

Reno-NY nonstop flight could be game changer

By Bill O'Driscoll, Reno Gazette-Journal

Talk about liftoff.

JetBlue Airways' coming nonstop flights linking Reno and New York City promise to elevate not only the future of Reno-Tahoe International Airport but also the broader economy in northern Nevada.

From filling hotel rooms to luring new business to the sheer prestige of "New York" and "nonstop" in the same sentence, Reno-Tahoe stands on a new level of opportunity, officials say.

"If we want to leverage Reno-Tahoe, it really helps to have the top name to point to, and that's what we have," Chris Baum, CEO of the Reno-Sparks Convention & Visitors Authority, said of the new connection to the nation's most populous market and financial epicenter. "Talk about instant credibility."

In the broader marketplace, it brings attention at a time of growing economic recovery in the region. Among the recent items providing a boost to northern Nevada: Tesla's \$5 billion battery gigafactory, the just-announced \$1 billion Switch data center and continued shrinking unemployment and rising home prices.

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