



WASHOE COUNTY

"Dedicated to Excellence in Public Service"

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MANAGER

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TO OUR WASHOE COUNTY TAXPAYERS:

We are pleased to present the Final Adopted Budget and Work Plan for Washoe County for fiscal year 2005-2006. This document represents the culmination of thousands of hours of effort by staff, elected officials, and citizens who have carefully considered not only the present demands of our fast-growing County, but also the future needs of the region.

The total budget represents some \$615,447,917 dollars in both governmental funds (revenues are primarily taxes) and proprietary funds (revenues are primarily user charges). This investment by residents, businesses, and visitors supports the 30+ different departmental functions of your County government, from integrated Water Resource Planning and Natural Resource Management, to Child Protection and Juvenile Services, to Libraries, Elections, Public Safety, Criminal Justice, Technology, Senior Services, Regional Parks, Trails and Open Space, Public Works and Infrastructure, and so on. Your County government staff team is made up of 2,889 dedicated employees, whose job it is to protect our health and safety and to preserve our treasured quality of life. This year, we have continued our efforts to provide the highest quality services with the minimum cost to taxpayers; our Washoe County property tax rate will remain unchanged at \$1.3917 per \$100 of assessed value (due to our long-term fiscal restraint, State law would have allowed us to impose an additional 31.5 cents of tax rate that Washoe County has chosen not to impose). In addition, for the eighth consecutive year, we have held the growth in our budget to less than the combined rates of growth in population and CPI (Consumer Price Index). We have also lowered our number of employees per 1,000 population from a high of 8.1 per 1,000 people in 2001 to 7.6 in this coming budget year, and we will fully implement the 3% cap on growth in residential property taxes approved by the 2005 Legislature. We take pride in continuing to find innovative ways of delivering services ever more cost-effectively.

Our commitment to service shows...this past year, in our efforts to continuously improve your County government, we randomly surveyed citizens in a statistically significant, broadly representative study, and found that our residents report high satisfaction with their County employees. In fact, they rated County employees an average of 7.0 on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being excellent. In addition, three-fourths of the citizens surveyed said that County employees respond to them within 24 hours.

In this year's budget, we have reflected the County Commissioners' priorities in allocating resources. The following are just a few highlights:

Protect the Safety and Security of Our Region

Truckee River Flood Project—new Project Director, increased investment in early land acquisition

Increased investment in Emergency Preparedness, public health and epidemiology, Homeland Security

Preserve Our Quality of Life

Expanded Library hours; expanded case management for elderly

Regional Collaboration

Full consolidation of Animal Services; funding support for regional homeless shelter

Promote Quality Economic Development

Continued investment in the design for Triple A Baseball Stadium; implement One-Stop Permitting Shop

Government Efficiency and Financial Stability

\$5.6 million investment in technology projects to increase efficiency and on-line services to citizens; implementation of pilot budgeting system to base our budget on community priorities—"Charting Our Course"

Encourage Citizen Participation

Enhancements to early voting and general election; increased funding for community outreach and Town Hall Meetings

Workforce Development

Increases to staff training; Wellness program; full-time position to guide planning for workforce turnover due to changing demographics

In each of our programs and services, we have utilized citizen surveys, trend analysis, performance measurement, and benchmarking with other public and private organizations, so that we can maximize the benefits to taxpayers for the investments that are made. We believe that every dollar entrusted to us must be put to the highest and best use, for the greatest good, for the greatest number, for the longest time.

The document, which follows, provides citizens with an easy-to-read guide to each program in every department, outlining the mission and goals of the department, as well as the budget, staffing and measures of performance for each program, which we use to help us manage most effectively. Our Budget Book has been honored five times for excellence in financial reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association, and we believe this year's edition will be no exception.

We hope that you will contact us at 328-2000 with any suggestions you have for how we can serve you better, or contact us online at www.washoecounty.us. Thank you for being our partners in maintaining Washoe County as one of the most compelling places in America to live, work, visit, recreate and invest.



Katy Singraub

Washoe County Manager