



**COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
PLANNING & BUILDING DIVISION**

**Master Plan
Population Element**

**WASHOE COUNTY
NEVADA**

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Master Plan Population Element

This document is one of a series that, as adopted, constitutes a part of the Master Plan for Washoe County, Nevada. This document is available for \$10.00 from the Washoe County Department of Community Development. If you have a copy of the Washoe County Comprehensive Plan notebook, please place this behind the Population Element tab. The Washoe County Comprehensive Plan can also be found on our department's website.

In accordance with Article 820 of the Washoe County Development Code, the Population Element (CP06-018) was adopted by Resolution No. 08-19 of the Washoe County Planning Commission on October 7, 2008, by the Washoe County Commission on November 10, 2008 and found in conformance with the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan by the Regional Planning Commission on January 14, 2009. Copies of the adopting resolutions are kept in the Washoe County Planning Commission and Washoe County Commission archival files. Amended by the Washoe County Commission, Resolution Number R20-051 on September 22, 2020 and found in conformance with the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan on November 12, 2020.

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Introduction

Nevada Revised Statutes, Section 278.170, requires that counties with populations in excess of 100,000 persons prepare a population element as part of their Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of the Population Element is to provide a method for entities to identify the projected growth in population and to set forth plans, policies and action programs through which the needs of the projected population will be met. The Washoe County Comprehensive Plan Population Element examines the population in terms of past and projected growth, generalized age groups, employment, income and land uses supported by the adopted land use plan through the year 2038.

The impacts associated with projected growth patterns are related to the various subject areas of the Comprehensive Plan. In addition to the Population Element, the Conservation Element addresses issues related to aspects of archaeological and historic significance; scenic resources, land resources such as soils and topography; and water issues such as the availability and use of surface water and groundwater, the treatment of wastewater and urban storm water, flood control, floodplains, wetlands and fisheries; and air quality issues as they relate to strategies for dealing with the increased stationary and mobile emissions which are attributed to new growth. The Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE) addresses issues related to adequately providing for the land use and transportation systems that will be needed for the projected housing and land use demands, while concurrently discouraging sprawled communities where the automobile is viewed as a necessity to obtain daily amenities. The Public Services and Facilities Element addresses issues relating to the provision of necessary services and infrastructure to support the existing and future population base of unincorporated Washoe County.

Population Forecasting Background

The Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency (TMRPA) Regional Plan (Regional Plan) sets forth requirements that each of the jurisdictions utilize Consensus Forecasting as the primary technique in developing a population forecast. Washoe County and its regional partners most recently developed the 2018 Consensus Forecast with a 2018-2038 forecasted time frame that took into account the variables of population growth rates, age distribution, employment, and income. The previous Consensus Forecast (2016-2036) was developed in 2016.

Consensus Forecast

The most current Consensus for Washoe County, at the time of this writing is the 2018 Consensus Forecast for Washoe County which uses a number of leading forecasts, which has several advantages over using a single source for forecasting population. The consensus approach minimizes the risk of large forecast errors and consensus forecasts consistently outperform individual forecasts across a range of variables. Washoe County recognizes the use of the most current adopted version of the Washoe County Consensus Forecast for all master planning and regional planning activities.

The most current Consensus for Washoe County is available at tmrpa.org, and is incorporated herein, by reference.

Natural Resources

Land Resources

The factors which influence, and will continue to influence, the pattern of land use in the County include historic growth patterns, development trends, availability of infrastructure, public land and development constraints. The Washoe County Comprehensive Plan Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE) and Area Plans are intended to implement the local and regional goals of improved traffic mobility and air quality, and achieve a balance of employment and

housing opportunities. Accommodating future growth requires coordinated planning and decision making designed to best manage limited fiscal and environmental resources. The success of local commerce and industry depends on the availability of public infrastructure including schools, parks, libraries, hospitals and the sewers, water and streets required to serve those facilities. Existing vacant planned land use and approved projects could easily accommodate the projected population. The natural resources of the County will support the projected population on a continuing basis without unreasonable impairment.

Air Quality

The Washoe County District Health Department, Air Quality Management Division (AQMD) has provided an Air Quality Trends report to present air quality data from 1995 to 2006. Listed below are the Attainment Status figures for this 11-year period:

Particulate Matter < microns size (PM10):

24-hour – “Serious Non-Attainment (as of 2/7/01)

Annual – Attainment

The Truckee Meadows Hydrographic Basin (Reno/Sparks urban area) defines the boundaries for the PM10 non-attainment area. On January 14, 2005, Washoe County recorded exceeded the 24 hour National Ambient Air Quality Attainment Standards (NAAQS). This was the first time the 24 hour was exceeded since 1999.

Particulate Matter <2.5 microns in size (PM2.5):

24-hour – Attainment

Annual – Attainment

The AQMD began monitoring for PM2.5 in January 1999. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires three years of complete and quality assured data prior to the classification of the area. In 2005, EPA designated Washoe County attainment of the 24 hour annual PM2.5 NAAQS.

Carbon Monoxide:

1-hour – Attainment

8-hour – Moderate (<12.7 ppm) “Moderate” Non-Attainment

The boundaries for the CO non-attainment area are also considered to be the Truckee Meadows Hydrographic Area 87. The last time the 8 hour CO NAAQS was exceeded was recorded on December 13, 1991. In September 2005, Washoe County AQMD submitted a request to the EPA for re-designation to an attainment area for the 8 hour NAAQS. Washoe County, including the Truckee Meadows CO NAA, is in attainment for the 1-hour CO NAAQS.

Ozone:

1-hour – NAAQS Rescinded June 2005. Previously “Marginal” Non-Attainment

8-hour – Attainment

Washoe County was designated a marginal ozone non-attainment area until EPA rescinded the 1 hour NAAQS in 2005. EPA has designated Washoe County as attainment of the 8-hour ozone standard.

Water Supply and Quality

In accordance with the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) chapter 540A, the Regional Water Planning Commission must adopt a plan that covers the supply of municipal and industrial (M&I) water, quality of water, sanitary sewage, drainage of storm waters, and the control of floods. The 2004 – 2025 Washoe County Comprehensive Regional Water Management Plan provides an extensive outlook and measures to sustain the criteria listed above with regard to population growth over the next twenty years. Unfortunately, the Water Management Plan does not include the 2025 to 2030 period.

Goals and Policies

Goal One: Update the Washoe County Comprehensive Plan Population Element pursuant to a schedule adopted in the most recent version of the adopted Truckee Meadows Regional Plan to ensure that planned population, land use, and public services and facilities are based on the most current information.

Goal Two: Maintain a 20-year planning horizon for the Washoe County Comprehensive Plan.

Goal Three: Plan for a balanced development pattern that includes employment and housing opportunities, public services and open spaces.

Goal Four: Coordinate population growth with the availability of water, sanitary sewer, streets and highways, and other public facilities and services.

Conclusion

The growth in employment and population in unincorporated Washoe County through the year 2038 will have a broad range of impacts. The issues that must be addressed as a result of these impacts will be complex. These issues, which are discussed in the following elements, provide the basis for the Washoe County Comprehensive Plan.

Conservation planning must address protection of archaeological sites, historic places and scenic areas; the relationship between land development and soils, topography, vegetation, geological hazards, geothermal sites, minerals, wildlife and agricultural areas; and the interrelated issues of surface water, groundwater, wastewater, urban storm water, flood control, protection of floodplains, wetlands and fisheries. Planning and management strategies must be implemented as soon as possible in order to ensure adequate water resources for future growth and development. Air quality planning and implementation measures must be continued to reduce carbon monoxide, ozone and total suspended particulate emissions in the Truckee Meadows.

Public services and facilities planning must recognize that the location of development in new areas, as well as population growth in general, will create the need for new and expanded public services and facilities. Adequate public safety, general government, libraries, schools, parks and recreation, and other public facilities must be provided to ensure efficient delivery of public services and a desirable quality of life.

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