



VISITOMAHA™

2023 BUSINESS PLAN

VISIT OMAHA - OMAHA'S TOURISM AUTHORITY - [VISITOMAHA.COM](https://www.visitomaha.com)



VISIT OMAHA

MISSION

To stimulate economic growth for our community by increasing visitation.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Successfully sell and promote our community as a desirable visitor destination.
- Influence tourism development to ensure future destination success.
- Deliver a positive and memorable customer experience.
- Collaborate and enhance relationships with local organizations, businesses and stakeholders.
- Operate as an efficient, high performing organization.

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

Visit Omaha creates sustainable visitor demand for the community through: meeting, event, sport and leisure marketing; collaborative relationships; broad industry experience; and unprecedented product knowledge. Visit Omaha's efforts result in economic growth and job creation for our community.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Relevance: We are committed to being consistent, accountable, transparent, perseverant, and dedicated to excellence.

Innovation: We are committed to being creative, pioneering, collaborative, and problem solving.

Gratitude: We are committed to being appreciative of both the big and small contributions that make our organization and industry valuable to our community.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM TRENDS FOR 2023

LEISURE TRAVEL TRENDS

Tourism experts have noted that travelers are less fearful of the pandemic and see it as less of a barrier to travel. So, what does that mean as we move into 2023? The year looks well positioned to outperform its impressive predecessor.

According to recent forecasts by the U.S. Travel Association, leisure spending will reach 104% of pre-pandemic levels in 2023. However 46% of family travelers with children in the household, say inflation will have an “extreme impact” on their travel decisions over the next six months.

Tourism market research firm Longwoods International echoes these sentiments, stating that recent surveys show economic concerns and higher costs will impact travel decisions significantly. Despite these concerns, the hunger to travel remains strong with nine out of 10 American travelers still planning a trip in the next year. To ensure travel is still accessible, these travelers will downsize in certain areas of their trip, such as transportation. A quarter of Americans said they would drive rather than fly and up to 30% would select affordable destinations that are closer to home.

LOCAL STR PROJECTIONS

After a record-breaking 2022, the most recent STR forecast report for Douglas County shows occupancy for 2023 will average 58.9%, a 1.6% increase over 2022. All other key metrics are expected to increase over 2022’s impressive performance. Demand is expected to increase by 2.7% and revenue is expected to land at \$258 million, a 3.9% increase over 2022.

While these expected numbers are promising, it is important to note possible challenges that lie ahead. Staffing shortages and potential inflation may impact how hotels operate and manage their service to travelers.

STR is a global research firm that tracks, reports, and projects hotel data.

SALES FORECAST

Nationally, industry experts are now predicting that group business (conventions, meetings and motorcoach) will fully recover in 2025. Previous forecasts anticipated 100% recovery in 2024. The primary cause for the delay is a mild recession predicted in Q2 and Q3. Inflation will be a factor, but is expected to slow gradually as economic conditions start to normalize.

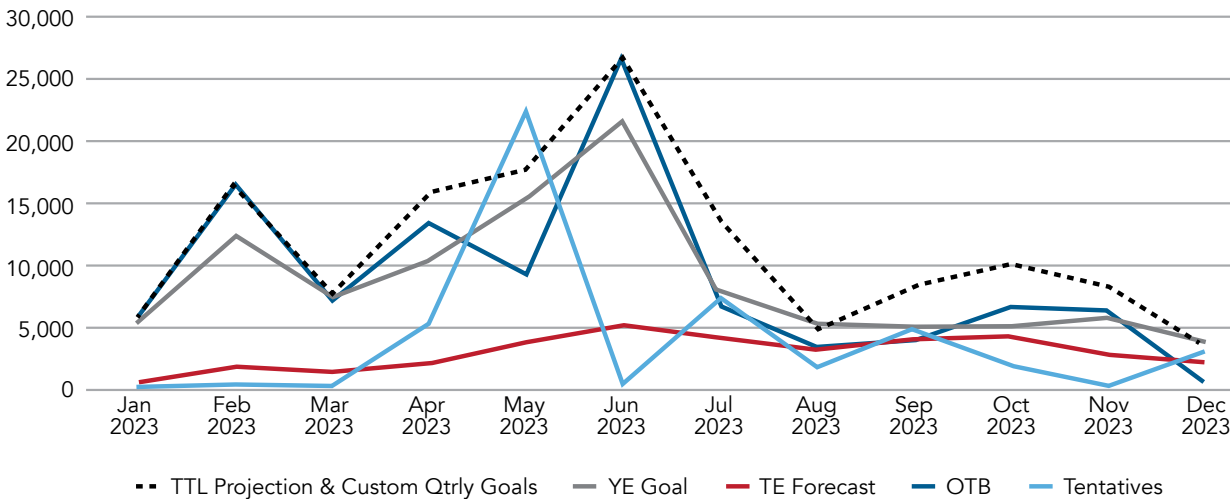
Currently, Tourism Economics predicts this year’s group demand will be at 86.1% of 2019 levels nationally. In 2024, demand will be at 93.8% of 2019 levels and 100.1% will be reached in 2025.

Based upon the booking pace in Omaha, Visit Omaha anticipates a full recovery in group business in 2023.

The Future Pace reporting tool utilizes historical data along with definite and tentative business to provide a booking pace for the Visit Omaha sales team. This information helps in strategizing and updating sales goals based on market conditions. The graphs on the right show Omaha’s booking pace.

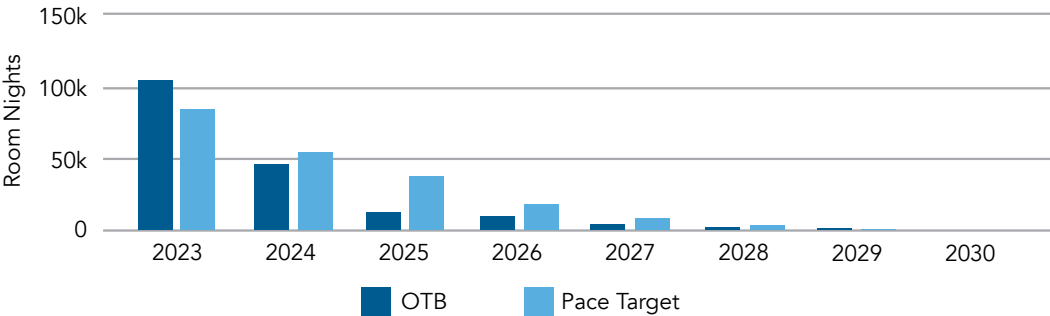
2023 PROJECTIONS

Total (TTL) Projection & Custom Quarterly Goals measure where the Visit Omaha Sales Team realistically thinks business will land, and the YE Goal reflects the predetermined year-end goal. Both are pacing above Tourism Economics' national average (TE Forecast). Currently, on the books (OTB) is pacing above the national average at certain points in the year and the Tentatives line shows business that Visit Omaha is still working to secure.



PACE TARGET

This graph compares definite business on the books (OTB) to pace targets.



CURRENT TENTATIVE ROOM NIGHTS BY YEAR

2023	45,441
2024	57,946
2025	44,402
2026	19,535
2027	16,341
2028	4,015
2029	3,335
2030	3,335

*At this time, only 2023, 2024 and 2025 year-end goals have been set.

KEY EVENTS IN LEAD OR DEFINITE STATUS

Berkshire Hathaway - lead status for 2023, 2024, and 2025
College World Series teams - lead status for 2025 and 2026
Presidents' Day Volleyball - lead status in 2024 (no future leads issued)
Triple Crown Sports - definite through 2023 (no future leads issued)

MEETING, SPORTS AND EVENT SALES

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Visit Omaha's sales team is responsible for bringing convention, sports, and event business to Omaha in order to increase revenue for local meeting and sports facilities, hotels, attractions, restaurants, vendors, and retail shops.

The sales team focuses on selling Omaha as a viable destination for state, regional, national, and international conventions, meetings, sporting events, and motorcoach groups.

The team's efforts contribute to the economic health of our local community by increasing business revenue and tax revenue, which in turn help provide jobs for our friends, family and neighbors.

KEY AREAS OF WORK

- Identify and pursue citywide and single hotel meeting/event business for Omaha based on predetermined goals.
- Evaluate and review sales efforts in key markets to ensure sales team efficiencies.
- Continue to partner with national organizations including ASAE, Association Forum, Helms Briscoe, Conference Direct, Cvent, and PCMA to increase awareness of Omaha as a Midwest meeting destination.
- Collaborate with local sports facilities, organizations and SPORTS Nebraska to attract sporting events to Omaha.
- Engage and build relationships with local board members of national organizations to gain support for Omaha as a location for that organization's annual or regional meeting.
- Ensure a professional, cohesive citywide sales effort by developing and maintaining a high level of trust and camaraderie with the local hospitality community.
- Enhance ongoing research programs to identify new meeting, sports and event business for the local community.
- Qualify, develop and generate motorcoach leads for local hotels, attractions, and performing arts facilities.

NEW INITIATIVES

- Provide additional site visit training for Omaha tourism partners and launch new client experience protocols to increase Omaha's conversion rate for booking business.
- Analyze the attractiveness of Omaha's sporting venues in comparison to the city's national competitive set.
- Conduct a sports sales mission in Colorado Springs, CO to increase sporting event opportunities.
- Sponsor an Omaha activation on location at the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) Convening Leaders and PCMA Educon conferences to heighten awareness of Omaha as a convention and meeting destination.
- Research a new partnership with Connect, a leading industry organizer of events for meeting and event planners, to increase accessibility to decision makers.
- Increase opportunities to secure tour bus business for Omaha by participating in the American Bus Association's US Tours Annual Gala.
- Establish a new partnership with Maritz Global Events, a leader in strategic planning for in-person, virtual and hybrid events, to increase awareness of Omaha to the Maritz membership base.
- Collaborate with MD West ONE to drive new regional sporting events into Omaha.
- Utilize the new Cvent prospecting tool to close more short-term business for Omaha.
- Participate in a national study to evaluate and showcase the ROI of national, tourism-focused tradeshows and sponsorships.
- Showcase the city as a desirable meeting destination by hosting the following meeting planners and decision makers in Omaha:
 - Ten citywide planners for a familiarization tour of Omaha
 - Ten executive directors and members of Association Forum for an educational program and a familiarization tour of Omaha
 - Sixty education executive directors from the Trust for Insuring Educators for an annual meeting and a familiarization tour of Omaha

TARGET GOALS

Generate:

400,000
Room night leads

120,000
Definite room nights

300,000
Attendees

50
Site Visits

MEETING, SPORTS, EVENT SERVICES AND HOUSING

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Once a meeting or event is confirmed, the Visit Omaha services team is responsible for working with organizers to coordinate details before, during and after the event to increase attendance and satisfaction. Their efforts generate business for local vendors who are hired by meeting and event planners.

The team also manages housing services, which provides clients with an easy way to manage blocks of hotel rooms.

The team quantifies success by measuring the event organizer's satisfaction, attendance, the number of referrals sent to local businesses, hotel room nights utilized, and the economic impact the group has on the local community.

KEY AREAS OF WORK

- Support the sales team's efforts throughout the sales process and establish relationships with event organizers to enhance Omaha's ability to close business.
- Provide exceptional service and support to event organizers by providing planning assistance, site visit coordination, pre-attendance promotional materials, and registration support.
- Manage the "Show Your Badge" program to provide attendee discounts that increase business referrals to local businesses and restaurants.
- Serve as the destination expert to connect meeting and event planners with local businesses, speakers and community resources in order to leverage Omaha's assets.
- Coordinate with the hospitality community to ensure a positive experience for event organizers and attendees.
- Provide housing services to event organizers who utilize a local venue and two or more hotel properties.
- Solicit and capture event organizer and attendee feedback, both formally and informally, and share the results with key industry stakeholders.

NEW INITIATIVES

- Partner with Omaha Marriott Downtown at the Capitol District, local shops, and area boutiques to create a unique pop-up shopping experience for the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Exceptional Boards.
- Partner with the Omaha Equestrian Foundation to create an interactive Omaha Visitor Information area for FEI World Cup attendees.
- Implement the Destinations International Overnight Room Demand Analyzer Tool to track event attendees staying in Douglas County hotels.
- Increase staff expertise by obtaining an Event Service Professional Association certification for each member of the services team.
- Produce a directory of key industry leaders to be used as a resource for incoming groups seeking expert speakers during their events.



TARGET GOALS

20

Post-event survey testimonials

3

New housing contracts

500

Leads and/or referrals

30%

Increase in the "Show Your Badge" program participants

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Visit Omaha marketing and communications team is responsible for persuading leisure travelers to visit the community in order to increase revenue for local attractions, restaurants, bars, hotels, retail shops and other businesses. The team: crafts and articulates the destination's brand; leads the organization's direct-to-consumer advertising and promotion efforts; and executes advertising programs to support all sales efforts. The team strategically plans and implements all advertising and promotional efforts for Visit Omaha.

The team also manages Visit Omaha's network of social media channels, the consumer and partner e-newsletters, the Omaha Visitors Guide, and the VisitOmaha.com website. The Visit Omaha communication efforts focus on securing media coverage for Omaha, which in turn raises awareness of the city regionally and nationally. Increased visitation from targeted markets, social media engagement, and number of people reached through promotional and advertising efforts are the main metrics used to gauge success.

KEY AREAS OF WORK

- Execute a multi-media leisure advertising and promotion strategy to inspire visitation from core Midwest drive markets such as Kansas City, Des Moines, Sioux Falls, Minneapolis and Chicago, while researching and cultivating new fly markets to increase awareness of unique experiences that visitors can only enjoy in Omaha.
- Produce and maintain a high quality destination guide and an online network of platforms that provide inspirational content.
- Build upon the brand position that Omaha is the Midwest destination for memorable weekends because Omaha lets the traveler focus on creating new experiences instead of the hassles of travel.
- Enhance awareness of Omaha as a unique food destination by creating multimedia content for distribution through Visit Omaha's online social media network, through media partnerships, with paid advertising campaigns, and by managing Omaha Restaurant Week, which supports local restaurants and builds local brand advocates.
- Inspire new product development with initiatives that focus on creating unique travel-worthy experiences in neighborhoods and at existing attractions.
- Implement an ongoing local advocacy plan focused on educating residents and decision makers on how tourism brings families closer together and helps neighborhoods grow, value sentiments that research shows Omaha residents strongly embrace.
- Generate positive, inspirational and topical media coverage of Omaha as a desirable travel, meeting and sports destination by working with targeted travel writers, editors, bloggers, online media, and other influencers.
- Assist with the annual Omaha Metropolitan Area (OMA) Tourism Awards to recognize frontline staff who exemplify excellent customer service.

NEW INITIATIVES

- Launch a year-round campaign in key target markets, and create new commercials to promote Omaha's unprecedented growth as a tourism destination, highlighting the city's unique attractions, venues, neighborhoods, dining, nightlife and recreation.
- Increase online conversation about traveling to Omaha from Chicago by creating a promotion that utilizes potential airline partnerships and incentivizes a diverse group of Chicagoans to travel to Omaha and share their experience.
- Harness the power of social media to further promote Omaha by creating a series of itineraries targeting Gen Z travelers, a new and emerging tourism audience.
- Create and maintain a new photo library featuring interior and exterior images of Omaha hotel properties to promote the quality and diversity of the city's accommodations.
- Design a new tradeshow booth using cutting-edge technology that provides meeting planners and decision makers an interactive way to experience Omaha.
- Develop and execute a year-round Public Relations strategy to provide local and national media with relevant tourism updates that promote Omaha's tourism community. This includes outreach campaigns encouraging bloggers to apply for various Omaha experiences.
- Capture video and photography of Omaha's new tourism attractions for use in television, streaming, print, online and social media promotion to increase awareness of the city's new travel-worthy experiences.
- Launch a new web series highlighting Omaha's seasonal offerings in spring, summer, fall and winter to promote Omaha as a year-round destination.

TARGET GOALS

30%

Increase in
VisitOmaha.com
pageviews from
target markets

10%

Increase in overall
pageviews on
VisitOmaha.com

15%

Increase in visitation
from targeted markets

25%

Increase in GDPR
compliant consumer
database

10%

Increase in social
media engagement

VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The visitor information team is responsible for welcoming visitors into the city and providing helpful, inspirational information that encourages exploration and enjoyment, which translates into increased visitor spending throughout the community.

The team is dedicated to engaging and collaborating with local tourism partners, staying informed about experiences available, and providing exceptional customer service.

With the help of experienced and dedicated volunteers, the team manages the downtown Omaha Visitors Center at 10th and Farnam, and two visitor information kiosks at the Omaha airport. Serving as the city's official resource for visitor information, each location provides personalized service, engaging visuals, area maps, brochures, special offers, and insider tips on what to see and do while visiting Omaha.

KEY AREAS OF WORK

- Year-round operation of the Omaha Visitors Center, airport information kiosks, and satellite information locations throughout Douglas County.
- Provide visitors with engaging information and excellent customer service to ensure a memorable experience, which maximizes guest satisfaction and increases visitation to, and spending with, local tourism partners.
- Collaborate with tourism partners to educate frontline staff on tourism offerings throughout the community, providing a full-city approach to visitor hospitality.
- Educate local residents on things to do with visiting friends and family, which in turn increases local awareness and appreciation of Omaha as a tourism destination.
- Develop new programs to increase traffic at the Omaha Visitors Center and increase its relevancy with visitors and local residents.
- Recruit and retain Visitors Center volunteer ambassadors, and provide continuing education opportunities through training and tours.
- Distribute Omaha promotional materials across the state in partnership with Nebraska Tourism Commission.

NEW INITIATIVES

- Develop educational programming for frontline hotel and restaurant staff to provide increased hospitality to visitors, and showcase the value of the Omaha Visitors Center.
- Expand distribution of visitor information at high traffic venues and events to increase awareness of activities throughout the community.
- Renovate the Omaha Visitors Center to optimize traffic flow, maximize space and better serve visitors.
- Launch retail sales at the Omaha Visitors Center to increase engagement with visitors and further promote the Visit Omaha brand.
- Create interactive experiences at the Omaha Visitors Center to attract and engage more visitors.



TARGET GOALS

Recruit **15**
new ambassadors

Assist **10,000**
visitors at the Omaha
Visitors Center

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Visit Omaha administration team develops and executes the strategic direction of the organization, manages daily operations and technology needs, ensures financial accountability and stability, leads community partnership and engagement efforts, and serves as administrator for the City of Omaha Destination Marketing Corporation (DMC). The DMC is a 501(c) 6 non-profit entity which is responsible for the management of the Strategic Marketing Fund used to incentivize meeting and event business.

KEY AREAS OF WORK

- Achieve revenue and expense goals.
- Lead advocacy efforts to promote and educate community leaders on the value of tourism.
- Collaborate with local, state and regional organizations to increase awareness of Omaha as a tourism destination.
- Manage the Omaha Destination Marketing Corporation and the Strategic Marketing Fund to offer incentives to attract meeting and event business to our community.
- Serve as a resource to Douglas County Visitor Improvement Fund applicants.
- Maintain Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP) certification to ensure Visit Omaha continues to meet and exceed industry standards.
- Ensure the organization has leading-edge technology to maximize efficiency and productivity.
- Provide staff training to increase employee performance and job satisfaction.

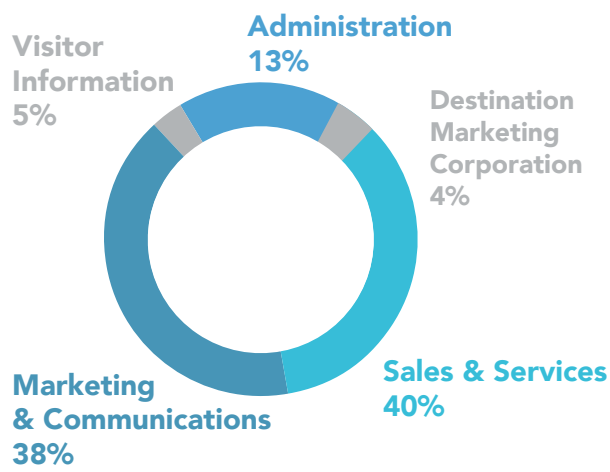
NEW INITIATIVES

- Secure long-term funding for Visit Omaha through an interlocal agreement between the City of Omaha and Douglas County to create financial stability for the organization.
- Strategically allocate \$1 million from the Visit Omaha reserve account to the 2023 budget to increase marketing and sales efforts.
- Partner with the City of Omaha Parks and Recreation department to advocate for increased sporting fields and facilities.
- Develop an efficient and effective hybrid work environment that supports the retention and growth of staff.
- Create quarterly staff engagement programs to increase collaboration and comradery.
- Continue the “Rent for Recovery” initiative to support local tourism partners and increase engagement with hotels, attractions, venues, and restaurants.

OMAHA DESTINATION MARKETING CORPORATION

To remain competitive, Visit Omaha created the Omaha Destination Marketing Corporation (DMC), a 501(c) 6 non-profit organization. The DMC is funded through Visit Omaha’s portion of the lodging tax paid by visitors. Each year, Visit Omaha sets its operational budget after calculating how much hotel tax revenue it will receive based on visitation projections. When that revenue exceeds projections, those dollars are saved in a reserve fund. The corporation allows Visit Omaha to take those reserve funds and use them as incentives to entice meeting, sports and event groups to select Omaha. Since the majority of meeting, sports and event business is booked three to five years in advance, the corporation allows Visit Omaha to earmark these funds and hold them until it is time to pay for a specific meeting or event. The Destination Marketing Corporation Board and the Omaha City Council approve fund disbursement.

2023 BUDGET BY DEPARTMENT



BUDGET

The majority of Visit Omaha’s funding comes from hotel tax paid by visitors. The state collects a 5% lodging tax on each Douglas County hotel room booked: 1% is for the state’s tourism promotion efforts; 2% goes to the county for tourism development; and the remaining 2% funds Visit Omaha’s tourism promotion efforts. In addition, the City of Omaha collects a 5.5% occupation tax on hotel rooms; the .5% goes to Visit Omaha. In 2023, the city will contribute \$2.2 million from its general fund to invest in tourism sales and promotion efforts. Visit Omaha also brings in private revenue by selling advertising on its website, in its visitor guide, and through promotional and tradeshow partnerships with local hotels, attractions and restaurants.

2023 REVENUE

	Projected
Lodging Tax - County (2%)	\$4,014,292
Occupation Tax - City (.5%)	\$896,693
General Fund - City	\$2,200,000
Private Dollars	\$131,625
Destination Marketing Corporation	\$316,066
Reserve Account	\$1,000,000
Total revenues	\$8,558,676

2023 EXPENSES

	%	Projected
Administration	15%	\$1,106,746
Meeting Sales & Services	38%	\$3,382,393
Marketing & Communications	37%	\$3,277,370
Visitor Information	4%	\$476,101
Destination Marketing Corporation	6%	\$316,066
Total expenses by department		\$8,558,676

*Adopted city budget

VISIT OMAHA STAFF

ADMINISTRATION

Deborah Ward
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dean Miller
VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS

Jodie Jordon
OFFICE MANAGER

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Jasmyn Goodwin
*VICE PRESIDENT OF
MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS*

Erin O'Brien
DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

Megan Feeney
MARKETING CONTENT MANAGER

Noelle Agenor
SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER

Lynn Mace
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GRAPHIC DESIGNER

VISITOR SERVICES

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MEETING, SPORTS AND EVENT SALES

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Matt Heck
SENIOR SALES MANAGER

Jessica Settje
TOURISM SALES MANAGER

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RESEARCH ANALYST

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