

- Our rapidly aging population will need more services as it ages, and community leaders must prioritize those needs and plan and budget to meet them.
- At age 65 and above, many elders experience increased difficulty walking and climbing stairs, more hearing and vision loss and increased need for caregiving assistance. Finding information about those needed resources is a pervasive problem.
- The estimated number of people aged 55 and over living below poverty in Washoe County is over 7500 which equates to 13% of that elder population. Housing and medical costs continue to rise while incomes remain relatively constant for those already retired, so many elders are worried about being able to afford to remain in their homes.
- As more people move to the area to retire or to work for the growing tech industry, housing is becoming scarcer and more expensive. There is a lack of affordable housing especially for lower- and middle-income people in Washoe County. The city, county, state agencies and several developers are working to address this, but it will take time to meet the demand.
- About 25% of seniors in Washoe County are moderately to highly isolated. Isolation is as much a predictor of early death as is living in poverty.
- Washoe County has a suicide rate that is twice the national average for people 65 and older and four times the national average for those 85 and older. People who are lonely have a higher rate of depression, suicide, chronic disease, and their lifespan is shortened, so it is increasingly important to focus resources on elders who are isolated and alone.
- In 2019, Washoe County Senior Services served over 5000 senior clients and nearly 466,000 meals at congregate meal sites and with home deliveries. About 20% of those eating lunch at Washoe County Senior Center report that it is the only meal they have that day. The Food Bank of Northern Nevada estimates about 15% of county older adults are food insecure.
- Washoe County seniors over age 65 have higher education levels than younger groups. This is a benefit to employers seeking qualified employees and for groups seeking to involve seniors as skilled volunteers. In 2018, over 90% have a computer and 93% of those have internet service.
- In 2018, there were 17,475 veterans in Reno, 67% aged 55 and over. They are served by the Reno Vet Center, the Veterans Resource Center, the VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System which provides inpatient and outpatient care to a large geographical area that includes 20 counties in northern Nevada and northeastern California. There are many active veterans service organizations in the area and a new Nevada State Veterans Home in Sparks offering long term care and rehabilitation services.