

# CEO says Resorts World expansion already in the planning stages

By Richard N. Velotta Las Vegas Review-Journal

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Resort designers knew from the start that the Genting Group had more than enough room on its 88-acre north Strip site to complete the \$4.3 billion Resorts World Las Vegas.

But it was still a little surprising that KT Lim, the chairman of Genting's board, would choose to share on Thursday that work was already underway to expand the operation.

He made the comments during his opening day speech, thanking who had contributed to getting the doors open. Lim directed his remarks to Gov. Steve Sisolak, who acknowledged them with approval.

What will go in the vacant land is unclear, but Resorts World President Scott Sibella has made no secret of the prospect of someday expanding.

The vacant land is just south of Resorts World's swimming pool complex. Guests peering out over the infinity pool can't miss the dirt scar that extends toward what once was identified as the site for the Alon hotel-casino and since has been bought by Wynn Resorts Ltd.

Analysts have said the most likely scenario is that rooms, perhaps in a tower, would be added.

That has been the pattern for Genting in some of its other projects. At Resorts World Genting in Malaysia, for example, a project that started with 200 rooms now has 10,000 in seven hotels, with two theme parks, five shopping malls and Malaysia's only legal casino.

## **‘Plenty of space to enhance the resort’**

Brendan Bussmann, director of government affairs for Las Vegas-based Global Market Advisors, said Resorts World has set the stage for other expansion, not just at the 3,500-room resort.

“Resorts World still has plenty of space to enhance the resort with an already promised expansion,” Bussmann said. “While no timetable has been set, the site was designed for a significant number of more hotel rooms, food and beverage, entertainment, and retail at the just-opened footprint. My assumption is that all cards are on the table as they fit out the rest of the site.”

Bussmann said that while Resorts World has properties around the globe, it knows that its Las Vegas footprint helps them set the stage for future development around the world and being one of the major gaming developers.

“The talk of expansion is a natural next step, but it will be one part of the further opportunities on the north end of the Strip with Wynn West and the potential next chapter of the Fontainebleau,” he said.

Kudos continued to roll in on Resorts World and the coming-out party it had Thursday.

Virginia Valentine, president and CEO of the Nevada Resorts Association, called Resorts World “a stunning property and a gorgeous addition to the Las Vegas Strip.”

“The opening comes at a perfect time and is sure to draw many more visitors to Las Vegas to experience the latest iteration of a world-class luxury integrated resort-hotel,” Valentine said. “From the moment you walk in, you are impressed at the attention to detail, the exquisite atmosphere and artwork and the advanced technology that’s embedded throughout the spacious property.”

Valentine said the opening was a fitting celebration to showcase the first new resort on the Strip in a decade.

“You could feel the excitement and energy of the Resorts World team members as the public was welcomed in for the first time,” she said. “Every moment of last night was special — from the entertainment and ceremonial dancing to the five-star food and beverage options and celebrity guests.”

“It is great to see additional life added to the north end of the Strip as there definitely is now a buzz between Wynn and Resorts World,” Bussmann said. “With the opening of the first full property in a decade, it shows the resiliency of Vegas to bounce back, innovation and push forward.”

He said Resorts World has the advantage of bringing a new vibe to the Strip because of how technology has evolved and the ability to enhance the guest experience.

“Part of this is through cashless gaming that provides the first real test on the Strip to how the consumer can adapt to provide a more fluid gaming experience than the cash-based system we currently operate in,” Bussmann said.

Contact Richard N. Velotta at [rvelotta@reviewjournal.com](mailto:rvelotta@reviewjournal.com) or 702-477-3893. Follow [@RickVelotta](https://twitter.com/RickVelotta) on Twitter.