

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The enabling legislation for a Master Plan, or Comprehensive Plan, is contained in Chapter 278 of Nevada Revised Statutes. All counties with populations greater than 45,000 are required to establish a planning commission (NRS 278.030). All planning commissions in Nevada are required to prepare Master Plans (NR 278.150) and to submit annual recommendations about the implementation of the Master Plan to the Board of Commissioners.

Master Plans provide long-term guidance on the physical development of cities, counties, and regions in Nevada. A Master Plan presents information on existing conditions, highlights current and future issues, and recommends Goals, Policies, and Actions to address identified issues related to Land Use, Housing, Transportation, and other Master Plan Elements. The Master Plan should be comprehensive and set long-term goals to address development and quality of life issues.

The 2016 Update of the Douglas County, Nevada Master Plan represents a twenty-year update of the original 1996 Master Plan. Since 1996, the Master Plan has been updated every five years.

## 2016 MASTER PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

The 2016 Douglas County Master Plan includes 13 Elements, including the Implementation Element. All Master Plan text and map amendments adopted following the 2011 update of the Master Plan are incorporated in this document.

Each Master Plan Element provides an overview of current conditions, discusses issues and opportunities, and concludes with goals, policies, and actions. Each chapter is briefly described below.

### CHAPTER 1 - COUNTY PROFILE

The County Profile provides a synopsis of current conditions in the County. The County's growth is expected to remain at less than 0.5 percent per year for the next 10 to 20 years, compared to the average annual growth rate of 1.39 percent between 2000 and 2010. The Census Bureau estimates the current population at 48,020 (July 2016) while the State Demographer estimates the current population at 48,235 (2016 Certified Estimate). The County is projected to reach a total population of 51,293 by the year 2035, based on the 2015 projections from the State Demographer.

### CHAPTER 2 - AGRICULTURE ELEMENT

The Agriculture Element was first created with the 2006 update of the Douglas County Master Plan. The goals for the 2016 Agriculture Element are as follows:

- ◆ **Agriculture Goal 1:** To protect and encourage conservation and enhancement of productivity and potentially productive agricultural land, agricultural activities and supportive industries throughout Douglas County.
- ◆ **Agriculture Goal 2:** To create alternatives to the urban development of existing agricultural lands in order to preserve these agricultural areas.
- ◆ **Agriculture Goal 3:** To allow routine agriculture practices and structures used for agriculture production and processing without restriction except for compliance with county health laws and federal and state environmental laws and except where sensitive environmental resources would not be adequately protected.
- ◆ **Agriculture Goal 4:** To increase Douglas County's capacity to acquire permanent open space with the cooperation of the agricultural community.

## CHAPTER 3 - CONSERVATION ELEMENT

The Conservation Element provides information on the condition of natural resources within Douglas County, such as air, floodplains, water, wetlands, and wildlife. The goals for the 2016 Conservation Element are as follows:

- ◆ **Conservation Goal 1:** To protect surface water quality in the county from the effects of growth, urbanization, and agricultural practices and improve water quality by reducing negative impacts of stormwater runoff and increasing best management practices for new development and redevelopment.
- ◆ **Conservation Goal 2:** To improve existing drainage and prevent future drainage problems from occurring.
- ◆ **Conservation Goal 3:** To protect floodplains and wetlands for their values for groundwater recharge, flood protection, sediment and pollution control, wildlife habitat, and open space.
- ◆ **Conservation Goal 4:** To protect potable water supplies, limit non-point source impacts on groundwater quality, and promote a regional approach to aquifer management.
- ◆ **Conservation Goal 5:** To protect the functions and values of surface water systems, which include fish and wildlife habitat, aquifer recharge and discharge, and recreational opportunities.
- ◆ **Conservation Goal 6:** To coordinate a regional approach to water resource development and management.
- ◆ **Conservation Goal 7:** To maintain groundwater withdrawals at, or preferably, below the limits prescribed by the state engineer for the Carson Valley and Antelope Valley groundwater basins to protect or manage the county's groundwater resources.
- ◆ **Conservation Goal 8:** Douglas County shall begin evaluation of water resource alternatives to supplement the groundwater supply for future quasi-municipal use.
- ◆ **Conservation Goal 9:** To maintain or improve existing air quality.
- ◆ **Conservation Goal 10:** To protect Douglas County's sensitive wildlife and vegetation in recognition of their importance as components of the county's quality of life.
- ◆ **Conservation Goal 11:** To encourage the efficient use of available energy resources and to provide incentives for energy conservation in construction.
- ◆ **Conservation Goal 12:** To minimize noise levels throughout the county and wherever economically feasible, mitigate the effects of noise to provide a safe and healthy environment.
- ◆ **Conservation Goal 13:** To increase awareness of the condition of natural resources in Douglas County and prevent further degradation of natural resources.

## CHAPTER 4 - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

The Economic Development Element includes information on the County's economic development priorities and challenges. The goals for the 2016 Economic Development Element are as follows:

- ◆ **Economic Development Goal 1:** To develop a thriving climate for business and learning.
- ◆ **Economic Development Goal 2:** To emphasize the importance of "place" and promote the development of attractive downtown centers.
- ◆ **Economic Development Goal 3:** To capitalize on outdoor recreation and lifestyle.

## CHAPTER 5 - GROWTH MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

The Growth Management Element reviews current strategies to manage growth in Douglas County and includes a review of the County's Building Permit Allocation and Growth Management Ordinance. The goals for the 2016 Growth Management Element are as follows:

- ◆ **Growth Management Goal 1:** To keep growth in Douglas County to a sustainable level that natural and fiscal resources can support.
- ◆ **Growth Management Goal 2:** To direct new development to locations within or adjacent to existing communities where public services and facilities can be provided and a sense of community can be created or enhanced.

- ◆ **Growth Management Goal 3:** To continue to work to secure federal, state, and private funding to purchase open space and establish conservation easements, and establish an open space acquisition program.

## CHAPTER 6 - HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT

The Historic Preservation Element provides an update on historic preservation efforts in Douglas County and opportunities to increase resources for historic preservation. The goals for the 2016 Historic Preservation Element are as follows:

- ◆ **Historic Preservation Goal 1:** To preserve Douglas County's historic, cultural, and archaeological resources as physical reminders of the county's past and as unique focal points to shape the county's identity.
- ◆ **Historic Preservation Goal 2:** To increase capacity of local organizations to carry out historic preservation activities.

## CHAPTER 7 - HOUSING ELEMENT

The Housing Element presents an overview of the housing inventory and housing market in Douglas County as well as an updated analysis of housing problems. The goals for the 2016 Housing Element are as follows:

- ◆ **Housing Goal 1:** To increase housing opportunities in Douglas County by removing regulatory barriers.
- ◆ **Housing Goal 2:** To increase awareness of affordable housing needs in Douglas County.
- ◆ **Housing Goal 3:** To reduce predevelopment costs associated with affordable housing developments, including land acquisition, and other up front development costs.
- ◆ **Housing Goal 4:** To increase affordable rental housing units for elderly and disabled households in the Minden/Gardnerville area and Indian Hills.
- ◆ **Housing Goal 5:** To increase availability of affordable homeownership opportunities for households with incomes up to 80 percent of AMI.
- ◆ **Housing Goal 6:** To increase housing opportunities for special needs households including persons with physical and mental disabilities, the elderly, and at-risk children.
- ◆ **Housing Goal 7:** to increase resources to maintain owner-occupied units in Douglas County with preference for elderly households.

## CHAPTER 8 - LAND USE ELEMENT

The Land Use Element describes current development patterns in Douglas County and in each regional or community plan and includes future land use maps for all areas of the County. The Land Use Element includes general land use goals as well as specific goals for the different regions and communities in Douglas County. The general goals for the 2016 Land Use Element are as follows:

- **Land Use Goal 1:** To retain the beauty, the natural setting and resources, and the rural/agricultural character of the County while providing opportunities for managed growth and development.
- **Land Use Goal 2:** To use the master plan future land use map to graphically depict the County's desired community land use pattern and character.
- **Land Use Goal 3:** To recognize the distinct character of individual communities and encourage land uses consistent with this character.
- **Land Use Goal 4:** To identify particular areas within Douglas County for development as distinct urban communities.
- **Land Use Goal 5:** To identify particular areas within Douglas County where the residents desire to preserve or develop distinct rural communities.
- **Land Use Goal 6:** To identify particular areas in Douglas County for commercial and industrial development, consistent with the County's Economic Development Element.

- **Land Use Goal 7:** To provide flexibility in project phasing to meet changing market conditions while ensuring improvements are provided concurrent with the demand for infrastructure and services.

## CHAPTER 9 - PARKS AND RECREATION ELEMENT

The Parks and Recreation Element provides updated information on regional, neighborhood, and special facilities in Douglas County. The goals for the 2016 Parks and Recreation Element are as follows:

- ◆ **Parks and Recreation Goal 1:** To implement the parks and recreation plan.
- ◆ **Parks and Recreation Goal 2:** To create a system of open space areas and linkages throughout the county that protects the natural and visual character of the county, provides contiguous wildlife corridors, and provides for appropriate active and passive recreational uses.
- ◆ **Parks and Recreation Goal 3:** To preserve USFS, BLM, and other public lands for their habitat, recreational, and scenic values.

## CHAPTER 10 - PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES ELEMENT

The Public Facilities and Services Element reviews the status of different public facilities and services in Douglas County. The goals for the 2016 Public Facilities and Services Element are as follows:

- ◆ **Public Facilities and Services Goal 1:** To develop regional approaches to providing public services and facilities in Douglas County in coordination with GIDs, Towns, the State, and other jurisdictions.
- ◆ **Public Facilities and Services Goal 2:** To plan and provide for the services necessary to implement this master plan by updating the CIP on an annual basis.
- ◆ **Public Facilities and Services Goal 3:** To provide levels of services for its residents to maintain at a minimum, the current quality of life for the county's citizens.
- ◆ **Public Facilities and Services Goal 4:** To ensure that new development pays its equitable share of the costs for public services and facilities needed to serve it.
- ◆ **Public Facilities and Services Goal 5:** Douglas County residents and visitors to the Douglas County Library will access the digital world using high-speed connectivity, emerging technologies and guidance from specialists in information, media and technology.
- ◆ **Public Facilities and Services Goal 6:** Douglas County residents will have library services, resources and programs designed to stimulate imagination, satisfy curiosity and create young readers.
- ◆ **Public Facilities and Services Goal 7:** To provide solid waste management processes that reduce the waste stream, promote recycling, and provide for the separation of waste prior to incineration or landfilling.
- ◆ **Public Facilities and Services Goal 8:** To protect the public's health by complying with all state and federal water regulations.
- ◆ **Public Facilities and Services Goal 9:** To provide adequate community wastewater facilities in urban service areas.
- ◆ **Public Facilities and Services Goal 10:** To prevent individual sewage disposal systems in rural areas from degrading groundwater quality.

## CHAPTER 11 - PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

The Public Safety Element includes updated information on fire protection and law enforcement services as well as natural and manmade hazards. The goals of the 2016 Public Safety Element are as follows:

- ◆ **Public Safety Goal 1:** To provide the residents of Douglas County with increased safety from flooding.
- ◆ **Public Safety Goal 2:** To protect the public and emergency personnel from manmade hazard incidents.
- ◆ **Public Safety Goal 3:** To provide professional fire protection and emergency medical services to residents and visitors.

- ◆ **Public Safety Goal 4:** To protect the public health, safety, and welfare with professional law enforcement services.
- ◆ **Public Safety Goal 5:** To increase safety and resilience due to wildland fires.
- ◆ **Public Safety Goal 6:** To prevent incompatible land uses and structures that threaten operations at the Minden-Tahoe Airport.

## CHAPTER 12 - IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENT

The Implementation Element contains the actions to implement the goals and policies of the 2016 Master Plan. Many actions will require amendments to the Douglas County Development Code while other actions are capital improvements that will need to be incorporated into the County's Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan.

### TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

The 2007 Transportation Plan is currently being updated and will be incorporated into the Master Plan when it is adopted by the Board of Commissioners.

### WASHOE TRIBAL LANDS ELEMENT

The Washoe Tribal Lands Element has not been updated as part of the 2016 Master Plan.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The public participation process began in June 2016 with four Master Plan Community Workshops and a 2016 Master Plan Survey which collected 898 responses.

The Planning Commission held three Master Plan Workshops to review the draft elements in June, July, and September of 2017.

Appendix A provides information on various planning documents and Development Code amendments adopted since 1996 to implement the goals and policies of the Master Plan.

Appendix B contains a listing of all Master Plan Amendments reviewed by the Board of Commissioners between 1997 and 2016.