

# Meet Minneapolis

## City by Nature

***Meet Minneapolis  
Customer Advisory Board  
October 24 – 26, 2022***



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KLIMAN  
GROUP**  
COMMUNICATION CONSULTING SERVICES

## Action Items and Recommendations from October 2022 CAB Members. Meeting summary is found after the Actions Items and Recommendations

### Media & General Communications

- Reach out and nurture relationships with BIPOC and diverse journalist organizations
- Lean into the fact that everyone can feel comfortable and belong here because of the genuine diversity Minneapolis offers for visitors, residents and businesses

# Connect Marketplace

August 22-24, 2023 • Minneapolis

Expect up to 3,000 attendees including robust hosted buyer program; privately owned trade show ([Tarsus](#)). Opening Reception [Orchestra Hall](#) & [Peavey Plaza](#) (portion of the Plaza will be tented) plus one closed block of [Nicollet Mall](#) and use of [Brit's Pub](#)

### • CAB recommendations for Connect Marketplace 2023

- Incorporate *Make Waves, Create Change* branding and people as part of the event and throughout the full agenda
- Include local food vendors from Lake Street and other iconic local areas to provide a unique sense of place
  - Define, highlight and explain how these parts of the City are important, create “did you know” moments with series of fun facts
- Entertainment
  - Activate series of musical experiences, “not just one”
  - Ensure music is “highly identifiable and relatable”
    - Music can be everywhere, create “pockets of sound”
    - Ensure that amplified music levels allow normal conversation levels
    - Include a “great Prince cover band”
  - Offer ample places for networking and conversation with seating areas
  - Ensure mobility accessibility
  - Activate Nicolette Mall with storytelling about Minneapolis
  - Ensure seamless F&B access with no or minimal lines
    - Plan for “double number of bars” normally needed



## Connect Marketplace August 22 – 24, 2023 - Continued

- If food trucks are used, they must be able to quickly get food to attendees and work in complement with catered food stations
- Provide ample “grab and go” self-service water and soda stations
- Lean into winter and display how well Minneapolis works when it’s cold
- MSP airport experience
  - Explain and highlight ease and very low cost of light rail experience from airport to downtown
    - Explain transportation options beyond Lyft and Uber
    - Create user focused video of the light rail experience
  - Position MSP airport ambassadors in baggage claim areas with easy to identify signage similar what was seen at IMEX America 2022
  - Position Ambassadors at host hotels to provide directions and agenda details
- Provide snacks and branded water stations in host hotel lobbies
  - These areas become magnets for networking and information
  - Provide branded water bottles to attendees
- Add energy in hotel lobby with music (potential to use services of Derrick Johnson *DJ DJ*)
- Provide CAB with camera ready tools to promote the event
  - Social media and referral links specific to CAB with full content
- Place welcome signs/stickers in retail and restaurant windows and windows and venues
- Provide accurate details to educate attendees about anticipated time/distance to walk or transfer from hotel to venues, communicate all available options

### **Marketing Video Likes & Dislikes**

Ideas on the images and content that makes a compelling and impactful meeting destination video

- **CAB members like:**



- Columbus’ full journey focus using the planner’s personal experiences
- Instances when genuine diversity is seen and expressed in videos
- Indy’s concept of building the ideal convention city
- Grand Rapids’ narrative
- Denver video’s entertainment value

- **CAB members dislike:**



- Lack of people in Indy video
- Exclusion of diverse images and people in Oklahoma City video and reliance of superlatives and accolades
- Denver video cartoon format
- Palm Beach “didn’t go far enough” to express a genuine story

### **Role of Video in Research and Site Selection**

- Primary role of destination videos is to:
  - create emotional connections after site selection that helps drives attendance
  - inform decision makers about site options highlights before site selection
  - provide general destination information to key stakeholders
- Video is not important for some groups in final decision-making process
- Video always important for attendance building and creating buzz about overall attendee experience
- Videos are educational tools to build knowledge about venues and city during bid process
  - important that videos offer accurate pragmatic and emotional balance to ensure fair decision process



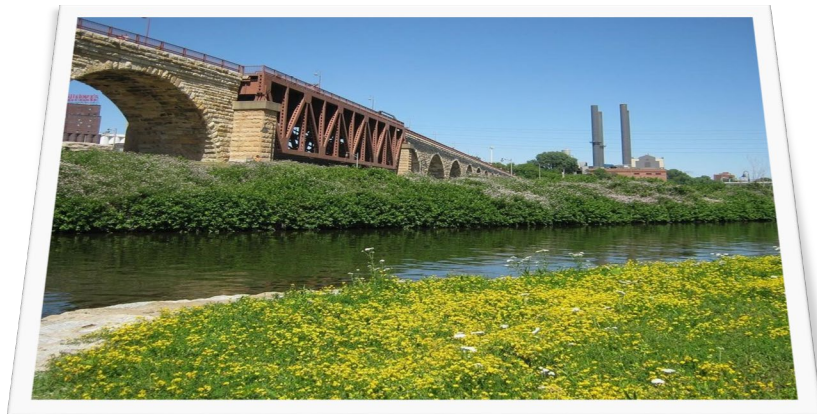
## Video Content

- Ideal length is 60 to 90 seconds
- Emphasize “wow” factors include local music scene
- Highlight combination of leisure and business images
- Testimonials are welcome in video, but must be brief in duration
  - Use CAB members for video testimonials
- Some groups don't want generic use of city officials in videos; however, personal outreach to the group from city officials can be meaningful for some groups
- Need to create balance of compelling visuals, narrative and soundtracks that evoke emotional connections to the city including current popular songs and that tells destination's story while also sharing sufficient pragmatic destination details
- Columbus video cited as “relatable”
- When asked if the video should have the planner or attendee point of view; CAB members responded that the best videos are editable and can be redirected to any audience
- Ensure genuine display of cohesive and inclusive communities
- Video content must be broad enough to address multiple markets and issues



## Minneapolis Video Content should include:

- Perspectives using *Create Change. Make Waves. In Minneapolis*
- Performing arts images
- Convention Center Auditorium and rotating seating pods (shown at high speed)
- Walkability and Sky Ways images
- Content related to local Fortune 500 companies (adds credibility)
- Cultural images
- References to local co-op capital
- Reflection of local diversity
- Culinary James Beard winners
- Highlights abundant airline accessibility and Delta hub
- Balance 30% pragmatic facts with 70% emotional content
- Format compatibility to TikTok and YouTube
- Speak to event planners as diverse individuals not as single entity or marketplace



## Convention Center Enhancements

- Ensure renovations are environmentally sustainable and purposeful
  - Share information that demonstrates solar panels/green roof to attendees
- Show floor expansion may be needed after proposed ballroom and lobby expansion
- Public access/Sky Way should be separated from pre-function spaces
- Activating the new spaces with latest technology is critical
  - Consider holograms in lobby to create a “wow” feature
- Improvements addresses many current concerns of limited and/or outdated spaces
- Proposed new ballroom should be closely located to existing meeting space
- Digital wraparound signage is welcome feature and should be extended to inside lobby areas
- Simple colors are preferable so planners can activate spaces with their own brands and color palates
- Renderings are beautiful
- Ability to host two simultaneous groups is important
- Place casual group seating and workstations throughout the Center
  - Informal gathering spaces are very important
- Must offer abundant power access in all areas
- Investigate potential to make exterior glass walls photochromatic so they can be dimmable
- Create “controlled access entrances” to convention center spaces

## Minneapolis Meeting Assets & Product Top assets noted in priority order

1. Offer free robust Wi-Fi access across the entire city and equal weighting to Wi-Fi is development of a new mixed use headquarters hotel located at or very near the Convention Center managed by [Omni](#) or [Signia Hilton](#) with (ideally) 1,000 rooms
2. Create more grab & go food and convenience (i.e., CVS) options in and/or near the convention center, open on weekend. CVS and Target cited for offer diverse hair products for BIPOC community
3. Continue short term renovations and improvements to existing assets

## Destinations

- Indianapolis is expanding connected hotel products, but convention center is dated
- [Boston BCEC](#) offers free Wi-Fi, natural light and ample digital signage which helps maximize revenue and reduce costs



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## Customer Advisory Board Members in Attendance



- Tamela Blalock – National Cooperative Business Association
- Matt Dykstra – ConferenceDirect
- Lisa Dyson - Society for Industrial & Applied Mathematics
- Marcus Eng – American Public Transportation Association
- Kris Fridgen – Heart Failure Society of America
- Maureen Goodson - National Postal Forum
- Derrick Johnson CMP, DES - Virtual Inc
- Kevin Johnson - Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity
- Kyle Jordan – Institute for Operations Research & Management Sciences
- Keith Kershaw - Church of God in Christ
- Katie Klanderud - Minnesota School Board Association
- Erika Kowalczyk – International Society for Stem Cell Research
- Michelle Long – Maritz Global
- Teresa Sorenson - Empowered Events, LLC
- Debbie Van Ravenhorst - HelmsBriscoe
- Stephenie Zvonkovich – American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists

## Meet Minneapolis & Minneapolis Convention Center Attendees

- Melvin Tennant, CAE - President & CEO
- Jeff Johnson - Executive Director, Minneapolis Convention Center
- Brent Foerster - Senior Vice President Destination Sales
- Jill Anderson - Senior Director of Marketing
- Madonna Carr, CMP - Vice President of Destination Services
- Stephanie Grimaldi - Director of Convention Sales
- Sue Murray - National Account Executive
- Courtney Ries - Vice President Destination Branding & Strategy
- Tom Ruzsa - Director of Meeting Sales
- Katie Smith - Director of Sales and Marketing - Minneapolis Convention Center
- Tamara Spude, CMP - Director of Destination Services
- Ka Vang - Vice President, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Erica Bergum, Senior Destination Services and Events Manager

### Guest Speakers

- [Sharon Sayles Belton](#), Former Mayor of Minneapolis, Vice President Strategic Partnerships and Alliance for Thomson Reuters, Government
- [Mitch Maguire](#), Managing Director, Paisley Park
- [Stacie Nerf](#) - Senior Sales Account Executive – MICE - Delta Air Lines
- [Dana Thompson](#), Co-Owner/COO, [Owamni](#) and The Sioux Chef

### Meeting Moderator

David Kliman – President – The Kliman Group



# Welcome



The Advisory Board was welcomed and asked to provide candid feedback regarding ways in which Minneapolis can enhance sales, marketing and services to meeting professionals, association executives, attendees and key stakeholders. All opinions and constructive feedback are welcome and encouraged.

**Florian Riedel, General Manager** [Four Seasons Minneapolis](#) welcomed the group and provided the backstory to the development and opening of the new 222 room hotel.

## Minneapolis Overview



**Meet Minneapolis**  
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### **Melvin Tennant - President & CEO Meet Minneapolis**

- Positive changes over the last years in the community seen in many ways including new partnerships and a more consistent commitment to inclusion
- The CAB was thanked for providing significant direction; their feedback is a welcome gift and their commitment is wholeheartedly recognized.



### **Brent Foerster - Senior Vice President Destination Sales - Meet Minneapolis**

The following summarizes Brent's comments:

- 10,200 hotels room downtown
- [Super Bowl LII](#) February 2018 and [NCAA Men's Final Four March 2019](#) helped put Minneapolis on the national event stage

#### **Successful recent events include**

- Craft Brewers with 10,000+ in April 2022
- Strong Summer 2022 with highlighted groups such as USA Fencing, Shriners International and Airport Councils.
- Connecting with customers with signature events and tradeshow incorporating the new theme [Make Waves. Create Change. In Minneapolis.](#)

#### **Current opportunities and weaknesses**

- Local corporate meetings don't want to leave suburbs
- Lack of surrounding communities' embrace of downtown  
Safety is difficult to convey and portray  
Cognitive dissidence about safety
- National meetings less concerned about safety downtown and are surprised it's still an issue for Minneapolis







## Marketing Updates and Breakouts Courtney Reis & Jill Anderson History

- 2020 Marketing “bridge” campaign
- Website improvements completed
- Top 8 Reasons Campaign 2021
- Strong interest in the message: Community leading the path forward



## Values Based Marketing

- When selling products or services, values-based marketing appeals to customers’ values and ethics.
- Shifts marketing from a product-centric approach to a customer-centric one
- Express an organization’s values as part of its core brand message



## MARKETING CHALLENGE – BEYOND RATES, DATES & SPACE



### MEET MINNEAPOLIS VALUES BASED MARKETING

- What is the “Minneapolis Brand” when it comes to being a unique and desirable meeting destination?
- Why should Meeting Planners choose Minneapolis? What makes us special?
- What is the “emotional hook” that can draw in Meeting Planners to want to learn more about Minneapolis?



### OBJECTIVE OR DESIRED OUTCOME

- Reintroduce Minneapolis to Meeting Planners, and create of a buzz about Minneapolis as a Meeting Destination
- *Clients understand that Minneapolis is not a typical meeting destination but a destination that appeals to their values of social justice and DEI initiatives*



# Theme 1: Idea

## CONCEPT BACKGROUND

### WAVES OF CHANGE

Minneapolis is a city of diverse opinions, styles, cultures and inspirations. This theme takes the idea of a ripple effect or a wave to visually tell that narrative of diversity in a unique way. From sound waves that celebrate our music and the arts to scent waves that highlight our food and culture to water waves that pay homage to our 10,000 lakes and city of nature, we showcase how Minneapolis offers a plethora of opportunities for those who seek to make their own waves of change.



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**Make waves.  
Create change.  
In Minneapolis.**



**Meet Minneapolis**  
City by Nature

**In Minneapolis, you can see it, hear it, taste it and experience it — waves of change are all around. With a diverse collection of voices, our community continues to evolve, expand ideas and grow together for a stronger and more dynamic Minneapolis.**

**Just like waves, we know that no two events are alike – we welcome those who have a passion for embracing and creating change to discover why Minneapolis is ready to be your next meeting destination!**

### CAB Feedback

- Very positive feedback that CAB's feedback from last year was heard and put into practice
- Marketing materials are "too copy heavy"
- QR code is useful, links for more details is preferable to "copy heavy" text
- Music creates emotional connections, Minneapolis has so much great music
- Leverage technology in all marketing tools including around the city
- Some planners confused by *Make Wave* campaign because it didn't align with their perceptions of the city
- "Making waves" isn't traditionally a positive comment
  - Minnesotans don't make waves
  - Creates a "certain edginess" to the campaign which can be a positive asset

## Wave Makers & Change Creators Panel

- [Sharon Sayles Belton](#), Former Mayor of Minneapolis, Vice President Strategic Partnerships and Alliance for Thomson Reuters, Government
- [Mitch Maguire](#), Managing Director, Paisley Park
- [Dana Thompson](#), Co-Owner/COO, [Owanmi](#) and The Sioux Chef
- **Melvin Tennant**, Moderator



- Dana Thompson's inspiration for the restaurant:
  - Partnership with [Minneapolis Parks Board](#) that creates restaurants using retrofitted and reinvented structures
- Mitch Maguire: Prince's legacy is embodied within Paisley Park where inspiration lives
- Sharon Sayles Belton's election as first African American woman changed political conversation and trajectory in Minnesota and the nation
  - Created women lead coalition across party lines focused on serving the public
- Prince's Innovation and Changing Making
  - Sonic evolution, choice of instrumentation
  - Fashion aesthetic
  - Gender neutrality
  - Authenticity
  - Prince symbol used as iconic identity
- Tribal Communities
  - Returning wealth to tribal communities
  - [Natifs](#) create food sovereignty for native tribes
- Lake Street
  - [MidTown Global Market](#)
  - Former red-light district reinvented by community lead changes
  - Embroiled in civil unrest and suffered significant damage during George Floyd crisis
  - There is "more hope than holes" on Lake Street
- Ambassador Program
  - Law Enforcement with Dignity

[Tonight Dinner at Owanmi](#) Menu and Backstory Story

**OWAMNI**



- [New Yorker Magazine story about How Owanni](#) became best new US restaurant
  - Roasted Vegetable Soup with Hominy, Root Vegetables, Purple Sweet Potatoes and Swiss Chard
  - Trout Cake with Anaheim Peppers, Corn, Onion and Kale with a Sumac Sage Aioli
  - Duck Confit with Sage Sweet Potato Puree and Wajape Sauce served with a side of Sweet Potato Dumplings and Swiss Chard tossed in a Black Walnut Vinaigrette with Puffed Wild Rice on top
  - Warm Apple Tart with Maple Merengue, Sunbutter Brittle and Fried Sage

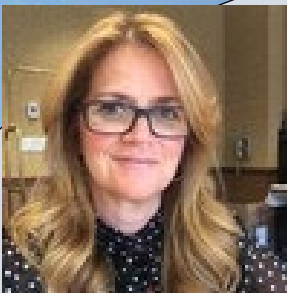




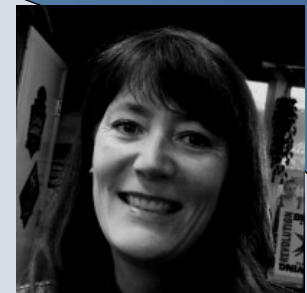
- \$75+ million spent over last 10 years to improve interior of Convention Center
- Currently, 28,000 square foot ballroom and falling behind
- Desired, create new 50,000 ballroom space
- Enhance pre function spaces
- Create natural outdoor spaces
- Insert Vision & Goals
- Embrace the Plaza
- Entry Sequence

Timeline:

- Start in earnest after November 2022 local elections
- Construction starting late 2024 with 2-year cycle and opening 2026/2



**Stacie Nerf – [Delta Air Lines](#)  
Manager MICE Team  
Kristin Parr – [Delta Air Lines](#)  
<https://news.delta.com/>**



- MICE market leads the return for Delta; corporate meetings have returned while corporate travel lags
- Delta logged \$14 Billion revenue in 3Q2022
- Reinvesting strongly in MICE market
  - \$12 billion investment in infrastructure 2020-2022
- Delta has only one union (pilots) and workplace satisfaction levels are very high
- ATL operating at 90% of pre COVID arrival/departure levels
- SEA, BOS and SLC are offering more flights than pre COVID arrival/departure levels
- Asian market returning with strong [ICN](#) demand and Japan reopening to tourism
- New service launching to LAX - [PPT](#), ATL - [CPT](#) and ATL - [TLV](#)



## Weaponization of Meetings & Travel



- Planners are making “Values Based Buying” decisions when placing meetings
- Most third parties do not have specific language in their contracts to address restrictive legislation
  - One group cited as willing to accept cancellation penalty because their meeting isn’t financial critical to organization (but this was cited as atypical)
  - Some associations use contract language stating that if legislation is passed, they reserve right to move locations
  - Some groups seek minority owned suppliers and minority leaders in supply chain
  - Focused buying decisions that supports oppressed people
- Documentation of minorities in leadership positions during RFP and site selection can help tip balance in favor of one destination or supplier over another
- Destinations with soft years are open to accepting ASAE’s inclusion clause
- Mid-level associations with individual membership are especially impacted by this topic
- American society and businesses are now significantly more focused on social issues
- Understanding underrepresented groups and taking steps to welcome and include everyone cited as “mission critical”

### Links cited during the meetings

- [Silver Tsunami](#)
- [TikTok Boom](#)
- [Unsung Documentary](#)
- [Dana Thompson Video](#)

