

DOWNTOWN RENO PARTNERSHIP YEAR TWO

2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT | VOLUME 2





DEAR DOWNTOWN STAKEHOLDERS,

During its second year, the Downtown Reno Partnership continued to support the downtown community with its ambassadors, a growing marketing program and new economic development program.

In partnership with Council Member Neoma Jardon, the Partnership added new, permanent tree lighting along Virginia Street. The holiday-style lighting makes a big difference at night and during the holidays. In addition, the Partnership helped fix all event electrical outlets and conduits along Virginia Street, so our future downtown events will have safe and reliable power.

We launched an Economic Development program, which, in its first year, produced impressive results. We conducted a survey of University of Nevada, Reno students and faculty to find out how downtown is perceived and what is needed in the area. And we now have an interactive map on the Partnership website, which shows new developments in downtown at their various stages. The Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada and many developers and investors have used it as a valuable resource.

We successfully started a big beautification project to improve the ReTRAC area between Virginia and Sierra streets. For that, we were able to secure a \$50,000 grant from Nevada Mainstreet and a Bloomberg grant in the amount of \$25,000 to add a mural. In partnership with the City of Reno, the project is scheduled to be finished by June of 2021.



Alexander Stettinski
Executive Director

And then COVID-19 hit. It changed the entire world and imposed challenges to every community in the United States. When the shelter had to be moved to the Reno Events Center, the concentration of our vulnerable population increased dramatically in the core of Reno. We all had to shift priorities to quickly respond to the new situation. The Ambassadors were declared an essential service and remained deployed.

The marketing and economic development efforts shifted to providing resources to businesses in a time where things changed daily. We increased our newsletter frequency to several times a week, so that our stakeholders and the business community got proper guidance throughout these unprecedented times.

We don't know how much longer it will take for communities to revert back to somewhat normal, but whatever the challenges, the Downtown Reno Partnership will be here to help keep downtown moving forward. We still look forward to a bright future with over 28 new developments in the pipeline. Shelter space is increasing thanks to the City' and County's tireless efforts. Our Place opened this summer, which provides a safer environment for women and children, and new shelter space for our vulnerable population is in development. We are looking forward to another year of progress in our downtown corridor.

As one strong community, we are making a difference.

Sincerely,



Cindy L. Carano
Chairperson

WHAT IS THE DOWNTOWN RENO PARTNERSHIP?

The Downtown Reno Partnership is a private, 501(c)6 nonprofit corporation created to make downtown Reno a safer, cleaner and friendlier place for business, residents and visitors. Our goal is to change the feel of the district, increase resident and visitor traffic and new business.

OUR MISSION

We lead and engage in efforts to revitalize downtown Reno and create a thriving, sustainable, innovative and vibrant heart of the community.

2019-2020 SUMMARY

In the fiscal year 2019-2020, the Downtown Reno Partnership continued its rapid success from the previous year. The 18 Ambassadors were expanded temporarily when the University of Nevada, Reno paid for a daily shift to cover the path between their temporary dormitories at the Circus Circus Hotel to the campus. That goodwill showed what the ambassadors were capable of accomplishing.

The Partnership created an Economic Development Department with the hiring of Nathan Digangi. Executive Director Alex Stettinski and Digangi work together on large-scale beautification and economic development projects in partnership with the newly created Economic Development Committee. The Marketing Department continued to increase content production and started a new business forum.

When COVID-19 shut down the city on March 17, 2020, the Downtown Reno Partnership switched into crisis management mode. While working remotely, the staff helped manage the crisis in downtown, specifically how it affected our vulnerable and homeless populations. It formed new partnerships with city and county entities and became experts on business issues and changes. There is a page dedicated to this work in this report.

All photos in this report by M.D. Welch, Tamara Snight, Mike Higdon and courtesy of Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority



The Downtown Reno Partnership's board, staff and ambassadors spent the year continuing to forge partnerships with downtown stakeholders, services and community organizations. Those partnerships help advance our mission of improving life in downtown Reno.

In fiscal year 2019-2020, the Downtown Reno
Partnership's \$2.7 million budget covered various
services, including Reno Police officers who had
been patrolling the district for two decades already
under city-run special assessment districts. Those
special assessment districts helped fund extra police
and maintenance in downtown. The Downtown
Reno Partnership's creation converted the City of
Reno's special assessment districts into one business
improvement district. Doing so created a funding gap
for the full cost of the police services. To close the
gap, generous supporters of the partnership's mission
pledged more than \$625,000 annually for the first three

years to ensure those existing patrols are maintained in order to support downtown and ensure success of the Partnership and its ambassador program. The fiscal year for 2019-2020 is the second year of their pledge.

PARTNERSHIP

Specific partnerships with our ambassadors and marketing staff will be discussed in more detail in the related sections of this report.

In the first quarter of 2020, the Downtown Reno Partnership was awarded a Nevada Main Street Grant, through the Governor's Office of Economic Development. The grant of \$50,000 will help pay for the redesign and beautification of the ReTRAC train lids in the center of downtown. That project will be completed at the end of the next fiscal year and will appear in detail in 2021 annual report.



APPLE, INC.

BASIN STREET PROPERTIES

CLUB CAL NEVA

SIRI'S CASINO, JEFF & SHERRY SIRI

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

OF WESTERN NEVADA

ELDORADO, SILVER LEGACY

& CIRCUS CIRCUS

THE FOUNDRY

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HARRAH'S RENO

JACOBS ENTERTAINMENT, INC.

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NV ENERGY

REMSA / CARE FLIGHT

RENO ACES & RENO 1868 FC

RENO LAND, INC.

RENOWN HEALTH

RENO-SPARKS CONVENTION & VISITOR AUTHORITY

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

ST. MARY'S REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

TOLLES DEVELOPMENT
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO

DOWNTOWN RESIDENTS BY THE NUMBERS

6,496POPULATION



49.6
MEDIAN AGE



\$26,464 MEDIAN DISPOSABLE



1,213 OWN PETS

9.5% NO HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA



HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE

24%
SOME
COLLEGE

37%

BACHELOR'S, GRADUATE, PROFESSIONAL DEGREE

Source: Environmental Systems Research Institute, Demographic and Income Comparison Profile. Numbers come from within BID boundaries.



n its second year, the Downtown Reno Partnership Ambassador program continued to be a game changer for Downtown Reno. The University of Nevada, Reno funded two ambassadors to better surveil the area between the Wolfpack Tower, one of the Circus Circus hotel towers that was converted into temporary student housing, and the campus.

This increased the ambassador team to a total of 20 for the fiscal year.

In addition to keeping the area clean and safe, the ambassadors also addressed the prevalent homelessness issue in the area. Two social outreach specialists focused on tending to our most vulnerable population, leading to many success stories of individuals who were placed in temporary and permanent housing and long-term treatment programs. The new "One-Person-at-a-Time" approach was bearing fruit, and the fact that some of the ambassadors once struggled with homelessness and addiction issues themselves made them more relatable. They were able to garner the trust of many individuals who eventually wanted to change their lives and took the ambassadors' guidance to check into rehab clinics and long-term treatment programs. Over 30 individuals were taken off the street and into housing or long-term treatment programs. To achieve that, the social outreach specialists have developed close relationships with most social service agencies in the area and were able to successfully refer people in need.

Between January and July 2020, over 1,100 hotline calls were received, most of which were nuisance related. This support led to a drop of almost 50% of nuisance related crime, according to Reno Police.

When COVID-19 hit the nation, the Downtown environment was greatly affected. The core of Reno turned into a ghost town overnight. With the mandatory shut down, even the casinos had to close, a first in the history of most gaming establishments. The Ambassadors were declared an essential service by the Reno Police, and they continued deployment throughout the shutdown. They rented a car and expanded the hours until 3 a.m. every day to make sure there was enough surveillance in the area. They received training in COVID-19 and the precautionary recommendations. They were supplied with industrial disinfectants and tools to wipe down street furniture, knobs and railings in the district. They passed out informational flyers to the homeless, when the shelter was temporarily moved into the Reno Events Center, and they assisted in managing the lines wrapping around the Reno Events Center every evening.

The usual sidewalk cleaning services, provided by High Sierra Industries, were suspended and all-day care rest areas for the homeless were closed. Our transient population was forced to find shaded rest spaces in the downtown area, which increased the population immensely. Temporary bathrooms were set up throughout the downtown corridor since all businesses were closed and not enough public bathrooms were



available. The ambassador team worked hard to keep the area somewhat controlled. Between March and July, the ambassadors picked up over 10 tons of trash and tended to people who needed support on the street. A big challenge was the constantly changing enforcement policies the RPD had to adjust to. When businesses slowly opened again, business owners expected the same enforcement as pre-COVID, and RPD and the ambassadors worked tirelessly to find creative solutions to assist property owners, businesses and residents in a time of uncertainty and ever-changing conditions. After a small riot in June, which mostly affected City Hall, the ambassadors worked hard, together with many volunteers in the community, to clean up the area and to remove graffiti tags and other damage from buildings and the street. As one strong and united community, we weathered the challenges the year brought on, and we are looking forward to a full recovery in the coming year. The Downtown Reno Partnership will be there to ensure the core of Reno will again be a clean and safe place for locals and visitors alike.

AMBASSADORS BY THE NUMBERS



486 GRAFFITI REMOVED



428 ILLEGAL DUMPING REPORTED



36 SIDEWALK REPAIRS REPORTED



30,667 DIRECTIONS GIVEN AND ENGAGEMENTS WITH VISITORS



789 SHOPPING CARTS RECOVERED



573 REFERRALS TO SERVICES



4,407 WELLNESS CHECKS



69,842 BUSINESS,
PROPERTY AND
RESIDENTIAL CHECK-INS



275 BAGS OF TRASH COLLECTED



527 FECES, URINE AND SYRINGES REMOVED



5,347 NUISANCE ISSUES RESOLVED



1,203 MARKETING MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED



2,036 SAFETY WALKS







DEVELOPMENT **ACTIVITY**

Under ConstructionProposed

Completed

Demolished

1) 210 North

2 24 California Ave

3 301 State St

4) 661 Lake

(5) Canyon Flats

A 158-unit Student Housing development with capacity of up to 508 students. To be completed in Fall 2020

6 CasaBella **Townhomes**

(7) Compass Point

8 Eden Towers

(9) Keystone Commons

Giant mixed-use development of residential and commercial. In-N-Out Burger Timeline pending permits

(10) Kimpton Hotel

20 stories with 270 rooms 50 private condominium residences 60,000 square feet of office space 20,000 square feet of meeting space Timeline pending

permit approval

(11) Loft 601

(12) Neon Line

(13) Neon Line

Neon Line

New College of **Business Building**

16 P3

Pine Street **Townhomes** (18) Reno City Center

530 market-rate apartments 150,000 square feet of new office space 78,500 square feet of retail, and a public green space plaza. 36 month project

(19) Reno Orthopedic **Clinic Expansion**

timeline

The Reno Orthopedic Clinic is finishing construction on a massive facility that will create 76,000 square feet of additional space and an investment of \$54 million To be completed fall

20 Renova Flats

(21) Ridge Street **Apartments**

22 RTC UNR Transfer Station - Rapid Extension

23 T3

(24) The Mod at Riverwalk

25 Tolles Development University Retail Center

26 Under the Rose **Apartments**

27 UNR Gateway Parking Structure

28 UNR Gateway Skyway

29 UNR Life Sciences Building

30 Whitney Peak Expansion



Create a more vibrant downtown that is economically diverse, equitable, inclusive, sustainable, dynamic, beautiful and resilient.

Our mission within the economic development departments aligns with the values of our organization by helping to build a downtown that has something for everyone. To focus on the core competencies of our department, we have identified three goal categories:

- **1. Data & Information** Collect it, manage it, analyze it and be a strong resource for it
- **2. Community Organizing** Facilitate meetings, make introductions, be available
- **3. Main Street** Entrepreneurship, business development, downtown promotion, and education

Managing downtown data and information allows us to be a strong resource for our community and stakeholders. It also gives us the ability to learn from the past and make better data-informed decisions.

Community organizing enables us to bring stakeholders together to keep the conversation going and facilitate

relationships and partnerships to help build a stronger downtown. We are committed to being accessible and available to the downtown community.

Being a Nevada Main Street Affiliate helps to deliver support for entrepreneurship and downtown businesses while leveraging opportunities for ongoing training and education in the areas of Organization, Design, Promotion and Economic Vitality—the Four Pillars of Main Street America. We are in a unique position as Nevada's only Urban Main district, and our collaboration with rural communities and state partners helps expand our reach beyond the boundaries of downtown.

The Economic Development department has accomplished much in our first year. After hiring Economic Development Manager Nathan Digangi, we hit the ground running by convening the Economic Development Committee, taking inventory of downtown properties, expanding our Reno Urban Main program through Nevada Main Street and starting to track all new developments in our district.

We have built a robust database for tracking stats and information about properties within the Business Improvement District as well as contact information and developments. Working to be data experts will ensure our ability to remain a strong resource while monitoring the pulse of downtown.

We have setup monthly meetings with our regional partners including EDAWN, The City of Reno, the Governor's Office of Economic Development, the Small Business Development Center and the University. We also participate in bi-weekly calls with other Nevada Main Street communities and state partners.

Our efforts to connect and engage with the local economy include putting together roundtable discussions for different groups and industries that have vested interests in downtown. We organized and facilitated a roundtable for downtown technology and startup companies who want to band together in an innovation district. Future planned roundtables include ones for brokers, developers and investors.

We get notified whenever a parcel within the BID changes hands and have started sending welcome letters to new property owners.

To better assist our downtown businesses, we have formed a strong relationship with the Nevada Small Business Development Center. They provide a wide range of services to businesses at no charge and are an instrumental resource for the local economy.

When you look at our development map, you will notice a lot of activity at the south end of the University. UNR's expansion into downtown is a dream twenty years in the making. Reno and the University have been strategically trying to cross the freeway gap and merge economics, education and culture to create a truly great "University Town." There is serious momentum for those efforts as Canyon Flats student housing is about to be completed and the University Gateway District is about to begin construction.

We conducted a survey of University students and faculty about downtown and received over 1,600 responses. Some of the things we learned show that students want more food options, retail, and nonnightlife activities (especially things for the under 21 crowd).

The outlook for downtown Reno is strong and we feel truly blessed to be able to make an impact and work to create a great urban environment where people love to work, live and play.

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS BY THE NUMBERS





5,233 TOTAL HOUSING UNITS





INCREASE FROM FROM YEAR 18/19

Source: Downtown Reno Partnership analysis of regional data. Environmental Systems Research Institute, Demographic and Income Comparison Profile, numbers from within BID boundaries.



MARKETING AND MEDIA

n our second year, the Downtown Reno Partnership marketing department and committee focused primarily on elevating businesses. This year, the department focused its energy on creating campaigns around summer activities and holiday gift buying, in order to start increasing foot traffic and reputation of downtown.

Intern Rachel Ribeiro added a new dynamic energy to the Instagram platform. She helped build the Partnership's Instagram Stories strategy for the first time. Throughout the summer, a constant stream of images and videos could be found on the 24-hour stories rotation that helped highlight some of the lesser known gems through downtown. This is especially important during large-scale events, such as Hot August Nights, Artown, Street Vibrations and Italian Festival.

After event seasoned lifted and through spring 2020, the department, board and community noticed an appreciable uptick in activity, foot traffic and general enjoyment of the district. We increased monthly newsletter subscriptions, appeared in more news stories

and increased our social media followers and website traffic.

After the winter, we geared up for a major summer, starting with big development news and reopening of the National Bowling Stadium. Unfortunately, COVID-19 pandemic paused everything for the rest of the fiscal year.

Instead of quieting down, we got louder. The marketing department increased its communication with the community through newsletters and social media. It created a COVID-19 Toolkit web page to coalesce the firehose of information residents and businesses needed to know to make it through the first few months. We joined forces with the City and County-run Unsheltered Task Force to produce an informational flyer for homeless people. The flyer helped identify symptoms and resources and provided a map of the new shelter and public restroom locations.

As we finished the fiscal year, we laid plans for what happens next in this new world. As Board Chair Cindy Carano said, "Downtown is resilient. We went from 0 to 100 by spring then back down to 0 during COVID and we can get back to 100 again."

BY THE NUMBERS

83 MEDIA MENTIONS

3,173,470 AUDIENCE

\$96,706 PUBLICITY VALUE

4,000 COMBINED SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWING

240,000 PEOPLE REACHED ON SOCIAL MEDIA

36,000 PAGE VIEWS TO DOWNTOWNRENO.ORG

1,285 EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS

COVID-19 RESPONSE

In partnership with the City of
Reno and Washoe County, the
marketing department produced
this COVID-19 information flyer
for the homeless population.
Without a stream of constant news
about symptoms and shelter changes,
the homeless population throughout Re

the homeless population throughout Reno was disconnected. Reno Type printed this flyer on sticky pads so that ambassadors could place them at the foot of shelter beds in the Reno Events Center and hand them out for people in line.

The COVID-19 pandemic caught the world be surprise. While others were forced into lockdown, the Downtown Reno Partnership pivoted to protect downtown. The three departments paused almost everything and immediately embraced remote work while seeking resources for our constituents.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

During the pandemic, we shifted gears to focus on providing support for downtown businesses in the form



of knowledge, information and technical assistance. We became a supporting member of the Nevada Business Information Network organized by the Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance, to create a central hub of state information and resources.

To get open access to large data sets, we joined the SafeGraph COVID-19 Tactical Response Data Consortium, where researchers and builders are sharing ideas, additional data and best practices.

We continue to monitor the economic situation and financial assistance programs to provide timely accurate information and plan for recovery and resiliency moving forward by communicating with stakeholders, businesses, partners, and the rest of the downtown community.

AMBASSADORS

Our ambassadors' mission shifted entirely to educating and working with the unsheltered people of Reno. We focused on assisting the Volunteers of America with managing the Reno Events Center shelter and keeping businesses safe and clean.

We started distributing bottled water provided by the City of Reno.

The ambassadors also took some cues from grocery stores and chalked Xs on the ground in front of the event center that are 6-feet apart. This helped create a line leading into the emergency shelter that was orderly and a bit safer.

We also received cloth masks from Joseph Garton and his group of stitchers to protect people from the ambassadors and vice versa. Finally, we rented a car for two weeks so that ambassadors can keep an eye on businesses while they are closed down in partnership with the Reno Police.

STRATEGIC PLAN

FY19/20 GOALS

FY20/21 GOALS

FY21/22 GOALS

PRIORITY #1: STABILIZE DOWNTOWN STREETS

Goal #1 Downtown Safety, Cleanliness & Friendliness

- Total of 18 Ambassadors, of which two are Social Outreach Specialists.
- · Begin execution of a lighting project.
- · Increase in ambassador hotline calls.
- Find a solution to river cleanliness issues
- Total of 22 Ambassadors, of which four are Social Outreach Specialists.
- Create a visitor and resident feedback
- Increase the number of Big Belly Trash Cans with Waste Management.
- · Total of 25 Ambassadors.
- Work with key agencies to enhance public transportation and create a walkable downtown.

Goal #2 Homelessness Outreach

- Refer 40 individuals into long-term programs.
- A decrease in panhandling and loitering.
- Refer 50 individuals into long-term programs.
- Establish robust relationships with mental health service providers and transitional housing options.
- Refer 60 individuals into long-term programs.
- Maintain robust relationships with mental health service providers and transitional housing options.

PRIORITY #2: ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Goal #1 Economic Development Resource

- · Hire qualified Economic Development
- Successful network of property owners developed, initiating a dialog about the future of downtown.
- Develop a road map through the Main Street program.
- Inventory of properties created by end
- Identify the top five viable, occupiable properties.
- Implement Main Street road map.

of 2020.

• Identify one specific project that is in process through the efforts of economic development committee.

PRIORITY #3: AWARENESS & PROMOTION

Goal #1 - Stakeholder & Community Relationships

- Educate the community to begin to establish the value of the BID.
- Host general quarterly town halls.
- Support RAD in their political awareness efforts.
- The value of the BID is established within Downtown stakeholders and residents.
 - **Goal #2 Promote Downtown**
- Increased Ambassador and brand recognition.
- · Promote downtown businesses.
- National recognition within BIDs across the Country.
- Focused on raising awareness around systematic issues.
- Influencer campaign established.

PRIORITY #4: ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Goal #1 - Independently Assessed Funded Organization

- Raise \$625,000.
- Explore legislation to update BID annual renewal process.
- Recruit or reelect seven Board Members.
- Raise \$625,000.
- Recruit or reelect seven Board Members.
 - Goal #2 Staff & Board Development
- Board members to host town halls.
- · Annual Board Retreat.
- Staff/Board to attend IDA conference.

- · Board members to host town halls.
- · Create a Board orientation.
- Board members to host town halls.
- · Review Ambassador contract.



BOARD FINANCIALS, BOARD AND STAFF

The 2019-2020 fiscal year budget was \$2.7 million.

\$940,000 of that paid for 17 ambassadors, their manager and equipment.

\$800,000 paid for supplemental Reno Police officers in order to maintain previous police force paid for by the previous special assessment district.

\$460,000 paid for staff, operations, economic development and marketing programs.

\$500,000 paid for the City of Reno staff who performed additional maintenance and cleaning throughout the district and for improvements along Virginia Street.

STAFF

Alex Stettinski

Executive Director

Mike Higdon

Marketing Manager

Grant Denton

Operations Manager

Nathan Digangi

Economic Development Manager

Tanva Polli

Office Manager

BOARD

Cindy L. Carano

Board Chair and Executive Director of Community Relations at THE ROW

Par Tolles

Board Vice Chair and President of Tolles Development Co.

Ken Krater

Board Secretary and Chair of Operation Downtown Committee, Owner of Krater Consulting

Mike Rossman

Board Treasurer and Basin Street **Properties**

Jonathan Boulware

Vice President of Nevada Operations at Jacobs Entertainment

Sharon Chamberlain

CEO of Northern Nevada HOPES Hospital

Eric Edelstein

President at Reno Aces Baseball and Reno 1868 FC

Jim Gallaway

Resident of the Palladio Condominium Tower

Heidi Gansert

Executive Director of External Relations at University of Nevada, Reno

Britton Griffith

Property owner in downtown and Reno Planning Commissioner

Neoma Jardon

Reno City Council Member

Helen Lidholm/Tiffany Coury

CEO of Saint Mary's Regional **Medical Center**

Robert Lucey

Washoe County Commissioner

Steven T. Polikalas

Attorney at law

Chris Shanks

Dickson Commercial Realtor, owner of The Depot Craft Brewery-Distillery and Louis **Basque Corner**

Maggie Telander

Downtown Reno resident at The Montage



SAFER · CLEANER · FRIENDLIER

40 E. FOURTH ST. PAVILION A, RENO, NV 89501 OFFICE: 775.432.0772 | AMBASSADOR HOTLINE: 775.313.4080

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