Values

The entire team at the Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority provided input to develop the organization's new vision and mission statements, as well as five values to hold the team accountable to the community it presents to the world.

Vision

To be the preferred outdoor, gaming and event destination

Mission

Attract overnight visitors to Reno Tahoe while supporting the sustainable growth of our communities

Values

Collaboration

We seek out internal and external perspectives, emphasizing an inclusive approach

Integrity

We always keep our word and do the right thing

Transparency

We share information to create open and honest communication

Ambition

We put in the hard work to enhance the quality of life for visitors and all Northern Nevada residents

People

We invest in the diverse experience and expertise of individuals who positively impact the communities we serve