

CHAPTER 7

Economic Development

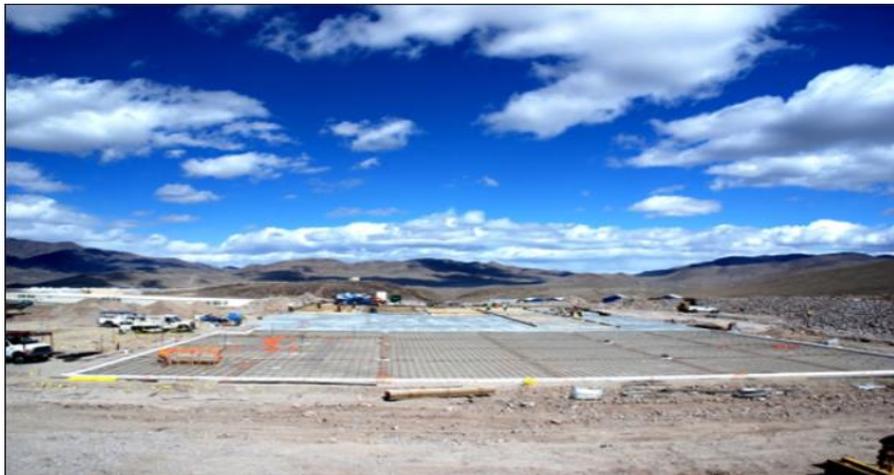


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7.1 Introduction

A vibrant and sustainable economy is essential to the well-being of any community. “A globally competitive community is one that is focused on innovation and the sustainability of economic growth” (Angelou Economics, *Northern Nevada Visioning Document*). Storey County has a diverse economy of manufacturing and distribution, tourism and hospitality, clean and renewable energy, mining, and agriculture. Labor force and total employment have been constant and upward trending over the last decade. Economic activity in the county is growing at a substantial rate and becoming more diverse and sustainable each year.

Economic development has been a top priority in Nevada for over a century. Francis G. Newlands had a western utopian dream through economic development and helped pass the Newlands Reclamation Act of 1902. This emphasis on economic development is portrayed through countless efforts at the state, regional and local levels. Here are some highlights.

In 1955, the Nevada Department of Economic Development was established to aid in the development of business interests in the state. The Division of Travel and Tourism and the Division of Industrial Development were created within the department in 1969. 1975 marked the year that the department assumed responsibilities of publishing the Nevada Magazine.

Governor List in 1982 established the commission on economic diversification which made many recommendations. Governor Bryan reorganized the department to five divisions. In 1985, the department received powers to promote occupational education.

The 1990’s saw Nevada’s economy grow very quickly. In 2005, then Governor Guinn committed \$10 million to the development of the Nevada Development Authority. On June 17, 2011, Governor Sandoval signed Assembly Bill 449 into law. Assembly Bill 449 was a watershed passage because it consolidated the State of Nevada’s efforts on economic development into the Governor’s office and gave the office funding.

“The Nevada Governor’s Office of Economic Development (GOED) was created during the 2011 Session of the Nevada Legislature through a collaboration of the Nevada Governor’s Office and the Leadership of the Nevada State Senate and State Assembly.

GOED promotes a robust, diversified and prosperous economy in Nevada, stimulating business expansion and retention, encouraging entrepreneurial enterprise, attracting new business and facilitating community development.

Nevada's economic platform will be driven by human ingenuity along with collaboration and strategic alliances with the broader community.”
(diversifynevada.com/about)

Other regional organizations also offer assistance. The Northern Nevada Development Authority covers Carson City, and counties of Churchill, Douglas, Lyon and Storey. The Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada covers Washoe County. The Western Nevada Development District (WNDD) also assists the area. Together, these authorities sole purpose is to

develop, grow, and bring businesses to the area.

Storey County embraced economic development as a priority decades ago. It put pro-growth policies in place and entered a groundbreaking public private partnership for economic development. Currently, Storey County is grabbing state and national headlines for achievements like the Tesla Gigafactory. Together with policy encouragement from state and regional efforts, Storey County is starting to achieve results for the entire northern Nevada area.

7.2 Employment Trends

7.2.1 Economic Overview

Storey County's economy started strong with the mining of the Comstock lode which was also a significant piece of the Nevada economy. Over the last century, while mining still exists in the county, its impacts have greatly diminished. For the last several decades, tourism and gaming was the major economic sector in the county. Virginia City's portrayal in the historic television show *Bonanza* added to this tourism interest. In recent years, Storey County, as well as surrounding counties, have devoted significant resources to diversifying their economies away from gaming as gaming developed around the country and internationally.

In 2000, the county signed a development agreement with the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center, LLC. This public-private partnership enabled one of the largest industrial parks in the county. Part of the agreement is that the county will repay to the developer of the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center once net funds become available, the costs for the infrastructure. The infrastructure costs cover road, heavy rail, drainage, water, sewer, communications and utilities. The cost to the county is over \$50 million. That breaks down to over \$12,000 per person in Storey County. This is a huge investment in infrastructure. If a community of one million people were to make an equivalent investment, it would result in over a \$12 billion investment, or for a 500,000 person community would result in over a \$6 billion investment. The investment is truly a staggering amount on a local level.

The Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center investment is now paying off. the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center is entering their fast growth phase, and the county and area are feeling the effects. the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center currently employs about 4,300 people, and it is expected to employ over 15,000 in 2019 (*EDAWN EPIC Report 2015*). Police and fire services have been extended in the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center, and building permits and inspections are keeping the county staff extremely busy. Massive tax abatements helped attract companies like Tesla and Switch. An example of these abatements includes 100 percent sales tax for 20 years and 100 percent property tax for ten years for Tesla. These two revenue sources are the major revenue sources for the county. These abatements will certainly impede the county's ability to fully utilize these successes for over a decade. Once these revenues do become available to the county, the infrastructure investment must be fully repaid first. It is expected that major companies locating in the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center in the future will expect similar kinds of abatements.

As the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center continues to grow rapidly, the county will continue to face challenges managing this large and rapid growth. County resources will be burdened while managing the abatements. Some of the reasons for the Storey County success in attracting companies to the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center is the ease of many of the governmental processes.

In addition to the friendly tax structure, other attractive aspects to the county include rapid approval of permits and inspections. Companies can move rapidly from land purchase to breaking ground on their building in 30 days. This fast process is almost unheard of around the county. The county should continue to leverage this competitive advantage and seek ways to improve the advantage.

Travel and tourism is still the major economic driver for the rest of the county. It is the largest employer for the county residents. The Virginia City Tourism Commission organizes and promotes special events in the county. The Virginia City Tourism Commission estimates that over a million tourists visit the county each year. This important economic attraction is largely based on the Comstock history, and the friendly relaxed nature of the county. These features should be protected and promoted in the future to maximize the tourism sector of the county economy.

| Figure 7.2-1 | | |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|
| Employment by Sector of County Labor Force | | |
| | <i>Nevada</i> | <i>Storey County</i> |
| | <i>Percent of jobs</i> | <i>Percent of jobs</i> |
| Mining and Extraction | 1.6 | 1.3 |
| Construction | 9.2 | 10.6 |
| Manufacturing | 4.9 | 11.7 |
| Wholesale Trade | 2.7 | 1.6 |
| Retail Trade | 11.3 | 15.8 |
| Transp., warehousing, utilities | 5.2 | 7.8 |
| Information | 2.2 | 2.4 |
| Finance, Insurance, Real Estate | 6.5 | 8.0 |
| Education & Health Services | 12.9 | 12.7 |
| Leisure and Hospitality | 26.3 | 15.2 |
| Business & Professional | 8.8 | 3.9 |
| Other Services | 3.9 | 1.5 |
| Government | 4.5 | 7.5 |

Source: US Census Bureau

7.2.2 Employment Rates

| Figure 7.2-2 | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| Storey County Civilian Labor Force | | | | | |
| <i>(Residents 16 years and older who are employed or actively seeking employment)</i> | | | | | |
| | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2010-2013 % Change |
| Civilian Labor Force | 2313 | 2213 | 2247 | 2044 | -11.6% |
| Total Unemployment | 352 | 404 | 441 | 310 | -11.9% |
| Unemployment Rate | 15.2 | 18.3 | 19.6 | 15.2 | 0 % |
| Total Employment (of labor force) | 1961 | 1809 | 1806 | 1734 | -11.6% |
| Nevada Unemployment Rate | 9.0 | 10.4 | 11.9 | 12.5 | 38.9% |
| U.S. Unemployment Rate | 7.9 | 8.7 | 9.3 | 9.7 | 22.8% |

Source: US Census Bureau

Two factors have impacted the Storey County labor force. First, the county population shrank slightly between 2010 and 2013. Second, the percentage of the population over 65 has risen over the last several years. The percentage change of the labor force, employed and unemployed have remained fairly constant in recent years. This shows the county's economy remained resilient while state and national unemployment rates have risen.

| Figure 7.2-3 Number of Jobs in Storey County Selected Industries | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| | 2005 | 2010 | 2014 | % Change 2005-2014 |
| Natural Resources and Mining | 84 | 84 | * | n/a |
| Construction | 92 | 132 | 219 | 138.0 |
| Manufacturing | 268 | 376 | 689 | 157.1 |
| Trade, Transportation and Utilities | 299 | 1,481 | 3,053 | 921.1 |
| Financial Activities | 15 | 7 | * | n/a |
| Professional and Business Services | 49 | 192 | 131 | 167.3 |
| Education and Health Services | * | * | 220 | n/a |
| Leisure and Hospitality | 162 | 164 | 191 | 17.9 |
| Other Services | 125 | 138 | 77 | -38.4 |
| All Sectors: Storey County | 1,286 | 2,810 | 4,806 | 273.7 |

Source: Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation; * means data not available

While the population and employment of residents of the county has been flat to weak, the number of jobs in the county is ramping up quickly. The Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center is starting to see companies entering their full operation stage. The number of jobs in the county has increased fourfold in the last decade. The largest growth sector is trade, transportation and utilities. This includes warehousing and distribution. Companies like Walmart, eBay, and Zulily have created many jobs in the last decade. This rapid growth in jobs is expected to continue for several years, but the industry mix is expected to change.

7.3 Income Trends

7.3.1 Per Capita Income

In 2013, Storey County had a per capita personal income of \$33,472. Of the surrounding counties, this amount is only slightly behind Douglas County as the highest in the region. Storey County is 25.9 percent above the state average and 18.9 percent above the national average. The county also realized the fastest per capita income growth as compared to surrounding counties, the state, or nation.

| Figure 7.3-1 | | | | |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Per Capita Personal Income (dollars) | | | | |
| | 2000 | 2010 | 2013 | % Change 2000 - 2013 |
| United States | 21,587 | 27,334 | 28,155 | 30.4 |
| Nevada | 21,989 | 27,589 | 26,589 | 20.9 |
| Carson City | 20,943 | 27,568 | 26,264 | 25.4 |
| Douglas County | 27,288 | 35,239 | 34,123 | 25.0 |
| Lyon County | 18,543 | 21,041 | 21,757 | 17.3 |
| Storey County | 23,642 | 31,079 | 33,472 | 41.6 |
| Washoe County | 24,277 | 29,687 | 28,670 | 18.1 |

Source: US Census Bureau

7.3.2 Income of Families

The median household income in 2013 was \$61,573. This was the highest in the region.

7.3.3 Average Annual Wage by Job Type

The average annual wage of jobs in selected industries is listed below. While Storey County saw rapid growth in the number of Trade, Transportation and Utilities jobs in the last decade, wages deflated. Construction, Manufacturing, and Professional and Business Services experienced strong wage growth. With the newer growth trends within the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center, these three industries should show higher growth rates for the number of jobs in the county. Any new business that decides to operate a business in Storey County is a success. However higher paying industries should be considered a higher priority for future recruitment and business development.

| Figure 7.3-2 | | | | |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Average Annual Wages by Job Selected Industries | | | | |
| | 2005 | 2010 | 2014 | % Change 2005-2014 |
| Natural Resources and Mining | 44,397 | 51,530 | * | n/a |
| Construction | 35,423 | 61,745 | 56,329 | 59.0 |
| Manufacturing | 44,988 | 55,441 | 55,938 | 24.3 |
| Trade, Transportation and Utilities | 41,913 | 43,145 | 38,828 | -7.4 |
| Financial Activities | 19,778 | 19,901 | * | n/a |
| Professional and Business Services | 26,182 | 58,426 | 51,094 | 95.1 |
| Education and Health Services | * | * | 31,752 | n/a |
| Leisure and Hospitality | 14,598 | 16,035 | 18,106 | 24.0 |
| Other Services | 23,019 | 23,841 | 30,376 | 32.0 |
| All Sectors: Storey County | 35,653 | 44,612 | 41,783 | 17.2 |

Source: Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation; * means data not available

7.4 Industries

7.4.1 Natural Resources and Mining

Gold, silver, aggregates, and gypsum are all currently being mined in the county. While these activities are all stable, the industry is not expected to grow significantly. In the days of the Comstock Lode, wages for miners were historically high and this attracted the most talented workers from around the world. The glory days of the Comstock Lode are gone, but it should remain the policy of the county to support high wages and still attract the top human resources from around the world.

7.4.2 Construction

Residential building progressed nicely through the 1990s and 2000s until the real estate and financial sector meltdown in 2008. Since then, residential construction has been weak. Commercial construction, weak for several decades, has increased significantly as the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center activity is picking up. It is expected to remain strong for several years. The county should continue to be business friendly with moderate taxes, bare bones bureaucracy, and quick turnaround times. Commercial real estate and infrastructure developed now should help to support the county for the next century.

7.4.3 Manufacturing

Historically, Storey County has not had a strong manufacturing base. The Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center and Storey County have had success recruiting manufacturing businesses in recent years. The Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center offers a central location in the western United States for shipping and receiving; and the labor pool in northern Nevada is skilled and lower cost compared to other competitive jurisdictions. The county should continue to develop quality human talent and skills to support the high quality jobs that manufacturing demands.

7.4.4 Trade, Transportation and Utilities

As discussed above, much of the job growth in the county in recent years has been in this industry. That rapid growth is not expected to continue and the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center is trying to target more manufacturing and high tech businesses. Currently in the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center, this is the majority of the employment. This industry set the foundation for the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center as a major regional employer. The county's business friendly environment should continue to support the new and established businesses as they continue to add quality of life to the area and the county's residents.

7.4.5 Financial Activities

Storey County has not had the volume of assets to support a notable Financial Activities sector. With the growth in other industries, Financial Activities might grow in response. As the total value of property, plants, equipment, real estate, personal property, and jobs expand in the county, jobs and wages in this industry should grow as well. For this master plan, the county should continue to support the other identified industries and by growing of the identified industries, the county will support this industry.

7.4.6 Professional and Business Services

Much like Financial Activities, Professional and Business Services has not been a significant industry for the county in the past. As the business base, especially as the technical business base, grows the need for this sector should grow rapidly. This industry is generally highly skilled and has higher wages. The priority should be on attracting more technical businesses which should help to develop this desirable industry. The development of commercial office properties in the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center should be supported, and the installation of simple infrastructure that supports the higher demands of skilled labor such as recreational trails and congestion relief.

7.4.7 Education and Health Services

The Storey County School District has been producing high school graduates for over 140 years. While the school is known as a small school powerhouse for basketball in Nevada, it is not known for the production of highly skilled labor. Institutions of higher education offer online classes, but have no permanent facilities in the county. For years, there have been no permanent health services based in Storey County. Community groups have partnered with the county to bring temporary services to the county. With the aging population of the county and the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center's need for highly skilled labor, the county should explore creative solutions to these problems. Partnering opportunities might exist with regional medical centers or with the Nevada System of Higher Education to bring more services to the county.

7.4.8 Leisure and Hospitality

This industry has been the main county industry for generations. Some saloons in Virginia City have been in the same families for over 100 years catering mostly to tourists. The history of the Comstock and the small town charm are the value proposition that the county offers. This should continue to be a solid market for generations to come. Special events such as motorcycle rallies, camel races and outhouse races promote the local economy. Infrastructure improvements like the fairgrounds in Virginia City offer a wider variety of possible events. The market opportunities for expansion of the tourism industry in the county appear favorable. The Virginia City Tourism Commission has significant momentum in generating more and more successful events. There is more capacity for off-season and midweek events. The county should maintain policies to protect the history of the county, and promote policies to expand Storey County's appeal as a tourism destination.

7.4.9 Other Services

Other Services should expand as the population and commerce base expands.

7.5 Overall Economic Conditions

| Figure 7.5-1 Nevada Competitiveness SWOT Summary | |
|---|--|
| <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low taxes • Business friendly regulatory climate • Historically has been a high-growth economy • Good quality of life (although this is under-recognized) • Extensive entertainment and recreation assets • Proximity to West Coast population centers, markets, transportation routes, and ports • Excellent airport infrastructure (in both Las Vegas and Reno) • Excellent natural and physical resources (for mining, energy, etc.) | <p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy is heavily oriented toward consumption-based industries • Lack of proactive, coherent economic development strategy and structures • Workforce skill level is low (esp. at higher education levels, although this has been improving) • K-12 educational system is underperforming • Healthcare system is underperforming • Energy costs are expensive (relative to other Western states) • Land transportation connections can be challenging (in some parts of state) • Innovation inputs and outputs are weak (and there has especially been underinvestment in innovation capacity in Southern Nevada) • Lack of risk capital and investor networks to invest in startups/innovation (although capital availability is improving) • Real estate bust (devastating to construction) |
| <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political leadership is closely engaged in revamping and renewing economic development activities • Ease and cost of living is attractive compared to neighboring California • Relatively affordable residential real estate and high vacancy rates (residential and commercial/industrial) • Growing urban/arts districts in Las Vegas and Reno • Large number of tourists/visitors/conventions – an opportunity to “sell” Nevada for future workforce/residents/businesses • Infrastructure for innovation is in place (at UNR, DRI, UNLV), but not at its full potential • Relatively strong Science & Engineering (S&E) workforce and students in Reno • World-class Internet connectivity opportunities (such as the Switch data center in Las Vegas) | <p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme economic cycles and volatility • Projected growth in the core consumption-based industries will not be sufficient to drive recovery • Limited state economic development resources dispersed through fragmented regional efforts • High unemployment • Underinvestment in higher education and lack of a top-tier Carnegie-ranked research university • Existing image issues can be a barrier in attracting higher skilled workforce • Federal land ownership can hinder land usage/development in much of the state • Water shortages |

Source: Nevada Industries and Competitiveness Analysis, Identification of Industry Opportunities. SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis. SRI International, November 14, 2011

7.6 Economic Development Strategies

7.6.1 Active Public-Private Engagement

Economic development efforts are pursued in Storey County to promote the location and development of business in the county. The economic development team also strives to:

- Diversity and expand the local job base;
- Recruit new businesses to industrial centers, communities, and other areas in the county;
- Respond to requests for demographic, labor force, and other information;
- Link businesses which are interested in locating to Storey County with tax and other funding incentives potentially available from the State, the federal government, or others;
- Help existing and prospective employers find out about continuing education, professional development, and job training opportunities for their employees;
- Help existing and prospective employers with providing for reliable and efficient transportation means for their employees.

7.6.2 Regional Cooperation and Partnerships

The Storey County economic development team cooperates with several economic development entities in the region including, but not limited to, the following:

- Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada;
- Western Nevada Development District;
- Northern Nevada Development Authority;
- Governor's Office of Economic Development

7.6.3 Strategies for Development and Diversification

The following are strategies that the county employs to promote economic growth and diversity:

- Maintain land use, zoning, and conservation policies and regulations that promote commercial, industrial, and mixed-uses in the county;
- Intensify efforts to diversify the local economy by recruiting employers with year-round, higher paying jobs. This will help balance the ongoing growth of seasonal, lower paying jobs associated with tourism and other service sectors;
- Continue establishing more job training and professional development partnerships with local employers and education institutions;
- Coordinate water and sewer facilities planning with the need to bring these utilities to areas zoned for commercial and industrial uses;
- Continue coordinating with the Nevada Department of Transportation and the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe on completion of USA Parkway and serving the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center to support logistics and congestion relief and more local control over portions of State Route 341 ("C" Street) in downtown Virginia City;
- Coordinate with the Washoe County Regional Planning Agency on the development of regional market analyses and economic asset management, including identifying assets and

constraints, labor forces, education resources, commercial and industrial sites and providers, and transportation networks;

- Actively encourage and participate in regional committees and efforts of which goals are to improve the economy in Storey County and the region by fostering the creation of higher paying jobs. A related goal of this effort will be to diversify the economic base so that the county is better able to withstand and accommodate future economic change.

7.6.4 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The Economic Development Strategies identified above are consistent with the following items. This should be considered an Action Plan for Storey County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

- Maintain tourism and hospitality as a primary economic industry in Gold Hill and Virginia City but diversify toward more industries and services to address local needs;
- Promote downtown redevelopment in Virginia City in order to revitalize tourism and market cultural and historical resources;
- Identify and plan for future growth industries:
 - Attracting uses and commercial endeavors that are synergetic and promote tourism on the Comstock. Uses may include, but are not limited to, movie and film production and related development, uses involving the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, encampments and uses featuring authentic and interactive western heritage, and integration of tourism and education into modern as well as historic mining;
 - Promoting "green-energy" such as solar, wind, geothermal, waste-to-energy at McCarran and other areas of the county where impacts to adjacent uses will be minimized;
 - Attracting unique high-intensity industries including those that conduct research, development, and testing of volatile compounds, weapons, civilian and military apparatus, wastes, fuels, and energy to McCarran and other remotely located industrial areas in the county;
 - Commercial business which is directly associated with serving the needs of local residents.
- Provide for the development of necessary infrastructure to provide a competitive business environment.
 - Ensure accessibility to and expansion of transportation, utility, and information-technology services serving businesses;
 - Provide for appropriate level of development and re-development of affordable workforce housing;
 - Emphasize on infrastructure holistically and not just focus on individual projects.
- Provide for the development of a sustainable, high quality workforce.

7.7 Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Policies Strategies

- Goal 1** Continue to enhance diversification of economic opportunities within the county.
- Policy 1.1 Maintain and continue to update, as needed, standards for industrial and commercial development within the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center and other parts of the county.
- Policy 1.2 Promote commercial business activity in and around the county which will benefit local residents and businesses as distinct from tourists and visitors.
- Policy 1.3 Promote commercial business activity within the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center which will serve employees, trucking, and visitors to the area.
- Policy 1.4 Expand programs and improve inter-local communication and collaboration with existing local, state, and federal economic development and diversification agencies.
- Policy 1.5 Promote commercial and industrial developments within the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center by facilitating efficient and straightforward permitting processes and enhanced communication between prospective businesses and local government agencies.
- Policy 1.6 Collaborate with the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada and the Northern Nevada Development Authority to coordinate development of prime industrial land within McCarran and other appropriate areas within the River District.
- Policy 1.7 Promote county-wide mobility infrastructure and projects to support job access.
- Goal 2** Support the development of the county's significant mineral resources while ensuring that negative impacts to the land and adjacent land uses are minimized.
- Objective 2.1** Adopt standards or policy statements concerning mineral development on or near the Comstock Historic District which are distinct from development standards in outlying areas.
- Objective 2.2** Refrain from duplicating permit applications requirements and fees which have been established by state and federal agencies.
- Policy 2.3 Maintain a close collaborative relationship between county agencies and mining operations throughout the permitting process and thereafter to minimize negative impacts.
- Goal 3** Design zoning districts to allow for a mix in land use development.

Objective 3.1 Encourage commercial development within industrial zones that provides goods and services (e.g., restaurants, entertainment, dry goods, food, etc.) to the maximum limit allowable by zoning code.

Objective 3.2 Encourage clustering of commercial land uses in industrial areas in order to reduce automobile travel time, congestion, and cross traffic on major throughways.

Objective 3.3 Encourage high density development and commercial uses in CR Zones.

Policy 3.1 Prohibit land use permits adjacent to brothels which are deemed incompatible therewith.

Goal 4 Secure a ZIP Code which is specifically assigned to McCarran and other River District communities.

Objective 4.1 Submit requests to state and federal agencies to obtain official “McCarran” name identification and have that name entered into United States Geological Survey’s names database.

Objective 4.2 Submit requests to the United States Postal Services to have a ZIP Code assigned exclusively to McCarran, Painted Rock, Hafed, Lockwood, and other River District communities in Storey County.

Policy 4.1 Maintain a close collaborative relationship between county and federal agencies to fulfill objectives 4.1 and 4.2.

Goal 5 Maintain and enhance primary job base

Objective 5.1 Retain and promote the expansion of major employers already established in the county, including Gold Hill and Virginia City, the River District, and the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center.

Objective 5.2 Promote activities that have the potential to upgrade the skill and wage levels of the county’s resident and non-resident labor force and those likely to enter the labor force (e.g., local college graduates). Encourage educational opportunities for the development and/or upgrade of skills required for employment, advancement and entrepreneurship.

Policy 5.1 Continue to coordinate the county’s ongoing planning efforts and Land Use Map with major employers where applicable to ensure compatibility with their facility master plans and expansion efforts.

Goal 6 Promote expansion of a regional retail service base.

Objective 6.1 Encourage the development of retail developments consisting of shops, restaurants, entertainment venues, offices, hotels, premium amenities, and upscale gaming venues in existing commercial centers and in proposed mixed-

use communities to allow residents access to a variety of retail service and entertainment needs close to home, and to attract patrons from surrounding growth areas.

Goal 7 Recognize and adapt to the impact of technology on work and workforce patterns.

Objective 7.1 Encourage the incorporation of home-based occupation businesses and live/work units that are consistent with the character of surrounding properties, land uses, and land use designations.

Objective 7.2 Encourage and work with regional service providers to provide low-cost, easily accessible, state-of-the-art telecommunications and other technology services throughout the county.

Objective 7.3 Use technology to increase information available to residents and businesses regarding growth patterns, economic conditions, development activity, and other elements of the competitive landscape. Where possible, these elements should be interactive.

Goal 8 Promote tourism activities and amenities that highlight the Virginia City National Historic Landmark and other cultural resources.

Objective 8.1 Support tourism activities associated with the major historic resources within the county, such as the V&T Railroad, the various cultural institutions, and the historic buildings and stories of the Comstock, by ensuring that future development supports the functions and visual character of these resources.

Objective 8.2 Encourage the development of historical opportunities, interpretive signage, and other amenities that complement and enhance the county's historic resources. Continue to explore opportunities to expand downtown walking tours and interpretive signage exhibits, and identify new opportunities to showcase the county's historic resources.

Objective 8.3 Support artists, arts organizations, the Storey County School District's arts programs, and related cultural institutions because of their significant contributions to the county's overall healthy business climate; their role in creating a cultural environment that attracts other living wage employers, as well as tourists, to the region; and the substantial benefits they provide to the residents and communities.

Goal 9 Promote and maintain the pro economic development county government.

Objective 9.1 Maintain land-use policies and permitting procedures that are understandable, predictable, and can be accomplished within reasonable time periods.

Objective 9.2 Leverage, whenever possible, statewide economic development efforts to help attract business investment to the county and promote the benefits of the

region.

Objective 9.3 To the extent of the county’s control, maintain a balance revenue system that is competitive for business and other investment.

Objective 9.4 Recognize the unique nature of Nevada’s tax system and promote economic development alternatives the result in a net positive fiscal impact for the county.

Policy 9.1 Recognize that business cycles will occur and the competitive landscape is rapidly evolving. Provide planning flexibility that can be responsive to unforeseen or changing economic conditions and community needs within the context of the Master Plan.