

# Chapter 5: Economic Vitality

Carson City derives its overall health and economic success from its ability to maintain a strong and diverse base of jobs, to provide a supply of varied housing choices for its employees, to provide a range of services and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors, and to generate tourism through the promotion of its unique characteristics and historic amenities. Furthermore, the City recognizes the revitalization of the Downtown as an important component of the community's long-term health and vitality. The Master Plan promotes the continued enhancement of the Downtown and surrounding residential neighborhoods as the focus of the community.



Principles for achieving Economic Vitality focus on:

- Retaining and enhancing the City's strong employment base;
- Diversifying the City's economic base to include a broader range of retail services downtown, along its major gateway corridors, and in targeted locations along the Carson City Freeway;
- Emphasizing the role of technology and knowledge-based industry in the City's economy;
- Promoting the City's historic and cultural resources to enhance its tourism base;
- Promoting the City's many parks, pathways, open space, and recreational amenities and overall quality of life as a tool for attracting new businesses to the community;
- Promoting Downtown revitalization;
- Promoting a collaborative approach to economic development;
- Promoting fiscal and economic health; and
- Continuing to support redevelopment efforts.



*The City will promote Downtown revitalization efforts and seek to provide a broader range of retail services.*

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLE 5: A STRONG DIVERSIFIED ECONOMIC BASE**

*The City will seek to maintain and enhance its enviable base of primary jobs and to provide a broader range of retail services that serve both residents of Carson City and those in surrounding counties.*

*The City will also seek opportunities to promote its historic and recreational resources and overall quality of life as a means of generating tourism revenue and attracting new employers to the community. The City will strive to approach economic development activities using a collaborative and innovative approach that encourages cooperation between the public and private sector, and with other jurisdictions as appropriate to achieve the objectives of this Master Plan.*



*The City will promote the retention and expansion of established major employers.*

## **GOAL 5.1—MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE PRIMARY JOB BASE**

### **5.1a—Retention/Expansion of Established Employers**

Retain and promote the expansion of major employers already established within the community, such as the State of Nevada; Carson-Tahoe Hospital's Regional Medical Center and associated facilities; the Western Nevada Community College; the extensive manufacturing community; finance, real estate and insurance industries (FIR); banking, and other knowledge-based industries. Continue to coordinate the City's ongoing planning efforts and Land Use Map with major employers where applicable to ensure compatibility with their facility master plans and expansion efforts.

### **5.1b—Business Support and Recruitment**

Use available tools and programs, such as the Northern Nevada Development Authority's Business Retention Program and UNR's Small Business Development Center and its graduate School of Business, to support existing businesses and to recruit new, well-established companies to the community. Foster public/private partnerships to help cultivate new opportunities for current and future employers in the community and promote expansion and recruitment of industries that offer career opportunities for both secondary and post-secondary school graduates.

### **5.1c—Diverse Employment Opportunities**

Promote diverse job options and entrepreneurial opportunities for persons interested in full-time or part-time employment or desiring to own their own business.

### **5.1d—Industrial Specializations**

Identify, develop and enhance multiple industrial specializations. Improve opportunities for productive employment in key sectors, including, without limitation, those already present in Carson City.

**5.1e—Workforce Training**

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

**5.1f—Incentives**

Encourage public economic development assistance for applicants that can increase the average wage rate in their industrial sectors, provide high-quality benefit packages and enhance existing and locally targeted industry clusters.

**5.1g—Vertical Diversity**

Promote vertical diversity, which includes the identification and encouragement of industries consistent with the natural environment, existing industries and targeted clusters. Vertical diversity can be obtained through reducing supply chain costs, shared research and development objectives and other co-location efficiencies.

**5.1h—Diversity of Industry**

Emphasize diversity of industry toward those sectors that demonstrate a steady employment pattern, avoid seasonal layoffs, and withstand cyclical downturns of the economy.

**5.1i—Development Opportunities**

Plan for a diversity of ready-to-build sites with sufficient support infrastructure and services needed to meet demand of growing and targeted industries. Consider pre-designating tourism improvement districts (i.e., STAR bond districts), enhancing redevelopment areas and maximizing the potential of all available economic development tools.

**5.1j—Housing Mix**

Encourage a citywide housing mix consistent with the labor force and non-labor force populations of the City, recognizing that imbalance on either end of the spectrum may have adverse economic and fiscal impacts.

**5.1k—Social Services**

Encourage and expand those social services, both in the public and private sector, that are necessary to facilitate the broadest labor force participation, including training, job placement, child care, health care and transportation services.



*The City will encourage educational opportunities that promote the development of necessary skills for employment and advancement of its labor force.*



*Industry that favors steady employment patterns contributes to a more stable economy.*



*The City will encourage a mix of housing consistent with the labor force and non-labor force populations of the City.*

**GOAL 5.2—PROMOTE EXPANSION OF RETAIL SERVICE BASE**

**5.2a—Encourage Regional Retail**

Encourage the development of regional retail developments consisting of shops, restaurants, entertainment venues, offices, hotels, premium amenities and upscale gaming venues in the City to allow residents access to a variety of retail service and entertainment needs close to home, and to attract patrons from surrounding growth areas. Work with local and regional economic development organizations, such as the Carson City Retail Recruitment Team and the Chamber of Commerce, on the development of a marketing strategy designed to attract national retailers to the community, particularly within the Downtown CBD and where access can be provided from the Carson City Freeway.

**5.2b—Encourage Reuse/Redevelopment of Underused Retail Spaces**

Encourage the redevelopment and reuse of underutilized retail spaces along major gateway corridors (such as the vacant K-Mart building on North Carson Street, the Eagle Station and Southgate Shopping Centers on South Carson Street, and the Downtown central business district) with tenants that will serve the broader community. Use available tools, such as adding additional redevelopment districts, to attract retail tenants to underutilized spaces, and continue to explore the use of incentive programs, such as capital projects subsidies (e.g., access improvements and façade upgrades) and land subsidies to mitigate rising and prohibitive land costs.

**5.2c—Retail Leakage**

Closely monitor the diversity of retail sales activity in the City and promote economic development activities which reduce retail leakages. In doing so, recognize the longer-term economic implications of primary versus secondary employment opportunities.



*The City will place an emphasis on expanding its retail service base to include a more diverse array of shops, restaurants, entertainment venues, and other features.*

**GOAL 5.3— RECOGNIZE AND ADAPT TO THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON WORK AND WORKFORCE PATTERNS**

**5.3a—Home-Based Occupations**

Encourage the incorporation of home-based occupations and live/work units that are generally consistent with the character of adjoining properties and surrounding neighborhoods.

**5.3b—Technology Services**

Encourage low cost, easily accessible, state-of-the-art telecommunications and other technology services throughout the City.

**5.3c—Access to Community Information**

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

**GOAL 5.4—PROMOTE TOURISM ACTIVITIES AND AMENITIES THAT HIGHLIGHT THE CITY’S HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

**5.4a—Heritage Tourism**

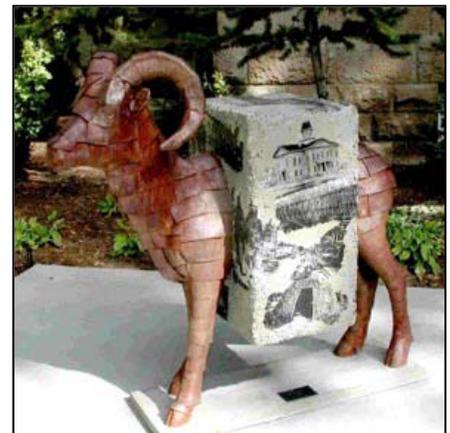
Support tourism activities associated with the major historic resources within the community, such as the V&T Railroad, the various cultural institutions, and the State Capitol Complex, by ensuring that future development supports the functions and visual character of these resources. Adopt design standards for developments that are adjacent to or highly visible from the V&T railroad alignment or the State Capitol Complex. Develop specific guidelines and policies for a tourism- focused activity center along Highway 50 East that will serve V&T Railroad visitors.

**5.4b—Historical/Interpretive Opportunities**

Encourage the development of historical opportunities, interpretive signage, and other amenities that complement and enhance the City’s historic resources. Continue to explore opportunities to establish trail access to the Carson River Canyon that honors and interprets the historic V&T railroad, expand Downtown walking tours and interpretive signage exhibits, and identify new opportunities to showcase the City’s historic resources.

**5.4c—Arts and Culture**

Support artists, arts organizations and related cultural institutions because of their significant contributions to the City’s healthy business climate; their role in creating a cultural environment that attracts other living wage employers, as well as tourists, to the region; and the substantial benefits they provide to the City’s residents and communities.



*Interpretive signage, recreational activities, and other features that complement the City’s historic resources will be encouraged.*



*Tourism activities and amenities that highlight the City's historic resources will be promoted.*



*The City will seek to increase awareness of its many recreational amenities as a tool for businesses seeking a high quality of life for their employees.*

## **GOAL 5.5—PROMOTE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND QUALITY OF LIFE AMENITIES AS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS**

### **5.5a—Community Recreational Facilities**

Expand opportunities to generate visitor revenue by continuing to promote the use of the community's sports complexes, aquatic facility, community center, and theater for regional, state-wide, or national sports tournaments. Seek necessary funding to improve the quality of existing recreational facilities, and to develop additional facilities.

### **5.5b—Recreational Amenities**

Increase awareness of the City's parks, sport complexes, pathway system, open space system, and other recreational amenities as a tool for attracting businesses seeking a high quality of life for their employees. Develop promotional materials that highlight these facilities and distribute materials to target markets or specific companies considering relocating to Carson City.

### **5.5c—Lake Tahoe Gateway**

Develop promotional materials that highlight the City as a primary gateway to Lake Tahoe and its associated recreational and tourism amenities as a means of attracting additional tourism revenues and promoting the City as an attractive place to live and work.

### **5.5d—Airport-Related Uses**

Continue to support the goals and policies of the Airport Master Plan. Encourage the development of airport-related commercial uses (e.g., sightseeing flights, skydiving, and extreme skiing tours) that will increase the City's visibility and marketability as a destination for tourists and recreational aviators.

### **5.5e—Public Facilities**

Provide the public services and public facilities necessary to sustain a high quality of life and attract business investment. Consider obtaining additional information directly from business operators to better define these services.

### **5.5f—Natural Resource Conservation**

Encourage economic development that conserves natural resources and open spaces, protects environmental quality and enhances the overall quality of life.

**5.5g—Educational Resources**

Emphasize educational resources of the community as an economic development tool. Enhance those resources where possible and efficient to do so.

**GOAL 5.6—PROMOTE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION****5.6a—Downtown Revitalization**

Encourage the redevelopment of underutilized properties, and the renovation and re-use of vacant buildings in the Downtown core. Establish additional incentives (e.g., density bonuses, an expanded range of permitted uses, or reduced parking requirements) that complement existing redevelopment tools.

**5.6b—Business Retention and Expansion**

Promote the retention and expansion of existing Downtown businesses through recruitment and retention of local restaurants and trend retail, along with other complementary services that provide local entrepreneurial franchise opportunities. Continue to explore opportunities to establish a Downtown Business Association (DBA), Local Improvement District (LID) and/or a Business Improvement District (BID) in Downtown to help pay for public infrastructure improvements and/or Downtown area marketing and events coordination.



*Downtown revitalization will be encouraged through the renovation and reuse of existing buildings where feasible, as well as through infill and redevelopment—these images illustrate how Downtown might look in the future as a result.*

**5.6c—Downtown Housing**

Encourage the incorporation of additional housing in and around Downtown (e.g., lofts, condominiums, duplexes, live-work units) to establish a mixed-use environment that encourages around-the-clock activity, supports Downtown businesses, and promotes the perception of Downtown as a safe, vibrant, and inviting urban neighborhood.

**5.6d—Public and Private Partnerships**

Seek opportunities for public/private partnerships on individual projects with the potential to play a major role in or serve as a future model for Downtown revitalization efforts, in terms of their size, location, use (i.e., incorporation of attainable housing, joint use parking, structured parking, etc.).

**5.6e—Downtown Parking Strategy**

Ensure that the parking needs of both existing and future businesses, employees, and residents can be served using a combination of private and public parking. Establish a Downtown Parking Strategy that identifies and recommends solutions to short and long-term parking deficiencies.

**5.6f—State Government Cluster**

Recognize the unique opportunity created by the state government cluster and contribute to the stabilization and redevelopment of Downtown through the provision of supporting services such as transportation enhancements, parking, utilities and police and fire protection, as well as the adaptive reuse of historic buildings that contribute to the commercial and cultural economic base of this area.



*Downtown revitalization activities should build upon opportunities created by the City's state government cluster.*

**GOAL 5.7—PROMOTE A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**5.7a—Public/Private Sector Collaboration**

Promote collaboration. Work with other levels of government and with the private sector to support and encourage activities associated with the re-use, expansion and economic development as necessary and appropriate.

**5.7b—Development Procedures**

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

**5.7c—Statewide Economic Development Efforts**

Leverage, wherever possible, statewide economic development efforts to help attract business investment to Carson City and promote the benefits of the region.

**5.7d—Business Cycles**

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

**5.7e—Neighboring Counties**

Recognize that Carson City's economy and economic development are impacted by a broader economic unit that includes surrounding counties. Wherever possible, and where there is a net positive economic and fiscal gain, economic development strategies should be collaborative.

**5.7f—Property Value Retention/Enhancement**

Promote economic development alternatives that protect or enhance existing and future property values – commercial, industrial and residential.

**5.7g—Adequate Infrastructure**

Recognize the importance of adequate infrastructure in economic development and long-run economic stability.

**GOAL 5.8—PROMOTE FISCAL AND ECONOMIC HEALTH****5.8a—Balanced Revenue System**

To the extent of the City's control, maintain a balanced revenue system that is competitive for business and residential investment.

**5.8b—Fiscal Impact**

Recognize the unique nature of Nevada's tax system and promote economic development alternatives that result in a net positive fiscal impact for the City.

## GOAL 5.9—PROMOTE REDEVELOPMENT

*Illustrative rendering of a revitalized Carson Street as the result of continued infill and redevelopment efforts.*



### 5.9b—Redevelopment Areas

The City will continue to work with local businesses and property owners to encourage and assist in redevelopment efforts within the boundaries of its existing redevelopment areas. Efforts should be focused on encouraging higher intensity and mixed-use development in Downtown and along major gateway corridors. Existing redevelopment areas boundaries should be reviewed periodically and expanded to support the redevelopment objectives of this Master Plan.