

Gerlach, Nevada Community Assessment July 2011 Final Report



Presented by
Nevada Rural Development Council

Collaborating Partners



**Nevada USDA Rural
Development**



Gerlach General Improvement District

The People of Gerlach

Made Possible with Financial Assistance from:



Washoe County

Friends of Black Rock High Rock



Burning Man

Gerlach Community Assessment

July 2011

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Executive Summary

The Gerlach General Improvement District (GGID) requested the Nevada Rural Development Council (NRDC) to complete a Community Assessment for their community. Funding was secured through the Washoe County Commission, Burning Man and Friends of Black Rock High Rock. The NRDC assembled a trained and certified resource team to assist in evaluating community challenges, assets and hopes. The two-day assessment began Wednesday, July 20, 2011 and concluded with a Town Hall Meeting in the Community Center on Thursday, July 21, 2011.

Most comments regarding the strengths or assets in Gerlach centered on the people of the community. One person put it this way, “The greatest asset to Gerlach is the people of Gerlach. They are just the finest bunch of people on the planet. They are really good at living in a small town together. There is a mix of liberals, wackos, conservatives, libertarians, environmentalists, ranchers, you name it, and everyone gets along.” There is a clear recognition that the people who live in Gerlach care very much about their community and their neighbors. The real strength in any community must be the people and their willingness to make a positive difference.

Over the two days the team was in Gerlach, they toured the area, participated in two listening sessions and received numerous citizen comments. Those comments led to the formulation of the four major themes identified in this report. After the listening sessions the team compiled a Preliminary Report which included the identified themes and presented it to the community at the Town Hall Meeting. The four themes identified by the team are in alphabetical order: Communications, Community Development, Economic Development, and Government Relations/Governance.

There is considerable information in this report ranging from citizen comments to write-ups from the resource team which include potential resources to help community members carry out suggested recommendations. It is through the efforts of those who participated in the process and their desire to build a better tomorrow for Gerlach that this assessment has any validity. Please take the time to read this report. If nothing else it should stimulate action and hopefully engagement by community members.

The key to the success of this planning process will be its implementation. The assessment identifies the needs of the community as presented by its citizens. Only as citizens become engaged in the process of carrying out the actions identified through this process will these efforts have a lasting impact on the community. Anyone reading this document is encouraged to become part of the solutions to the problems and challenges identified within it.

The Nevada Rural Development Council (NRDC) is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization dedicated to the enhancement of rural communities in Nevada. Its mission is to “build the capacity of rural communities.” For questions or comments regarding this report, contact the NRDC.

Introduction

Most comments regarding the strengths or assets in Gerlach centered on the people of the community. One person put it this way, “The greatest asset to Gerlach is the people of Gerlach. They are just the finest bunch of people on the planet. They are really good at living in a small town together. There is a mix of liberals, wackos, conservatives, libertarians, environmentalists, ranchers, you name it, and everyone gets along.” There is a clear recognition that the people who live in Gerlach care very much about their community and their neighbors. The real strength in any community must be the people and their willingness to make a positive difference.

It was with this willingness of the people of Gerlach to make a difference that led community members to approach the Nevada Rural Development Council to arrange a Resource Team Visit. The team consisted of four individuals who live and/or work in Rural Nevada and who are certified to be team members. The resource team spent two days in Gerlach where they learned a great deal of new information as they listened to residents share their thoughts and feelings about their community. The team felt a genuine sense of commitment to this grass roots process from those who participated. The team was pleased and honored to be invited into your community, your businesses, and your friendship.

Funding for this project came from the Washoe County Commission, Burning Man, and Friends of Black Rock High Rock.

There is considerable information in this report ranging from citizen comments to write-ups from the resource team which include potential resources to help community members carry out suggested recommendations. This assessment could not have been possible without the great turnout by local residents and their willingness to share their thoughts about their community. It is through the efforts of those who participated in the process and their desire to build a better tomorrow for Gerlach that this assessment has any validity. Please take the time to read this report. If nothing else it should stimulate action and hopefully engagement by each of you in your community.

Acknowledgements

For a Community Assessment to be successful many people need to be involved in the process to create that success. First was the willingness of Lisa Bertschi and the members of the Gerlach General Improvement District (GGID) Board to seek input from residents as to their thoughts about the future of their community. Second was the work by the local Steering Committee, Bobbie Barlow, Margie Reynolds and Sheilla Stransky, in pre-planning efforts and logistical support for the resource team. Also, thanks to Tina Walters who took over the administrative position with the GGID when Sheilla left. Third is the support of the Washoe County Commission, and particularly Commissioner Bonnie Webber, that provided the funding to make this assessment possible. Special thanks to Gabrielle Enfield who helped find where the funds were available. Additional support came through Will Roger of Burning Man and Matthew Ebert of the Friends of Black Rock High Rock. Finally, participation by the citizens of Gerlach was essential to the success of this process. Not only did many of you participate, you also made the team feel warmly welcomed in your community.

Members of the team spent two days listening to and evaluating the many comments they heard and read from those who participated in the listening sessions held during their visit or submitted written comments. Each member of the team volunteered his or her time to be in your community and additional time to write up what was heard, make recommendations to address the themes that arose from the listening sessions and identify potential resources that may be used to carry out those recommendations. Each member brought his or her unique expertise and background to the process which gives this report a broad perspective.

Other generous contributions came from the Western Nevada Development District, Nevada USDA Rural Development, and the Nevada Commission on Economic Development by providing staff to be team members. Additionally, support for the community assessment process came through the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension. Extension's role in the success of this process is a testimonial to their commitment to rural Nevada.

The Nevada Rural Development Council

The Nevada Rural Development Council (NRDC) is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization dedicated to the enhancement of rural communities in Nevada. It is a collaborative public/private partnership comprised of federal, state, local, tribal, university, non-profit organizations, the private sector and individuals dedicated to teamwork and partnership.

The NRDC mission is “building the capacity of rural communities.” The NRDC seeks to carry out its mission by:

- Providing rural communities with strategic planning assistance, including community assessments, asset mapping, and plan implementation.
- Providing leadership development as a foundation of every community.
- Providing access to resources.
- Serving as a networking link between resources and needs.
- Promoting the quality of life in the values, needs, and contributions of rural communities.

The NRDC is governed by a board of directors and supervised by its executive committee. Through their determination and tenacity, the NRDC has continued its presence in rural Nevada through growth and challenging times.

For more information on the Nevada Rural Development Council, please contact:

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Strategic Planning & Community Assessments

Strategic planning is essential for every community to reach its goals and objectives. Without a plan, there is no roadmap to success. Residents of a community will follow community and elected leaders down any path if they believe in the plan presented to them. Community master plans may be the basis for strategic planning in rural communities; but often these plans are primarily land and water use plans. A “community plan” is an important compliment to a master plan; it does not replace it, rather it reinforces it.

Community assessments provide the first step, the visioning step, in the strategic planning process. It is a community based planning process consisting of interviewing a large number of people in the community, recording their suggestions, and having a team of experts write up implementation plans for community use. This is a very neutral, non-threatening process where citizens can give input without criticism or debate. Because it is citizen-based, it adds tremendous validation to master plans, strategic plans, community development plans, and the elected officials that use these plans for implementing strategies.

The benefits of a Community Assessment include providing an opportunity to hear from community members, offering an affordable process, opening of communication between citizens and government, bringing “outside ideas” into the community, identifying new resources for communities to use, and providing a source of in-kind contributions for grants. Additional results include leadership development, an increase in volunteerism, and an increase in civic engagement.

The key to the success of this planning process will be its implementation. The assessment identifies the needs of the community as presented by its citizens. Only as those citizens become engaged in the process of carrying out the actions resulting from this process will this plan or any plan have a lasting impact on the community. Each of you reading this document is encouraged to become part of the solutions to the problems and challenges identified in this document.

The resource team and the Nevada Rural Development Council are honored to bring this great engagement process to your community. It is our hope that it will provide benefits short-term and long-term for the residents of Gerlach and the surrounding area.

Process for the Development of this Report

The Gerlach General Improvement District requested the Nevada Rural Development Council (NRDC) to complete a Community Assessment for Gerlach and the surrounding area. Funding was secured through the Washoe County Commission, Friends of Black Rock High Rock, and the Burning Man Project. The NRDC assembled a trained and certified resource team to assist in evaluating community challenges, assets and hopes. The team then developed suggestions for improving the quality of life, social and economic future in Gerlach. The two-day assessment began Wednesday, July 20, 2011 and concluded with a Town Hall Meeting in the Community Center on Thursday, July 21, 2011.

Before the resource team started the assessment they received an orientation to Gerlach and were given the listening session schedule and a tour of the area. They then participated in the listening sessions and received hundreds of citizen comments. Those comments led to the formulation of the four major themes identified in this report. Participants in the listening sessions were asked to respond to three questions. Their responses served as the basis for developing the final report and the ensuing action plan. The three questions were:

- **What are the major challenges or problems in your community?**
- **What are the major assets or strengths in your community?**
- **What projects or initiatives would you like to see completed in the short term (24 months) or in the long term (5, 10, or 50 years from now) in your community?**

At the end of the listening sessions, the resource team met to review the comments collected and to assemble the major themes. The team then compiled a Preliminary Report which included the identified themes and presented it to the community at the Town Hall Meeting. The four themes identified by the team are in alphabetical order: Communication, Community Development, Economic Development and Government Relations/Governance.

On October 27, 2011, citizens of Gerlach will come together in a Priority Setting Meeting. At that meeting those present will prioritize the four themes. They will also begin the process of planning their future as a community.

Resource Team Members

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Resource Team Schedule

Wednesday and Thursday, July 20 and 21, 2011

Wednesday, July 20

Noon	Team Arrives and had lunch with the Gerlach Steering Committee
1:00 – 5:30 PM	Team taken on a guided tour of the greater Gerlach area
6:00 – 8:00 PM	Community-wide Bar-be-que and Listening Session at Community Center

Thursday, July 21

7:00 AM	Breakfast at Bruno’s Country Club
8:00 – Noon	Team taken on a continued tour of the greater Gerlach area
Noon – 1:30 PM	Lunch and Listening Session at the Gerlach Senior Center
1:30 – 5:30 PM	Team prepared for Town Meeting
6:00 – 8:00 PM	Preliminary Report presented at Town Meeting in Community Center

Major Themes

Communications

- Improve Internal Communication
 - News Letter
 - Website
- Improve Communications with Others
 - Burning Man Project
 - Tourists (Visitors Center)
 - Local Businesses
 - Chamber of Commerce

Community Development

- Housing Issues – Quality, Quantity, Absentee Owners
- Infrastructure – Improvement, Costs
- Senior Center
- Housing for Seniors
- Use of School Facilities and Solar Array
- Lack of Health Care – Open Clinic, Doctors, EMTs
- Community Clean Up
- Volunteerism
- Transportation Planning

Economic Development

- Economic Development Analysis
- Asset Mapping/Skill Assessment
- Economic Development Strategy
- Develop Entrepreneurial Environment
- Job Creation
- Capitalize on our Existing Strengths
 - Eco-Tourism, Burning Man Investments/Initiatives,
 - Hunters, Bikers, Rocketeers, Balloons, Film Makers
- Marketing and Branding – Target Younger Generation
- Renewable Energy Development

Government Relations/Governance

- County Issues/Zoning, Permitting, etc.
- School District
- Other Government Entities
 - BLM, Federal and State Agencies,
- Forms of Local Government
 - Gerlach GID, Citizens Advisory Board
- Local Leadership Development

Priority Setting Results

A Town Hall Meeting was held on Thursday, October 27 from 6-8:00 PM in the Gerlach Community Center. At that time, members of the Resource Team will present the Draft Report for the Gerlach Community Assessment. Residents will then prioritize the four themes identified through the listening sessions and begin to develop action plans to address them. The major themes are as prioritized by community members:

- Economic Development
- Communications
- Community Development
- Government Relations/Governance

At the meeting, action groups were formed around each of the four themes. These groups began a process to develop plans to address the issues and concerns identified in the themes. NRDC, the Resource Team, and other partners will work with community members as they implement strategies to carry out their priority actions.

Team Member Recommendations and Resources

Theme: Communications: Des Craig

Issues:

During the listening sessions in Gerlach we heard frequent reference to communication problems, internal and external.

Internally, it would appear that residents as a whole are not sharing information or openly discussing and confronting community issues. There would seem to be inadequate, regular dialogue within the community.

In a way, this is strange since the community is small and everyone claims to know everyone else. We heard that in emergencies, neighbors gladly help each other, but in more normal times, there is little communication. It is possible that opposing agendas or conflicting points of view would limit open communications and information-sharing, or it may be that some residents simply prefer to be left alone and stay uninvolved. Many people in Gerlach retired or moved to Gerlach 'to get away' and don't want to be bothered or involved in community affairs. While attendance at the two listening sessions was good, it was clear there were quite a few residents who chose to stay away and not engage in discussing the community's problems.

The problem of inadequate public dialogue may also be caused by the lack of public forums in Gerlach. Apart from the General Improvement District (GID) and Citizens' Advisory Board (CAB) there is no formal government in Gerlach, no elected town leaders. There are a number of public bars and one restaurant but no churches or business associations. The school was down-sized in 2011 when the Empire gypsum plant closed so with a much reduced school, public communications could become even more difficult and strained.

Lack of common vision can also contribute to poor internal communications. There is no comprehensive development plan for the town and surrounding area. Some individuals in the community may have ambitious ideas and plans for the community, but there is no strongly-held, shared vision and plan. Without a clear vision and achievable plan of action, internal communications will be hampered. There was also a certain apathy expressed during our visit to Gerlach. This may be the result of events that took place recently in Empire but such apathy could be another reason for the poor internal communications in Gerlach.

The annual Burning Man festival also creates divisions in Gerlach and may also limit communications. There are those who have no time for the festival and want nothing to do with those involved. At the same time, those involved with the festival may be in the community for months at a time, and indicated to us their interest in the long term development and sustainability of the community. At the same time, private clubs exclusively for those involved with the Burning Man festival do not help improve local internal communications.

Externally, it appears there are communication problems with the County School District, and Washoe County government in general. Relations with the school district over the partial closure

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of the school, housing, land and other asset issues have been strained. There is a feeling that the County authorities do not understand or care enough to help the Gerlach community and zoning laws were mentioned more than once as a case in point.

There appears to be an image problem whereby the residents of Gerlach are not accurately communicating their true needs, strengths and assets, and the outside world has a distorted picture of Gerlach. This could be due to the lack of shared vision and local government referred to above. It could also be due to a lack of knowledge on how to effectively create an attractive brand, and how to communicate the positive aspects of life in Gerlach.

Recommendations:

Better communication within the community on local, community opportunities and activities is needed. During the Community Assessment exercise, some said that they were not aware of all that goes on within the community. Perhaps an updated and widely circulated Community Calendar and Newsletter could be adopted, together with better and more efficient use of the internet and a purpose-built website for the community.

Clearly a more appropriate form of local government and leadership is required for Gerlach. This would need to be researched in more detail and various models examined but a single body is recommended instead of the current situation where the GID and CAB co-exist. Incorporation may not be a viable or sustainable option but some rationalization has to occur to provide direction and focus for the community.

While the form of local government is being discussed, it may be possible to create community action groups around relevant development themes. These could bring about better and more meaningful communication in the community. Groups to encourage civic engagement and communication might include: a Business Development Action Group; a Clean-Up-Our-Town Action Group; a Tourism and Festival Action Group; a Vision and Planning Action Group; a Modernize our Infrastructure group; a Student-Senior Working Group etc. The formation of such groups would require a core of champions from the community, but very often there is a large number of people, willing and prepared to be involved in their community, who are simply waiting to be asked to participate. The suggested action groups need not be permanent and need not have the same people all the time, but they could provide the necessary rallying points to allow people to share and communicate and become involved in community affairs.

Leadership training is suggested for those who are and regard themselves as leaders in the community. There are a number of training courses available in Nevada for community leaders – elected officials, community organizers, economic developers, educators, church leaders, youth organizers etc. There are also specific courses available in Nevada on effective communications, and full advantage should be taken of these in Gerlach to help correct the communication issues raised in the community assessment.

Business sponsorship of community activities is a real possibility in the development of Gerlach. While not universally popular, the Burning Man festival brings thousands through Gerlach each year and is a major source of revenue and development assistance to Gerlach. Better

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communication with the Burning Man organizers (through an action group as mentioned above), and a variety of sponsored activities could help bring people together and get residents motivated to serve in their community.

Further, there is a real need to establish better communications with the County Commissioners and County staff in Reno. If a committed group of people from Gerlach could attend Commission meetings more frequently, and if the Commissioners could somehow be persuaded to hold a Commission meeting in or near the town once a year, such initiatives might lead to better understanding and appreciation on both sides. We would recommend various approaches to resolving this issue, for example, consensus workshops could be held, or some form of externally-facilitated conflict mediation might be recommended. Involving younger people in representing the community at Commission meetings could be very powerful in being heard. The situation pertaining in Gerlach is not unique; other communities have faced similar challenges with poor communication and lack of community engagement, and learnt to overcome these challenges. It is recommended that a group be formed within the community to research other communities that have successfully overcome similar challenges in this area of communications and community involvement. The town of Wray, Colorado has been mentioned as one such example.

Finally the development of a common vision and development plan for Gerlach and the surrounding area is absolutely vital for the future of the community. This could be done internally or with external assistance but either way it would result in better communications internally and externally. It would provide a focus for the community and a road map for the future.

Resources:

USDA Rural Information Center (RIC), Community Development Resources
<http://ric.nal.usda.gov>. (Search using the word Volunteerism)

Center for Rural Affairs: <http://www.cfra.org>. (Look under Community)

Rural Community Assistance Corporation: <http://www.rcac.org>.

Partnership of Community Resources: Cheryl Bricker, Executive Director: (775) 782-8611;
pcrbricker@partnership-resources.org

Nevada Volunteers: Janet Wright, Volunteer Development Manager: (775) 825-1900;
janet@nevadavolunteers.org

All America City Award http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/All-America_City

Cooperative Extension, UNR – on leadership training, Contact:
Dr. Marlene Rebori, Reno. Tel. 1-775-784-4848, and
Carl Dahlen, Carson City. Tel. 1-775-230-0075

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Nevada Commission on Economic Development – on board training. Contact Ken Pierson, Carson City. Tel. 1-775-687-9914 www.diversifynevada.com

Sierra Circle Consulting – for facilitating consensus and collaboration, Contact Patricia R. Tuecke, Reno Tel 1-775-333-6998 www.sierracircle.com

Heartland Center for Leadership Development - for assistance in small rural community revitalization, including the Hometown Competitiveness Program and leadership development, Contact Milan Wall, Lincoln, Nebraska Tel 1- 402-474-7667 www.heartlandcenter.info

Futures Corporation – for strategic planning assistance, Contact John Luthy, Boise, Idaho Tel 1-208-345-5995 www.futurescorp.com

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Theme: Communications: Kay Vernatter

Issue: Improve Internal Communication

During the listening sessions community members commented on several issues of communication within the community and outside of the community (County and School District). Open dialog among community residents, appointed or elected boards, representatives, and local community groups are essential for a community to move forward. Effective communication builds relationships and trust between groups within the community and assists in bringing a community together.

As a society we have become more and more reliant on electronic communications; emails, social media sites, and web sites. Gerlach and Washoe County have utilized these communication methods to assist in keeping the community informed. Gerlach has a Face Book page located at: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Gerlach/104743556231122> and the Washoe County Citizens Advisory Boards web page is located at: http://www.co.washoe.nv.us/comdev/boards_commissions/cab/gerlach_empire/ge_index.htm.

The Gerlach Advisory Board web site has all agendas, minuets, and other key information posted concerning items that are being acted on within the community and with Washoe County. The site is very informative and easy to navigate. While electronic media provides access 24 hours per day this form of communication doesn't always allow for effective two way communication and conversations to occur which helps build community relationships.

Recommendations:

Improving communication is always difficult and it takes agreement from all parties involved in the community or discussion to work on improving communication. There is an old saying of “a two way street” this is the same with communication. Having a willingness to be part of the solution to open up communication involves adopting some active listening skills which can include; no interruptions, good eye contact, and trying to clear our minds of external distractions or what our response might be. When a community is in an active listening mode they are opening up the dialog.

We are a very multi-generational society and each of us are adopting electronic media and technology at different paces, therefore a community must explore all ways to effectively and accurately keep community residents informed. Social gatherings and community events such a community picnics, clean up events, etc. are all excellent ways to allow everyone in the community to become engaged and open up lines of communications. Some ways to open up communication with elected officials, federal and state agencies are to invite them to your events. This keeps everyone informed on what is going on in the community and provides a common ground to begin conversations out side of “business”.

An item to remember is most individuals would like to participate and become involved however they haven't been invited or asked personally. Taking the extra step of personal invitations begins the first step in open communication. Other ways to communicate and keep the

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community informed is a small newsletter with facts and events of what is occurring in the community. Keep copies at local gathering places; post office, local business establishments, senior center, community center. The City of Fernley publishes a monthly fact sheet named “News Flash” it is a very informative on current happenings in the community, this is posted on their website, emailed to community and external contacts and printed and posted around the community. Become an engaged and informed citizen Washoe County has an “Engaged Leadership Program” which allows civic minded community residents to learn and gain an understanding about workings of government, this assists in forming relationships within and outside of the community and begins the partnership process with the County.

Resources:

University of Nevada Cooperative Extension

Rebori, Marlene, Area Extension Specialist, Community and Organizational Development
(775)784-4848 - reborim@unce.unr.edu

Expertise: Marlene Rebori's expertise includes public participation, civic engagement, leadership development, public policy and community development. She works with community groups and local governments in the area of facilitation, group process, community planning and problem solving, and public involvement.

Programs: Engaged Leadership, Policy Education and Civic Engagement (P.E.A.C.E.)

Nevada Rural Development Council

The Nevada Rural Development Council (NRDC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization who develops and expands alliances among local, regional, state and federal efforts. The NRDC advocates for and enhances rural Nevada's human, economic, and natural resources while assisting rural communities achieve locally determined objectives.

The NRDC specializes in organizing and reporting Community Assessments for rural communities in Nevada. A Community Assessment shows a collection of information gathered from community members regarding the strengths, weaknesses and desired future of the area. Funding for Community Assessments comes from the contributions of local government, businesses, community funds and/or grants. The NRDC also provides leadership training for rural communities, assists in setting up community foundations for funding, and organizes rural conferences.

Carl Dahlen, Executive Director - 775-230-0075 - email: dahlenc@unce.unr.edu

Rural Community Assistance Corporation

RCAC is a nonprofit organization that provides technical assistance, training and financing so rural communities achieve their goals and visions. Headquartered in West Sacramento,

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California, RCAC's more than 100 employees serve rural communities from 40 plus field locations in 13 western states, plus the Western Pacific.

RCAC's work encompasses a wide range of services including technical assistance and training for environmental infrastructure; affordable housing development; economic and leadership development; and community development finance. These services are available to a variety of communities and organizations including communities with populations of fewer than 50,000, other nonprofit groups and tribal organizations.

Eileen Piekarz - epiekarz@rcac.org - (775) 323-8882

Washoe County Engaged Leadership Academy

Citizens & Government Working Together to Make a Difference....

Washoe County and the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension have created an 8-week training program of interactive sessions that are designed to cultivate a partnership between citizens and their County government. The participants develop skills to be more active in their communities and County government. At this time, it is anticipated that another session will be in the Fall of 2011.

"Learning about the inner workings of the county departments has not only made me a more informed citizen, but a more interested citizen; in seeking to volunteer and better my community!" -Sue Sherman (Fall 2007)

Benefits of Attending:

- * Meet other community-minded citizens.
- * Develop skills to interact with local government.
- * Create a partnership with Washoe County Government.
- * Make positive contributions to your neighborhood and community.

The program is newly designed by merging the *Washoe County Leadership Academy* and University of Nevada's Cooperative Extension *Engaged Leadership Program*. The Engaged Leadership Program has been taught in Washoe County since 2002 under the leadership of Dr. Marlene Rebori, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension. The Engaged Leadership Program was developed in partnership and close collaboration with Washoe County Community Development Staff to provide citizen volunteers with leadership skills and tools.

The Washoe County Leadership Academy began in 2004 and focuses on providing information on the vast services the County provides through personal contact with elected officials and department heads, simulated trials, planning and emergency simulations, tours to behind the scenes of jail and other venues.

"I gained a great amount of insight and information about our county government and I would strongly recommend attending the Leadership Academy to any individual with the desire to get the "inside scoop" on how our county government functions." -Michael Henry (Fall 2007)

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City of Fernley News Flash <http://www.cityoffernley.org/DocumentView.aspx?DID=4639>

Online Resources for Active Listening Skills:

<http://www.mitoaction.org/pdf/tipActiveListening.pdf>

<http://www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/ActiveListening.htm>

Issue: Improve Communications with Others

Tourists (Visitors Center)

Local Businesses

Chamber of Commerce

Comments were received from the community on how to improve communications with others on the recreational opportunities Gerlach has to offer. In a search of Gerlach on the web, the Commission of Tourism web site and the following web site were some of the first to pop up. Both web sites do not fully portray all the recreational opportunities the community offers for visitors.

Gerlach, Nevada

Welcome to Gerlach, Nevada (pop. 450). In this thriving metropolis you will find one elementary school, one high school, one post office, one propane distributor, one gas station, one motel, 3 bars and that's it.

We list almost no information on Gerlach because there is almost nothing in the town or the surrounding area. The nearest town is Empire 20 miles to the south and it's even smaller. Although, it does have a grocery store.



The town of Gerlach, NV

The gas station is on the south end of town. The prices are typically higher than anything you will be expecting, but if you plan on leaving on Sunday, gas up when you get to Gerlach. If you need to gas up, you may have to wait up to 30 minutes in line to use the pump. For some reason, everyone leaves in droves after the man burns. You end up facing a white knuckle traffic jam all the way home. If you wait an extra day, it is a fairly relaxed trip.

Recommendations:

The community of Gerlach should work to create their own image to tourist and visitors instead of images of the community portrayed by others. Form a public relations or tourism committee with partners from all sectors including but not limited to: Friends of Black Rock, the local hospitality industry, local grocery store, Burning Man, BLM, NDOW, Tourism, AeroPac, Nevada Outdoor School, DRI, local community members and others who may have an interest in the area. From this working committee create the official Gerlach website which provides

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visitors with all the opportunities and amenities within the area. It is very important once the web site is up and running that it be kept up to date with events, new attractions, business, new opportunities to learn about the area. Attend the Nevada Rural Roundup conference put on annually by the Nevada Commission on Tourism, learn from tourism experts on what works to promote tourism within a community.

The Friends of Black Rock Desert has a **great** website however it isn't the first site which pops up when a search of Gerlach is initiated. If this is the official web site of Gerlach as indicated on the Commission on Tourism web page then a tie-in to a "Gerlach" search of the web needs to be accomplished. http://blackrockdesert.org/friends/area_information/gateway_communities

Request the Nevada Commission on Tourism to update their website – this page does not show case Gerlach very well. The picture shown is of the "Fly Geyser" while a very beautiful picture, it is a location that does not have public access, visitors and travelers will be disappointed.

Consider teaming up with the California communities of Eagleville and Cedarville and BLM to create a tour, stay, play promotional campaign.

Consider a star gazing campaign without the influence of larger community lights the night sky viewing must be spectacular in the area.

Resources:

Nevada Commission on Tourism

The Nevada Commission on Tourism (NCOT) manages a Marketing Grant Program to help the rural communities of Nevada market their towns to potential visitors around the world in an effort to generate overnight stays.

Marketing Grants require a match, which may include in-kind services unless a waiver is approved. Grant recipients must meet the criteria outlined in the Grant Guidelines-Marketing Grant and are generally non-profit organizations. There are two Marketing Grant cycles each fiscal year. The 1st cycle begins in early February with applications due in early April. The 2nd cycle begins in early August with applications due in late September.

<http://travelnevada.biz/grants.aspx> - <http://ruralroundup.com/2011.aspx>

Kari Frilot, Rural Grants Manager

775.687.0620- 775.684.8912 fax - kfrilot@travelnevada.com

Christian Passink, Rural Programs Manager

775.687.0643 - 775.684.8912 fax - cpassink@travelnevada.com

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Theme: Community Development: Carl Dahlen

Issues:

- Housing Issues – Quality, Quantity, Absentee Owners, Housing for Seniors
- Infrastructure – Improvements, Costs
- Senior Center
- Use of School Facilities and Solar Array
- Lack of Health Care – Open Clinic, Doctors, EMTs
- Community Clean Up
- Volunteerism
- Transportation Planning

The loss of more than 300 residents when the Town of Empire was mothballed has left the people remaining in Gerlach with major community development challenges. Some of these challenges were in place before US Gypsum closed their mine and manufacturing facility. However, the closure has intensified the need to find solutions. The Gerlach School closed with the exception of one teacher and a couple of class rooms. There were concerns expressed regarding the school buildings and how they might be used to help the community. Utility expenses are now spread over a smaller number of users and as a result rates have had to be raised. As one commenter put it, “The water/sewer/trash residential rate is currently \$89.15. There is no way we can raise the rate much higher, since we have many residents who live on limited fixed income.” On top of the rate issue, there is a need for infrastructure maintenance and improvements. The medical clinic was closed. Many comments centered on this issue, “We need a medical clinic.” Also the Senior Center lost some of its regular attendees and maintaining senior activities was a high priority for many people. Housing once filled with teachers and other workers now sits vacant. As one person noted, “We have a lot of housing we would like to have more humans to fill up the housing we already have.” Other homes in the community have not been kept up by absentee owners or because residents don’t have the means to pay for regular maintenance. Overall, residents called for a general clean up of the town. Local businesses dependent on a larger population base now struggle to keep their doors open. And there are fewer people to help with the various volunteer jobs that have kept many services open and available to local residents. However, even with all of these challenges, residents are determined to move Gerlach into a positive future.

Recommendations:

In order to adequately address Community Development needs, a community-wide planning effort may be helpful. This assessment is a beginning step toward such a plan. However, there needs to be an examination of each of the challenges the community faces and a determination of the best approach to addressing those challenges. An inventory of specific items in each area of concern including their positive and negative aspects will help show what needs to be addressed in each area. The Nevada Rural Development Council is able to provide local residents with training in Strategic Planning that can lead to implementation plans for the community. Also, the Washoe County Community Development Department may be able to help with planning efforts. Another source of assistance may be the Land Use Planning Agency of the Nevada

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Division of State Lands. Another planning effort called for by local residents is transportation planning to include roads, rail and air transportation opportunities. The Nevada Department of Transportation may be able to help the community in this specific area of planning.

In regard to housing, a list can be compiled that records for each lot, who owns it, does it have a structure on it, is it vacant, the general condition of the lot and structure, and any other information that may help determine what action, if any, may be recommended for that property. Such a list will help clarify which lots and houses might be available for use. One suggestion was to encourage workers at the Hycroft Gold Mine to live in Gerlach. There was also a suggestion to encourage the development of an artist colony in the community. By knowing what housing is available, the community could better encourage people to move to the area. One suggestion was to post an inventory of available housing and lots on line so that someone looking to locate in Gerlach would be able to see immediately what was available. This same type of inventory can be completed for commercial property as well. There was also a concern for the need of low-income or senior housing. The Nevada Rural Housing Authority may be able to help in both planning efforts and in bringing housing to Gerlach.

The great news on the medical clinic is that it is being reopened. Westcare will operate the clinic on a regular basis. As a result, primary medical care will be available to local residents.

Some suggestions were made for use of the school facility. One was to turn it into a boarding school. Another was to turn it over for community use as a recreational facility or possibly as a place for an artist colony or business incubator. The hope expressed by many people is that a sufficient number of families will be attracted to the area so that the school could be reactivated. Plans are underway to direct the power generated by the solar array to community use.

In regard to funding for some of these efforts, USDA Rural Development has certain grant and loan programs that may help communities with planning and infrastructure needs. Also, the Community Development Block Grant Program is able to help with efforts that help low to moderate income residents. An income survey has been completed and the community may qualify for assistance on a community-wide basis. However, if programs are directed at senior citizens or persons with disabilities, they may qualify for Block Grant Funds directly.

Resources:

Hycroft Gold Mine – Allied Nevada Gold Corp – 9790 Gateway Drive, Suite 200, Reno, NV 89521, 775/358-4455, info@alliednevada.com, www.alliednevada.com

Nevada Rural Housing Authority – 3695 Desatoya Drive, Carson City, Nevada 89701, 775/ 887-1795, info@nvrural.org, www.nvrural.org

Nevada Department of Transportation – 1263 South Stewart Street, Carson City, Nevada 89712, 775/888-7000 www.nevadadot.com/Public_Involvement/Transportation_Planning/Planning.aspx

Washoe County – Department of Social Services, 1001 E Ninth Street, PO Box 11130, Reno, NV, 89520-0027, 775/328-2778 socialsvs@washoecounty.us, www.washoecounty.org/socsrsv

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Nevada Division of Aging Services, 3416 Goni Road, Suite D-132, Carson City, NV 89706, 775/687-4210, 775/687-4264 Fax E-mail: adsd@adsd.nv.gov, www.nvaging.net/

WestCare Community Triage Center – 315 Record Street, #103, Reno, Nevada 89512, 775/348-8811 www.westcare.com

Washoe County School District, 425 E Ninth Street, Reno, NV 89512, 775/348-0200 hmorrison@washoeschools.net, <http://washoecountyschools.org>

Nevada Volunteers – 639 Isbell Rd., Suite 220, Reno, NV 89509, 775/825-1900 www.nevadavolunteers.org

USDA Rural Development – 1390 South Curry Street, Carson City, Nevada 89703, 775/887-1222 www.rurdev.usda.gov/nv

Nevada Commission on Economic Development – Community Development Block Grant Program – 808 West Nye Lane, Carson City, Nevada 89703, 775/ 687-9918 www.diversifynevada.com

Washoe County Community Development Department – 1001 E. Ninth Street, Reno, NV 89512, PO Box 11130, Reno, NV 89520-0027, 775/328-3600, planning@washoecounty.us, www.co.washoe.nv.us/comdev/index.htm

Nevada Division of State Lands – Land Use Planning Agency, 901 S. Stewart Street, Suite 5003, Carson City, Nevada 89701-5246, 775/684-2723 <http://lands.nv.gov/program/slupa.htm>

Nevada Rural Development Council, PO Box 3926 Carson City, Nevada 89702, 775/230-0075 www.ruralnevada.org

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Theme: Community Development: Kay Vernatter

Issue: Overall Community Development

Community development is a community based and driven process of people and organizations working together to improve the economic, social, cultural and environmental conditions in a community. Community development is a long term process and includes short and long term conception of ideas and includes the planning and implementation of projects to improve the overall community.

Community development includes aspects of community capacity building, citizen participation, consensus building, problem solving, visioning and action planning. Partnerships among private, public and nonprofit entities are created to promote activities supporting community development.

Gerlach is in a unique position while there has been recent economic downturn the community and surrounding area has many opportunities which do not exist in other rural areas. The current economic downturn is a result of the overall U.S. economy with the closure of the USG operation at Empire which has resulted in the subsequent closure of the local high school. Gerlach is situated as an entry point to the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area, it has an annual influx of hunters into the area and for the past eleven years has been the entry point for the Burning Man event which has grown over the years to 50,000 individuals and for the past seven years the Black Rock Rendezvous. Based on discussions with community members Gerlach has not embraced the opportunities which may exist with these annual events in a holistic manner or evaluated how these opportunities build on each other and the potential economic and community development aspects of these annual events. New events or groups in an area often bring a different perspective and change to a community. It takes time for communities to embrace change and develop an understanding for how this change may benefit the community. The Gerlach area has embraced change over the years from initially being a ranching area to a rail road community in the early 1900's, and finally as a support community for the Empire area. The question is how does the greater Gerlach area capture and benefit from the annual events including Burning Man which can bring a positive economic impact to the community and create the synergy for all events to build upon each other. Additionally the community should consider and evaluate ways to support and enhance the local grocery store. With the closure of the Empire community facilities dynamics have changed and discussion should occur in the support of this vital community asset.

Recommendation:

The community of Gerlach should look at forming and maintaining a coalition who have a common interest in working together for the benefit of Gerlach. The coalition group would be an inclusive group which explores the opportunities which existing events bring to the community and the potential uses of the closed school facilities. Members of the local community and others should include but should not be limited to the following:

- Members of the Community

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- Burning Man Organization
- Current Community Groups and Non-profits in the Community
- Friends of Black Rock
- Local Government
- Regional Government
- Federal Government as applicable
- School District
- Local Business
- Local Schools
- State Agencies as applicable
- State Wide Non-Profit Organizations – housing, community development, business
- University of Nevada Center for Economic Development

The coalition working group should meet on a routine basis, I would suggest quarterly with sub-work groups meeting more often as their work load requires. Some items to explore:

- Creation of a sustainable giving fund as part of the Burning Man and the Black Rock Rendezvous ticket price to benefit local community organizations such as the Senior Center, Chamber of Commerce, Tourism, etc.
- Exploration of value added business which could be developed or the enhancement of local business ventures based on events.
- Explore the use of the school district buildings with sound financial feasibility studies and management agreements. Also explore the purchase of the facilities from the school district.
- Explore opportunities with the Washoe County School District owned housing – is a land trust a viable option?
- Explore on how the newly opened BLM Visitor Center ties into the community
- Grocery Store – how to enhance the services of the local grocery store
- Explore the impact of the Burning Man event on infrastructure; roads, utilities, facilities, etc.
- Study by UNR Center for Economic Development to evaluate the economic impact of; tourism, hunting, Burning Man, Black Rock Rendezvous, and other events on the local economy.
- Comprehensive evaluation of the local main street area to include how synergy can be created from existing businesses, beautification of the Main Street and community garden area.
- Consider the creation of a Gerlach Community Fund at a foundation. Contact Walker River Basin Communities Foundation which is a local foundation which supports local groups in the community. They may be able to provide guidance on how their foundation was formed and how community giving occurs in their area.

I would highly recommend a facilitator be selected to assist with the meetings as the working coalition forms. A facilitator will assist in ensuring all interested parties have a voice at the table and to keep the coalition on track. With a coalition it is important to understand why members are at the table and to listen to everyone's concerns and suggestions. Membership of the

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coalition will ebb and flow as the issues/items are being addressed, resolved or worked on by the coalition. .

Resources:

The Community Tool Box is a service of the Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas - http://ctb.ku.edu/en/dothework/tools_tk_1.aspx

This web site provides quick resource guides on key activities for community work one of the guides which is very useful is the guide on Creating and Maintaining Coalitions and Partnerships. Other guides include:

1. Creating and Maintaining Coalitions and Partnerships
2. Assessing Community Needs and Resources
3. Analyzing Problems and Goals
4. Developing a Framework or Model of Change
5. Developing Strategic and Action Plans
6. Building Leadership
7. Developing an Intervention
8. Increasing Participation and Membership
9. Enhancing Cultural Competence
10. Advocating for Change
11. Influencing Policy Development
12. Evaluating the Initiative
13. Implementing a Social Marketing Effort
14. Writing a Grant Application for Funding
15. Improving Organizational Management and Development
16. Sustaining the Work or Initiative

UNR Center for Economic Development - The University Center for Economic Development (UCED) at the University of Nevada, Reno was established in the fall of 1992 in response to the growing need within the state for economic development research, technical assistance and educational services. The UCED's primary objective is fostering economic development throughout Nevada by making the extensive resources of the University of Nevada, Reno available to organizations and areas that can benefit from job and income creation and job retention efforts. The UCED is sponsored by the University of Nevada, Reno with support provided by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Thomas R. Harris, Foundation Professor and Director
Phone: (775) 784-1681/1931 - Fax: (775) 784-4082 - harris@cabnr.unr.edu

Washoe County – Community Development Department - The Community Development Department guides the creation of livable and economically viable communities in Washoe County. The Department prepares and implements the County's master plan, to include distinct plans for the varied communities within unincorporated Washoe County. The master plan is

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implemented through review of development applications and through instituting and enforcing land use and business licensing codes.

Dave Childs, ICMA-CM, Acting Community Development Director

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Phone: 775.328.3600 - Fax: 775.328.6133 - Email: planning@washoecounty.us

Mailing Address: PO Box 11130, Reno, NV 89520-0027 - 1001 E. Ninth Street, Reno, NV 89512

University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Service - Facilitator

Rebori, Marlene, Area Extension Specialist, Community and Organizational Development
(775) 784-4848 – reborim@unce.unr.edu

Expertise: Marlene Rebori's expertise includes public participation, civic engagement, leadership development, public policy and community development. She works with community groups and local governments in the area of facilitation, group process, community planning and problem solving, and public involvement.

Programs: Engaged Leadership, Policy Education and Civic Engagement (P.E.A.C.E.)

Nevada Rural Development Council – Facilitator - The Nevada Rural Development Council (NRDC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization who develops and expands alliances among local, regional, state and federal efforts. The NRDC advocates for and enhances rural Nevada's human, economic, and natural resources while assisting rural communities achieve locally determined objectives.

The NRDC specializes in organizing and reporting Community Assessments for rural communities in Nevada. A Community Assessment shows a collection of information gathered from community members regarding the strengths, weaknesses and desired future of the area. Funding for Community Assessments comes from the contributions of local government, businesses, community funds and/or grants. The NRDC also provides leadership training for rural communities, assists in setting up community foundations for funding, and organizes rural conferences.

Carl Dahlen, Executive Director - 775-230-0075 - email: dahlenc@unce.unr.edu

Rural Community Assistance Corporation – Facilitator - RCAC is a nonprofit organization that provides technical assistance, training and financing so rural communities achieve their goals and visions. Headquartered in West Sacramento, California, RCAC's more than 100 employees serve rural communities from 40 plus field locations in 13 western states, plus the Western Pacific.

RCAC's work encompasses a wide range of services including technical assistance and training for environmental infrastructure; affordable housing development; economic and leadership development; and community development finance. These services are available to a variety of

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communities and organizations including communities with populations of fewer than 50,000, other nonprofit groups and tribal organizations.

Eileen Piekarz – epiekarz@rcac.org - (775) 323-8882

Building Community Collaboration and Consensus - contains extensive information on Collaboration and Public Participation with an emphasis on Youth Participation. This site is divided into informational sections and pages with links to additional information.

The first section contains information on Why and How to Build Community Collaboration, Who to Include in Community Collaboration, Why and How to Build Consensus, and How to keep it going. www.communitycollaboration.net

Center for Rural Affairs – provides a resource page with a study and discussion of rural grocery stores and the economic impact on the community. The resource material explores importance and challenges of rural grocery store and ownership models that work for rural communities. Economic impacts include access to healthy food, jobs and tax revenue, assists in attracting new residents.

Issue: During all the listening sessions we heard many comments concerning housing:

- Quality of housing
- Quantity of housing
- Absentee Land Owners – clean up and maintenance
- Housing owned by the School District
- Housing for Seniors

Recommendations:

There are many local, state and federal agencies which assist with housing development and enhancing existing housing stock all are listed under the resource section. It would be beneficial for the community to explore and quantify in a more comprehensive discussion what is the actual issue of housing in the community. From the listening sessions while many items were discussed it appeared the main concerns were absentee land owners and the clean up/maintenance of these residential properties, and the housing owned by the Washoe County School District. The condition of properties owned or rented by some seniors in the community was a concern for safety reasons. Lastly how do new community members know or locate available property for rent or purchase.

The issue of absentee property owners is addressed under community clean up and code enforcement.

Quality / Quantity of Housing – The community can consider the completion of a comprehensive community wide survey of the type of housing which is available; rental, homeownership, investment and the quantity and quality of the housing stock. This will provide an overall data base to begin with to meet the needs of potential future employers and new community residents.

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Housing owned by the school district - a discussion should occur with the district concerning their plans for the homes and property. There are several options to consider:

1. Weatherizing the property and setting up a routine maintenance and inspection program to ensure the homes do not fall into a state of disrepair or be vandalized.
2. Sell the property and homes at auction
3. Rent out the property and homes
4. Consider selling the homes and property to a land trust who can offer the homes for rent or sale.

All are viable options and worth exploration by the community with the district. The community should ensure the vacant properties are maintained and do not create an area in the community which appears abandoned or an absentee property owner issue.

The Nevada Rural Housing Authority can offer a Land Trust program which creates affordable housing opportunities within a community. The holder of the Land Trust retains title to the property and an eligible applicant can build a home upon the land. This allows for homeownership at a cost savings and allows for equity to be built into the home for the purchaser.

Housing Repair – several programs are available to allow property owners to stay within their homes and age in place. These programs allow for the necessary health and safety improvements such as electrical wiring, roof replacement, hot water heater replacement, handicapped accessibility in bathrooms and access into the home. Small loan programs are available for other improvements which do not include any room additions.

Housing Resources:

USDA Rural Development offers a variety of programs for individuals and groups for homeownership or housing repair. Programs can be used for the purchase of an existing home, build a new home or for an existing homeowner for needed repairs or weatherization to a home. Programs are income based programs to find out more on these programs please review web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/nvhousing.html> or by contacting:

Rural Development **Specialist** - Zeeta Augello – zeta.augello@nv.usda.gov Phone: (775) 423-7541 x116 | Fax: (775) 423-0784

Nevada Rural Housing Authority offers home ownership and home improvement weatherization and land trust programs. Programs are income based to find out more on these programs please review web site at www.nvrural.org or by contacting the following:

Main office - (775) 887-1795 (775) 887-1795 - Fax (775) 887-1798 - TDD (800) 545-1833 ext. 545 - info@nvrural.org

Home at Last - (775) 887-1795 ext 104 - homeatlast@nvrural.org

Weatherization - (775) 283-0099 - weatherize@nvrural.org

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Rural Nevada Development Corporation – offers home repair and weatherization programs for income qualified applicants. Additionally for income qualified applicants they offer a down payment assistance program to help in the purchase of a home. Web site: www.rndcnv.org

Headquarters - 1320 East Aultman, Ely, Nevada 89301 - rndcnv@sbcglobal.net
Office: (775) 289-8519 - Fax: (775) 289-8214 - Toll Free: 866-404-5204
Housing Dept. Fax: - (775) 289-3690

Western Region Office - 704 W. Nye Lane, Ste. 201 - Carson City, Nevada 89703
audrey@rndcnv.org - Office: (775) 883-4413 - Fax: (775) 883-0494

The WASHOE COUNTY HOME CONSORTIUM (WCHC) is comprised of the City of Reno, the City of Sparks, and Washoe County. Formed through an intergovernmental agreement, the WCHC makes available loans from various funding sources for pre-development, development, construction, acquisition, preservation and substantial rehabilitation of affordable, permanent or transitional, housing units. Its primary goal is to assist lower income families and individuals, including homeless and special needs groups, to obtain affordable housing. The Consortium also allocates funds to housing assistance programs, including down payment assistance to first time homebuyers, monthly rental assistance, rental and utility deposit assistance, and homeowner rehabilitation assistance. Individuals must meet program eligibility requirements.

Katy Simon, Manager, Washoe County, P. O. Box 11130, Reno, NV 89520, (775) 328-2000

Issue: Infrastructure – Improvement and Costs

All communities are faced with the challenge of providing safe drinking water and the subsequent collection of wastewater. Both infrastructure systems are tied to community health, life safety issues and are part of the necessary infrastructure for economic development in a community. Conveyors of public systems must meet the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Clean Water Act and any necessary requirement for the State of Nevada Department of Environmental Protection. As community dynamics and population changes occur the overseeing Board of a utility system must adjust user rates accordingly to maintain operational integrity, meet regulatory requirements and the covenants of obtained grants and loans.

Costs for operating a system include but are not limited to; power, supplies, maintenance, services, personnel, benefits and routine capital replacement. Additionally if grants or loans have been obtained some grants require a capitalization of the grant which means the owner of the system must place into a restricted account the cost of the grant over time. As an example if a community has obtained \$100,000 in grant funds this cost must be paid into the restrict account over the course of 20-30 years or \$5,000 or \$3,333 annually. Loan funds require pay back over 20-40 years depending on the source of the loan and most funders require an annual debt service reserve of 10% annually until one full annual payment is accumulated into a debt service reserve fund.

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Operational and capital costs are typically passed on to the end user (customer) via a monthly charge or user rate. There are other sources of revenue which a community may consider such as a monthly obligation fee which is assessed against all lots in a community which has access to water and wastewater services. The monthly obligation fee can then be assessed against occupied and vacant lots this assists in spreading costs of the system to all potential users. A utility board should evaluate current rates and fees on an annual basis as they are evaluating the annual budget for next year. By completing annual rate analysis the board is being proactive by using good fiscal management policies, protecting users from unexpected large rate increases, and forecasting for potential large capital replacement items.

Resources:

There are two organizations which can assist with the evaluation of the current utility rate structure:

Rural Community Assistance Corporation - RCAC is a nonprofit organization that provides technical assistance, training and financing so rural communities achieve their goals and visions. Headquartered in West Sacramento, California, RCAC's more than 100 employees serve rural communities from 40 plus field locations in 13 western states, plus the Western Pacific.

RCAC's work encompasses a wide range of services including technical assistance and training for environmental infrastructure; affordable housing development; economic and leadership development; and community development finance. These services are available to a variety of communities and organizations including communities with populations of fewer than 50,000, other nonprofit groups and tribal organizations.

Steven Palmer - spalmer@rcac.org - (775) 323-8882

Nevada Rural Water Association - The Nevada Rural Water Association is a nonprofit membership organization that provides water, wastewater and solid waste training and technical assistance programs statewide; an aggressive training calendar that provides classroom instruction with practical application, and valuable networking assistance with other systems and vendors.

Most water systems are small. In fact, over 56,000 water systems, almost 95% of the water systems in America, serve less than 10,000 in population. By joining together, small systems realize big benefits.

Bob Foerster, Executive Director, (775) 721-7972, nvrwa@pyramid.net
NvRWA Office, 363 Fairview Drive, Carson City, NV 89701 (775) 841-4222, F: (775) 841-4243, frontdesk@nvrwa.org

Resources for capital improvements to water and wastewater systems:

Nevada Water & Wastewater Review Committee - Are you uncertain who can assist in funding your project? The USDA, CDBG, and NDEP are now working together to help future

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water and wastewater loan and grant applicants to determine the best approach to funding their projects. This pre-application process involves potential applicants filling out a pre-application form and sending it to the NWWRC for comment.

If you have a water or wastewater project in mind and need funding assistance, please take a few minutes to complete the form (see below) and send it back to any of the review committee listed on the instructions page. The review committee comprising USDA, NDEP, and CDBG will consider the proposal and respond to your pre-application with comments and further guidance.

Please note this form does not replace the application forms required by NDEP, USDA, or CDBG at this time. Sending in a pre-application form will keep all of the funding agencies better informed of your needs/plans and should help in getting the funding you need to implement your project(s). To download an application package please access the website listed below:

<http://ndep.nv.gov/bffwp/nwwpa.htm>

Nevada Commission on Economic Development – Community Development Block Grant -

The CDBG Program is a widely appreciated and highly flexible community development tool, and a genuine federal-state-local government partnership. The state receives its CDBG funds from the federal government, and uses those funds to provide grants to units of local government which implement the projects, typically using local contractors and/or non-profit organizations.

In Nevada there are 26 local government entities that can apply for the State CDBG funds. Communities receiving CDBG funds from the state may use those funds for a variety of community development activities, such as:

- acquisition of property for public purposes
- construction or reconstruction of streets, water and sewer facilities,
- neighborhood centers, recreation facilities and other public works
- demolition
- rehabilitation of public and private buildings
- public services
- planning and capacity building activities
- assistance to nonprofit entities for community and economic development activities
- assistance to private, for-profit entities to carry out economic development activities, including assistance to micro-enterprises

Des Craig, Director, Rural Community Development: (775)-687-9918 -
dcraig@diversifynevada.com

USDA Rural Development - offers two distinct programs to address improvements for community infrastructure (water, wastewater, solid waste and storm drain systems) a guaranteed loan program and a direct loan program. The direct loan program may include a combination loan/grant component to qualified communities and projects. All applications are evaluated for financial feasibility for maximum loan repayment. Term of the loan is 40 years which provides for the lowest payment to assist the lowest income users in the community. The interest rate is

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determined by the median household income of the community and if the project is necessary to correct a health or sanitary issue. Application packet and additional information is available at: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/nvwtrenvutil.html#wepag> - Cheryl Couch, Cheryl.couch@nv.usda.gov or by calling 775-887-1222 ext 113

The State of Nevada offers several loan programs for water and wastewater system improvements through the State Revolving Loan programs. Communities must be listed on the States priority lists, each program has a separate priority list, and be ranked for priority with other systems in the state. Funding is made available based on project readiness and the priority points awarded to the project in order for the project to meet a requirement of the Safe Drinking Water Act or the Clean Water Act.

Daralyn Dobson, Manager, Manager, 775-687-9489, ddobson@ndep.nv.gov
Drinking water link - <http://ndep.nv.gov/bffwp/dwsrf1.htm>
Wastewater link - <http://ndep.nv.gov/bffwp/srlf01.htm>

Issue: Senior Center

The Senior Center was recognized by all community members as an asset to the community. The center provides a place where senior residents socialize; obtain health care information, and nutrition. However the services to the senior center are at risk due to cut backs in funding which directly impacts the hot meal program at the center. Each year the Senior Center is looking for additional funding to support program delivery. The community and different organizations within the community have graciously donated to the program.

Recommendation:

The center has reduced all possible operational costs and still delivers a quality program to the senior community. Additional costs savings could be realized by connecting to the solar power generation facility at the school district. Reducing the power costs will allow the center to place more funding into program delivery services. Since the capital costs of the installation has been borne by others via grant and school district funding the senior center should see an immediate impact. .

Consider creating an annual giving campaign and create a fund with a community foundation. With a community foundation funds can be set up so individuals can make monthly contributions which may allow a larger share of individuals to donate. Also legacy planning for wills or gifts can occur for those who would like to utilize this option.

Staff should raise awareness in the community on the potential short fall in funding and provide an educational program concerning where funds are received from and how funds are utilized. Individuals and organizations are more willing to donate if they have a clear picture of the financial aspects and how their contributions will be utilized.

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Resources:

Walker River Basin Communities Foundation, Box 442, Yerington, NV 89447

Community Foundation of Western Nevada, [Christopher Askin](mailto:caskin@cfwnv.org), President & CEO, caskin@cfwnv.org, 1885 S. Arlington Ave. Suite 103, Reno, NV 89509, Call: 775-333-5499, <http://www.cfwnv.org/>

Issue: Use of the School Facilities and Solar Array

The community felt it was important to explore the use of the school facilities; class rooms, gymnasium, shop areas and how to access the power generation from the solar array. Several buildings in the community could benefit from the use solar generated power school these facilities include:

1. Community Center
2. Senior Center
3. Emergency Services Building
4. Medical Clinic (?)

Recommendations:

School Buildings – the community must first explore the options on the adaptive reuse of the buildings and how this reuse will coexist with the education and safety of the elementary students who are attending the Gerlach School.

Once a decision is reach by the community on potential uses the next step is to develop a financial feasibility plan to outline projected costs of operation and maintenance and sources of revenue for the program or facility. The plan should be developed by an independent third party and should evaluate a purchase versus rental scenario. If rental of the facility is the only option the plan should address which organization will be responsible for; maintenance and repairs to the facilities (capital costs), routine maintenance (janitorial, mowing, watering, snow removal, etc.), insurance (will the district require additional coverage) etc. Additionally a management agreement may be needed if the facilities will have many groups using the facility. The management agreement will set out which primary group has the overall management responsibilities of the building. Approaching the school district in an informed manner with financial projections and planning will lay the foundation for discussions from an informed platform.

A possible reuse of the facility is the creation of a technology center similar to the City of Yerington/Lyon County and the City of Fernley and Carson City. These centers are available to the community at no costs and provide for a business and entrepreneurial atmosphere. The centers provide for free internet access, Wi-Fi capability, computer training classes, have access to business tools, and will be the local location for business counseling services and Western Nevada Community College. All of these communities have embraced the concept of building and creating local businesses from within their community. With the tourism potential in the

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Gerlach area having a facility such as this where individuals who are on vacation can check-in would be an asset which travelers appreciate, small fees could be charged to non-community residents.

Solar Array – Providing access to all the public buildings in the community will benefit the entire community by reducing overall operation and maintenance costs. All publically owned and operated facilities in Nevada and Washoe County are seeking ways to reduce costs as revenues are decreasing. The largest cost of installing the solar array has been paid for through grants and school district funding. Items to explore are:

1. What are the capital costs for extending the electrical lines to the community buildings and how will this be funded?
2. How many buildings can the solar array support?
3. If the solar array cannot support the school and all the community buildings what will determine which community buildings receive access to the solar power?
4. If the community buildings are connected to the solar array and later the school district and community reach an agreement on the adaptive reuse of the school buildings what impact will this create?
5. Do any restrictions exist within the grant agreement on how the solar array could be utilized?

Resources:

USDA Rural Development - Offers the Community Facility Program funding under this program can be utilized to assist with renewable energy projects and building modifications or repair (publically owned facilities). <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/nv>

Cheryl Couch, Acting Community Program Director, 775-887-1222 ext 113 or by email at Cheryl.couch@nv.usda.gov

Nevada Commission on Economic Development – Community Development Block Grant – funds for planning and studies

Des Craig, Director, Rural Community Development: (775)-687-9918, or by email at dcraig@diversifynevada.com

Rural Community Assistance Corporation - RCAC is a nonprofit organization that provides technical assistance, training and financing so rural communities achieve their goals and visions. Headquartered in West Sacramento, California, RCAC's more than 100 employees serve rural communities from 40 plus field locations in 13 western states, plus the Western Pacific.

RCAC's work encompasses a wide range of services including technical assistance and training for environmental infrastructure; affordable housing development; economic and leadership development; and community development finance and renewable energy. These services are

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available to a variety of communities and organizations including communities with populations of fewer than 50,000, other nonprofit groups and tribal organizations.

Steven Palmer - spalmer@rcac.org - (775) 323-8882

Issue: Lack of Health Care – Open the Clinic, Doctors, and EMTs

The Gerlach community is very similar to other small rural communities throughout America with the closure of medical facilities and the lack of population to support a full time physician in the community. The access to health care is important to the overall health of a community and decisions made by individuals or families to stay in place or to move to communities which offer access. Providing direct medical access to communities must be economically feasible to the provider or the provider must make a decision to spread the cost of providing direct access throughout their entire service area by increasing overall fees to all.

Recommendations:

Gerlach is at a distinct advantage of having an existing building for the community health center. This building can be utilized as an incentive to a traveling practitioner (s) by offering clinic space at no cost or very low cost. Many rural and isolated communities are utilizing the opportunities which telemedicine can provide which include; routine medical examinations, follow-up visits, and some emergencies. What is necessary to start a telemedicine program in a community is:

1. Clinic space
2. Equipment which is adapted for telemedicine use
3. A medical provider who is familiar and comfortable with new technology
4. A qualified and trained assistant at the patient end this could be a nurse, a certified EMT, or a trained/certified medical assistant
5. An educational campaign within the community on how telemedicine works and what type of medical concerns require a face to face office visit.

Other communities are forming working relationships with nearby medical schools and hospitals. I would suggest an invitation be extended to the University of Nevada School of Medicine, Pershing County General Hospital in Lovelock or Banner Hospital in Fallon all of which are close to the community. Explore with these providers the opportunities for telemedicine and occasional on-site physician (to be determined by the provider and community). Is there the possibility of a Student Outreach Clinic through the School of Medicine at UNR?

Potential Resources:

American Academy of Family Physicians - <http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home.html>

Rural Family Doc Homepage - <http://www.ruralfamilymedicine.org/>

Rural Information Center - <http://www.nal.usda.gov/>

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National Health Service Corps - <http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/> - For more information, call (800) 638-0824; in Maryland call (301) 443-6034.

University of Nevada School of Medicine - <http://www.medicine.nevada.edu/>

Pershing General Hospital District - <http://pershinghospital.org/> - Patty Goldsworthy, CEO/Administrator, pgoldsworthy@pershinghospital.org, Phone: 775.273.2621

Banner Churchill Community Hospital - http://www.bannerhealth.com/Locations/Nevada/Banner+Churchill+Community+Hospital/Programs+and+Services/_Services.htm – Banner Health has on-going current telehealth programs. Phone 775-423-3151

Arizona Telemedicine Program - the Arizona Telemedicine Program is regarded as a national leader in developing and delivering innovative telemedicine, telehealth and distance education programs. These efforts have been recognized over the years by numerous national awards of excellence. <http://www.telemedicine.arizona.edu/>

Sources of Funding for Telehealth Equipment

Nevada Commission on Economic Development – Community Development Block Grant
Des Craig, Director, Rural Community Development: (775)-687-9918,
dcraig@diversifynevada.com

USDA Rural Development - Offers two programs the Community Facility Program and the Distance Learning and Telemedicine program for the purchase of equipment and related software or facility improvements for the equipment. <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/nvdl.html>

Cheryl Couch, Acting Community Program Director, 775-887-1222 ext 113 or by email at Cheryl.couch@nv.usda.gov

Issue: Community Clean Up

Many comments were received concerning the overall appearance of the community and the need for a community wide clean up. Several of the comments related to individual property owners (absentee) and the need to clean up residential and commercial property.

The visual impact of a community is the first indicator a visitor or a potential new community member has of a community. This first view will leave a “perception” of your community with the visitor which will be passed on to others who plan to visit the area. Community pride can go a long way with a community deciding to embrace what is unique and special about the community and utilizing the attributes to show case the community.

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Recommendations:

It is not difficult to start a community wide clean up campaign this can easily be accomplished by having the support of the local Citizens Advisory Board and Washoe County Public Works Department. Utilize public works equipment and crews to assist with the pick up and disposal of heavier items at the transfer station. What is important is to communicate to the community through various methods about the clean up and then to keep the clean up as an on-going community wide event. Turn the event into a community celebration by having a bar-be-queue for volunteers, hand out awards or plaques for the most improved property or the most volunteer hours. Various communities across the state including the Towns of Tonopah, Town of Hawthorne and the City of Wells have started and continue to have a community wide clean up program. The Towns of Tonopah and Hawthorne also created a small on-going beautification program which includes flower and tree plantings along the Main Street area.

Depending on the needs of your community create a clean-up calendar to coincide with the seasons or major community events; such as homecoming or the annual community picnic.

It is sometimes difficult for property owners to remove larger items which can include yard debris, out dated appliances, or furniture due the lack of transportation or being physically unable to move these larger items. Develop a schedule within the community where volunteers can be called upon to assist with the removal of larger items. If youth groups do not exist in the community seek out and contact local Boy Scout troops, even if the scout troop is not within your community. Scouts are always looking for projects to earn their Eagle Scout status.

Work with local business owners and property owners to put up privacy fencing so accumulations of necessary machinery, equipment and vehicles do not lessen the dramatic views that exist within the community.

Investigate when Washoe County or Nevada Department of Transportation will be repaving the roads through Gerlach. Use this opportunity to improve the attractiveness of the main road through town. Build upon the existing community enhancements which have occurred with the replacement of some store fronts. Form a committee to create a list of improvements and possible funding sources. Improvements can include; additional façade improvements to commercial and residential properties, tree plantings, pedestrian friendly sidewalks and pathways through the community, and solar lighting.

After the City of Wells completed their community assessment one of the first action taken was a community wide clean up which included City and privately owned property. The City took steps to address absentee landowner clean up by reviewing and enforcing existing City codes. Absentee property owners were sent letters to initiate clean up of their property, the overall results of code enforcement within the City has resulted in more attractive neighborhoods. Existing Washoe County ordinances and codes can be utilized to address property clean up for absentee property owners. Code enforcement requests should be initiated through the local Gerlach Citizen Advisory Board or contacting Washoe County directly at the resource number listed below.

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Potential Resources:

Washoe County Public Works Department

David M. Solaro, P.E. Acting Public Works Director
Kimble O. Corbridge, P.E., CFM County Engineer
1001 E 9th Street Reno, NV 89512-2845 - PH: (775)328-2040 fax (775)328-2040

Boy Scouts of America – The Nevada Area Council provides Scouting to over 14,500 youths in Northern Nevada and Eastern California

Service Center Office

Nevada Area Council, BSA 1745 S Wells Ave Reno, NV 89502 - 775-787-1111 - 775-787-1114
Fax 800-733-5244 Toll Free - *Hours:* Monday through Friday - 8:30 am - 5:00 pm. Closed major holidays.

Washoe County Citizen Advisory Boards, Business License, Code Enforcement

Sheri Ingle, Program Assistant - 775.328.3612 - Fax: 775.328.6133 - singley@washoecounty.us

Funding Sources:

Nevada Department of Transportation – community enhancement grants

Scenic Byways Federal Grant opportunities:

http://www.nevadadot.com/Traveler_Info/Scenic_Byways/Federal_Grants.aspx

Landscape and Aesthetics Community Match Program – The State Transportation Board approved the Landscape and Aesthetics Community Match Program to help communities add landscape and aesthetic treatments to existing State highways (“retrofitting”). The program provides for a variety of projects, such as landscaping, scenic beautification, transportation art, and community gateways that may not be covered by other funding programs. These matching funds are provided in addition to other cost sharing or enhancement programs through NDOT, such as the Transportation Enhancement Program, or the Community Match and Transportation Art Grant.

Federal Government Electronic application forms are available at:

http://www.nevadadot.com/Projects_and_Programs/Landscape_and_Aesthetics/Landscape_Aesthetics_Program.aspx

Nevada Commission on Economic Development – Community Development Block Grant

Grant funding which can be utilized for downtown core community enhancement. Funds have been utilized in the past for community façade improvements which included painting and window awnings. Grant funding has been tied with an overall economic business strategy.

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Des Craig, Director, Rural Community Development: (775)-687-9918 -
dcraig@diversifynevada.com

Issue: Transportation Planning

Comments on transportation planning ranged from individuals having to commute to Reno due to lack of medical facilities or local grocery store to the influx of the 50,000 visitors during the Burning Man event. While there are concerns for individual transportation needs, typically transportation planning is a larger regional issue.

Recommendations:

For local transportation the community should consider completing a survey to evaluate the following:

1. How many individuals are interested in car pooling or cost sharing?
2. What locations is transportation needed – Reno, Fallon, Fernley, Winnemucca, and Carson?
3. What waiting time is needed at each location?
4. Is there a central dropping off point in communities which riders can obtain local public transportation?

From the survey a simple matrix can be completed to match needs to available drivers. The completed matrix can be made available to all interested parties, and the parties arrange with each other the logistics. I would suggest the survey be updated at least once per year to ensure up-to-date information is posted and available. If there is a large enough need for transportation services within the community this may be an opportunity for an entrepreneur to create a small business.

Regional transportation needs are a much larger issue and which requires coordinated planning and partnership at the local, county, state and possibly federal levels. Resources are listed below to explore regional planning needs for transportation.

Housing and Urban Development - Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grants – opens annually

The Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program supports metropolitan and multijurisdictional planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments in a manner that empowers jurisdictions to consider the interdependent challenges of: (1) economic competitiveness and revitalization; (2) social equity, inclusion, and access to opportunity; (3) energy use and climate change; and (4) public health and environmental impact. The Program places a priority on investing in partnerships, including nontraditional partnerships (e.g., arts and culture, recreation, public health, food systems, regional planning agencies and public education entities) that translate the Federal Livability Principles into strategies that direct long-term development and reinvestment, demonstrate a commitment to addressing issues of regional significance, use data

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to set and monitor progress toward performance goals, and engage stakeholders and residents in meaningful decision-making roles.

The Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program is being initiated in close coordination with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), co-leaders with HUD in the Partnership for Sustainable Communities.

In order to apply for this grant, please ensure **early in the process** that your organization is registered with Grants.gov. Applicants will also need to know their organization's CCR number and DUNS number and who is the contact person associated with the number and what http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/sustainable_housing_communities/sustainable_communities_regional_planning_grants

Tony Ramirez, Field Office Director - Tony.Ramirez@hud.gov - Phone: (775) 824-3700

Regional Transportation Commission – Washoe County

Amy McAbee Cummings, Planning Director, <http://www.rtcwashoe.com/>

Nevada Department of Transportation

Transportation/Multimodal Planning Division 1263 South Stewart St., Carson City, NV 89712

Email – smallurban@dot.state.nv.us

http://www.nevadadot.com/About_NDOT/NDOT_Divisions/Planning/Statewide_Transportation_Planning.aspx

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Theme: Economic Development: Des Craig

Issues:

During the two listening sessions held in Gerlach in July, frequent references were made to the lack of jobs and businesses in and around Gerlach.

Several reasons were cited for inadequate business development, for example:

- remoteness,
- zoning and permitting difficulties,
- the lack of a stable customer base,
- unreliable telephone and electricity infrastructure,
- the lack of vision and community togetherness, and
- a poor image

Interestingly there was no shortage of ideas and suggestions on how to correct these and related problems. Many different types of businesses were mentioned. However, the financial investment and communal will needed to change the prevailing situation are clearly in short supply.

There is no shortage of potential opportunities for investors in and around Gerlach. The community sits on the edge of spectacular open lands with incredible hunting and other outdoor sports potential. A railway line passes through town, solar and geothermal resources abound, water supplies are good, and tourists come in large numbers for the Burning Man festival and at other times of the year en route to northern California and the wilderness areas. While the permanent population of Gerlach may be small, the residents have needs that are not being met by the current list of local businesses. So why is business development so limited? Why is the environment for business development so unattractive?

Growth and the development of a business-friendly environment require champions with funding to step forward, take the lead in helping community members understand what growth means and what it takes to grow and develop. Presently there are those who feel there is no need for growth (“the community is fine as it is”), while others believe their community needs to grow, and feel much more can be done to ensure future growth.

Growth through economic development can take various shapes and forms; however, from the listening sessions it appeared that there was a lack of understanding on what is meant by growth, and little consensus on how to actually accomplish growth. Also, there seemed to be confusion and sometimes frustration on what role elected officials, Washoe County, the Burning Man organization and the community at large should play in determining and effecting growth in the community.

The discussion that follows concentrates on:

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- clarifying what is meant by growth, and economic development in particular, and how to reach a consensus on these important subjects;
- the need for several studies on what form economic development should take in Gerlach in the next 5 years;
- the issue of entrepreneurial growth and development; and
- the need for a community-wide marketing plan

Recommendations:

Before any meaningful growth can be achieved it is essential to have a common understanding of what is meant by growth, and a good measure of community support and consensus for growth. A community-wide survey is recommended to determine what residents mean by growth and what they want in the way of growth. Growth is not something that is planned and implemented only by the County Commissioners or other leaders in the community. A survey would help to determine the type of growth that the community as a whole wishes to see. The survey should be conducted by an individual or company that is experienced in community surveys; it should involve a well developed and tested questionnaire; and the results should be scored and analyzed in depth, and a report prepared explaining the results.

On economic development in particular, a one-day pilot workshop could be hosted to provide a greater understanding of rural economic development, and how to create it. This workshop would be primarily aimed at the leaders in the community - the business community, the service sector, government employees, retirees etc. – but would be open to the entire populace. The objective of this simple approach to explaining economic development is to make everyone in the community aware of the meaning of economic development and what it might look like in rural northern Washoe County.

Once there is wide and common understanding on growth and economic development, the next step might be to prepare a strategic plan for community growth and development. The first two steps are essentially informational and consensus building. A strategic plan for growth and development would develop a plan for the community, it would look in greater detail at the barriers and challenges to growth and development, and the strengths and opportunities, it would involve asset mapping and set development goals and objectives for the community, and would recommend a number of initiatives or actions that would lead to the preferred type and scale of growth and development. Such a study should be done by an external professional experienced in strategic planning for growth, and community facilitation. However, at every step of the way, the community should be involved, their ideas sought and referenced in the analyses and plan. The importance of keeping in touch with the community in preparing such a study cannot be overemphasized. The professional will leave the community once the plan is complete, but the residents of the community will be responsible to implement its recommendations.

During the course of the Community Assessment, several comments were made concerning the lack of small businesses in town and the limited opportunities that exist for small business development. Entrepreneurial/small business development can help rejuvenate a small rural community but an appropriate enabling environment is essential. The survey, training and strategic planning referred to earlier should highlight the importance and role of entrepreneurship

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in community growth and development, but small businesses will not flourish and entrepreneurs will not come and stay unless the environment is right for their growth and development. Again, some research and planning are required. A gap analysis and leakage study might be recommended to identify underserved areas of the local economy. This would involve looking at the strengths and weaknesses in the economy, and the demographics of the community and would ultimately show those areas where businesses might do well. The strategic plan referred to earlier might find that entrepreneurial training is necessary, and there are different ways in which this can be provided. Currently most communities across the nation are facing financial difficulties, but a small business development fund or a local incentives program might be set up to encourage the development of small businesses. The Hometown Competitiveness Program and Main Street Program are two programs that come to mind when thinking about small business development in rural America.

The plans referred to here would conclude with a list of possible businesses appropriate to Gerlach and would provide recommendations on how to implement the suggested economic development. Clearly certain impediments would need to be overcome in the process of implementing the economic development strategy. This would involve considerable determination and cooperation at the local level and would require all or most of the community to be in support of the vision and strategic plan.

Once the right enabling environment for small business development is in place, a widespread marketing plan would help in attracting entrepreneurs, investors, new residents and visitors to the community. Every community has its strengths and weaknesses. The latter should be mitigated while the former need to be publicized and spread abroad. If a community is uncertain as to its future look and feel, if there is not a common purpose and vision, any effort to promote the community will probably fail. Once there is common purpose and a focus on the future, a good marketing plan is essential. Again, this is something that should probably be crafted and put in place by external professionals with no personal agenda. It will cost money to design and implement but its effectiveness will be measurable and easy to determine.

Resources:

A number of organizations have resources and guidance in the above areas, for example:

Nevada Commission on Economic Development – can provide further advice and guidance on community surveys, community/economic development training, strategic planning, entrepreneurial development and community marketing. Contact Des Craig, Carson City. Tel 1-775-687-9900 www.diversifynevada.com

Rural Community Assistance Corporation: for assistance with facilitation and community surveys. Contact Eileen Piekarz, Reno. Tel 1-775-323-8882 www.rcac.org

Sierra Circle Consulting – for facilitating consensus and collaboration, Contact Patricia R. Tuecke, Reno Tel 1-775-333-6998 www.sierracircle.com

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Futures Corporation – for strategic planning assistance, Contact John Luthy, Boise, Idaho Tel 1-208-345-5995 www.futurescorp.com

Small Business Development Center, UNR – for assistance with small business training and advice, Contact Winnie Dowling, Reno Tel 1-775-327-2334 www.nsbdc.org

Heartland Center for Leadership Development - for assistance in small rural community revitalization, including the Hometown Competitiveness Program, Contact Milan Wall, Lincoln, Nebraska Tel 1- 402-474-7667 www.heartlandcenter.info

Sirolli Institute - for assistance in small rural community revitalization through small business development and enterprise facilitation www.sirolliinstitute.com

McQuinn Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership, [University of Missouri](http://www.unimissouri.edu) – for information on resources available for entrepreneurship development <http://mcquinn.missouri.edu/>

USDA – Rural Development – for business loans and grants and advice on business development Contact Herb Shedd, Carson City Tel 1-887-1222

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Theme: Economic Development: Ronald J. Radil

Issues:

The following issues were raised by listening session attendees:

- Economic Development Analysis
- Asset Mapping/Skill Assessment
- Economic Development Strategy
- Develop Entrepreneurial Environment
- Job Creation
- Capitalize on our Existing Strengths
 - Eco-Tourism, Burning Man Investments/Initiatives,
 - Hunters, Bikers, Rocketeers, Balloons, Film Makers
- Marketing and Branding – Target Younger Generation
- Renewable Energy Development

At least 12 attendees at the two listening sessions stated the lack of jobs or no jobs was the major issue in the Gerlach community.

As a Community Assessment Team, we are interested in how attendees view their community. Do attendees define their community as just within the boundaries of their particular jurisdiction? Do attendees define their community as being within their respective county? Do attendees define their community as being a region of a state?

Several attendees stated the Gerlach community was an 80 mile radius of Gerlach. Geographically, this is the biggest area defined as their community in any of the previous Community Assessments in Nevada. This speaks to the idea that “community” in Gerlach encompasses a large geographic area, due to Gerlach’s physical location in northern Washoe County. The idea of a community defined by an 80 mile radius allows for greater opportunities for economic development.

There is no doubt the need for economic development expressed by attendees is largely due to the closure of the U.S. Gypsum plant and mine in neighboring Empire, a mere seven miles from Gerlach. The resulting closure, announced in late December 2010, has led to the town of Empire being closed and its residents leaving the area. Another major impact is the effective closure of the Gerlach School resulting in the loss of teaching professionals in the community, the loss of students and the loss of water and sewer revenue to the Gerlach General Improvement District.

With this information as back ground, we can discuss each of the issues identified as a need for economic development.

➤ Economic Development Analysis of the Gerlach Community.

Analyze the economic development problems and *opportunities* that identify *strengths* and *weaknesses* in the Gerlach community’s makeup of *human and economic assets*, and *problems and opportunities* posed by external and internal forces affecting the Gerlach economy.

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Identify past, present, and projected future economic development investments in the Gerlach community.

Involve the public and private sector in the economic analysis of the Gerlach community. Define who the public and private sector participants were in this economic analysis.

Include as broad a representation from all groups within the Gerlach community for its economic analysis. Examples would include: public officials, male, female, businesses, retired, youth, low income. An economic development analysis should include, at a minimum, the following:

List ALL economic development, community development, social, recreational, cultural projects the stakeholders and others have defined.

Identify lead organization's responsibilities for execution of the projects.

List individuals, groups and public sector groups who will be responsible for implementing the identified projects.

List the potential sources of funding, public and private, necessary for implementing the identified projects.

Develop a plan of action to implement the determined goals of the economic analysis and objectives of the Gerlach community in a manner that:

- Promotes economic development and opportunity;
- Fosters effective transportation access;
- Enhances and protects the environment;
- Maximizes effective development and use of the workforce consistent with any applicable State or local workforce investment strategy;
- Promotes the use of technology in economic development, including access to high-speed telecommunications

➤ Asset Mapping/Skill Assessment

Asset mapping and skill assessment can be done either formally or informally.

We know from our experiences in working in rural areas there is a wealth of talent in rural areas. The key is always to identify that talent and have that talent step forth to help develop the rural area.

More than a few attendees at the listening sessions stated Gerlach was a diverse and tolerant community. Talents and skills are residing within this diverse community.

Asset mapping would be done to determine the physical strengths and weaknesses of the Gerlach community. The following list is not all inclusive:

- Are there adequate water and wastewater facilities for the community?

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- Can the existing water and wastewater facilities accommodate additional growth and how much growth could these facilities accommodate?
- What is the state of the transportation network in the community?
- Is there adequate housing in the community?
- What type(s) of housing are available in the community?
- What type(s) of housing are needed in the community?
- Are there retail services in the community and what type(s) of retail services are available?
- Are there professional services available, such as lawyers, accountants and medical services?
- What type(s) of social amenities are available in the community?
- What type(s) of social amenities are needed in the community?

There remains one other question regarding Asset Mapping. Has some form of Asset Mapping been recently completed in the community? If so, the community needs to review the recent Asset Mapping effort and work to improve the asset map and build upon the existing asset map.

Skill assessment should address some of the following issues:

- What is the total population of the community?
- Determine the age and sex categories of the community's population.
- Determine education levels of the adult population by high school, high school graduation, some college, associate degrees, four year degrees, master degrees and doctoral degrees.
- Determine the courses of study of those who have achieved post secondary degrees.
- Determine job skill sets for the adult population.

➤ Economic Development Strategy

Compared with other Nevada communities, Gerlach does have an identifiable down town area along Nevada 447. The down town area can become a focus for the community's economic development strategy.

Any economic development strategy should include as much public and private participation in the development and consideration of an economic development strategy. Stakeholders should provide their input regarding a strategy.

Stakeholders then need to prioritize of vital projects, programs, and activities that address the community's greatest needs. Include of funding for past and potential future investments.

➤ Develop Entrepreneurial Environment

A mainstay for economic development and economic diversification is to have an entrepreneurial environment within any community. Entrepreneurs take the risks to develop new businesses and new products. Entrepreneurial efforts lead to job creation and wealth creation.

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The enhancement of an entrepreneurial environment can be achieved in many ways. Schools at the secondary and post-secondary levels can provide classes in entrepreneurship. Existing business owners can provide mentoring efforts to potential entrepreneurs. Local economic development organizations can work with the local, state and federal agencies to develop the entrepreneurial climate.

At this time, October 2011, Gerlach is lacking the secondary and post-secondary levels that could provide classes in entrepreneurship.

Existing business owners could fill this gap and provide mentoring to prospective entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs within the Gerlach community could also provide such mentoring. Again, we are back to the issue of identifying talent within the community and using the existing community talent to provide mentoring to entrepreneurs.

The creation of a local business group could provide such mentoring services.

Collaborative efforts between many levels, both public and private, can lead to an entrepreneurial environment that will benefit the community.

The Nevada Small Business Development Center (NSBD), University of Nevada-Reno is another source that could provide NxLevel Business Training classes. However, cost may be an issue in implementing these classes in the Gerlach community.

Therefore, the Gerlach community will have to rely upon its internal resources to work together to develop an entrepreneurial environment.

➤ Job Creation

At least 12 attendees of the listening sessions stated job creation was their top priority. The closure of the US Gypsum Plant and the Town of Empire provide the basis for job creation being a top priority.

However, the initial response from someone outside the Gerlach community would be rather negative regarding the potential for job creation. There is no one at preset who will ride in from the Black Rock Desert and magically create jobs in the community.

However, see the next section.

➤ Capitalize On Our Existing Strengths

The following strengths were identified in the listening sessions as strengths to be capitalized upon.

These strengths were:

- Eco-Tourism
- Burning Man Investments/Initiatives

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- Hunters
- Bikers
- Rocketeers
- Balloons
- Film Makers

We are going to give two definitions for tourism initiatives in the Gerlach Community.

The first is for “geo-tourism” and the second is for “eco-tourism”.

The Gerlach community can review both definitions and then decide which would definition meets the community’s expectations.

Geo-Tourism

Geo-tourism is “best practice” tourism that sustains, or even enhances, the geographical character of a place, such as its culture, environment, heritage, and the well-being of its residents.

The concept was introduced publicly in a 2002 report by the Travel Industry Association of America (as of 2009 this organization adapted name to U.S. Travel Association) and National Geographic Traveler magazine. National Geographic senior editor Jonathan B. Tourtellot and his wife, Sally Bensusen, coined the term in 1997 in response to requests for a term and concept more encompassing than ecotourism and sustainable tourism.

Like ecotourism, geo-tourism promotes a virtuous circle whereby tourism revenues provide a local incentive to protect what tourists are coming to see, but extends the principle beyond nature and ecology to incorporate all characteristics that contribute to *sense of place*, such as historic structures, living and traditional culture, landscapes, cuisine, arts and artisanry, as well as local flora and fauna. Geo-tourism incorporates sustainability principles, but in addition to the do-no-harm ethic, geo-tourism focuses on the place as a whole. The idea of enhancement allows for development based on character of place, rather than standardized international branding, and generic architecture, food, and so on.

The Geo-tourism Charter

The National Geographic Society defines geo-tourism as tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place – its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents.

National Geographic Society has also drawn up a "Geo-tourism Charter" based on 13 principles:

1. *Integrity of place*: Enhance geographical character by developing and improving it in ways distinctive to the local, reflective of its natural and cultural heritage, so as to encourage market differentiation and cultural pride.

2. *International codes:* Adhere to the principles embodied in the World Tourism Organization's Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and the Principles of the Cultural Tourism Charter established by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).
3. *Market selectivity:* Encourage growth in tourism market segments most likely to appreciate, respect, and disseminate information about the distinctive assets of the locale.
4. *Market diversity:* Encourage a full range of appropriate food and lodging facilities, so as to appeal to the entire demographic spectrum of the geo-tourism market and so maximize economic resiliency over both the short and long term.
5. *Tourist satisfaction:* Ensure that satisfied, excited geo-tourists bring new vacation stories home and encourage friends to experience the same thing, thus providing continuing demand for the destination.
6. *Community involvement:* Base tourism on community resources to the extent possible, encouraging local small businesses and civic groups to build partnerships to promote and provide a distinctive, honest visitor experience and market their locales effectively. Help businesses develop approaches to tourism that build on the area's nature, history and culture, including food and drink, artisanry, performance arts, etc.
7. *Community benefit:* Encourage micro- to medium-size enterprises and tourism business strategies that emphasize economic and social benefits to involved communities, especially poverty alleviation, with clear communication of the destination stewardship policies required to maintain those benefits.
8. *Protection and enhancement of destination appeal:* Encourage businesses to sustain natural habitats, heritage sites, aesthetic appeal, and local culture. Prevent degradation by keeping volumes of tourists within maximum acceptable limits. Seek business models that can operate profitably within those limits. Use persuasion, incentives, and legal enforcement as needed.
9. *Land use:* Anticipate development pressures and apply techniques to prevent undesired overdevelopment and degradation. Contain resort and vacation-home sprawl, especially on coasts and islands, so as to retain a diversity of natural and scenic environments and ensure continued resident access to waterfronts. Encourage major self-contained tourism attractions, such as large-scale theme parks and convention centers unrelated to character of place, to be sited in needier locations with no significant ecological, scenic, or cultural assets.
10. *Conservation of resources:* Encourage businesses to minimize water pollution, solid waste, energy consumption, water usage, landscaping chemicals, and overly bright nighttime lighting. Advertise these measures in a way that attracts the large, environmentally sympathetic tourist market.
11. *Planning:* Recognize and respect immediate economic needs without sacrificing long-term character and the geo-tourism potential of the destination. Where tourism attracts immigration of workers, develop new communities that themselves constitute a destination enhancement. Strive to diversify the economy and limit population influx to sustainable levels. Adopt public strategies for mitigating practices that are incompatible with geo-tourism and damaging to the image of the destination.
12. *Interactive interpretation:* Engage both visitors and hosts in learning about the place. Encourage residents to promote the natural and cultural heritage of their communities so tourists gain a richer experience and residents develop pride in their locales.

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13. *Evaluation*: Establish an evaluation process to be conducted on a regular basis by an independent panel representing all stakeholder interests, and publicize evaluation results.

Source: www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geotourism

Eco-Tourism was mentioned by some of the attendees at the listening sessions. Eco-tourism may be seen by some as a tool for economic development in rural areas with an environment such as exists in the Gerlach community. However, the term “eco-tourism” in its definition must correspond to expectations of the Gerlach community for “econ-tourism” to be an effective economic development tool. www.Answers.com/topic/ecotourism defines “ecotourism” the following way:

Ecotourism is a form of tourism that involves visiting natural areas -- in the remote wilderness or urban environments. According to the definition and principles of ecotourism established by The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) in 1990, ecotourism is "Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people." (TIES, 1990) Martha Honey expands on the TIES definition by describing the seven characteristics of ecotourism, which are:

- Involves travel to natural destinations
- Minimizes impact
- Builds environmental awareness
- Provides direct financial benefits for conservation
- Provides financial benefits and empowerment for local people
- Respects local culture
- Supports human rights and democratic movements
- conservation of biological diversity and cultural diversity through ecosystem protection
- promotion of sustainable use of biodiversity, by providing jobs to local populations
- sharing of socio-economic benefits with local communities and indigenous peoples by having their informed consent and participation in the management of ecotourism enterprises
- tourism to unspoiled natural resources, with minimal impact on the environment being a primary concern
- minimization of tourism's own environmental impact
- affordability and lack of waste in the form of luxury
- local culture, flora and fauna being the main attractions
- local people benefit from this form of tourism economically, often more than mass tourism

Read more: <http://www.answers.com/topic/ecotourism#ixzz1aQJMt1Hf>

➤ Burning Man Investments/Initiatives

The three following comments by attendees addressed this issue:

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- We need to have a common vision and better understanding of the advantageous and contributions of the Burning Man Festival.
- Burning Man – burning man project nonprofit – economic development for small towns is one of the committees use this non-profit to be the fund raiser. Create relationships to help along with the ideas that are being developed.
- Inclusiveness of community – it is a community where we can get to know each other as people, it is a community that we can develop relationships in.

The Gerlach community is well known as the home of Burning Man, the annual arts event held in the Black Rock Desert.

Burning Man and its off shoots have provided funding for community projects in the Gerlach community, such as the solar panel field adjacent to the Gerlach School.

The Gerlach community should work together with Burning Man to capitalize on this relationship for community development and economic development projects.

➤ Hunters, Bikers, Rocketeers, Balloons, and Film Makers

These activities were referred to by a number of attendees at the listening sessions with the following comments:

- Gerlach is 77 miles from Fernley, seclusion, solitude and wide open spaces
- People come from all over the world to this area because open spaces and scenery
- Ditto – Gerlach is the gateway to a National Conservation Area, one of the jewels for the entire Country. We have the Geysers, Hot Springs, Soldier Ranch – our location is the asset
- Hunting best in northern NV big and small animals and game birds
- BLM is publishing strategic plan for the Winnemucca district. Nightingale Area designated for off road, begin to look at short term opportunities – recreation type of businesses that we can feed off
- Reach out to the Safari Club – tour to Gerlach, guides that can give a live presentation on the hunting that is available here. Invite them to come out for the hunting
- The greatest asset of the Gerlach area is its location. Gerlach sits on the edge of the Black Rock Desert which is one of the most unique environments in the world. Gerlach could easily become a destination and point of interest for the many thousands of visitors who pass through Gerlach on their way to visit the Black Rock Desert every year.
- REMOTE LOCATION: The Gerlach area is a virtual wonderland for people seeking to get away from their everyday lives and seek the beauty of nature. The area is surrounded by public lands, open to explore history, geology, astronomy, etc. To drive out on the playa and watch the universe slowly spin in the velvet black expanse, unpolluted by light pollution is truly as unforgettable experience.

Attendees at the listening sessions were very supportive of the remoteness, clear skies, the Black Rock Desert, open spaces, the history and geology that are available in the Gerlach community as significant assets.

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Economic development should be asset based and the outdoor recreation assets are certainly available in the Gerlach community.

➤ Marketing and Branding – Target Younger Generation

A number of attendees stated the Gerlach community should be marketed and a brand identified for the Gerlach community.

The Gerlach community will need to first brand the community and then a marketing campaign can be developed.

It would appear the branding may involve two efforts: (1) the Gerlach community a great outdoor adventure area that is remote and offers a number of outdoor recreation opportunities; and (2) a brand may already exist in some form as the Gerlach community being the gateway and home for Burning Man.

Both these marketing efforts would be able to target the younger generation to come to the Gerlach community for recreational purposes.

➤ Renewable Energy Development

Attendees at the listening sessions made comments regarding the potential for renewable energy development in the Gerlach community.

US Geothermal is currently operating a geothermal plant in the Empire Farm area. The company plans to expand its geothermal plant in the phased development.

The solar panels at the Gerlach School are another example of renewable energy development in the community.

The Gerlach community has renewable energy development potential in the area of geothermal and solar projects.

However, one of the factors in renewable energy development may revolve around the issue of public lands in the Gerlach community. Public lands in the Gerlach community are sensitive and the renewable energy development may only be able to be implemented to the south and west.

Recommendations:

The Gerlach community was severely rocked to its core with the announcement US Gypsum was closing its mining and processing facility at Empire, Nevada. Not only was the gypsum facility being closed, the town of Empire was being closed. This closure resulted in people leaving the Gerlach community for work elsewhere, but in addition, the plant closure also resulted in the severe cut back to the operation of the Gerlach School to the point where only one full time teacher is projected to remain with less than 10 students.

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Therefore, these recommendations are based upon existing assets and ideas and concepts brought forth during the listening sessions.

The Gerlach community needs to keep everyone engaged and to do asset mapping and a skills assessment of the community. One proposal is to develop a core working group that could engage the community and determine the skill levels of persons within the community. Who can do what? Who has the skills to do some basic home repair work that does not require a license?

The next step should be the creation of an economic development strategy for the Gerlach community. What should be done to grow the community's economy? Prepare and develop a strategy based upon the community's assets. Keep the community engaged in this process. One recommendation for economic development could be accomplished in accordance with the written comment stating the following:

Focus on the development of community supported artists and craftsman and musicians who could open their studios to the untapped tourist market which just drives by Gerlach as there is no reason to stop here.

This would mean to capitalize on an identified existing strength, Burning Man. However, some attendees at the listening sessions did not seem to be supportive of such an effort.

Capitalizing on the great outdoor recreation opportunities should be pursued. There seemed to be support from most attendees of the listening sessions. Most everyone in the Gerlach community is aware of the great outdoor recreation assets, as well as those who visit the area. As an example, we learned from two different people in Gerlach they were attending Burning Man and decided to live in the community and work in the community.

The recommendations are:

- Capitalize upon the strengths of the Burning Man event, to include a year round effort to promote arts as an economic development tool in the Gerlach community. Another issue would be the possible utilization of the Gerlach School as the physical basis for an “art colony” in the Gerlach community. We also realize development of the school will entail working with the Washoe County School District on any use(s) of the existing Gerlach School facility.
- Capitalize on the existing asset of outdoor recreational activities in the Gerlach community to include “dark skies” as one of the assets.
- Form a local economic group to implement these two recommendations.

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Resources:

Geo-Tourism –

Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce, www.tahoechamber.org, 169 Highway 50, 3rd Floor, P.O. Box 7139, Stateline, Nevada 89449, (775) 588-1728

Chuck Alvey - Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada. Email: alvey@edawn.org
Phone: (800)-256-9761

Jenny Scanland - Nevada Division of State Parks, Email: jscanland@parks.nv.gov Phone: (775)-684-2770.

Ron Radil - Western Nevada Development District, Email: rjradil@wndd.org Phone: (775)-883-7333.

David Leonard, United States Small Business Administration. 775-827-4923
David.leonard@sba.gov

Nevada Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), Nevada Commission on Economic Development, (775) 687-9918, dcraig@diversifynevada.com

Procurement Outreach Program (POP), source for small businesses for government contracting, (775) 687-9900 (Carson City)

USDA Rural Development, Nevada State Office, 1390 South Curry Street, Carson City, Nevada, 89703, (775) 887-1222

Rural Nevada Development Corporation (RNDC), small business loans, 1320 East Aultman, Ely, Nevada 89301 (775) 289-8519 or RNDC, Western Region Office, 704 West Nye Lane, Suite 201, Carson City, Nevada 89703, (775) 883-4413

Nevada Microenterprise Initiative, small business loans, 1301 Cordone Avenue, suite 100, Reno, Nevada 89502, (775) 324-1812, info@4microbiz.org

Nevada Small Business Development Center (NSBDC), business plans/training, College of Business, Business Building, Room 411, Reno, Nevada 89557-0032, (775) 784-1717, University of Nevada, Reno, www.nsbdc.org

U.S. Small Business Administration, Section 504 Loan Program, (fixed asset and equipment financing) Nevada State Development Corporation, 6572 South McCarran Boulevard, Reno, Nevada 89509, (775) 826-6172, www.nsdcl-loans.com

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Theme: Government Relations/Governance: Carl Dahlen

Issues:

- County Issues/Zoning, Permitting, etc.
- School District
- Other Government Entities
 - BLM, Federal and State Agencies,
- Forms of Local Government
 - Gerlach GID, Citizens Advisory Board
- Local Leadership Development

There is a strong feeling among many residents of Gerlach that Washoe County Government is a hindrance to growth and development in the community. At the same time, many people feel that the county government should be more responsive to community needs. As one commenter complained about zoning limitations or county ordinances, another was calling for restrictions on where unsightly trailers should be located. As one person thinks the presence of the Sheriff's Office should be reduced, other people are extolling the virtues of Gerlach as a safe place to live. This dichotomy within the community is one of the problems in local relationships with county government. Some residents would like less "interference" while others look for expanded services. In addition, though people recognize the reality of the school being closed because of the loss of population, they feel the Washoe County School District is not being responsive to the impact of the closure. Those impacts include a loss of significant revenue to the Gerlach General Improvement District (GGID), empty houses on "teacher row," a solar array that must be connected elsewhere in the community, and a large unused building in the middle of town. Other federal and state agencies do not have a presence in the community and residents must travel more than 100 miles to access services. The exception is the US Bureau of Land Management (BLM) which controls large sections of land around the community. Some residents feel BLM policies are limiting the ability of the community to maximize the use of public lands surrounding it and therefore reduce economic opportunities. These limitations include road closures, restrictions on geothermal development, and other perceived actions. To complicate matters further, there is no local government in Gerlach except for the elected GGID Board and the appointed Citizen's Advisory Board (CAB) to speak on behalf of the residents. The GGID has a limited scope relating to water and sewer issues and the CAB has a limited voice because of the small number of people they represent. Other than these two entities, there are no other groups or organizations for residents to rally around and present a unified voice. The lack of civic structure limits ways for residents of Gerlach to become engaged in developing a vision for their community and creating solutions to the challenges and issues that have snowballed since the closure of the mine and manufacturing plant in Empire.

Recommendations:

Over and over the Resource Team heard comments like, "People in this community are tight knit. They help their neighbors. If something really happens, they will pull together." Or, "We all know each other. Once we like something we get on board will give 110% for any challenge. We have the strength to do something. Like the school, we always supported it. We just need a

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good idea that will benefit the town and people will work their butts off to make it happen.” However, the challenge is finding that “good idea.” Other comments noted, “We need to find a direction that all or most people can get behind;” and “We need a cohesive vision.” Creating a common vision for a community is not an easy process. This assessment is a good first step because it invited community members to express their thoughts and ideas about the current reality and future hopes for Gerlach. However there needs to be a concerted effort by members of the community as a whole to determine the future they want for their community.

Some people would like to see more civic organizations like a business association, a Chamber of Commerce, service clubs, or a Gerlach Civic Improvement Club. Others would like to see the beginning of faith-based groups. Still others think there may be a need for a strengthened form of local government like a town board to serve as a focal point for community dialog and action. All of these efforts speak to the need for better Governance. Too often we think of Governance as elected or appointed officials who make decisions on behalf of the community. “Governance” becomes “Government” and residents tend to remove themselves from the decision making process. Community problems become “government problems” and government representatives are expected to fix their problems. On the last page of this report is a brief statement “Traits of Good Governance” that says in part:

Effective governance incorporates a variety of decision-making and implementation practices by a wide range of people, organizations, and institutions beyond government. These include non-profit groups, faith-based organizations, community foundations, citizen alliances, community colleges, business associations, and others.

This type of Governance does not just happen. It can only occur as citizens pull together around common goals. Their actions must be intentional and involve as many citizens as are willing to participate. Without a vision and commonly held goals, the community will lack a unified voice and will lose credibility with outside entities. Perhaps the CAB may be the structure to begin the community dialog necessary to create a community vision.

There are organizations that may be able to help in this process. The Nevada Rural Development Council can present workshops in visioning and in strategic planning. Also the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension through the Washoe County Office may be able to provide leadership training to increase the number of people in the community who are able to take leadership roles. If there is a desire to consider a more structured form of local government, the Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities may be able to offer advice. In addition, the Washoe County Department of Community Development can become a partner with Gerlach in helping residents plan for their future. The Washoe County School District will be a necessary partner in determining the best use of their facilities in Gerlach. In regard to faith-based opportunities, the Catholic Archdiocese of Reno should be approached in regard to Mass being offered in the community on a regular basis. Protestants may want to contact churches in other communities about an outreach effort in Gerlach. There may be a pastor or layman who would be willing to come to Gerlach and possibly even live in the area that would be able to help start a church. One approach might be to contact the Pastor who was at the Community Church in Empire to seek advice on how to proceed. Most service clubs require a minimum number of members to be a viable club. The Lions Club International has been particularly active in many smaller

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communities in rural Nevada. Citizens can always create their own civic organization if that is their choice as well.

In order for community concerns to be heard by decision makers outside of the community at the county or state or federal levels, the community must first learn to work with each other. By aligning local efforts, the community's voice will be strengthened. If spokespersons are recognized as speaking on behalf of the whole community, their comments will be given greater consideration than if they are perceived to be speaking only for themselves. By engaging all members of the community in defining its vision and goals and creating structures that provide consistency in implementing planned activities, Gerlach will have a greater opportunity to manage its future.

Resources:

Nevada Rural Development Council, PO Box 3926 Carson City, Nevada 89702, 775/230-0075
www.ruralnevada.org

University of Nevada Cooperative Extension – Washoe County, 4955 Energy Way Reno, NV 89502, 775/784-4848, www.unce.unr.edu

Washoe County Community Development Department – 1001 E. Ninth Street, Reno, NV 89512, PO Box 11130, Reno, NV 89520-0027, 775/328-3600, planning@washoecounty.us,
www.co.washoe.nv.us/comdev/index.htm

Washoe County School District, 425 E Ninth Street, Reno, NV 89512, 775/348-0200
hmorrison@washoeschools.net, <http://washoecountyschools.org>

Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities, 310 S. Curry Street Carson City, NV 89703
775/882-2121, www.nvleague.org/

Archdiocese of Reno, 290 South Arlington, Suite 200, P.O. Box 1211, Reno, NV 89504-1211,
775/329-9274, www.catholicreno.org/

Gerlach/Empire Community Church, Aaron Constable, 775/557-2620,
ntpastoraaron@hughes.net (last known contact)

The Fernley Chamber of Commerce 70 N. West St. Fernley, NV 89408 775/575-4459
FernleyChamber@sbcglobal.net, <http://fernleychamber.org/>
(The Fernley Chamber of Commerce lists ten churches among its members.)

Lions Clubs International, 300 W. 22nd Street, Oak Brook, IL 60523-8842, www.lionsclubs.org
(There are local clubs in Fernley, Fallon and Reno.)

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Theme: Government Relations/Governance: Ronald J. Radil

Issues:

There were a number of comments from attendees at the listening sessions regarding the issue of governance in the Gerlach community.

The term “governance” has the following definitions:

1. The act, process, or power of governing; government
2. The state of being governed.

Source: www.answers.com/topic/governance

The following issues were identified from the listening sessions:

- County Issues/Zoning, Permitting, etc.
 - School District
 - Other Government Entities
 - BLM, Federal and State Agencies,
 - Forms of Local Government
 - Gerlach GID, Citizens Advisory Board
 - Local Leadership Development
- County Issues / Zoning, Permitting, etc.

Comments from the listening session pertaining specifically to the issue of zoning included:

- Zoning – for commercial growth
- Clean up Main Street
- See zoning solved – should be easy if a complaint the complaining party should have to prove that damages have been done. The County Commissioner said they would work on this 6 years ago and nothing has happened at the County level
- County ordinances to put an awning without going through all the county hassles and ordinances
- What type of business on Main Street we need codes – need to decide what type of business on Main Street
- Zoning deal needs to be accomplished with the County beauty parlor closed down, someone wanted to open up in same location couldn't do it not grandfathered in
- Encourage more home business – need flexibility with zoning, home based
- The current zoning discourages home business. If the zoning rules were more flexible more local residents could have a home business without having a location on Main Street.
- Establish some standards on what types of businesses can be on Main Street. No Junk Storage! People will not want to here when places are storing junk.

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- Development as it currently stands all zoning falls under the development umbrella of Reno, mandatory enforcement of code

Probably the most significant of the comments relating to the zoning issue are the two following comments:

- The current zoning discourages home business. If the zoning rules were more flexible more local residents could have a home business without having a location on Main Street.
- Establish some standards on what types of businesses can be on Main Street. No Junk Storage! People will not want to here when places are storing junk.

Other attendees stated they would like to see some variances or even the re-quitting of the zoning ordinances pertaining to Gerlach. These attendees stated Gerlach is not Reno or Sparks and should have a more flexible set of zoning ordinances.

- The zoning issue can affect economic development, particularly in regards to the following comment: “Zoning deal needs to be accomplished with the County beauty parlor closed down, someone wanted to open up in same location couldn’t do it not grandfathered in”

➤ School District

The main issue with the Gerlach School is the significant reduction in force of teachers and staff resulting from the US Gypsum mine and plant closure in Empire. There will be only one full time teacher and a teacher’s aide with less than 10 students.

The school is unlikely to become more active unless school age students increase in the Gerlach community. This may only occur when significantly more jobs become available.

➤ Other Government Entities

- BLM, Federal and State Agencies

Attendees commented about the level of communication with various other governmental agencies. The following comment is a good summation of the need for communication between local, state, and federal levels of government, as well as agencies within these governmental levels:

“Historic difficulty in building relationships with the county, federal and state on the part of the town, works both ways. Town has difficult time with organizations, no chamber, mayor, GCAC, GGID, no trust of the community and groups”.

➤ Forms of Local Government

- Gerlach GID, Citizens Advisory Board

There were comments from some attendees regarding the form of governance of Gerlach.

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Currently, there are two local governing bodies: the Gerlach General Improvement District (GGID) and the Gerlach Citizens Advisory Board (GCAB).

The GGID governing body is elected by the voters residing in GGID.

The GCAB is appointed by the Washoe County Board of Commissioners and is an advisory body only.

There are two sets of local governing bodies, both with separate powers and responsibilities.

➤ Local Leadership Development

The following comments from attendees were made regarding Local Leadership Development:

- Agreeing on planning and zoning etc.
- Nobody can agree on anything
- Don't have a comprehensive strategic plan to help stimulate commerce, everyone has their own plan and don't work together
- GGID is the only elected body of this town they take on many tasks of the town however the GGID don't have the interest or the ability for many of these tasks. If the town had someone or a group council or economic development czar
- Another challenge to this community is the idea in Washoe County government that we are a wasteland, and that this is a good area to put some kind of stupid, polluting business. Please, please, could you send them the message that we are not wanting those kinds of businesses
- Finally, on this same topic, several Washoe county politicians have said some version of this: "You all chose to live out here, and you should not complain about the lack of services." Well, the fact of the matter is that the people who create the most need for services out here are tourists from Reno and the Bay Area! They're the ones who wreck their quads and get lost and fall into mines and so on, creating demand for taxpayer-funded services. The locals actually do not create demand like that. I think this needs to be communicated clearly.

Local Leadership Development is closely related to other Government Entities and Forms of Local Government. Residents of the GGID and GCAB need to communicate with each other regarding issues impacting not only Gerlach but the Gerlach community as well. Local entities do not exist in a vacuum and must interact with each other for positive outcomes.

Recommendations:

County Issues/Zoning, Permitting, etc –

The members of the GGID Board must become more familiar with the planning and zoning ordinances of Washoe County that affect GGID area. Do not rely on hearsay or "they did it that way" from sources that can not be documented. This familiarity and knowledge of the planning

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and zoning ordinances applies to the GCAB and the general public. This reflects the need for leadership development in the Gerlach community.

The GGID should investigate other areas in Nevada similar to them and determine what could be useful and might affect some outcomes the community residents would like to see implemented.

School District –

The School District issue is not easily addressed nor do ready made solutions seem to be at hand.

Utilization of the School facility will determine greatly upon the relationship between levels of government, specifically the GGID and the Washoe County School District. This relationship will become crucial, should the community want to discuss re-use or other uses of the school facility.

Other Government Entities –

Communication with and development of relationships between the GGID, as the local governing body, and other levels of local, state and federal government becomes imperative, particularly regarding economic development projects in the Gerlach community.

Local government relations with Washoe County are important if the community wants to successfully address the zoning issues, the community feels are impediments to economic development in Gerlach.

The governmental relations with the Bureau of Land Management and National Parks become very important, if the Gerlach community wants to pursue geo-tourism/eco-tourism as an economic development tool.

Forms of Local Government –

The Gerlach General Improvement District (GGID) is the most local governing body in Gerlach. GGID is organized under Nevada Revised Statutes, 318.010, Short Title. This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the General Improvement District Law. (Added to NRS by 1959, 457)

Nevada Revised Statutes 318.116 describes the limited basic powers granted to a GID:

NRS 318.116 Basic powers which may be granted to district - Any one, all or any combination of the following basic powers may be granted to a district in proceedings for its organization, or its reorganization pursuant to [NRS 318.077](#) and all provisions in this chapter supplemental thereto, or as may be otherwise provided by statute:

1. Furnishing electric light and power, as provided in [NRS 318.117](#);
2. Extermination and abatement of mosquitoes, flies, other insects, rats, and liver fluke or *Fasciola hepatica*, as provided in [NRS 318.118](#);

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3. Furnishing facilities or services for public cemeteries, as provided in [NRS 318.119](#);
4. Furnishing facilities for swimming pools, as provided in [NRS 318.1191](#);
5. Furnishing facilities for television, as provided in [NRS 318.1192](#);
6. Furnishing facilities for FM radio, as provided in [NRS 318.1187](#);
7. Furnishing streets and alleys, as provided in [NRS 318.120](#);
8. Furnishing curbs, gutters and sidewalks, as provided in [NRS 318.125](#);
9. Furnishing sidewalks, as provided in [NRS 318.130](#);
10. Furnishing facilities for storm drainage or flood control, as provided in [NRS 318.135](#);
11. Furnishing sanitary facilities for sewerage, as provided in [NRS 318.140](#);
12. Furnishing facilities for lighting streets, as provided in [NRS 318.141](#);
13. Furnishing facilities for the collection and disposal of garbage and refuse, as provided in [NRS 318.142](#);
14. Furnishing recreational facilities, as provided in [NRS 318.143](#);
15. Furnishing facilities for water, as provided in [NRS 318.144](#);
16. Furnishing fencing, as provided in [NRS 318.1195](#);
17. Furnishing facilities for protection from fire, as provided in [NRS 318.1181](#);
18. Furnishing energy for space heating, as provided in [NRS 318.1175](#);
19. Furnishing emergency medical services, as provided in [NRS 318.1185](#);
20. Control and eradication of noxious weeds, as provided in [chapter 555](#) of NRS; and
21. Establishing, controlling, managing and operating an area or zone for the preservation of one or more species or subspecies of wildlife that has been declared endangered or threatened pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, 16 U.S.C. §§ 1531 et seq., as provided in [NRS 318.1177](#). (Added to NRS by 1967, 1693; A 1969, 201; 1971, 261; 1977, 533; 1979, 571; 1985, 1803; 1989, 1881; 1993, 2783; 1995, 179, 1905; 1997, 483; [2001](#), [2083](#); [2003](#), [1513](#))

These parts of NRS 318 are included to provide a basis for the limited powers of a GID. A GID is not an incorporated municipality and thus, the GID powers are limited.

Local Leadership Development –

The Gerlach community, based upon the community assessment, requires leadership development. However, leadership does exist within the community. It may be unidentified at this point. It may not be willing to step forward and be a leader.

Leadership development will be necessary to have the Gerlach community work together upon agreed goals, particularly for economic development and community development.

Resources:

County Issues/Zoning, Permitting, etc –
planning@washoecounty.us, www.co.washoe.nv.us/comdev/index.htm

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School District –

hmorrison@washoeschools.net, <http://washoecountyschools.org>

Other Government Entities –

Bureau of Land Management, Winnemucca District, 5100 East Winnemucca Boulevard,
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445, 775-623-1500

Ms. Bonnie Weber, Washoe County Commissioner, District 5 & Vice Chairman, 775-
328-2005

Washoe County board of Commissioners, P.O. Box 11130, Reno, Nevada 89520

Forms of Local Government –

NRS 318, Web site for full Chapter 318, Nevada Revised Statutes,
www.leg.state.nv.us/NRS/NRS-318

Local Leadership Development –

Dr. Marlene Rebori: reborim@unce.unr.edu

Carl Dahlen, Nevada Rural Development Council, Dahlenc@unce.unr.edu

Nevada Commission on Economic Development, Rural Economic Development, Carson
City Phone: (775) 687-4325. www.diversifynevada.com

Dr. Thomas Harris, Department of Resource Economics, University of Nevada, Reno,
Mailstop 0204 Phone: (775) 784-1681. Email: harris@cabnr.unr.edu

Comments

Community Center Listening Session 7/20/11

Challenge/Problems

- No jobs
- Pass
- Ditto
- No jobs
- No jobs
- Inability for the town to grow
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Distance from everything
- Not enough population to support local business
- Ditto
- Jobs
- Jobs
- Attractions there are none why does someone want to live here?
- Not enough people to pay for services like water, sewer, garbage therefore we have to pay more
- No jobs – school has suffered which effects ability to attract business and people
- Support year your business
- Tourist stop get out of business
- Gerlach lacks an identification
- Not enough people to pay bills so they go up (services; water, sewer, trash)
- Outside interference – Reno
- Reasonable housing, lack of it
- Doctor – need appointments for all everyone – no Doctor
- Fantastic place to retire, how do we get the word out. We have identity and marketing challenges – is it a good idea to package Gerlach as a great place to retire
- Need medical clinic
- Zoning – for commercial growth
- Need money to support town, all fees and bills are going up and getting higher
- Mindset of what the community is suppose to be, close minded don't want growth without growth you die
- Ditto and marvelous place to retire however medical is a challenge 80-110 miles to medical services
- Ditto
- Medical
- Lack of service or poor quality of service – power out 9-12 hours, rail road goes right through town however we can't get on train
- If we are going to attract people what housing are we going to offer
- Everything is perfect
- Medical

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- Development as it currently stands all zoning falls under the development umbrella of Reno, mandatory enforcement of code
- Lack of housing
- Attractions small wonders hard to get to or on private property
- Agreeing on planning and zoning etc.
- Main street looks bad
- Nobody can agree on anything
- Don't have a comprehensive strategic plan to help stimulate commerce, everyone has their own plan and don't work together
- Lack of communication in town didn't know about the meeting today until someone mentioned it at work
- Washoe County reassessed all property when big development was coming to Gerlach raised property values and taxes. Development didn't happen County never lowered property values or taxes.
- Housing some of the housing is in adequate. Need low income and senior housing in some type or form. They had a plan once that included teachers housing was scrapped would like to revitalize
- We have a lot of housing we would like to have more humans to fill up the housing we already have.
- Not sure that there is a lot of empty housing the problem is a lot of the existing housing if inspected by the County no one would be able to live in, we need decent housing.
- Two buildings in town are owned by organizations and are private clubs; this keeps individuals from participating in the community. Members of the private clubs have talents and skills which can be brought into the community
- There are businesses; bars, gas station, restaurant, but no churches. If you want to have a church you can use the community center we need more in town than the bars, especially for the seniors.
- Historic difficulty in building relationships with the county, federal and state on the part of the town, works both ways. Town has difficult time with organizations, no chamber, mayor, GCAC, GGID, no trust of the community and groups
- GGID is the only elected body of this town they take on many tasks of the town however the GGID don't have the interest or the ability for many of these tasks. If the town had someone or a group council or economic development czar
- None of the local business owners; gas stations, bars etc., are involved in the process of having a vision for the future. Not one local business owner from the community is at meeting
- Only one elected official of the community is here discussing issues
- Community needs a shared vision of change and cooperation from Burning Man
- Infrastructure not being discussed, collars made out of cast iron like a time bomb for the town, need cast iron collars on the pipes fixed, lucky that many haven't broken recently

Strengths and Assets

- Gerlach is 77 miles from Fernley, seclusion, solitude and wide open spaces
- People come from all over the world to this area because open spaces and scenery

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- Ditto – Gerlach is the gateway to a National Conservation Area, one of the jewels for the entire Country. We have the Geyser, Hot Springs, Soldier Ranch – our location is the asset
- Ditto also the small size of town
- Good neighbors good people
- Ditto for most part caring community even to new individuals
- Pass
- Ditto
- Ditto public land and lots of water we have a full supply no concern of not having enough like some parts of the west
- Ditto – location
- We just moved here in May – appreciate the senior center
- People are the asset
- Hunting best in northern NV big and small animals and game birds
- Geothermal and solar – BLM not approving permits for renewable energy this would employ individuals in the community
- No development or business we are a blank canvass to start from
- Opportunities for outdoors wide open spaces where you are not bothered. When you want to do something outdoors like camping you can't beat it. Law enforcement doesn't bother you too much in the wide open spaces.
- Good old western liberalism exists in people here. People are tolerant of each other we have a diverse community with liberals, conservatives, ranchers, burners, etc. We have that good old rancher ethic, you can be naked, tattooed, and upside down going down Main Street and no one is going to bother you. Most people feel what you decide to do is your business as long as not effecting other. We have a go along get along attitude that is what is good at living in small town. People don't carry grudges unspoken pride that everyone gets along, not saying it is easy to get along we have to work at it and people do work at it, this is a huge strength
- Water, geothermal, and wind assets not used the rail road needs to be included in a plan. Don't think we can only rely on tourism we need something else
- Events that are currently happening in the community like the rocketeers, and burners we have to figure out how to go somewhere with these
- Strength of the community
- People – we all know each other once they like something they get on board will give 110% for any challenge. We have the strength to do something. Like the school we always supported, we just need a good idea that will benefit the town and people will work their butts off
- People - if someone has problems everyone is always right there to help
- People in community are tight knit, help neighbors if something really happens will pull together
- A lot of assets not being utilized; housing, building lots, medical center, not seeing the potential. We have a lot of wind and sun
- Empty lots to lease for housing someone can located some mobile homes on them so they can lease out the homes

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- People again ditto on helping each other. Challenges unique cultural everyone has different agendas there is a separation that is here which shouldn't be here, small unique diverse at times nitpicky, some don't see this time as opportunity or are willing to capture on it.
- Users groups that come out to the area; history buffs, hot springs, burning man, rocketeers, incredibly diverse
- Think of the great area on the edge of the west, rail road, empty spaces, potential is the greatest, true assets
- Diversity of the area -people are already coming how do we maintain what we value
- Seniors we take care of them even if we don't know them everyone pitches in – example of the senior who ran out of fire wood, everyone got together went around with a truck everyone donate or obtained extra fire wood, stories are like this are normal
- Community spirit is biggest strength even in challenging times
- Clean area and dark skies for night time viewing, no coal burning power plant with big lights that light up the dark, marvel of the community are the night skies

Projects and Initiatives

- Bed and breakfast cottage industry. School is closed down with 20 rooms not being used the building will deteriorate if not used
- Utilize school through retreats or some type of training center
- Solar array don't need all of that at the school how can the town benefit from the solar array
- Generate more interest in the town, need to inform or provide information about what is going on
- Have general store move from Empire to Gerlach
- Get people to come for a reason – looking a building a commercial camp ground and art park at the Fly Ranch
- Clean up Main Street
- Need for RV Park in town near the water tower
- Take inventory of housing and lots then contact the mine to see if they are interested in fixing the road, run a shuttle bus from town to the mine
- Face lift on Main Street the town has to care about what it looks like
- Looks of Main Street
- More advertisement
- RV Park
- See zoning solved – should be easy if a complaint the complaining party should have to prove that damages have been done. The County Commissioner said they would work on this 6 years ago and nothing has happened at the County level
- Another restaurant
- Ditto
- Bed and Breakfast
- We need to have a common vision and better understanding of the advantageous and contributions of the Burning Man Festival.
- 2-3 clusters of vacant homes we could have a year round artist colony

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- Building where the non-profit community radio is located we can have programs to educate what is going on in the community which would have an espresso machine and or restaurant
- Figure out a way for the community to come together for the best of the community
- Available property inventory to bring employees from Hycroft this will make the school grow and bring it back to what it was
- Overlay of Main Street with the County that was approved get people to understand, interested community members to participate on a committee to have a community plan for economic development
- Burning Man – burning man project nonprofit – economic development for small towns is one of the committees use this non-profit to be the fund raiser. Create relationships to help along with the ideas that are being developed
- Restaurant and good coffee
- Quinn magic on Main Street for the rest of town and have Burning Man pay for it
- Lola's porch is falling down we found \$5,000 grant are applying for need community volunteers to help with the porch
- County ordinances to put an awning without going through all the county hassles and ordinances
- Need to have an internet café, bakery, curio shop and grocery store
- Need entrepreneurs
- Need business space for that to occur
- What type of business on Main Street we need codes – need to decide what type of business on Main Street
- Need a coffee shop, churches, antique stores, control the growth on Main Street. These business need to hire local folks
- Zoning deal needs to be accomplished with the County beauty parlor closed down, someone wanted to open up in same location couldn't do it not grandfathered in
- Clean up the community trailers and junk make the community inviting
- Do something about the medical clinic – if you call 911 they send the helicopter from Reno can't afford that
- Medical clinic and doctors are needed
- BLM is publishing strategic plan for the Winnemucca district. Nightingale Area designated for off road, begin to look at short term opportunities – recreation type of businesses that we can feed off
- We need Reno and Fernley to stop fighting us, need advertising for off road is area we need advertising
- Web-site list properties, advertise, comprehensive and professional
- Need way to communicate better, newspaper on monthly basis – little paper – not everyone is on face book
- Functional phone service - cell

Long term

- Reach out to Eagleville and Cedarville to do some regional planning and marketing of the entire area
- Growth and thrive

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- Thrive
- Get school back
- Clinic, school, restaurant
- Need land – BLM or big private property
- Jobs opportunities
- Clean up street– rezoning – main street store, pizza parlor, pub, tavern, like VC or Truckee
- Transportation, bus, pave road to Winnemucca, rail, airstrip
- Farmers, ranchers, and cowboys need to bring back this industry they need power lines, they are dying off
- Like it just the way it is moved here because of the size
- Short term to long term housing and business
- Main street refaced, plumbing fixed, trailer park, restaurants,
- Keep small don't overgrow
- Reach out to the Safari Club – tour to Gerlach, guides that can give a live presentation on the hunting that is available here. Invite them to come out for the hunting
- If short term happen we need the have the assets here function; clinic and school
- Circular Main Street with board walk, lined with shops and stores, brewery, and bakery, rail road sidings museum rail road Develop growth along arts, crafts and ranching, railroad and Burning Man
- Place where family can have things to do for kinds hard to bring kids to the bar for events. We need to be an event oriented destination
- Fly Geyser be the international place it can be area is a national asset. Not BLM or National Park land we need the area to be a national attraction
- Get rid of the BLM Recreation Directors
- Camp ground in NCA closer to town
- Long term plan for transportation – airport – 10 year plan to improve the transportation issues (all over)
- Data call center – customer support – need good communication lines
- Keep viewscapes open
- Energy issues – propane costs – natural gas at Empire – negotiate with USG on how to bring to Gerlach

Senior Center Listening Session 7/21/11

Challenges/Problems

- Keep senior center going have to fund yourselves now
- Not enough people to share in the cost of the water and sewer, costs are sky high
- School closing down, need to have more people in town that can sell lots, build and live here
- Medical clinic need a doctor
- More jobs, clinic, and one room school
- Clinic
- Clinic
- Encourage more home business – need flexibility with zoning, home based

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- Ditto on everything
- Ditto on everything
- Opportunities for tourism niche eco tourism
- Ditto on everything
- Medical clinic
- Senior center and clinic
- 27 seniors are fed
- Medical clinic get open with a doctor, don't have vehicles to go to Reno
- Ditto on everything
- Missing demographic of younger family to man the fire department, because no jobs here
- Hunters support economy in winter, BLM has shut down roads by BLM has made this economy
- GGID contact Hycroft mine for men, need to sell lots
- School road empty with housing
- Need more business
- Hycroft need employees no place for the
- GGID owns unimproved lots, need to sell
- Stopped newspaper delivery, now comes in the mail – may have newspaper but at higher cost
- Nothing for a blind person to do
- Move here because they don't know where else to go, move here and don't contribute to the community
- Living here is cheaper than living elsewhere, need better housing
- Too few people trying to keep the infrastructure going, water/sewer/fire department, need more money for a living wage
- BLM more restrictive things, higher utilities with the water forces on by Feds/EPA
- Don't understand why population lost still need to do
- Absentee landlords fire hazards
- Rats in vacant houses
- Restriction on selling of lots by the GGID number of lots only 4
- BLM – USGS thermal power plant and BLM putting skids on the building of the plant don't shut down the ability of the public lands to support the community
- Ditto
- NCA is bad
- Find a direction that all or most people can get behind
- Half people in town are over 60
- Burning Man should contribute part of their gate fees to the town, just like they contribute to BLM and Washoe County
- Cohesive vision
- Building for business, funding, people to support, zoning, etc.
- Ruby pipe line should have contributed or Gerlach should benefit from the pipeline

Strengths and Assets

- Everyone helps everyone else

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- Senior center need to keep it going
- Ditto
- Location of Gerlach is a wonderful place, history, geology, night skies
- Location remoteness clean air big skies, huge asset no light or noise pollution
- Ditto – people like the fact that can acknowledge everyone, desert is a mental floss
- Class sizes where small, everyone gets attention in the community
- Ditto
- Inclusiveness of community – it is a community where we can get to know each other as people, it is a community that we can develop relationships in
- School facility and NCA area
- None
- Natural resources for energy and mining be able to use wind solar geothermal
- Community everybody knows everybody, get sick everyone can help
- Ditto
- Ditto
- Quiet, don't here sirens everything going, it is safe
- Ditto
- Empire farms dehydrating buildings, has water and power – dehydration for drying flowers, housing at Empire Farms bring in families
- Sun, wind and geothermal, can be off the grid as a town huge asset self reliant
- Small population don't want to loose the small aspect of the town
- Ditto
- Hunters buy ammunition, beer, dump station for RVs, fire

Projects and Initiatives

- Restaurant
- Completion for existing business
- Restaurant and another business need to sell property
- Vet
- Dentist
- More business – restaurant
- Medical clinic, get school back, need more business, have competition
- Grocery store and restaurant
- Ditto
- Business that support senior and medical as non profit, coffee tap the pass through funds go to support seniors and medical center
- Car wash
- Laundry
- Other resources for the school, several boarding schools to – credit recovery go to school Monday -Thursday individual attention on- line learning go home on the weekends
- Let the tourist know what is in town, chamber and coffee shop internet café
- Tourist need to have access to things – grocery store, camping supplies, etc
- Visitor trailer needs to be more stable
- NCA guides tourism

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- Brewery business – sell the product in local bars and store black rock ale
- Clean up town, stop parking all the junky trailers, there should be some standard, build a fenced in lot for the trailers or storage area. Get them off residential lots. Downtown looks junky
- Ditto
- GGID should use the property as income for the town such as an RV Park this way it stays in the town and asset but income comes in
- Washoe County tells us what to do or not - move to challenge – communication to the county
- Different standard from Washoe County
- GGID property does not have water to all their lots
- Business to help the seniors with home projects, taking them to store, or doctor, emergency repairs
- Clean up the town
- Encourage Burning Man to do some things responsibility
- Burning Man should store trailers on their 80 acres
- Need to pool resources to assist everyone in town
- Excess water flow at tank – use it for some high end product which can be dried
- Great solar array, possible to use for the community center and senior center good public works project
- What are the skill sets in the town, here are jobs I need, here is what I can supply, community bulletin board
- Reliable internet service that doesn't have to be paid for
- Swimming pool and trailer park – hot pool
- Need to know how many people actually come to Gerlach and what type of number, what do they need
- Business of Bloomers and Bolts on commercial lot, flea market with food
- Car count along the highway

Written Responses

Challenges and Problems

- Jobs, Jobs, Jobs
- We need more successful small businesses. I love Bruno and his clan, but almost every economic benefit that comes to Gerlach goes to that one family. It's not their fault, I mean to be clear, but we need a wider economic base. We need small businesses that can be located out here and be successfully run by an owner/operator. What comes to my mind is dog breeding, champion show chicken breeding, arts and crafts like Ray Mosely does, fine arts like Planet X, tourist and hunter guiding businesses, artists' retreat homes, and such. We need a LOT MORE of these micro businesses.
- Gerlach needs to position itself as THE place to retire for active retirees. Cheap. Beautiful. Nice people.
- We need someone to be an eBay reseller here. There are hundreds of thousands of dollars or fallow assets sitting on ranches all over this corner of the state, and someone could make a robust living helping to sell stuff on eBay. I've been trying to get someone interested in this, but for some off reason, the right combination of computer skills, savvy

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ability to get along with locals and ranchers, and responsibility just has not stepped forward. Great business idea!

- Honestly, Burning Man and its affiliated associations need to put some of their property into use. They have these great locations on Main Street and they just keep making them into private clubs. That does no good for the rest of the community. That doesn't create jobs, commerce, facilities or anything of benefit to the larger community. Actually, it does just the opposite, by giving Burners yet another way to avoid spending a dime in this town. They should OPEN one of these places up as a business. Open to the public. Hire someone. Pay a living wage. Let's get that out in the open and discussed publicly.
- Another challenge to this community is the idea in Washoe County government that we are a wasteland, and that this is a good area to put some kind of stupid, polluting business. Please, please, could you send them the message that we are not wanting those kinds of businesses
- Finally, on this same topic, several Washoe county politicians have said some version of this: "You all chose to live out here, and you should not complain about the lack of services." Well, the fact of the matter is that the people who create the most need for services out here are tourists from Reno and the Bay Area! They're the ones who wreck their quads and get lost and fall into mines and so on, creating demand for taxpayer-funded services. The locals actually do not create demand like that. I think this needs to be communicated clearly.
- Clean up Main Street!
- Draw young families with employment opportunities. We need families with kids for the school, young energetic adults for the fire department, ambulance and to put some life in the town.
- Not much income for **the town of Gerlach!** Only for a certain few
- I think our gallons of water ought to be more for the residents of Gerlach – even if it was just a thousand or two thousand more gallons! People are letting their yards die! We need all the trees, etc we can get around here! Up to 12,000 instead of the 10,000 – we deserve that much!!
- We the people need **a Clinic**. Let's all try to get it open.
- We need approx. \$90,000 to exchange the resin at the water treatment plant in about a year. Unfortunately, there are not grants available for this type of maintenance to my knowledge.
- We will owe \$470,000 on our USDA-RD loan by the end of September. So far, we were able to service the loan without much problem, however because of the school closure, we might face some problems coming up with the payment every month in the future.
- Our whole system is old and might have to be replaced eventually, we will not have enough money (depreciation has not been funded!) to attempt such a project.
- The water/sewer/trash residential rate is currently \$89.15, there is no way we can raise the rate much higher, since we have many residents who live on limited fixed income.
- The GGID owns several properties on the outside of the town. All of them are undeveloped and not subdivided. We need some guidance on how to proceed in developing/selling or whatever of this land.
- Only one hotel
- Only one Restaurant

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- No store
- No Medical Clinic (but in the works)
- Many properties on Main Street are used in a non-productive way
- Fly Geyser is on private property and cannot be considered an asset in planning a tourist destination.
- Apathy, magical thinking
- Tension between “townies” and newcomers
- One of the biggest challenges facing the Gerlach area is lack of business community. No employment opportunities are available as we do not have any local businesses or industries which serve to support a thriving and healthy community.
- The second biggest challenge is a lack of community planning or openness by the citizens to any kind of change or business development within our community.
- The third greatest challenge to the Gerlach area is the lack of affordable housing.
- The remote location would require that any product produced in the area would need to be of a high enough value to offset the extra freight costs for both raw materials and finished products.
- Unsightly storage of materials on Main Street and at other residential areas
- Loss of citizens out of Gerlach. There will not be enough people to pay the water, garbage, and sewer bills.
- Lack of employment opportunities in the area (closure of USG and downsizing of the school)

Strengths and Assets

- First, the greatest asset to Gerlach is the people of Gerlach. They are just the finest bunch of people on the planet. They are really good at living in a small town together. There is a mix of liberals, wackos, conservatives, libertarians, environmentalists, ranchers, you name it, and everyone gets along. You can’t carry a grudge and live successfully in a small town, and people here get that.
- Second, the town’s location on the edge of the Black Rock Desert gives it ready access to one of the most stunningly beautiful places in the American West.
- Third, although it is limited in supply, cheap housing. There are few places in America cheaper than here.
- Open Space
- Vacant lots available for housing
- School building
- Our beautiful desert
- Our remoteness for the people who like to “get away”
- I think the ranches ought to be considered a part of our community. **They are** a part of our community. They should be able to have a say in the future of Gerlach also!
- Our springs produce approx. 250 gallons per minute since 1906.
- We don’t owe anything on the water plant!
- Water
- Clean Air
- Beautiful landscape (plus NCA) and hot springs
- Railroad

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- Geothermal activity that could be harnessed
- Wind
- Community Spirit (currently somewhat compromised)
- The greatest asset of the Gerlach area is its location. Gerlach sits on the edge of the Black Rock Desert which is one of the most unique environments in the world. Gerlach could easily become a destination and point of interest for the many thousands of visitors who pass through Gerlach on their way to visit the Black Rock Desert every year.
- Additionally the climate is well suited for agricultural projects. Presently the Gerlach area grows many tons of alfalfa each year and in the past supported a successful commercial garlic farm.
- Abundant clean energy resource development possibilities exist here: Geothermal, Wind, Solar. All of these sources of clean energy could be produced here in the Gerlach area.
- REMOTE LOCATION: The Gerlach area is a virtual wonderland for people seeking to get away from their everyday lives and seek the beauty of nature. The area is surrounded by public lands, open to explore history, geology, astronomy, etc. To drive out on the playa and watch the universe slowly spin in the velvet black expanse, unpolluted by light pollution is truly an unforgettable experience.
- GEOTHERMAL WATER: Gerlach is surrounded by Hot water springs.
- ABUNDANT SUNLIGHT: The solar potential in the area is huge. Used in concert with the geothermal heat it could be used for greenhouse algae farms, flower farms, shrimp or fish farms, etc.
- Beautiful, unique geographic area
- Space

Projects and Initiatives

- Move the store from Empire to Gerlach. It doesn't make sense to drive 14 miles to get a gallon of milk or a newspaper.
- Start a new hotel or B&B with accommodations that are attractive to travelers, hunters, explorers, rocketeers, and so on.
- Get a website devoted to getting people to retire in Gerlach
- Get a website (could be the same one) devoted to property sale and for rent up here. We need to roll over some of the empty trailers and get real, live community-contributing humans into them. One way would be to increase the water fee whether the water is turned on or not, and another way would be to build and maintain a robust web site covering every rental, house, trailer and acreage for sale up here. Run it for free to the seller. Run it as a community service. This really needs to be done, and could be done quickly.
- Reduce the Sheriff's office presence. We just don't need so much police presence in a town of only 100+ people. Let the Sheriff send officers up for special events, and get rid of the substation altogether to save taxpayers' money.
- Actively reach out to Japanese and European tourists. If we got popular, they could send a steady stream of wealthy tourists, year after year.
- Get Fly Geysers out of private hands and into some kind of recreation facility with access, even if limited. The BLM should swap some nice development land near Las Vegas for this unique jewel of the American West.

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- Geothermal Power Plant
- Stop allowing Main Street and residential properties to be used as storage for junky trailers and other unsightly junk.
- Some sort of income **for the town**
- I would like to have a flower and vegetable business but need \$ for 2 hoop houses and access to the school greenhouse to grow starts for the hoop houses. Need Cash!
- The first thing we need to do is become self sufficient in hauling our own garbage! Add up what we have been paying them to come out and get our garbage – they are constantly going up – we can invest and be able to take our own garbage – Jon – could haul it! Or if that is a problem, I am sure one of the guys from here would be happy to do it. This is the **#1** priority for the town of Gerlach! It will save us a fortune!
- Could the town make some money by putting in an RV park? Doesn't sound like a bad idea to me! A cement slab and plant a tree – I think it would be a welcome addition to the people who come through.
- Camp Grounds are good.
- We need a CHURCH. If we ask GOD for help, he will help us, Amen!
- The town ought to concentrate on selling water during Burning Man! Use the money Burning Man gave to buy containers – we need to tray and make some money – not keep spending it!
- Put lots up for sale!
- New meter reading/billing system (No. 1 priority, short term)
- Windmill at the water plant
- Replacement of all saddle clamps in town at once
- Some affordable rental/senior housing. Most units for rent are not adequate. Many seniors live in their own houses, however, some are really subpar. This might be part of a development plan that includes the GGID properties mentioned in the other submission.
- A new restaurant
- A convenience store, preferably run by the people who own the Empire store, i.e., we would like them to move to Gerlach
- A smallish new, somewhat upscale, hotel or B&B
- More small businesses such as art galleries, coffee shops, antique stores, a flea market, artisan welding studios and a small grocery store.
- Focus on the development of community supported artists and craftsman and musicians who could open their studios to the untapped tourist market which just drives by Gerlach as there is no reason to stop here.
- According to a market research performed by the Nevada department of agriculture recently there is a growing demand by Las Vegas and Reno chefs and restaurants for Nevada grown produce as well as a demand for specialty flowers by Nevada's abundant casinos and hotels. The climate in Gerlach is particularly well suited for growing produce and flowers in unheated hoop houses ten months out of twelve. The town of Gerlach has an excellent water supply and because of the geothermal assets in and around the Gerlach area there is the additional possibility of utilizing those resources to heat the hoop houses. Developing these geothermal assets to heat hoop houses would extend the growing season to twelve months per year.

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- Two years ago the Washoe County School District was approached by the Nevada Rural Housing Development Agency (NRHDA) with a proposal and plans to build beautiful, affordable energy efficient housing on the property owned by the school district. Financing was in place and the deal fell through as it was dependent on the school district's promise to deed the property to the NRHDA at an extremely low price. Because of the agreed upon low price for the land the project was able to find financing as the units themselves are inexpensive to manufacture and build. The school district backed out as one of the school board members refused to allow the school district to deed the property for the low agreed on price. This project would have included a community garden and would have given new and existing Gerlach residents the opportunity to live in clean, beautiful, affordable energy efficient homes which could have been rented or purchased. The units could have been built and installed in less than six months. I would like to see if we could revisit the project and reopen negotiations with NRHDA and the Washoe County School District as one of Gerlach's greatest challenges is the lack of safe, clean and energy efficient housing.
- For the last five years Gerlach has been able to support a community gardening project situated on Washoe County School District property. The water was supplied by the District and the Community Garden is being cut off from its water supply as the District does not want to pay for water. This garden has supported the Gerlach Senior free and reduced lunch program and has been an integral component of the K-12 Science and FFA curriculums at our local school. This garden's success has been highlighted in the Reno Gazette-Journal and has been a cornerstone of community spirit for many years now. Because the District refuses to support the garden by providing us with water the community is in danger of losing this valuable asset.
- Restore the Old Railroad Depot and convert it into a museum and gift shop with a focus on Gerlach and the surrounding area's rich history. (Railroad History, Emigrant Trail, etc.)
- Gerlach would be a wonderful location for a small outdoor amphitheater providing musical entertainment in the summer months.
- **The current zoning discourages home business. If the zoning rules were more flexible more local residents could have a home business without having a location on Main Street.**
- A business providing adventure tours of the area would attract many tourists to the area.
- A hot springs resort would draw guests from all over the world.
- Geothermal heat could be used to power industry. An example of this was the onion and garlic plant located near Empire Farms. They utilized geothermal heat to produce large quantities of dehydrated onions and garlic. The buildings and infrastructure are still in place. The Geo power plant produces a lot of waste heat that could power a large business.
- BLM to allow US Geothermal to put in another power plant near Gerlach
- Market what housing and empty lots we have here to Hycroft Mine. They need housing for employees. People could be employed by the mine and live here. Maybe some people who own lots in Gerlach would be willing to lease them to the mine or to people who want to live here and work at the mine.
- Establish some standards on what types of businesses can be on Main Street. No Junk Storage! People will not want to here when places are storing junk.

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- Establish some standards on what types of housing can be pulled in here
- General beautification of the town
- BLM needs to stop closing off roads in the area. This is discouraging hunters from coming here because they are unable to access the areas that they normally hunt in.
- The town needs to put in some type of business on a town owned empty lot so that the town can earn some money. Maybe something like a campground or trailer park would be feasible.

Additional Resources

Heartland Center for Leadership Development
650 "J" Street, Suite 305-C
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508
402/474-7667
www.heartlandcenter.info

Nevada Arts Council
716 N. Carson Street, Suite A
Carson City, NV 89701
775/687-6680
www.nevadaculture.org/nac

Nevada Association of Counties
201 S. Roop Street, Ste. 101
Carson City, NV 89701
(775) 883-7863
www.nvnaco.org

Nevada Commission on Economic
Development
208 East Proctor Street
Carson City, Nevada 89701
775/687-4325
www.expand2nevada.com

Nevada Department of Conservation and
Natural Resources
901 S. Stewart St., Ste. 5001
Carson City, NV 89701
775/684-2700
www.dcnr.nv.gov

Nevada Department of Health and Human
Service
4126 Technology Way, Suite 100
Carson City, Nevada 89706-2009
775/684-4000
www.dhhs.nv.gov

Nevada Department of Public Safety
555 Wright Way
Carson City, NV 89711
(775) 684-4808
www.dps.nv.gov

Nevada Department of Transportation
1263 South Stewart Street
Carson City, Nevada 89712
775/888-7000
www.nevadadot.com

Nevada Division of State Lands
901 S. Stewart Street, Ste. 5003
Carson City, NV 89701-5246
Phone (775) 684-2720
Fax (775) 684-2721
<http://lands.nv.gov/>

Nevada Fire Safe Council
440 West Spear Street
P.O. Box 2724
Carson City, Nevada 89702
Phone: (775) 884-4455
www.nvfsc.org

Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities
310 S. Curry Street
Carson City, NV 89703
775/882-2121
www.nvleague.org

Nevada Microenterprise Initiative
113 W. Plumb Lane
Reno, NV 89509
775/ 324-1812
www.4microbiz.org

Nevada Rural Development Council
704 W Nye Street, Suite 201
PO Box 3926
Carson City, NV
775/829-1048
www.nevrdc.org

Nevada Rural Housing Authority
3695 Desatoya Drive
Carson City, Nevada 89701
775/887-1795
www.nvrural.org

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NV Small Business Development Center
University of Nevada, Reno
College of Business Administration
Ansari Business Building, Room 411
Reno, NV 89557-0100
775/784-1717
www.nsbdc.org

Nevadaworks
6490 S McCarran BLVD
Building A, Suite 1
Reno, Nevada 89509
775/377-8600
www.Nevadaworks.com

Rural Community Assistance Corporation
3120 Freeboard Dr, # 201 - 2nd Floor
West Sacramento, CA 95691
916/447-2854 or
775/323-8882 – Reno
www.rcac.org

University of Nevada Cooperative Extension
University of Nevada, Reno
Mail Stop 404
Reno, NV 89557-0404
775/784-7070
www.unce.unr.edu

USDA Rural Development
1390 South Curry Street
Carson City, Nevada 89703
775/887-1222
www.rurdev.usda.gov/nv

US Small Business Administration
Nevada District Office
400 South 4th Street, Suite 250.
Las Vegas, NV 89101
702/388-6611
www.sba.gov

Nevada State Development Corporation
6572 South McCarran Boulevard
Reno, Nevada 89509
775/770-1240
800/726-2494
www.nsdclloans.com

Public Utilities Commission of Nevada
1150 E. William Street
Carson City, NV 89701-3109
(775) 684-6101
[http://pucweb1.state.nv.us/PUCN/\(X\(1\)S\(pxtqp155jbsqcp55h0ly4o23\)\)/PUCHome.aspx](http://pucweb1.state.nv.us/PUCN/(X(1)S(pxtqp155jbsqcp55h0ly4o23))/PUCHome.aspx)

Rural Nevada Development Corporation
1320 East Aultman Street
Ely, Nevada 89301
775/289-8519
www.rndcnv.org

US Bureau of Land Management
Nevada State Office
1340 Financial Blvd
Reno, NV 89502
775-861-6400
www.blm.gov/nv/st/en.html

US Forest Service
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
1200 Franklin Way
Sparks, NV 89431
775/331-6444
www.fs.fed.us/r4/htnf/

Western States Arts Federation
1743 Wazee Street, Suite 300
Denver, CO 80202
888/562-7232
303/629-1166
www.westaf.org

20 Clues to Rural Community Survival*

1. **Evidence of Community Pride:** Successful communities are often showplaces of care, attention, history and heritage.
2. **Emphasis on Quality in Business and Community Life:** People believe that something worth doing is worth doing right.
3. **Willingness to Invest in the Future:** In addition to the brick-and-mortar investments, all decisions are made with an outlook on the future.
4. **Participatory Approach to Community Decision Making:** Even the most powerful of opinion leaders seem to work toward building consensus.
5. **Cooperative Community Spirit:** The stress is on working together toward a common goal, and the focus is on positive results.
6. **Realistic Appraisal of Future Opportunities:** Successful communities have learned how to build on strengths and minimize weaknesses.
7. **Awareness of Competitive Positioning:** Local loyalty is emphasized, but thriving communities know who their competitors are and position themselves accordingly.
8. **Knowledge of the Physical Environment:** Relative location and available natural resources underscore decision making.
9. **Active Economic Development Program:** There is an organized, public/private approach to economic development.
10. **Deliberate Transition of Power to a Younger Generation of Leaders:** People under 40 regularly hold key positions in civic and business affairs.
11. **Acceptance of Women in Leadership Roles:** Women are elected officials, plant managers, and entrepreneurial developers.
12. **Strong belief in and Support for Education:** Good schools are the norm and centers of community activity.
13. **Problem-Solving Approach to Providing Health Care:** Health care is considered essential, and smart strategies are in place for diverse methods of delivery.
14. **Strong Multi-Generational Family Orientation:** The definition of family is broad, and activities include younger as well as older generations.
15. **Strong Presence of Traditional Institutions that are Integral to Community Life:** Churches, schools and service clubs are strong influences on community development and social activities.
16. **Sounds and Well-Maintained Infrastructure:** Leaders work hard to maintain and improve streets, sidewalks, water systems, and sewage facilities.
17. **Careful Use of Fiscal Resources:** Frugality is a way of life and expenditures are considered investments in the future.
18. **Sophisticated Use of Information Resources:** Leaders access the information that is beyond the knowledge base available in the community.
19. **Willingness to Seek Help from the Outside:** People seek outside help for community needs, and many compete for government grants and contracts for economic and social programs.
20. **Conviction that, in the Long Run, You Have to Do It Yourself:** Thriving rural communities believe their destiny is in their own hands. Making their communities good places is a pro-active assignment, and they willingly accept it.

*Reprinted from Heartland Center Leadership Development, Spring 2002 *Visions Newsletter*

Traits of Good Governance

Governance is the process of making and carrying out decisions.

Effective governance incorporates a variety of decision-making and implementation practices by a wide range of people, organizations, and institutions beyond government. These include non-profit groups, faith-based organizations, community foundations, citizen alliances, community colleges, business associations, and others.

Effective governance incorporates community building processes that develop leadership, enhance social capital and personal networks, and strengthen a community's capacity for improvement.

It is the hope of the resource team that the community assessment process has provided encouragement and support for your community's pursuit of effective governance.

Nevada Rural Development Council

