



Meet **Minneapolis**
City by Nature

MEET MINNEAPOLIS

CUSTOMER ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 18-20, 2023



THE KLIMAN GROUP
COMMUNICATION CONSULTING SERVICES

Meeting facilitated and report authored by:
David Kliman, CMM - President - The Kliman Group
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Customer Advisory Board Members in Attendance

Lisa Marie Borchert, CSEP	Director - Event Planning - Thrivent
Sally Ann DeBolt	BlueJay Consulting
Lisa Dyson CMP, DES	Conference Dir.- Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics
Kris Fridgen	VP of Education and Meeting - Heart Failure Society of America
Maureen Goodson	Executive Director - National Postal Forum
Derrick Johnson CMP, DES	Convention and Events Director - National Medical Association
Kyle Jordan, CAE, CEM, CMP, DES	Director of Meetings - INFORMS
Keith Kershaw	Chief Operating Officer - Church Of God In Christ
Erika Kowalczyk CMP	Sr Manager of Global Events - Intl. Society for Stem Cell Research
Michelle Long	Senior Sourcing Manager - Maritz Global Events
Teresa Sorenson	Partner - Empowered Events
Debbie Van Ravenhorst	Regional Vice President - HelmsBriscoe



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
Bill Deef	Senior Vice President - Public Affairs
Jill Anderson	Senior Director - Marketing
Madonna Carr, CMP	Vice President - Destination Services
Stephanie Grimaldi	Director - Convention Sales
Sue Murray	Senior National Account Executive
Courtney Ries	Senior Vice President - Destination Branding & Strategy
Tom Ruzsa	National Account Executive
Katie Smith	Director of Sales and Marketing - Minneapolis Convention Center
Tamara Spude, CMP	Director - Destination Services
Betty Williams, CMP	Senior National Account Executive
Erica Bergum, CMP, DES	Associate Director - Events
Ka Vang	Vice President - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
Megan Wahman	Marketing Manager

Guest Speakers

Mayor Jacob Frey	Mayor of Minneapolis
Norma Dean	Director - Specialty Sales, Delta Air Lines
Steve Cramer	President & CEO - Minneapolis Downtown Council
Natalie Foster	Delta Air Lines
Paul Ouimet	President/Partner - MMGY NextFactor

Meeting Moderator

David Kliman, CMM	President - The Kliman Group
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Land & Water Acknowledgment

- ❖ Meet Minneapolis acknowledges and honors the Dakhóta Oyáte (Dakota People), who are the original stewards of the magnificent land and vibrant waterways of Minneapolis. The Dakota, as well as Ojibwe and other Indigenous people cared for the land, lakes and the Haha Wakpa (Mississippi River) for thousands of years before the arrival of Europeans.
- ❖ Today, this place continues to hold significant spiritual and cultural importance for the strong, resilient and growing Indigenous community in Minneapolis and Minnesota.
- ❖ This acknowledgement is just the start of our journey as we continually strive to tell the rich and diverse story of Minneapolis.
- ❖ We invite you to learn more about the Dakota, Ojibwe and other Indigenous people of our area, as well as the non-colonial history of Minneapolis and Minnesota.

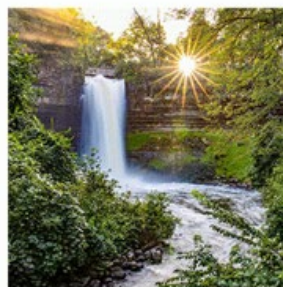
Special thanks to **Hotel Ivy** for their partnership in hosting this meeting

- [Mark Maggiotto, General Manager](#)
- [Tom Peters, Director of Sales & Marketing](#)
- [Samantha Freemark, Director of Catering](#)



MARRIOTT
BONVOY

HOTEL IVY
MINNEAPOLIS



Melvin Tennant Destination Updates

2023 Strong Recovery

- Occupancy Up 9% YOY
- Demand Up 17% YOY
- Room Revenue Up 21.5% YOY
- Record revenues earned during June 23 – 25, 2023 over Pride Twin Cities and Taylor Swift Concert



Meet **Minneapolis**
City by Nature



Hotel Trends During

THE MINNEAPOLIS MEGA WEEKEND

95% Occupancy

Change of 64% from similar time frame

\$306 ADR

Change of 80% from similar time frame

19,531 Demand

Change of 176% from similar time frame

\$5,975,203 Revenue

Change of 136% from similar time frame

Source: Smith Travel Research Weekly Data; June 2023 – Even



THE MINNEAPOLIS MEGA WEEKEND

June 23 – June 25, 2023

Kiwanis
Taylor Swift x 2 Nights
Twin Cities Pride Weekend



2023 – EXCITING EVENTS HOSTED

March

- Big 10 Women's Basketball Championship
- Northern Lights Junior Volleyball
- American Public Transportation

April

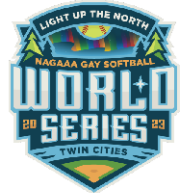
- Midwest Poultry
- National Forum Black Public Administrators
- USA Volleyball Junior National Championship

June/July

- Elks
- American College of Surgeons
- Microscopy Society of America
- National Bar Association

Aug/Sept/Oct

- NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series
- American Society of Health Risk Management
- Society of Landscape Architects



2024 – EXCITING EVENTS AHEAD

March/April/May

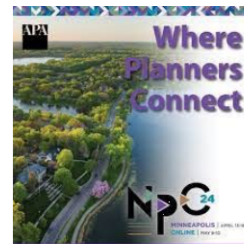
- Big Ten Women's & Men's Basketball
- American Physical Society
- National Art Education Association
- American Planning Association
- American Clean Power

June/July

- American College of Veterinarians
- GALA Choruses
- Olympic Trials
- Jack and Jill of America
- Herbalife(TBD)

Aug/Sept/Oct

- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
- American Public Health



JACK AND JILL
of America, Inc.

GALA
CHORUSES
THE ROAD TO FESTIVAL



LOOKING AHEAD: BIG FUTURE BOOKINGS



2025

- American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologist
- National Health Information Management Association
- National Science Teaching Association

2026

- National Catholic Education Association
- AFL-CIO

2027

- American Railway Engineering and Maintenance-of-Way
- Association Midwest Poultry '27 – '30

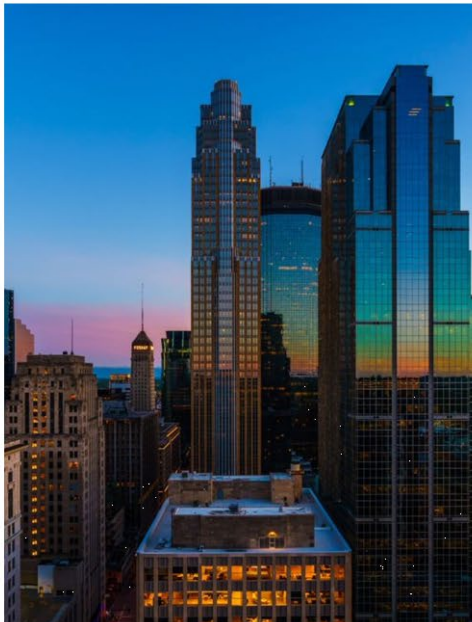
2028

- Irish Dance North America Championships (TBD)

2029

- Nat'l Council for Teachers in Mathematics

KEY TAKEAWAYS



**Hotel Performance
Continues to Improve***

**2024 Recovery
Continues with
Key Events**

**Future Bookings
Looking Strong**



*** Slow return of
Business Travel
continues to slow
full recovery**

Connect Marketplace 2023
Brent Forester
[Connect Video Link](#)



Opening Reception by the Numbers ...



- 3 Stellar Venues
- 1 Prince Impersonator
- 1 Prince Tribute Band
- Purple attire everywhere
- **108 Heat Index** at party time
- 14 bars
- 28 food stations
- 2300 light-up purple necklaces

2023 CONNECT MARKETPLACE
MINNEAPOLIS
Make waves. Create change.



Client Reception Overview

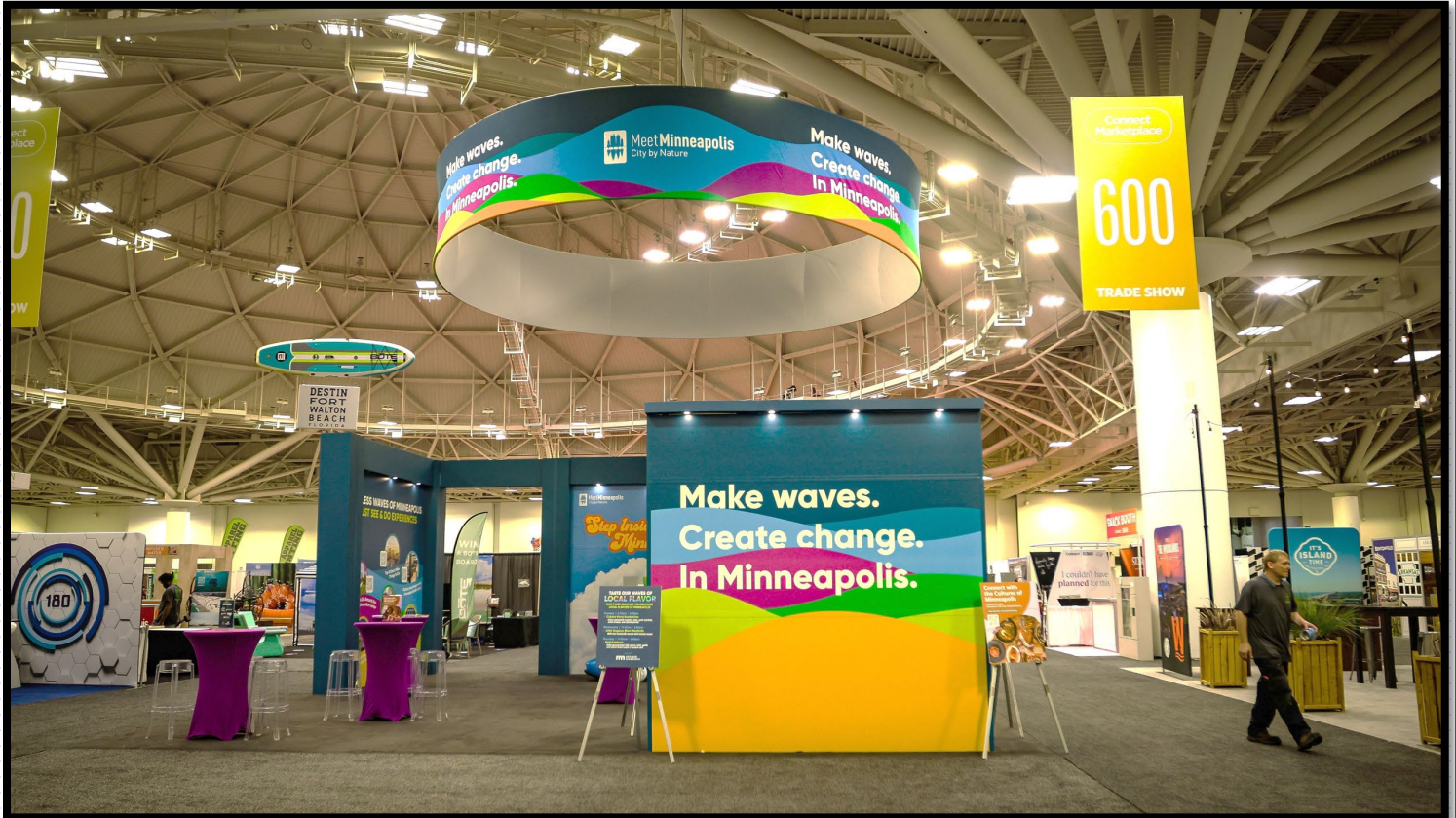


Date: Wednesday, August 23

Time: 5pm-6pm
(99 degrees at party time)

Location:
The Seasons at the MCC

of Attendees:
129



SECTIONS |



LEGION OF LOONS

★ StarTribune

BUSINESS

A conference for conventions: Downtown Minneapolis markets itself for future visitors

Meet Minneapolis, the city's convention and visitors association, hosted hundreds of meeting and event planners as business travel slowly recovers nationwide.



MeetMinneapolis



2023 Connect Marketplace Host City Post Event Summary

August 22-24 2023 | Minneapolis



44%

Of registered attendees were first time visitors to Minneapolis



All 50 States

Were represented at the 2023 Connect Marketplace

774

HOSTED BUYERS

96

NON-HOSTED BUYERS

1,643

SUPPLIERS & EXHIBITORS

179

STAFF, SPEAKERS & GUESTS

107

INDUSTRY GUESTS

Why weren't you with us in Minneapolis?

36% Professional Schedule Conflict

24% Destination Concerns

18% Personal Schedule Conflict

Meet Minneapolis



2023 Connect Marketplace Host City Post Event Summary

August 22-24 2023 | Minneapolis

What are the first (3) words that come to mind when you hear
Minneapolis Convention Center



Sports Planners

#1 - Clean
 #2 - Easy
 #3 - Great
 #4 - Connected
 #5 - Large



Meeting Planners

#1 - Prince
 #2 - Friendly
 #3 - Walkable
 #4 - Clean
 #5 - Lakes

Meet Minneapolis



2023 Connect Marketplace Host City Post Event Summary

August 22-24 2023 | Minneapolis

What are the first (3) words that come to mind when you hear **Minneapolis**?

before



after



Meet Minneapolis



2023 Connect Marketplace Host City Post Event Summary

August 22-24 2023 | Minneapolis

How likely are you to send an RFP to Minneapolis **(1-5 scale)**

before



after



Meet Minneapolis

Marketing Updates *Courtney Reis*



Wave of Change Video Link

- Second wave of leisure marketing Campaign launched today – include link to second video
 - [What the Fuss](#) campaign

Community Information and Policies shared:

- <https://www.minneapolis.org/community-info-and-policies/lgbtq-rights/>
- <https://www.minneapolis.org/community-info-and-policies/reproductive-health-rights/>

What we heard and responded to from the CAB in 2022

- Ideal length is 60 to 90 seconds
- Highlight combination of leisure and business images
- Need to create balance of compelling visuals, and narrative ... evoke emotional connections to the city that tells (the) destination's story while also sharing sufficient pragmatic destination details
- Walkability and Skyways images
- Ensure genuine display of cohesive and inclusive communities
- Video content must be broad enough to address multiple markets and issues

Ka Vang - DEI&B Updates

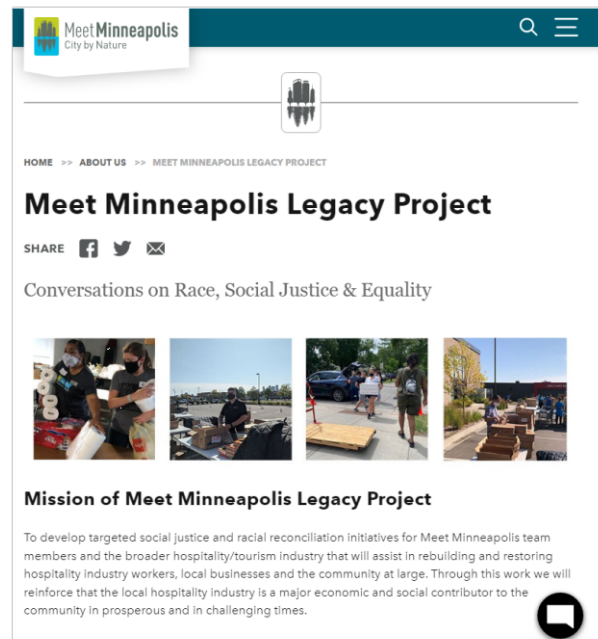
- Land & Water Acknowledgment's goal is to create a just tourism industry and to provide cultural fluency and competency to DMO and tourism community
- Key activities include:
 - [Legacy Project](#)
 - Focused on developing targeted social justice and racial reconciliation initiatives for Meet Minneapolis team members and the broader hospitality/tourism industry that will assist in rebuilding and restoring hospitality industry workers, local businesses and the community at large.
 - Learning experiences for staff and business partners
 - Using diversity as competitive edge
 - [Diversity Supplier Guide](#)



Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Access Three-year Strategic Plan

Key Activities = Outcomes

- Learning experiences for staff and business partners = Cultural fluent staff & Tourism and Hospitality industry
- Corporate social responsibility projects for staff & business groups = Empower staff & partners to create community impact
- Creating an inclusive work culture at Meet Minneapolis = Strategic competitive advantage
- Contributing to the inclusive recovery by connecting BIPOC businesses with visiting business groups = Vibrant & just tourism and hospitality industry



RESOURCES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Connect With Our Community of Wave Makers and Change Creators

Create your own waves in Minneapolis by connecting to **our local key destination resources** and assets including BIPOC area businesses and suppliers, local community leaders that can assist with DEI content for your event, and CSR/attendee engagement opportunities.



Diverse Referral Program



**DEI&B Feedback found at the end of this report;
Walking Tour Feedback is found at the end of this report**



[Paul Ouimet](#) - Partner/President - [MMGY NextFactor](#)

10- year Destination Master Plan

- Develop future vision for Minneapolis' visitor economy and prioritize key issues and opportunities to thrive in competitive landscape.
- Focus on enhancing infrastructure, facilities, services, storefront vibrancy, attractions & events to allow for overall visitor offering & experience.
- Align with Downtown 2035 plan.
- Coordinated with and integrated into other planning initiatives underway or completed.
- Consider mechanisms for evaluating major event ideas.
- Consider the sentiments of residents and consumer demand for authentic, local and unique experiences and services.
- Develop a 3-year implementation plan with stakeholder agreement

Project Objectives

Areas of Consideration in Destination Master Plan Development



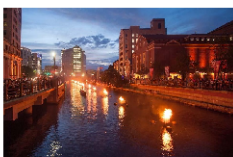
Iconic Attractions

- London Eye
- Winnipeg's Human Rights Museum



Unique Neighborhoods

- Asheville's Historic District
- San Diego's Gaslamp District



Iconic Events

- Providence WaterFire
- Austin's South by Southwest



Recreation/Sports

- Indianapolis Grand Park
- Frisco's Warren Sports Complex

Convention & Meeting Facilities

- Madison's Convention Center Expansion
- Sydney's Convention and Exhibition Centre



Arts & Culture

- Paris' Louvre Museum
- Pittsburgh's Andy Warhol Museum



Entertainment & Shopping

- Nashville's Music City
- Austin's Live Music



Nightlife

- Portland, OR
- Austin, TX
- Nashville, TN



Transportation

- Vancouver's Pacific Gateway Program
- Memphis' Air Service Development

Mobility & Wayfinding

- Indianapolis Cultural Trail
- Nashville Music Wayfinding Plan

PHASE 1

Project Planning & Management

- a. Virtual project initiation meeting
- b. 1.5-day project kickoff trip
- c. Prepare a stakeholder consultation plan
- d. Project planning, management and monitoring

PHASE 2

Destination Assessment

- a. Analyze destination metrics
- b. Review existing research & plans
- c. Identify relevant trends
- d. DestinationNEXT assessment
- e. Conduct gap analysis

PHASE 3

Stakeholder Engagement

- a. Prepare discussion guides
- b. Conduct 20 one-on-one interviews
- c. Conduct 8 focus groups
- d. Conduct 2 community townhalls
- e. CAB session
- f. Develop an online resident survey
- g. Present stakeholder findings

PHASE 4

Visioning Workshop

- a. Prepare draft goals and recommendations
- b. Prepare session materials
- c. Facilitate a half-day visioning workshop

PHASE 5

Destination Master Plan Development

- a. Prepare draft master plan report
- b. Work with Visit Orlando team to review/edit plan
- c. Validation sessions w/key stakeholders
- d. Layout and design the final plan
- e. Present the plan for ratification

PHASE 6

Implementation Plan Development

- a. Prepare a 3-year Implementation Plan
- b. Present to Meet Minneapolis Board and Steering Committee
- c. Deliver final report

Destination Strength Variables



Attractions & Experiences



Arts, Culture & Heritage



Dining, Shopping & Entertainment



Outdoor Recreation



Conventions & Meetings



Events & Festivals



Sporting Events



Accommodation



Local Mobility & Access



Destination Access



Communication Infrastructure



Health & Safety

DESTINATION
NEXT

Destination Alignment Variables

DESTINATION
NEXT



Business
Support



Community Group &
Resident Support



Government
Support



Organization
Governance



Workforce
Development



Hospitality
Culture



Equity, Diversity
& Inclusion



Funding
Support & Certainty



Regional
Cooperation



Sustainability
& Resilience



Emergency
Preparedness



Economic
Development

Stakeholders

Industry

Board
Staff
Hotels
Attractions
Restaurants

Community

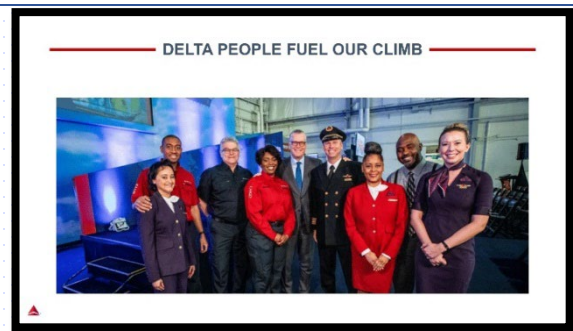
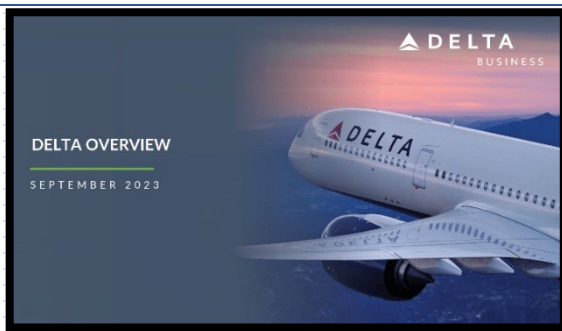
Government
Business Community
Economic Development
Local Foundations
Education

Market

Meeting Planners
Tour Operators
Travel Agents
Event Planners

DESTINATION
NEXT

CAB feedback regarding
ways to elevate Minneapolis
are found at the end of this report



Delta Air Lines

Norma Dean - Director Specialty Sales

Natalie Foster - Above the Wing Operations MSP Airport

- Delta is one of Minnesota's top private employers, uplifting the state's 5+ million residents is a core aspect of our operation.
- 6,400+ Minnesota employees are central to carrying out *the Delta Difference*
- Serves 200,000,000+ passengers annually



Delta | News & highlights



ELEVATED CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Delta Sky Club® Investments
Five new Clubs have opened in 2023 - MCI, MSP, JFK, BOS and EWR - part of the airline's more than \$12B in airport investments over last decade.

Expanding Digital ID
Program provides the ability to go through your airport journey using only your face. Currently in ATL and DTW, expanding this year to LAX, LGA and JFK with more airports coming in 2023.



OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

New COO Joins to 'Keep Climbing' for our customers
In June, Mike Spanos joined to fill newly created position of COO. He will be working to enhance and accelerate the integration across our operational, customer service and technology teams.

Named 'Best US Airline' by The Points Guy for 5th year in a row, in May, based on analysis of cost, availability, reliability and loyalty programs.



ACCELERATING INNOVATION

Free, Fast Wi-Fi for SkyMiles Members*
Delta continues to roll out free Wi-Fi, with most mainline domestic aircraft now equipped.

Connected Travel with Delta Sync Platform
Delta Sync exclusives, now onboard most domestic mainline flights, delivers tailored experiences for SkyMiles Members, helping them to maximize their journey.



SUSTAINABLE AVIATION

Sustainable Aviation Fuel
Secured over 50+ corporate SAF deals to help our clients meet their sustainability goals.

Electrifying First Catering Truck
Along with Delta having electrified nearly all core ground equipment in BOS and SLC, Delta recently introduced the first zero-emission catering truck, reducing both CO2 emissions and pollution from diesel.



NEW MSP SKY CLUB

OPENED IN APRIL (2023)

Delta Sky Club customers traveling through MSP can now relax in a stunning new nature-inspired oasis on the upper level of the G concourse. This investment represents MSP's third and largest hub, with more than 21,000 square feet and seating for more than 450. Key highlights include:

- 90% waste diversion from landfills via recycling/composting
- Recipes from Bravo's Top Chef Justin Sutherland, a Twin Cities native that specializes in Southern cuisine
- A rich color palette inspired by Minnesota's designation as the "land of 10,000 lakes" with local food and beverage offerings:

DAMPFWERK
DISTILLING

BOURBON & SMOKE
Handsome Hog
LOUISVILLE, KY - PAUL



PROPELLING THE NEXT GENERATION OF PILOTS

Delta is the only airline offering student pilots a customized career path to the cockpit, with Propel offered at Minnesota State Mankato University.



Through Delta's Propel Pilot Career Path Program, participants can select from three pathways and receive a conditional offer to be a Delta Pilot upon successful completion.

TECHU: EDUCATING & INSPIRING FUTURE AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE TECHNICIANS (AMTs)



TechU has partnerships with more than 50 Maintenance Training Programs across the U.S. Two are in Minnesota.



MINNEAPOLIS COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Through these partnerships, we offer tours and career guidance for the schools as well as training opportunities for instructors.

Delta donates parts, engines and airframes to give students real-world experience working with aircraft components.

Delta business meetings and events

Your One-Stop Meetings & Events Solution



CORPORATE MEETINGS

- ✓ 15+ passengers.
- ✓ Originating from multiple US/Canada locations.
- ✓ Clients receive the better discount between their negotiated rates and our MSE flat rate discounts.
- ✓ Access to self service reporting for your meeting.
- ✓ **PLUS** client's get 1% back on qualified spend.



CONFERENCES & EVENTS

- ✓ 50+ passengers.
- ✓ Originating from multiple US/Canada locations and up to 1 additional international country.
- ✓ Clients receive the MSE flat rate discounts.
- ✓ **PLUS** the opportunity to earn one free ticket per every 40 round-trip passengers.



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DELTA PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS & EVENTS

Program Highlights | Bookings | Conferences & Events | Groups

YOUR PARTNER IN DELIVERING IN-PERSON CONNECTIONS

Meetings Program Highlights [NEW MEETING](#)

Delta Business offers an travel solutions for every meeting or event, no matter what your needs are. Explore the program options below or begin a New Meeting Request Form to get started planning for your next event now.

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SKYTEAM GLOBAL MEETINGS

- ✓ 150+ passengers.
- ✓ Originating from 2+ countries to the same destination.
- ✓ Offers service to over 1,000 locations worldwide.
- ✓ Access to market leading discounts.
- ✓ Event can be registered up to 5 years in advance.

Hotel General Managers joined the meeting on Wednesday

Christy Loy
Chair- Meet
Minneapolis
Canopy by Hilton



Aaron McDougale
Hyatt Regency



Daniel Dedecker
Royal Sonesta



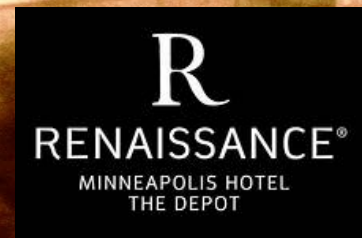
Florian Riedel
Four Seasons



Jay Garrett
Marriott City
Center



Michael Clark
Renaissance at
the Depot



Jacob Frey

MAYOR,
CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS



Key Takeaways:

- Minneapolis Future and the [City's 2040 plan](#)
- Crime is down
- Hotel occupancy is up, rivaling pre pandemic levels
- Twin Cities Pride & Taylor Swift Concert produced all-time record revenue weekend
- Minneapolis is a city of parks and lakes
- The City has had rough times and is on the road to recovery and renewal
- Focused on rethinking and reinventing downtown retail and storefronts
 - All successful cities are innovative
 - Downtowns are changing dramatically
- East Lake neighborhood was hard hit during George Floyd Murder and COVID and has come back strongly
- Focus on activations, not just retail, workspaces and homes
- [Sister City Program with Kuopio](#) Finland
 - Embraced pedestrians and biking access
 - Quick access to nature and work
 - Pedestrian dedicated streets throughout the city
- When asked what are the most fun things to experience in Minneapolis, the Mayor responded with:
 - Stone Arch Bridge and Old Loop and [Somali Shopping Mall](#)
- When asked his iconic vision for The City without regard to funding or politics; the Mayor responded:
 - Nicollet Mall reinvented into a pedestrian utopia, full of small experiential shops and the riverfront redesigned into connected experiences full of residential, visitors and workers
 - Convert the post office building and convert 1970s portion and create riverfront entrance
 - Activate the Riverfront
- The Mayor joked about his “greatest accomplishment was surviving 2020”
- Strong focus on creating more affordable housing

Nicollet Reimagined - Steve Cramer MPLS Downtown Council



Key Comments:

- Nicolette Mall was designed as a Minnesota's Multipurpose Main Street and opened in 1972
- USA's first dedicated transit street and has evolved over the years
- Designed primarily as a regional retail street
 - Redesigned in 1991 and 2017
- Three Fortune 500 companies headquartered on Nicollet
- Numerous residential high rise apartment buildings
- Now redesigned for civic gatherings and more pedestrian friendly with spaces for large gatherings
- Safety Presence and Response includes Downtown Ambassadors
- [Population Endeavor](#) successes cited by [CBS News](#)

Projects and concepts for the near future

- [Daytons Project](#)
- [Strive Bookstore](#)
- Overall reinvention of downtown
- Holiday pop up activations
- Many spaces still require attention
- Seeking solutions to redesign Nicollet
 - Is it a transit way or pedestrian zone?
 - Embracing new reality of office workers' transportation needs
- Need more infrastructure investment to fully transform Nicolette into an inviting and activated pedestrian zone
 - Need increased zoning flexibility to advocate for better storefront signage that's visible from afar
- Realistically doesn't expect full return to pre pandemic office population levels

Future direction: evolving retail and storefront uses

#mymplsdt



Strive Bookstore

Dayton's Project



DID Nicollet Office

Focus on public safety

#mymplsdt

SAFETY PRESENCE & RESPONSE



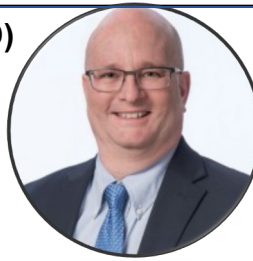
Tourism Improvement District (TID)

Bill Deef,

Senior VP of Public Affairs

Meet Minneapolis

Bill outlined the development of a new [Tourism Improvement District](#)



- Meet Minneapolis total budget is \$13 million
 - Competitive cities' budgets are much higher - Denver \$40 million
- Multiple DMOs represent metropolitan Minneapolis area
- Currently 14.3% hotel tax
 - Adding 1% in October 2023 dedicated to housing and infrastructure
- Potential new TID will be indicated as separate line on guest folios
- TID will apply to all 43 downtown hotels
- When asked how important total tax amounts are to CAB members; the following feedback was offered:
 - More attention is paid to service fees/resort fees than taxes
 - However, lower tax amount can be competitive advantage
 - Amount must be reasonable
 - Must be transparent regarding bottom line amount of room charges
 - Mixed feedback offered when asked if TID should be a percentage or flat dollar amount
- TID is expected to generate an additional \$5 to \$7 million annually and will be used for new sales and marketing deliverables
- When asked how important is great trade show booth is for planners, the following feedback was offered:
 - A presence at big meeting industry shows (IMEX etc.) is expected
 - Ensure access to the booth is welcoming and approachable
 - DMO would be "conspicuous by its absence" if it choose not be have a presences at major shows
 - Noted that ASAE is populated by CEOs and CMOs who are typically not key decision makers and aren't core audience for DMOs
 - Personal email outreach cited as effective method to invite planners to trade show meetings in booths etc.

Minneapolis Experience and Updates - Jeff Johnson

Money from the US Government program [American Rescue Funds](#)



is being used to develop new ideas including:

- Reinvention of traditional client events into client ideation workshops and symposiums
- Creation of a new signature event at the Convention Center planned for roll out in 2025
- Development of new Minneapolis centric experiences inside the Convention Center including Experience Minneapolis at the MCC
 - Food and drink experiences suitable for groups
 - Attendees able to opt in and buy in advance
 - Suggest making programs available on site
 - Create package to sell to exhibitors for customer gatherings
 - Reluctance to include on registration forms which planners want to simplify
 - Work with groups to create final day experiences to help keep attendees engaged
 - Link to affinity groups such as LGBTQ, BIPOC, Women groups etc.
 - Turn key solutions are highly desirable
 - Offer programs with links to local charities
- Convention Center renovations - \$9.5 million project
- All meeting rooms being renovated with new carpets and chairs and use of wood surfaces
- Completion expected December 2024



Breakout Group Key Takeaways

CVB/DMO Support Fund

- DMO funding always tied to room night pick up; consider tying incentives to overall economic impact.
- Less desirable to pay for receptions, prefer funds to offset AV and Center rental

Surveys

- Relationship with DMO team motivate some planners to complete surveys
 - Helpful when event coordinator or services personally asked planner to complete a survey.
 - Relationships matter to get feedback
- Offer donation to local charity as incentive for survey feedback
- Most planners don't complete post event surveys
 - Planners receive 8-12 post surveys from all vendors
- Most surveys generate responses to negative issues
- Best surveys have only one question
- Timing is critical, post event planners are overwhelmed post event
- Gift cards are not effective incentive to generate survey responses
- Text survey requests are generally not effective
- Experiences motivate planner to complete survey
- Survey must be customized to the group and be concise

Breakout Group Key Takeaways

Competitive Cities

- Hard to combine group incentive, different needs of large and small groups
- Want transparency
- Smaller groups often overlooked
- Most planners focus on money from the DMO based on room block
- Incentives range from \$10-22 plus rebate from hotel and housing bureaus
- Credit based on room pick up
- Money often used to buy down convention center rental and F&B minimums
- Cities typically don't offer incentives in the same ways
- Most incentives are for citywide groups, not self-contained
- Detroit offers strong incentives
- Some cities provide incentives to attract local businesses to host meetings locally
- Delta voucher for pre-planning is a great incentive
- Offer "need time" incentives
- Tie incentives to leverage preexisting activities such as winter festivals
- Connect group profile (i.e. medical groups) to local affinity groups; act as intellectual capital connector.
- For nonprofit groups, focus on "anything that hits the bottom line"
 - "every dollar counts"

Letters of Commitment (LOC)

- LOC isn't seen as a legal document
- Planner asked to sign many years out and not considered reasonable
- Lack of desire to sign unless hotels and center are confirmed at firm rates
- LOCs are only meaningful and important to some planners
 - Many planners don't like them - prefer to move right to contract
- Planners want to lock in hotel rates without escalation clauses
- Many cities don't ask for LOC
- Often takes months to sign a contract, but most planners don't want to sign LOC in interim
- Corporations generally will not sign more than 2 years out and tend to use linking clauses
- Hotels are more open to mutual indemnification clauses

Breakout Group Key Takeaways

Site Inspections

- In winter; offer welcome receptions outside with fire pits and winter gear
- Rapid hotel pub crawl
- Interactive experiences
- Food tastings
- MSP Center F&B is excellent; Kyle Jordan offered to do testimonials
- Some planners need detailed site inspections information in advance
- Elevate experiences during all four seasons tied to community - based events
- Ensure sites are tailored to what's important to the client
 - Only show them what they need to see
- Create customized connected sites for top customers with similar sized groups meeting in Minneapolis
 - Clients get great tips seeing how the city handles like groups
 - Makes it easier to see their group in the city
 - Salt Lake City does this well
- Use Mayor Fray or former Mayor RT Rybak to help attract and close Top 10 group businesses
- Planner want well produced video tours of hotel and convention space
- Many planners know hotel better than sales staff

Extended Stays Pre and Post

- Great opportunity to market theater and sports events
- Attendees have too much to read in advance
- "See you later" campaign upon check out and invite attendees to come back to visit
- Timing to get local pre/post options is critical to catch attendees before travel booking closes, must be shared with Save the Date
 - DMO must be ready to promote pre/post offer before registration is open
- Barrier to add pre post rooms from hotel which want planners to sign addendums
- Attendees want same group rate for pre/post stays
- Some meetings are already too long and hard to ask attendees to extend
- Not seen any good examples of pre/post stays.
- GDPR issues cited, stops planners from allowing DMO access to attendee lists
- Planners might send out on behalf of the DMO, but will not release attendee list
- Group microsite could be used to share offers

Customer Advisory Board

Key Comments, Action Items and Recommendations

September 2023

General Topics

- Share Minneapolis' [Diverse Supplier Guide](#) more widely with planners and Include LGBTQ+ suppliers in supplier guide
 - Use diversity case studies as learning scenarios
- Use AI to aggregate diverse visitor data
- Ensure transparency of hotel taxes, assessments and fees
- Share stories of local leaders, especially BIPOC community
- Include video tours in all sales and marketing meeting tools
- Locals are generally uninformed and have misconceptions about downtown realities

DEI&B

- Many destinations don't offer diverse supplier guides
- Make Minneapolis' [Diverse Supplier Guide](#) more prominent
 - This will make planners' jobs easier as they probably don't know about it and sharing this will help drive more business to those suppliers
- Share unique Minnesota offers such as THC drinks in Breweries
- Offer incentives deigned to create pipeline of BIPOC hospitality positions

Walking Tour

- Include markers and plaques to better document city history
 - Share stories about murals and/or historical naming of site
 - Create walk tour using QR codes
 - Mayor speaking or written descriptions about highlighted site
 - Neighborhood indicators
- Need enhanced signage along Nicollet to describe building names and shops
- Addition of shopping, boutiques, drug store etc. is critical
 - Need drug store close to MCC
- Downtown greenery is beautiful
- Build an automated kiosk inside MCC to get information regarding places to enjoy during/after conventions, include transport options
- Create Minneapolis Walk of Fame
- Activate Nicollet by making it a true destination
- Make shuttle more visible from downtown to North Loop for shopping and restaurants
 - Create 30 second teaser video and share with meeting planners
- Activate empty building across from MCC
 - Open to local pop-up shops
 - Install street signs to indicate shopping/dining options on skyway levels
 - Planners are willing to pay surcharge for more frequent and farther servicing using North Loop Circulator
 - Marketing of these options should start at the airport



**Nicollet and
North Loop
CAB
Feedback**

- Abandoned/empty buildings could be used for pop up executive meetings (if space was upgraded and made suitable), or pop up activations or an Apple Store which would attract more than just convention attendees to the area
- Develop gardens to grow herbs, spices and vegetables for local community
- Some high rise residential buildings seem outdated and uninviting
- Very quiet around the convention center; needs more energy
- Nicolette doesn't maximize outdoor spaces, need to create activities. Lacks energy
- Need more downtown activities to bring life to the area every day, not just Tuesday and Thursdays
- Need more streets activated; the area lacks retail options
- Cling directional signs on the sidewalks are good, but should be made larger
- Maximize and use unused space (sidewalks, parking lots)
- Create a program to add more signs and plaques sharing downtown history
- Need enhanced and more visible signage on Nicollet
 - Cited example that Caribou Coffee sign is not visible from afar
- Need more shopping and a drugstore near Convention Center
- Area is very clean
- Create QR walking tours with city luminaries as storytellers
- Create Walk of Fame with local luminaries
- Share dining, activities, experience and shopping options in information kiosk at Convention Center including distances and transportation options
- Use lighting to activate outdoor spaces
- Need more dining options near the Hyatt
 - Immediate solution could be to better promote free shuttle to North Loop which offer more options
 - Many visitors are not aware that the City Circulators are cost free
 - Need more obvious signage - wrap the buses
 - Push information about free buses to all planners
- Empty storefronts could be used as pop up spaces for suppliers/retailers and planners; activate them during peak convention periods
- Provide turnkey solutions to event planners
- Maximum time between free shuttles is 15-20 minutes
- Circular shuttles desirable
- Convention Plaza
 - Any outdoor activations such as yoga, dog/animal centric events are desirable
- A shaded turn key solution is needed
- Winter igloos and firepits (as used during SuperBowl) are highly desirable

'Tourism Improvement District'

- Focus on creating iconic “senses of place”
- Embrace concepts of “[People Place and Planet](#)”
- Embrace experiences that capture all four seasons
 - Igloos dining in winter
 - Ice bars
 - Winter carnival
 - Lighted ice skating trails
 - Music and Light shows
 - Ice sculptures - Create Instagrammable moments
- Cultivate social media influencer markets
- Consider creation of immersive outdoor building lighting experiences as seen in [Cleveland](#) and [Baltimore](#)
- Enclose sections of Nicolette and create indoor activations
- Repurpose office building atriums with zip lines and other activations
- Offer incentives to buildings
- Create family experiences in downtown area
- Address impact of homeless population on group attendees
- Enhance culinary options
- Advocate funding for infrastructure modernization
 - Including development of a new 1,000 room hotel attached to the convention center
- Ongoing improvement to the Convention Center

