
CHAPTER 8:
Economic Development Element

This chapter (previously Chapter 5) has been updated for the 2006 Master Plan. Refer to Chapter 2: “Summary of Changes Reflected in 2006 Update” for a detailed summary of changes to the 2006 Master Plan.

Mission

~~It is the mission of the Economic Diversification Plan to create and maintain a positive business climate in Douglas County.~~

Introduction

Douglas County’s economic development objectives exist within the framework of the overall vision for the county. A significant component of the Master Plan is the recognition of the importance of environmental factors and natural and cultural amenities, or “quality of life” issues, to the health of the entire community. Business leaders have voiced strong support for the protection of these assets, recognizing the aesthetic and cultural value of open space and agricultural lands as well as their importance in attracting and retaining employees and businesses.

Sustainable economic growth balances the need for jobs and services with the need to preserve prime agricultural land, protect natural resources, and maintain open space. Economic development can contribute to quality of life by attracting businesses with low environmental impact, and providing high wage jobs, new services, and infrastructure improvements. Redevelopment and infill projects can serve to bolster community identity through enhancement of historic districts that promote tourism through the attraction of visitors to unique retail areas. Economic development can also promote the agricultural heritage of the region through value-added agriculture, such as the existing Eagles and Agriculture program. By expanding upon the characteristics that make it unique, Douglas County can protect its quality of life and also provide for a sustainable economic future.

The policy and practice of the Douglas County Board of Commissioners and staff will be to, through a partnership between the private and public sectors, encourage and expedite the promotion, establishment, ~~and~~ relocation, and retention of diverse industrial and commercial development that is compatible with maintaining quality of life. This will provide long-term employment opportunities for competitively paid workers and diversity and thereby increase the County’s tax base. ~~(Adopted 4-4-2002)~~Purpose

Business and Economic Development Team

In recent years, the Carson Valley Chamber of Commerce has taken on a significant role in economic development by serving as a clearinghouse for information and providing support for businesses to meet their needs. Regionally, Douglas County is a member of the Northern Nevada Development Authority (NNDA), which serves seven counties, including Lyon County and Carson City. The NNDA emphasizes the importance of a coordinated regional planning effort to the future of Northern Nevada’s economic health. Other organizations that are involved and related to business development efforts in the county include the Nevada Small Business Development Center, the County and Towns, Northern Nevada Development Authority, and the school and university systems.

~~The primary function of this group will be to provide continuing assistance to business through:~~ The policy and practice of the Douglas County Board of Commissioners and staff is to work in partnership with organizations such as these to provide continuing assistance to business through:

- Educational opportunities
- Methods and means of attracting and maintaining a qualified labor pool including positive community development and a balance of jobs and housing
- Development of supplier networks
- Professional development programs

These partnerships in the business and development communities will allow for the addition of, or changes to participating groups over the lifetime of the Plan. It is anticipated that these groups will be asked to take a leadership role in their specific areas of interest/expertise; however, they will also be encouraged to participate in all on-going activities. ~~(Adopted 4-4-2002)~~

~~Douglas County has entered a dynamic period of growth. It is important to prepare for its economic future by developing an environment for quality growth and new employment opportunities, in addition to our tourism industry.~~

~~Preparing for this economic future depends upon the support of diverse industrial and commercial development. These measures will protect Douglas County from short term fluctuations and long term downtrends in its economic employment base.~~

~~Presently existing assets and resources should be expanded, enhanced and cultivated. These include all geographic areas and businesses in Douglas County including, but not limited to: the Airport, Lake Tahoe, the Topaz area, the Washoe Tribal lands, gaming, tourism, and agribusiness. While the Washoe Tribe, as a sovereign nation, makes independent land use and economic development decisions, tribal leaders and the County recognize that coordinated development can provide synergistic benefits as well as economies in infrastructure development.~~

~~The high quality of life so precious to residents of Douglas County must be maintained. Douglas County should not only maintain, but improve its commitment to local business. This can be done by attracting new, quality, environmentally safe, industrial and commercial development to Douglas County.~~

Business Climate

Taxes

Residents and businesses enjoy one of the lowest tax rates in the State of Nevada, which when combined with no lack of a State personal or corporate income tax, makes Douglas County a community of choice among businesses, mobile professionals, and retirees. Additionally, the County currently has no business license/tax.

Land Use

The Land Use Element and Land Use Map prepared in conjunction with this plan includes land use designations to accommodate commercial and industrial development ~~within various areas within the county. Approximately 959 acres of land within the County (excluding Lake Tahoe) is to be devoted to commercial use with an additional 1,477 acres devoted to industrial/manufacturing uses.~~ A detailed breakdown of these uses by type and community can be found in the Land Use Growth Management Element.

Commercial Areas

Commercial and Office Uses

The Carson Valley has historically been the retail and financial center of Douglas County. Today, the Carson Valley remains the primary focal point of retail sales, financial offices, insurance offices, service businesses, and other related uses. Commercial development has occurred most recently in the Towns of Gardnerville and Minden, the Indian Hills area, and the Gardnerville Ranchos. ~~Other~~ Smaller in-fill development has occurred in other areas of the county. Commercial development has occurred as a result of several factors, including supply and availability of water, sewer treatment capability, utilities, access, and population. The Topaz/TRE area has and will likely lag behind the other two areas due to the lack of infrastructure and population base.

Within the Lake Tahoe Basin, economic development has been slowed by environmental regulation and the lack of available land. The County has adopted three community plans within the Lake Tahoe Area ~~which that~~ will provide an opportunity for additional economic development in the Kingsbury, Round Hill, and Stateline areas.

~~One of the primary issues confronting Douglas County is the retention of commercial/retail trade and tax dollars. The County has realized some sales tax leakage to Carson City and the Reno area. This leakage is somewhat offset by the retail sales generated by visitors to the County, particularly within the casino core of the Stateline area.~~

Redevelopment Areas

In 1998, the County established a Redevelopment Agency and created Redevelopment Project Area No. 1 (see Figure 8.1), which includes commercial areas in the North County area, Genoa, and along Foothill Road ~~(north and south of Genoa)~~. It is anticipated that the County will work with the development community to utilize redevelopment funds for capital and infrastructure improvements when available. (Adopted 4-4-2002) In 2005, the County amended Redevelopment Project Area No. 1 to include additional commercial and private recreation areas in the North County portion.

| [Figure 8.1 Redevelopment Areas Map](#)

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Jobs/Housing Balance

Although discussed at length in the Growth and Land Use chapters of this plan, housing is also an economic development objective. New jobs mean more workers. Workers require more housing. One of the primary factors businesses consider when choosing a location is the availability of housing affordable to their workforce. Both the volume and the affordability of housing are important criteria for a healthy business environment. Currently, Douglas County is well positioned to meet these criteria.

Two trends have a tendency to rapidly change a jobs/housing balance. The first is a shift from a manufacturing or agriculture economic base to a service based economy such as a resort. The western portion of the county is already experiencing the effect of this trend. Land and housing values are on the rise while wages and incomes are declining. The second trend affecting the jobs/housing balance is a stifled supply of housing, thereby pushing prices up as competition rises. A land shortage typically created by environmental conditions or hazards can stifle the housing supply. – Strict growth management controls, focused mainly on housing, can cause a shortage to occur as well. A more robust growth management strategy that addresses economic growth, residential growth, infrastructure capacity, and environmental conditions/hazards is the only way to maintain a jobs/housing balance while limiting growth.

Trends

Employment

Douglas County functioned over the last 100 years as an agriculture/ranching based community. Over the last fifty years, the County has been in a transition phase from an agrarian based community to a more diverse economy which-that includes manufacturing, professional service-industries, tourism and retail as well as agri-business. – The following represents a synopsis of County development patterns and recent trends.

Commercial and Office Uses

The Carson Valley has historically been the retail and financial center of Douglas County. Today, the Carson Valley remains the primary focal point of retail sales, financial offices, insurance offices, service industries, and other related uses. Commercial development has occurred most recently in the Towns of Gardnerville and Minden, the Indian Hills area, and the Gardnerville Ranchos. Other smaller in-fill development has occurred in other areas of the County. Commercial development has occurred as a result of several factors including supply and availability of water, sewer treatment capability, utilities, access, and population.

One of the primary issues confronting Douglas County is the retention of commercial/retail trade and tax dollars. The County has realized some sales tax leakage to Carson City and the Reno area. This leakage is somewhat offset by the retail sales generated by visitors to the County, particularly within the casino core of the Stateline area.

Industrial/Manufacturing

Industrial and manufacturing development has recently become a major focal point for economic development. Since the late 1950's, Bently Nevada Corporation has been the primary manufacturing employer within Douglas County. Today, Bently remains the primary employer, but new technology

~~has limited the employee growth within the company. Industrial and manufacturing development today is focused in four geographic areas: 1) the airport area; 2) Bently Science Park; 3) the Gardnerville industrial area; and 4) Williams Industrial Park. Several new companies have relocated or are relocating to Douglas County. Several other area companies are expecting to begin expansion projects. Additional development is continuing within the Meridian Business Park, Carson Valley Business Park, Bently Science Park, Williams Industrial Park, and other smaller developments within the Carson Valley.~~

~~Tourism~~

~~Douglas County's primary employer and industry is the gaming/tourism industry. The County abuts Lake Tahoe and is surrounded by National Forest and other public holdings which provide excellent hiking, camping and other outdoor activities. The County is the home of five major casinos/resort hotels in the Stateline area, one major casino/resort hotel in the Carson Valley and a casino/resort complex at Topaz Lake. The County is currently home of four golf courses, two of which are in the top three rankings of golf courses in the State of Nevada. All are open to the public. There are two additional courses under construction and approvals for several additional courses. The County has also approved one casino resort complex in the Indian Hills area. Heavenly Ski Resort operates two base lodges within Douglas County in addition to their South Lake Tahoe Lodge.~~

~~Currently there are a number of organizations who are working to promote Douglas County and the South Lake Tahoe area as a destination point for travelers. It is the intent of this plan to continue to support the efforts of these groups and to strive for expansion of the tourism industry.~~

~~Other~~

~~The County has been the site for several motion pictures over the last several years. The County will continue to work with the State of Nevada and the film industry itself to encourage future activity. The County is the site of several arts and crafts festivals and sports tournaments annually. The County and the various organizations should continue to support and encourage expansion of these and similar events.~~

~~In 1998, the County established a Redevelopment Agency and created Redevelopment Project Area No. 1, (see figure 5.1) which includes commercial areas in the North County, Genoa, and along Foothill (north and south of Genoa). It is anticipated that the County will work with the development community to utilize redevelopment funds for capital and infrastructure improvements when available. (Adopted 4-4-2002)~~

~~Conclusion~~

~~Douglas County is committed to continuing as a resort destination and meeting the needs of the tourism industry. However, the County also recognizes the need for diversification of its economy and the need to focus its economic development efforts in the coming years within the Carson Valley.~~

~~Over the last several years there has been tremendous growth in the retail, service, and manufacturing segments of the local economy. It is the intent of this plan to facilitate and direct continued growth, particularly in the service and "clean" manufacturing segments of the economy. It is also the intent of this plan to work toward the revitalization of the historic downtowns of Gardnerville and Minden and to assist existing businesses within the community.~~

~~Employment Trends~~

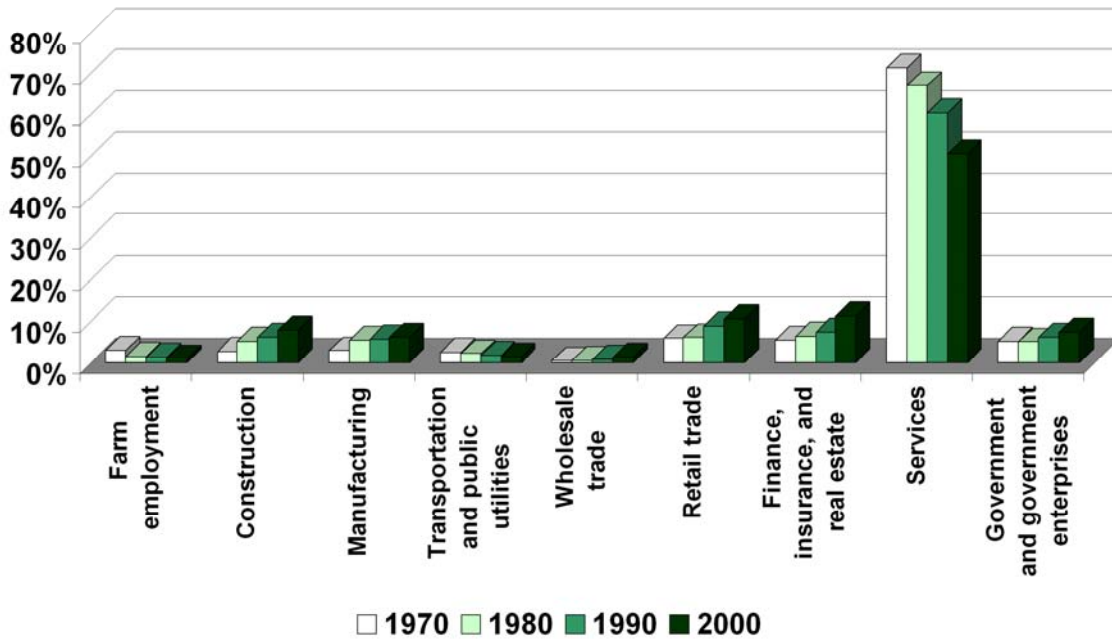
Up until World War II, the primary employer of the cCounty centered around on agriculture and agri-business. Over the years, the County's employment base has expanded and diversified. ~~This-The~~ first wave of expansion after World War II was the result of the growth of gaming and the Lake Tahoe casinos and the expansion of Bently Nevada Corporation.

~~More recently, the retail and service industries have expanded to meet the demands of the increased population. Most recently, the County has observed increased development activity in the industrial/manufacturing segment. This development has been focused in four primary locations: the Airport (Meridian Business Park and Carson Valley Business Park); the Bently Science Park; Williams Industrial Park with the Aervoe Pacific Corporation; and the Gardnerville Industrial area. Based on 1995 figures, there were 19,020 jobs located within Douglas County. Of this figure, 60 percent were in the services sector of the job market. This is reflective of the large number of jobs related to the gaming and tourism industry. Jobs were fairly evenly distributed among the remaining segments of Construction (6.3%), Manufacturing (7.9%), Transportation and Public Utilities (1.1%), Trade (11%), Finance, Insurance and Real Estate (3.6%), Government (8.3%), Agriculture (1.6%). Unlike many other areas of the State, mining only represented 0.1% of the jobs within the County. With the relocation of several manufacturing and warehousing companies and the expansion of the retail/service industry, the County realized an increase in employment opportunities which is demonstrated in Figure 2.6 and 2.7, Pages 2.005 and 2.006.~~

While the leisure and hospitality industry is still the top employer, employment in the hospitality and leisure industry (largely represented by the Services category in the figure below), has declined over the past few decades. Meanwhile, employment in most other sectors of the economy is rising.

Figure 8.2: Employment by Industry Trends

Employment by Industry (1970-2000)



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

*Data not included for Agricultural services, forestry, fishing and Mining industries, which represent 1% or less of the total in any given year.

Douglas County could be considered by many as “job rich,” with a ratio of more than one job per Douglas County household. This figure, however, is deceiving in two specific areas. First, it is estimated ~~that more than 5,000~~ that a significant number of jobs within the casino core/tourism industry are held by non-residents, with the majority of the positions ~~being~~ held by ~~persons residing in residents~~ of the City of South Lake Tahoe, in the State of California. Secondly, many of these positions are at or slightly above Federal minimum wage standards with little or no benefits.

~~As was indicated earlier, the focus of this plan is to provide for diversification of the County’s economy. This will result in the creation of new employment opportunities for existing residents with higher wages and employer paid benefits.~~

Figure 8.3: Douglas County's 12 Largest Employers

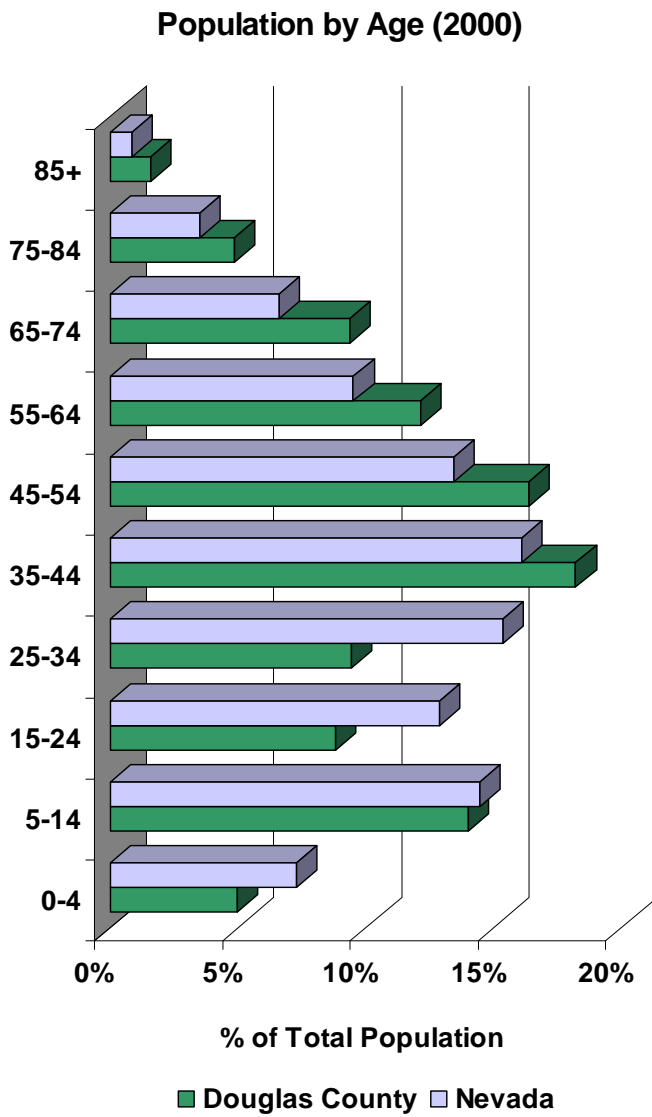
<u>TRADE NAME</u>	<u>INDUSTRY</u>	<u>NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES</u>
<u>HARRAH'S/HARVEY'S RESORT CASINO</u>	<u>Casino Hotels</u>	<u>1500-1999</u> <u>2500-3499</u>
<u>HARVEY'S RESORT HOTEL CASINO</u>	<u>Casino Hotels</u>	<u>1000-1499</u>
<u>DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT</u>	<u>Elementary and Secondary Schools</u>	<u>1000-1499</u>
<u>HORIZON CASINO RESORT</u>	<u>Casino Hotels</u>	<u>600-699</u>
<u>BENTLY NEVADA</u>	<u>Industrial Process Variable Instruments</u>	<u>600-699</u>
<u>DOUGLAS COUNTY</u>	<u>Executive & Legislative Offices Combined</u>	<u>600-699</u>
<u>CARSON VALLEY INN</u>	<u>Casino Hotels</u>	<u>500-599</u>
<u>WAL-MART SUPERCENTER</u>	<u>Warehouse Clubs and Supercenters</u>	<u>500-599</u>
<u>LAKESIDE INN & CASINO</u>	<u>Casino Hotels</u>	<u>300-399</u>
<u>HEAVENLY VALLEY LTD PTRSHIP</u>	<u>Skiing Facilities</u>	<u>300-399</u>
<u>RESORTS WEST</u>	<u>Hotels (except Casino Hotels) and Motels</u>	<u>200-299</u>
<u>TRAVEL SYSTEMS LIMITED</u>	<u>Food Service Contractors</u>	<u>200-299</u>

Source: Nevada Workforce Information 1st Quarter 2006

Population and Workforce

As shown in Figure 8.4 below, compared to Nevada as a whole Douglas County contains a smaller proportion of people in the “young professional” age category (25-34) and a higher proportion of people 55 years or older. People of retirement age may not be part of the workforce, or they may pursue opportunities to work or volunteer a percentage of their time into retirement. Challenges exist with developing and attracting a qualified workforce, a large part due to lack of affordable housing. In addition, a growing retiring-age population shows a need for services to address the needs of the senior demographic group.

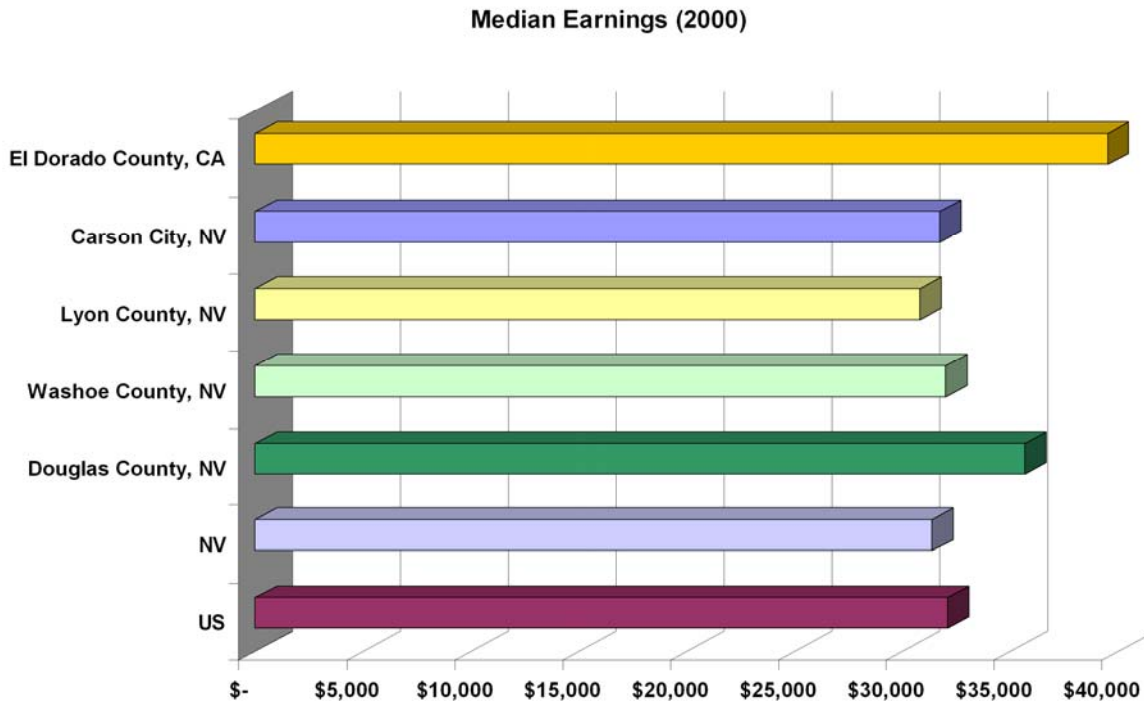
Figure 8.4: Comparison of Population by Age



Source: US Census

Earnings

Median income in Douglas County is higher than that of its neighboring counties in Nevada and Nevada as a whole, as shown in Figure 8.5 below. The county is also influenced, however, by the economy of California counties that it borders, particularly El Dorado County. Douglas County must compete with surrounding areas for skilled, knowledgeable workers.

Figure 8.5: Comparison of Median Earnings (2000)

Source: US Census

Economic Development Objectives

Business Diversity

Support of diverse economic development will protect Douglas County from short-term fluctuations and long-term downtrends in its economic employment base. The County believes that business diversification is also a basic requirement to:

- I
- Improve the County's fiscal standing through both direct and indirect tax generation.
- ~~improve the county's future revenue opportunities, m~~ Maintain the quality of life expected by its residents by attracting business, such as clean energy, that are compatible with preserving prime agricultural land, protecting natural resources, and maintaining open space, and to
- ~~I~~ Improve its jobs/housing balance by attracting higher paying jobs so that workers can more easily afford housing and by providing jobs for people who currently commute to other areas to work.— Douglas County exports a large number of skilled, non-skilled, and professional laborers to other communities. ~~Further, it is recognized that the quality of life of the residents of the County is paramount. Finally, it~~ is believed that if similar employment opportunities are provided within the county, most persons will choose to work closer to their place of residence. This will in turn improve quality of life for all residents of Douglas County through the reduction of commuter traffic, individual commute time, and its impact to the county's noise and air quality.
- Improve the business climate for existing and future businesses through the retention of employees and retail sales within the county.

With declining employment in the county's largest employment sectors (tourism, gaming, and services) there are opportunities to provide alternative sources for employment. These include agriculture, agricultural tourism, bioagriculture, clean energy, and professional services including health care, education, and a range of manufacturing. These opportunities will not only reduce commuter activity, provide additional ad valorem taxes, and improve basic quality of life, but will also result in an economic spin-off to local suppliers and service providers and retailers. ~~The diversification of the local economy is intended to achieve the following objectives:~~

The County is committed to the identification of all revenue benefits to the community as well as the service and infrastructure costs to county government required to support this diversification. To that end, the County shall work to develop a meaningful fiscal impact model that can be used as an additional planning tool when evaluating development projects. Such data shall include, but not be limited to, operating results of existing Douglas County companies and projects, national performance and service standards, and the experience gathered from other Nevada and western region cities and counties. (Adopted 4-4-2002)

Affordable Housing

Addressing affordable workforce housing is identified as a significant county and region-wide need. Increased housing prices attract second homeowners and retirees, and limited housing options hamper the ability of employers to hire qualified workers.

Streamline Regulatory Environment for Business

There is a need for further simplification and increased predictability in the development permit process, through which businesses make applications to the County. In addition, stronger leadership and increased collaboration between local government entities is needed to streamline business processes.

Education

Education plays an important role in developing a qualified workforce within the county. There is an opportunity to build on the strength of the Douglas County School District and enhance school-to-work partnerships to bridge the gap in qualified workers. In addition, a higher education campus could help equip the workforce with the skills and knowledge needed to work in the types of business that the county wants to attract.

Quality of Life

There is a need to sustain rural character while providing economic opportunities for residents.

Economic Leakage

Although new "big box" stores in North County provide new retail options for residents, there is still a need to capture sales tax leakage occurring from the retail and service sector into surrounding areas. This leakage is somewhat offset by the retail sales generated by visitors to the County, particularly within the casino core of the Stateline area.

Overview

Location

Douglas County is located within the northwest portion of the State of Nevada, just south of the State capital of Carson City and 35 miles south of the state's second largest city, Reno. Douglas County's western border is formed by Lake Tahoe and the State of California. Douglas County is located less than two hours from the Sacramento metropolitan area and less than four hours from the San Francisco/San Jose Metropolitan area.

Access

Douglas County is accessed by several major highways. North-south access is provided via Highway 395, which extends southerly to Los Angeles and north to Reno and other points north. East-west access is provided via State Routes 50 and 88. Each of these routes connect Douglas County to the Sacramento, San Francisco and the central valley of California. Interstate 80 is within easy access via Highway 395 to Reno.

Douglas County owns and operates a public general aviation airport. This airport is located just north of the Minden area and provides a full range of services including, but not limited to automobile rental, airplane rental, tie downs, aviation fuel and other support services.

Important Information About Douglas County

Douglas County contains the third smallest land area within the State, but is the fifth most populous County with a population of approximately 42,000. The assessed valuation of Douglas County now exceeds one billion dollars. The County is broken into three primary geographic/population areas: the Lake Tahoe Basin; the Carson Valley; and Topaz Lake/TRE. The primary population center of the County is the Carson Valley, which also contains the Town of Minden, the County seat. The Carson Valley also contains two other unincorporated Towns, Gardnerville and Genoa, Nevada's oldest settlement. The Carson Valley is the County's commercial, industrial and governmental center. The Lake Tahoe Basin contains the Stateline casino/resort core area, a major tax and employment generator for the County. Approximately 7,000 people reside in the Lake Tahoe portion of Douglas County. The Topaz Lake/TRE area is located approximately fifteen miles south of Gardnerville and is the least populated of the three areas. Topaz Lake and recreation area is located within this area and provides many recreational and scenic opportunities. The County as a whole is known for its scenic and recreational opportunities.

Douglas County lies within the Great Basin. The climate varies significantly within the County because of the varying elevation and adjacent mountain ranges. The climate can be best described as the northern high desert, which is controlled by the pacific high pressure ridge. This climate makes the County one of the premier glider, soaring and hot air ballooning locations in the world. (Adopted 4-4-2002)

—Climate:

-	Month	-	Temperatures (Fahrenheit)	
-	-	-	High	Low
-	December	-	47.2	19.2
-	March	-	57.4	25.7
-	June	-	81.5	42.6
-	September	-	80.7	39.3

Economic Development Strategies

Tourism

Currently there are a number of organizations working to promote Douglas County and the South Lake Tahoe area as a destination point for travelers. It is the intent of this Plan to continue to support the efforts of these groups and to strive for expansion of the tourism industry.

Tourism & Hospitality opportunities include:

- Restaurants,
- Downtown and destination retail, and
- Lodging and entertainment.

The retail and tourism industry compliment each other and help to promote unique and distinctive areas such as historic downtowns of Minden and Gardnerville. There is an opportunity for high density mixed use developments that contribute to community character.

Agriculture, Agricultural Tourism, and Bioagriculture

Agricultural Tourism

Opportunities exist to expand agricultural tourism offerings and to coordinate these activities so they build on the success of existing programs, such as Eagles in Agriculture. Specifically, there is potential to:

- Cooperate with private agricultural interests in identifying and developing future opportunities for expanding markets.
- Work in partnership with educational institutions such as the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension.
- Encourage agricultural and heritage tourism and events and new vehicles for marketing.

Agriculture

In addition, the following are some of the many affirmative measures the County can and should take to help maintain the competitiveness and economic viability of agriculture:

- Cooperate with private agricultural interests in identifying and developing future opportunities for reducing production costs, expanding markets, and increasing competitiveness.
- Work in partnership with educational institutions such as the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension.
- Encourage new forms of agriculture, such as high yield and high value crops, through investments in research, new technologies, education, and pilot programs.
- Encourage development of new agriculture technologies through investments in research, partnerships with educational institutions, and pilot programs. Identify potential markets and methods to bring new technologies to the marketplace.
- Specifically include agricultural interests in all economic development planning.

- Facilitate the purchase of conservation easements and the transfer of development rights to enable more agricultural landowners to capitalize on the equity in their property without creating conflicts with residential uses that could jeopardize commercial agriculture.
- Outline a framework for a local Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program to be funded in part by a fee dedicated for this purpose.
- Support efforts to obtain federal and state funding and technical assistance for agricultural pollution control, implementation of best management practices, and construction of farm worker housing.
- Support efforts to obtain funding through the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act and voter approved Question 1.
- Define open space within the context of NRS (see Appendix I for NRS sections) as well as within the context of public outreach during the process of developing this Master Plan Update.
- Identify a number of existing and proposed techniques to preserve open space lands.
- Create a primary means for implementation of the Conservation Element of the Master Plan.

BioAgriculture

BioAgriculture includes food production and nutraceuticals. Food production uses biotechnology to modify agricultural feedstocks to be more productive, enhances crop productivity, increases resistance to disease, and develops genetic modifications for added human health benefits. Nutraceuticals use of food or agricultural inputs to provide health and medical benefits, including the prevention and treatment of disease.

Clean Energy

Clean energy technologies have several benefits in terms of economic development. They are a long-term growth industry, a fast growing segment of the energy industry, and can be low impact in terms of their demands on natural resources. Clean energy includes geothermal, wind, and solar technologies, among others.

Geothermal

Geothermal energy potential is present in the Carson Valley, primarily along the western fault line, incorporating the Genoa area and in the northern portion of the Valley, including Johnson Lane to the east. This geothermal energy has been identified as non-electricity producing, but it does have some potential for space and district heating (heating of several buildings connected through steam lines).

Geothermal water reaches the earth's surface in the areas of Walley's Hot Springs, Hobo Hot Springs, Saratoga Hot Springs, and Indian Hills Springs. Walley's Hot Springs, Hobo Hot Springs, and Saratoga Hot Springs have all been tapped for commercial purposes in the past, but Walley's Hot Springs is the only commercial hot spring at present.

Wind

Windmills used to be a very important part of life in Nevada. They were used to run well pumps and bring groundwater to the surface. Now, wind power may become popular again. Every year, the amount of wind energy generated state- and nation-wide increases. Turbines come in all shapes and sizes and can be used by all types of users, from large power utilities to the individual homeowner.

Wind power can be used to supplement conventional power generation, protect the environment, lower electricity costs, and foster greater energy independence. It should be noted, however, that wind power has its detractors: many people feel that wind generation creates excessive noise, presents dangers to people and property on the ground as well as birds in flight, and decreases the aesthetic appeal of the natural landscape.

Solar

There are approximately 300 sunny days per year in Douglas County. This abundance of sunshine offers opportunities for utilizing both passive and active solar energy for water and space heating. “The solar power industry is comprised of two competing technologies, photovoltaic and thermal. Solar thermal is more cost effective than photovoltaic, but during cloud cover can produce no electricity while photovoltaic can produce some energy. Currently, the cost of solar is still too high for mass adoption. Nanotechnologies offer new hope in driving down these costs.” (Northern Nevada Economic Development Authority, Regional Economic Development Strategy, October 2006)

Other

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Demographics

~~Over the last twenty years, Douglas County has had one of the highest annual percentage growth rates in the State. In 1960, the population of Douglas County was 3,481 while the last United States Census taken in 1990 placed the population of the County at 27,637. Today it is estimated that the County population is 34,493. This represents a significant increase in population and potential work force.~~

~~Douglas County is a rather homogeneous population with approximately 93.1 percent of the population being classified as white. Remaining population was classified as Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut, black Hispanic, pacific islanders, and other races.~~

~~As with many other communities within the State and the U.S. at large, the population of the County is aging. The County has seen significant increases in the population for individuals between 45 and 84 years of age, due in large part to the relocation of individuals to the area. The population increases in Douglas County have been the result of the Statewide tax system, climate, land availability, reasonable environmental/development regulation and natural, visual and recreational amenities available to residents. The increase in population followed the State wide trend which was primarily a result of the State of Nevada tax system.~~

Health Services

Health services, along with services for other basic needs, are an important area to serve the county’s growing proportion of senior residents. These include:

- Doctor and dentist offices
- Assisted living
- Nursing and residential care facilities
- Home healthcare services
- Rural Health Services
- Home health care programs
- Medical equipment and supplies

Campus for Higher Education

Opportunities exist to capitalize on the county's proximity to educational institutions such as the University of Nevada, Reno. Higher education provides higher paying professional services jobs and also serves to grow and develop a skilled and knowledgeable workforce within the county.

Aviation

Controlled by the pacific high pressure ridge, Douglas County's climate makes it one of the premier glider, soaring and hot air ballooning locations in the world. The Minden-Tahoe Airport is located just north of the Minden area and provides a full range of services in addition to attracting soaring enthusiasts. These services include automobile rental, airplane rental, tie downs, aviation fuel, and other support services.

A High-Altitude Athletic Training Facility

A high-altitude training facility is an opportunity to leverage Douglas County's climate and elevation as well as its proximity to educational institutions such as the University of Nevada, Reno. The facility could serve as a training as well as research facility.

Film Industry

The County has been the site for several motion pictures over the last several years. The County will continue to work with the State of Nevada and the film industry ~~itself~~ to encourage future activity.

Events

~~The County is the site of S~~ several arts and crafts festivals and sports tournaments occur annually ~~that~~ contribute to the success of the tourist and hospitality sectors. The County, the Chamber of Commerce, the Business Industry Association and other ~~and the various~~ organizations should continue to support and encourage expansion of these and similar events.

Conclusion

Douglas County is committed to continuing as a resort destination and meeting the needs of the tourism industry. However, the County also recognizes the need for diversification of its economy and the need to focus its economic development efforts in the coming years within the Carson Valley. In addition to the opportunities described earlier, general aviation and specifically soaring and facilities such as high altitude training operations are a few low impact, high value economic opportunities to be considered.

Over the last several years there has been tremendous growth in the retail, service, and manufacturing segments of the local economy. It is the intent of this Plan to facilitate and direct continued growth, particularly in the service and "clean" manufacturing segments of the economy. It is also the intent of this Plan to work toward the revitalization of the historic downtowns of Gardnerville and Minden and to assist existing businesses within the community.

Economic Development Goals and Policies

GOAL 8.01 ~~_____~~ Promote Douglas County as a “community of choice” for business and for employees to ensure continued attractiveness for business.

Policy 8.01.01 ~~Strategically Pp~~ promote successful Douglas County business retention and attraction ~~ease~~efforts.

Policy 8.01.02 Cooperate in marketing, advertising, and public relations efforts to contact and recruit a skilled workforce and businesses.

Policy 8.01.03 Support programs aimed at attracting a qualified and accessible labor pool such as affordable housing, recreational opportunities, transportation alternatives, and higher/continued education opportunities.

Policy 8.01.04 Research, adapt, and adopt best demonstrated practices from other communities and jurisdictions.

~~Policy ED 01.01: — Develop a pro-active plan to market Douglas County’s assets to appropriate target audience – i.e. businesses, relocation consultants, new media, development authorities, etc.~~

~~Policy ED 01.03: — Collect and analyze data on businesses and industries seeking to relocate.~~

~~Policy ED 01.04: — Review possible new economic development programs and projects for Douglas County.~~

~~Policy ED 01.05: — Cooperate in marketing, advertising, and public relations efforts to contact and recruit _____ firms to the County.~~

GOAL ED 8.02: ~~_____~~ Promote economic development through ~~a~~ public-private partnerships.

~~Policy ED 8.02.01: — _____~~ Continue to create economic development opportunities through the Chamber of Commerce, Business Council, Northern Nevada Development Authority, Nevada Small Business Development Center (NSBDC), Sierra Pacific Power Company, State and local agencies, and other economic development organizations.
~~(Adopted 4-4-2002)~~

Policy 8.02.02 Focus public efforts on economic development opportunities resulting in business that uses clean energy, mitigates impacts on the environment, uses water conservation practices, adds value to existing products or services in the county, pays high wages, attracts professional service, and supports the quality of life in the county.

Policy 8.02.03 Link education and economic development through creation of public/private partnerships that encompass public education and targeted business sectors. Grow, diversify, and promote educational opportunities aimed at attracting and developing a qualified and accessible labor pool.

~~Policy ED 02.02: Sponsor detailed market studies regarding economic development opportunities for Douglas County.~~

~~GOAL ED 8.03: Retain and strengthen our existing business base.~~

~~Policy ED 03.01: Support Business Enhancement Projects~~

~~Policy ED 8.-03.021: Determine the needs of tourism and tourism related businesses that are currently not being met and remedy shortcomings where possible.~~

Policy 8.03.02 Reduce the cost of doing business in Douglas County by streamlining County approval processes and by providing better communication channels with other agencies that share jurisdiction.

Policy 8.03.03 Encourage training and assistance through the University of Nevada Reno, Western Nevada Community College, and Nevada Small Business Development Center.

Policy 8.03.04 Provide catalysts for revitalization of downtown business areas of Minden, Gardnerville, and Genoa through the use of Plans for Prosperity and redevelopment. (Adopted 4-4-2002)

Policy 8.03.05 Advocate expansion of existing businesses by providing tools and information to encourage same.

~~GOAL 8.04 Policy 8.04.01 Provide support for international business development in Douglas County.~~

~~Policy ED 03.03: Develop an executive level business outreach program. (Adopted 4-4-2002)~~

~~GOAL ED 04: SUPPORT INFORMATION AND PROBLEM SOLVING FORUMS BY WORKING WITH EXISTING BUSINESS SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL AND MANAGEMENT TRAINING TO BUSINESS FOR IMPORVED OPERATIONS. (Adopted 4-4-2002)~~

~~Policy ED 04.01: Encourage training and assistance through the University of Nevada Reno, Western Nevada Community College, and Nevada Small Business Development Center. (Adopted 4-4-2002)~~

~~Policy ED 04.02: Revitalization of the downtown business areas in Minden, Gardnerville, and Genoa. (Adopted 4-4-2002)~~

GOAL ED8.0544 Evaluate opportunities to obtain economic development funding from federal, state, or other sources.

~~Policy ED8.050544.01: Assist partners such as Western Nevada Development District in identifying funding sources available and appropriate to Douglas County. (Adopted 4-4-2002)~~

~~Policy ED8.05544.02: Incorporate and distribute information regarding funding sources within the informational packet. (Adopted 4-4-2002)~~

GOAL 8.0565 To Attract and approve commercial and industrial developments that provide high-wage jobs and meet the intent of the other goals and policies in this plan that protect the quality of life for residents of Douglas County.

Policy 8.0655.01 Continue the on-going effort to simplify the Douglas County approval process.

Policy 8.0655.02 ~~Continue to Collect, evaluate, and incorporate feedback from businesses during the permit process to further meet their needs.~~

GOAL 8.0676 Track economic trends in a way that provides a method for measuring success in reaching other economic goals.

Policy 8.0766.01 Douglas County shall work with other agencies to track economic indicators such as sales tax revenues, employment rates, cost of living, and wages.

Policy 8.0766.02 Douglas County shall work with other agencies to track economic trends in the area of business retention, economic development, and commercial and industrial development.

Policy 8.0766.03 Douglas County shall work with other agencies to track potential state and federal funding for economic development.

Policy 8.076.04 Douglas County shall work with other agencies to track progress and levels of success in determining and serving business needs.

GOAL 8.0877 Appropriately address the regional implications of economic development efforts.

Policy 8.0877.01 Douglas County shall work with neighboring jurisdictions on major economic development efforts.

Policy 8.0877.02 Douglas County shall solicit feedback from surrounding jurisdictions on commercial and industrial developments.

Policy 8.0877.03 Douglas County shall monitor economic development efforts of surrounding jurisdictions to gather potential best practices and comment on such efforts when necessary.

~~**GOAL ED 06: BUILD A BUSINESS RESOURCE NETWORK**~~

~~Policy ED 06.01: Attract a qualified and accessible labor pool by implementing an educational program through the Nevada Small Business Development Center, the Douglas County School District, the University of Nevada system, including Western Nevada Community College. (Adopted 4-4-2002)~~

~~Policy ED 06.02: Through the public/private partnership, produce a regular public informational report on employment growth and development and, promote a supplier network that makes goods and services readily available. (Adopted 4-4-2002)~~

~~**GOAL ED 07: DOUGLAS COUNTY SHALL STREAMLINE THE PROCESS AND REDUCE THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS.**~~

~~**GOAL ED 08: CONTINUE THE ON-GOING EFFORT TO SIMPLIFY THE DOUGLAS COUNTY APPROVAL PROCESS. (Adopted 4-4-2002)**~~

~~**GOAL ED 09: CONTINUE TO EVALUATE AND MODIFY THE PERMIT REVIEW PROCESS BASED ON THE NEEDS OF BUSINESS**~~

~~Policy ED 09.01: Identify and annually review regulations affecting business in Douglas County by~~

~~Reviewing projects with significant economic development benefits while providing for appropriate public review and input~~

~~Providing for greater flexibility for secondary economic activities where they are compatible with other permitted uses~~

~~Identifying any needed revisions to regulations governing reuse or renovation of existing structures~~

~~Reviewing areas such as community sign regulations and parking standards~~

~~(Adopted 4-4-2002)~~