

# Boulder City Chamber of Commerce



Annual Report Card 2017

Prepared by Monica Preston,  
Communications Director &  
Vice President

## Mission Statement

The Chamber's mission is to promote business and commerce for the Boulder City area through leadership in economic, political and social development.

In pursuing its mission, the Chamber is an advocate, catalyst, and service provider focusing on those issues which affect the area's economic vitality. The Chamber acts as an advocate by representing the membership especially regarding State and local legislative issues. As a united voice of its members, the Chamber seeks a consensus on key issues, communicates the business community's perspective and ultimately influences decisions made by legislatures.

The Chamber acts as a catalyst by identifying issues affecting economic vitality and focusing resources to address and resolve those issues. It sponsors and supports a variety of efforts and organizations congruent to the Chamber mission. The Chamber encourages the involvement of corporate citizens within the community and provides a forum for discussing topics of interest to the business community.

The Chamber acts as a service provider by initiating and managing programs which are responsive to member needs. In addition to managing a wide range of programs which encourage small business formation and retention, the Chamber is a clearinghouse of information for business. In this role, it helps members interpret the impact of recently passed legislation.

The geographic scope of the Chamber extends throughout Boulder City and the adjacent Metropolitan area. A larger geographic scope of influence and involvement (e.g. communities within Southern Nevada) may be required based on the issue (e.g. legislative, transportation, and regional economic development).

As the area grows and becomes more diverse, coordination with other organizations is increasingly important. When working on issues affecting all sectors of the community, the Chamber represents an important but limited constituency. It is essential to cooperate with other organizations to achieve the Chamber's goals. Therefore, the Chamber seeks to establish coalitions around issues as needed. Routine liaison is sought with closely related organizations (e. g. Southern Nevada Chambers of Commerce).

Boulder City Chamber of Commerce is a 501 c (6) organization that houses under its umbrella four other non-profit corporations; the Boulder City Tourism Commission, the Boulder City Economic Vitality Commission, the Boulder City Chamber of Commerce Foundation, and the Boulder City Community Foundation.

The Boulder City Tourism Commission (BCTC) was founded in 2004 and was created by the Chamber as a volunteer group's solution to mitigate the negative impact of the future I-11. Its guiding principles are to advertise the name Boulder City and create energy around the new brand, "*A World Away For A Day*". The marketing efforts on behalf of all Boulder City businesses have seen the success advertising to the repeat customers from "over the hill" have been to solidify the name Boulder City.



The Boulder City Economic Vitality Commission (EVC) was created in 2011 to fill a gap happening in the efforts of economic development in Boulder City. At the time, the City of Boulder City was the only municipality in Southern Nevada without an in-house economic development department. In order to find a solution that would help intensify the efforts of business retention and expansion, as well as recruitment of jobs and new companies, the group of volunteers that founded this organization developed a robust agency that now has had substantial success in all its efforts.

**Table of Contents**

How Do We Advocate .....3

How Do We Take Action .....5

What Do We See For The Future .....9



## How We Advocate

Through the efforts of the EVC and Chamber, NDOT agreed to change the name of US 93 (or Great Basin Highway, SR 101, Boulder Highway, Nevada Highway, etc) to Boulder City Parkway so that this title would be on all green and white informational signage entering Boulder City city limits. Prior to this effort and win, the State Interstate symbol and US 93 would have been the only wording on the approach. During this same timeframe, all signage was reviewed by the EVC and Chamber to make sure all information was correct, more signage added, and brown and white signs added to properly represent museums, the National Park, the Dam, and Bootleg Canyon. Without those efforts, many would have been forgotten or would have had to be fought for and possibly be added after the fact. The EVC also brought NDOT's sign official to Boulder City to discuss with the business owners the ability to purchase icons for the businesses on the Blue and White informational signs at each off ramp. Without those efforts, we would not have the agreed upon number of blue and white signs at each off ramp, which is far greater now that NDOT had so much feedback from business owners who needed to be represented.

As part of the bypass project, the Economic Vitality Commission has identified signage as a concern for business which has been on the radar for some time. This issue should be the next legal issue attacked after a new City Attorney is hired. The City has some examples of what other communities have implemented for ordinances and guide-lines. The EVC has also conducted many meetings and discussion groups on how we can work with the ordinances. An attempt to find a loop-hole in the State of Nevada "right-away" and claim that State land not in BC limits, and therefore open to the use of outdoor message boards, did not come to fruition. So the City needs to now look at signage corridors that allow for billboards to be in certain locations allowed by the I-11 corridor. The allowed messaging and content is another battle.

The Chamber has been working with LAMAR signs on the approaches to Boulder City from Kingman and from Searchlight. In this effort, when a sign comes available, they notify us to help find a Boulder City business that can fill that spot. If all the billboards coming into town from both directions were filled with BC businesses, it would drive traffic into the community, and we all will need to thank those businesses for their efforts and investment. The City has shown interest in also contracting with LAMAR, but we've been able to find independent business owners that have contracted with LAMAR as a better first step. The Chamber would also like the City to have a cohesive message (been waiting on LVCVA's message to be adopted and approved by the City) before just throwing some message on the board that may not be the best use of the City's taxpayer funds. The Chamber is also in discussions with Las Vegas Billboards for four digital boards around and on the 215. These are more expensive, so until a single message has been decided on, that should be communicated via these boards, no contracts have been signed.



Per the suggestion of the Interstate 11 Impact Study commissioned by the EVC, and paid for by a grant the Chamber assisted in obtaining, there have been conversations to incorporate a rest stop at the new four corners built and maintained by a lease of the City for information dissemination. We also held a brief discussion with Railroad Pass to have an information center there as well. Both would be to direct traffic into Boulder City and off the I-11.

The Chamber lobbied last Legislative session to make sure the fees to conduct an event in BC were not so astronomical that they were no longer feasible to put on here. After two months of work in Carson City and by changing the State Law, for Art in the Park alone, we were able to save them what would have been \$6500 in licensing fees with the Health District. Had we not been successful in those efforts, most of the small non-profits in BC would never have been able to sponsor an event, raise much needed funds for their organizations, thus resulting in fewer guests to BC. Thanks to the relationship we now have with the Lobbyist for Boulder City, we continue to stay abreast of issues that are pertinent to the business climate of Nevada and specifically, Boulder City.

Looking to identify funds, an underwriter for events is essential. It is the one factor that has kept us from being able to bring large events to town, but could be a catalyst for much positive impact. Without a venue and having to use City Parks that are not gated, it is very hard to bring in music festivals that require large stages, lighting and sound, let alone paying for the bands that draw a crowd. An underwriter helps set large-scale events up to get them started and eventually self-sustain. In continuing the momentum with events, the goal to work toward is an events center scaled to fit the needs of Boulder City and to entice corporate events, concerts, and ticket events that will drive more tourism into our area.

The Chamber has long been known to champion the need for an events center. We need a location to bring in small corporate events with break-out rooms and a ball room for an expo hall needed by trade shows. We need a small theater, with capacity for 500, for indoor concerts, performances, etc. This could be another huge attraction for off-Strip activities where the event producer is just looking for a location close to the entertainment of the Strip, but without the distractions of the gaming life during their trade show day.

Along with finding more diverse ways to draw in visitors, the Chamber and EVC have noted the need for an adventure hub much like they have in Moab, Utah, such as a centrally located building that hosts all our outdoor attractions and outfitters under one roof. Supplies for each medium could be sold and a staffer from each outfitter could be at their desk taking reservations and selling supplies related to their business. What a huge impact this could have for visitation and business owners. This identified need will remain as a goal the Chamber will champion for this community.

Several years ago, the Bureau of Reclamation approved a pilot program to allow the Chamber to put a brochure at the Dam with a coupon on it that was redeemable at the Chamber office, driving traffic into Boulder City after they visited the Dam. Unfortunately, the staff that allowed this program is no longer at the Bureau. However, the Chamber does have Relocation Guides at the Hoover Dam Mercantile.



The Chamber and EVC act as conveners when needed and make sure our members have a voice when local government needs to be aware of issues in the business community. Last year, we took action when business developers and contractors were expressing concern about licensing and inspections in respect to their building projects. As we all came together to devise a plan to share and suggest to the City for improvements, they were responsive due to the nature of a strong voice coming together. We will always be stronger as one voice, and more successful in getting a positive resolution.

## How We Take Action

As a catalyst, the Chamber is proactive in identifying opportunities that affect economic vitality and focusing resources to address and resolve those issues. The Chamber has connections with various networks designed to put Boulder City on the map. For example, Boulder City Social has an excellent reward app that could be amplified along with the other mobile apps in design currently that would provide a gift at any stop if they had come from the Dam or other designated location. This would mimic the Chamber's brochure at the Dam and free gift at the Chamber if they brought in their BC brochure. It would also eliminate the need to have any permissions granted as it would be an independent app that would drive visitors from the Dam area to the business districts of BC.

The Conversion Zone program that is offered by many advertising companies now could be used to gauge how effective the apps and reward programs are. The Chamber has been using the app to advertise to guests from the SkyWalk, the Grand Canyon, the Dam, the Lake, Southern California, the I-40, Las Vegas and Southern Utah. We have had a conversion rate of 5 out of every 100 come into BC after seeing our ad on their phone. Meaning that from all those that view our video clip advertising on their mobile devices and then actually come into the Boulder City geo-fence, we have 5 out of every 100 people convert or become a tourist to Boulder City. Based on our last stats, we have had 750,000 impressions during that 3 month campaign or 1500 tourists cross over the geo-fence mapped around the Chamber office. Based on those numbers and the cost of the campaign, the Chamber spent approximately \$5.33 per tourist to bring them to BC.

The BCTC, in the past, rolled out a package pricing to vendors and attempted to create a reservation system that all businesses could be a part of and receive traffic. However, some challenges arose. One of which was being able to keep the pricing of the tourism packages accurate and up-to-date. Possibly with future apps and software creation, this may become more affordable and will be something to consider.



In the meantime, the development of the “Plan Your Trip” and “Take a Tour” links on the Chamber’s website have received a lot of positive feedback and will continue to be updated and upgraded. These features allows tourists to use their mobile phone or desk top to plan their future trip to Boulder City and have all the details needed to make their reservations, plan times at attractions, and have directions to all attractions. The tour options are robust and vary from the wine walks, history walks, driving tours, art tours, etc. They can be changed at a moment’s notice and will always be relevant for businesses and guests.

The Chamber has tried to be supportive of the Las Vegas Visitors and Convention Authority’s promotion of Destination Boulder City, not only as a good partner, but also because we simply do not have the same budget the LVCVA has for this type of promotion. When the BCTC was formed, we received funds from the City’s RDA to match to LVCVA’s dollars to begin the “A World Away For A Day” campaign. At the time, it was a wonderful way to market the name Boulder City to the repeat customer of the Las Vegas Valley. The campaign was successful in solidifying the brand, and we do have name recognition from it. Although we will never be able to quantify those efforts with statistical data on the ROI, it has increased awareness of the brand as proven through focus groups LVCVA conducted. All these efforts were done in preparation of the impacts of I-11. Without the forethought of the founders of the BCTC, we would be in a much bleaker situation today. Because of the creation of the BCTC, LVCVA added the Destination Boulder City market to their existing “Destination” programs. Prior to the BCTC, LVCVA did not have BC on its radar.

The LVCVA recently conducted research regarding Boulder City and the nearby Hoover Dam. As a result of that study, tourists do not associate the Dam and Boulder City as one. The direction of the marketing team at the Chamber now becomes, “How do we connect the two?”. One of the ideas is to develop a marketing strategy for all stakeholders that can be used as a collective message. This will entail the City coming together with LVCVA’s presentation, what the EVC is proposing with the UNLV study and student input, and what has already been used by the BCTC as a baseline. Once this happens, the Tourism Commission can be ramped back up to house all of these efforts and oversee all interested parties so that everyone has a voice. This laser focused approach allows for one message, and dollars can be used to create a stronger message.

More suggestions also came out of the UNLV study where students not familiar with BC studied the current marketing efforts and gave very modern, “millennial” answers to how to market BC. Along the same vein, a lot of money was spent by the LVCVA on our behalf to research what would be an up-to-date approach to messaging, prior to authorizing R&R to spend dollars on a new website.

The Chamber has been focusing in print materials the “ings” of BC. Not specifically the same project as HDL with the 101 activities, but simply stating you can do anything that ends in “ing” in BC. It has been used in multiple print locations. This is also the focus of the UNLV study that the EVC just wrote and was awarded a grant for. The results will be used to forward the mission of outdoor adventure and marketing efforts of this very important part



of Boulder City.

For a few years now, the EVC has attempted to identify a stand-alone building that would work as a “Hub” for adventure tourism. This idea has been pitched to outfitters during the EVC One-on-One’s with City officials. It has gotten much traction from the outfitters, and is now attempting to find a building that could be managed by one operator and house computer kiosks to book reservations or attended desks for all the outfitters to be represented. This opportunity has not yet presented itself. It was proposed at the location where the previous trailer park stood on the highway, but did not come to fruition. This concept is still a strong idea. What was pitched was that one operator would maintain the facility that would also be the home to a campground that was well maintained and inviting to those seekers of adventure. Many that participate in the adventures we offer in BC are not looking for a bed and breakfast experience, but instead bring their camp van or tent with them and have only found they can go clear down to the Lake and out of our community to camp. The concept of a well-maintained campground with a venue that offered supplies and kiosks to book adventure travel with all Boulder City outfitters and attractions all in one location is truly a Destination and should be priority. The EVC recently got traction on this concept with the City identifying a parcel of land that could potentially be home to a campground maintained by a contractor on City land. The studies are now being conducted on the parcel.

Adventure Tourism needs to be the tagline in some way. Gateway to all the activities in the surrounding area as far as the Grand Canyon and as close as Bootleg should be key messaging. The Chamber just contracted with their webmaster to create trip planning software to not only suggest a package, but allows guests to make their own. This wouldn’t make reservations for them, but would provide suggested itineraries and would provide all contact info on a one sheet.

We have also contracted to have an app created for driving tours and for the wine walks to go mobile. Billboards, television/radio spots and print materials are all excellent avenues for advertising. Looking at what statistically is being used more than any other means to learn about where to go and where we are, we have to look to our phones. Spending more dollars on ways to advertise to someone in the palm of their hand seems more advantageous in this day. The Chamber members are now able to use a key texting word to advertise their business and educate the guest on what they have to offer. The text number 72727 will become very familiar as the Chamber Members are using it plus their business keyword. The link received by the user takes the user directly to the Member’s mobile-friendly website.

With the loss of the Friends of the Arts and the Art Scape, the Chamber contracted with Lee Lanier to design a brochure that will encompass the murals all over town as well as the many sculptures created by Art Scape and other private exhibitors. There have been several separate versions of promotional materials, but one comprehensive version is needed. This printed piece will be printed on demand and driven from a web-based piece so that it can be updated as needed. The next step will be to create a walking/driving tour that will take users to each location from the historic district to as far as the sculpture in Bootleg Canyon





and eventually to the proposed “largest” sculpture that the EVC is in the process of creating to draw traffic off the I-11 and to a location close to the business district. This picture point will also have a small interpretive center that will educate guests as what more there is to see and do in BC, whether with a mobile app or printed material at that location.

The Chamber has been working toward more events at the theater. As new people are trained on how to maintain its delicate historical structure and interior, this will be another avenue for driving tourism into the Historic District and improving the quality of life for residents, as well as offering another venue for non-profit fundraising.

The idea was proposed to the City for an events specialist that would work with the current events to improve visitation as well as to go after more events for the community. Whether utilizing Bootleg Canyon to its full capacity or bringing in more golf-tournaments, a specialist could be dedicated to making events a number one way to bring in a guest and hopefully have them fall in love with BC and become a “regular” on the weekends.

The broad efforts that are focused on the Southern Nevada Railway will have deep and long-lasting effects on tourism in Boulder City. The EVC and Chamber have spent the last two years making the bridging of two communities a reality. With the relocation of the current Depot from Yucca to the corner of Boulder City Parkway and Nevada Way, the visibility factor will significantly improve ridership. Currently, in December alone, the ridership was over 44,000. Those numbers are staggering when you think of the short line travel from an outdoor interpretive center. With the new indoor Museum and Gift Shop and the added amphitheater for presentations and field trips, the children’s park for play and relaxation, the 1/3-gauge track and train and the 1/8-gauge track and train, this park will be an incredible addition to pull tourism for our destination. The addition of the ability to bring in Polar Express, dinner trains, wine trains, mystery and murder train events as we travel from the new Depot to stops at Van Wagenen just below Water Street and the Fiesta in Henderson. Events on the train seem endless. The addition of a car that fits transporting bicycles amps up the idea of families getting on the train in Henderson with their bikes, riding the train to BC, playing at the park for a while, riding up to Bootleg or on the River Mountain Loops Trail, eating dinner at a local restaurant and hopping back on the train to ride home. Or if the user is in Henderson and wants to see the Dam, a public/private agreement with a trolley car will give users a ride at the BC Depot to take them you to the Dam or the Historic District before returning to Henderson on the Wine Train that stops at the new I-11 Bridge, showcasing the lights of the Las Vegas Valley just past Railroad Pass. And to think that all of these efforts are State dollars to relocate and build the new Museum. Through the efforts of the EVC, four grants-close to \$18 million- are in the works to pay for all the off-site improvements; and this does not require any BC tax payer dollars.

Ten months ago, the Chamber formally brought together a group of interested off-road enthusiasts to discuss going to the City to look at changing the current ordinances guiding the use of OHV’s in our surrounding deserts and the use of golf carts on City streets. The dialogue led to the collaboration of resources and materials from other communities that support such efforts. Much data was collected and a proposal put together and presented to the City in December. That led to a presentation to the City’s Traffic Safety Commission in



January and currently the ordinances and codes are in review at the City Attorney level for staff directive. The overall request is to add to or change the current codes to allow street legal golf carts on streets with speeds under 25 mph and large, street legal OHV's on designated streets to allow them to exit the desert at certain access points and travel into the business district for services such as fuel, food, supplies, etc. This also allows residents to ride to and from their homes to the designated desert access points. A grant will be applied for to assist the PD in registering local OHV's and golf carts to insure their street legal as well as enforcement. An additional grant will be applied for to create and print tourism maps and educational materials as well as trailhead markers. The Chamber has also started the dialogue with the Nevada Commission on Tourism to create a Statewide map to add BC to the Silver Line trail system that will tie Boulder City to Reno in off-road trail systems.

With the transition from an employee-based dues structure to a tiered-dues structure, the concept of what return on your investment has been quantified. Members now purchase the level of benefits they'd like to take advantage of, and the Chamber keeps a running spreadsheet for each member and each benefit. Line items are dated upon completion and at the anniversary of the join date, the member is presented with a date-stamped log of each of every benefit provided them. This has received an excellent response from the membership, has allowed us to take inventory of the benefits we provide and increase them, and has allowed us to recognize a 97% retention rate since the creation of this new structure.

## **How We Make It Happen**

The Chamber of Commerce is funded by member investments, direct donations, grants, special event income, and sponsorships. We are proud of the fact that we have many partners that appreciate the value of their investment and remain loyal.



## What Do We See For The Future

The Boulder City Chamber of Commerce and all of its partners in the tourism, convention, economic development and business arenas will continue to be a strong business voice with the ability to make things happen. We come together to find solutions in times of need; we stand strong in making a difference. This community is the passion of all of the partners and members we associate with and serve. The quality of life of the residents of Boulder City is of the utmost importance of all our efforts. Boulder City's quaint charm and unique history need to always be included in our vision. The success of our business community, special events, adventure outfitters, and attractions will always hold the attention of our guests. These are exciting times filled with great opportunity, and it is our charge to make Boulder City the best of everything.

