

A 10YR DESTINATION PLAN FOR THE CULTURAL CORRIDOR



TRAVEL NEVADA - BETTER DESTINATIONS - NICHOLS TOURISM GROUP - SMG CONSULTING

CREATED THROUGH THE TRAVEL NEVADA DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT DEMONSTRATION (3D) PROJECT MAY 2024



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THE CULTURAL CORRIDOR

INTRODUCTION



ABOUT THE CULTURAL CORRIDOR

Three Northern Nevada destination organizations — Visit Carson City, Visit Carson Valley, and the Virginia City Tourism Commission — proposed in October 2022 to collaborate in development of a new Cultural Corridor to build the local arts and culture economy and attract year-round cultural travelers.

Yet to be formally named and branded, this scenic, 16-mile region holds much promise for showcasing the region's rich tapestry of Western history as well as its growing creative economy. By collaborating and leveraging their most compelling offerings, the three destinations can lift the reputation of the whole region, create a distinctive new year-round travel experience, and even spark development of new offerings serving the kinds of visitors it would attract.

Each of the three destinations brings unique attributes to this partnership. Virginia City, known as the "Queen of the Comstock," won fame as one of the richest and most productive silver and gold mining towns in the West. It's where young adventurer and journalist Samuel Clemens adopted the pen name of Mark Twain. Today, its charming streets and boardwalks are lined with elaborate

Victorian buildings that house shops, restaurants, and famed music venues. Some maintain their original purpose, such as the storied Piper's Opera House and the colorfully named Red Dog Saloon and the Bucket of Blood Saloon. Others have been converted to new uses such as the Fourth Ward School Museum and the St. Mary's Art Center, built in 1875 as a hospital. Visitors can immerse themselves in mining history, explore underground shafts, and even ride a historic steam train. Virginia City is a cultural gem that captivates the imagination and provides a glimpse into the Old West.

Carson City, the capital of Nevada, offers a blend of history, government, and lively cultural experiences. The city actively supports a vibrant arts scene, with numerous galleries, theaters, and museums showcasing the region's heritage and culture. The Nevada State Museum, the U.S. Mint, and Nevada State Capitol are must-visit attractions where visitors can explore the Silver State's place in U.S. history and experience the work of artists and artisans past and present. The Nevada State Railroad Museum offers fascinating insights into the transcontinental rails that defined the state and shaped its economy. Carson City's downtown is a walkable mix of charming boutiques, restaurants, and historic buildings, providing a delightful setting

for exploration and cultural immersion. On the city's outskirts, the 110-acre Stewart Indian School Cultural Center and Museum offers rare insight into how a boarding school established in 1890 to eradicate Great Basin tribal culture has evolved into a place that celebrates it.

The Carson Valley, lined by the majestic Sierra Nevada range, is a haven for outdoor enthusiasts and nature lovers with a rising arts and culture scene. The picturesque valley's meandering rivers, rolling hills, and breathtaking views are a worthy backdrop for art galleries, music festivals, and cultural events showcasing galleries, local artists, makers, and musicians. Visitors can explore historic spaces and museums highlighting the region's ranching, Mormon, and Basque heritage. The Carson Valley is a place where nature, the past, unique cultures, and art come together in harmonious ways.

Blending this collection of assets into an integrated, branded experience stands to elevate the reputation and attractiveness of this region far beyond what individual promotions of Virginia City, Carson City, and the Carson Valley can accomplish.



THE PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

Travel Nevada created the 3D Project, its statewide destination development initiative, in the spring of 2022 to reimagine rural Nevada’s attraction for travelers in new and exciting ways and lay a foundation for incorporating destination development into its mission.

This 10-year destination plan is intended to guide the Cultural Corridor region’s three destination organizations and their partners — arts and culture organizations, museums, businesses, and civic and community organizations — in shaping a compelling new experience for Northern Nevada. By joining to develop awareness around a diverse collection of arts, cultural, and historic experiences, this region can inspire and attract year-round cultural travelers and build investment and local pride in the region’s unique assets, while providing Travel Nevada with a compelling new traveler experience to market domestically and internationally.

Desired outcomes include increased visitor spending that generates more business earnings, jobs, and tax revenues for local jurisdictions. This plan also holds strong potential for strengthening the economic viability of a full range of arts experiences while

enhancing the prosperity of artists and artisans, art studios, and culture and heritage-focused businesses and organizations throughout the region.

ABOUT THE 3D PROJECT

The Cultural Corridor proposal was among six selected by Travel Nevada and approved by the Nevada Commission on Tourism (NCOT) in December 2022 to show the potential of a state-funded destination development program through a two-year demonstration program. Each of the six 3D participants was given access to a team of tourism planning professionals to guide the creation of a 10-year destination plan. The plans identify strategies for creating new travel-worthy experiences and products, developing desirable visitor infrastructure, and advancing organizational and promotional strength.

In January 2024, NCOT approved plans and grants for the first three 3D projects — the Friends of Black Rock-High Rock, Lincoln County, and White Pine County. The Cultural Corridor plan was among the second and final cohort, which also includes Boulder City. Planning for the sixth participant, for Nevada’s Indian Territory, was halted upon agreement of all parties. A final step of the project will include a report of findings and recommendations for Travel Nevada.



The 3D project allows participants to apply for a share of a one-time \$2 million grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, secured by Travel Nevada in 2022 to bring the 3D plans to life. 3D participants may apply when their 10-year destination plan is complete. Travel Nevada also structured the demonstration project to include oversight and participation from a multidisciplinary 3D Working Group, including several state and federal agencies that share Travel Nevada’s mission of building rural economies.

3D PROJECT TIMELINE

SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	MAY-JUNE
Stakeholder Mapping	On-Site Steering Committee	SWOT Analysis	Scenario Analysis	Target Audiences	Plan Outline	On-Site Steering Committee	Draft and Deliver Final Report
Destination Asset Inventory	Community Forum	Gap Analysis	Destination Vision	Economic Goal	Key Objectives	Community Forum	
Steering Committee Kickoff							

HOW THE PLAN WAS BUILT

This plan was led by Travel Nevada and developed in collaboration with leaders of the Cultural Corridor's three destination marketing organizations (DMOs) — Visit Carson City, Virginia City Tourism Commission, and Visit Carson Valley DMO leadership recruited a 3D Steering Committee representing artists, museums, galleries, the business community, nonprofits, and government jurisdictions.

The Cultural Corridor consulting team was led by SMG Consulting CEO Carl Ribaud, with Mitch Nichols of Nichols Tourism Group as co-lead and ongoing oversight and support from Better Destinations CEO Cathy Ritter.

Between October 2023 and March 2024, the steering committee met with the consulting team six times. Three meetings were held virtually. The three in-person meetings were convened in key locations throughout the Corridor — Carson City, Gardnerville, and Virginia City — in conjunction with public forums where residents could share insights and ideas. Steering Committee members and forum participants assisted in shaping the direction of

the plan, shared perspectives for a SWOT Analysis, considered research findings, and provided input into key components of this destination plan.

This plan also drew insights from many discussions, interviews, on-site visits, original research, and other studies and reports. Each point of contact provided a unique perspective and validated a strong belief that a collaborative approach to expanding and celebrating the Corridor's arts, culture and history would not only build the region's attraction for visitors but enrich the local quality of life.

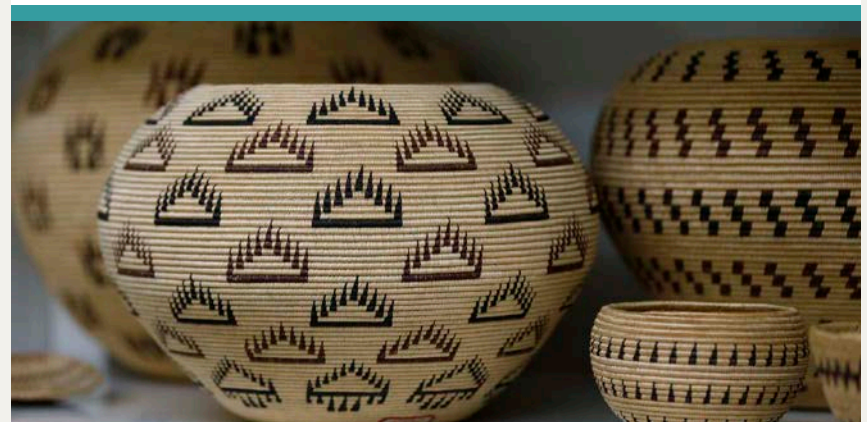
Travel Nevada research, including a custom Zartico report for the Cultural Corridor, provided many valuable insights into visitor behaviors which will be discussed further in this plan. Additional insights stem from the consultants' June 2023 3D Tourism Development Survey, analyzing responses of more than 5,700 travelers who had requested Travel Nevada trip information. The 3D Survey findings identified key traveler personas and other insights that point to effective targeting, communications, and development strategies. Travel Nevada and a 3D Working Group of state and federal leaders provided ongoing oversight and input.

3D STEERING COMMITTEE

Our Team

MEMBERS

- Eric Brooks, Arts & Culture Program Manager, Visit Carson City
- Brian Fitzgerald, President, Carson Valley Arts Council
- Arika Perry, Executive Director, St. Mary's Art Center, Virginia City
- Josh Bonde, Director, Nevada State Museum
- Kristy Dial, President, Nevada Artists Association
- Melissa Elges, Chief of Staff, Douglas County
- Anna Freeman, Arts and Culture Supervisor, Carson City Parks, Recreation & Open Space
- Jake Houston, Owner, Houston Boot Co.
- Quest Lakes, Director, Resident Artist Program in Silver City
- Debra Lang, Volunteer, Carson Valley Visitors Authority
- Gretchen Lavach, Owner, Gallery of the West
- Pamela Litka, Marketing & Community Relations Manager, Visit Carson Valley
- Dennis Little, Director, Carson Valley Museum/Cultural Center
- Spike McGuire, Executive Director, Brewery Arts Center
- Joe Milazzo, Artist, Milazzo Artworks
- Jen Nalder, Director, Main Street Gardnerville
- David Peterson, Executive Director, Visit Carson City
- Bobbi Rahder, Museum Director, Stewart Indian School Cultural Center and Museum
- Nikki Rudelbach, Economic Vitality Manager, Douglas County
- Debra Soule, Executive Director, CONNECTIONS Central
- Teri Sweeney, Artist, Teri Sweeney Art
- Todd Tuttle, Tourism Director, Virginia City Tourism Commission
- Maggi Vandenburg, Director of Sales, Carson Valley Inn



THE CULTURAL CORRIDOR

KEY FINDINGS & INSIGHTS



KEY FINDINGS AND INSIGHTS

This plan draws upon Travel Nevada's extensive research program, including the 3D Tourism Development Survey created for this project.

To develop additional insights for the Corridor's unique geography, which encompasses parts of three counties, Travel Nevada also commissioned a custom report from geolocation data provider Zartico. A July 2023 study by OmniTrak reports findings for the entire Reno-Tahoe Territory, which also includes Nevada's Lake Tahoe destinations and the Reno area.



CUSTOM ZARTICO REPORT

The Zartico report analyzed activity of digital devices in the region from Nov. 1, 2022- Oct. 31, 2023, yielding the following insights:

- Nearly all of the Corridor's visitors (86%) are Nevada residents, with most (71%) coming from Washoe and Douglas counties and another 2% from Storey County. This insight underscores the vital importance of connecting the region's residents with Cultural Corridor experiences, both to attract them as visitors and engage them in recommending

the Corridor to friends, family and other visitors.

- Of the 14% who came from another state, most (62%) were from California. The top origin markets were Sacramento, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, also key markets for the Lake Tahoe region.
- Though out-of-staters represented just 14% of visitors, they accounted for 29% of the Corridor's visitor spending.
- The study also found that 36% of the visitor devices seen in Carson City, Gardnerville, or Genoa also were observed in the city of Reno. A total of 12% also were observed to visit from the Las Vegas Strip.
- The Corridor's casino visitors included far more out-of-staters, with 54% from California and 11% from Nevada. Texas, Oregon, and Arizona each accounted for 4% of visitation. Targeting these in-market casino visitors can be a highly cost-effective way of reaching out-of-state visitors who already are inclined to visit the area.
- Out-of-state Corridor visitors were likely to connect with other Nevada experiences. A total of 68% of out-of-state devices seen in Carson City, Gardnerville or Genoa were spotted at other points of interest in



the Reno-Tahoe Territory, while 41% also were seen in the Las Vegas Territory.

- About 16% of Corridor visitor spending was for lodging, similar to the state average of 17%.

NEVADA TERRITORY VISITOR FACTS

Findings also were drawn from OmniTrak's study of Nevada Territory Visitor Facts from 2018-2022 for the Reno-Tahoe Territory. The insights apply to the entire territory rather than to the Corridor alone.

- Nearly 80% of visitors were on overnight trips, staying an average of 3.6 days. Those staying longer may be more likely to seek out experiences such as the Cultural Corridor after fulfilling the main purpose of their trip.
- Visitors expressed strong satisfaction with their trip experience, with a substantial majority planning to return within the next 24 months. This points to opportunities to engage returning travelers.
- While Gaming and Nature were identified as key interests for territory visitors, creation of a Cultural Corridor could fulfill latent interest in art and culture or attract a new category of visitors to the region.
- Friends/Relatives/Other Word of Mouth was the second-most frequently cited source for trip planning information. Again, this further validates the need to ensure that the region's residents are fully aware of Cultural Corridor products and experiences.

Full reports of both studies are available in the Appendices.

KEY FINDINGS

3D TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STUDY

Travel Nevada fielded a survey created by the 3D consulting team to a first-party database of about 75,000 emails from people requesting Nevada trip information. The office also stimulated response through organic and paid social and digital messaging. With 5,739 responses, the findings have a confidence level of 95% at +/- 2.5%.

- Respondents expressed significant interest in visiting the six Cohort 1 and 2 3D destinations as described on the survey. When presented with a description of the Cultural Corridor concept, 51% said they would be highly likely to visit.
- The study showed that about 75% of respondents were interested in overnighting in places other than Las Vegas or Reno-Tahoe if the destination offered activities or experiences they enjoyed. While the Cultural Corridor is located in the Reno-Tahoe region, its mix of smaller communities and open spaces are more similar to Nevada's rural areas.



- Respondents were most motivated to choose a destination because “It’s a beautiful place” (77.3%), “It offers a unique experience I’ve never had before” (64.4%), and “I like to travel to smaller, more remote places” (54.5%).
- Large numbers of respondents described themselves as Road Trippers (72%), Nature Lovers (64%), or Cultural Travelers (54%). The Cultural Corridor has potential to attract all three segments.
- Traveler personas reporting the highest spending per trip were Nightlife Seekers (\$1,296), Motorsports Enthusiasts (\$1,151), Family Fun Seekers (\$1,049), and Hook-and-Bullet Enthusiasts (\$1,005). While Cultural Travelers reported spending less than these categories, their per-trip spend of \$955 was still more than the average traveler spend of \$914.
- Given a choice of lodging types, 48.8% of respondents said the chance to stay in a historic lodging or resort would inspire them to travel. Nearly a quarter said they’d travel for a unique overnight experience like stargazing or a festival, and about the same share said they’d travel for unusual lodgings such as Airstream trailers, yurts,

or A-frames. Creating more unique lodgings in the Cultural Corridor could be a potential way to attract more overnight stays.

- More than half of respondents — across all age and income categories — said a destination’s sustainability practices were at least somewhat important to their choice of destinations.
- Beyond its arts, culture and historical attractions, the Cultural Corridor offers many activities respondents reported enjoying on their Nevada trips. These include scenic road trips, hiking, rockhounding, photography, wildlife viewing, hot springs, guided outdoor experiences, and more. These activities could be bundled with cultural experiences to provide a broader set of experiences to appeal to families or groups with varied interests.

The full 3D Tourism Development Survey is available in the Appendices.



INSIGHTS

FINDINGS FROM PUBLIC FORUMS

The consulting team's site visits to the Cultural Corridor in November, February, and March included public forums where community members were invited to share perspectives and ideas. More than 220 residents participated at sessions in Carson City, Minden, and Virginia City, weighing in on preliminary findings and major planning components as the 3D process evolved. Many 3D Steering Committee members attended as well.

The kickoff forum in the Nevada State Museum on Nov. 7, 2023, drew more than 110 attendees from across the Cultural Corridor region. Many shared perspectives on a wide range of exploratory questions using the Mentimeter online engagement platform and in follow-up discussions. Findings included:

- The most important reason for increasing tourism within the Cultural Corridor was to celebrate and preserve the region's cultural history. Attendees expressed extremely high agreement with this statement (4.6/5.0).
- They also shared high agreement with the opportunity to support development of the region's creative economy (4.0/5.0) and attracting more visitors (3.9/5.0). Generating local tax revenues and creating more business opportunities and jobs also were seen as highly important (3.7/5.0). Improving resident quality of life was an additional consideration. (3.5/5.0)
- The region's history was the most cited response for two separate questions: "What

connects Carson City, Carson Valley, and Virginia City?" and "If someone asked why they should visit the Cultural Corridor, what would you say?" Others noted the region was connected by mining, mountains, and ranching and that reasons to visit included the outdoors, scenic beauty, hiking, Basque culture, nature, and the arts.

- Many challenges were identified for Corridor development, including the need for more infrastructure to serve visitors as well as funding, promotion, communication, and collaboration among entities across the region.
- Some noted the importance of planning to mitigate impacts of more tourism and the need to portray the region's culture through multiple perspectives and an "equity lens."

A wide range of other thoughts and ideas were shared during public forums, including:

- Experiences throughout the Corridor should be authentic, rather than manufactured.
- The Corridor's creative economy should incorporate writers, artisans, culinary, and makers as well as fine artists and performance artists from throughout the region.
- Visitors could be connected with the region's experiences through a passport.
- Visitors to Reno and Lake Tahoe could be attracted as day trippers.
- It is vital to represent Washoe and other tribal culture and art in the Corridor.

WHY SHOULD THE CULTURAL CORRIDOR HAVE MORE TOURISM?

To create more business opportunities.

To support development of the region's creative economy.

To generate local tax revenues.

To celebrate and preserve the region's cultural history.

To attract more visitors.

To create more jobs.

To enhance resident quality of life.

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

Source: Source: Forum Participants at Nov. 7, 2023 public forum in Carson City, Mentimeter

SWOT ANALYSIS



A SWOT analysis identifies both internal factors — Strengths and Weaknesses — as well as external factors — Opportunities and Threats — that can either advance the work of the Cultural Corridor or hold it back. The SWOT Analysis for the Cultural Corridor was developed primarily through input from the 3D Steering Committee.

The Cultural Corridor's core strengths are its rich history and natural beauty. The region's unique mix of cultures, one-of-a-kind events, and rising arts and culture scene also are seen as strengths to build upon. The Corridor's proximity to popular destinations of Reno and Lake Tahoe and the potential for collaborating on visitor attraction and experiences was noted frequently.

Weaknesses to be addressed included accessibility for mobility-impaired visitors to historic buildings and infrastructure, especially in Virginia City. Some

noted that fragmentation within the arts community, along with a lack of structures for collaboration, could stand in the way of success. Avenues for consistent communication and coordination between different organizations are yet to be created. Some cautioned that the region's resources already may be stretched thin.

Nevertheless, the Cultural Corridor has significant opportunities. These include the potential to spark a collaborative

spirit among the region's arts community and growing energy for developing the local creative economy. Other possibilities include development of itineraries that showcase a mix of experiences linking the region and the creation of spaces where artists can live and work while building the region's creative capital.

Changes to the region's climate could threaten the timing and appeal of outdoor festivals and events. Other challenges are pervasive: a workforce shortage, a lack of affordable and available housing, a rising cost of living, and an aging resident population.



THE ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- An abundance of significant U.S. history – from the Comstock Lode to Mark Twain, the rise of the intercontinental railways, rock music lore, and even iconic '60s TV show Bonanza.
- Local commitment to preserving natural beauty.
- A creator culture that ranges from fine arts and galleries to live music and theatre to custom boot and hat makers.
- An abundance of authentic experiences and “best-kept secrets” – whether riding a train, learning about Basque history, or experiencing well-preserved Victorian architecture.
- Unique special events, such as Mark Twain Days, the Silver State Art Festival, Fourth Ward Film Festival, Dia de los Muertos, and Silver Palooza can be leveraged across the wider geographic regions of the Corridor.
- Proximity to the well-known destinations of Reno and Lake Tahoe and their visitors.
- Strong culture of collaboration among the Reno-Tahoe Territory DMOs.
- Proximity to large population centers in Northern California.

WEAKNESSES

- Low awareness of the breadth and depth of the region’s arts and cultural assets.
- Lack of collaboration and cohesion among local arts communities and organizations.
- Lack of structure for communication and coordination, particularly within the arts community.
- Lack of signage and wayfinding to help visitors understand how to navigate or interpret the region.
- Accessibility challenges in many historic buildings, particularly in Virginia City.
- Small promotional budgets.
- Seasonality of visitation and a need to deepen attraction in shoulder and off seasons.
- Local permitting issues can inhibit development of new visitor experiences.
- Small and medium enterprises (SME) already stretched too thin.

THREATS

- Lack of workforce for development and expansion.
- Increasing cost of living and lack of affordable housing.
- Aging resident population and outmigration of younger residents.
- Too many events in the same locations could strain the local community (i.e. Carson and Virginia City)
- Weather, winter snows close the businesses in Virginia City. Warming weather affects the ski season and summer fires affect the summer and fall tourism seasons.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Sparking a collaborative spirit among an arts community that is poised for development.
- Developing impact of the creative economy over the life of this plan and beyond.
- Presenting cultural tourism as a new year-round opportunity that can generate visitation during shoulder seasons.
- Creating regional itineraries to showcase art and culture and disperse visitors throughout the region.
- Continued integration of arts and culture into other local experiences, including outdoor recreation.
- Creation of spaces where artists can live, work and interact with visitors.
- Supporting new artists with training in starting and operating a business and micro loans.
- Gaining exposure from Travel Nevada’s Carson City Adventure Center, opening in 2025.

KEY FINDINGS AND INSIGHTS

SCENARIO TESTING

During the January 2024 meeting, members of the 3D Steering Committee took part in an exercise inviting them to consider three different strategic approaches for shaping the Cultural Corridor.

One option explored whether the region should play to its most powerful current strengths by focusing efforts — at least initially — on amplifying its famous history and heritage. Another option was to structure the Corridor from the start to showcase and nurture the region’s artists and artisans, galleries, museums, cultural centers, and other arts experiences.

A third alternative offered a hybrid of the first two scenarios, structuring the Cultural Corridor to offer a blend of experiences showcasing the region’s well-established history and heritage seamlessly with its growing art and culture scene.

While weaknesses and strengths were identified for all three scenarios, steering committee members ultimately endorsed Scenario 3, committing to shaping the Corridor as an experience encompassing the region’s arts and cultural experiences as well as its unique culture and history.

Even though Scenario 3 requires significant efforts to identify, brand, and integrate a wider range of assets and experiences, participants agreed that a richer diversity of experiences would improve the Cultural Corridor’s chances for success and build awareness faster.

What kinds of tourism opportunities/ travelers do you think would be the best fit for the Cultural Corridor?

DESTINATION
CULTURAL CORRIDOR

SCENARIO 1

Focusing efforts on amplifying the famous history and heritage in the region.

SCENARIO 2

Showcase and nurture the region’s artists and artisans, galleries, museums, cultural centers, and other arts experiences.

SCENARIO 3

Offer a blend of experiences showcasing the region’s well-established history and heritage seamlessly with its growing art and culture scene.

Scenario Analysis

THE CULTURAL CORRIDOR

THE DESTINATION PLAN



10YR VISION

FOR THE CULTURAL CORRIDOR

The Cultural Corridor's thriving arts and culture scene provides an exciting year-round reason to visit a Northern Nevada region filled with famous U.S. history, natural beauty, and charming towns.



10-YEAR VISION

HOW THIS VISION ALIGNS WITH THE TRAVEL NEVADA BRAND

Travel Nevada’s new brand line, “Get a Little Out There,” speaks to the state’s breathtaking natural beauty, thrilling adventures, and uncommon ways for experiencing the best life has to offer. This exciting positioning is a strong platform for promoting the Cultural Corridor’s vibrant mix of artistic, cultural and historical experiences as well as its outdoor spaces and natural features. The craggy landscapes of the Sierra Nevada provide a magnificent and inspiring backdrop for a full range of Cultural Corridor pursuits, including:

Arts: The region’s dramatic landscapes, from its dusty deserts to the High Sierra, and its resilient people, flora, and fauna have inspired countless artists, writers, musicians, performers, makers, and photographers. The essence of the Cultural Corridor is expressed in the region’s many studios, galleries, performance venues, and shops, as well as in dining and drinking establishments and special events.

Culture: Since before recorded history, the Corridor region has attracted a mix of people due to its natural resources and beauty. Prior to European settlement the region was home to Native American tribes, including the Numu (Northern Paiute) and the Wašičiw (Washoe) people. The Gold and Silver Rush, construction of the transcontinental railways, and the rise of the ranching economy brought new waves of people from around the globe. This rich mosaic of people and cultures has fostered a unique blend of festivals, food, performances, traditional crafts, music, and ceremonies.

History: Exploring the vast expanses of the Eastern Sierra and high desert terrain, visitors can discover historical sites and experiences that tell tales of the state’s adventurous past and its earliest cultures. These connections to history offer a unique perspective on of the challenges and triumphs of those who shaped the region as it is today.

THE DESTINATION PLAN



GOALS AND PRINCIPLES OF THIS PLAN



OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

Stewardship and Inclusivity

Throughout the implementation of this plan, the three primary Corridor Communities should prioritize the principles of stewardship and inclusivity in all aspects of communication and implementation.

i. Integrate stewardship into the Cultural Corridor identity to express the region's commitment to long-term sustainability and the preservation and protection of the resources that define the Corridor.

ii. Involve the art and culture community in developing creative approaches to sharing and showcasing the regions priorities around stewardship, inclusivity, and creating a welcoming culture.

iii. Emphasize the importance and value of inclusiveness and welcoming in all Corridor communications, including ongoing messaging that educates residents on the benefits of tourism to Corridor communities.

Readiness and Responsiveness

iv. Prioritize collaboration between the destinations in the Corridor by establishing and practicing protocols to communicate between destination leaders, corridor partners and with the public, both in preparation for and in response to adverse events that threaten the reputation, safety, or well-being of Corridor destinations individually or collectively.

PROJECT GOALS

The Corridor's application to participate in the 3D Project identified the following goals:

- Connect the arts and heritage destinations through branding and marketing to increase the number of cultural travelers coming to Virginia City, Carson City, and Carson Valley.
- Strengthen the economic viability of existing artists; art studios; and arts, culture and heritage businesses and organizations in the Virginia City, Carson City, and Carson Valley region by increasing visitation to regional arts and heritage destinations.

At the conclusion of the consultation process, Travel Nevada recommends the following SMART Goals:

Community Goal

By the end of Year 2, recruit at least ten arts organizations and businesses, individual artists, artisans, makers, photographers, writers, and performers within the Corridor region to form a sustainable and inclusive alliance that serves as the basis for a regional arts and heritage

destination that can be branded and marketed to increase the number of cultural travelers visiting Virginia City, Carson City, and Carson Valley, and who will benefit from participation in the alliance.

Creative Economy Goals

Leverage the region's existing and emerging arts and culture resources to develop and market the Corridor to potential visitor segments identified in this plan with the aim to increase visitation to Corridor sites by 10% from a 2024 benchmark by 2034.

By 2034, facilitate creation and growth of arts and culture small businesses through growth in reported revenue adjusted for inflation by 10% as reported by participating partners from a 2025 benchmark.

By 2034, the Corridor region will experience a 20% increase in employment in the arts and culture sector as indicated by 5-digit NAICS codes. Fostering opportunities to expand this sector regionally will lead to enhancements in the visitor experience, expanded special events, and corridor-specific tour products, thereby increasing employment opportunities in the region and increasing the region's revenue.



HOW THESE GOALS WILL BE ACHIEVED

- **Establish a collaborative organizational structure to develop, market, and manage the Cultural Corridor.** Create a non-profit Alliance that includes representation from the region’s three destination marketing organizations, arts organizations, independent artists and artisans, performers and appropriate government agencies. This new organization will work collectively to provide leadership and direction to the Corridor, including development, coordinating branding, marketing, and management of a visitor experience that is representative of the entire region and evolves to meet community needs as well as new opportunities and challenges. This will be critically important to address the current fragmentation and lack of collaboration among the arts community. Building a successful, integrated Corridor experience will require a strong coordinated effort.
- **Identify sustainable funding.** Identifying sustainable funding for a Cultural Corridor organization is a critical requirement for supporting the success of this new engine for tourism-related economic development. Future possibilities could include fundraising events, voluntary visitor fees or contributions, designated fees on visitor activities, membership dues or allocation of a portion of local government revenues or DMO budgets. The Corridor can seek out additional state, federal and foundation grant funding to support ongoing development and leverage public-private partnerships to maximize available resources.
- **Build support for artists and arts-related small businesses.** Work collaboratively to create initiatives within the Corridor to elevate individual artists, arts collectives, and arts and culture businesses, thereby increasing economic and employment opportunities for local residents in the arts and culture space.

- **Identify a memorable, engaging brand and name to amplify awareness of the Cultural Corridor.** It is vital to establish a compelling brand for this new visitor offering to build awareness, inspire referrals, and to differentiate it from other cultural tourism destinations. The most successful trails and experiences across the U.S. all carry easy-to-remember names that rapidly communicate a fun, interesting, or elevated experience. Inspiration can be found in Oregon’s “Hood River Fruit Loop,” the “Kentucky Bourbon Trail,” or the “Connecticut Art Trail” and the “Southern Literary Trail” While the “Cultural Corridor” has been a convenient placeholder for planning purposes, the name is generic and does not convey a sense of place or the region’s unique attributes.
- **Build the Cultural Corridor’s market position through consistent messaging.** Rather than a generic shotgun approach, targeted communication efforts should reinforce the unique opportunity to experience a wealth of year-round artistic, historical, heritage and cultural experiences in a scenic region in Northern Nevada — and communicate the Corridor’s name and brand at every opportunity.
- **Link arts and cultural experiences throughout the Cultural Corridor.** The Cultural Corridor is rich in



artistic, cultural and historic experiences but navigating them and understanding their scope and context can be challenging for visitors. By creating cohesive wayfinding, itineraries, a comprehensive event calendar, and guided experiences, Corridor partners can make it easy for busy visitors to plug into their vibrant collection of arts, cultural offerings, and events.

- **Connect visitors with ways to support and engage with local artists, businesses, and cultural organizations.** Establish occasions — such as periodic gallery walks, tours of artists’ home studios, auctions or fairs, classes or workshops — allowing visitors to experience and purchase the work of local artists, artisans and makers. A digital guide or app for the region could connect art and culture lovers with artists’ and makers’ transactional websites and share stories to help visitors develop an emotional connection with the artists and with the destination.
- **Direct 3D grant funding toward projects that will support Corridor development.** Prioritize projects that support development of needed organizational structure and capacity, equip arts, cultural, and historic organizations to grow by improving their ability to attract and serve cultural travelers, and build awareness for the Corridor among residents and visitors alike.

THE TARGET VISITOR

Travel Nevada research, including insights from the custom Zartico report commissioned for this plan, point to a three-part strategy for attracting visitors to the Cultural Corridor.

- Inspire multi-day visitors to Lake Tahoe and Reno to enhance their trip by exploring a new arts, culture, and history trail.
- Inspire residents throughout the region to explore an exciting new attraction in their own backyard — and bring their guests.
- As the Corridor develops and awareness grows, widen the aim to cultural travelers, especially in Northern California population centers.

Why these visitors are right for the Cultural Corridor:

While DMOs often are reluctant to deploy marketing activities in-market, this strategy recognizes that interest in a brand-new, developing offering like the Cultural Corridor can grow fastest by connecting with the people who are most likely to visit. That includes residents of surrounding communities, as well as the millions of visitors who already are in-market visiting Lake Tahoe or Reno — or are passing through on road trips. This approach also recognizes the reality of the region's small marketing budgets.

In-market tactics aimed at inspiring visitors to add an activity are much less complicated and costly than campaigns enticing visitors to travel many hours from home. Moreover, tactics created for in-market visitors also can inspire locals. With locals making up 45% of the Corridor's current visitors, they — and their guests — represent an important audience

for the Corridor's curated trail of attractions and ongoing arts, cultural and historical experiences. It is important to remember that Zartico found in-market casino travelers were likely to be among the highest spenders and do more activities.

As the experience of the Cultural Corridor solidifies and awareness grows, it will be important to invest in attracting higher-spending cultural travelers beyond the local region, especially in identified target markets such as Sacramento and San Francisco. Travel Nevada and local DMO marketers are encouraged to leverage this opportunity as soon as it is feasible. Over time, a vibrant Corridor filled with engaging arts and cultural experiences could become one of the main reasons for visitors to choose Northern Nevada for their next trip.

In shaping marketing communications, it will be important to keep these audiences in mind:

High-Potential Personas Identified in the 3D Study

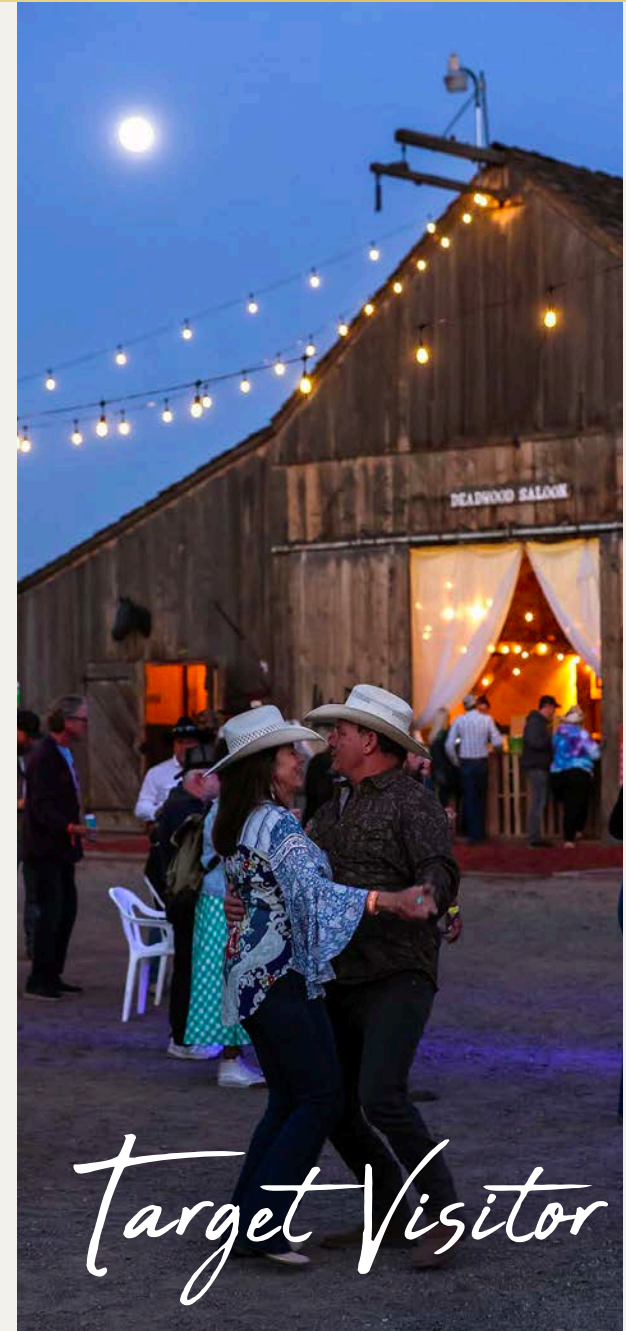
- The Road Tripper
- The Nature Lover
- The Cultural Traveler

Geographic Segments

- Visitors to Reno and Lake Tahoe
- Residents of the Reno-Tahoe region
- Visitors from Northern California
- Other Nevada residents

Thematic Visitor Segments

- Art and culture
- Museums and historic sites
- History and heritage
- Nature
- Casino (to reach in-market out-of-state visitors)



FROM CONCEPT TO REALITY

CREATING THE CORRIDOR

Today's Cultural Corridor is a concept built upon a belief that the region's growing arts and cultural offerings can be integrated with its famous history and museums of the Western experience and the region's burgeoning outdoor recreation into an exciting new attraction for Northern Nevada. Initially, the region's strong history and heritage attractions will be leveraged to drive interest in the destination's lesser-known arts and cultural offerings. Later stages of the plan recognize that new and expanded arts and cultural experiences will increasingly build the destination's reputation for art and culture travelers and that the focus will shift.

Much work lies ahead to bring this concept to life, and many decisions are yet to be made — including how to brand and name this new attraction so that it helps to market itself. This plan recommends engaging professional agency services to develop a compelling name and brand position.

Creating the Corridor also will require making choices about which experiences to highlight and which stories to tell to engage visitors in giving this new trip experience a try. It will be vital to curate the experience to make it easy and accessible for visitors



to explore all or part of the Corridor and to hook them with the most compelling reasons to take a look. As this plan is written, the Corridor's most powerful visitor assets are its ties to the past. With dedicated commitment and investment over time, the region's blossoming art and culture experience can become as well known and treasured.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Determine the qualifications required to be part of the cultural corridor.
- Care should be taken to highlight year-round offerings with regular hours rather than seasonal attractions or events.
- Create an asset list of all art, cultural, and heritage assets in the corridor. It will be important for community members within each of these destinations to have a say in identifying their marquee attractions.
- A necessary first step is to describe a path through the Corridor along a reliable route that showcases each of the three main destinations' most powerful and compelling assets.
- To inspire visitation, it is essential to provide visitors with a clear understanding of what the Corridor is, how to access it, and the benefits of visiting it.
- For the Corridor's core messaging, existing assets should be highlighted in each of the three destinations, avoiding too many choices that might dilute the impact of the list in year one, with a goal to increase products and experiences year over year.
- A digital app could be designed with layers to curate



and showcase the many other experiences to be found along the Corridor. For instance, one layer could display all of the Corridor's museums with a brief description and navigation to each. Other layers could identify galleries, watering holes, museums, live music venues, restaurants, shops, or signature events.

- A digital Corridor app could be designed to share alerts of special events.
- To support the Corridor's long-term viability, it will be important to weigh the value of monetizing a digital app and/or map.
- Identify a local tour operator(s) to build cultural tour experiences.
- Multi-day itineraries to entice guests to extend their stay.
- Charging private businesses for placement in the app or map could provide a long-term source of funding for the Corridor. During the startup phase, costs of participation could be free or low. But as the Corridor experience matures and with Travel Nevada and local DMOs promoting it, the value of being included in the app or map will climb and could well become a key part of a business' own promotional strategy. It will be key to establish a vetting process to select businesses highlighted in the Corridor.

LINKING THE DESTINATION DRIVERS

A CONCEPTUAL MAP

This conceptual map is a starting point for consideration. It is shared to illustrate the value of turning the Corridor concept into a tangible “product” that can be promoted and that visitors can understand and access. The map’s core points of interest could change over time as new experiences gain in importance. This map will be integral to many points of communication including a website, digital app, printed materials, cross-selling strategies, and wayfinding. A map can be digital or printed, or both, as long as it is dynamic and interactive (see Tassie Tasting Trail). Please note that the Carson Valley Arts Council has already created a Carson Valley Arts & Antique’s Trail Map. Carson Valley representatives from Carson Valley will need to determine if they want their “treasure map” absorbed into the Cultural Corridor or stand alone.

Here are examples of assets in each destination to build upon:

VIRGINIA CITY

- Virginia & Truckee Railroad
- St. Mary’s Art Center
- The Historic Fourth Ward School Museum and Archives
- Virginia City Cemetery
- Piper’s Opera House
- Gold Hill Hotel and Saloon Lecture Series
- Gallery of the West
- Territorial Enterprise Mark Twain Museum

CARSON CITY

- Carson City Murals
- Brewery Arts Center
- Stewart Indian School Cultural Center and Museum
- Nevada State Museum
- Western Nevada College Bristlecone Gallery

CARSON VALLEY

- The Copeland Community Arts Center, Minden
- Minden, Gardnerville, and Genoa Galleries
- Douglas County Historical Society Museum
- Dangberg Home Ranch Historic Park
- Mormon Station State Historic Park
- Buffalo Creek Art Center



THE CULTURAL CORRIDOR

OBJECTIVES AND ACTION STEPS



OBJECTIVE 1: DEVELOP COMPELLING PRODUCTS AND EXPERIENCES

INITIAL ACTION STEPS: YEAR 1-2

A. Develop a structure to guide the formation of the Cultural Corridor.

- i. Consider using Travel Nevada’s Destination Development grant award to fund an Executive Director to assist with the formation of a new non-profit alliance with representatives from each community.
- ii. Undertake an inventory of local artists, performers, and creatives throughout the corridor to ensure a robust and comprehensive understanding of existing arts and culture resources, establish a contact list for outreach and identify gaps and opportunities for growth and development. This inventory could be shared with event planners for booking purposes or with Corridor members to encourage networking.
- iii. Convene discussions in each of the Corridor’s three main destinations to identify candidates for each of the Corridor’s “sub-brands,” including museums, historic sites, galleries, murals, artist

studios, artisan shops, signature events, watering holes, restaurants, lodgings, or other categories.

- iv. Leverage established events’ popularity to promote the new Corridor with an engaging booth/exhibit, special itinerary, or packaged experience.
- v. Develop opportunities for locals to experience and engage with the Corridor to build community support.
- vi. Establish inclusion criteria and a process for partners to join in the Corridor. This may include a method by which interested participants can apply or be nominated and subsequently selected as a partner, as well as an annual renewal process.
- vii. Develop guidelines for Corridor partners to maximize their success as well as ensure a positive and authentic visitor experience.

i. Create an annual calendar of Corridor-themed cultural events — such as art fairs or markets, gallery or studio walks, literary readings, lectures, or musical performances — to create vibrant, ongoing, and reliable year-round arts and culture experiences. Ensure that all carry the Cultural Corridor brand.

ii. Consider developing an annual or periodic “Local Made” event showcasing local artists and makers. Palisades Resorts has a “Made in Tahoe” event and Reno’s Wandering Wyld Night Market could serve as an inspiration. The event could roam through corridor communities to add a unique value, like the San Diego Pop-Up Maker Markets.

iii. Taking a cue from the Brewery Arts Center Murals & Music festival and the long running Jazz and Beyond event, develop experiences throughout the Corridor that combine interactive art opportunities with live music and crafted culinary and beverage offerings.

MID-TERM ACTION STEPS: YEAR 3-5

B. Create an immersive art experience across the Corridor through steady growth of the region’s inventory of art experiences.



OBJECTIVE 1: DEVELOP COMPELLING PRODUCTS AND EXPERIENCES

iv. Expand opportunities for visitors and locals to take part in interactive arts programs, whether in nonprofit cultural centers or in local schools, community centers, libraries, or at events. For example: art classes, cooking classes (Basque and/or Nevada Indigenous cuisine), visiting artist studios, street busking (see city of Napa’s busking program), and/or walking tours (see Ely’s mural walking tour for inspiration).

v. Build on the region’s cinematic history by supporting events that provide opportunities for modern day filmmakers such as the Carson City Shorts film competitions or the Fourth Ward School’s film festival.

vi. Packaged experiences: self-drive and/or guided tours (See Blue Walk which packages art experiences into European group tourism packages.)

vii. Develop themed trails by artist disciplines – a Mark Twain literary trail inspired by the “Southern Literary Trail”.

viii. Support local performing arts groups and shows, such as the Chatauquans who perform at the Dangberg Ranch.

ix. Support and engage with local tribes in preserving their arts & culture through indigenous festivals, crafts, and arts & cultural experiences.

C. Develop signature initiatives to elevate the Corridor’s reputation and build stronger support for developing art and culture at the community level.

i. Develop an annual, regionwide signature event to generate enthusiasm and awareness of the Corridor. Consider using a theme that each community can execute in its own way to reflect local creativity and culture.

ii. Partner with Nevada Arts Council’s Creative Aging initiative on their “All Ages Arts Education” program bringing together multiple generations to share art activities and learning experiences. PALETTE, Promoting Art for Life Enrichment Through Transgenerational Engagement provides a foundation to build upon.

D. Foster creation of guided experiences linking arts and cultural offerings to the region’s compelling history and outdoors.

i. Support development of walking, bus or trolley tours and other guided experiences to serve visitors and connect them with the Corridor’s many assets. These efforts can be structured to generate earnings for nonprofits or entrepreneurs.

ii. Recruit a cadre of well-informed local guides whose services can be offered and compensated on platforms such as “Tours by Locals” or “Get Your Guide.”

iii. Develop walkable, bikeable (Art Along the Way) or drivable itineraries for self-guided experiences (Hudson River School Art Trail).

iv. Create a mix of downloadable self-guided tours or narratives to deliver meaningful experiences without an in-person guide. Consider sharing this content from a Corridor mobile app.



OBJECTIVE 1: DEVELOP COMPELLING PRODUCTS AND EXPERIENCES

E. Work with local communities and partners outside the arts to develop and implement an “Art in All Policies” approach.

- i. Advocate for arts and culture preservation as an element in county/municipal plans and strategies.
- ii. Communicate to stakeholders the benefits of arts and culture for well-being and quality of life to build support for the Corridor and gain a seat at the table in community decision-making.
- iii. Integrate strategies to support arts and culture entrepreneurship with local business license division or county clerk offices.
- iv. Consider creative ways to increase visibility and accessibility for the arts by linking the arts with other activities taking place in the corridor, like transportation, trails and housing. Examples include “Bike Month Art” in partnership with local cycling advocacy group Muscle Powered or “Art in the Garden” with local UNR Extension Master Gardeners.
- v. Collaborate with City Planners to include art in already-established projects, e.g. William Street Redesign in Carson City.

vi. Work with developers to ensure that new housing or commercial projects are intentional in efforts to incorporate arts and culture into community design.

F. Revisit the attractions highlighted on the Cultural Corridor map to determine if changes are justified.

- i. Collect and assess data on visitation patterns to gain insight into the Corridor’s most powerful attractions.
- ii. Convene public forums to assess whether the initial anchor Corridor attractions have stood the test of time.
- iii. Incorporate changes with significant public support into all avenues of communication.

G. Take inspiration from Sun Valley’s homage to Ernest Hemingway to develop experiences from Mark Twain’s legacy, especially for writers.

- i. Develop workshops for writers and poets spread over multiple weekends. These can be patterned on the Olympic Valley Community of Writers workshop.
- ii. Consider expanding Mark Twain Days and offering more opportunities for short story authors or dramatic readings or interpretive performances.
- iii. Create “always-on” experiences like a Literary

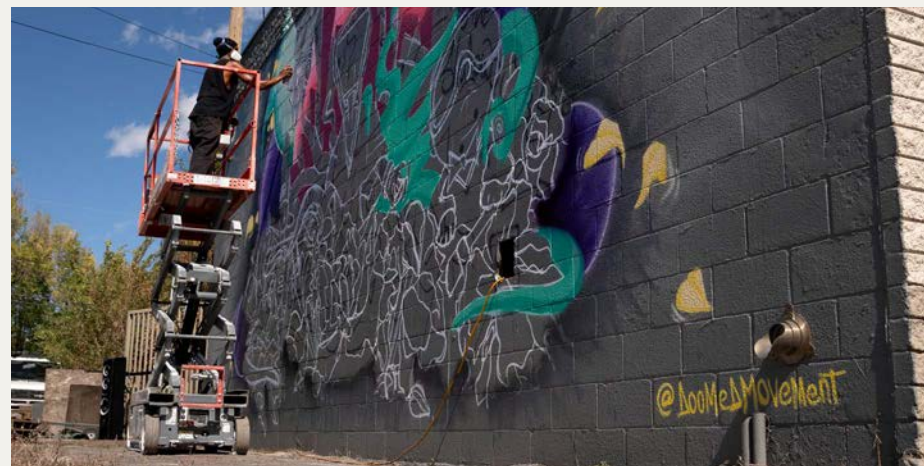
Walk that capitalizes on the area’s literary history and prestige. One model might be the homage to Harper Lee and others in Monroeville, Alabama, the “Literary Capital of Alabama.”

- iv. Explore opportunities to partner with local educational institutions, such as the University of Nevada writing program.

LONG-TERM ACTION STEPS: YEAR 6-10

H. Develop an arts incubator/residency program.

- i. The Incubator program can provide fiduciary oversight, financial management, and other administrative services to help build the capacity of cultural projects and emerging artists and arts groups.
- ii. Seek support for development of live-work studios in underused historic structures. Live-work studios can give artists an affordable space to live and create while giving visitors interesting and fun ways to interact with them.
- iii. Seek support or an endowment for a Cultural Corridor Artist-in Residence program bringing in different disciplines of artists and artisans to create, teach, and inspire visitors and locals.



In September 2024, nearly two dozen local, national and international artists will join in Carson City’s three-day Murals & Music festival to paint murals throughout the city. While the artists are painting, musicians will be playing in concerts at the Brewery Arts Center and at locations where murals are coming to life. The festival also will include docent-led mural tours, artist lectures and talks, children’s art activities, and interactive mural painting with the community. Corridor leaders should look for ways to extend the Murals and Music Festival throughout the region.

OBJECTIVE 2: DEVELOP PROMOTIONAL STRENGTH

INITIAL ACTION STEPS: YEAR 1-2

A. Establish a compelling name and unified brand for the Corridor to generate awareness and encourage visitation.

i. Engage professional agency services to develop the Corridor’s brand position and a memorable name that identifies the experience and communicates a sense of place.

ii. Establish a branded trail that connects the region and leads visitors to and through the Corridor. Find inspiration in the Kentucky Bourbon Trail, the Colorado Creative Corridor, and the Connecticut Art Trail, Pueblo’s Creative Corridor Itineraries. See CREATING THE CORRIDOR, p. xx, for specific recommendations.

iii. Convene discussions in each of the Corridor’s three main destinations to select the five or six most compelling (art, culture, history, heritage, performance, maker) experiences that best represent their community and its place within the Corridor during the project’s development.

B. Develop digital solutions to curate Corridor offerings, inspire visitation, guide visitors to desired experiences, and generate visitor spending.

i. Secure professional services to develop a Corridor website and app that can connect with partner websites and serve as the “call to action” for all Corridor marketing activities.

ii. Develop a layered digital map to showcase and curate the many Corridor experiences and make them easy to access. Layers from the main Corridor map could display the region’s museums or galleries, artisan shops, artist studios, historic sites, watering holes, restaurants, etc., and provide a user with vital information for each.

iii. Provide ways for users to sign up for notifications of upcoming events or special offers.

iv. Consider incorporating a transactional feature allowing users to buy tickets, make donations, or complete other purchases from the website or app.

v. Consider incorporating artificial intelligence to simplify updates for app or map information.

vi. Create an annual calendar of Corridor-themed cultural events — such as art fairs or markets, gallery or studio walks, literary readings, lectures, or musical performances — to create vibrant, ongoing, and reliable year-round arts and culture experiences. Ensure that all carry the Cultural Corridor brand.

C. Market to artists, artisans, performers, writers and other arts and culture professionals and organizations to activate them as partners in the Corridor.

i. Undertake efforts to outreach to potential corridor partners and build excitement around participation and benefits.

D. Market to the cultural travelers in your own backyard.

i. Secure professional services to develop and produce in-region tactics to inspire Reno and Tahoe



OBJECTIVE 2: DEVELOP PROMOTIONAL STRENGTH

visitors, casino visitors, regional residents, and passing road trippers to explore the Corridor.

ii. Collaborate with local DMOs and other Reno-Tahoe Territory partners to share in-region marketing messages to provide ancillary experiences for their visitors.

MID-TERM ACTION STEPS: YEAR 3-5

E. Collaborate with the Reno and Lake Tahoe DMOs on initiatives to build the entire region’s reputation for appealing arts and cultural experiences.

i. Establish an ongoing dialogue among regional DMOs and arts organizations to identify possibilities for larger regional arts experiences.

ii. Identify ways the Cultural Corridor’s art and culture offerings, artists, and artisans can be incorporated into programming and events in Lake Tahoe and Reno.

iii. Seek support for sharing the Cultural Corridor site on Reno and Lake Tahoe websites.

F. Expand proactive marketing outreach to key target markets and audiences.

i. Once the basics for the Corridor are established and as the budget grows, consider marketing cross-Corridor events in larger nearby markets, especially Sacramento and San Francisco through social media campaigns, tv, radio, and billboards.

ii. Maximize opportunities to reach cultural travelers in high-potential geographic markets through Travel Nevada’s marketing matching grants program.

iii. Collaborate with DMO partners to target a PR strategy to media catering to cultural travelers, art lovers, music lovers, and Western history. Recruit visiting journalists for overnight experiences to explore the entire region.

LONG-TERM ACTION STEPS: YEAR 6-10

G. As the Corridor grows in strength and fame, broaden targeted marketing outreach.

i. Identify opportunities to attract domestic and international group travelers by attending industry trade shows.

ii. Broaden the PR strategy to target larger travel and general interest media.

iii. Consider increasing marketing spend to generate more visitation from the highest-potential markets.

Houston Boot Co. crafts an in-market promotional strategy as rugged and distinctive as the leather boots and hats they sell in the historic heart of Virginia City. This artisanal bootmaker leverages the town’s rich Wild West heritage to create an unforgettable brand experience. The building’s weathered wood facade, adorned with antique spurs and cowboy paraphernalia, is an homage to the town’s past. Through its large storefront windows, visitors can often view artisans meticulously handcrafting custom boots and hats, providing an irresistible draw for passersby. The shop also is active on social media, sharing the stories behind each boot and the craftsmanship that goes into them.



OBJECTIVE 3: DEVELOP VISITOR INFRASTRUCTURE

INITIAL ACTION STEPS: YEAR 1-2

A. Establish wayfinding to identify the Corridor and to help visitors navigate it.

- i. Secure professional resources to develop a wayfinding plan that guides visitors through the Corridor and identifies participating sites, businesses, activities, and events.
- ii. Consider establishing Travel Nevada’s new Carson City Adventure Center as the Corridor’s official “Information Station” to communicate the offering to hundreds of thousands of visitors.
- iii. Provide displays — such as a map, video or model — at the most-visited Corridor sites to inspire visitors to seek out other Corridor experiences. These displays can provide ways for private businesses to be included, potentially for a fee.
- iv. Consider incorporating vestiges of the region’s past into wayfinding or presenting wayfinding in artistic ways. For example, in the heart of the

Colorado Creative Corridor, the town of Carbondale has a spinning sculpture representing its environs.

- v. Work with local planning agencies and the Nevada Department of Transportation to identify signage and best routes for directing visitors to experience the Cultural Corridor.

B. Share local art and creativity through recruitment of “Showcase Partners” throughout the Corridor.

- i. Identify “Showcase Partners” — including nonprofits, eateries, shops, and beverage establishments — whose proprietors are willing to showcase the work of local artists and artisans and connect them with buyers.
- ii. Cultivate partnerships with venues to showcase the work of touring artists – musicians, theatrical performances, dance, and more. Consider Nevada Arts Council’s traveling exhibits or in-state companies such as Nevada Shakespeare Festival, who brings approachable adaptations of Shakespeare’s works to

Nevada communities.

- iii. Incorporate a layer on the Cultural Corridor digital map or app to recognize “Showcase Partners.”
- iv. While a long-term strategy is being developed to develop artist housing, recruit community partners to provide short- to medium-term housing for visiting artists or artists in residence. This can be enriching for the host and also provide more opportunities for the artist and the community. Look to local partner Silver City’s Artist in Residence program for inspiration.
- v. Work with property owners to utilize vacant or underutilized storefronts in Corridor communities as “pop-up” galleries to display art and promote Corridor partners.
- vi. Develop a brand or insignia that participating partners can display at their place of business to identify themselves as members of the Corridor.



OBJECTIVE 3: DEVELOP VISITOR INFRASTRUCTURE

MID-TERM ACTION STEPS: YEAR 3-5

C. Build the Corridor's collection of assets.

i. Develop a plan to enhance the Corridor through ongoing acquisition of public art — whether sculptures, murals, or interactive art — including consideration of works by local artists.

ii. In cooperation with participating municipalities, participate in planning for placement of new art acquisitions. Where possible leverage existing community plans and encourage consideration of the arts in the development of new plans.

iii. Develop a program recognizing sponsorship of new art installations, noting both the artist and the sponsor(s).

iv. Foster community engagement with the arts by creating opportunities for the public to sponsor art installations (Alley Cats in Decatur, Alabama).

v. Create a comprehensive digital archive to conserve the Corridor's history, works of art, literary contributions, and cultural heritage.

vi. Integrate technology into cultural experiences to create virtual exhibitions, augmented-reality installations, and interactive digital displays. Not only will this share Corridor offerings more widely but will align the Corridor with contemporary trends in the arts.

LONG-TERM ACTION STEPS: YEAR 6-10

D. Develop new ways for cultural enthusiasts to embrace being an overnight guest.

i. Collaborate with DMO partners to create and promote lodging packages that include special arts and cultural experiences.

ii. Support development of unique lodging options — potentially in repurposed or historic spaces and buildings — that will inspire cultural travelers to prioritize a trip to the Corridor.

iii. Develop shared retail spaces, cooperatives, arts villages, maker spaces, and pop-up or seasonal markets to provide accessible opportunities for visitors to view and purchase locally made art. Work with municipal officials to identify vacant lots or buildings that would

be appropriate for this function. Check out the Market Village in Tionesta, PA for inspiration of a low-barrier way to implement this idea.

iv. Consider creating mobile spaces to create “unexpected” art experiences for visitors. This could include mobile markets, but also mobile studios. Direct visitors to the location of mobile assets.

E. Support opportunities to improve accessibility to historic sites and arts experiences.

i. Consider establishing microgrants to improve accessibility for the Corridor's historic structures and arts facilities.

ii. Work with local providers to develop art exhibits and cultural experiences that recognize and cater to the needs of differently-abled visitors, such as a sensory space or a narrated gallery.

F. Create opportunities to support up-and-coming “homegrown” artists through scholarships, apprenticeships, residencies or other programs.

i. Look for opportunities to partner with existing grantmaking organizations, arts benefactors, or educational institutions to develop and promote programs and initiatives that support emerging artists.



Matching \$55,000 in grants with donations and its own savings, the Carson Valley Arts Council is transforming a 1968 logging facility in downtown Minden into the new Copeland Community Arts Center. Listed on the National Register of Historic Buildings last year, the spacious industrial building has space for performances and community rooms and will be available for conferences and events. After the building was purchased by the Carson Valley Arts Council in 2008, fundraising netted a \$35,000 T-Mobile Hometown Grant and a \$20,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. The Carson Valley Arts Council has a long history of creating arts experiences for young people of all backgrounds and abilities.

OBJECTIVE 4: DEVELOP ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH

INITIAL ACTION STEPS: YEAR 1-2

A. Develop a formal organizational structure to guide Corridor development.

- i. Form a nonprofit alliance to shape Corridor development, set policy, build membership, and secure and manage future resources. See ORGANIZE AN ALLIANCE, page xx, for specific recommendations.
- ii. Establish a representative board of directors and develop bylaws for governance.
- iii. Enter into a two-year contract with a professional resource to develop the Alliance and to lead execution of the Year 1-2 initiatives described in this plan.
- iv. With input from Corridor partners, create a 5-year strategic plan for the organization.

B. Engage local communities in shaping the Corridor.

- i. Seek to identify all stakeholders — including

artists, artisans, performers, writers, and arts and cultural organizations — to identify a base of support and generate broad participation in developing the Corridor. Build upon the Cultural Corridor Stakeholder Map to identify key players.

- ii. Establish regular forums, online platforms, and other experiences to provide residents with opportunities to voice opinions, suggest ideas, provide support, and actively participate in shaping the region's cultural landscape.
- iii. Involve the community as “art owners” in efforts to build the Corridor's art collection and to foster a sense of inclusion.
- iv. Encourage local artists and cultural organizations to recognize the region's diverse mix of cultures and ethnicities with diverse and inclusive programming and art acquisitions.
- v. Work in partnership with historical and cultural arts districts in Virginia City and Carson City and support development of a district in Carson Valley.
- vi. Because people seldom appreciate that which

they do not understand, look for opportunities to integrate education and interpretation into regional arts and culture assets to garner the support of locals and visitors alike.

C. Develop sustainable funding to support a thriving Corridor organization.

- i. Seek 3D grant funding to kickstart the project and execute Year 1-2 initiatives described in this plan.
- ii. To prepare for Year 3 and beyond, establish reliable revenue streams to support Corridor development and a permanent full-time manager or director. See FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, page xx, for recommendations.
- iii. Use 3D funding to engage a grant writer to identify and develop state, federal, and foundation funding opportunities to support programs and ongoing organizational needs.

MID-TERM ACTION STEPS: YEAR 3-5

D. Find ways to connect with organizations and people who are not yet prioritizing art and culture.



OBJECTIVE 4: DEVELOP ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH

i. Develop partnerships with local high schools and community colleges to provide students with opportunities to engage with professional artists.

ii. Create a program that pairs a local business with an artist. This creates a win-win-win: The artistic installation showcases the artist, draws people through the business's door, and contributes to an immersive art experience for visitors.

iii. Consider establishing a tent or space at arts events where only children can enter and buy lower-priced pieces of original art.

E. Develop a Cultural Corridor Volunteer Cooperative.

i. Create a forum on the Cultural Corridor website for event promoters seeking volunteers, as well as for people seeking volunteer opportunities.

ii. Develop opportunities to recognize and appreciate volunteers who support the arts and culture initiatives taking place in the corridor.

LATER-STAGE ACTION STEPS: YEAR 6-10

F. Align regional arts and culture organizations (similar to The Eastern Sierra Arts Alliance) within the Corridor to advance art and culture to increase influence and potential for funding support.

i. Test the idea with local artists, cultural organizations, businesses, educational institutions, government representatives, and community members.

ii. Research and identify potential funding sources, including local, state, and federal grants, to establish a case for change.

iii. Track progress of 5-year strategic plan.

G. Develop an outstanding artists recognition program.

i. Develop a Young Artists under-30 recognition program for rising artists, artisans, writers, performers and other creators in the Corridor.

ii. Arts at Every Age generational arts initiative to recognize lifetime contributions to the arts.

iii. Recognize patrons and supporters for their contributions to a thriving arts and culture community.



ORGANIZE AN ALLIANCE

For the Corridor to achieve its full potential, it will be vital to create an organizational structure capable of managing it. The true work of destination development is not in creating an exciting concept, but in putting it into action.

To ensure the Corridor's long-time viability, it also will be important to develop strategies for funding and managing its activities. For instance, the essential tasks of developing a Corridor website and app, achieving agreement on the approach, and organizing the content will require effort beyond what any of the Corridor's three DMO partners are equipped to manage.

For all of these reasons, this plan recommends that Corridor partners form a nonprofit Alliance to steer policy and strategy for Corridor development and management. This plan also recommends that Corridor partners seek 3D funding for a two-year contractual resource to execute on the Year 1-2 initiatives in this plan to build the Corridor as a viable tourism experience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Organize the alliance as a nonprofit membership organization. This will allow the organization to secure and manage grant funding and receive donations and dues while marketing and advocating for the arts, culture, heritage, history, and tourism.
- Develop a charter for the organization describing its goals and practices to create clarity about its



purpose and responsibilities of various categories of Corridor participants and partners.

- Develop bylaws establishing a representative Board of Directors, a process for selecting them, and their decision-making authority.
- Consider establishing a balanced 9-member board. This could include a DMO leader, an art and culture representative, and an elected leader from each of the Corridor's three main destinations. The elected leader potentially could be appointed by the County Commissioners of each of the three counties in the region.
- A 9-member board is small enough to make decisions and large enough to represent key interests across the Corridor. The odd number limits the potential for tie votes, although a

consensus approach to decision-making is highly recommended.

- Including an elected leader from each destination will provide transparency for local governments, heighten the importance of the organization, and potentially generate broader understanding and support for the Corridor.
- Prioritize identifying stable, growing sources of revenue to manage Corridor operations and promotion. See FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, p. xx, for possibilities.
- Consider holding monthly meetings during the Corridor's first two years to propel decision-making and guide the spend-down of 3D grant funding. Consideration could be given to a bimonthly or quarterly meeting schedule as the Corridor matures.
- Establish sub-committees or special interest committees (By region, by discipline, by event, etc...) to give Corridor members a way to participate and have a voice in the corridor.



THE CULTURAL CORRIDOR

HOW TO IMPLEMENT THIS PLAN



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

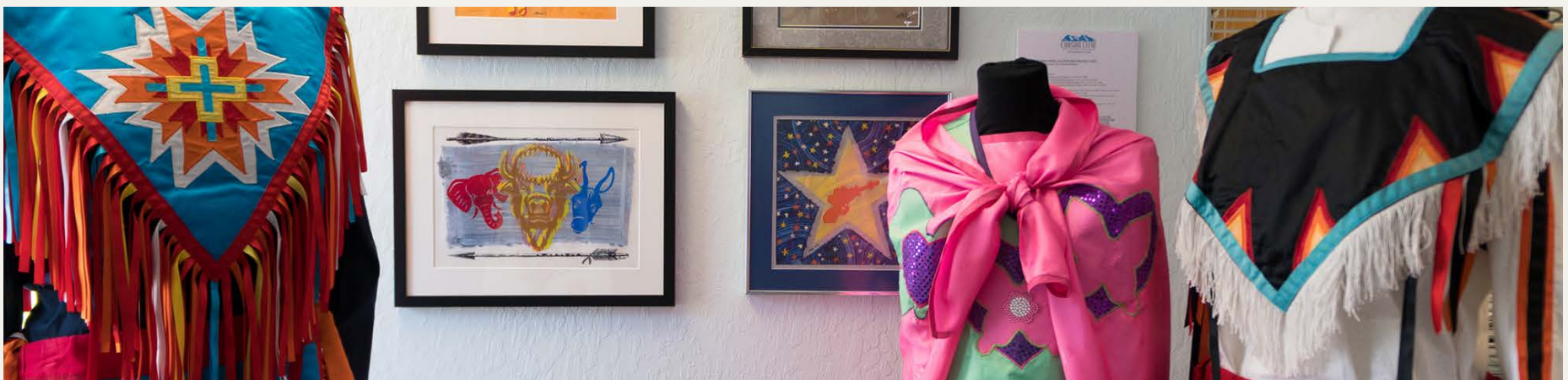
This plan’s success will depend upon strong partnerships among many organizations. It will also require these organizations and operators to take the lead on initiatives related to their work or interests. This list is not exhaustive, but provides a starting point for recruiting the partners who will fuel the growth and success of the Corridor.

Lead Organization	New Non-Profit Organization	A new Cultural Corridor Organization will serve as the lead entity, directing and prioritizing future efforts. The Organization will seek 3D funding to contract with an expert resource to support the Corridor’s initial development and devise a long-term solution for Corridor leadership and management.
DMO Organizations	Virginia City Tourism Commission, Visit Carson City, Visit Carson Valley	The region's three DMOs will catalyze Corridor development by actively promoting and enhancing its offerings. Their collaboration with local stakeholders and partners is essential for creating a vibrant and sustainable art and culture experience for visitors.
Arts Organizations	Brewery Arts Center, Carson Valley Arts Council, St. Mary’s Art Center, Nevada Arts Council, Silver City Arts	Both regional and state art and culture organizations will be instrumental in shaping and enriching the Corridor's cultural tourism landscape. Their creativity, collaboration, and commitment to preserving and promoting local culture will contribute significantly to the overall success of cultural tourism initiatives. Their access to funding and grants also will be vital to furthering the Corridor's objectives.
Museums	Virginia City, Carson City, Carson Valley	Museums in the Cultural Corridor are integral to the region's cultural tourism strategy. Their role in preservation, education, and providing immersive experiences contributes significantly to the overall appeal of a destination for cultural tourists.
Local Government	Carson City, Douglas County, Storey County	Local governments play a multifaceted role in fostering cultural tourism by creating a supportive environment, preserving heritage, facilitating collaboration, and actively supporting the destination and region’s cultural assets. Their efforts contribute to the sustainable development of cultural tourism, which benefits visitors and the local community.
Community Organizations, Non-profits, Clubs	Carson City, Gardnerville, Genoa, Minden, Silver City, Virginia City, Gold Hill	Community organizations serve as essential partners in implementing a cultural tourism strategy. They preserve cultural heritage, organize events, facilitate community engagement, and contribute to the overall sustainable development of cultural tourism. Their involvement can help create an authentic visitor experience and benefit the local community.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Experience Providers	Artists, Authors, Artisans, and Other Creators	Creators play multiple roles in implementing a cultural tourism strategy. They contribute to a destination's aesthetic appeal, cultural richness, and economic development. Their creativity and cultural contributions enhance visitors' overall tourism experience while supporting local quality of life.
Tourism Industry	Travel Nevada, Reno-Tahoe Territory	Travel Nevada and the Reno-Tahoe Territory provide various levels of support for tourism development in the destination. Travel Nevada provides funding for tourism development and multi-state marketing campaigns, while both organizations provide assistance with PR strategies and support at trade events.
DMO Partners	Reno-Sparks CVA, Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, Travel North Tahoe	Other local DMO partners can be essential referrers by providing their own visitors with recommendations for incremental trip experiences within the Corridor.
Academia	University of Nevada – Reno, Western Nevada College	The University of Nevada, Reno can provide a wide range of technical expertise in implementing everything from market research to economic analyses, creative support, and more. Western Nevada College's renowned Western Nevada College Musical Theater Company provides a top-notch performing arts experience.
Local Arts Businesses	Dance Studios, Painting Studios, Art Galleries	Provide accessibility to all arts disciplines.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Funding opportunities for development and promotion of local arts organizations have been limited. Local arts organizations typically fund their activities through the following strategies:

- Annual membership dues.
- Donations of money, time, and talent.
- Fee-based revenues from tours, classes, or events.
- Grants from state and federal agencies, including Travel Nevada and the Nevada Arts Council.

In contrast, Nevada's Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) typically have sustainable funding through Transient Occupancy Tax collected and allocated by local governments. These funds are available for promotional efforts to generate tourism spending.

FUTURE FUNDING

While the Corridor's startup activities can be supported with a Travel Nevada 3D grant, building the Corridor's long-term viability as community resource and a tourism destination will require a sustainable, growing source of funding. This could include any of the following:

- Membership dues from Alliance members.
- An annual allocation of funding from the three DMO budgets.

- An annual allocation of funding from county or local budgets, such as a dedicated share of a new lodging tax supporting art and culture.
- Grants from federal, state and foundation sources, such as the National Endowment for the Arts or the Nevada Arts Council.
- A rate structure for privately owned businesses to be listed in the Corridor app and map or other promotional materials. During the Corridor's startup period, rates could be waived or low.
- As the Cultural Corridor experience matures, a Corridor visitor fee on items such as event tickets or tours.
- Potential development of a Corridor-wide Business Improvement District that is funded by self-imposed fees on tourism- and arts-related business activities (similar to the funding model for the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority). This likely will require professional consulting services and may require restructuring the Corridor Alliance as an Authority.
- Revenues from Corridor-sponsored tours.
- Fundraisers.
- Endowments.



OTHER FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- As a 3D Project participant, the Cultural Corridor can apply for a significant share of a one-time \$2 million Travel Nevada fund to implement initiatives described in this plan.
- The membership of the 3D Working Group includes state and federal agency partners with resources that could help to advance the initiatives described in this plan.
- The Governor's Office of Economic Development and its partners offer many options to connect rural entrepreneurs with capital, business resources, and learning networks.
- Travel Nevada maintains an extensive list of funding opportunities for rural tourism development at travelnevada.biz/travel-nevada-partner-resources

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

The success of the Cultural Corridor 10-year Destination Plan will hinge on the region’s ability to address and overcome challenges.

Barrier	Challenges	Solutions
Lack of political/community alignment	This plan’s development will require support, commitment, and consensus among relevant tourism and art and culture organizations within each destination.	Continually work to educate and inform key stakeholders within each community and build support for a broader regional arts and cultural effort that can deliver benefits at the local level. Generate excitement around the project by showcasing early-stage successes and using first-person voices to note progress.
Alignment among the three destinations	It’s essential for each of the three DMOs — Virginia City Tourism Commission, Visit Carson City, and Visit Carson Valley — to continually align around a regional approach for tourism, arts, and culture.	Continually work to maintain alignment through regular consultations, collaboration, and participation in the Alliance.
Lack of alignment among history, arts, and culture organizations	Without the participation and collaboration of these key partners, it will be challenging to build a regional approach and an integrated experience for visitors.	Foster development of collaborative structures within each of the main destinations that can join in collaborations to advance the Corridor.
Sustainable funding	The Cultural Corridor needs sustainable funding to build marketing and organizational capacity, develop new experiences, and support outreach.	Use the 3D grant to execute on Corridor startup needs while developing a long-term funding strategy.
Lack of an organizational infrastructure to guide Corridor development	The Cultural Corridor lacks a structure for making decisions, securing grants or generating revenues, and managing strategic initiatives.	Create a representative nonprofit Alliance to guide decision-making and secure funding.
Resistance from the local community	Local communities may be concerned about the potential negative impacts of more tourism development. Overcoming potential resistance to events and visitors and gaining local support is crucial to developing a regional arts and culture plan. Local communities may also be concerned about the subject and/or nature of art installations.	Engage local communities in Corridor development and continually showcase examples of how art and culture enhance local quality of life. Care should be taken to ensure that initiatives align with local culture while inspiring acceptance.

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES AND THEMES

Developing a cohesive communication strategy will be essential for building the Corridor's reputation as a worthy tourism destination.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

- **Develop a Cultural Corridor brand.** Retain professional services to develop a memorable brand and name for the Corridor and its many art and culture assets, activities, and experiences.
- **Develop a Corridor microsite and app to communicate and curate the range of experiences in the 16-mile destination and inspire travelers to explore it.** Partners throughout the Corridor should share the website as a component of their own websites and use it as a "call to action" for promotions relating to the Corridor.
- **Develop narratives for the identified heritage, arts, and cultural themes.** Focus on the unique stories behind the region's museums, history and heritage sites, art and culture, events, culinary offerings, and unique places. Storytelling can give visitors a more insightful experience and create a



unique connection to the Corridor.

- **Generate awareness through partnerships.** Leverage the communications channels of partner tourism and arts organizations to develop awareness of Corridor offerings. Consider opportunities to partner with Lake Tahoe and Reno arts and tourism organizations to leverage exposure for the Corridor.
- **Foster development of an immersive art experience throughout the Corridor.** Encourage civic organizations, businesses, nonprofits, schools, religious institutions, land managers, and others to consider showcasing local art and culture to establish a unified sense of place across the Corridor, instantly communicating that the Corridor is a special place.
- **Promote stewardship through education.** Develop a uniform messaging campaign about experiencing art and culture responsibly in the region. Share messaging in ways that leverage the region's arts and culture assets.

COMMUNICATION THEMES

- **Highlight and emphasize the welcoming and inclusive nature of the Corridor.**
- **Connecting art and culture to history and heritage.** Find linkages between the Corridor's arts and cultural experiences and its well-known historical assets and diverse heritage to engage a wider range of travelers.
- **Enjoy experiential arts adventures.** Give visitors a reason to immerse themselves in the Corridor by offering opportunities to participate in arts

experiences. Possibilities include watching artists and artisans as they create, buskers, street art, participatory community arts experiences (Gardnerville's paint by number mural), and engagement in art classes or plein air painting experiences.



- **Gain deeper understanding of a community through its history, heritage and art.** Get to know the community deeper through its history, art, and culture. Opportunities to experience Basque culture, gain insight into Mormon history, experience life in a mining town, or understand the Great Basin tribal experience are compelling opportunities for cultural travelers, especially for those from outside the U.S.
- **Connect the Corridor with the region's other assets.** While the Corridor is full of fascinating experiences, painting a larger picture of what visitors can do can generate longer stays and build the region's attraction. Connect Corridor experiences to outdoor recreation through the Adventure Center, which will feature murals inspired by the local landscape. Corridor music and entertainment can be connected with nightlife and gaming in Reno. Possibilities for linking food and beverage experiences abound. Linking assets can increase their power of attraction.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

ECONOMIC GOAL

By branding, promoting and developing the Cultural Corridor to attract more visitors and spending, the region's businesses — especially those relating to arts, culture, history, and tourism — will generate higher revenues, and the number of these businesses will expand year after year.

INDICATORS

It is important to identify success measures that can be tracked and that point to ways the Corridor is building the region's visitor economy. An annual progress report can focus on numbers and narrative.

Overall:

- Through an annual business survey, evaluate whether Cultural Corridor businesses — especially those relating to arts and culture — are experiencing increasing revenue.
- Each year, track new business permits and total business permits, especially for businesses relating to arts and culture, to track the impact of the Corridor's creative economy.

Objective 1: Develop Compelling Products and Experiences

- Completion of branding and naming.
- Growth in the inventory of Corridor attractions, events and offerings, including tours.

Objective 2: Develop Promotional Strength

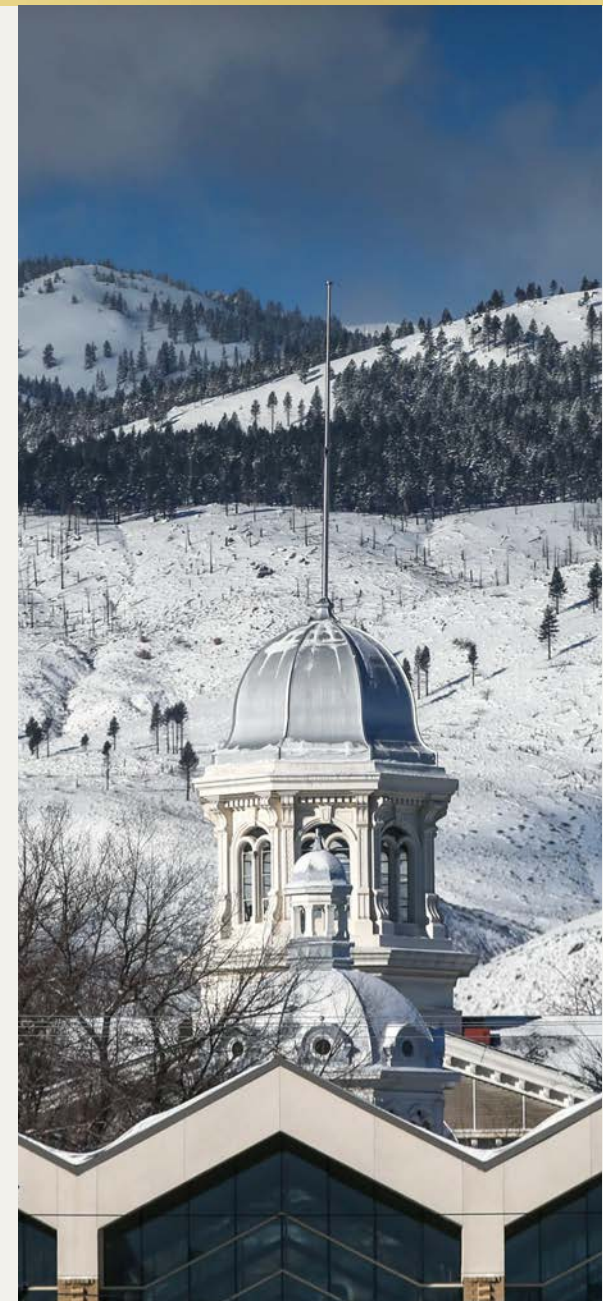
- Activity on Corridor website and app.
- Transactions on website and app (if applicable).
- Rise in visitor spending as tracked by Travel Nevada Zartico report (or equivalent).

Objective 3: Develop Arts and Culture Visitor Infrastructure

- Completion and maintenance of a wayfinding system.
- Growth in the Corridor's art collection, galleries and artists' studios.
- Creation of art incubators or work-live studios.
- Increase in number of creators participating in events and festivals throughout the year.

Objective 4: Develop Organizational Strength

- Rising revenues generated by the Alliance (excluding the 3D grant)
- Membership
- Partners



RESOURCES

The following are resources that may be helpful to Corridor partners in implementing the 10-year destination plan.

Arts and Culture

- Nevada Arts Council
- National Endowment for the Arts
- Nevada Humanities

Transportation

- Nevada Department of Transportation



Rural Economic and Community Development

- Governor's Office of Economic Development
- The Nevada Main Street program and Community Development Block Grants

Housing, Infrastructure, Broadband, USDA Rural Development, and Other Rural Services

- USDA Rural Development Programs and Services

Historic Preservation

- Nevada Trust for Historic Preservation
- Nevada State Historic Preservation Office
- National Park Service Historic Preservation Fund

Nevadans for Cultural Preservation Environmental Quality

- The Environmental Protection Agency
- Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Tread Lightly, and Leave No Trace

Federal Art and Culture

- National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)
- National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)



- Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)
- Department of Education - Office of Innovation and Improvement
- Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) - Office of Community Planning and Development

Academic

- University of Nevada - Reno - Economic data and planning

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Brenda Scolari	Director	Nevada Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs
Mary Ellen Kawchack	Chief Deputy Director	Nevada Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs
Rafael Villanueva	CEO	Nevada Division of Tourism
Nicole Orsua	Chief Industry Development Officer	Nevada Division of Tourism
Cortney Bloomer	Destination Development Manager	Nevada Division of Tourism
Kyle Shulz	Research Director	Nevada Division of Tourism

3D Working Group

Denise Beronio	Administrator	Nevada Division of Outdoor Recreation
Shari Davis	Director, Rural Economic and Community Development	Governor's Office of Economic Development
Miles Gurtler	BLM NV Recreation, National Conservation Lands & Tourism Lead	U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Tony Manfredi	Executive Director	Nevada Arts Council
Fred Steinmann	Director, University Center for Economic Development	University of Nevada, Reno

3D Advisory Group

Dan Thielen	Administrator	Nevada Division of Museums and History
Stacey Montooth	Executive Director	Nevada Indian Commission
Rebecca Palmer	Administrator	Nevada State Historic Preservation Office
Lucas Ingvoldstad	State Rural Development Director, Nevada	USDA

Cultural Corridor

3D Steering Committee

Josh Bonde	Director	Nevada State Museum
Eric Brooks *	Arts & Culture Program Manager	Visit Carson City
Kristy Dial	President	Nevada Artists Association
Melissa Elges	Chief of Staff	Douglas County
Brian Fitzgerald *	President	Carson Valley Arts Council
Anna Freeman	Art and culture Supervisor	Carson City Parks, Recreation & Open Space
Jake Houston	Owner	Houston Boot Co.
Quest Lakes	Director	Resident Artist Program in Silver City
Debra Lang	Volunteer	Carson Valley Visitors Authority
Gretchen Lavach	Owner	Gallery of the West
Pamela Litka	Marketing & Community Relations Manager	Visit Carson Valley
Dennis Little	Director	Carson Valley Museum/Cultural Center
Spike McGuire	Executive Director	Brewery Arts Center
Joe Milazzo	Artist	Milazzo Artworks
Jen Nalder	Director	Main Street Gardnerville

* Project Co-Lead

** Project Lead

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Arika Perry *
David Peterson
Bobbi Rahder
Nikki Rudelbach
Debra Soule
Teri Sweeney
Todd Tuttle
Maggi Vandenburg

Executive Director
Executive Director
Museum Director
Economic Vitality Manager
Executive Director
Artist
Tourism Director
Director of Sales

St. Mary's Art Center, Virginia City
Visit Carson City
Stewart Indian School Cultural Center and Museum
Douglas County
CONNECTIONS Central
Teri Sweeney Art
Virginia City Tourism Commission
Carson Valley Inn

Better Destinations Consulting Team

Cathy Ritter
Mitch Nichols
Carl Ribaldo **

Founder and CEO
President
President and Chief Strategist

Better Destinations
Nichols Tourism Group
SMG Consulting

* Project Co-Lead

** Project Lead

APPENDICES

- [Application for 3D Project](#)
- [3D Cultural Corridor Stakeholder Map](#)
- [3D Cultural Corridor Asset Inventory Work Sheet](#)
- [3D Tourism Development Study](#)
- [Custom Zartico Report for the Cultural Corridor](#)

A 10YR DESTINATION PLAN

FOR THE CULTURAL CORRIDOR

CREATED THROUGH THE TRAVEL NEVADA DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT DEMONSTRATION (3D) PROJECT AUGUST 2023

