

# SPORTS TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN + FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

## VISIT LAKE TAHOE

Visit  
**lake  
tahoe**

Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority



June 13, 2025

POWERED BY THE HUDDLE UP GROUP



June 13, 2025

Stuart Maas  
Director of Marketing & Conference Sales  
Visit Lake Tahoe  
169 Highway 50  
Stateline, NV 89449

Dear Stuart,

Thank you for your efforts on our recent work in your community. Your team and your stakeholders have been quite helpful throughout this process. The groundwork we have set with your local leadership will serve as a strong foundation for future sports tourism, venue, and event development efforts into the future.

Enclosed is the report (which we call the “playbook”) detailing our findings. The playbook includes a SWOT analysis of your organization and destination as it relates to sports tourism, an overview and evaluation of the venue inventory in the area, benchmarking of your organization’s sports tourism efforts, and recommendations to enhance your destination’s sports tourism “tool kit” moving forward. Both the SWOT analysis and the recommendations are built on a “powers of three” foundation. That is, in most cases, no more than three focus areas are cited for each section.

Please let us know if you have questions about the enclosed recommendations leading up to the roll out of the report and community presentation(s). We are looking forward to our final delivery and follow-up discussions.

Thank you again for all your support throughout this process!

Yours in Sport,

Jon Schmieder  
Founder + CEO  
Huddle Up Group, LLC

**Visit Lake Tahoe (VLT)**  
**Sports Tourism Strategic Plan + Facility Recommendations**  
**Executive Summary**

In the opinion of the Huddle Up Group (hereafter the “Consultant” or “Consultant Team”), there is an opportunity for Visit Lake Tahoe (hereafter the “VLT”) and the Lake Tahoe Region to improve its position among sports tourism destinations nationally. This can be achieved through the implementation of a focused and intentional sports tourism development agenda. Throughout this process, VLT’s community leaders showed a desire to further grow sports tourism in the region and for VLT to become even more engaged with the area’s stakeholders. Both characteristics are positive signs that the region is ready to continue to grow its sports tourism impact.

This strategic planning and facility audit project was conducted with the input of three (3) members from the Consultant Team and included the following:

- A rating of VLT and the destination through the Sports Tourism Index™.
- 14 phone interviews.
- One (1) in-person VLT staff meeting.
- Tours of 36 existing or planned sports and event venues.
- Benchmarking against high performing destinations and venues both regionally and nationally.

The full report (which we call the “playbook” detailed in the following pages), offers a SWOT analysis, recommendations for an enhanced sports tourism marketing program (near-term), and suggestions for facility development/enhancement (longer-term). The playbook offers depth on each recommendation along with research and benchmarking that support the suggestions made by the Consultant Team. There are three (3) primary and three (3) secondary recommendations, each of which is detailed in the full playbook:

**Primary Recommendations – Organizational Strategies (Shorter Term)**

1. Enhance Human Capital
2. Build Relationships with Community Stakeholders
3. Enrich Marketing Presence

**Secondary Recommendations – Enhance the Facility “Tool Kit” (Longer Term)**

1. Tahoe Blue Event Center Maximization
2. Develop a Tournament Ready Hardwood Venue
3. Create a Regional Facility Master Plan

The opportunity at hand is to put in place a sustainable sports tourism ecosystem, engaging all stakeholders throughout the region to drive more economic development while also improving opportunities for community user groups. Through a community-wide effort, VLT can drive increased economic activity through sport in the form of additional overnight stays and visitor spending. This effort will result in more lodging and sales tax revenues being collected in the region year over year. Given the opportunities that exist and the numerous organizations that could play a key role, the Consultant Team believes VLT is the ideal entity to lead the community’s sports tourism charge in the region.

**Visit Lake Tahoe (VLT)**  
**Sports Tourism Strategic Plan + Facility Recommendations**  
**Synopsis**

The sports tourism industry has grown consistently over the past 30 years. A study by the Sports Tourism and Events Association – *State of the Industry Report 2023*, states that the participant driven portion of the domestic sports tourism sector was responsible for more than \$52.2 billion in direct spending as of the end of 2023. This direct spending generated a total economic impact of \$128 billion to local economies, driving over 750,000 jobs and \$20.1 billion in taxes. Each of these numbers demonstrates a significant increase in the grass roots sports tourism sector over 2021. Add to this industry growth the increased popularity of emerging sports such as pickleball, BMX, and Esports, the opportunity for the continuing expansion of economic development through sports tourism is tangible and ever-expanding.

Throughout the research process, it became apparent to the Consultant Team that there is an opportunity for VLT to enhance its current position in the sports tourism marketplace and to drive even more value to the Lake Tahoe community in the future. The key moving forward will be for community stakeholders to work together in developing and maintaining tourism driving assets (sports venues) that can deliver upon the sports tourism mission of VLT from one year to the next. Through the execution of a strategic and targeted game plan, VLT can strengthen its position as a regional and national player in the sports tourism and events industry.

**Methodology**

The Consultant Team conducted an assessment on the current sports tourism work of VLT and an analysis of the area's sports venues. The project was led by Huddle Up Group Founder + CEO Jon Schmieder, Huddle Up Group Strategic Partner Vince Trinidad, and Data and Communications Manager Kevin de Lange. The project followed a six (6) step process that included:

1. An evaluation of VLT and the destination through the Sports Tourism Index™ (a proprietary benchmarking tool developed by the Huddle Up Group, summarized in Appendix E).
2. An organizational audit on the current sports tourism work of VLT, including a review of previously conducted relevant research, as well as input from the 14 phone interviews with key community stakeholders. Individuals engaged included, among others, VLT staff and board members, elected officials, community leaders, venue managers, athletic administrators, event owners, hospitality industry executives, and local sports club leaders.
3. A multiple day market visit (December 1-3, 2024) that consisted of one (1) staff presentation, and a sports tourism facility audit. The audit included tours of 36 existing or planned sports and entertainment venues.
4. The creation and delivery of a strategic plan (the “playbook”) for an improved sports tourism program and an enriched venue “tool kit.”
5. An in-person delivery and presentation to members of VLT staff and board members outlining the findings and recommendations outlined in the playbook.
6. A follow-up conversation with VLT staff 30-days following the delivery of the playbook and presentation of the findings to discuss new developments and next steps.

The facilities visited in step three (3) are listed below and in Appendix D. The Appendix includes a current and potential rating for each venue should tourism-focused enhancements be made.

### **South Lake Tahoe**

- Bijou Community Park Disc Golf
- Bijou Bike Park
- Bijou Municipal Golf Course
- Bijou Community Skate Park
- Blue Granite Climbing Gym
- Community Play Fields
- Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course
- George Whittel High School Football & Track Stadium
- Heavenly Ski Resort
- Kahle Community Center
- Kahle Park Baseball Field
- Kahle Park Flat Fields
- Lake Tahoe Golf Course
- Skatehouse Skate Park
- South Lake Tahoe Recreation Center Pool
- South Lake Tahoe Recreation Center Gym
- South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena
- South Tahoe High School Football Field
- South Tahoe High School Soccer Field
- South Tahoe Middle School
- Tahoe Blue Event Center - Arena
- Tahoe Blue Event Center - Convention Space
- Tahoe Keys Tennis Courts
- Tahoe Paradise Golf Course
- Tahoe Paradise Disc Golf Course
- Tahoe Paradise Pickleball Courts
- Zephyr Cove Tennis Courts
- Zephyr Cove Park Baseball Field
- Zephyr Cove Park Disc Golf Course

### **Carson City**

- Pete Livermore Sports Complex
- John D. Winters Sports Complex
- Carson City Aquatic Facility
- Carson Ridge Disc Golf
- Robert "Bob" Crowell Athletic Center

### **Reno**

- Reno Ice

The scope of the project focused of five (5) key areas:

1. Evaluating the current sports tourism efforts of VLT and comparing “Best in Class” sports tourism organizations in similar destinations to offer recommendations for an improved sports marketing and business development strategy.
2. Assessing the current facility inventory in the region and benchmarking those venues using the Sports Tourism Index™ as a scoring tool.
3. Providing a gap analysis and recommendations for new sports facility developments and existing venue enhancements that would drive the largest ROI to the community through sports tourism.
4. Identifying available organization and venue funding mechanisms as well as opportunities for public/private partnerships.
5. Detailing one (1) economic impact analysis for one facility.

Discussions were held around national best practices in these theme areas and focus was given to applications for VLT. The intent of this process was to create community support for an increased sports tourism and venue development effort by giving local stakeholders a voice and fostering a teamwork mentality throughout the area.

The Consultant Team took the results from the stakeholder interviews, data from the Sports Tourism Index™, and the in-market site visit, then overlaid national best practices from several event rights holders and “Best in Class” sports destinations to develop and deliver the enclosed recommendations. These recommendations are intended to spark a dialog within the community’s leadership hierarchy to build a framework for next steps on an expanded sports tourism marketing effort.

The recommendations presented here are based upon what the Consultant Team believes are five (5) universal truths about VLT’s sports tourism market position:

- Sports tourism could be a larger driver to economic development in the destination.
- There is an optimism to grow sports tourism opportunities in the area.
- The regional and national competition is strong.
- An individual or organization needs to “own” the sports market. This includes recruiting, servicing, and retaining sporting events.
- VLT should continue to strengthen relationships within the community.

**Visit Lake Tahoe (VLT)**  
**Sports Tourism Strategic Plan + Facility Recommendations**  
**Key Challenges and Questions to Address**

As we begin to transition from overarching themes to a more detailed market analysis, it is essential to outline the core issues and questions driving this project. These questions represent the critical challenges faced by VLT and the broader South Lake Tahoe community as they strive to enhance sports tourism while aligning with community priorities and existing constraints. Addressing these questions is pivotal to ensuring the success of the strategic plan and achieving sustainable outcomes.

**1. How can the region balance tourism growth with community needs?**

Tourism plays a vital role in the Lake Tahoe economy, but stakeholders have expressed concerns about “over-tourism” and its impact on the environment, infrastructure, and residents’ quality of life. The challenge lies in growing tourism in a way that respects these concerns and maintains the area’s sustainability goals.

**2. How can new facilities or developments be pursued given South Lake Tahoe’s unique challenges?**

Stakeholders have consistently emphasized that development in South Lake Tahoe faces significant hurdles, including regulatory, environmental, and community opposition. This raises a key question: how can the community overcome these barriers to address gaps in sports facility infrastructure and drive economic impact while preserving the region’s character?

**3. How do we maximize the potential of the Tahoe Blue Event Center without compromising sustainability goals?**

The new Tahoe Blue Event Center represents a transformative asset for Lake Tahoe, but it must be utilized strategically. How can the community fully leverage this venue to attract high-value events while ensuring alignment with sustainability goals and minimizing disruptions to the environment and community?

**4. How can VLT achieve these goals within the constraints of the Event Center’s usage rules?**

With limited availability for event dates and usage restrictions tied to the Event Center, there is a need for precision in selecting and executing events that align with Lake Tahoe’s tourism objectives. How can VLT make the most of this constrained resource to deliver maximum return on investment and community benefits?

These guiding questions form the foundation of the SWOT analysis and subsequent recommendations outlined in this plan. By addressing each of these challenges, the playbook seeks to align the community’s vision with actionable solutions that enhance sports tourism while preserving the unique character and sustainability of the Lake Tahoe region.

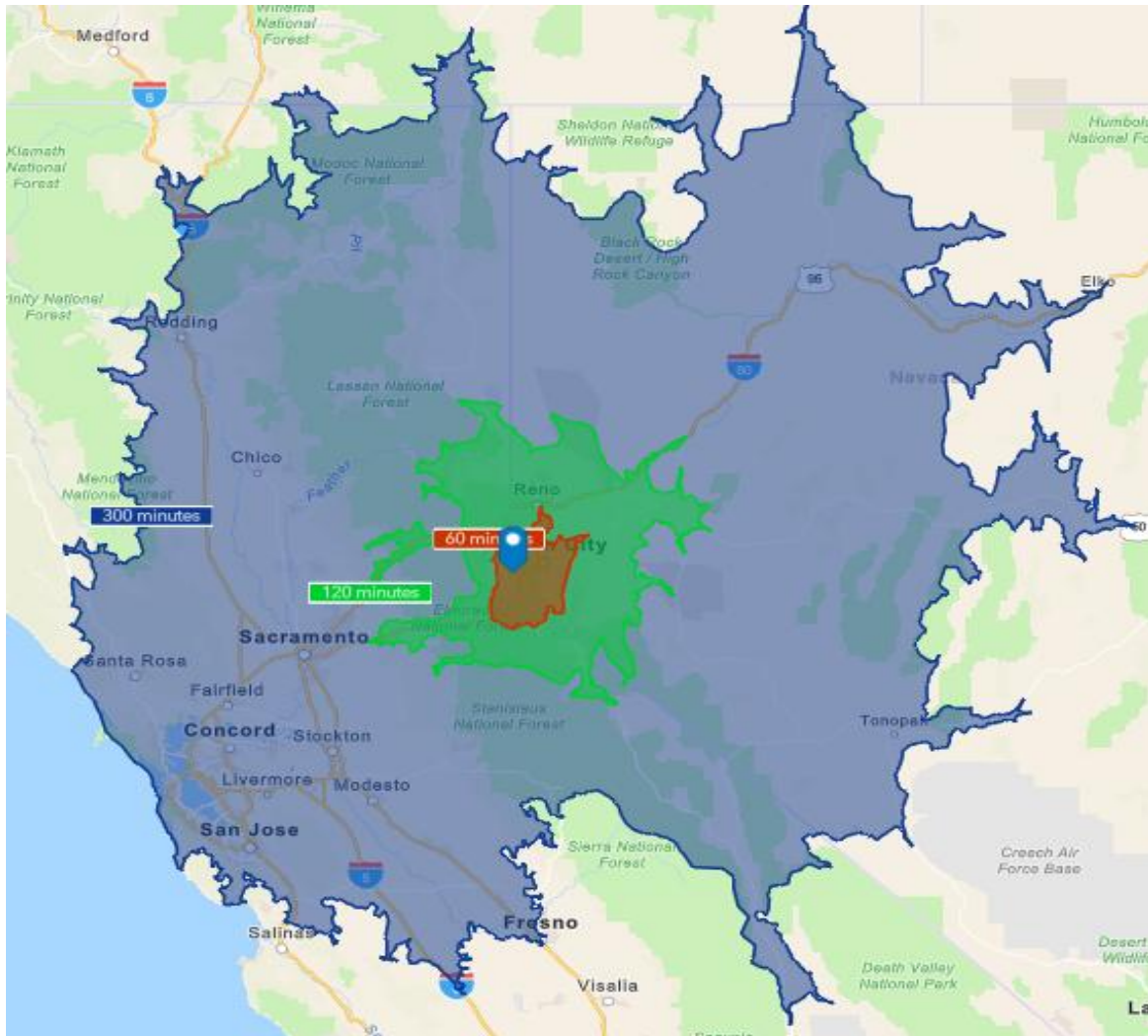


## Visit Lake Tahoe (VLT)

### Sports Tourism Strategic Plan + Facility Recommendations

### Market Analysis

Lake Tahoe's geographic location brings with it a wealth of opportunities to attract visitors to the area. The map below shows several large population centers that can reach Lake Tahoe within a five-hour drive. Notable cities include Carson City, Concord, Fresno, Reno, Sacramento, San Francisco, and San Jose.



Utilizing data from the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), the table on the next page provides insights into the markets that are reachable within a day's drive. It outlines key demographic factors such as the number of households, median household income, as well as the attendance and participation rates in sporting events throughout 2024. Additionally, it includes each market's Market Potential Index (MPI), where an MPI of 100 represents the national average. Markets with an MPI above 100 indicate a higher-than-average potential for demand, while those below 100 suggest lower-than-average potential, offering a clear picture of regional opportunities.



<b>Driving Distance</b>	<b>Households</b>	<b>Attended a Sporting Event in 2024</b>	<b>Participated in any Sport in 2024*</b>	<b>Sports Participation MPI</b>
60 Minutes	105,051	32,963	172,815	104
120 Minutes	355,230	111,957	602,425	105
300 Minutes	5,147,199	1,832,866	9,772,186	105

\* - Participants may be counted double if they engaged in multiple sports during the year.

The Market Potential Index (MPI) values exceeding 100 across all driving distances highlight the strong presence of active sports enthusiasts within the region. An MPI over 100 indicates that households in these areas are participating in and attending sporting events at rates above the national average. This is a positive indicator for Lake Tahoe, as it suggests a well-established base of sports enthusiasts who could be drawn to the city for events and activities. The consistent MPI of 105 within the 120- and 300-minute driving radii further underscores the broader regional demand for sports-related opportunities, creating a solid foundation for expanding sports tourism in the area.

In addition to strong sports participation, the Lake Tahoe region has a proven history of attracting audiences for live entertainment, including concerts. The MPI data highlights that concert attendance across all driving distances exceeds the national average, indicating a robust audience base for events at venues like the Tahoe Blue Event Center.

<b>Driving Distance</b>	<b>2024 Concert Goers</b>	<b>MPI</b>
60 Minutes	36,030	109
120 Minutes	120,038	106
300 Minutes	1,902,171	103

Music concerts across various genres—rock, country, and classical/opera—show strong engagement throughout the region. The Market Potential Index (MPI) scores highlight a significant demand for genre-specific performances across different driving distances. This broad appeal underscores the importance of diverse musical offerings to cater to varied audience preferences.

<b>Driving Distance</b>	<b>2024 Rock Music Concert Goers</b>	<b>MPI</b>	<b>2024 Country Music Concert Goers</b>	<b>MPI</b>	<b>2024 Classical Music /Opera Concert Goers</b>	<b>MPI</b>
60 Minutes	18,207	109	9,944	103	7,879	118
120 Minutes	60,632	106	34,099	103	25,307	110
300 Minutes	1,006,893	108	464,801	86	430,477	116

Lake Tahoe’s history of hosting successful concerts and live performances highlights its ability to draw large audiences from near and far. The Tahoe Blue Event Center, with its multi-purpose capabilities, is well-positioned to continue building on this legacy. High MPI scores for both general concert attendance and specific genres like rock music demonstrate strong regional demand, reinforcing the venue’s potential as a hub for live entertainment and economic growth.

**Visit Lake Tahoe (VLT)**  
**Sports Tourism Strategic Plan + Facility Recommendations**  
**National Best Practices**

The chart below outlines the fundamental benchmarks for some of the most common types of facilities that event rights holders are looking to book. “Tournament friendly” facilities are defined as those that can host most state and regional level events but would need to be paired with additional nearby venues to host top-tier national level competitions. “Anchor” facilities are defined as those that can host the largest national level tournaments **all in one location**. Beyond the pure field/court counts shown below, true “tournament friendly” and “anchor” facilities also require various amenities that provide rights holders the ability to host events. Those amenities are described later in this report.

Facility Type	Anchor	Tournament Friendly	Current VLT Inventory (Highest scoring facility)
Flat Fields	Minimum 16 fields	8-15 fields	Lake Tahoe Community College Playfields (3 fields)
Swimming Pool	50m/8-10 lanes with diving well	25m with diving well	South Lake Tahoe Recreation Center (25y/6-lane with 1m diving)
Diamonds	Minimum 12 fields	8-11 fields	Zephyr Cove Park (1 field)
Hardwood Courts	Minimum 8 Basketball/ 16 Volleyball	4 Basketball/ 8 Volleyball	Tahoe Blue Event Center (3 Basketball/ 6 Volleyball)
Tennis	Minimum 12 courts	Minimum 6 courts	Zephyr Cove Park (6 Courts)
Pickleball	40-60 Courts (National)	8-16 Courts (Local) 24-32 Courts (Regional)	Tahoe Paradise Park (4 Courts)

The following sections of this report highlight three (3) recommendations that focus on organizational opportunities, and three (3) recommendations that focus on opportunities for an improved sports tourism facility “tool kit.” The development and enhancement recommendations are outlined in order, starting with facility enhancements that require less financial investment and can typically be implemented more quickly. In all cases, Visit Lake Tahoe should look to have “Favored Nations Status” with each venue.

“Favored Nation Status” is a term used to indicate a high priority for the DMO/sports commission to use/book a facility for tourism driving events. This is often achieved through an investment in the facility by the DMO/sports commission that carries with it an MOU outlining booking priority, fixed rental costs (if any), and numbers of dates available each year.

**Visit Lake Tahoe (VLT)**  
**Sports Tourism Strategic Plan + Facility Recommendations**  
**SWOT Analysis**

It is the opinion of the Consultant Team that there is an opportunity to grow sports tourism in the Lake Tahoe area. Through our extensive analysis and our knowledge of the national marketplace, we believe there is an opportunity for VLT to deliver additional overnight stays to the destination through an enhanced sports tourism strategy. This expanded effort will lead to increased economic development and will positively impact the community over time.

In a market the size of the Lake Tahoe area, with its numerous positive attributes, it is critical that grassroots sports tourism, as well as special events, continue to serve as economic drivers for the local economy. Keeping these objectives in the forefront while focusing on both an enhanced sports marketing program and long-term facility development, below is a SWOT analysis on the current position of VLT and the region as a sports tourism destination. This analysis was derived from a combination of the aforementioned interviews, site visit and data collected through the Sports Tourism Index™.

**Strengths**

1. **Tahoe Blue Event Center (Arena)** – The Arena part of the Tahoe Blue Event Center has quickly become a cornerstone of Lake Tahoe’s sports tourism efforts, offering a state-of-the-art, versatile facility capable of hosting a wide range of events, from hockey games to concerts and other large-scale gatherings. Its strategic location near both casino and non-casino accommodations ensures accessibility for visitors, while its adaptability supports diverse uses that appeal to varied audiences. Strengthened by strong partnerships between Visit Lake Tahoe, the arena, and local organizations, the venue fosters collaboration in event promotion and execution, further solidifying its role as an economic driver for the region.

Stakeholders recognize the arena as an economic driver, particularly during the shoulder seasons, bringing increased visitation and boosting overnight stays. Its role extends beyond economics, fostering community pride and collaboration among local organizations.

Although the Arena part of the Tahoe Blue Event Center is already an anchor venue, there is acknowledgment among stakeholders that expanding complementary facilities—such as additional indoor sports complexes or multi-sport fields—could elevate the region’s capacity to host even larger or more diverse events. This momentum positions the Arena part of the Tahoe Blue Event Center as both a current strength and a springboard for future growth in Lake Tahoe’s sports tourism ecosystem.

2. **Destination Appeal** – Lake Tahoe is widely recognized as a destination for both winter and summer sports, offering a broad range of recreational opportunities such as skiing, snowboarding, hiking, and water sports. Its established reputation for outdoor activities makes it a strong candidate for expanding sports tourism initiatives. The region’s appeal is further supported by its natural landscapes, which provide a backdrop that aligns with visitor expectations for an active, outdoor-focused experience.

The infrastructure in Lake Tahoe is designed to support the existing demand for year-round activities. Ski resorts, lakefront spaces, and trail systems are well-utilized by both residents and visitors, demonstrating the area's ability to handle significant recreational traffic. Additionally, its draw for athletes and outdoor enthusiasts creates opportunities to host larger-scale sporting and cultural events that align with the region's existing strengths, reinforcing its position as a competitive tourism destination.

3. **Funding** – Lake Tahoe benefits from a funding structure that supports its ability to host events and attract new signature opportunities. Despite its multi-jurisdictional nature, the region's funding sources are robust and capable of meeting the needs of event development and marketing.

These funding streams provide a reliable financial foundation for event recruitment, operational support, and promotional efforts, enabling the destination to compete effectively for regional and national events. The collaboration between jurisdictions, while complex, allows for the pooling of resources to support initiatives that align with the shared goal of enhancing Lake Tahoe's profile as a sports and recreation hub. Stakeholders have noted that these resources are sufficient to drive continued growth in the region's event portfolio, especially as the arena and other facilities position the destination to attract higher-profile events.

4. **Sustainable and Accessible Local Transit** – Lake Tahoe's investment in sustainable and visitor-friendly transportation solutions is exemplified by the Lake Link micro transit system. This free, on-demand shuttle service improves mobility within the South Shore area, connecting visitors and residents to key locations such as the Tahoe Blue Event Center, lodging, dining, and recreation spots. Lake Link reduces parking congestion, supports the region's environmental goals, and provides a convenient transportation option for event attendees, which is particularly valuable during tournaments and festivals when traffic volumes are high.

By offering reliable and eco-conscious mobility, Lake Link enhances the visitor experience and demonstrates the region's commitment to sustainable tourism practices. Its year-round availability and app-based booking system make it a modern and flexible asset that aligns with the destination's goals for balancing growth with conservation.

## **Weaknesses**

1. **Dedicated Human Capital** – A key weakness for Lake Tahoe in its pursuit of becoming a premier sports tourism destination is the lack of personnel exclusively dedicated to sports tourism. The current staffing model does not fully capitalize on the region's potential for hosting sports events, which can limit growth and efficiency in this competitive sector. Without this dedicated role, efforts often adopt a "spray and pray" approach, submitting numerous bids for events without the focused time and energy needed to secure higher-impact opportunities. This generalized method limits the ability to strategically target events that align best with the region's strengths and long-term goals.

Organizations with dedicated sports sales and servicing personnel tend to perform significantly better in attracting and retaining events. Consider the following data from the Sports Tourism Index™:

- **Event Awards:**
  - Southwest destinations with a dedicated sports development person are awarded **6.7 times more events** than those without.
  - These destinations also have **14 times more events contracted** for the next two fiscal years.
- **Event Hosting Rates:**
  - Organizations with a dedicated sports servicing person host **1.6 times more events annually** compared to those without.
  - Event renewal rates for such organizations average **48%**, compared to just **25%** for organizations lacking a service-focused staff member.

This data clearly illustrates the value of investing in a dedicated role to drive sports tourism, ensuring both initial success in event acquisition and long-term retention through better servicing and support. A single point of contact with expertise and connections in sports tourism could provide strategic alignment, better stakeholder engagement, and a more coordinated effort to capitalize on the region's assets and funding. Stakeholders have highlighted the need for such a position to elevate Lake Tahoe's competitiveness in attracting signature sports events while ensuring the existing venues and resources are optimized. For Visit Lake Tahoe, hiring a dedicated sports sales and services manager could drive strategic event recruitment, proactive marketing, and operational support, ensuring a seamless experience for event organizers while strengthening long-term relationships. By addressing this gap in human capital, Lake Tahoe could enhance its competitiveness, optimize its resources, and position itself as a leading sports tourism destination.

2. **Hotels** – A significant challenge for Lake Tahoe's sports tourism efforts lies in the composition and perception of its lodging landscape, particularly in the immediate vicinity of the Tahoe Blue Event Center. Many of the properties near the arena are casino-oriented, which may be viewed as less desirable by families traveling with young athletes. This can contribute to a perception that the destination is not ideally suited for youth sports tournaments, especially for organizers and attendees who prioritize affordability and a family-friendly environment.

However, it is important to note that the California side of the destination offers a broader range of lodging options, including 10-20 properties that cater well to families. These properties help support youth and family-oriented events but are often located farther from the core event venues, requiring thoughtful coordination for housing sports tourism groups.

Adding to the region's potential, Caesars Republic has been confirmed. This new hotel brand, geared toward millennials and featuring a focus on dining and wellness rather than gaming, is expected to be smoke-free and more aligned with the needs of families and modern travelers. Its addition will enhance the area's inventory of family-friendly accommodations closer to the Tahoe Blue Event Center, improving the destination's appeal for youth events.

Additionally, the lack of STR (Smith Travel Research) data from casino hotels complicates planning efforts for event organizers and destination marketing teams. Without accurate reporting, it is difficult for VLT staff to identify need periods or effectively target events during off-peak times. This limitation affects the ability to optimize occupancy and attract events that align with the

region's economic goals.

Finally, the peak season rates during the summer months can be prohibitive for families, making it less feasible for youth sports teams to choose Lake Tahoe as an event destination. These high costs may deter event organizers who prioritize affordability for participants, further reducing the region's competitiveness in this market segment.

3. **Tournament-Ready Venues** – Lake Tahoe faces a significant challenge in the limited availability of competitive sporting venues beyond those designed for winter sports. While the region excels in offering world-class facilities for skiing, snowboarding, and other winter activities, it lacks the necessary infrastructure to attract and host large-scale tournaments for traditional sports such as soccer, basketball, volleyball, or other popular youth and amateur sports.

Stakeholders have specifically highlighted the absence of multi-field soccer complexes, and high-quality indoor facilities, which are critical for hosting large tournaments or attracting new events to the area. For example, there is a noted need for an indoor facility capable of accommodating multiple sports, including basketball and volleyball, to meet the growing demand from regional and national event organizers. Additionally, existing venues are often spread out, adding logistical complexity for event organizers and participants.

In a significant step forward, the community has successfully advocated for and built a new recreation and aquatics center. This development is a testament to the community's commitment to enhancing local recreational facilities and investing in quality-of-life assets. While the primary purpose of the center is to serve local residents, it also provides strategic value for sports tourism.

The facility features two high school-sized basketball courts and seating for approximately 300 spectators, making it an ideal overflow venue for multi-day tournaments and events held at the Tahoe Blue Event Center. Its inclusion in future event planning can increase hosting capacity, improve operational flexibility, and make Lake Tahoe more competitive for mid-sized basketball, volleyball, and cheerleading events.

Although the recreation center may not currently meet the scale needed for standalone, tourism-driving events, its construction is a positive milestone. It broadens the area's capacity to support sports activity, builds community engagement, and provides a platform for future expansion that could meet the evolving needs of both residents and visiting athletes.

The region's reliance on outdoor recreational venues further limits its competitiveness in attracting year-round events, particularly during inclement weather or shoulder seasons. Addressing this gap in infrastructure is essential for Lake Tahoe to position itself as a more versatile sports tourism destination capable of competing with other regional hubs that have invested in diverse, tournament-ready facilities.

4. **Location** – Lake Tahoe's geographic location presents a challenge for attracting sports tourism events. The region is approximately 60 minutes from Reno-Tahoe International Airport (RNO), which can make transportation and logistics less convenient for event organizers and participants compared to more accessible destinations. For sports teams and event planners seeking ease of



travel, nearby cities such as Reno and Carson City may be preferred due to their closer proximity to the airport and more centralized facilities.

This relative isolation can also impact the region's competitiveness when bidding for certain events, especially those with tight schedules or participants traveling from outside the region. Furthermore, limited public transportation options within Lake Tahoe and between the airport and event venues can compound these logistical difficulties, potentially dissuading organizers from selecting the area. Addressing these transportation gaps and emphasizing the unique strengths of Lake Tahoe as a destination may help mitigate the challenges posed by its location.

## **Opportunities**

1. **Facility Maximization** – The Tahoe Blue Event Center offers a key opportunity for Lake Tahoe to host high-impact events that align with the venue's capabilities and the destination's goals. However, VLT operates under a fixed capacity for booking event days at the arena, with only approximately one-third of the calendar year available for VLT's use. This limited availability highlights the critical need to prioritize "right fit" events that maximize the arena's economic and community impact.

Given the high demand for the arena's usage, including professional hockey, recreational ice sports, concerts, and other non-sporting events, strategically selecting events that align with the venue's strengths is essential. Opportunities include cheerleading competitions, high school state championships, and collegiate invitational basketball events. Additionally, the venue's adaptability makes it ideal for non-sporting uses like trade shows, expos, and other large gatherings. Choosing the right events ensures that each available date delivers maximum return on investment while aligning with Lake Tahoe's broader tourism objectives.

Some stakeholders have emphasized the need for better coordination between VLT, event organizers, and other local venues to enhance Lake Tahoe's ability to host larger or more complex events. This includes proactively identifying events that require multiple facilities or collaborating with other venue operators to address capacity constraints. Stakeholders also recognize the importance of building relationships with event organizers who can commit to recurring events, ensuring that Lake Tahoe remains on the map as a go-to destination for high-profile tournaments and events. By focusing on targeted partnerships and cross-venue collaboration, VLT can maximize the value of each booked event and strengthen the region's overall reputation in sports tourism.

2. **Stakeholder Engagement** – A significant opportunity for VLT lies in strengthening engagement with local sports clubs and organizations. Currently, these groups have not been fully integrated into the region's sports tourism strategy, which limits the potential for collaboration and event development. Local clubs and organizations play a critical role in identifying community needs, leveraging existing networks, and providing support for hosting events.

Stakeholders have noted that closer collaboration with these groups could help align regional efforts and identify opportunities to host events that resonate with both local participants and visiting teams. For example, sports clubs could act as co-hosts or partners for tournaments, ensuring access to additional facilities, volunteers, and on-the-ground expertise. Additionally, club leaders often maintain relationships with their national event organizers, providing a valuable network that can

be leveraged to bring high-profile tournaments and competitions to Lake Tahoe. This engagement could also support efforts to market Lake Tahoe as a destination for emerging sports or underserved groups, expanding the region's reach in the sports tourism market.

Developing a formalized framework for stakeholder collaboration, such as advisory boards or routine communication channels, would allow VLT to better understand and address the priorities of local organizations. This approach could foster stronger relationships, create buy-in from the community, and enhance the destination's ability to attract and execute high-quality events.

3. **Created Events** – Lake Tahoe has a strong opportunity to create signature events during off-peak and shoulder seasons, leveraging existing venues and the destination's appeal. Stakeholders emphasized the potential for multi-day events, such as college basketball tournaments during the holiday season, which align with the indoor capabilities of the Tahoe Blue Event Center and strategically fill a seasonal gap in visitation. A 3-day hoops invitational, for example, would count as a single event against the arena's limited event days but would maximize impact by driving overnight stays, spanning multiple days of economic activity, and potentially garnering television coverage to promote Lake Tahoe as a premier sports destination.

In contrast, single-day events are less aligned with this strategy, as they do not fully capitalize on the venue's potential to generate sustained economic impact. By prioritizing multi-day events that attract teams, fans, and media, Lake Tahoe can ensure a more efficient use of the arena's limited availability while driving long-term benefits for the region.

Another example includes reviving or creating unique outdoor events modeled after the success of the American Century Championship (ACC) celebrity golf tournament. Stakeholders have suggested replicating the former John Denver skiing event, producing a similar high-profile celebrity winter competition that could draw national attention while celebrating Lake Tahoe's legacy as a winter destination. These events would not only bolster economic activity during slower periods but also reinforce Lake Tahoe's reputation as a premier sports and entertainment destination.

Developing such events would require strategic partnerships with universities, event promoters such as Position Sports or Kemper Sports, and media outlets to ensure strong attendance and visibility. Furthermore, focusing on recurring events that align with Lake Tahoe's brand and seasonal needs could provide long-term benefits, including consistent economic impact and enhanced community engagement.

## **Threats**

1. **Regional Competition** – Lake Tahoe faces significant competition from nearby regions that are heavily investing in sports tourism infrastructure. Reno, Sacramento, Las Vegas, and Placer Valley have all prioritized the development of new or enhanced sporting venues, creating a highly competitive environment for attracting events. These destinations offer modern, large-scale facilities and convenient access, making them appealing options for event organizers.

The proximity of these competing regions exacerbates the challenge, as their advanced infrastructure often outpaces Lake Tahoe's current offerings in terms of capacity and versatility. Additionally, Reno

and Las Vegas benefit from their closer proximity to major airports and urban centers, making logistics and travel easier for participants and organizers. This dynamic threatens Lake Tahoe's ability to secure high-profile events.

To remain competitive, Lake Tahoe must focus on leveraging its unique assets, such as its natural beauty, existing venues like the Tahoe Blue Event Center, and its appeal as a recreational destination, while addressing gaps in its facility offerings. Collaboration with local stakeholders and strategic investments in targeted venue upgrades could help mitigate the impact of this regional competition.

2. **Facility Development** – The development of new tournament-ready facilities in Lake Tahoe faces significant political and logistical challenges, which limit the region's ability to address gaps in its sports tourism infrastructure. Conservation concerns raised by local organizations and residents play a major role in restricting large-scale development, as the region prioritizes preserving its natural environment and managing the impact of tourism on local ecosystems.

Additionally, the multi-jurisdictional nature of Lake Tahoe complicates facility development. With overlapping governance between California and Nevada, as well as involvement from federal and local authorities, gaining approval for new projects can be a lengthy and complex process. Stakeholders have noted that even if funding were available, these regulatory hurdles make it difficult to build new venues in a timely manner.

These challenges constrain Lake Tahoe's ability to compete with nearby destinations that are rapidly expanding their facility offerings. To mitigate this threat, the region must focus on optimizing existing venues, such as the Tahoe Blue Event Center, and identifying creative solutions to enhance underutilized spaces for sports tourism. Engaging stakeholders in dialogue around sustainable facility upgrades and leveraging partnerships with private entities may also provide pathways to improve infrastructure without compromising conservation goals.

3. **Access Challenges** – Facility availability and weather unpredictability pose significant threats to Lake Tahoe's sports tourism efforts. The Tahoe Blue Event Center operates under strict booking limitations, with only approximately one-third of the year available for VLT to schedule events. These restrictions, coupled with the arena's high demand from various users, limit the region's flexibility to host a diverse range of events and maximize its potential as a sports destination.

Weather is another critical factor impacting sports tourism in Lake Tahoe. The region's climate, while an asset for winter sports, can be a liability for outdoor events due to unpredictable conditions such as heavy snow, high winds, or wildfire smoke during the summer. Emergency events related to weather, such as road closures or air quality issues, can disrupt competitions and deter participants from returning in the future.

To mitigate these challenges, Lake Tahoe must strategically prioritize events that align with the arena's limited availability and explore creative ways to utilize other venues in the region. Additionally, proactive communication and contingency planning for weather-related disruptions will be essential to maintaining the confidence of event organizers and participants.

## Visit Lake Tahoe (VLT)

### Sports Tourism Strategic Plan + Facility Recommendations

### Competitive Set Analysis

As part of the analysis, the Consultant Team utilized the Sports Tourism Index™ to evaluate VLT’s current position within the sports tourism marketplace, benchmark the organization against its competitors, and provide a baseline to measure future growth. As the sole proprietor of this platform, the Consultants have exclusive use of the trademarked tool to determine the destination’s strengths, competitive set, and areas of opportunity. This analysis produced a score and ranking based on the organization’s answers to questions addressing four major theme areas or “buckets.” The questions and scoring method were derived from responses by leading event rights holders across the country when asked for their most important criteria in placing events in a particular destination. Benchmarking and rankings are generated from responses by more than 390 destinations that included over 6,600 facilities across the country. The four buckets, each with a maximum score of 25, are represented as follows:



Bucket	VLT	Overall Average	Southwest Average	Under 500k Pop. Avg.
Facilities	12.89**	8.47	8.81	9.34
Destination Strength	10.60	11.67	13.73	10.57
Organization Structure	14.51	11.10	9.20	11.33
Events	12.15	7.79	7.11	7.78
Overall	54.41*	33.38	31.62	37.06

\*Each bucket has a maximum score of 25, for a total of 100 points overall.

For a further breakdown of VLT’s scores, and their meaning, refer to Appendix E.

\*\*Only VLT’s 10 most used facilities were used for this calculation.

\*\*When including Carson City & Carson Valley assets, the facilities score rises to 15.53.

Using the scores generated by the Sports Tourism Index™, the Consultant Team was able generate a competitive set of destinations within the sports tourism market. Below is a list of organizations with similar scores to VLT.

- **Overall:** DuPage Sports Commission (IL), Hershey Harrisburg Sports & Events Authority (PA), OKC Convention & Visitors Bureau (OK), Pearland Convention & Visitors Bureau (TX), Visit Frisco (CA).
- **Facilities:** OKC Convention & Visitors Bureau (OK), Pearland Convention & Visitors Bureau (TX), Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission (LA), Visit Bentonville (AL), Visit Boise (ID).
- **Destination Strength:** The Colony Convention & Visitors Bureau (TX), Travel Medford (OR), Visit Norman (OK), Visit Oceanside (CA), Visit Shenandoah (TX).
- **Organization Structure:** Campbell County Convention and Visitors Bureau (WY), Decatur Morgan County Tourism (AL), Eugene, Cascades, and Coast Sports Commission (OR), Visit Casper (WY), Visit Sebring (FL).

- **Events:** Colorado Springs (CO), Discover Ames (IA), Norfolk Area Sports Council (NE), Tempe Tourism Office (AZ), Visit Hattiesburg (MS).

Finally, as VLT begins to undertake the steps outlined in the recommendations in the following sections, there are several high-performing sports tourism organizations that serve as best-in-class examples. These organizations are comparable to the Lake Tahoe area in terms of market size and share similarities with VLT's organizational structure. These include, but are not limited to (in alphabetical order):

- Fox Cities CVB (WI)
- Louisville Sports Commission (KY)
- Spokane Sports (WA)
- Visit Quad Cities (IL)

**Visit Lake Tahoe (VLT)**  
**Sports Tourism Strategic Plan + Facility Recommendations**  
**Primary Recommendations**

The enclosed primary recommendations include three (3) opportunities for an enhanced sports tourism marketing program. While the scope of work for this project also had a focus on facility development opportunities, it is likely that an enhancement to the sports tourism marketing program would deliver returns much earlier than the development of an entirely new venue or enhancing existing facilities. The recommendations are listed on the following pages along with more detail for each concept.

**Primary Recommendations – Organizational Strategies (Shorter Term)**

1. **Enhance Human Capital** – To strengthen VLT’s capacity in sports tourism, it is essential to address the need for dedicated human capital to lead the sports business development effort. As noted in the first weakness, the current staff model does not fully capitalize on Lake Tahoe’s potential for hosting sports events. A dedicated sports sales and services manager could effectively drive sports tourism initiatives, serve as a single point of contact for event organizers, and ensure seamless support for events hosted in the community.

Data from the Sports Tourism Index™ highlights the importance of this role, both regionally and nationally. In the Southwest, destinations with a specific sports development position are awarded 6.7 times more events, secure 14 times more events contracted for the next two fiscal years, host 1.6 times more events annually, and renew 48% of their events compared to just 25% for destinations without a service-focused staff member.

On a national scale, destinations with a dedicated sports development role still see significant advantages, being awarded 2.7 times more events, securing 3.4 times more events contracted, hosting 2.4 times more events annually, and renewing 14% more events. These numbers reinforce the critical need for focused sports business development efforts to maximize Lake Tahoe’s potential as a premier sports tourism destination.

However, instead of immediately hiring a full-time staff member for this position, VLT could explore alternative strategies to fulfill this critical role. One approach would be to partner with an experienced third-party organization, such as Airstream Ventures. Airstream Ventures has a proven track record of enhancing a community’s sports profile through established relationships with event rights holders, successfully leading numerous nationally televised events, and generating significant economic impact in the communities they serve. By leveraging such a partnership, VLT could gain immediate access to expertise and resources while avoiding the overhead associated with a full-time hire.

2. **Build Relationships with Community Stakeholders** – Executing the recommendations in this playbook will take an intentional effort by VLT’s team to be externally focused with the community’s sports and events stakeholders. The Consultant Team calls this role serving as the community’s “connective tissue” in this area. This strategy requires an ongoing and consistent outreach program to the area’s venue owners and managers, sporting clubs, high schools, colleges, elected officials, hospitality members, community leaders, and citizens to ensure continued access



to the resources needed to accomplish VLT's mission. By focusing more time on the larger conversation relating to sports tourism, VLT can connect the dots between various community partners and uncover more collaboration opportunities in the future. Furthermore, as VLT strengthens its partnerships within the community, some stakeholders may better recognize the value of sports tourism and become more supportive of VLT and their initiatives going forward.

To help achieve this connectivity, the Consultant Team recommends the implementation of a sports specific advisory group, (best in class: West Michigan Sports Commission). The top performing sports organizations in the country have created such a strong advisory group that very few sports-related moves are made in their communities without their consultation. The end goal is to create an environment where the biggest sports decisions in the community happen at the VLT sports advisory group's table. To accomplish this, the following attributes should be considered when building out the new sports advisory group:

- The group's makeup should provide an environment for community leaders that touch sports tourism, events, economic development, and the business community to connect in one meaningful and intentional place.
- The group should consist of 7-15 members.
- Members should be decision makers for their respective organizations.
- The group should be diverse in several areas, including, but not limited to the following: race, sex, age, skill sets, industry background, and political connectivity.
- Members should be willing to commit their "time, talent, and/or treasure" (financial, volunteer time, fundraising, networking, etc.).
- VLT should convene and manage the group.

A sports specific advisory group can be tasked with leading in the creation of a regional sports tourism facility master plan, helping build created events, supporting bids, fundraising, sourcing grant opportunities, prioritizing event opportunities, reviewing grant requests and/or lending political capital to VLT and other members of the group when needed.

Additionally, VLT should implement externally facing programs that will help enhance relationships with community stakeholders. A few examples of such programs are the "4-Touch Rule", "6&6" luncheons, an annual sports award breakfast, and/or having bi-monthly facility meetings.

Implementing the "4-Touch Rule" program is paramount for maintaining strong relationships with key stakeholders. The essence of this initiative lies in regularly engaging with stakeholders through one-on-one meetings, solely focused on updating them about the organization's activities and garnering their feedback. It is essential to emphasize that these meetings should not include any sales pitches but rather serve as information-gathering sessions to keep stakeholders informed and connected. The Consultant Team suggests establishing at least four touches or engagements per year per contact to ensure consistent and meaningful interaction. Tracking these interactions is crucial. The best tactic to track "touches" throughout the year is to maintain a visible chart in the office

where dates and details of each meeting are recorded. This ensures transparent accountability and encourages team-wide participation. With a concerted effort from the entire team, successful follow-through on these touches can be achieved, and solid community relationships can grow.

The “6&6” lunch program offers a strategic platform to engage with stakeholders and the broader business community. The concept is to ask six existing stakeholders to each invite a guest that knows little to nothing about the organization’s ongoing efforts (six stakeholders plus six guests = “6&6”). These informative luncheons create opportunities to educate attendees about the significance of sports tourism and events and the work of VLT in this space. Hosting these gatherings quarterly (or monthly if resources allow) provides a consistent forum for introducing the organization’s mission and ongoing initiatives. Over time, this initiative can cultivate a knowledgeable cohort of community leaders who may potentially advocate for the organization in the future, amplifying its reach and impact.

Hosting an annual sports breakfast, coupled with an awards ceremony, serves as a meaningful gesture to recognize, and celebrate the contributions of partners and key performers in driving sports tourism efforts in the Lake Tahoe area. This event would foster a sense of appreciation while also reinforcing the collaborative spirit among stakeholders. By highlighting achievements and acknowledging the dedication of individuals and organizations, VLT can continue to strengthen relationships and inspire continued support for its initiatives.

3. **Enrich Marketing Presence** – To strengthen VLT’s capacity in sports tourism, it is essential to enhance its marketing presence and adopt tools that streamline event recruitment and management. While a dedicated staff member solely focused on sports tourism remains the best practice, this approach may not be feasible in the near term. As an alternative – or even in addition to a dedicated staff member – VLT could leverage online event matchmaking tools like the Sports Tourism Index™ and Scout platform. These cost-effective resources can help identify events that align with Lake Tahoe’s assets and available facilities, offsetting the challenge of limited staff availability for attending traditional trade shows and networking opportunities.

Currently, the marketing and website content for Lake Tahoe is heavily focused on water sports, highlighting the region’s strong reputation for boating, paddleboarding, and other lake-based activities. While these activities are an undeniable strength, expanding the focus to include regional indoor and outdoor sports facilities – such as the Tahoe Blue Event Center and Carson City’s flat fields – would broaden the appeal to event organizers.

Partnerships with nearby communities like Carson City and Carson Valley, who are not currently members of SportsETA, represent a natural and valuable opportunity for Visit Lake Tahoe to drive a unified, regional approach to sports tourism. It is common for geographically connected destinations to collaborate on event recruitment and facility promotion, particularly when resources and venues are spread across multiple jurisdictions.

By including Carson City and Carson Valley’s venues in marketing efforts and establishing a shared strategy, VLT can help position the broader region as a more comprehensive and competitive destination for events such as the Come Up For Air (CUFA) fall and summer soccer tournaments, as well as basketball, volleyball, and cheerleading competitions. With its strong industry presence,

Stuart Maas and the VLT team are well positioned to serve as the regional lead in this collaboration, guiding joint efforts, aligning messaging, and ensuring a cohesive approach to regional sports tourism development.

Creating a dedicated sports-specific webpage that features detailed profiles of regional venues, contact information, and interactive tools like maps and event calendars would further enhance the appeal. This approach not only showcases the broader area's resources but also establishes VLT as a leader in shaping the sports tourism agenda for the entire region. Furthermore, VLT's strong presence on the PlayEasy platform, where it is one of the most viewed destinations, exemplifies its proactive digital strategy. The inclusion of Carson City's facilities on this platform has been particularly positive for regional visibility, attracting greater attention to the area's comprehensive offerings.

These platforms, such as Destination International's Economic Impact Calculator or the Sports Tourism Index™ Estimated Spending Calculator, provide tools to quantify the potential economic impact of events. This data is invaluable for illustrating the return on investment from sports tourism initiatives to stakeholders and aiding in the prioritization of high-value opportunities. VLT should intentionally use and share these economic impact numbers to showcase the success of its efforts and highlight the value of sports tourism initiatives. By strategically leveraging these metrics, VLT can strengthen its business development efforts and focus on attracting the most impactful events to the region.

As part of VLT's marketing efforts, incorporating outbound sales missions and inbound FAM tours could be pivotal in building relationships with event organizers and showcasing the region's capabilities. These efforts provide direct opportunities to engage decision-makers and highlight Lake Tahoe's unique facilities and amenities. Additionally, hosting smaller sports-related meetings, such as S.P.O.R.T.S. the Invitational, can serve as a dual-purpose initiative – acting as both an industry event and an immersive FAM experience for attendees. This approach allows organizers to experience the destination firsthand while building awareness of its potential for hosting future events. Beyond S.P.O.R.T.S. the Invitational, VLT could explore hosting industry gatherings like ACES or other niche sports-related meetings, which would further position Lake Tahoe as a key player in the sports tourism industry.

**Visit Lake Tahoe (VLT)**  
**Sports Tourism Strategic Plan + Facility Recommendations**  
**Secondary Recommendations**

Below are three (3) secondary recommendations that focus on opportunities for an improved sports tourism facility “tool kit.” The development (new venue) and enhancement (updating existing facilities) recommendations outlined below are listed in order based on what the sports tourism impact is likely to be for the Lake Tahoe area should each of these opportunities come to fruition.

**Secondary Recommendations – Facility “Tool Kit” Opportunities (Longer Term)**

1. **Tahoe Blue Event Center Maximization** – The Tahoe Blue Event Center stands out as a transformative asset for Lake Tahoe's sports tourism efforts. Its versatility and capacity make it a significant competitive advantage for the destination, capable of hosting a wide range of sporting events, from hockey tournaments to basketball, volleyball, and cheerleading competitions. Maximizing the availability of this facility is a key priority to fully unlock its potential as a sports tourism driver.

Expanding the center's availability for events, particularly during the shoulder seasons, would increase its impact on the local economy and bolster Lake Tahoe's ability to attract high-profile tournaments and competitions. While the current restrictions limit the number of event days available for booking, addressing these constraints through strategic planning and operational adjustments could significantly enhance its utilization. Collaboration between Visit Lake Tahoe (VLT), facility managers, and local stakeholders is essential to optimize scheduling and prioritize events that align with the region's goals.

Furthermore, the Tahoe Blue Event Center serves as a natural focal point for future facility expansion. Its central location and existing infrastructure make it an ideal site for additional indoor spaces, such as practice courts or multi-sport training areas, which could further increase Lake Tahoe's capacity to host larger or multi-sport events. Strategic investments in facility upgrades and expansions would not only elevate the center's capabilities but also strengthen the region's position as a premier destination for sports tourism.

2. **Develop a Tournament Ready Hardwood Venue** – There are very few indoor tourism driving sports venues in the Lake Tahoe region. Coupled with some of the scheduling challenges with the Tahoe Blue Event Center, there is a great opportunity to develop an asset that can separate VLT from its competition for court sport focused events.

Based on the results of the facility audit, the national experience of the Huddle Up Group in the sports tourism industry, and their knowledge of the current landscape in Lake Tahoe, it is the belief of the Consultant Team that a significant economic and community impact on the region could be made from the development of a new indoor court venue.

Using the Sports Tourism Index™ as a benchmarking tool, the chart on the following page summarizes the key characteristics possessed by the top indoor court facilities in the country. Note that in the “Difference” column the darker the color of green, the larger the gap between the top 10 facilities and the average court sports focused venues.

Indoor Courts = 506 scored by the Sport Tourism Index™

	AVERAGES		
	Top 10	Overall	Difference
# Basketball Courts	15	3	12
# Volleyball Courts	27	4	23
Court Surface (Hardwood)	80%	77%	3%
Scoreboard	90%	82%	8%
Scorers' Table	90%	90%	0%
Team Benches	60%	56%	4%
PA System	60%	58%	2%
Locker Rooms	70%	73%	-3%
Permanent concession stand(s)	100%	76%	24%
Permanent restrooms	100%	99%	1%
Permanent Wi-Fi	100%	88%	12%
Parking	100%	98%	2%
ADA Compliant	100%	99%	1%
Auxiliary meeting rooms	9	3	6
Ability to book (Definitely yes)	80%	49%	31%
Score	4.12	2.81	1.31

National Best in Class: American Sports Center (Anaheim, CA), Bell Bank Park (Mesa, AZ), Community First Champions Center (Grand Chute, WI), Hoover Met Complex (Hoover, AL), LakePoint Champions Center (Cartersville, GA), Myrtle Beach Sports Center (Myrtle Beach, SC), Omaha Sports Academy (Omaha, NE), Rock Hill Sports Complex (Rock Hill, NC), Rocky Mount Events Center (Rocky Mount, NC), Virginia Beach Sports Center (Virginia Beach, VA).

Citing the data presented above and the benchmarking chart provided earlier in this report, a minimum of 8 basketball courts (convertible to 16 volleyball courts) would provide the area with an “anchor” indoor court facility that would be among the best in the region. In addition to pure court count, amenities should include:

- An eight (8) court basketball facility that could convert to 16 volleyball courts.
- A flexible championship court that could accommodate at least 1,000 spectators and the ability to expand total seating for larger championship events.
- Scoreboards, shot clocks, benches, and a press table dedicated to each court.
- Locker rooms and ancillary meeting space for tournament operators and officials.
- Permanent restrooms, concessions, PA system, and Wi-Fi throughout the facility.
- Parking that meets industry standards (at least 3.5 permanent spaces per 1,000 square feet).
- A common area to accommodate athletes and spectators.
- ADA compliant.
- Ability for VLT to book the facility for tourism driving events (aka “Favored Nation Status”). “Favored Nation Status” means that the CVB/sports commission has a high level of priority when scheduling considerations are being made for the community’s venues. As an example, when blocking out dates for their user groups, the local university locks in

intercollegiate athletics first, then talks to the CVB about dates they may need for tournaments (before booking recreation leagues, intramurals, and student user groups into their venues).

As part of the scope of work for this project, the Consultant Team was tasked with creating a top-line impact analysis of what the number one recommended venue development opportunity could generate for the community. Should VLT and its partners find a pathway to develop a new eight (8) court indoor basketball venue (that would convert to a 16-court volleyball facility), the new asset would be able to host sizable events throughout the year in various sports. If VLT builds the indoor court venue as a multi-use flexible venue, they are able to realize more economic impact than listed below. The economic impact numbers below only take into account sports and do not include tradeshow, meetings, and other events that could be hosted. Using local tax rates and a conservative 25% capture rate for proven events that could fill the facility's calendar, the Consultant Team believes the following new economic activity could reasonably be realized over a calendar year:

- 11 new state, regional, and national tournaments.
- More than 20,500 total attendees relating to tournaments/competitions.
- Over \$4.3 million in direct visitor spending.
- Nearly 9,600 hotel room nights.
- Hotel Lodging Taxes generated close to \$215,000.
- Sales Tax collections over \$380,000.
- SLT Tourism Improvement District Taxes generated over \$38,000.
- Total sports tourism related taxes over \$634,000.

To illustrate the potential demand for an indoor sports facility, the tables below highlight the participation rates for basketball, volleyball, pickleball, and other niche indoor sports within driving distance from Lake Tahoe. This data provides insight into the local market potential for these activities.

For basketball, within a 60-minute driving distance, there are 9,878 participants, with a Market Potential Index (MPI) of 88, indicating slightly below-average participation compared to the national level. However, this could also suggest that the region lacks sufficient facility inventory to meet the demand for basketball, prompting potential players to either forego the sport or choose alternatives. As the driving distance increases, the number of participants grows significantly, reaching 36,847 at 120 minutes (MPI 95) and 640,241 at 300 minutes (MPI 102). The broader region demonstrates above-average interest, highlighting an opportunity for a well-designed facility to attract tournaments and events while addressing gaps in local access.

Basketball Participation Rates and Market Potential Index (MPI) by Radius		
Driving Distance	Sports Participation	MPI
60 Minutes	9,878	88
120 Minutes	36,847	95
300 Minutes	640,241	102



For volleyball, the 60-minute radius includes 4,355 participants with an MPI of 85, reflecting slightly lower local engagement compared to the national average. Similar to basketball, this may be due to a lack of indoor volleyball facilities, which could lead players to choose other sports. However, as the radius extends, interest becomes more consistent, with 16,805 participants at 120 minutes (MPI 95) and 271,904 participants at 300 minutes (MPI 95). This indicates regional demand that could support an indoor facility with multi-court capabilities to accommodate leagues and tournaments.

Volleyball Participation Rates and Market Potential Index (MPI) by Radius		
Driving Distance	Sports Participation	MPI
60 Minutes	4,355	85
120 Minutes	16,805	95
300 Minutes	271,904	95

Pickleball shows particularly strong local engagement, with an MPI of 119 within a 60-minute radius, reflecting significantly above-average participation. This trend continues, with MPIs of 111 at 120 minutes and 106 at 300 minutes. The sport's rapid growth and strong participation rates indicate a clear demand for additional indoor pickleball courts, particularly during colder months when outdoor play is limited.

Pickleball Participation Rates and Market Potential Index (MPI) by Radius		
Driving Distance	Sports Participation	MPI
60 Minutes	6,080	119
120 Minutes	19,540	111
300 Minutes	303,394	106

Beyond basketball, volleyball, and pickleball, additional indoor sports show notable participation rates across the broader Pacific region. Activities like dance, martial arts, and table tennis exhibit significantly above-average engagement, while others, such as gymnastics and wrestling, maintain stable player bases. This data, drawn from a regional analysis rather than Lake Tahoe's immediate driving radii, highlights broader market trends and underscores the potential for a versatile indoor facility that could serve multiple sports and events. The breakdown of participation rates and Market Potential Index (MPI) scores for these activities is provided in the table on the next page, offering detailed insights into the opportunity for facility development. By aligning with these broader participation patterns, Lake Tahoe can position itself to attract regional tournaments and events while addressing gaps in local access.

Sport	Total Sports Participation	MPI	Core Sports Participation	MPI
Boxing	1,562,900	109	1,562,900	109
Cheerleading	470,057	81	168,915	77
Dance, Step, and other Choreographic Exercises	4,336,517	109	1,310,669	107
Gymnastics	625,966	86	209,233	95
Martial Arts	1,140,780	113	477,176	100
Table Tennis	2,908,335	124	820,986	124
Wrestling	299,739	93	65,470	80
Yoga	5,809,235	111	2,439,449	118

While lower MPI scores for basketball and volleyball in the immediate area may indicate lower engagement, they could also reflect limited facility access, driving potential participants toward other activities. Developing a state-of-the-art indoor sports complex would address this gap, fostering greater participation and attracting leagues and tournaments from the broader region. By providing a versatile space for indoor sports, Lake Tahoe could significantly enhance its sports tourism profile while addressing unmet local demand.

- 3. Create a Regional Facility Master Plan** – One common theme from our interviews and surveys was that stakeholders in the area often weren't aware of other projects going on in the region until they were well underway. While the city, parks department, county, schools, facilities, and club programs all likely have a venue development plan in place, these projects tend to operate in silos with no unified game plan for the region. Pulling together the wants and needs of all area stakeholders to eliminate any redundancies would be a valuable exercise for VLT and the community. This process would also likely lead to better regional alignment and participation from the various partners that may not be engaged today.

It is the belief of the Consultant Team that creating a regional sports tourism facility master plan should be the first task undertaken before any additional facility developments begin. This master plan would encompass North Lake Tahoe, South Lake Tahoe, Carson Valley, and Carson City, ensuring a comprehensive and strategic approach to regional development. VLT, along with a sports-specific advisory board, would be the ideal entities to lead such a project and to generate community-wide momentum relating to sports. The Consultant Team believes that developing this regional master plan should be the primary focus of the new advisory board, setting the stage for coordinated growth and enhanced sports tourism across these interconnected areas.

**Visit Lake Tahoe (VLT)**  
**Sports Tourism Strategic Plan + Facility Recommendations**  
**Typical Funding Models**

To enrich the destination as a desirable sports tourism market, VLT and its partners may want to identify an additional sustainable funding source to enhance, develop, promote, and maintain tourism driving assets. Numerous markets across the country have implemented a dedicated tourism-based revenue source (a tax) to enhance their sports marketing programs and sports facilities. These revenue streams most often come in the form of a hotel occupancy tax, Tourism Improvement District (TID), or a food and beverage tax that is dedicated to the singular purpose of increasing overnight stays through hosting sporting events. A sample list of destinations that have gone down these funding pathways can be found in Appendix C. As a major point of note, numerous cities are using these revenue streams to put towards the construction and/or operation of new and enhanced sports facilities. In nearly all these cases, the taxes generated to enhance/build these facilities are used to drive incremental overnight stays for the destination. As an example, not necessarily a recommendation, the most common funding mechanisms the Consultant Team has seen implemented nationally include (in order):

- Tourism Improvement Districts (TIDs)
- Hotel/bed taxes
- Prepared food (restaurant) taxes
- Sales taxes
- Sponsorships and philanthropic support

Beyond these traditional funding mechanisms, municipalities and many of the area's corporate leaders have a vested interest in the sports market and how it can positively impact the area's youth. As a result, a discussion with the area's leaders should be had around what resources could be brought to the table for new sports facilities and maintenance of existing facilities and how to support local program development.

**Visit Lake Tahoe (VLT)**  
**Sports Tourism Strategic Plan + Facility Recommendations**  
**Conclusion**

For the area to be relevant in the sports market, VLT and its sports tourism stakeholders must continue to build bridges with key players locally and pave the way for asset development over the long term.

The addition of an improved sports tourism marketing strategy and the execution of the enclosed recommendations will empower VLT and local event operators to create home-grown participant driven events, enhance their existing venues, and host more bid-in regional/national championships (events obtained through competitive bidding). To achieve these lofty aspirations, VLT has a heavy lift ahead, but by forging this path, the destination will solidify and protect its position regionally and nationally as a strong player in the sports tourism industry while also providing better opportunities for local youth through sports.

To raise the bar in the Lake Tahoe area, and to positively impact the community, VLT's leadership should focus its efforts on three (3) overarching objectives:

1. Create a culture of sports and events development. Develop human capital (staff and volunteers). Develop relationships (local stakeholders and regional/national event owners). Develop a vehicle to push the tourism agenda through sports (funding). And, finally, develop physical products (venues).
2. Partner with local promoters to build created events that will call the area home long into the future and that will not be subject to an RFP process with VLT's competitors. There is a major trend in the industry around the created events concept, inclusive of a focus on the regional drive market. This is an area that VLT should work on with its local event owners and venue managers to evolve in the future.
3. Make the improvement of the destination's venue "tool kit" a priority by adding new venue assets and enhancing the existing assets where necessary. The top multi-sport facilities in the country have spurred private investment in and around them, which is something that needs to be top of mind for regional leadership throughout this process (especially in the area of hotel inventory in close proximity to the tourism driving venues in the destination).

As with any new project, there are numerous variables that need to be considered when evaluating the ROI and risk in developing new sports facilities. In the experience of the Consultant Team, destinations that consider the overall impact on their community and its citizens will have more success, and see a higher level of collaboration, than those that measure purely by room nights or bed tax collections. This community-wide effort will help VLT connect the tourism and business communities in an ongoing and proactive manner into the future.

In the eyes of the Consultant Team, the puzzle pieces exist for Visit Lake Tahoe to expand economic development for the area through sports tourism. The Consultant Team believes it is within the power of the community's stakeholders to capture more opportunities in the sports tourism and events market while also enriching the lives of its citizens.

**Visit Lake Tahoe (VLT)**  
**Sports Tourism Strategic Plan + Facility Recommendations**  
**“King for a Day”**

As VLT positions itself for growth in the sports tourism industry, the next steps are critical to ensuring sustainable success. To build on its current momentum, VLT must focus on strategic initiatives that enhance collaboration, develop new opportunities, and establish itself as a leader in sports tourism. By addressing key areas such as governance, event creation, and marketing, VLT can solidify its foundation and maximize the impact of sports tourism in the region.

If the Consultant Team were in charge of VLT (if we were “King for a Day”), the following action items would be our top priorities to drive immediate and impactful results:

**Create an Advisory Board**

VLT should establish an advisory board that includes representatives from key stakeholder groups, such as venue operators, local sporting clubs, and regional leaders. This board would play an essential role in driving collaboration and aligning goals across the community.

- **Assign Regional Facility Plan Task:** The advisory board would spearhead the development of a regional facility plan to identify current gaps, prioritize facility needs, and explore opportunities for enhancements or new development.
- **Engage Sporting Clubs:** The board should work closely with local sports clubs to discuss ways to expand or create events that align with the region’s strengths and broader tourism goals. These partnerships would also provide access to valuable networks and resources to attract high-impact events.

**Focus on Created Events**

To grow Lake Tahoe’s sports tourism portfolio, VLT should proactively focus on creating and developing signature events that are unique to the destination and align with its brand and facilities.

- **Basketball Event Development:** VLT should work with basketball operators to create new, high-profile events, such as a custom college invitational tournament and/or a signature high school state-level showcase. By designing and owning these events, VLT can tailor them to fit the Tahoe Blue Event Center’s strengths, fill gaps in the seasonal calendar, and establish Lake Tahoe as a must-visit destination for basketball tournaments.

**Build an Externally Facing Marketing Effort**

An effective, outward-facing marketing campaign is essential for positioning Lake Tahoe as a premier sports tourism destination. To achieve this, we recommend the following:

- **Hire Dedicated Staff or Engage ASV:** VLT should either hire a dedicated sports tourism staff member to oversee this effort or engage Airstream Ventures (ASV) to provide immediate expertise and execution support.

- **Join ACES:** Joining the Association of Chief Executives for Sport (ACES) would provide VLT access to a network of industry leaders, fostering relationships that could help attract high-impact events and partnerships.
- **Explore Hosting Opportunities for Industry Shows:** Hosting events such as the SportsETA Symposium or other industry shows would further enhance VLT's visibility and showcase the region's facilities to influential decision-makers.
- **Commit to Annual Inbound FAMs and Outbound Sales Missions:** Conduct one inbound familiarization (FAM) tour annually to bring key decision-makers to Lake Tahoe and one outbound sales mission to meet with potential event organizers and partners. These proactive efforts will grow relationships and create more opportunities to bring events to the area.

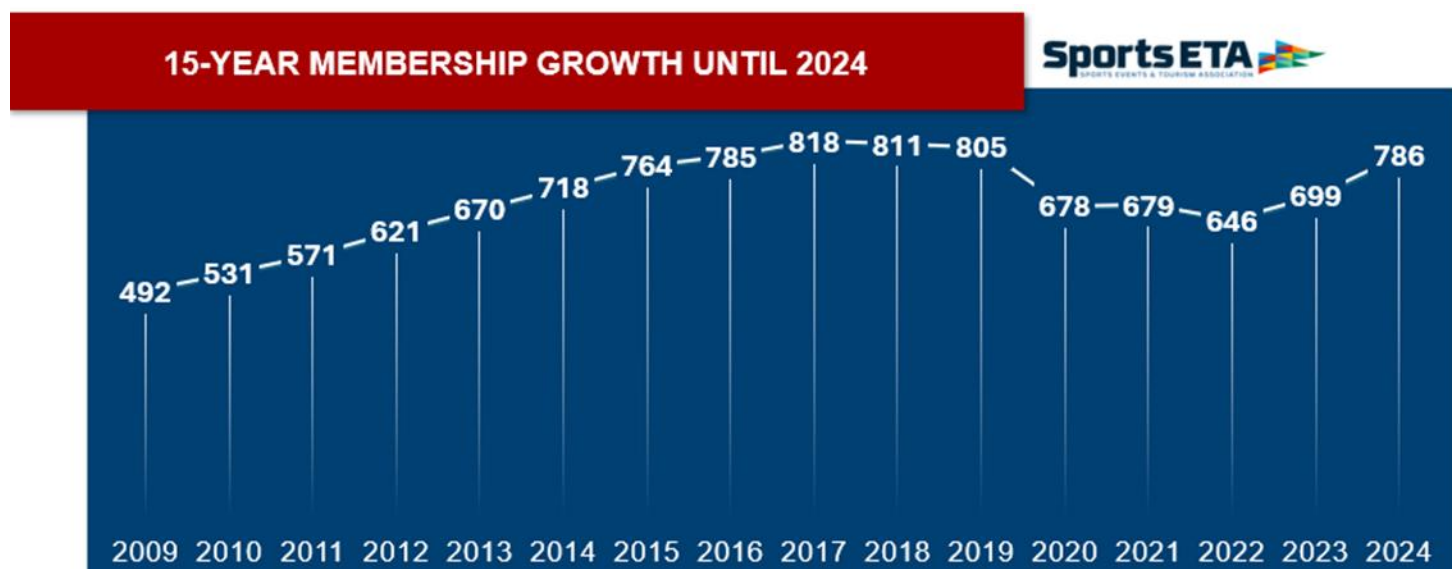
By prioritizing these action items, Visit Lake Tahoe can strengthen its position in the sports tourism market, align its efforts with regional goals, and attract high-value events that drive economic impact while supporting the community's sustainability objectives.



## Appendix A – SportsETA Membership

Despite the downtick in national membership figures that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, the sports tourism industry has grown exponentially over the past two decades. The nature of the industry is that it is relatively “immune” to market factors such as troubled economies, war, high unemployment, or similar factors. Projections indicate that the grass roots sports tourism industry (exclusive of mega events like the Superbowl, Final Fours, etc.) is growing at a pace of 12-14% per year, with more growth anticipated in the coming decade.

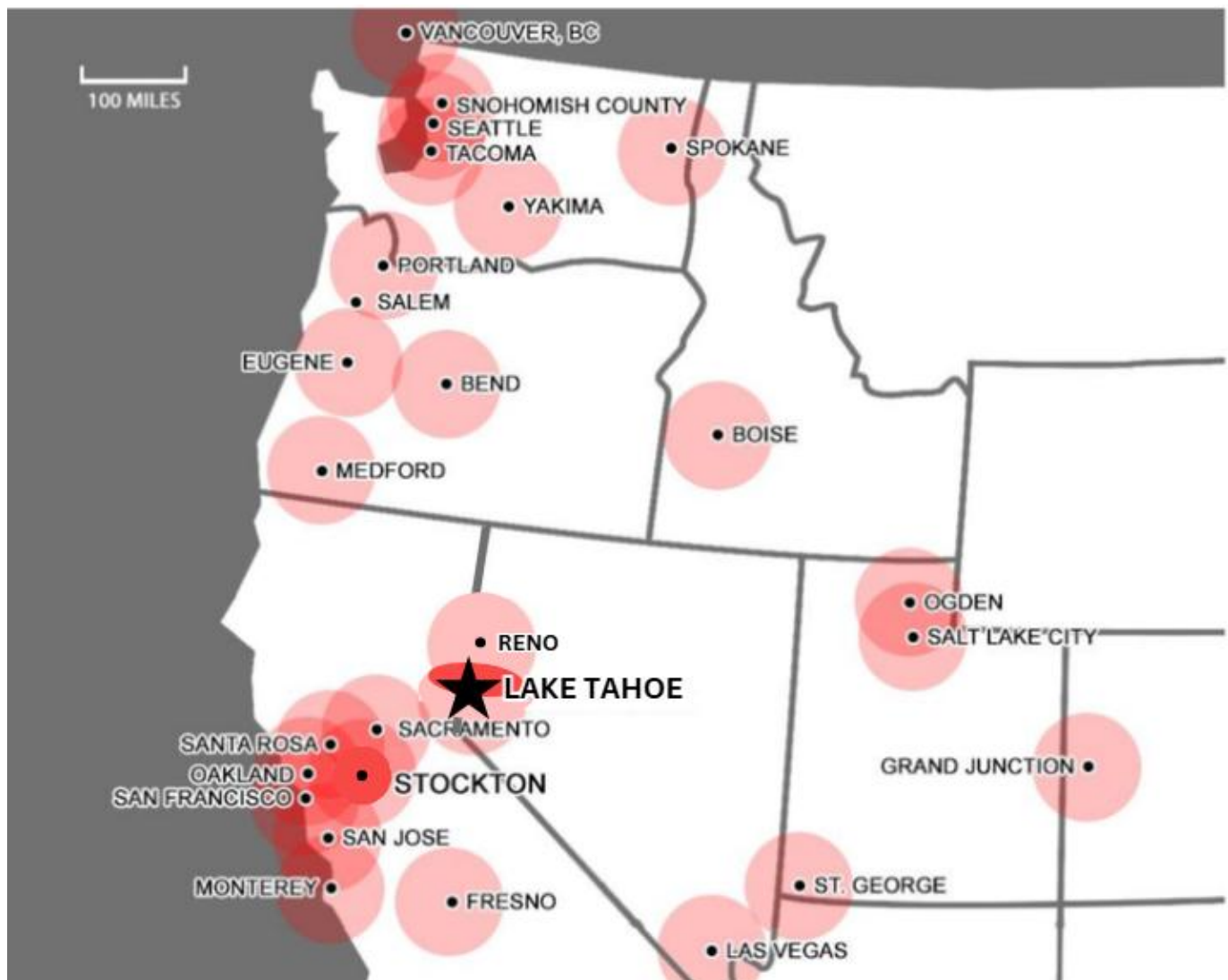
Today, there are more events, with more participants competing in those events, than ever before. As a result, there are also more organizations placing an intentional effort into attracting these events to their destination than ever before. Below is a chart outlining the growth of membership organizations within SportsETA, which is expected to rebound to pre-pandemic numbers in the near future and is a direct correlation to the growth of the sports tourism industry as a whole.



## Appendix B – Visit Lake Tahoe Competition Map

The sports and events tourism industry is as competitive today as it has ever been. Numerous destinations market themselves in this niche industry in the form of a sports commission, DMO, convention & visitors bureau, city, or through an alternative organization.

Below is a visual representation of the various entities in VLT's geographic region that are active in the sports tourism and events space. Tournaments often attract teams from as far away as a full day's drive. This graphic shows the significant level of competition in this industry and the high-level geographic overlap amongst these communities.



## Appendix C – Trends in Sports Marketing & Facility Funding

A funding source that has been growing rapidly in the past few years are tourism improvement districts (TID), they are not legal in every state yet, but the states and destinations that do utilize them see a tremendous economic impact from these districts. TIDs use a special benefit assessment to raise revenue to use for destination marketing and tourism promotion. Several of these success stories include:

- Lafayette (LA) created the Lafayette Tourism Improvement District (LTID) on September 20, 2023. This 2% self-imposed assessment paid by hotels and motels within Lafayette Parish will generate a staggering \$1,758,356 annually in additional funds. These funds will support the planning of a brand-new, state-of-the-art indoor sports facility, which will drive additional local and national tourism.
- Portland (ME) created Maine's first tourism improvement district called the Portland Tourism Development District (PTDD) in September 2023. The PTDD is not based on a flat percentage or dollar amount, instead it is based on the business activity related to each parcel within the district. This model leverages the average short-term room rental occupancy percentage and the Average Daily Rate as reported by STR, this value is then multiplied by 1.5%. The first full year budget projection of the PTDD is approximately \$2,953,968.
- In a 2021 study, Tourism Economics examined a three-year period before and after a TID was implemented in 29 TID cities and then compared these cities against their non-TID competitors. Tourism Economics found that on average, TIDs produce a 2.1% lift in hotel room demand and an average 4.5% lift in hotel room revenue for their destinations compared to destinations without TIDs. To put this in perspective, lift on hotel room demand and revenue represented an increase in 150,000 room nights and \$51 million, respectively, for the average destination in 2019.
- Sacramento (CA) approved the 10-year renewal of the Sacramento Tourism Marketing District (STMD) on July 1, 2017. The STMD is a variable assessment rate on hotel stays, with the percentage depending on the zone of the hotel. For fiscal year 2022-2023, the budgeted revenue from the STMD was \$6,860,000.
- Memphis (TN) began their TID on January 1, 2016, assessing \$2.00 per occupied room per night to fund destination marketing programs. Prior to forming the TID, the Memphis bureau projected an annual budget of \$9.4 million in 2017, but with the TID funding, the projected 2017 budget increased to \$14.7 million.
- Denver (CO) created their TID in 2016, with the intent to generate revenue for tourism-related services to increase overnight visitation, including funding capital improvement projects such as the Convention Center. Tourism Economics analyzed the effects of the TID in 2019 and found that Visit Denver's \$36 million budget generated \$73 million in local tax revenue.
- According to Civitas Advisors, the nation's leading firm in TIDs, there are over 200 TIDs across the globe, which raise over \$312 million each year for destination marketing. One study found that for every dollar raised by a TID, there is a \$70 return for the economy.

## Appendix C (cont'd) – Trends in Sports Marketing & Facility Funding

The most common funding source for new facilities is a general fund allocation from the city/county where the facility is located as well as a land contribution for the venue to be constructed (again donated by the city or county). Although the level of success is yet to be determined, several communities around the country have already, or are in the process of, raising their hotel/bed (transient) tax collection rate to fund sports-related facility development, including:

- Placer Valley (CA) allocated funds from an increased bed tax to develop and open a new indoor hardwood complex in 2018.
- Spokane (WA) bonded \$25 million against future bed tax collections to construct a new athletic field house (The Podium) which opened in December 2021.
- Evansville (IN) opened a \$15 million multi-use outdoor sports complex that is entirely funded by bed tax dollars. The future management of this facility will also be funded by bed tax dollars, and it is run by the DMO itself.
- Shreveport (LA) passed a bed tax increase for the expansion of their Convention & Visitor Bureau's national marketing program. This new tax also supports the Independence Bowl (venue enhancements and improved matchups) and the Shreveport Regional Airport (incentives for new airline routes). This combined effort between three of Shreveport's leading agencies shows the economic development impact that sports tourism can have on a mid- or small-size market.
- Fox Cities (Appleton, WI) raised their bed tax rate from 6% to 10% to build a convention center, a new large (hardwood and ice) indoor sports complex, and to renovate three existing sports facilities used to attract regional and national tournaments. The new facility opened in October of 2019 and due to its early success, further expansions are already being discussed.
- Pasco (FL), in partnership with the Florida Sports Foundation, developed a new sports complex on 120 acres of county-owned property. Pasco County is investing \$11 million to the project, including \$8.5 million in tourist tax funds and \$2.5 million in unrestricted bond proceeds.
- In January 2016, Warren County (OH) raised the lodging tax one (1) percent to finance a \$10 million, 20 field sports complex. The rate hike increased the county hotel occupancy tax from 3% to 4%. The tax will be used over 20 years to pay off debt the Warren County Convention & Visitors Bureau will take on to pay for the complex.

## Appendix C (cont'd) – Trends in Sports Marketing & Facility Funding

In addition to the hotel tax examples noted on the previous page, several communities have implemented a food and beverage tax for the purpose of developing or enhancing sports facilities.

- Elizabethtown (KY) passed a 2% food and beverage tax in 2012 to fund the development and management of the Elizabethtown Sports Park. In the first five years of operations, the “mega complex” generated nearly \$100 million in direct visitor spending to the community (according to studies commissioned with SportsImpacts, one of the top economic impact agencies in the country). Etown as it is known, is currently looking at facility expansion opportunities to capture even more sports tourism activity.
- For the past 30 years, Fort Wayne (IN) has implemented a 1% food and beverage tax that is used for capital projects. This program has funded several new buildings at the site of the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum arena, including a 100,000-square foot expo center and 5,000-seat baseball stadium. These funds have also been used to renovate the arena’s ice floor, to add 2,500 seats and meeting rooms to the arena. The fund generates \$7.5 million per year and is currently being considered to help finance a new arena downtown.
- Ashland (OR) employs a 5% food and beverage tax which garners nearly \$4.5 million a year. Twenty percent of these funds are allocated to the acquisition and preservation of open spaces for parks and recreation, with 80% of the funds used to retire debt for a recently completed community-wide waterway enhancement.
- Historically, King County (WA) has used intermittent funding from food and beverage taxes to build stadiums such as the King Dome. While this program is not active today, it has been a tool the Greater Seattle area has used in the past for venue development to entice professional sports teams to the area. Similarly, the State of Florida has a professional league stadium venue development program that is also funded by temporary food and beverage taxes, when needed. Finally, Milwaukee used a food and beverage tax to build Miller Park, home of Major League Baseball’s Milwaukee Brewers.
- In 2007, the State of New Jersey created the “Sports and Entertainment District Urban Revitalization Act.” Under this legislation, the community of Millville levied a 2% local food and beverage tax to fund a sports and entertainment district including a 500-acre motorsports park that hosts numerous events including NASCAR racing.

It should be noted that different states have different regulations regarding the use of funds generated by bed and/or food and beverage taxes. The cases outlined above are not exhaustive and should be viewed only as examples for further discussion.

## Appendix D – Visit Lake Tahoe Venue Summary & Notes

Overall, the Consultant Team toured several “Tournament Friendly” venues and “Anchor” facilities in the area. Below is a list of all venues (sorted alphabetically) that were evaluated by the Consultant Team. Using the Sports Tourism Index™, the Consultant Team rated each facility on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being superior) at its current quality (CQ). The rating system used the following color codes:

Anchor Facility
Tournament Friendly
Overflow or Small Tournament Facility
Not of Tournament Quality

Facility Name	Facility Type	National Average	Index Score & CQ
Bijou Community Park	Disc Golf Course	3.37	3.05
Bijou Community Park	Other	2.90	2.80
Bijou Community Park	BMX	3.18	1.80
Bijou Community Park	Golf Course	3.52	1.65
Blue Granite Climbing Gym	Other	2.90	3.80
Community Playfields	Flat Fields	2.27	2.40
Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course	Golf Course	3.52	4.10
Heavenly Ski Resort	Winter Sports	3.10	3.70
Kahle Park	Indoor Courts	2.78	2.58
Kahle Park	Diamonds	2.24	1.80
Kahle Park	Flat Fields	2.27	1.80
Lake Tahoe Golf Course	Golf Course	3.52	3.60
Skatehouse Skate Park	Other	2.90	2.30
South Lake Tahoe Recreation Center	Indoor Courts	2.78	2.53
South Lake Tahoe Recreation Center	Swimming Pool	2.60	1.78
Tahoe Blue Event Center	Arena	2.72	3.70
Tahoe Blue Event Center	Ice	2.92	3.28
Tahoe Keys Tennis	Tennis	2.30	1.50
Tahoe Paradise Golf Course	Golf Course	3.52	3.55
Tahoe Paradise Park	Disc Golf Course	3.37	2.85
Tahoe Paradise Park	Pickleball Courts	2.41	2.20
Zephyr Cove Park	Disc Golf Course	3.37	3.30
Zephyr Cove Park	Tennis	2.30	2.35
Zephyr Cove Park	Diamonds	2.24	1.95



## Appendix D – Visit Lake Tahoe Venue Summary & Notes

Bijou Community Park Disc Golf Course
Wooded, flat course in the park.
Bijou Bike Park
Freestyle Park, not much tourism opportunity here. No fencing around facility.
Bijou Municipal Golf Course
9-hole executive course, not of tournament quality. Might the highest/best use be converting to flat fields? Located in a protected land area.
Bijou Community Skate Park
Freestyle jumps mostly. Not fenced.
Blue Granite Climbing Gym
New facility located by their YMCA, not competition ready, more recreational. Small 30-foot climbing wall. Several small grotto style climbing areas. Limited parking.
Community Playfields
Located at the Lake Tahoe community college. 2 grass flat fields located adjacent to the artificial turf field. 1 artificial turf flat field with lights and limited AL bleacher seating on one side closest to parking lot. Field looks regulation (120x80m). A low fence surrounds the field. Parking is shared by the area buildings.
Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course
Don't host much outside of the American Century Championship. Not easy to book.

## Appendix D – Visit Lake Tahoe Venue Summary & Notes

Heavenly Ski Resort - World Cup
Limited run ski/snow board area visible from the main parking. Gondola access from main street “Village” area. Could be a good site for a second celebrity event similar to the old John Denver event.
Kahle Community Center
<p>Aged County facility. Indoor elevated 200m flat walking track (rec). 1 – Full size hardwood gymnasium marked for Basketball / Volleyball / Pickleball. Small workout area. Childcare center on premises. Decent parking options. Flat field and recreation baseball on the same site</p> <p>Reno just purchased a modular 200m running track (\$3 million according to Synergy Sports).</p>
Kahle Park Baseball Field
Limited use Little League sized site with lights. Overlaps with part of the soccer fields. Right field is open to the flat soccer field.
Kahle Park Flat Fields
1 grass flat fields. Linear layout approximately 120x80m. Surfaces not great. Adjacent to the Community Center. The baseball field is located at the west end of the field.
Lake Tahoe Golf Course
By Blue Granite Gym.
Skatehouse Skate Park
Indoor, wasn’t able to access.

## Appendix D – Visit Lake Tahoe Venue Summary & Notes

South Lake Tahoe Recreation Center - Pool
6 lane 25-yard pool. A concrete shell with collapsible inflatable bubble in the cold months. No seating, limited deck space, not competition friendly.
South Lake Tahoe Recreation Center - Indoor Courts
1 aging tartan floor court.
South Lake Tahoe Ice Arena
1 sheet barn with limited seating. Possible upgrade to facility coming in the near future. Nice concession area and lobby.
South Tahoe High School Football Field
Artificial turf field for football and soccer. Metal bleachers with Press Box, scoreboard, and lights. Limited seating and parking.
South Tahoe High School Soccer Field
Artificial turf Football field. Secondary grass field in proximity to school. Two indoor gyms we didn't visit.
Tahoe Blue Event Center - Ice Arena
GREAT new facility that is flexible for a myriad of event types. Limited dates to book events. During the book year, community might limit number of participants allowed in the building.

## Appendix D – Visit Lake Tahoe Venue Summary & Notes

Tahoe Blue Event Center
Great convention space included in the building. Several breakout and hospitality areas are available. Large ballroom that can be divided into three parts.
Tahoe Keys Tennis
4 neighborhood courts in a planned housing area. These courts are not currently competition ready.
Tahoe Paradise Golf Course
Flat par 71. Limited amenities to support tournament play. Doubles as snow recreation area.
Tahoe Paradise Park Pickle Ball Courts
8 courts, basic recreational facility.
The Loft
Whittel High School. Grass football field with lights and a 400m track. Throwing cages on adjacent field. Limited seating via inground bleachers. Rubber track surface.
Zephyr Cove Tennis Club
6 hard courts outdoors. Good condition with lights. No pickleball lines.
Zephyr Cove Park Baseball Field
Lights but no covered dugouts, limited seating. Slow pitch friendly, dirt or skinned infield.

**Appendix D – Visit Lake Tahoe  
Venue Summary & Notes**

Zephyr Cove Park Disc Golf Course
Mountain elevated course next to tennis facility.
Additional Venues / Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rec center being built, virtually the same assets as the existing center, just newer.</li><li>• Tahoe Keys – 4 tennis and 4 pickleball in a neighborhood, no lights at either.</li><li>• South Tahoe Middle School – 1 football field with a rubberized track, 1 baseball and 1 softball fields both grass. Four court tennis complex.</li></ul>

## Appendix E – Visit Lake Tahoe (VLT) Sports Tourism Index™ Results

Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority



FINAL SCORE

54.41

### SPORTS TOURISM INDEX REPORT

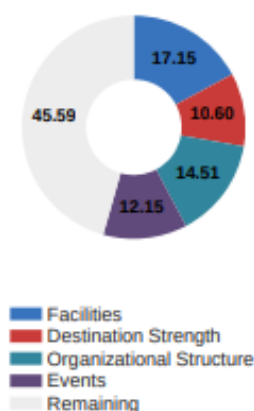
Market Size: Under 500k

Organization Type: DMO (CVB/Sports Commission)

Geographic Region: Southwest

Sports Budget: 1,000,000+

### SCORE BREAKDOWN



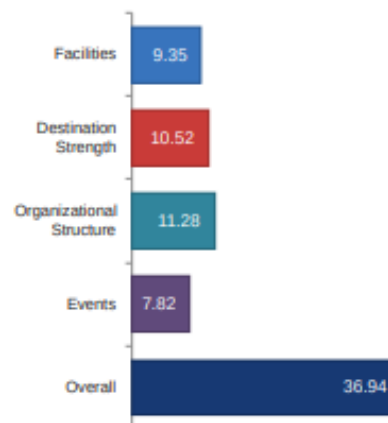
### AVERAGE SCORES

Southwest



### AVERAGE SCORES

Under500K



### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Facilities

Your destination likely has a strong mix of both spectator based and/or participant focused facilities that meet or exceed the standards necessary to host top tier events. Focus should be on continuing to maintain and enhance existing venues and to look ahead and plan for the potential replacement of any aging facilities that will approach its natural shelf life in the next 3-5 years.

#### Destination Strength

Your destination has some access challenges that are likely tied to limited air service and/or a small population within a days drive. It is likely that a focus on hotel product development would support the sports tourism market in the future.

#### Organizational Structure

Your organization has a good number of dedicated staff and a budget that is adequate for attracting and hosting select events. Sports tourism organizations at this level generally have some community support through their boards, advisory groups, and community stakeholders at large. Most often this community support comes through a select few individuals. Growing the organization's influence in the community will depend on expanding the number and reach of its stakeholders over time.

#### Events

Your organization hosts an average number of bid-in events, may create and/or owns a handful of its own championships, and services some events at a basic level. Organizations that score well in this area likely have the ability to work with their local promoters to create new tourism driving events and/or grow their current properties year over year. There is likely an opportunity for organizations in this category to enhance their efforts in servicing events in order to strengthen renewal rates in the future.

## Appendix E – Visit Lake Tahoe (VLT) Sports Tourism Index™ Results

Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority



### INDUSTRY AVERAGES REPORT

#### Overall Scores \*

	Your Score	Average Score	Difference
Facilities	17.14	8.45	8.69
Destination Strength	10.60	11.62	-1.02
Organizational Structure	14.51	11.03	3.48
Events	12.15	7.77	4.38
<b>Overall</b>	<b>54.41</b>	<b>33.07</b>	<b>21.34</b>

#### Facilities Breakdown

Participant-Based	Your Score	Average Score	Difference
Golf Course	4.10	3.52	0.58
Indoor Courts	3.77	2.78	1.00
Winter Sports	3.70	3.11	0.59
Golf Course	3.60	3.52	0.08
Golf Course	3.55	3.52	0.03
Convention Center	2.40	2.06	0.34

Spectator-Based	Your Score	Average Score	Difference
Theater	4.15	3.38	0.77
Arena	3.70	2.73	0.97
Arena	3.55	2.73	0.82
	-	-	-
	-	-	-

#### Destination Strength

	Your Score	Average Score	Difference
Tourism Drivers ^	3.00	2.92	0.08
Hotels *	2.70	1.05	1.65
Destination Accessibility *	2.45	1.94	0.51

#### Organizational Structure \*

	Your Score	Average Score	Difference
Sports Staff	1.50	0.39	1.11
Grant Program	5.00	1.95	3.05
Board & Advisory	-	0.50	-0.50

#### Sporting Events

Number on an annual basis	Your Answer	Average Answer	Difference
Local Events	8	23	-15
Bid-In Events Hosted	-	7	-7
Local Events	1	27	-26

\* Max score of 5

^ Max score of 10

\* Max score of 25