

Humboldt County

Economic and Community Analysis—Phase I



Better City
Solving Problems. Creating Opportunity.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Better City was hired by the Northern Nevada Regional Development Authority (NNRDA) and the Humboldt Development Authority (HDA) in early 2018 to create a comprehensive economic development assessment and strategic plan for Humboldt County (the “County”). The scope of work for the project includes identifying economic development projects that can attract private-sector investment, assessing economic and demographic trends, and creating a plan to make the County’s economy more robust. This document reports on the first phase of Better City’s assessment and is part of a broader community development initiative, led by NNRDA and HDA. This assessment and the subsequent strategic plan is meant to work in conjunction with the ongoing *Winnemucca Futures* Project.

The first phase of Better City’s process is to gather information and data relating to economic/demographic trends, community assets, and community priorities. The findings of this analysis are summarized in the report and will be used in later phases of the project. The Second Phase will leverage the insights gained from this phase to recommend projects and initiatives which the community should adopt to leverage the County’s assets, reverse negative demographic trends, and maintain the unique character of the region. The third phase of the project will be focused on implementation.

This report is broken up into eight sections, each with a focus on a different aspect of the community.¹ Key findings of each section are provided in the following list. More detailed supporting data

and analysis can be found in the subsequent sections, specified in parentheses after each key insight.

- Humboldt County grew rapidly between 1970 and 2000, but growth has slowed since then to 1.3 percent per year (Demographics)
- The County’s loss of population is mostly attributable to negative net migration, especially in the 45 to 49 age cohort (Demographics)
- Approximately 26 percent of the County’s population identifies as Hispanic/Latino (Demographics)
- The County’s median age decreased slightly between 2010 and 2016, from 36.2 years to 35.2 years (Demographics)
- The largest shares of the community are weighted toward children and young adults (Demographics)
- The most underrepresented age cohort is those of retirement age—65 and older (Demographics)
- The share of post-high school education is lower in the County than in the State (Education)
- Approximately 26 percent of the County’s population age 25 and greater has completed “some college” but has not earned a degree (Education)
- Few workers are unemployed, making it difficult for new businesses to find employees from the current labor pool (Workforce)
- Total employment has dropped steadily each year since 2013, representing an estimated loss of 850 workers (Workforce)

¹ Note: Since this report is focused on the County as a whole, many graphs and charts will focus on County-level datasets. However, since most of the County’s population and assets

are in the City of Winnemucca, some of the charts may also analyze City-level data and trends.

- The largest entities by employee count are Humboldt County School District, Turquoise Ridge Joint Venture, Newmont Mining Corp, Marigold Mining Co., and Humboldt General Hospital (Workforce)
- 77.2 percent of the County’s workforce is employed by a private entity (Workforce)
- The “Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction” cluster represents the largest cluster by number of jobs in the County, followed by “Government and Government Enterprises” and “Retail Trade” (Industry Analysis)
- The Mining cluster makes up approximately 40.7 percent of total payroll (Industry Analysis)
- The industries which experienced the largest amount of job growth between 2012 and 2016 were “Government and Government Enterprises” and “Real Estate and Rental and Leasing” (Industry Analysis)
- The industries which saw the most significant job losses over the period were “Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction” and “Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services” (Industry Analysis)
- The Industry that has been most affected by regional factors is “Construction” (Industry Analysis)
- The County’s three most-concentrated industries are “Farm Employment,” “Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction,” and “Utilities” (Industry Analysis)
- The two least-concentrated industries are “Finance and Insurance” and “Real Estate and Rental and Leasing” (Industry Analysis)
- The industries that experienced the most contraction between 2012 and 2016 were “Construction,” “Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services,” and “Retail Trade” (Industrial Analysis)
- Humboldt County’s median household income is \$67,295, which is higher than the State’s \$53,094 and is competitive with comparable counties in northern Nevada (Income)
- An estimated 8.7 percent of household incomes are below the poverty level. The overall poverty rate is 11.9 percent, which is lower than the State’s overall rate of 14.9 percent (Income)
- Housing prices and availability are historically somewhat volatile (Housing)
- There is a lack of contractors and sub-contractors for home construction (Housing)
- The County has a high ownership rate of 75.3 percent, much higher than the State’s rate of 45.2 percent (Housing)
- Based on the County’s median income of \$67,296, an estimated 70.3 percent of the County’s 3,083 residential properties are assessed as affordable (Housing)
- 86 percent of the County’s 1,525 rental units are considered affordable (Housing)
- Notable housing shortages are in homes valued between \$62,500 and \$87,500, as well as homes above \$187,500 (Housing)
- People in higher-income categories are buying homes that are valued below what they are able to afford, squeezing the middle-priced homes in the market (Housing)
- A majority (58.4 percent) of the County’s residents reported that they drive 20 minutes or less to get to work. 77.6 percent of the County’s population reported that they drive less than an hour to get to work (Market Area)
- 99.3 percent of workers in Humboldt County reported that they work in Nevada; 90.1 percent of workers

reported that they are employed within the County (Market Area)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the community members and stakeholders who participated in the creation of this document. Their input and ideas contribute to the value of this document to the community. Since Stakeholder interviews were still underway at the time of writing, individuals will not be listed until the next phase of the project.

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DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic trends are important for understanding the makeup and movement of the County’s residents. An analysis was conducted to examine City and County demographic trends with an eye to how they relate to economic development.

COUNTY POPULATION BREAKDOWN

The population of Humboldt County is concentrated near Interstate 80, in and around the City of Winnemucca. Winnemucca (the “City”) is the only incorporated city in the County and also serves as the county seat.

The incorporated boundaries of Winnemucca do not represent most of the County’s population; however, this seems to be because of the growth which has occurred directly outside City boundaries. When the unincorporated areas surrounding the City are included—particularly to the south and southwest in the Grass Valley neighborhood—more than three-quarters of the County’s population (76 percent) are represented. Approximately 90 percent of the population lives within five miles of Winnemucca.

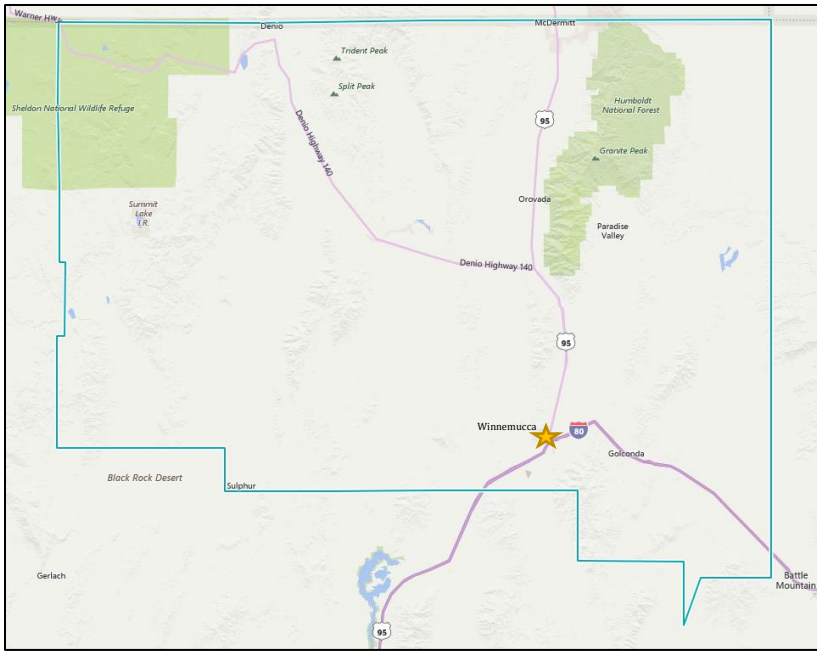
The remaining population lives in smaller communities located throughout the County, such as Fort McDermitt (representing approximately three percent), Orovada (one percent) and Golconda (one percent).

Community	Designation	2016 Pop. (Est.)	% of Total
Winnemucca	City	7,881	46%
	<i>w/ Surrounding Unicorp.</i>	13,069	76%
Fort McDermitt	Census Designated Place	482	3%
Golconda	Census Designated Place	223	1%
Orovada	Census Designated Place	208	1%
McDermitt	Census Designated Place	177	1%
Paradise Valley	Census Designated Place	171	1%
Valmy	Census Designated Place	110	1%
Denio	Census Designated Place	46	0%
Humboldt County		17,091	100%

SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Table 1—County Population Breakdown

Map 1 shows the size and shape of the County, with Winnemucca situated near the southern border. The three main thoroughfares in the County are Interstate 80, U.S. Route 95, and State Route 140.



SOURCE: Bing Maps

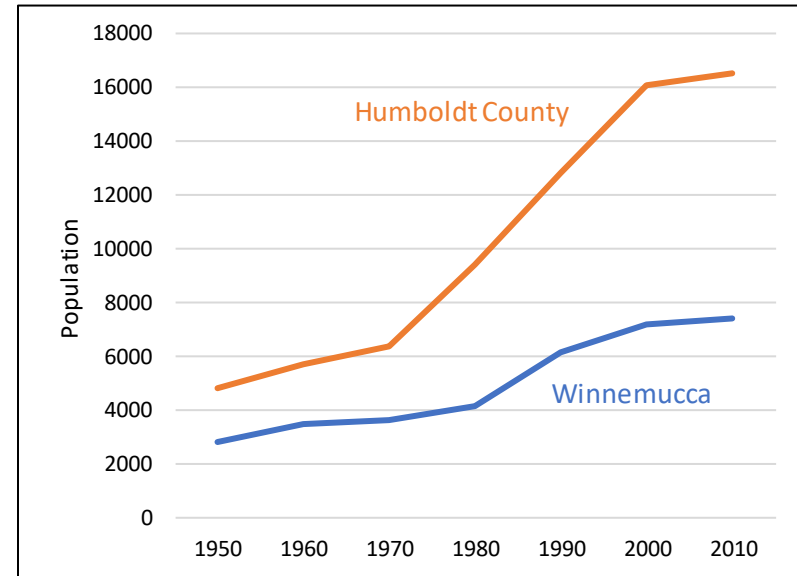
Map 1—Humboldt County

POPULATION GROWTH

Humboldt County experienced significant population growth between 1970 and 2000. After 2000, growth has continued but at a relatively slower pace (1.3 percent per year). This slower growth is likely attributable to a larger national demographic trend, wherein people are leaving rural areas for urban locations.

Growth has been relatively stable within City limits (an increase of approximately 2.7 percent per year since 1950). However, it is likely that most of the growth represented in the County occurred in the developments immediately surrounding Winnemucca, such as the Grass Valley neighborhood. Growth is expected to continue

in the area due to Winnemucca's location on I-80 and greater access to amenities compared to other areas of the County.

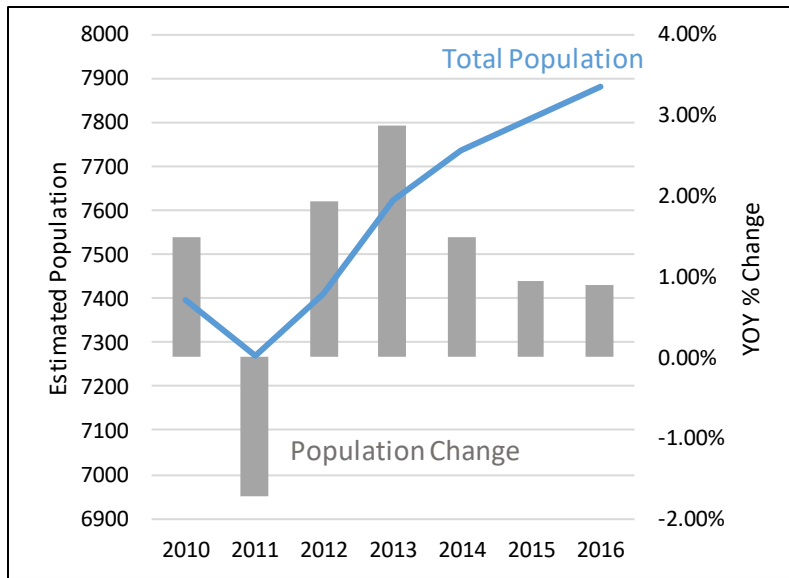


SOURCE: City and Town Intercensal Datasets

Figure 1—Humboldt, Winnemucca Decennial Population Trends

Winnemucca

Since 2000, the City has experienced an average of one percent growth per year. However, population volatility is common and largely reflects the hiring and firing decisions of the mining industry. Fortunately, recent years have showed relatively stable growth—the City has enjoyed growth every year since 2003 (except for 2011, when the price of gold dropped).

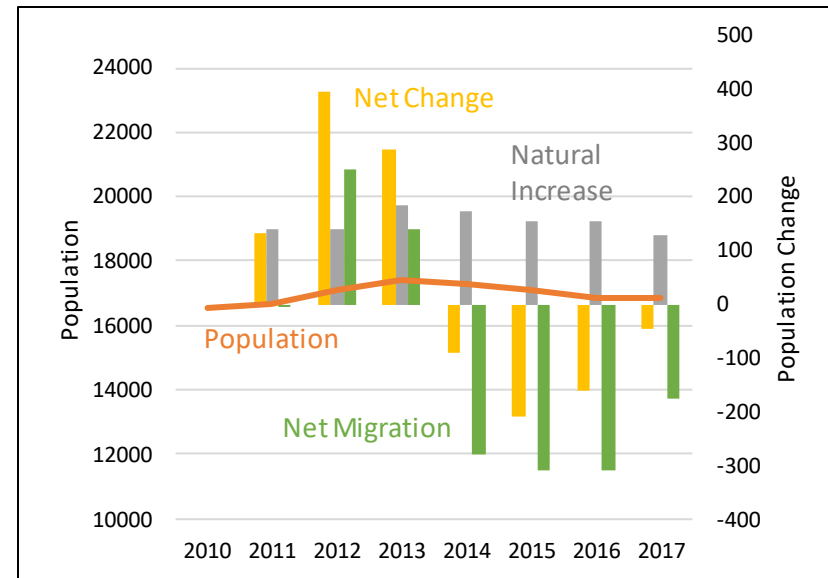


SOURCE: City and Town Intercensal Datasets, 2000-2010, 2010-2016

Figure 2—Winnemucca Population Trends

Humboldt County

Humboldt County’s population experienced growth in 2011 and 2012 but has been decreasing every year since 2013. A more specific analysis of the demographic changes shows that, while the County has experienced more births than deaths (natural increase), the loss of population is largely attributable to negative net migration. County-level data show that the loss of individuals mostly comes from the 45 to 49 age cohort. There aren’t enough data available to provide a reliable nominal estimate for this loss (percentage change estimates are analyzed on page 17).

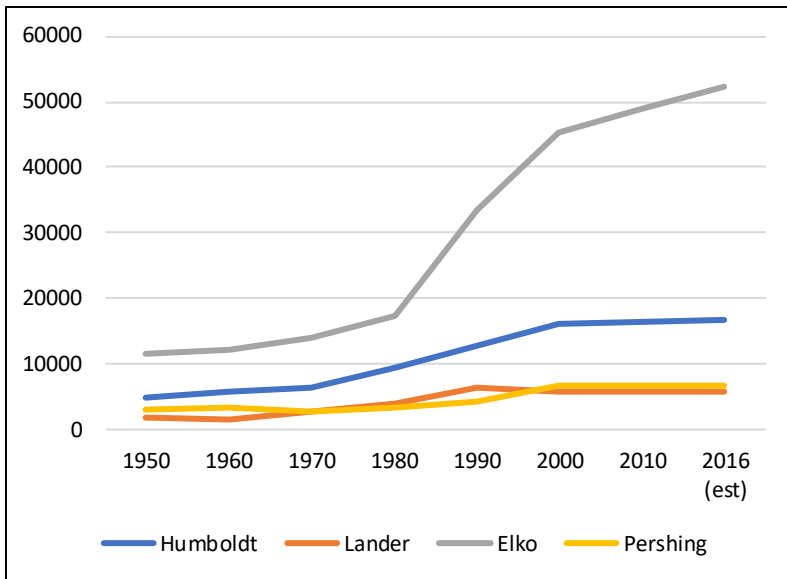


SOURCE: US Census Annual Population Estimates

Figure 3—Humboldt County Population Trends

Regional Comparison

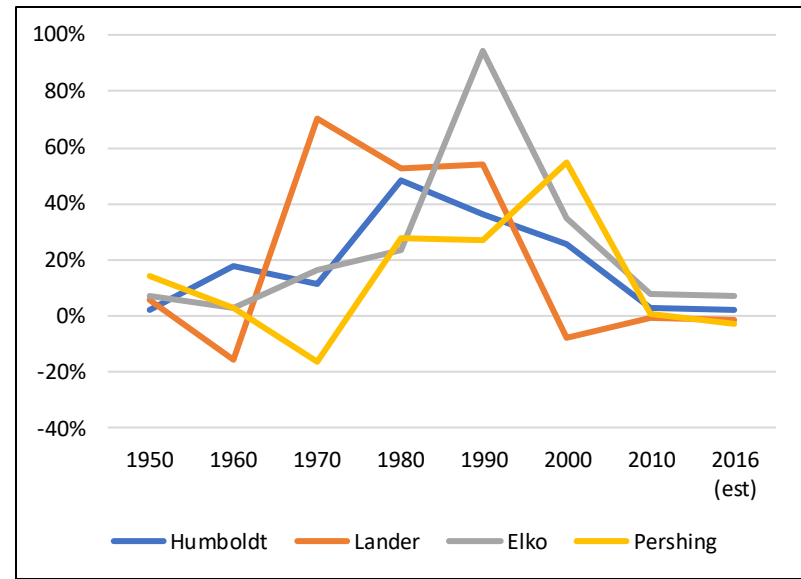
Other Counties with a county seat situated along I-80 (“comparable counties”) have also experienced growth since 1950. Elko, the largest of these counties by population, has seen the most growth. Populations in other counties, including Humboldt County, have become largely stagnant since 2000 (see Figure 4).



SOURCE: US Decennial Census Datasets

Figure 4—Population Growth County Comparison

When looking at percent-growth per decade, the Counties appear more similar. Each county has experienced periods of significant growth (such as in the 80's and 90's) but have also experienced more muted growth in recent years.



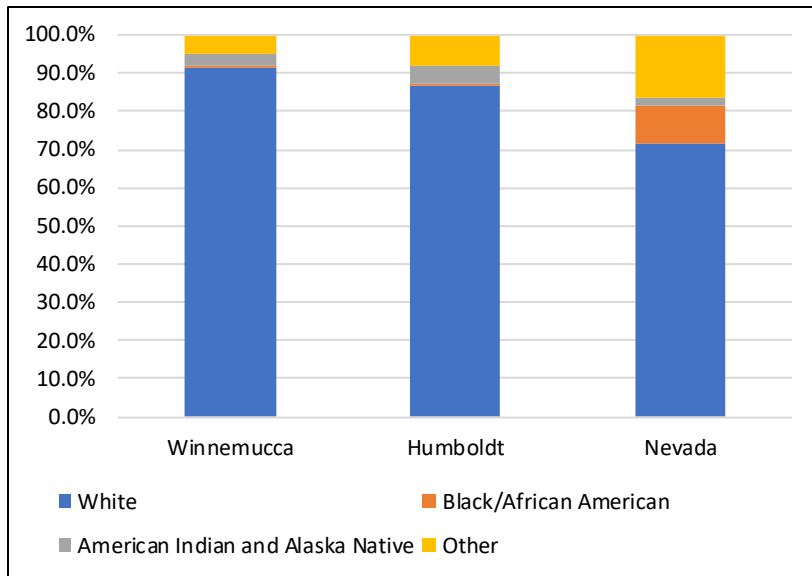
SOURCE: US Decennial Census Datasets

Figure 5—County Population Growth (%)

RACE PROFILE

According to 2016 Census estimates, Winnemucca is racially homogenous, with more than 91 percent of the respondents identifying as White. The remaining eight percent identify as Black/African American (0.2 percent), American Indian (3.1 percent) and other (five percent).

The County has a similar racial breakdown, with 86.7 percent identifying as white, 0.5 percent identifying as Black/African American, 4.8 percent identifying as American Indian, and eight percent as other.

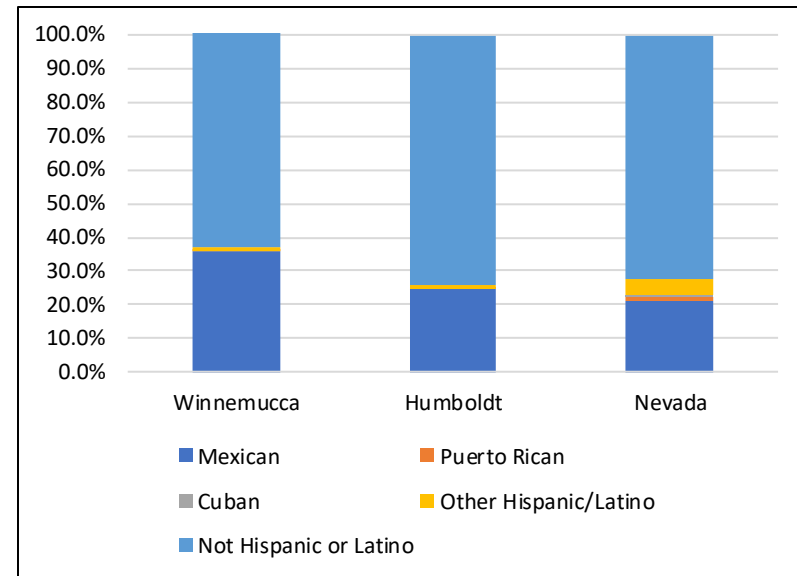


SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 6—Race Profile Comparison (2016)

Ethnic Profile

Of respondents in Winnemucca, approximately 35.7 percent identified as Mexican. The remaining 64.3 percent of respondents did not identify as Hispanic or Latino (with a very small percentage identifying as other Hispanic/Latino). Humboldt County has approximately 25 percent identifying as Mexican and 74.1 percent identifying as not Hispanic/Latino (see Figure 7). This ethnic group, making up a quarter of the County, is a key part of the community and was underrepresented in stakeholder interviews and at public meetings. The County should ensure that this group is engaged and has a voice in community and economic development.

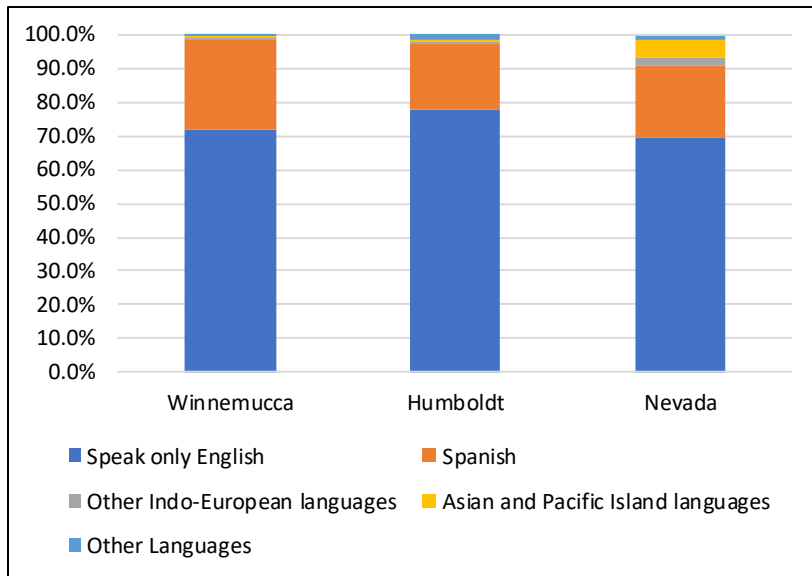


SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 7—Hispanic/Latino Profile Comparison

LANGUAGE

A large share of the population in Winnemucca (approximately 72 percent) speaks only English at home, with the remaining speaking Spanish (26.7 percent) or other languages (1.5 percent). Humboldt County has similar language diversity, with 78.1 percent speaking English, 19.4 percent speaking Spanish, and 2.6 percent speaking other languages at home.

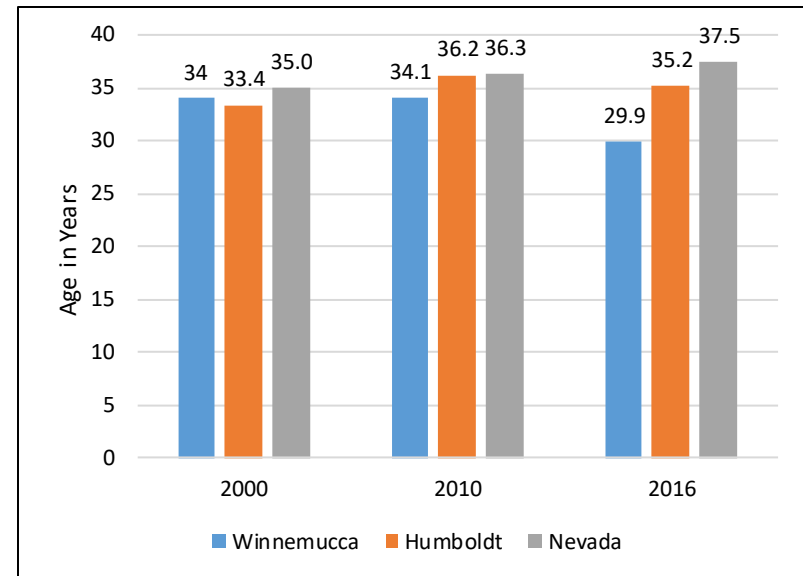


SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 8—Language Spoken at Home

AGE COMPARISON

Winnemucca’s median age has decreased over time, from 34 in 2000 to an estimated 29.9 in 2016. Humboldt County, in comparison, saw an increase in median age between 2000 and 2010, from 33.4 to 36.2 years, followed by a decrease to 35.2 between 2010 and 2016. The State has grown older over the same period (35 in 2000 to 37.5 in 2016, see Figure 9).

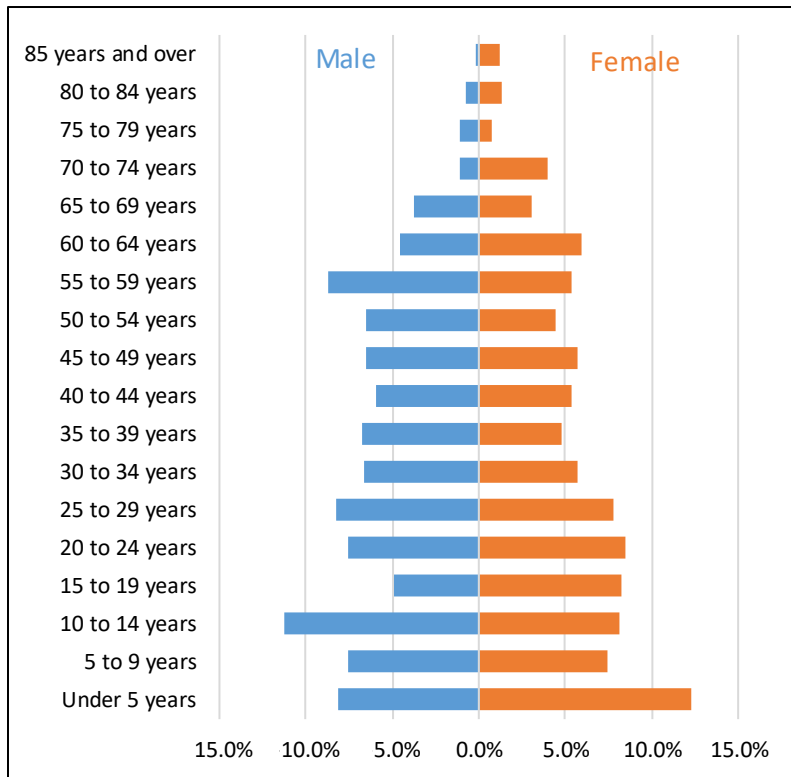


SOURCE: US Decennial Census, ACS 2016 5-Year Estimates

Figure 9—City, County, State Median Ages over Time

Winnemucca

The largest shares of ages in the City are under five years, 10 to 14, 20 to 24, and 25 to 29. The smallest shares of ages are 80 to 84, 74 to 79, and 85 and over. This is good news for the community in that it shows that there is a good base of children, youth, and those just starting their careers. However, it also shows that many retirees are likely leaving the area after they finish their careers and may indicate that additional age-in-place infrastructure is needed. This observation in the data was also confirmed anecdotally in interviews with stakeholders, as many reported that they themselves intended to, or knew others who intended to, retire in another community.



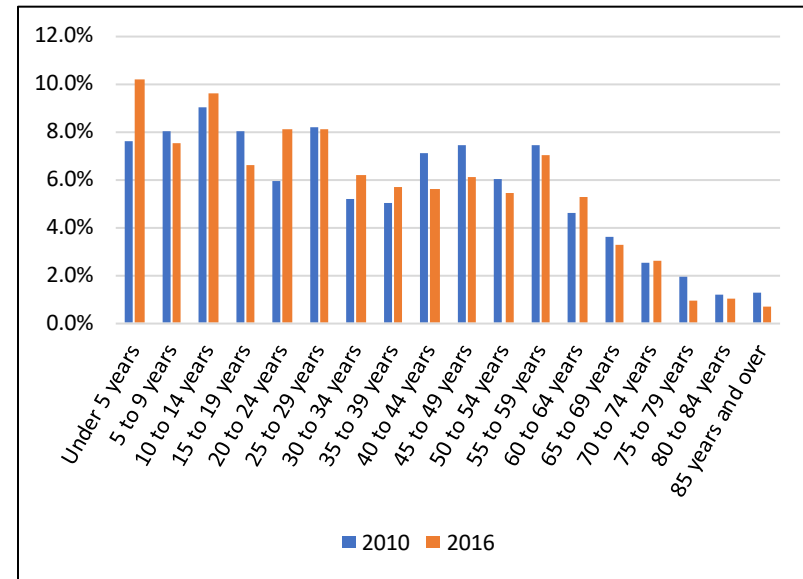
SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 10—Winnemucca Age and Sex Demographics (2016)

Since 2010, the share of young children under the age of five has increased by 2.6 percent (from 7.6 percent of the population in 2010 to an estimated 10.2 percent in 2016). The cause of this increase is likely due to a similar increase in those aged 20 to 24 years, who are starting families and have young children (see Figure 11).

The age group which saw the largest decrease over the period was 40 to 44 (an estimated loss of 281 individuals). The loss of this age group is concerning. Stakeholders were asked about possible

causes of this discrepancy but were unable to determine a reason. It could be an anomaly in the data but should be analyzed further when the 2020 Census is published.

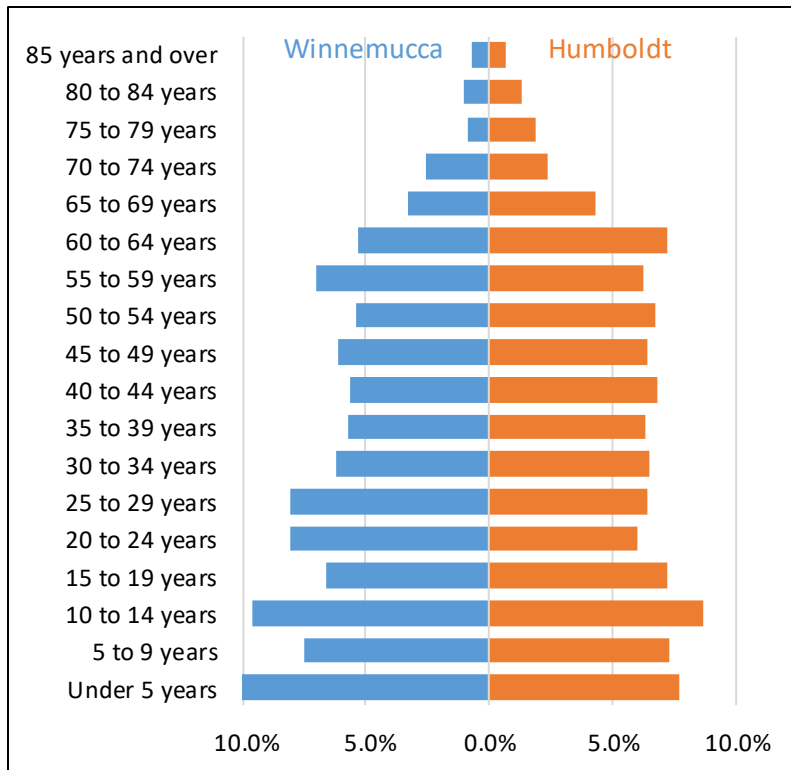


SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 11—Winnemucca Demographic Changes (2010 to 2016)

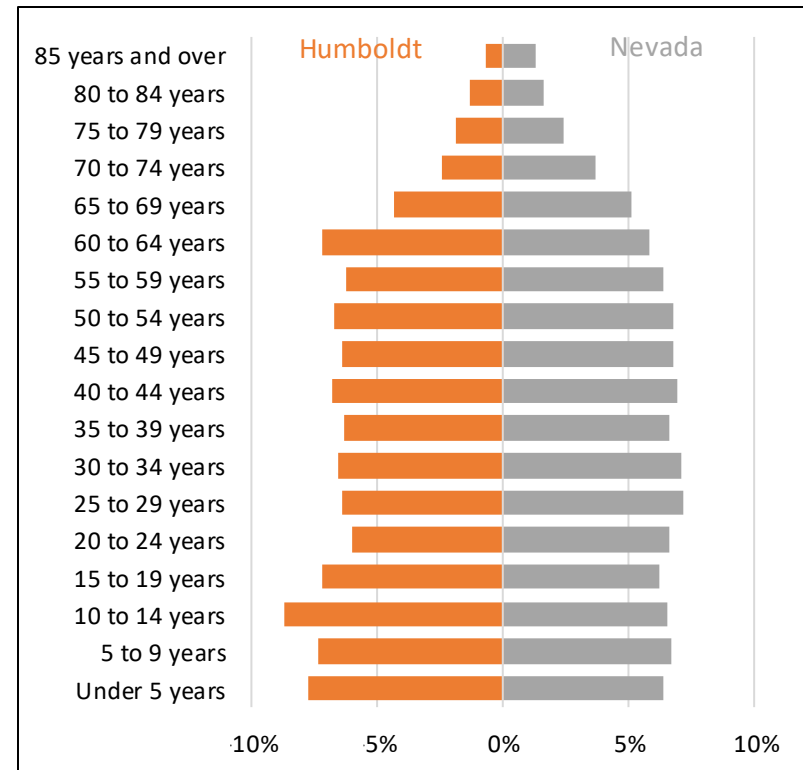
Humboldt County

The County and City age pyramids are very similar, with a relatively high share of younger individuals (under the age of 15) and an underrepresentation of those of retirement age (65+). No significant discrepancies exist between the two.



SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 12—City, County Age Comparison



SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 13—County, State Age Comparison

The County age pyramid estimates are very similar to the State, essentially mirroring one another (see Figure 13). The only exception is an unusually large share of individuals in the County aged 60 to 64 (pre-retirement age) and the underrepresentation of those in retirement age (65+). The State is likely capturing these retiring individuals, who leave Winnemucca and move to Reno or other metropolitan areas after they finish their careers.

EDUCATION

Education is an important factor of economic development. A highly educated, high-skilled workforce makes the economy more robust, giving it the ability to adapt to technological and social changes while also increasing the potential for employer recruitment and entrepreneurship.

Education does not only include the degrees earned by the population, but also the availability of educational institutions so that people can access new knowledge and skills. An analysis was performed of the County's educational offerings and attainment to determine the degree to which the population has access to educational opportunities and to degree or certificate programs.

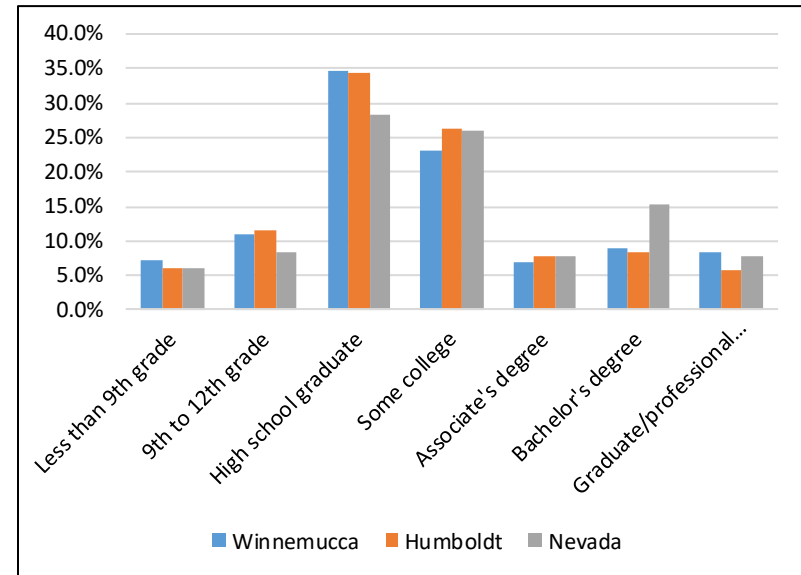
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

A majority of the population (82.4 percent) in the County is a high school graduate or above. This is comparable to the estimated level of high school achievement in the State.

Post-high school education in the County, however, is lower than State levels. While 23.2 percent of Nevada's population has a bachelor's degree or higher, only seven percent of the County and 8.7 percent of the City have received a bachelor's degree or higher (see Figure 14).

A lower share of bachelor's degrees in no way represents the skills or capabilities of the population because there are many highly skilled individuals who are working in positions and industries that don't require a 4-year degree. Yet the low percentage of degree-holding individuals may impact the ability of the economy to diversify into other industries, such as technology or professional services. The county should focus on converting the relatively high share of those who have "some college"

(approximately 26 percent for the County and 23 percent for the City) into associate's or bachelor's degrees. Increasing the share of degree-holders will make the County more appealing to specialized employers who have a degree requirement as one of the first hurdles of relocation or expansion. This effort will become increasingly important as the modern economy continues to become technologically reliant.



SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 14—Educational Attainment, Age 25+

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The availability of good schools is a key determiner for families as they decide whether they should move into or out of a given area. An analysis was performed of the Humboldt County School District to evaluate the competitiveness of its schools compared to schools in comparable counties.

Humboldt County School District

Humboldt County School District is the largest employer in the County, with between 500 and 599 total employees. According to the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), the district served 3,399 students in the 2016-17 school year.

The State’s ranking data were used for each level of education and are used to allow comparison between schools. Additionally, Greatschools.org is used, if available, to provide a secondary source of ratings.²

Elementary Schools

Elementary Schools are a vital asset to the community because it can be a deal-breaker for young families. Parents want to live in a community that offers families the best teachers, books, and test scores. It can therefore be an impediment to families if they feel the school district is lacking or not providing the opportunities that their children deserve. Therefore, a well-performing district can expect to be a positive force for recruiting and keeping young families.

Denio Elementary School

Denio Elementary School is in a small town on the Nevada-Oregon border. The school offers K-8 education, allowing the students to attend until they are old enough to go to high school. The school has too few students to have any published statistics.

Grass Valley Elementary School

Grass Valley Elementary is located just off Grass Valley road and is not within the City’s borders. It provides education for most of the residents that live in the grass valley neighborhood, to the south of Winnemucca.

Grass Valley Elementary School	
Topic	Estimate
Total Enrollment	411
Student Teacher Ratio	19:1
ELA Proficiency	37.7%
Math Proficiency	43.2%
Daily Attendance Rate	91.4%
Great Schools Rating Score (Out of 10)	
Overall Score	5
Test Scores	5
Equity Overview	5

SOURCE: NDE 2016-17 Scores, Greatschools.org

Table 2—Grass Valley Elementary School Stats

Kings River Elementary School

Kings River Elementary is a rural school located in Orovada and is the smallest school in the district by enrollment. Due to the school’s size, only Daily Attendance Rates are reported.

² Great Schools is a national nonprofit that rates schools using testing data. Schools are only compared to other schools within the State. For more information regarding how these scores are compiled, visit: <https://www.greatschools.org/gk/summary-rating/>.

Kings River Elementary School	
Topic	Estimate
Total Enrollment	20
Student Teacher Ratio	20:1
ELA Proficiency	N/A
Math Proficiency	N/A
Daily Attendance Rate	94.4%

SOURCE: NDE 2016-17 Scores

Table 3—Kings River Elementary School Stats

McDermitt Elementary (Combined Schools)

McDermitt Elementary is part of the McDermitt Combined Schools, which is a combination of elementary, Jr. High, and High School offerings. NDE separates the schools for their rankings, so they will be separated in this report as well.

McDermitt Elementary	
Topic	Estimate
Total Enrollment	80
Student Teacher Ratio	16:1
ELA Proficiency	6.2%
Math Proficiency	3.1%
Daily Attendance Rate	90.1%

SOURCE: NDE 2016-17 Scores

Table 4—McDermitt Elementary School Stats

Orovada Elementary School

Orovada Elementary is also located in Orovada but has a higher student count. This school has the highest attendance rate of any

other Elementary School in the District. The student teacher ratio is 15:1.

Orovada Elementary School	
Topic	Estimate
Total Enrollment	30
Student Teacher Ratio	15:1
ELA Proficiency	28.5%
Math Proficiency	21.4%
Daily Attendance Rate	94.7%

SOURCE: NDE 2016-17 Scores

Table 5—Orovada Elementary School Stats

Paradise Valley Elementary School

Paradise Valley Elementary is another rural school located in the northern half of the County. The school has approximately 36 students and a student teacher ratio of 12:1.

Paradise Valley Elementary School	
Topic	Estimate
Total Enrollment	36
Student Teacher Ratio	12:1
ELA Proficiency	26.6%
Math Proficiency	6.6%
Daily Attendance Rate	92.3%

SOURCE: NDE 2016-17 Scores

Table 6—Paradise Valley Elementary School Stats

Sonoma Heights Elementary School

Sonoma Heights Elementary is located within the City’s boundaries and is therefore the largest elementary in the district by enrollment. The school’s student teacher ratio is 21:1.

Sonoma Heights Elementary School	
Topic	Estimate
Total Enrollment	517
Student Teacher Ratio	21:1
ELA Proficiency	39.7%
Math Proficiency	35.6%
Daily Attendance Rate	92.8%
Great Schools Rating Score (Out of 10)	
Overall Score	3
Test Scores	4
Equity Overview	2

SOURCE: NDE 2016-17 Scores, Greatschools.org

Table 7—Sonoma Heights Elementary School Stats

Winnemucca Grammar School

Winnemucca Grammar School is also located in Winnemucca and has an estimated enrollment of 251 students. The school has a student teacher ratio of 19:1.

Winnemucca Grammar School	
Topic	Estimate
Total Enrollment	351
Student Teacher Ratio	19:1
ELA Proficiency	48.8%
Math Proficiency	45.9%
Daily Attendance Rate	92.1%
Great Schools Rating Score (Out of 10)	
Overall Score	5
Test Scores	6
Equity Overview	3

SOURCE: NDE 2016-17 Scores, Greatschools.org

Table 8—Winnemucca Grammar School Stats

French Ford Middle School

French Ford serves the 5th and 6th grade students of Winnemucca and the surrounding neighborhoods. While not a traditional elementary school, it is still considered primary education, putting it in the same category as the elementary schools listed above.

French Ford Middle School	
Topic	Estimate
Total Enrollment	467
Student Teacher Ratio	24:1
ELA Proficiency	37.2%
Math Proficiency	30.9%
Daily Attendance Rate	93.7%

SOURCE: NDE 2016-17 Scores

Table 9—French Ford Middle School Stats

Elementary School Comparison

While it is important to understand how well the schools are performing individually, it is also worthwhile to see how Humboldt County School District compares with other districts in the region. Other rural districts were chosen as a basis for comparison using the State data.

As shown by Table 10, Humboldt County is competitive with the region for its elementary offerings. Humboldt was average in terms of enrollment but below average in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math proficiency scores (a state-wide standardization tool), as well as Daily Attendance, for the 2016-17 school year.

Regional Comparison—Elementary Schools				
Name	Total Enrollment	ELA Proficiency	Math Proficiency	Daily Attendance Rate
Humboldt SD	3,399	38.1%	34.7%	91.5%
Elko SD	9,907	36.60%	35.40%	94.8%
Lander SD	1,004	48.3%	40.1%	93.3%
Pershing SD	627	39.4%	27.8%	94.3%
Eureka SD	276	55.5%	46.6%	94.6%

SOURCE: NDE 2016-17 Scores

Table 10—Elementary School Comparison

Based on these data, the elementary schools in the district are remaining competitive with other districts in the region. The district should continue striving to increase these scores to increase the competitiveness of the district and be more welcoming for young families.

Jr. High Schools

Humboldt County School district has only one school between primary and secondary education: Winnemucca Jr. High. Many of the elementary schools described above teach students up to 8th grade before they are enrolled in Albert M Lowry High School. The only exception to this is the McDermitt combined school, which offers Jr. High and High School Classes.

McDermitt Jr. High School (Combined Schools)

McDermitt Jr. High is part of the combined McDermitt Schools. It therefore has relatively few students, so some of the data were withheld. The NDE reported that the math proficiency level was zero, so it is likely a typo.

McDermitt Jr. High	
Topic	Estimate
Total Enrollment	19
Student Teacher Ratio	N/A
ELA Proficiency	18.7%
Math Proficiency	0.0%
Daily Attendance Rate	86.3%

SOURCE: NDE 2016-17 Scores

Table 11—McDermitt Jr. High Stats

Winnemucca Jr. High School

Winnemucca Jr. High provides education for 7th and 8th grade students in Winnemucca. Most of the students come from French Ford Middle School and graduate into Albert M Lowry High School.

Winnemucca Jr. High School	
Topic	Estimate
Total Enrollment	448
Student Teacher Ratio	16:1
ELA Proficiency	37.7%
Math Proficiency	27.0%
Daily Attendance Rate	92.5%

SOURCE: NDE 2016-17 Scores

Table 12—Winnemucca Jr. High School Stats

Jr. High Comparison

Humboldt’s Jr. High schools perform relatively well in the region, scoring near or above the average in ELA and Math proficiency

scores. Daily Attendance is based on the entire county and is unchanged from the elementary comparison.

Regional Comparison—Jr High Schools				
Name	Total	ELA	Math	Daily Attendance
	Enrollment	Proficiency	Proficiency	Rate
Humboldt SD	3,399	37.4%	26.1%	91.5%
Elko SD	9,907	35.2%	20.9%	94.8%
Lander SD	1,004	28.1%	21.3%	93.3%
Pershing SD	627	39.1%	23.5%	94.3%
Eureka SD	276	66.6%	34.3%	94.6%

SOURCE: NDE 2016-17 Scores

Table 13—Jr High School Comparison

High Schools

Humboldt County has two high schools: Albert M Lowry High School and McDermitt High School. According to local stakeholders, the High School regional events are a major source of private sector and tax revenue for the City and County.

Albert M Lowry High School

Albert M Lowry High School is the school with the highest attendance in the district. Many of the rural schools feed into it, making it an important component of the district.

High school statistics differ significantly from those of elementary and Jr. High Schools. Instead of using ELA and Math Scores, the High Schools will be compared using the graduation rate (percent of eligible students who complete high school) and the average ACT composite score.

Albert M Lowry High School	
Topic	Estimate
Total Enrollment	967
Graduation Rate	79.4%
Average ACT Composite	17.57
Daily Attendance Rate	89.5%

SOURCE: NDE 2016-17 Scores

Table 14—Albert M Lowry High School

McDermitt High School

McDermitt High School was recently acknowledged for its largest graduating class ever.

McDermitt High School	
Topic	Estimate
Total Enrollment	44
Graduation Rate	N/A
Average ACT Composite	15.13
Daily Attendance Rate	86.2%

SOURCE: NDE 2016-17 Scores

Table 15—McDermitt High School Stats

High School Comparables

Humboldt County’s high school scores are still competitive with the neighboring counties, but the District is below average in graduation rates, which is a key metric for the district. However, the ACT composite score is competitive, which is a good sign for college-bound students.

Regional Comparison—High Schools				
Name	Total Enrollment	Graduation Rate	Average ACT Composite	Daily Attendance Rate
Humboldt SD	3,399	76.3%	17.42	91.5%
Elko SD	9,907	85.1%	17.36	94.8%
Lander SD	1,004	80.3%	18.03	93.3%
Pershing SD	627	83.3%	17.19	94.3%
Eureka SD	276	100.0%	18.93	94.6%

SOURCE: NDE 2016-17 Scores

Table 16—High School Comparables

Higher Education

Opportunities for higher education are an important aspect of the City’s economic sustainability. The City will need to emphasize degree options that allow the City to have a greater breadth of degree types so that other industry types can be sustained by the population.

An analysis was performed of the current higher education opportunities afforded to students in Humboldt County. Great Basin College is analyzed in detail, followed by alternative institutions and options that students may choose.

Great Basin College

Great Basin College (GBC) is headquartered in Elko but has locations in Winnemucca, Battle Mountain, Ely, and Pahrump Valley, along with the ability to serve other rural towns via interactive video. GBC has a wide availability of degree offerings, ranging from bachelor’s degrees to certificate programs.

The college offers a total of 46 degree and certificate programs in Winnemucca. The breakdown of these offerings by type is shown in Table 17.

Degree	2017-18
Bachelor of Arts	4
Bachelor of Science	0
Bachelor of Science in Nursing	1
Bachelor of Applied Science	4
Total Bachelor's Degrees	9
Associate of Arts	1
Associate of Science	1
Associate of General Studies	1
Associate of Applied Science	8
Total Associate's Degrees	11
Certificate of Achievement	13
Industry Skills Certificate	8
Teaching Certificates and Endorsements	5
Total Certificates and Endorsements	26
Grand Total Degrees and Certificates	46

SOURCE: GBC Institutional Research and Effectiveness

Table 17—GBC Winnemucca Degrees Awarded, 2017-18 School Year

Humboldt County had 343 Humboldt County residents attending GBC or one of its satellite campuses in the Fall, 2017 semester. Of those, 118 were declared non-degree seeking students.

Associate of Arts	35
Associate of Applied Science	86
Associate of General Studies	1
Alternative Route to Licensure Program	11
Associate of Science	21
Bachelor of Arts	35
Bachelor of Applied Science	16
Bachelor of Science	0
Bachelor of Science in Nursing	9
Certificate of Achievement	11
Endorsements	0
Non-Degree	118
Post-Baccalaureate	0
Total	343

SOURCE: GBC Institutional Research and Effectiveness

Table 18—Winnemucca Student Count by Type

University of Nevada, Reno

The University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) is another favorite choice for students in Humboldt County. Not only does the school offer a wider variety of degrees, but it also offers a different college experience including the ability to move out of the house, live in student dorms, and move to a bigger city.

The University of Nevada, Reno offers more than 145 degree programs, including graduate programs. UNR is approximately 2½ hours away from Winnemucca via I-80.

WORKFORCE

For the health of the labor market and surrounding economy, it is important to have a stable workforce with a wide range of skills and experience. A robust workforce benefits the community because it leads to more citizens that are engaged in civic affairs, independent, tax-positive, and have disposable funds to spend on local services. An analysis of the current workforce was conducted and is discussed in this section of the report.

AGE-DEPENDENCY RATIO

A sustainable ratio between dependents and workers is important for a healthy economy. Some age groups, such as children and retirees, contribute to the economy through purchases of goods and services, but do not contribute to the economy through labor and entrepreneurship. An age dependency ratio is good at highlighting these shares to make sure that a proper balance is achieved. The ratio is calculated by showing how many working aged adults (ages 16-64) are supporting children and retirees.

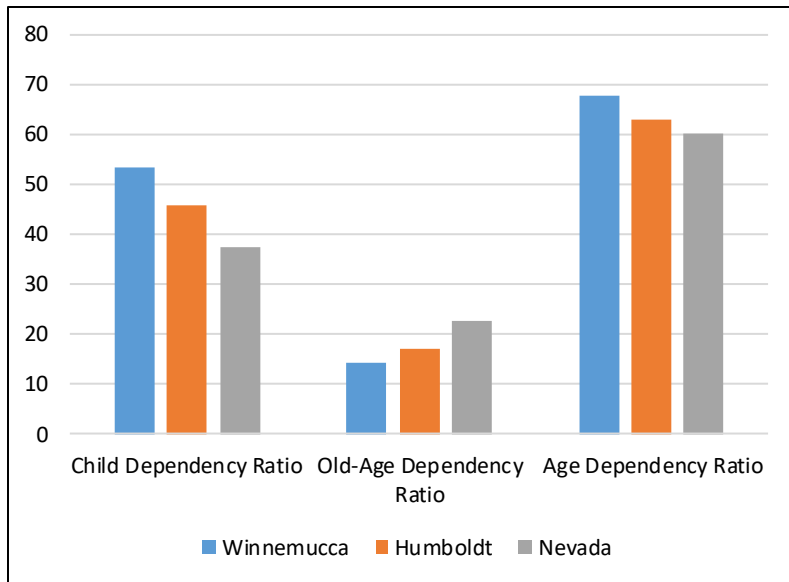
The age dependency ration is calculated by dividing the amount of the dependent population (ages zero to 14 and ages 65 and greater) by the amount of the population in the “productive ages” (ages 15 to 64). It is expressed as the following formula:

$$\frac{(\text{Population ages } 0 - 14) + (\text{Population ages } 65+)}{\text{Pop. ages } 15 - 64} \times 100$$

The formula can also be used to determine the child dependency ratio or the old-age dependency ratio by excluding the factor in

the equation. There is not a target ratio amount; rather, the ratio is valuable in showing trends or pressures in a population over time. A child dependency ratio of 50, for example, would mean that for every 100 adults, there are 50 children dependent on them.

For Winnemucca, the age-dependency ratio is quite high for Children, at 53.4. In comparison, the State of Nevada has a child dependency ratio of 38. The old-age dependency ratio in Winnemucca, on the other hand, is quite low. For many economies, this would be a good sign because it means that the economy has a higher share of children and a lower share of retirees, signaling a strong future of workers. However, due to the generous retirement packages given to the employees of the mines, the shortage of retirees represents a significant loss to the economy, since these workers would otherwise be spending this retirement income in the community.



SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 15—Dependency Ratio Comparison

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

According to the most recent estimates, more than 64 percent of working-age adults in Humboldt County are employed. Winnemucca’s employment rate is even greater, at 71.3 percent. These figures are higher than both the State (57.9 percent) and National (58.4 percent) estimates (see Figure 16).

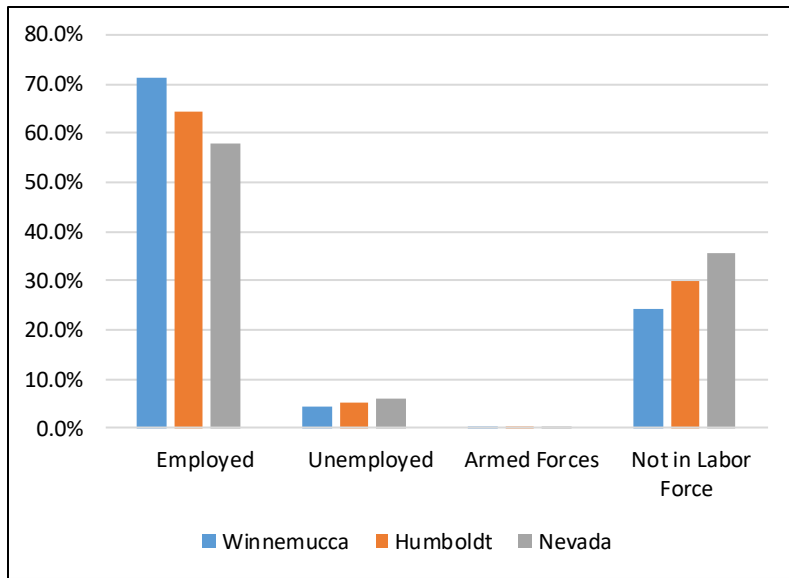
Economists traditionally define an economy at full employment when the unemployment rate is at five percent. Humboldt County is at 5.4 percent, which means that it is at or near “Full Employment.”

“Unemployed” represents the segment of workers age 16 and above who are willing and able to work but are not yet employed.

With such a small share of these types of workers in the County, it may be difficult for new businesses to find employees from the current labor pool. New businesses will need to:

- 1) Search for workers in the “Unemployed” segment, which only represents 5.4 percent of the County and may be too limiting,
- 2) Pull workers from the “Not in Labor Force” segment
- 3) Hire workers from outside the County and bring them in,
- 4) Take workers from other employers in the County by offering better wages, better benefits, or both.

All four of these options are expensive since it requires extra effort from the business to secure good laborers. This is good for workers, since it means they can secure higher wages and benefits, but it also makes it more difficult for small or new businesses that are trying to establish a presence in the community.



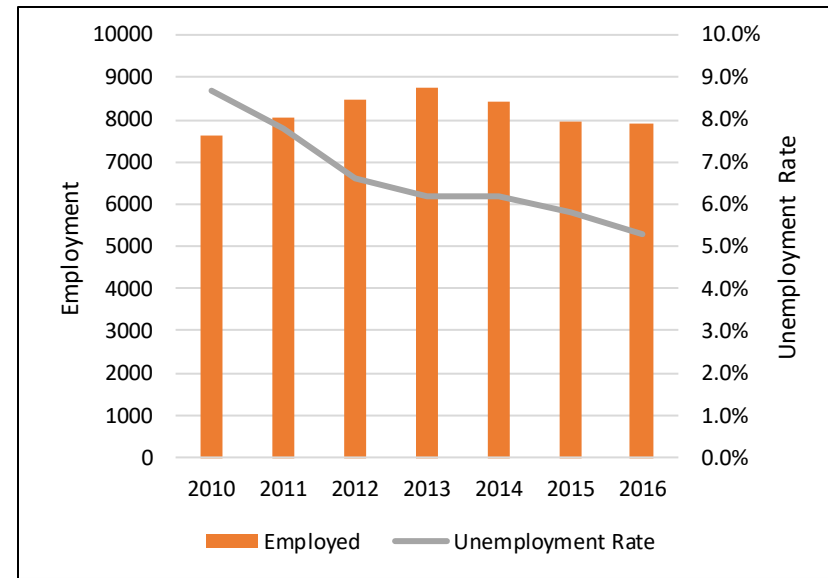
SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 16—Employment Status Comparison

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Humboldt County’s unemployment rate has been dropping over time, from a high of 8.7 percent in 2010 to a low of 5.3 percent in 2016. This is consistent with National trends.

Unfortunately, total employment has dropped steadily each year since 2013, representing an estimated loss of 850 workers within that time. This is concerning given the current economic trends toward high wages and a tight labor market. It can be assumed that those who would be considered unemployed—such as those who are laid off or injured or have other needs which stop them from working for a time—choose to leave the County rather than staying and looking for a new job locally.



SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Figure 17—Humboldt County Employment and Unemployment Rate

PART-TIME LABOR

[Both Jan and Alicia had questions about how part-time labor and underemployed would factor in to these estimates. It might be worth discussing.

LARGEST EMPLOYERS

The largest entities by employee count are provided in Table 19. This largest public entity is the Humboldt County School District; the largest private entity is the Turquoise Ridge Joint Venture, which is operated by Barrick Gold and co-owned between Barrick and Newmont.

	Employer	# of Employees
1	Humboldt County School District	500 to 599
2	Turquoise Ridge Joint Venture	500 to 599
3	Newmont Mining Corp.	400 to 499
4	Marigold Mining Co.	300 to 399
5	Humboldt General Hospital	200 to 299
6	Wal-Mart Supercenter	200 to 299
7	Humdoldt County	200 to 299
8	Manpower Temporary Services	100 to 199
9	Winners Hotel & Casino	100 to 199
10	American Mining & Tunneling	100 to 199
11	Cary-on Trailer	100 to 199
12	Winnemucca Inn	90 to 99
13	NV Energy	90 to 99
14	Model T Casino Resort LLC	90 to 99
15	Bureau of Land Management	80 to 89
16	Nevada Department of Transporation	60 to 69
17	Hycroft Resources & Dev. Inc.	60 to 69
18	Newmont Mining Corp. (Subsidiary)	60 to 69
19	Elko Inc.	60 to 69
20	City of Winnemucca	60 to 69

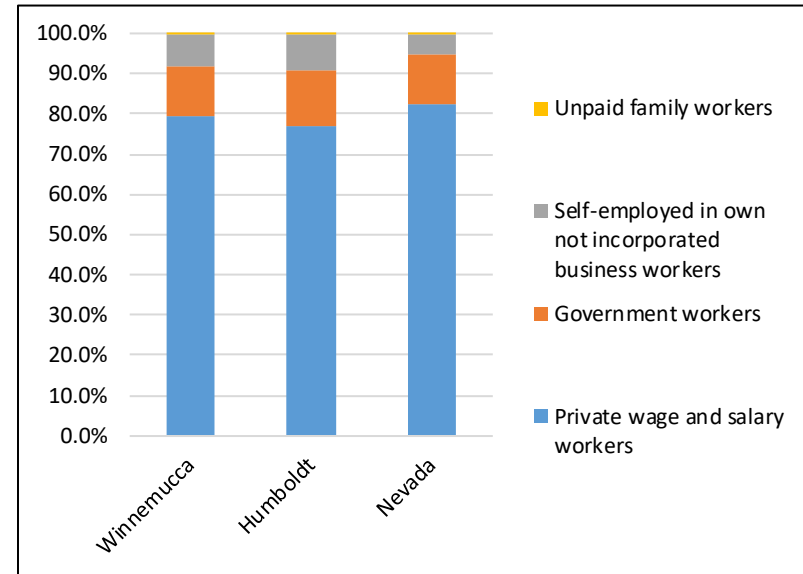
SOURCE: Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation

Table 19—Humboldt County Largest Employers

TYPE OF WORKER

A significant share of the County’s workforce is employed by a private entity (77.2 percent). The remaining are employed by a government entity (13.9 percent) or are self-employed (8.7 percent). This mirrors the State’s breakdown, except that the share of private is smaller while the share of self-employed is larger. This discrepancy is likely attributable to the agriculture

industry, which is made up of mostly family-owned and non-incorporated entities.



SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 18—Class of Worker Comparison

INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

One of the important topics expressed in Stakeholder interviews and the subsequent roundtable discussion was the reliance of the economy on the mining industry. Stakeholders expressed an interest in growing other industries to diversify and protect the future of the community.

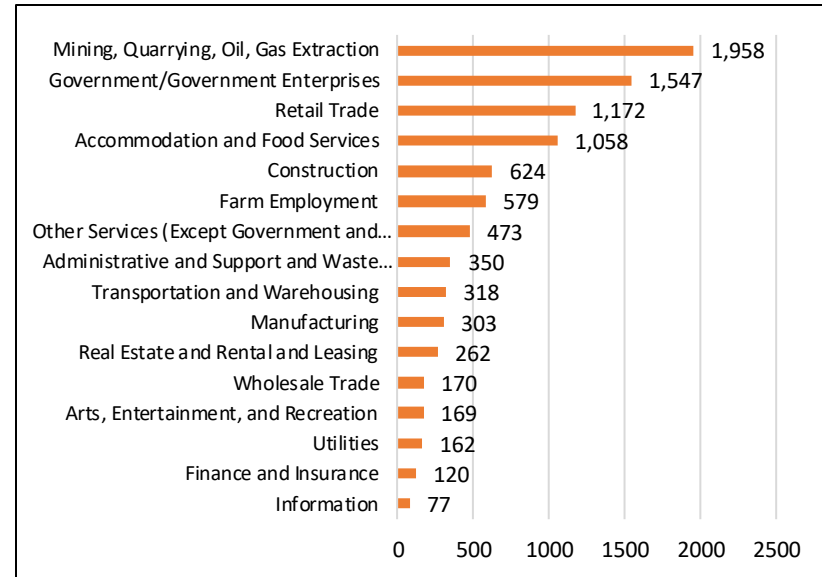
This section analyzes industry trends and measures the County’s industry clusters by the number of jobs as well as the economic value provided through the clusters by payroll estimates. An industry cluster analysis and Location Quotient analysis were also performed and are described in detail.

INDUSTRY CLUSTERS BY JOBS

According to estimates provided by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), approximately 4,700 jobs are created by the County’s three largest clusters. The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) estimates that the County has a total of 9,342 jobs.³

The “Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction” cluster represents the largest number of jobs in the County (1,958 jobs), followed by “Government and Government Enterprises” (1,547 jobs) and “Retail Trade” (1,172). Farm employment is likely underrepresented since family-owned operations do not have an official payroll.

³ Estimates may differ from Census estimates provided in the previous section due to differences in the way BEA analyzes economic data. Not all industries are represented by the data. Some industries do not have enough workers or businesses represented so the data was suppressed to prevent personally identifying information. The industries that



SOURCE: Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA); Not all industries represented (see Footnote 3)

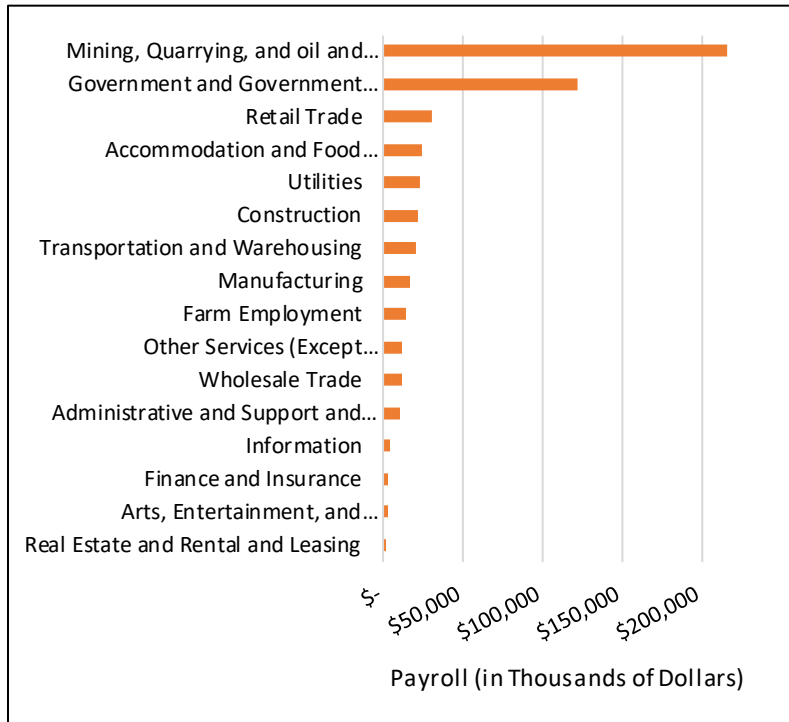
Figure 19—Number of Jobs by Industry Type, 2016

Not all jobs have the same economic value for the community. Figure 20 shows the economic value of the industry clusters by payroll. A larger payroll value means that a given industry contributes more to the economy since incomes turn into local spending.

The larger the payroll value, the more reliant the County’s economy is on the industry. According to BEA estimates, the Stakeholders are correct in their assertion that the Mining industry makes up a significant share of the County’s economy. The Mining cluster makes up approximately 40.7 percent of total

were suppressed in this report include Forestry, Fishing and Related Activities; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Management of Companies and Enterprises; Educational Services; and Health Care and Assistance.

payrolls, dominating all other clusters in economic value. The Government cluster is the second-largest, which makes up about 22 percent of total payrolls.



SOURCE: BEA; not all industries represented (see Footnote 3)

Figure 20—Total Payroll by Industry, 2016

INDUSTRY CLUSTER ANALYSIS

The County’s industry clusters were analyzed using the shift share and location quotient methodologies. The analyses will be described in detail, followed by an analysis of what they mean for the County’s economy.

Overview

Shift share analysis is a method of dissecting job growth into its component parts. This helps to better understand the factors contributing to growth. The following are components of the analysis:

State Share

The portion of job growth that can be attributed to general economic growth throughout the State. It is calculated by multiplying the number of jobs created in a given industry by the State’s overall growth rate. For example, a change in the real estate agents may be the result of the State’s overall economic growth (or decline), and not because of local industry or regional trends.

Industry Share

The industry share represents the portion of job growth that is attributable to the industry’s state-wide expansion or contraction. It is calculated by multiplying the number of jobs in the County at the beginning of the time period (2012) by the State’s growth rate for a specific industry and taking out the State Share. This share shows expansion or contraction trends for a given industry that cannot be explained by the State Share.

Regional Share

This is the most important component of job growth for the local analysis. It is calculated by subtracting the industry share and the state share from the total number of jobs gained or lost in the selected industry at the local level. This highlights the change in employment that is attributable to the County’s economic conditions. Regional shares highlight aspects of the region which

may be working with or against the other trends and can reveal strengths of weaknesses of the area for selected industries.

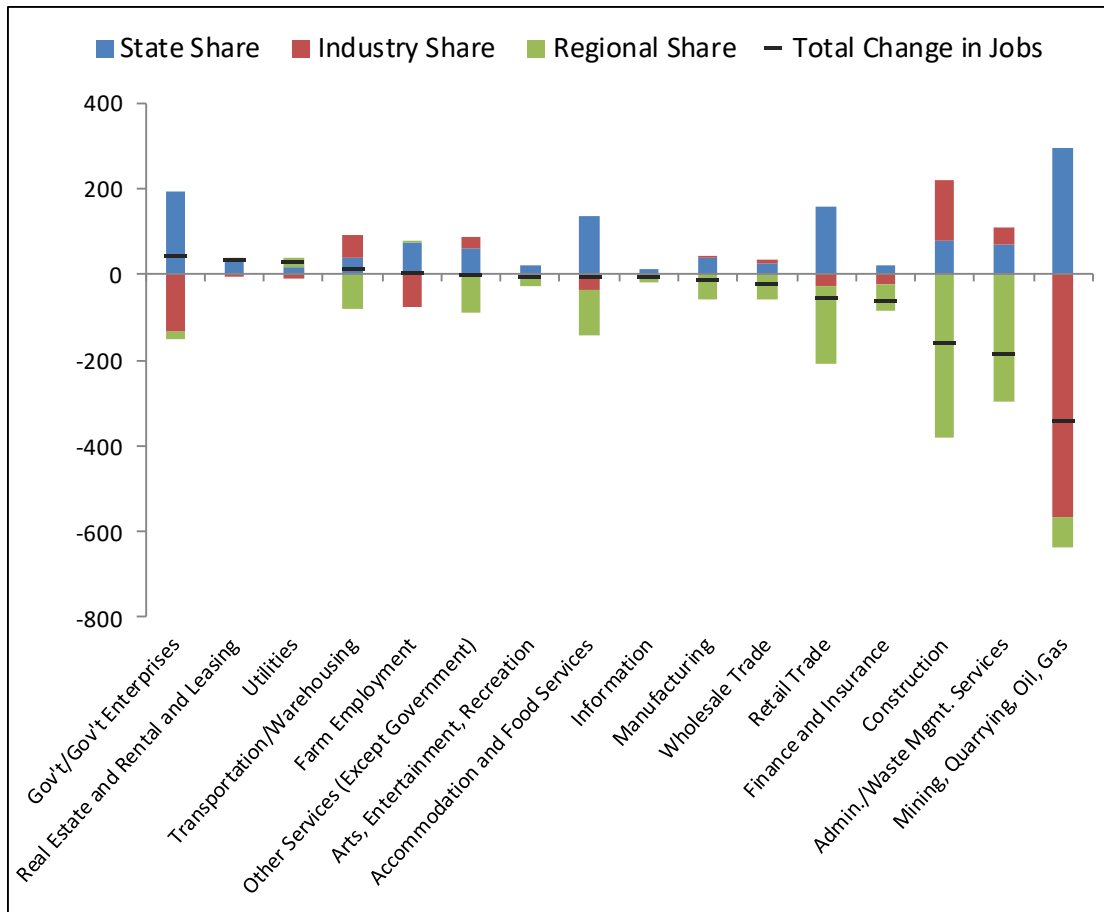
Total Job Change

The total number of jobs (full-time and part-time) gained or lost in an industry during the period analyzed (2012-2016). This number is based on estimates provided by the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Shift Share Analysis

According to BEA estimates, the industries which have experienced the largest amount of growth between 2012 and 2016 were “Government and Government Enterprises” (42 jobs) and “Real Estate and Rental and Leasing” (35 jobs). Government has seen quite a bit of growth throughout the State, which is why it grew overall despite job losses due to industry and regional factors.

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SOURCE: BEA, Better City

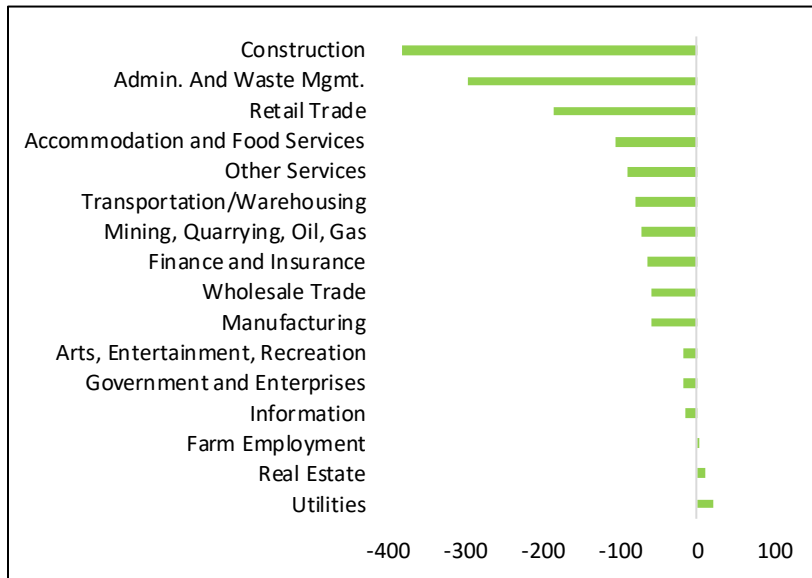
Figure 21—Humboldt County Shift Share Analysis (2012-2016)

The industries which saw the most significant job losses over the period were “Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction” (-343 jobs) and “Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services” (-187 jobs). The loss in the mining industry is from the closing of the Hycroft Mine in 2015, where more than 250 workers were laid off. Additional job loss occurred in other parts of the industry. “Admin. and Waste Services” and “Construction,” on the other hand, reveal that County-specific issues are causing such a massive loss in employment, despite the growth that is occurring both on the State and industry levels.

As discussed previously in this report, the primary cause of the Construction industry job shortages in the County is the challenge of competing with construction demand in the Reno area.

Regional Analysis

Looking at the region-specific aspect of job growth reveals the County’s strengths and weaknesses in terms of industry performance. Unfortunately, there isn’t a specific industry which has seen a special amount of growth due to regional factors. This means that job growth within the county is mostly attributable to either State-wide economic growth or industry-specific growth. Regional factors are actually hurting job growth in a large share of the industries (see Figure 22). The County should prioritize an effort to mitigate these negative factors or it risks not being able to take advantage of industries that otherwise would be adding jobs to the local economy.



SOURCE: BEA, Better City

Figure 22—Regional share in Job Growth (2012-2016)

EMPLOYMENT LOCATION QUOTIENT

An employment location quotient (LQ) analysis is a method of quantifying the concentration of an industry cluster in an area when compared to the State averages. This tool allows the County to see if it has a highly-concentrated clusters it can leverage for future economic growth.

The LQ is calculated as shown below:

$$\text{Location Quotient (LQ)} = \frac{\text{Local Proportion}}{\text{State Proportion}}$$

Where the local and state proportions are calculated as follows:

$$\text{Local Proportion} = \frac{\text{Employees in the County in Industry X}}{\text{Total \# of Employees in the County}}$$

$$\text{State Proportion} = \frac{\text{Employees in the State in Industry X}}{\text{Total \# of Employees in the State}}$$

For example, there were approximately 1,958 employees in the “Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction” industry in Humboldt County in 2016. This cohort represents 19.65 percent of the County’s total 9,960 employee estimate in the same year. For the State, the share of the mining industry to total State employment was significantly lower, at a mere 1.14 percent. Dividing the former number by the latter equals 17.59. This means that the mining industry is approximately 17 times more concentrated in Humboldt County than it is in the State as a whole. A LQ of 1.0 indicates that the local concentration is in parity with the State.

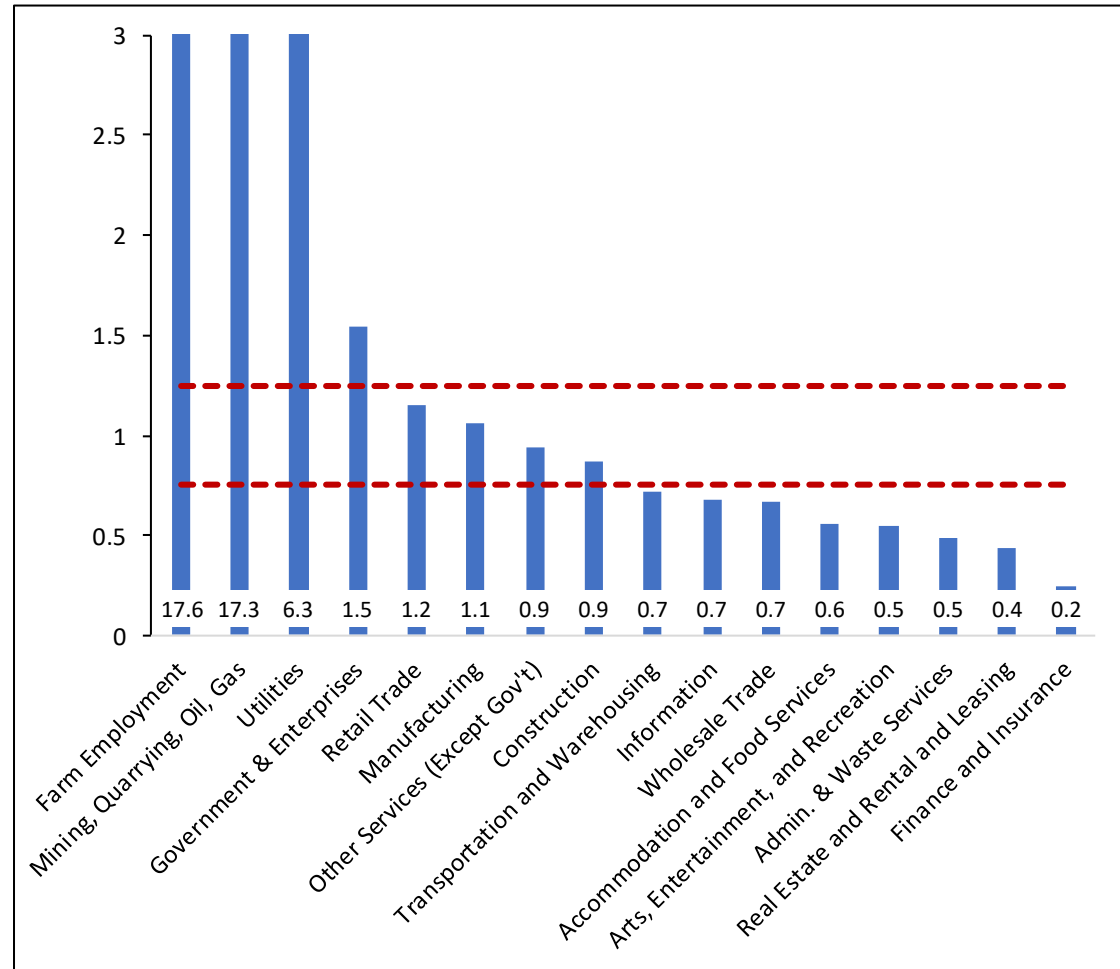
Industries with LQ values greater than 1.25 are typically beneficial to the local economy because they become export-oriented, providing a good or service from the County that goes to customers outside of it. These industries not only provide jobs local but also have a multiplier effect, creating jobs in other industries that are dependent on the concentrated industries. A LQ value that is below 0.75, on the other hand, is an industry that has very low concentration and is typically unable to serve local demand, resulting in a “leakage” of goods and services outside of the County.

Humboldt Location Quotient Analysis

According to Figure 23, the industries with the greatest concentration are “Farm Employment”, “Mining, Quarrying, Oil and Gas,” and “Utilities.” These represent the significant industry sectors to the County and should be viewed as the County’s economic base.

The industries which fall below the 0.75 threshold may have a regional disadvantage that needs to be mitigated. It may also represent industries that have room to grow and which could likely be supported by the local economy. Industries that fall far below the threshold often represent the low-

hanging fruit in terms of reducing economic leakage. These industries should be targeted first.



SOURCE: BEA, Better City

Figure 23—Humboldt Location Quotient Vs. Nevada, 2016

INDUSTRY CLUSTER MATRIX

Shift Share, location quotient, and wealth creation measures can be combined into a simple matrix that provides a more comprehensive view of the County's economy. The method used in this report plots industries in a two-by-two matrix using normalized LQ estimates on the x-axis and the regional shift on the y-axis. The graph also adds a bubble size to represent total payroll, a proxy for the industry's wealth generation for the County.

The graph can be interpreted according to where the point is placed in comparison to the origin as well as the relative size of the point. The interpretation for each quadrant is listed below:

Quadrant One: Industries in this quadrant are concentrated in the region and are growing due to regional advantages. Large industries in this quadrant distinguish the regional economy as they increase workforce demand. Small industries in this quadrant are possibly emerging exporters that should be developed.

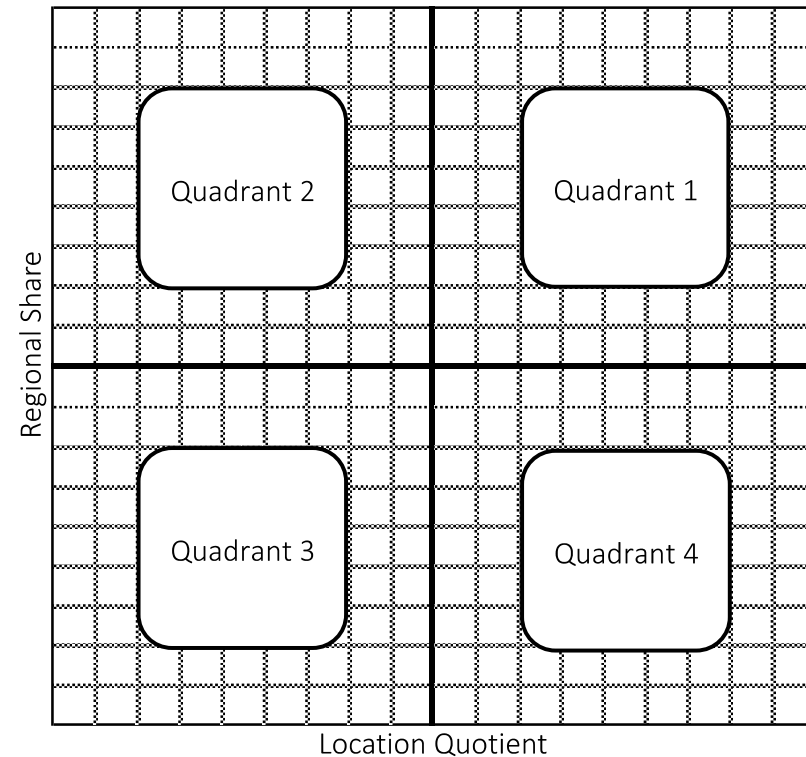
Quadrant Two: Industries in this quadrant are growing over time but are still less concentrated than the State average. Depending on the industry, it may settle at the State average or continue to grow and move into Quadrant One.

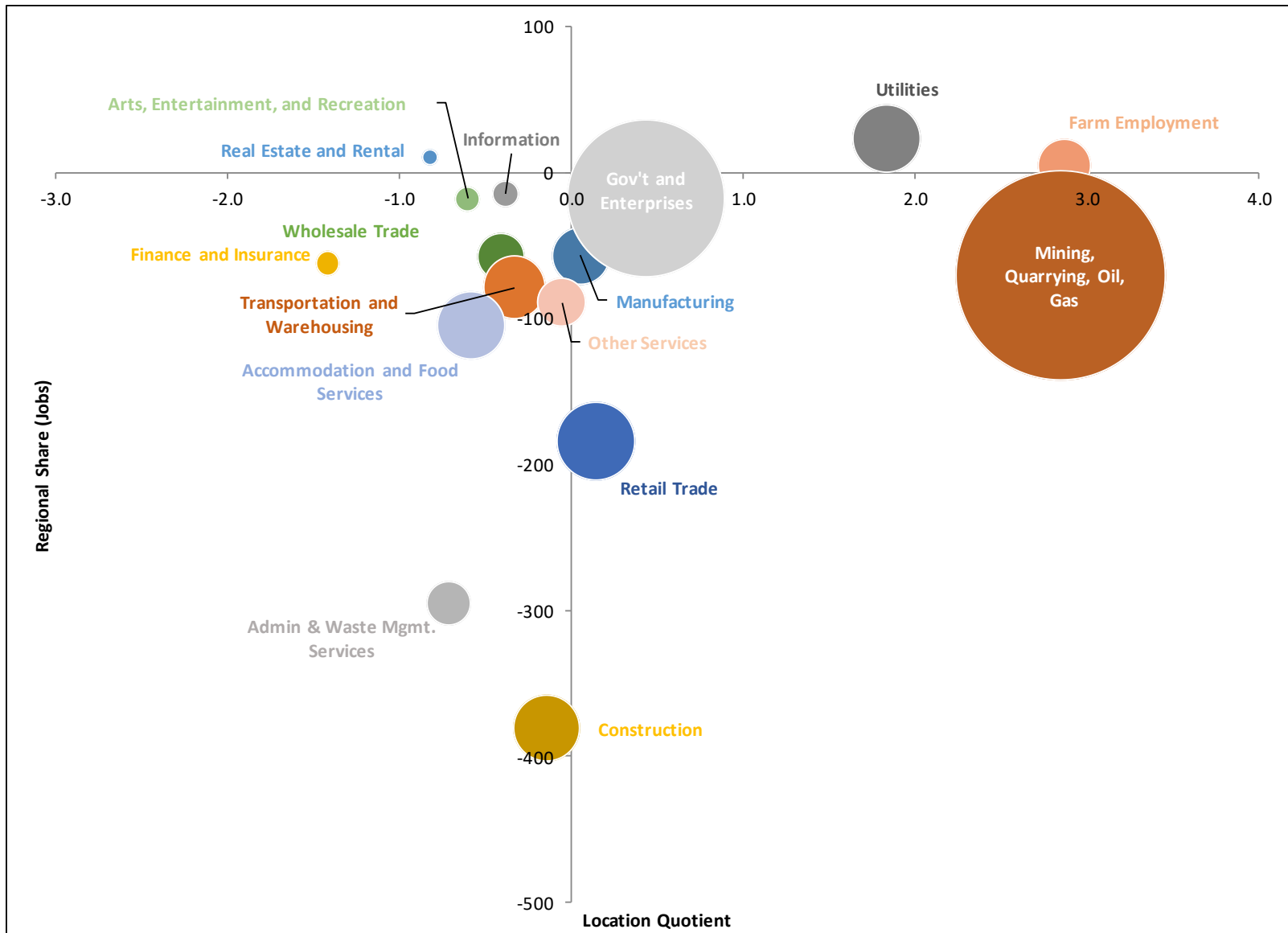
Quadrant Three: Industries in this region are less concentrated than State average and are losing ground relative to State growth. Such industries may face competitive disadvantages due to area factors.

Quadrant Four: Industries in this quadrant are declining but are still more concentrated than the State average. If a large industry

is in this quadrant, the region is often losing its export base. The region should plan and invest accordingly.

The size of an industry (according to its relative wealth generation, as represented by the size of the bubble) is key to identify short-term economic impacts. Growth or contraction in industries with high payrolls will have a large impact on the local economy. Small industries will take time to have a significant impact. Smaller industries are usually dependent on the growth or contraction of the larger ones, so a trailing effect is common in this analysis.





SOURCE: BEA, Better City

Figure 24—Industry Cluster Analysis, 2012-2016

A majority of the bubbles are located in Quadrants three and four of the Matrix, signifying a decline of these industries between 2012 and 2016. The mining industry has not declined significantly, but its concentration and size mean that even a small amount of contraction can lead to a more significant decline in the total economy as the multiplier effect ripples throughout the economy and into other industries.

The three industries that have experienced the most contraction are “Construction,” Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services,” and “Retail Trade.” Of these, retail trade is the largest. However, Construction may be the most important, especially in regard to the housing market.

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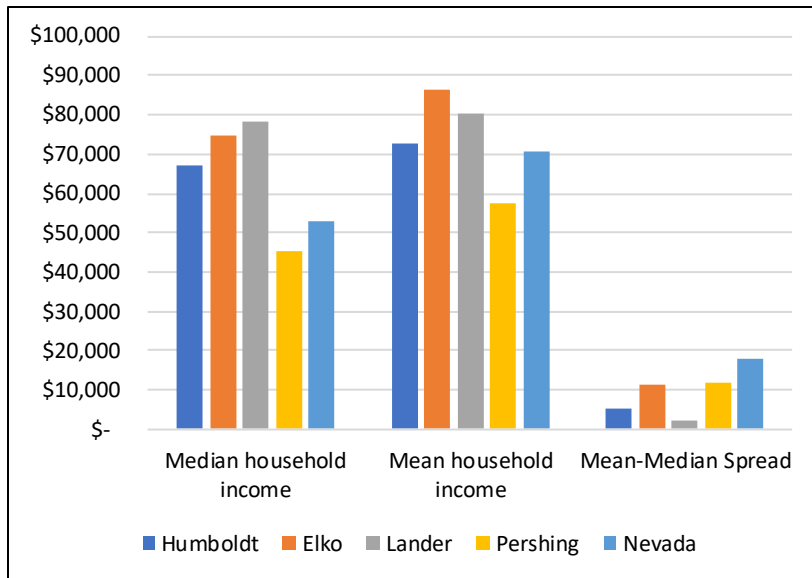
INCOME AND COMPENSATION

Income and compensation estimates were analyzed at the City and County level. Humboldt County competes for workforce, and the local economy needs to offer jobs with competitive wages so that it will remain competitive with other counties in the region.

INCOME AND BENEFITS

As shown by Figure 25, Humboldt County’s median household income (MHI) is \$67,295 (including monetary benefits). This is significantly higher than the State’s \$53,094 MHI. However, this income level is about average for comparable Counties in northern Nevada.

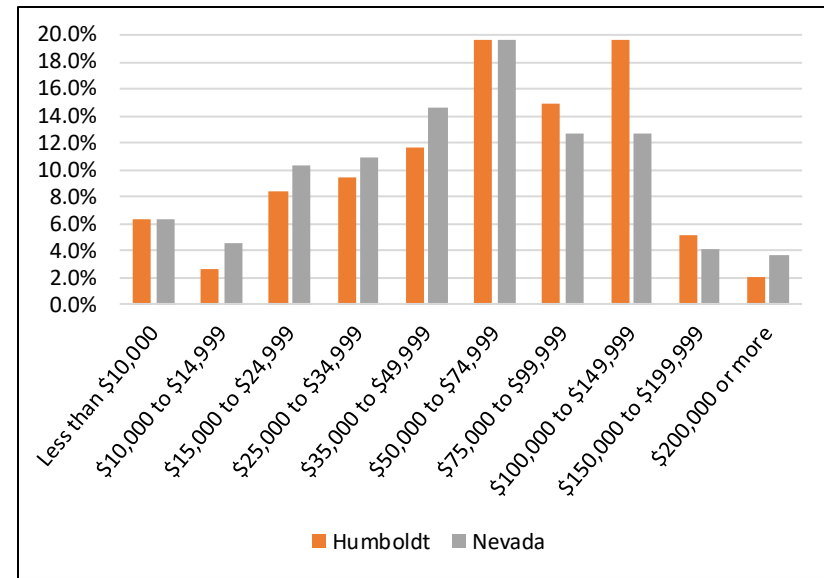
Mean household income estimates in Humboldt are not significantly larger than the median (around \$5,000 annually). This spread is smaller than the spreads in Elko and Pershing Counties, which can be interpreted as the County’s income levels being more equal than in those Counties. In other words, the mean is not being pulled significantly by high-earning individuals who receive a significant portion of the County’s incomes.



SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 25—Income Statistics Comparison

The County’s incomes are concentrated in two categories: \$50,000 to 74,999 and \$100,000 to \$149,000, representing approximately 20 percent of the incomes each. Humboldt County’s share of earners is on parity with the State in the “less than \$10,000” category but is more heavily weighted toward higher incomes than the State, with the exception of the \$200,000 or more category. These estimates reflect the higher wages of the skilled workers in the Mining and Manufacturing industries. It also represents the income levels with which other businesses will need to compete for skilled labor.

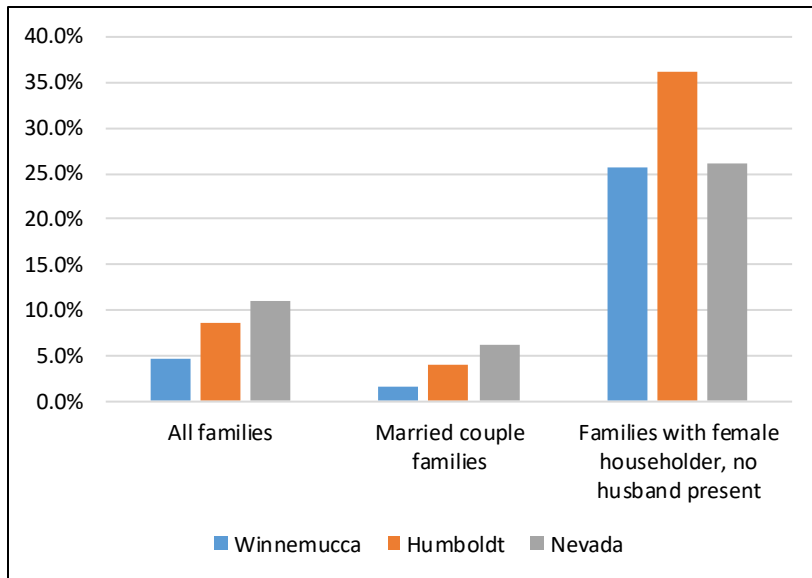


SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 26—Income and Benefits Comparison

POVERTY

Of the County’s 6,174 households, an estimated 8.7 percent (approximately 537) had a household income that was below the poverty level. Of the married couple families, an estimated 4.1 percent were below the poverty level. Families with a female householder and no husband are especially hard hit in the county, with more than a third of families in that category below the poverty level.

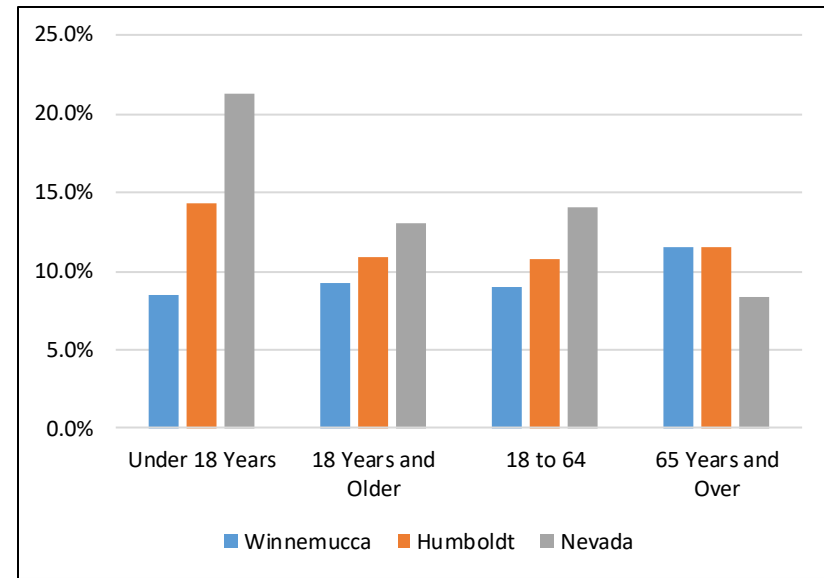


SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 27—Poverty Rate by Family Type Comparison

Humboldt County is below the poverty rate for every age category when compared with the State. The overall poverty rate for all people is approximately 11.9 percent compared to the State’s rate of 14.9 percent.

The only age group in the County for which the rate is high is in the 65 and older category. This is unsurprising given that the wealthier Seniors tend to move away, leaving a higher portion of those who do not have the financial means to move away.



SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

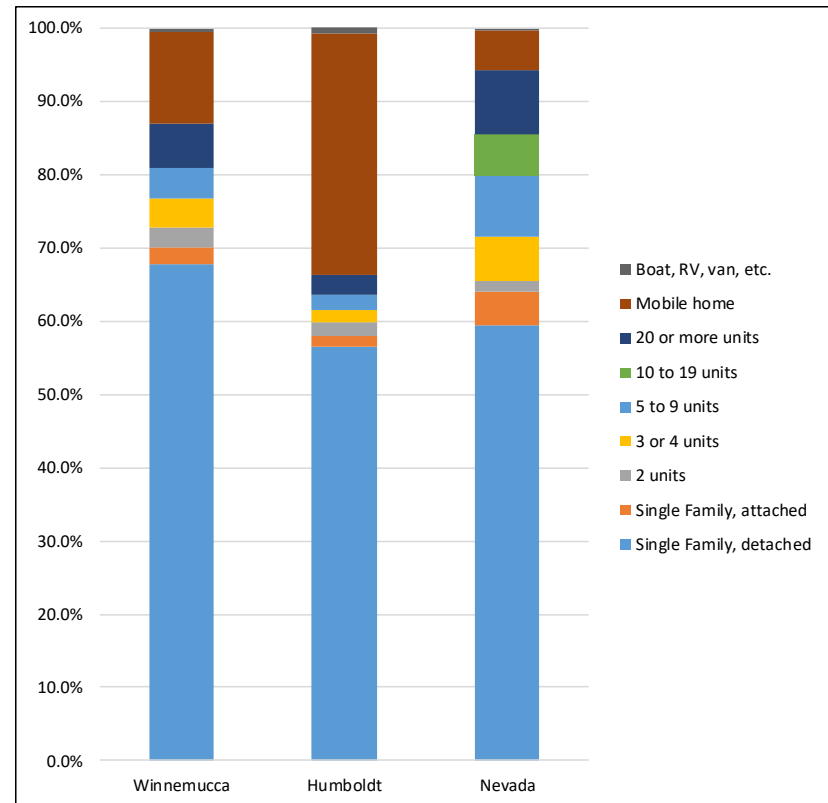
Figure 28—Poverty Rate by Age Comparison

HOUSING

While sometimes not directly associated with economic development, the housing market plays a critical role in economic development and is an important factor in the ability to attract and retain workforce. Therefore, a housing analysis was conducted to determine if the current stock and type of homes match the needs and characteristics of the City and County.

In Stakeholder interviews and the roundtable discussion, housing was discussed as a challenge due to the variability and uncertainty of the mining industry’s boom and bust cycle. In boom years, demand for housing increases dramatically, spiking housing prices and incentivizing large construction projects with many units. In the bust years, workers are relocated or laid-off, causing a sharp drop in demand, depressed housing prices, and vacant homes. While the mines have been relatively stable in recent years—which was noted with appreciation by nearly every interviewed stakeholder—the history of volatility continues to dampen real estate developers’ interest and investment in the County.

As expected, the County has a higher percentage of mobile homes than the State due to the need of quickly ramping up housing availability during the early stages of a mining boom period (see Figure 29). A high percentage of mobile homes is often problematic for communities because these properties are not maintained with the same degree of care as a traditional single-family home. However, this doesn’t appear to be the case in the County as there is a high degree of pride of ownership, and anecdotally, mobile homes appear to retain value in the Community more than is expected.



SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 29—Housing Units by Type, 2016

A major issue that was brought up is the lack of contractors and sub-contractors for home construction. Many of these skilled laborers left the County during the Great Recession in search of more profitable markets or left the industry for other careers. Now that demand for new construction has returned to the local market place, there is still a shortage of skilled labor because explosive growth in the Reno area appears to be pulling most of the potential labor pool out of Winnemucca and Humboldt

County. Many developers said that this has left very few contractors for local projects.

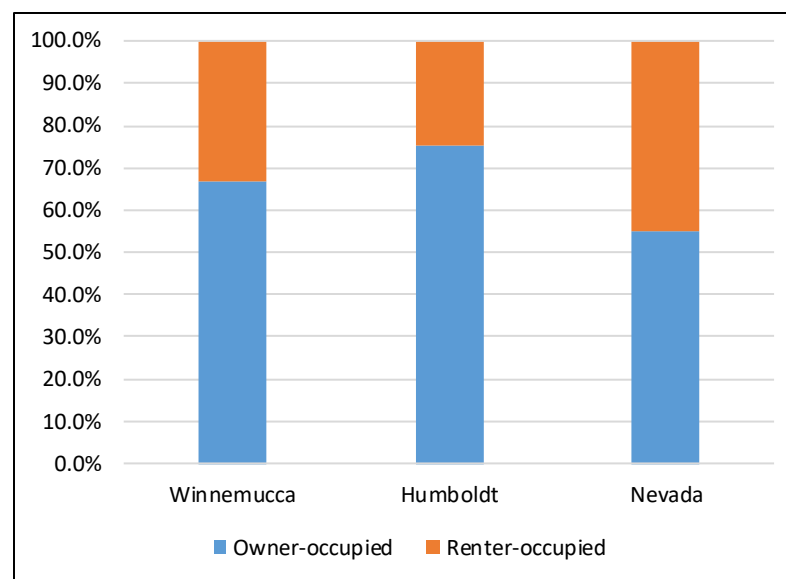
HOUSING TYPES

The percentage of owner-occupied units in Winnemucca is approximately 67 percent, which is lower than the County’s 75.3 percent but higher than the State’s 45.2 percent (see Table 20). According to local real estate agents, one of the primary enablers of high shares of ownership in the County is the generous wages provided by the mining companies. However, not all miners plan to stay in the Community long-term. Many are hired for short-term projects and would prefer to rent when they are staying in Winnemucca. Figure 30 shows the share of owner-occupied and renter-occupied units.

Housing Characteristic	Winnemucca	Humboldt	Nevada
Population (2016)	7,881	17,091	2,839,172
2016 Housing Units	3,116	7,223	1,200,517
% Occupied	90.5%	85.5%	85.9%
% Owner Occupied	67.0%	75.3%	54.8%
% Renter Occupied	33.0%	24.7%	45.2%
% Vacant	9.5%	14.5%	14.1%
Median Household Income (2016)	\$73,106	\$67,295	\$53,094
Median Home Value (2016)	\$185,100	\$165,100	\$191,600
Median Gross Rent	\$984	\$788	\$803
Median Gross Rent as % of Income	22.6%	22.6%	29.9%
Median Year Structure Built	1977	1983	1994

SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Table 20—Housing Summary

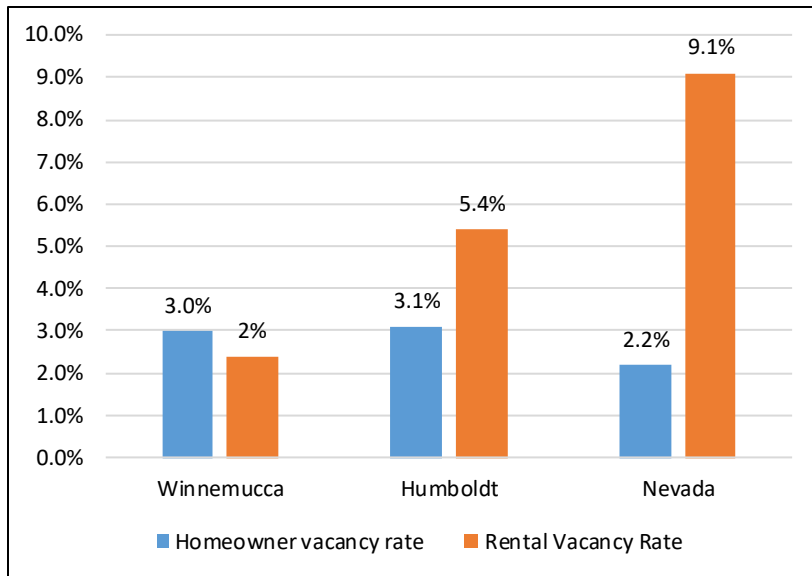


SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 30—Occupancy by Ownership Type

VACANCY

Homeowner vacancy rates in the City and County are slightly higher than the State’s vacancy rate. However, it isn’t high enough to be of major concern and likely represent the more transient nature of a mining community. However, the rental vacancy rate is very low. The rental vacancy rate in Humboldt County and Winnemucca is 5.4 and 2 percent, respectively, compared to the State’s vacancy rate of 9.1 percent. This discrepancy implies that there is a significant shortage of rental units in the current market and represents an area of potential future investment.



SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 31—Vacancy Rates Comparison

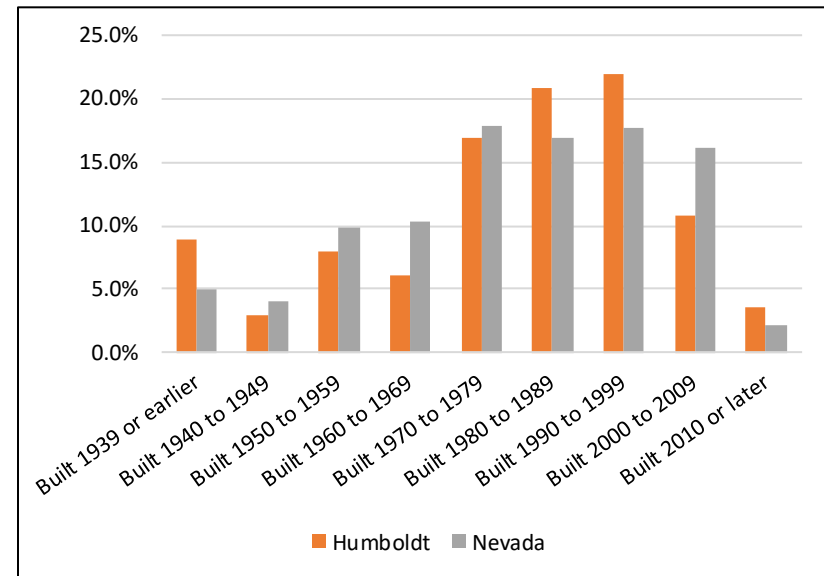
AGE OF HOUSING STOCK

The age of the housing stock shows a fairly diverse mix of homes available in the community. In Humboldt County, the largest shares of homes were built in the 1980's (20.9 percent) and 1990's (22.0 percent). The median age of homes in the Community is 35 years old (built in 1983, see Figure 32).

The Humboldt County and Winnemucca age estimates show how the boom and bust cycles have led to significant construction in the boom decades and a significant cutback in the bust decades. In the 90's, for example, the County outpaced the State in construction. In the following decade, the trend flipped, leading to a significant cutback at the County level. It appears that so far this decade (2010 and later) the roles have flipped again, and the

County is again slightly surpassing the State average construction rate.

These findings coincide with the views of local industry professionals, who claimed that this current positive mining and economic cycle has had a positive impact on the local housing market.



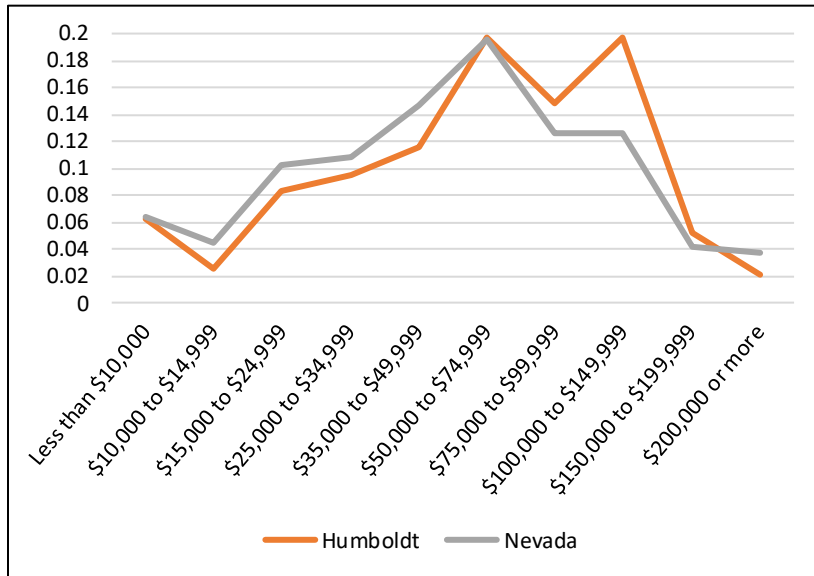
SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 32—Age of Housing Stock Comparison

HOME VALUES AND AFFORDABILITY

As discussed earlier in the report, income levels in the County are relatively high compared with the State average. As shown by Figure 33, the distribution of incomes in the community is skewed to higher incomes, with 33 percent of the community earning at or above the median income bracket of \$50,000 to \$74,999. Ideally, the distribution of incomes should mirror the distribution

of housing values to ensure that there is adequate supply across the housing stock and that there are options for individuals at all income levels.



SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year estimates

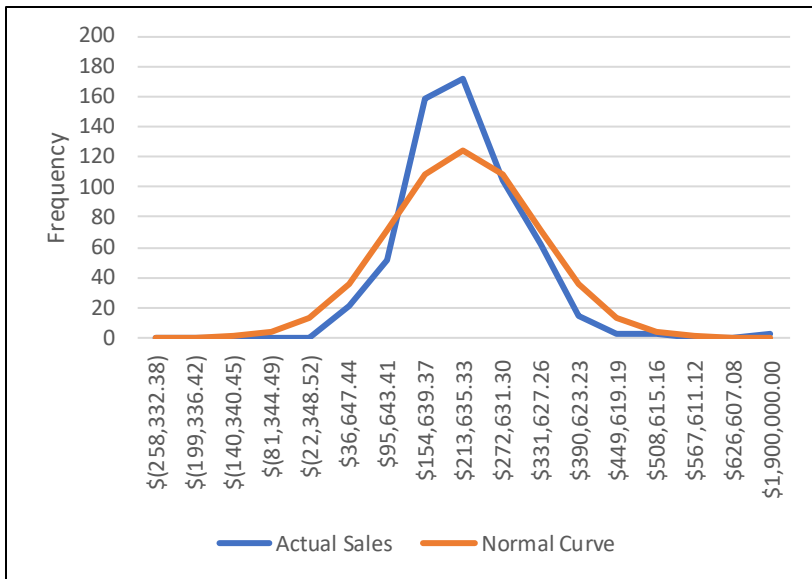
Figure 33—Income Distribution

To analyze the distribution of home values, taxable values obtained from the County Assessor were aggregated and analyzed. In theory, the taxable value is a rough housing stock estimate and, per State statute, should reflect the replacement cost of the asset including the land and the improvements. When compared to actual recent sales values of homes obtained from the County, a discrepancy was found between the taxable values and the final sales price. For example, one home in the County was assessed at \$66,577 but was sold for \$210,000, more than three times greater than the assessed value. Further analysis of residentially zoned, single-family properties discovered that, on

average, homes sold in the last four years were sold at prices 1.45 times greater than their assessed value.

To avoid grossly misrepresenting the market value of residential homes and properties in the County, statistical tools were used to estimate the distribution of homes according to estimated sales value rather than by using the assessed value.

The use of a 1.45 multiplier to estimate home values can only be statistically valid if the population is normally distributed. To see how well the actual homes fit a normal distribution, a frequency count was taken for each standard deviation from the mean home value \$213,635.33. The frequency represents the number of homes that are between each standard deviation, as shown in Figure 34. The number of homes in each category are represented by the blue line, with the orange line showing a normal distribution. For example, 158 homes were sold between the values of \$154,639.37 and \$95,643.41.



SOURCE: Humboldt County Assessor's Office, Better City

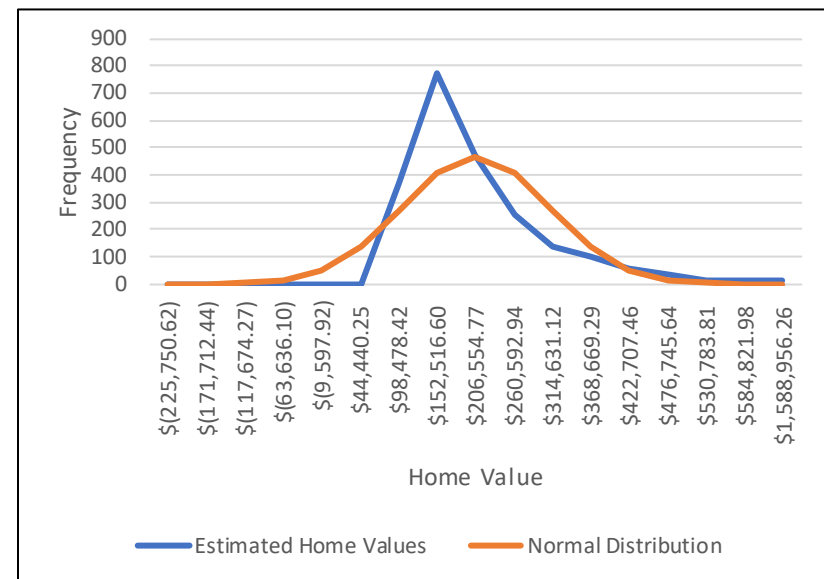
Figure 34—Actual Home Sales Distribution

According to Figure 34, a significantly higher share of the homes sold between 2014 and 2018 were sold at prices between \$154,639 and \$272,631 than would be expected for a normal population. However, the shape of the curve shows that there is a good distribution of homes around the mean. It is expected that there will not be any homes valued below \$0, so there should be underrepresentation for those categories. The result of this analysis is that the multiplier has enough support to justify its use to estimate home values for the entire County.

The assessed values County-wide were then multiplied by 1.45 to estimate their market value. Only residentially-zoned properties with at least \$10,000 in assessed improvements were used in this report to avoid the analysis of properties with minor improvements such as sheds, barns, etc.



The distribution of estimated home values is provided in Figure 35. This data represents more than actual sales, so the standard deviations are different than what is presented in Figure 34. Once again, the normal distribution (what could be expected if home prices were normally distributed) is represented in orange. The distribution shows that there is a significant overrepresentation of homes valued in the lower end of the market (between \$99,389 and \$153,927.21), proper representation at the middle (between \$153,927 and \$208,465) and underrepresentation of homes in the higher end of the market (above \$208,465).



SOURCE: Humboldt County Assessor's Office, Better City

Figure 35—Estimated Home Values Distribution

The final step in determining home affordability is to compare the County's share of incomes to the share of homes available in a price range the households at a given income level can afford. It

must be noted that this analysis will be based on the existing housing stock, not a snapshot of homes that are currently for sale.

A common measure of determining home affordability is the ratio of monthly mortgage to monthly income. A mortgage that is 28 percent or less of one’s monthly income is generally considered affordable. For example, a household which earns \$60,000 annually (\$5,000 monthly) can afford a mortgage of approximately \$1,400.

Monthly mortgage payments were calculated using the estimated market values of homes in the County. A down payment of five percent was used as a conservative estimate. The homes were then matched according to what income levels could afford them, showing the assumed surplus (if greater than zero) or shortage (if less than zero) of homes compared to incomes. For example, 10.3 percent of the households in Humboldt County earn between \$10,000 and \$15,000 but 29.9 percent of homes are affordable within that budget, meaning that there is a surplus of homes in that price range.

As shown by Table 21, there is a surplus of homes in homes on the lower end of the distribution and a shortage of homes in the higher end of the distribution. This is consistent with Figure 33 and Figure 35, which showed that incomes are relatively high but that the distribution of homes is skewed to the lower end.

Income		Housing		Stock Surplus/ Shortage
Annual Income Range	% House- holds	Monthly Mortgage Payment	% Housing Stock	
Less than \$10,000	6.4%	Less than \$233	0.0%	N/A
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4.5%	\$233 to \$350	1.4%	N/A
\$15,000 to \$24,999	10.3%	\$350 to \$583	30.6%	20.3%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	10.9%	\$583 to \$817	28.5%	17.6%
\$35,000 to 49,999	14.7%	\$817 to \$1,167	20.2%	5.5%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	19.6%	\$1,167 to \$1,750	13.4%	-6.2%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	12.7%	\$1,750 to \$2,333	4.6%	-8.1%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	12.7%	\$2,333 to \$3,500	1.2%	-11.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	4.2%	\$3,500 to \$4,667	0.1%	-4.1%
\$200,000 or more	3.7%	\$4,667 or more	0.0%	-3.7%

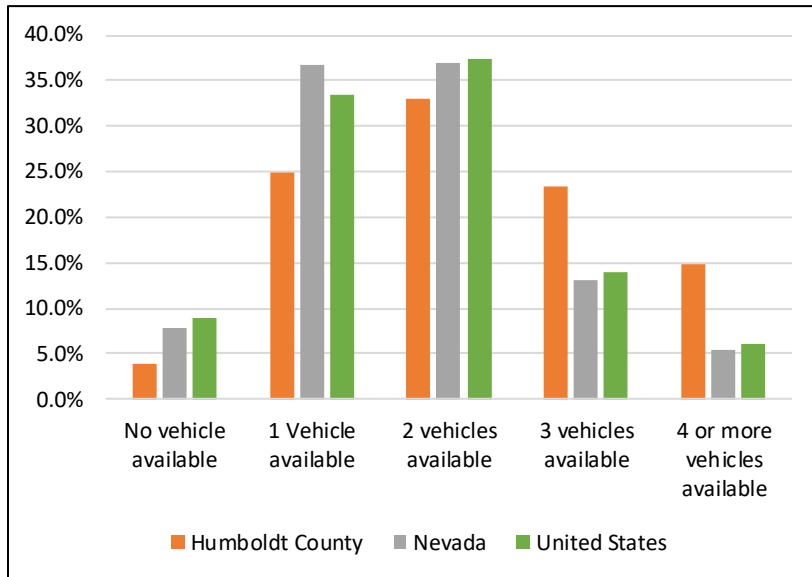
SOURCE: Humboldt County Assessor’s Office, Better City

Table 21—Housing Surplus, Shortage Analysis

The current housing stock seems to favor lower-priced homes despite the fact that income levels are high enough to afford higher value homes. A potential reason for the shortage at the high end is that there is simply isn’t enough supply of homes at the higher end of the distribution. Despite the fact that buyers would be willing and able to afford higher-priced homes, they are unable to do so and purchase where housing is available, at the lower end of the distribution.

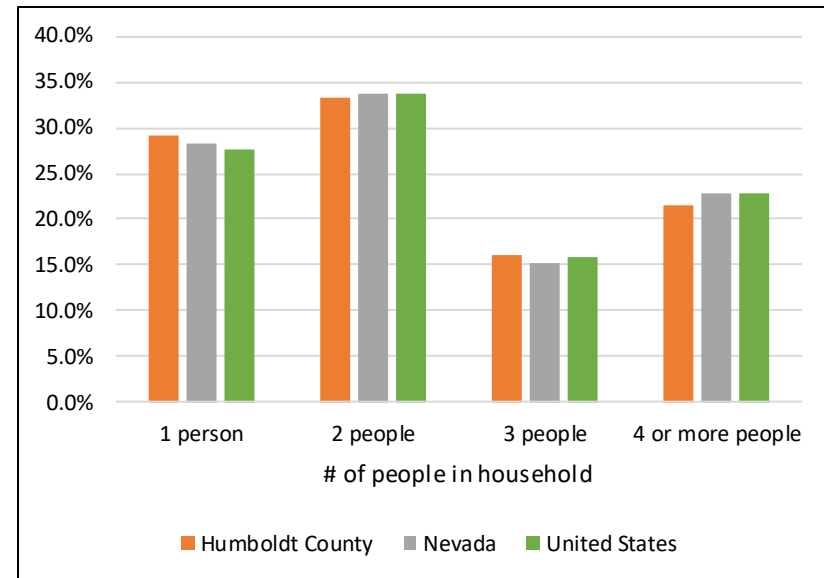
Another possible reason for this discrepancy is that the County’s residents are choosing to spend their money on “toys”, such as additional vehicles, RVs, motorcycles, ATV/UTVs etc. rather than a larger/more expensive home. While the validity of this assertion would be hard to evaluate empirically, a simple analysis of the number of vehicles available per household showed that Humboldt county has a much larger share of households with 3 or 4 vehicles than the State and the National average despite the similarities between household sizes (see Figure 36 and Figure

37). The households which choose to purchase additional vehicles don't want to be house poor and it appears that these households are purchasing homes below what they can afford, adding demand to homes which are priced for lower income groups. As a result, low- and moderate-income individuals are being priced out of the marketplace due to the premium that is placed on moderately-sized homes.



SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 36—Vehicles per Household



SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Figure 37—People Per Household

Possible solutions to address the challenges with the housing stock will be explored in a subsequent section of the economic development strategic plan, but in short, the solution will likely need to include the construction of income-restricted housing units as well as a community survey to determine how the market would respond to the availability of additional higher-priced homes.

RENTAL AFFORDABILITY

Monthly rental payments were also analyzed, but only at an aggregate level due to data unavailability. Similar to the housing

analysis, a monthly payment equal to approximately 28 percent of monthly income was considered affordable.⁴

Table 22 shows the estimated shortage/surplus of rental units by price in comparison to the income bracket which could afford it. A majority (71.4 percent) of the rental units are priced in the \$600-\$799 and \$800-\$1,249 brackets, which shows that most of the rentals are targeted at households which earn between \$25,000 and \$49,999. Based on this data, it can be assumed that the rental stock is filling the economic hole created by the premium placed on mid-priced homes. Households that earn less than \$50,000 likely can't afford a home in the local market and resort to renting. This, in turn, creates upward pressure on rental prices.

It is not concerning that there is a shortage of rental units at the higher end of the distribution, where home ownership is a better choice for most households at that income level. However, the shortage of rental units at the lowest bracket of less than \$250 should be addressed. Approximately 6.4 percent of the County's households earn less than \$10,000, yet only 3.2 percent of the rental stock is available. At that income, home ownership is unlikely, so these households have no housing options.

There are already some low income and subsidized apartment offerings in the County, but they seem insufficient for the number of households who would need them.

Income		Housing		Stock Surplus/ Shortage
Annual Income Range	% Households	Gross Rent	% Rental Stock	
Less than \$10,000	6.4%	Less than \$250	3.2%	-3.2%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4.5%	\$250 to \$349	6.7%	2.2%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	10.3%	\$350 to \$599	14.0%	3.7%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	10.9%	\$600 to \$799	28.9%	18.0%
\$35,000 to 49,999	14.7%	\$800 to \$1,249	42.5%	27.8%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	19.6%	\$1,250 to 1,999	4.5%	-15.1%
\$75,000 or more	33.3%	\$2,000 or more	0.0%	-33.3%

SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year estimates

Table 22—Rental Surplus, Shortage Analysis

MEDIAN AFFORDABILITY

Rental units and owned units both play a role in the housing market. To this end, an analysis of the stock was conducted to assess the stock's overall affordability.

Given the County's median household income of \$67,295, the median monthly income would be \$5,608 and the corresponding median affordable rent would be \$1,570 or less per month. An estimated 1,313 (or 86 percent) of the County's 1,525 rental units are at or below \$1,570 per month, making the rental units very affordable in general. Owned units are also affordable, with 4,649 units (70 percent) affordable for the median household.

Overall, approximately 74.2 percent of the housing/rental stock in Humboldt County is considered affordable for the median household. This is much higher than the State's estimated 43

⁴ Gross rent figures differ from mortgage payment estimates because of the rent brackets chosen by the U.S. Census. The nearest approximate value was chosen for each income bracket.

percent of housing/rental stock that is considered affordable for the median Nevada resident (see Table 23).

	Humboldt County		Nevada	
Total Units	7,223		1,200,517	
Median Income	\$67,295		\$52,970	
Median Affordable Housing	\$168,238		\$132,425	
% of Homes below MAH	70.3%		47%	
Median Affordable Rent	\$1,570		\$1,236	
% of Units below MAR	86%		39%	
	Units	% Affordable	Units	% Affordable
Owner-Occupied	4,649	70%	564,787	47%
Renter-Occupied	1,525	86%	465,914	39%
Vacant	1,049	N/A	169,816	N/A
Total Affordable	--	74%	--	43%

SOURCE: Humboldt County Assessor’s Office, ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Table 23—Affordability Estimates

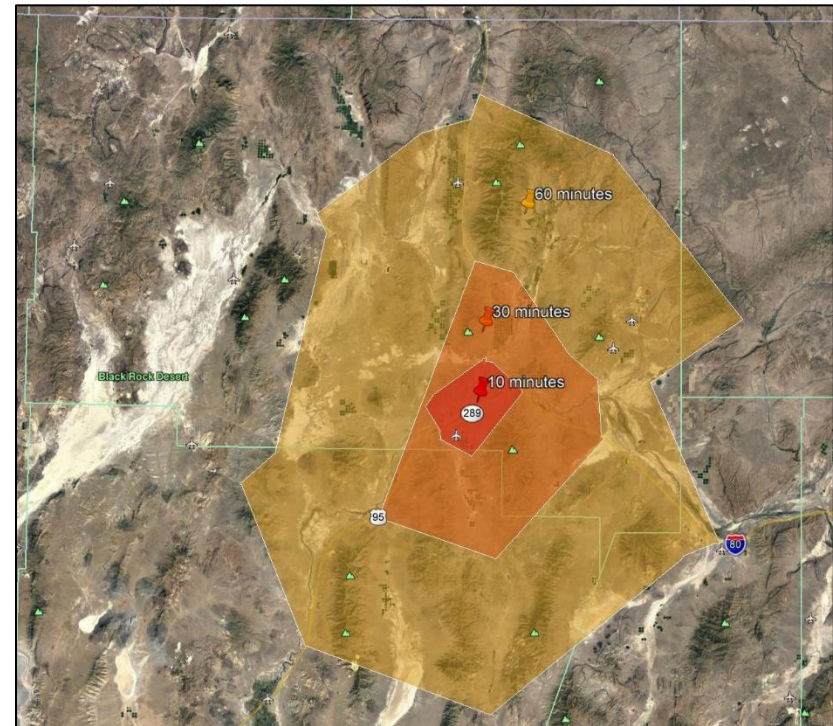
MARKET AREA

An analysis was performed of the estimated drive times and job locations to get a better sense of the relationship between where people live and where economic activity takes place. It can be assumed that, in a rural area like Humboldt County, the majority of people will work in the same County in which they reside. However, it is important to analyze what percent of the population works outside the County because they represent a



significant economic loss because they are significantly less likely to use local services for dining, shopping, and entertainment.

As shown by Map 2, there are not any major population centers within an hour drive of Winnemucca (assuming an average speed of 60 mph). About ½ of the county can be reached within an hour’s drive of the County Seat.



SOURCE: FreeMapTools, GoogleEarth

Map 2—Drive Time Shed

The estimated total population, number of households, and number of businesses within each drive time shed is shown in Table 24.

Drive-Time Analysis	10 minutes	30 minutes	60 minutes
Total Population	7,798	16,438	21,932
Number of Households	3,119	6,322	8,435
Businesses	481	564	747

SOURCE: ESRI Community Analyst

Table 24—Drive Time Shed Estimates

TRAVEL TIME TO WORK

A majority (58.4 percent) of the County’s residents report that they drive 20 minutes or less to get to work. This estimate represents those who live in or near Winnemucca, where a majority of the jobs are located, or who live relatively close to their place of employment.

77.6 percent of the County’s population drives less than an hour to get to work. This estimate represents a larger demographic, including commuters who drive from other parts of the County.

The remaining 22.4 percent represents those who must travel over an hour to get to work. This estimate likely captures a wide variety of commuters, including miners who must commute for an hour or more to get to work each day, those who live in more remote locations in the County, and those who live in the County but work in another location.

Travel Time to Work	Percent
Less than 10 minutes	28.40%
10 to 14 minutes	17.70%
15 to 19 minutes	12.30%
20 to 24 minutes	4.50%
25 to 29 minutes	1.50%
30 to 34 minutes	2.70%
35 to 44 minutes	2.90%
45 to 59 minutes	7.60%
60 or more minutes	22.40%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	30.4

SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Table 25—Travel Time Analysis

WORK LOCATION

A significant majority (99.3 percent) of workers in Humboldt County work in Nevada. A similar majority (90.1 percent) work within the County, meaning that approximately 9.2 percent of workers are employed in another County.

Job Location	Percent
Worked in State of Residence	99.3%
Worked in County of Residence	90.1%
Worked outside County of Residence	9.2%
Worked outside State of Residence	0.7%

SOURCE: ACS 2016 5-year Estimates

Table 26—Job Location

ASSET INVENTORY

According to Investopedia, the economic definition of an asset is “a resource with economic value that an individual, corporation, or country owns or controls with the expectation that it will provide a future benefit.” It is with this definition in mind that the County was analyzed to create an inventory of assets available for the County’s use. These assets will be classified according to type: natural assets, developable land, built environment, and intangible assets.

NATURAL ASSETS

Northern Nevada has a wide variety of natural assets all in close driving range of the Interstate. Humboldt County can take advantage of these assets to leverage tourism spending and to bring in more visitors each year.

Trail Network

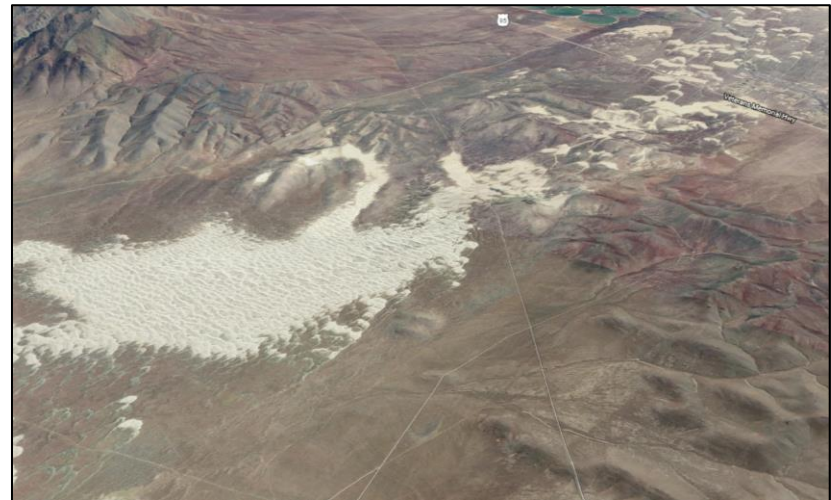
Northern Nevada has thousands of miles of mountain biking, hiking, and OHV trails. This area’s natural beauty and accessibility make it perfect for the die-hard or the casual outdoorsman alike.

The County’s has yet to take full advantage of its access to trails. Stakeholders expressed interest in adding better trail signage to make it more inviting to tourists. Additionally, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has expressed interest in developing the trail network to increase annual attendance.

The historic California Trail runs right through the County and has great access from Winnemucca (via Jungo Road), following Nevada State Route 49, toward Gerlach.

Sand Dunes

Winnemucca’s sand dunes are the largest in the State and are only 10 miles northeast of Winnemucca. Their location makes them perfect for tourism and recreation, especially if the future Interstate 11 passes through Winnemucca. The main dunes are a mix of BLM and privately-owned land, so the ownership may need to be consolidated before development efforts begin. Otherwise, the private property owners may view development efforts as a risk and a threat to their land.



SOURCE: Google Earth

Figure 38—Winnemucca Sand Dunes

Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge

Sheldon is a wildlife refuge maintained by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. It was established in 1931 to protect the American pronghorn. The refuge also serves as a habitat for native secondary species, listed endangered or threatened fish, and a bird sanctuary. The refuge is approximately 570,000 acres in size and can be accessed via State Route 140. The community which

could best take advantage of this asset is Denio, which is only about 30 miles from the refuge.

Water Canyon

Water Canyon is one of the closest recreation areas to Winnemucca. It offers sites for camping, picnics, hiking and biking, and some ATV use, all at no cost to visitors. The Water Canyon Trail is well reviewed by tourists and should be leveraged in tourism efforts.⁵

DEVELOPABLE LAND

Humboldt County has millions of acres of land that can be used for development, be it manufacturing, industrial, residential, or other land uses.

Winnemucca Airport Industrial Park

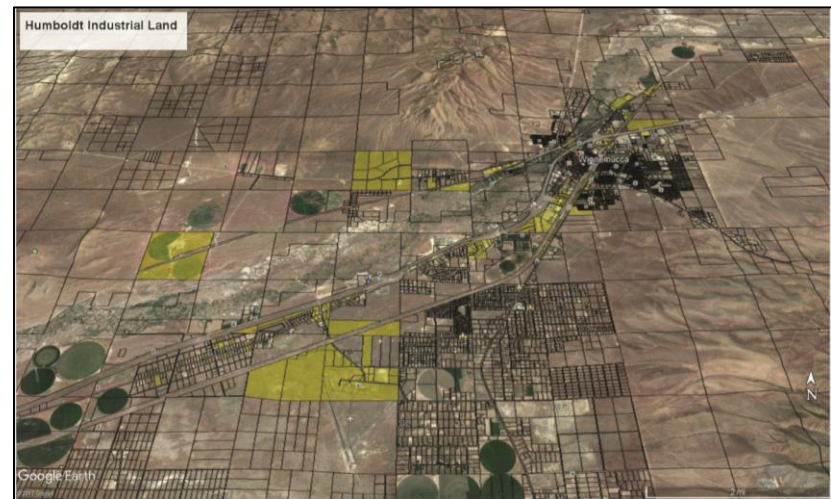
The airport industrial park is an exciting development opportunity backed by the Humboldt Development Authority. The incentives opportunities being offered at the Park are substantial and the County and City is eager to recruit additional businesses to the park that can add jobs for the County.

The incentive package for potential businesses is alluring and a number of businesses have already expressed interest in locating a facility there.

Other Industrial Lands

Humboldt County has more industrial land in and near Winnemucca, as shown in Map 3. The distance between these areas and seeming random placement is largely the result of the city growing into areas that were once on the outskirts creating

the need for new industrial areas and appropriate buffering. The challenge is that because there are a variety of industrial development options available, future growth may occur in sporadic fashion throughout the available options. While additional research and analysis is needed, it may be appropriate to consider a rezone for some of the underutilized industrial areas to create the ability to guide more focused industrial development that is less likely to be encroached upon. To help reduce the risk of sporadic industrial growth, the focus for recruitment should be on the Airport Industrial Park until it reaches capacity.



Map 3—Humboldt County Industrial Land

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The term “built environment” encompasses any places or spaces that are created or modified by people for human use. It can include buildings, parks, and transportation systems.

⁵ Given a score of 4.5/5 stars on AllTrails.com

Transportation Infrastructure

Humboldt County stands as a crossroads for a number of well-traveled routes, including Interstate 80, U.S. Route 95, and the Union Pacific Railroad. The Winnemucca Municipal Airport is another asset and is one of Google’s Project Loon launch points.

Regional Recreation Complex

The City has completed the first phase for a 43-acre regional recreation complex in eastern Winnemucca. This complex is large enough to have a soccer complex, a four-field little league and youth baseball/softball complex, a future aquatic center, and tennis, volleyball, and basketball courts. This complex has the potential to be a regional draw and will provide an economic boon to the City during regional events.

Community Pond

A community fishing pond was recently completed in Winnemucca (Fall 2018). This pond will likely be viewed as a community asset for locals but may be an additional stopping point for travelers or guests if advertised.



SOURCE: Michael Neel

Figure 39—Youth Soccer League

Shooting Range

Winnemucca has a well-maintained outdoor shooting range located a few miles out of the City. The range is open year-round and offers a number of shooting distances. This range is north of Winnemucca and could be used in tandem with the Sand Dunes.

Bridge Street

Historic Bridge street has some truly iconic structures and the street was once the center of economic activity. Historic pictures show a streetscape and built environment that brought remarkable vibrancy to the downtown. Many of the historic structures have since been replaced or are boarded up. Despite the fact that many of the buildings need renovation and redevelopment, the Street is still considered by many residents as the City’s downtown corridor. This street will be at the center of redevelopment and establishing a walkable downtown in Winnemucca.



SOURCE: Library of Congress

Figure 40—Historic Bridge Street



SOURCE: Google Earth

Figure 41—Bridge Street 2017

Humboldt County Museum

The Humboldt County Museum is located on the northwestern half of the City and includes a number of old buildings in the same complex. The museum was opened in 1974 and has recently created an app that uses a phone’s GPS location to guide visitors through the City’s historic buildings, complete with a history and pictures of each building.

INTANGIBLE ASSETS

A City’s success is not built on the stock of its natural and built assets alone. The community itself can stand as an asset or liability.

Mining Relations

Newmont and Barrick mining corporations have good relationships with the City and County Governments, school district, Great Basin College, and other community entities. As the economic base of the community, this industry’s relationship can be a catalytic driver for community initiatives.

City/County Relations

The City and County governments share an incredible relationship which cuts down on administrative overhead, process redundancies, and saves the Community thousands of dollars a year.

Community Participation

The Community enjoys a high level of engagement from residents and stakeholders that participate in civic events and public service organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, public relations events with the mines, etc. This level of engagement and excitement is rare.

Humboldt County

Project Recommendations and Analysis—Phase II



Better City
Solving Problems. Creating Opportunity.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Better City was hired by the Northern Nevada Regional Development Authority (NNRDA) and the Humboldt Development Authority (HDA) in early 2018 to create a comprehensive economic development assessment and strategic plan for Humboldt County (the “County”). The scope of work for the project includes identifying economic development projects that can attract private-sector investment, assessing economic and demographic trends, and creating a plan to make the County’s economy more robust. This document is the second phase of Better City’s assessment and is part of a broader community development initiative led by NNRDA and HDA. This project is meant to work in conjunction with the ongoing Winnemucca Futures Project.

The first phase of Better City’s process was to gather information and data relating to economic and demographic trends and to take an inventory of the community’s assets. This document reports on major topics brought up during stakeholder interviews, important events impacting the community in the near-term, and project recommendations based on community assets and strategic advantages. The third and final phase of the project will describe an implementation plan and recommend local project champions.

This document is broken up into six sections. The first two sections discuss the findings of stakeholder interviews and major topics resulting from those interviews. The other four sections discuss economic and community development opportunities and concepts based on strategic advantages.

Key takeaways are provided in the following list. An in-depth description of each takeaway can be found in the relevant section, given in parentheses after each insight.

- Major topics that were brought up in the interviews with stakeholders were “Community”, “Water”, “Businesses”, and “Events” (Stakeholder interviews)
- Major concerns in the community include: Water rights, the closing of the local public swimming pools, the possibility of Interstate 11, and the lack of small businesses and events (Stakeholder Interviews)
- Approximately 79.9 percent of Humboldt County is owned by the Federal Government (Public Lands)
- Multiple-use limitations on public lands create a regulatory hurdle which hinders or prevents the investment of private capital (Public Land)
- Public lands in the County are underutilized and represent an opportunity for economic growth and diversification (Public Lands)
- Interstate 11 would have a significant impact on the County’s economic infrastructure (Interstate 11)
- The Transportation/Warehousing industry has a jobs multiplier of 2.21, meaning that each new job in that industry is expected to create an additional two jobs in the County (Interstate 11)
- Humboldt County is already a competitive shipping point on a regional basis, but not on a national basis (Interstate 11)
- Winnemucca’s downtown needs development to give it a downtown feel, increase walkability, and support local businesses (Downtown (Re)Development)
- Value-added agriculture can increase the economic significance of the County’s agricultural industry by adding jobs, increasing revenues, and creating products which can be exported to other counties or states (Value-Added Agriculture)

- Humboldt County's largest industries in agriculture production output value in 2015 were: Beef cattle ranching and farming, all other crop farming, and dairy cattle and milk production (Value-Added Agriculture)
- 328 businesses have been added to the County's economy since the year 2000 (Entrepreneurial Infrastructure)
- The year with the highest numbers of new businesses was 2012, which experienced 46 net businesses (Entrepreneurial Infrastructure)
- Business counts have been decreasing; since 2013, a total of 62 businesses have left the County's economy (Entrepreneurial Infrastructure)
- Approximately 36.5 percent of businesses in the County are in their startup years (Entrepreneurial Infrastructure)
- Business survivability has been decreasing over time (Entrepreneurial Infrastructure)
- Affordability is important because of the relatively high wages by the mining industry, which tends to drive up the price of homes (Population Growth and Development)
- According to a probable construction cost estimate, a rail spur for the Airport Industrial Park will cost approximately \$2 million (Population Growth and Development)
- The development of the Thacker Pass lithium mine is expected to create at least 800 high paying jobs during the 21-month construction phase, 292 permanent positions during the 46-year operation, and several hundred indirect jobs (Population Growth and Development)

PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

The following projects are recommended in the document. The page on which the recommendation can be found is given in parenthesis:

- Lodging Options (Page 11)
- Winnemucca Sand Dunes (Page 13)
- Trail Development (Page 14)
- Ghost Mine/Ghost Town Tours (Page 15)
- Drag Strip and Race Tracks (Page 16)
- Rodeo/Outdoor Events Complex (Page 16)
- Microbrewery (Page 29)
- Industrial Hemp (Page 29)
- Dairy Production (Page 29)
- Entrepreneurship Center/Incubator (Page 34)
- Redevelopment Agency (Page 36)
- Export Retailers (Page 36)
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- Assisted Living (Page 39)
- Traditional Development (Page 39)
- Manufactured Housing (Page 39)
- Community Housing Development Organization (Page 40)
- Full Street Concept (Page 40)
- Rail Spur

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PUBLIC LANDS & OUTDOOR RECREATION

Nevada is the seventh-largest state in the United States, with more than 70.3 million total acres. However, it is also the state with the highest ratio of federal-to-private land. Approximately 56 million acres (79.6 percent) of the State’s total land area is owned and maintained by Federal or State government, leaving only 12.8 percent of the land in the hands of local government or private parties.¹ Humboldt County’s share of Federal ownership is similarly divided, at approximately 79.9 percent. Table 1 shows that, after deducting Indian reservation and State government land, about 19.5 percent of land in Humboldt County is available for local government and private ownership.

Humboldt County: Federal and State Lands		
	Acres	Percent
Federal Lands	4,961,616	79.9%
Indian Reservation	27,948	0.5%
State Government	8,074	0.1%
Local Government and Private	1,212,922	19.5%
Total	6,210,560	100.0%

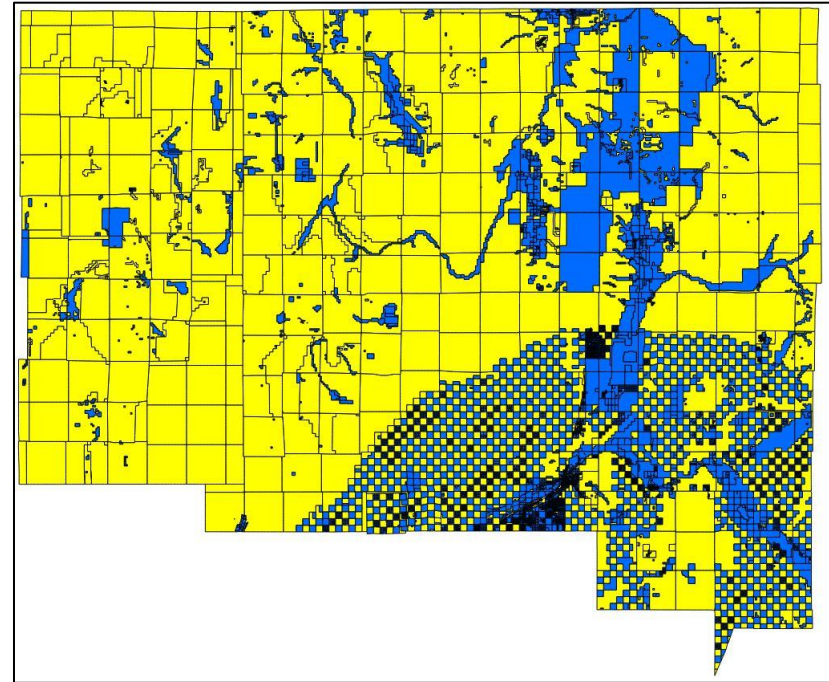
SOURCE: UNR University Center for Economic Development

Table 1—Humboldt County Lands by Type

Map 1 shows the breakdown of Federal and State land (shown in yellow) versus local government and private ownership (shown in blue). As can be seen by the map, most privately-owned land is located on or near the County’s two main corridors: I-80 and U.S. Route 95. The checkerboard ownership pattern in the south-eastern region of the map is made up of square mile blocks that

¹ SOURCE: UNR University Center for Economic Development, Fact Sheet-01-32 <https://www.unce.unr.edu/publications/files/cd/2001/fs0132.pdf>.

switch between private and public lands. The impact of this pattern for economic development is especially problematic for the development of public amenities in the area.



SOURCE: Humboldt County Assessor’s Office, QGIS, Better City

Map 1—Public Lands vs Local Government or Private Ownership

Some of the lands shown in Map 1 may be available for disposal by the Bureau of Land Management through sale, exchange, or for conveyance to state or local governments. These lands are shown in Appendix I.

With more than four-fifths of the land owned at the Federal and State level, public lands are an important issue for the County and its economy. The County should consider land ownership as an important factor for all the projects recommended in this report, understanding the limitations and hurdles that these lands may require to develop or use.

MULTIPLE-USE LIMITATIONS

Public lands are a valuable resource for the County because they represent a common good from which the County can benefit, be it from livestock grazing, outdoor recreation, conservation, energy development, wildlife management, or mining and logging (see Figure 2).

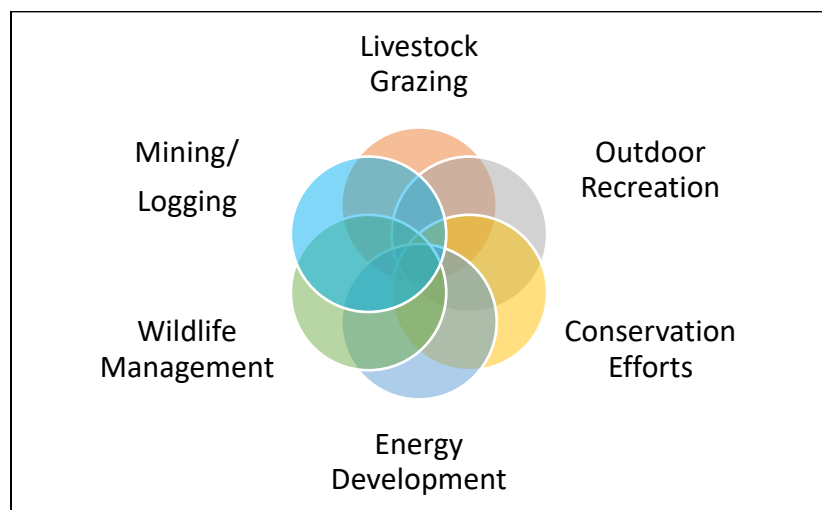


Figure 2—Multiple Use Examples

The Federal government initiated the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) so that each of these uses could be managed for the benefit of the people. FLPMA outlines the way in which the BLM, part of the Department of the Interior, should manage public lands for multiple uses. Of course, the way the lands should be managed, and the relative importance of those needs is hard to define and is different for each person or entity. Not only must these government agencies manage the lands for current needs, but the agencies must ensure that these uses are sustainable for generations to come.

Land use policy in the United States has undergone significant changes over the last decade, many of which have affected Humboldt County directly (i.e. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008, Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, the Sage Grouse Initiative of 2010, etc.). These regulations have imposed multiple-use limitations on the public lands within the County.

Limits to multiple-use often have a negative impact on local economic conditions, especially for private capital investment. These limits include:

- **Increased difficulty in the ability for the mines to expand or explore.** In 2015, SNL Metals & Mining, a British consulting firm, estimated that unexpected delays in the U.S. permitting process could reduce a mining project's value by more than one-third. These delays can push back the project start dates by up to 20 years.²
- **Less public land available for livestock ranching.** According to one Humboldt County official, grazing areas have been significantly reduced since 1979 due to

² SOURCE: Fellows, Mark. "Permitting, Economic Value and Mining in the United States." *SNL Metals & Mining*. June 19, 2015.

conservation areas, herd management areas, and wildfires.

- **Public Land limitations for tourism and recreation.** Protected or high-priority areas do not allow for certain tourism or recreation activities through categorical exemptions.³
- **Increased costs in using or adding improvements to public lands.** The City waited to try to get a 4H waterline from a natural spring along an established route. The review period took longer than 6 months, at an estimated cost of \$45,000 for the proposal, before it could go to the NEPA committee. This cost and time constraint is prohibitive for small businesses.
- **Increased resource requirements from the local BLM/Forest Service offices.** These agencies have been given many roles: conducting studies, determining categorical exemptions, and then enforcing them. Multiple use limitations place a greater burden and tie-up resources that could otherwise be used to perform other duties.

In short, multiple-use limitations on public lands create a regulatory hurdle which hinders or prevents the investment of private capital. Four specific land use issues were analyzed which have had a particularly important impact on the local economy: Sage Grouse, wild horses/burros, wildfires, and water rights.

³ SOURCE: https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/documents/files/PlanningandNepa_Planning_FinalPlanningRuleCategoricalExclusion.pdf

Sage Grouse and Other Protected Species

Northern Nevada is home to a number of protected or threatened species. To ensure that these species can survive and that their habitat is not destroyed by human causes, federal and state administrations have been given the authority to limit land use in designated areas. This authority allows these bodies to shape land use decisions. There are several protected species in the County, the most notable of which is the greater sage grouse.

Greater Sage Grouse is an imperiled bird species that is found in the Western 11 states.⁴ Sage Grouse is highly dependent on arid climates and large, connected swaths of sage brush for its survival. Sage Grouse is found in 15 of Nevada's 17 counties, making land-use limitations and policies regarding sage grouse particularly important for the State's economy.

Northern Nevada is a critical area for this species because it has some of the best lands, in terms of habitat size and makeup, for Greater Sage Grouse. However, wildfires, rural development, and invasive species such as juniper trees and cheatgrass have caused a loss of habitat in the region, shrinking the species' population over the last several decades.⁵ The species was a candidate for protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), but the US Fish and Wildlife Service published a report in September 2015 that found that the Greater Sage Grouse did not warrant listing under the Act, mostly due to regulatory certainty from the conservation commitments and management actions in the BLM and US Forest Service. This was good news for the County because it meant that Sage Grouse lands would not be heavily managed under the ESA. However, it now shifts the burden to the BLM and

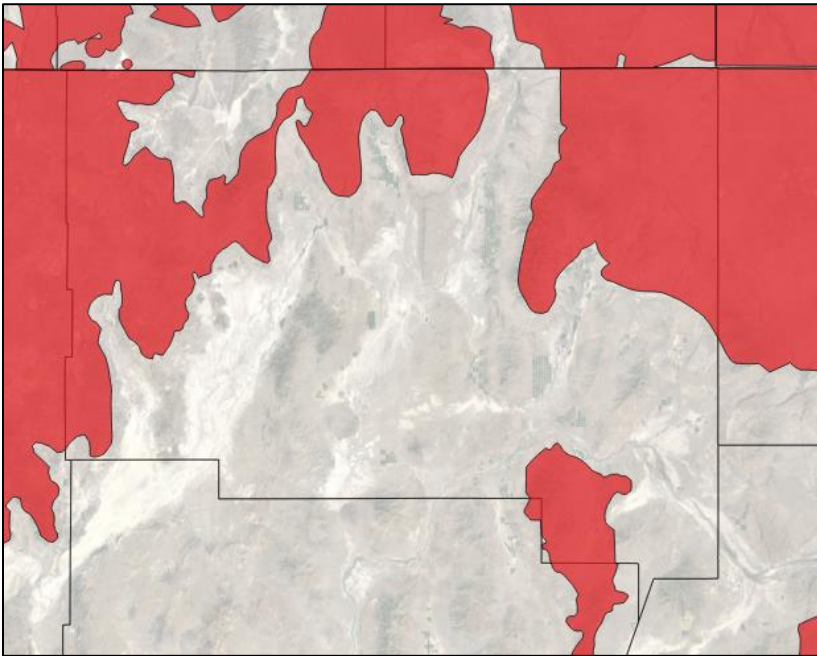
⁴ The 11 western States include Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming

⁵ SOURCE: Fish and Wildlife Service, *Sage Grouse Initiative*.

Forest Service to protect the species through land use plan amendments and categorical exemptions.

An effort called the *Sage Grouse Initiative* was launched in 2010 as “a partnership-based, science-driven effort that is part of *Working Lands for Wildlife*.” The initiative seeks to work with private land owners and Federal agencies to protect sage grouse lands without the blunt tools of limited-use management.

The areas that have been designated as priority areas of conservation are shown in red on Map 2. Sage grouse lands make up a total of 2.2 million acres in the County, or approximately 35.2 percent of the County’s land area.



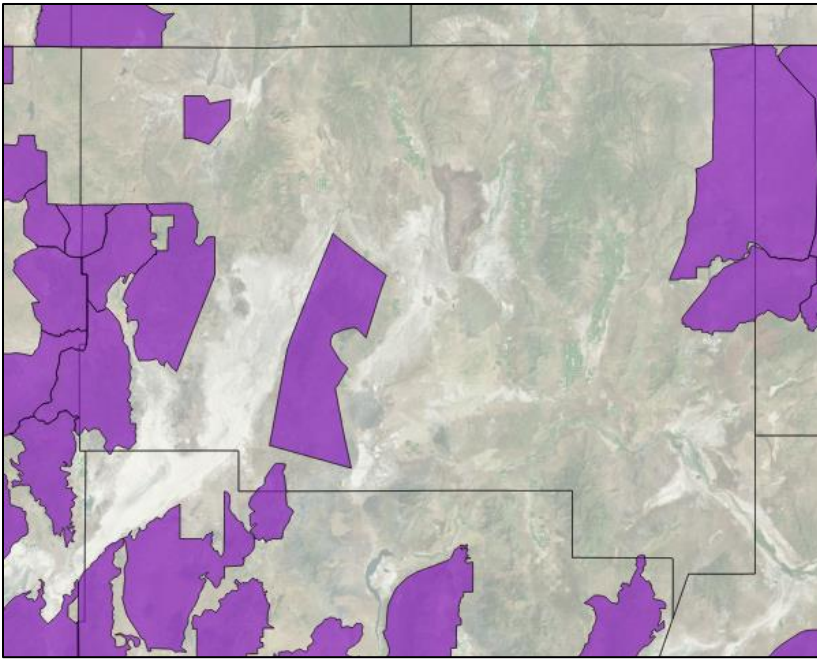
SOURCE: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, QGIS, Better City

Map 2—Sage Grouse Priority Areas of Conservation

Wild Horses/Burros

Nevada is home to many small herds of wild horses and burros. Regionally, most of them are descendants of released cattleman and rancher breeds; they are sometimes horses that escaped or were released into the wild.

Wild horses and burros are protected through BLM’s Herd Management Areas (HMAs) and the US Forest Service’s wild horse and burro territories. Nevada is home to approximately half of the nation’s HMAs, with 15.7 million acres in the State. Humboldt County has 10 HMA’s which are partially or fully located in its borders. Together, more than one million acres of land is dedicated and managed as HMAs. The HMAs in and near Humboldt County are shown in purple on Map 3. HMAs cover approximately 16.3 percent of the County’s total land area.



SOURCE: Sciencebase.gov, QGIS, Better City

Map 3—Herd Management Areas

Like the Sage Grouse lands, wild horse and burro lands are carefully considered when approving uses. These large land areas may impede uses in the County, limiting activities which could otherwise provide economic gains to the region. A list of HMA in and near Humboldt County is shown in Table 2.

Area Name	Acres	Counties	Appropriate Management Level
Black Rock Range	185,520	Humboldt	112-186 horses
Calico Mountains	160,831	Humboldt, Washoe	200-333 horses
Jackson Mountains	283,775	Humboldt	130-217 horses
Kamma Mountains	57,390	Humboldt, Pershing	46-77 horses
Little Owyhee	460,284	Elko, Humboldt	194-298 horses
McGee Mountain	41,160	Humboldt	25-41 burros
Snowstorm Mountains	117,109	Elko, Humboldt	90-140 horses
Tobin Range	198,236	Humboldt, Pershing	25-42 horses
Wall Canyon	41,158	Humboldt, Washoe	15-25 horses 105-175 horses,
Warm Springs Canyon	91,710	Humboldt	12-24 burros

SOURCE: Sciencebase.gov

Table 2—Herd Management Areas in Humboldt County

Wildfires

Recent wildfires have significantly impacted the County’s public lands. The 2018 Martin Fire, which was the largest fire in the United States at the time, burned approximately 435,569 acres and destroyed a significant amount of Greater Sage Grouse land. The cost of such massive fires has been increasing as fires in the United States continue getting larger and more frequent. In addition to record-setting temperatures, wildfires are fueled by invasive grasses like cheatgrass and medusahead-rye.

The prevalence of invasive grasses is largely due to funding shortages and a lack of rehabilitation. Priority should be given,

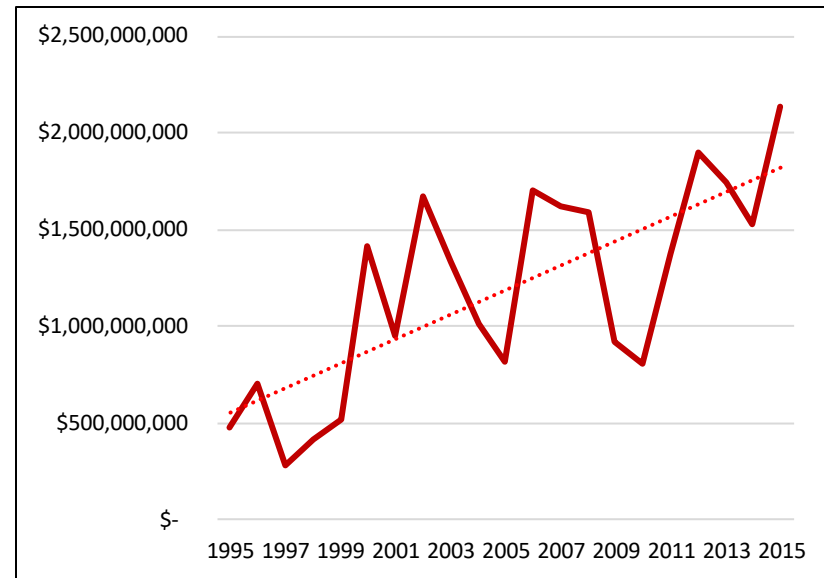
and grants sought after, to properly rehabilitate areas so that invasive plants do not dominate areas prone to wildfires.



SOURCE: Fire Aviation

Figure 3—2018 Martin Fire

The BLM and Forest Service are the two agencies charged with managing wildfires. As shown in Figure 4, the cost to suppress wildfires in the United States has been increasing dramatically over time, from less than \$500,000 before 1995 to well over \$2 Billion in recent years. When adding indirect costs, wildfires have averaged \$3 Billion per year in the last five years. The Federal budget for fighting these fires is under-allocated. This leaves less Federal money available for local agencies to provide their more traditional services. It also means that there is much less money to spend on fire prevention projects for the next year, making the lands even more vulnerable.



SOURCE: National Interagency Fire Center, inflation adjusted

Figure 4—Federal Firefighting Costs (Suppression Only)

Wildfires aren't only expensive at the Federal level. Recovery efforts such as road repairs, landscape rehabilitation, home and property restoration, and infrastructure can add millions of dollars to overall costs. According to Headwaters Economics, an independent research firm, "almost half of the full community costs of wildfire are paid for at the local level" by homeowners, businesses, and NGOs.⁶

The County must assume that wildfires will continue to get worse and more frequent, potentially eating up Federal and local resources. Increased investment in fire safety and prevention are recommended to ensure that Federal and local agencies will not be overwhelmed by this issue.

⁶ Barrett, Kimiko. "Full Community Costs of Wildfire." *Headwater Economics*. May 2018.

Water Rights

Water is an extremely limited resource in the western United States. Rights to appropriate it and put it to use are complicated, causing a significant strain on farms, industries, and cities. The doctrine of prior appropriation has created difficult political and practical debates on how to use and divide water rights. With Humboldt County representing approximately 24 percent of the groundwater pumpage in 2015⁷, it is not a stranger to these issues.

The County is working with Resource Concepts Inc to develop a county-wide water plan to “insure the availability of water, provide opportunity for planned community growth and economic development, and to maximize the County’s influence on decisions that impact water resources within Humboldt County.” The plan was released in November 2017 but is a living document and may be revised over time. For the most up-to-date version of the document, please visit the County’s website (hcnv.us).

How water is allocated and used will significantly impact economic development initiatives. The County water plan will be an important tool to allow current and future residents to make investment decisions with the reassurance that there will be adequate water to meet current and future needs. The uncertainty of water availability is a negative factor in economic development; therefore, the development and implementation of the water plan is vital to long-term economic vitality.

OUTDOOR RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS

While public lands multiple-use considerations could be problematic for outdoor recreation, the potential benefits from bolstering up the County’s natural assets are much larger than any short-term hurdles such as permitting or conservation issues that may arise. Public lands in the County are underutilized for economic development and represent an opportunity for economic growth and diversification. The following recommendations are intended to continue the development of tourism as well as provide more amenities for current and potential residents.

Lodging Options

There are not very many overnight lodging options in the County. Of the options available, even fewer provide RV-friendly sites, toilets, or other amenities such as fire pits or tent pads (for a list of current campgrounds, see Table 3). Almost all of the campgrounds in the County are free to use and do not bring in any direct revenue for the County or their operating agencies. Additionally, these free sites are not destination attractions in and of themselves. It is recommended that the County develop fee-supported RV/Campgrounds near popular tourist destinations throughout the County, especially in locations close to major transit corridors. These campgrounds should not replace the free options available, but should target marketing toward more affluent customers through improved amenities such as RV hookups, infrastructure improvements, an online reservation system, etc.

⁷ Statewide Groundwater Pumpage Inventory: Calendar Year 2015. State of Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of Water Resources

Campground Name	Operated by:	Designated Campgrounds?	Driving Distance from Winnemucca:
Black Rock Desert Wilderness	BLM	Yes	96.9 miles
Calico Mountains Wilderness	BLM	No	244.0 miles
High Rock Lake Wilderness	BLM	No	258.0 miles
Lahontan Cutthroat Natural Area	BLM	Yes	111.0 miles
Lye Creek Campground	FS	Yes	58.0 miles
North Black Rock Range Wilderness	BLM	No	123.0 miles
Onion Valley Reservoir	BLM	Yes	125.0 miles
Pahute Peak Wilderness	BLM	No	167.0 miles
Pine Forest Range Wilderness	BLM	Yes	96.1 miles
Santa-Rosa Paradise Peak Wilderness	FS	Yes	46.1 miles
Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge	FWS	Yes	141.0 miles
South Jackson Mountains Wilderness	BLM	Yes	89.6 miles
Water Canyon	BLM	Yes	4.3 miles
Winnemucca Sand Dunes	BLM	Yes	10.0 miles

Note: BLM = Bureau of Land Management, FS = US Forest Service, FWS = US Fish and Wildlife Service

SOURCE: BLM, FS, FWS, Recreation.org

Table 3—Public Lands Campgrounds in Humboldt County

An additional option is to have non-traditional lodging options like yurts. A yurt is a round and canvas-covered structure (typically made from wood, but it can utilize various materials) that can be used for an outdoor experience but with heating, air-conditioning, and higher-quality beds. These structures have become popular for what is known as “glamping.”

A fusion of the words “glamour” and “camping,” glamping has become a popular way to go to exotic and exciting locations without having to experience the less-desired aspects of camping. Glampground accommodations are often luxurious and can exceed the furnishings found in a typical hotel room (see Figure 5 and Figure 6). Glamping provides patrons with more ways to enjoy nature and be out in the wilderness. Yurts and other glamping accommodations are typically rented out to visitors on a nightly or weekly basis, so it affords urban families—who might

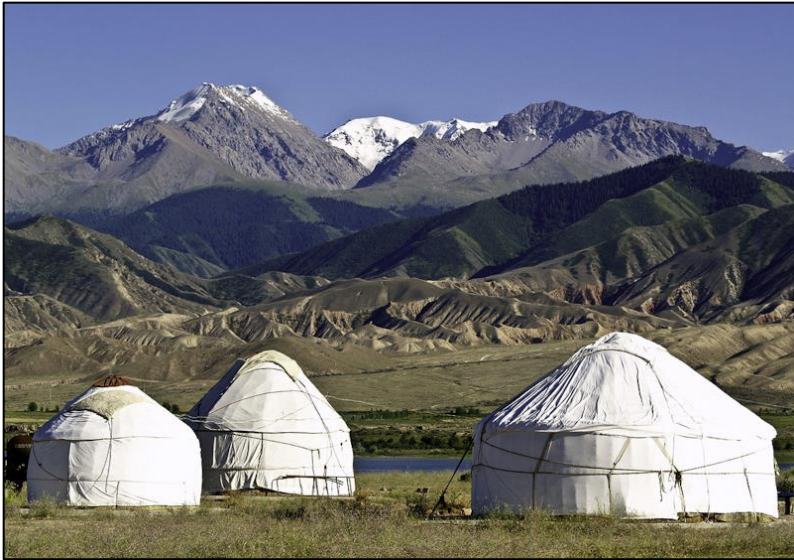
rarely go camping—with a way of getting into nature without needing to purchase a tent and other camping gear.



SOURCE: HotelsCombined.it

Figure 5—Yurt Interior

Glampgrounds, and yurts in particular, can be found above the red rocks of Moab, in the trees in northern New York, or on the beaches of Washington State. They have proven to be profitable due to the rental rates, which can reach as high as \$200/night in popular locations. During one of the public meetings, a comment was made that there is a yurt available for public use in Water Canyon. This is not marketed well as no on-line information was found regarding this offering. Efforts should be made to increase awareness of available yurts and to expand this lodging option.



SOURCE: Flickr/CEA+

Figure 6—Yurt Exterior

The County should work with BLM to create additional fee-based glamping options, especially in the more popular locations of the County’s public lands. These options will start bringing in more tourism revenue while creating destination attractions for outdoor enthusiasts and vacationers.

Winnemucca Sand Dunes

Winnemucca’s sand dunes are located only about 10 miles north of the City, giving them the potential to become a great, easy-to-access tourist attraction. The dunes, recognized as the largest in Nevada by acreage, stretch for more than 40 miles, giving tourists plenty of space for hiking, sandboarding, sledding, or dune buggy or ATV riding. The dunes are free to access and use.

Winnemucca’s dunes already have a BLM-owned access point and small campground but not much else has been done to develop or advertise the site. The access point is not easily visible from the road and no signs are posted at the entrance to guide travelers in. According to one stakeholder, many travelers miss it because they have no idea it is even there (see Figure 7).



SOURCE: Google Earth

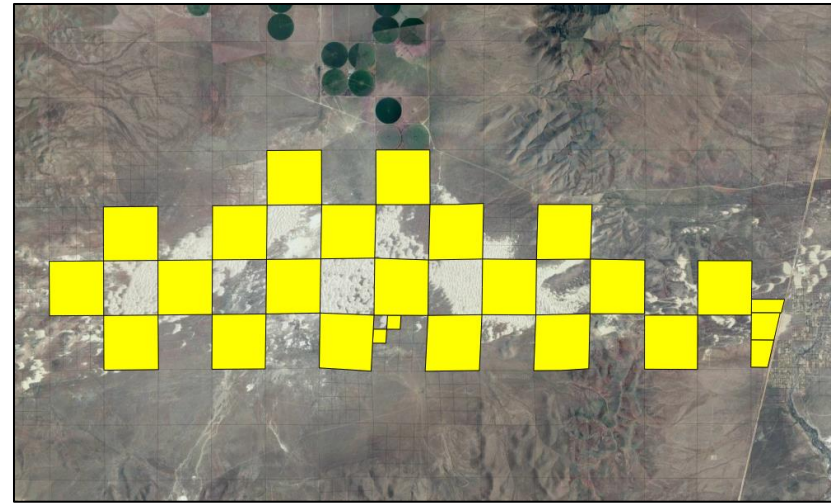
Figure 7—U.S. Route 95 Access Point

As reported by local BLM officials, the main reason the BLM doesn’t advertise recreational opportunities at the sand dunes is because the dunes are owned under a checkerboard pattern of ownership, meaning that only a portion of the dunes are under BLM control (see Map 4. BLM land in yellow). The rest of the land is owned by other entities, both public and private. The Pacific Railroad Act of 1862, which was intended to be used to fund railway construction, is the cause of this pattern of ownership. BLM therefore won’t advertise the site unless there is a significant change in ownership or public policy. However, the County has full authority to advertise and promote the site as-is. The only

concern is that the public and private sections of the dunes are not always clearly marked. Access easements could be sought from the private land owners to provide patrons access to the privately-owned sections, or additional signage could be created to help ensure that private land is respected. Another potential solution to address these concerns would be to explore a land swap with the BLM and then purchasing private lands, giving the County full control of this recreation destination.

In either case, the County should work to develop and improve these dunes. Improvements, such as a road turnout and adequate signage, are desperately needed. With their proximity to the City, easy access from U.S. Route 95 and I-80, and due to the dunes' status as the largest in the state, they represent an immediate opportunity for outdoor recreation development. The County should work with the BLM to improve the site and then begin marketing, especially with signs on I-80 and Route 95.

In addition to infrastructure improvements, a sand dune equipment rental store should be established so visitors can rent OHVs, ATVs, dune buggies, sleds, phat bikes, or any other equipment they would need to enjoy the dunes. The rental store can be headquartered in downtown Winnemucca with an outpost on site for pickup/return and quick repairs.



SOURCE: Bing Maps, QGIS, Better City

Map 4—Government-owned lands near sand dunes, BLM lands in yellow

Trail Development

Northern Nevada is well known for its hiking and mountain bike trails. Both BLM representatives and stakeholders mentioned, however, that the trails in the County are in need of improvements and better wayfinding signage. This is a low-cost, sometimes forgotten aspect of outdoor recreation. People enjoy trails more when they are easy to find, follow, and use. When trails do not meet these criteria, it can be frustrating to miss a turn because the path isn't distinct enough or if the signs aren't clear.

The County should work with the BLM, Forest Service, and Fish and Wildlife Service to make sure the most popular trails in Humboldt County are well suited for outdoor recreation. Benches, gondolas, trailheads, signage, and other improvements should also be considered to make trips more enjoyable. A master plan,

which outlines the County’s goals and priorities for trail development, is highly recommended.



SOURCE: Flickr/Mark Turner

Figure 8—Trail Development

Ghost Mine/Ghost Town Tours

Humboldt County is rich in natural resources such as silver, gold, lithium, and opal. These resources have been major drivers of growth in the County and historically make up the County’s economic base. But mining is often only a temporary activity, so when the resource dries up, entire towns can be abandoned. Humboldt County has seen quite a few of these boomtowns over the years, leaving abandoned ruins and a rich history with large structures that stand in dramatic contrast to the desert landscape.

Figure 9 shows some of the buildings from the Alabama Mine/Awakening District. These ruins would be an ideal stop for tours of Humboldt’s mining heritage.

⁸ SOURCE: 1970 decennial census.



SOURCE: Forgivennevada.org

Figure 9—Awakening Mine Ruins

Cripple Creek in Colorado is a great example of how a community was able to turn its old mining assets into a tourist destination. Cripple Creek is the site of the last great Colorado Gold Rush. After gold was found in 1890, the small community of 500 increased to 10,000 in less than three years. It was an active mine town until activity stopped when the Carlton Mill, the only way to process the gold ore in the region, was closed in 1961. The city was left with as few as 425 residents in 1970.⁸

Tourism was identified as a potential opportunity due to Cripple Creek’s location (one hour from Colorado Springs, one hour from Canon City, two hours from Denver, and two hours from Pueblo). One of the City’s premier tourism sites is the Mollie Kathleen Gold Mine Tour. A small operation at first, the tour has expanded over

the years and now features a 1,000-foot descent in a man-skip elevator, an underground tram air locomotive, and functioning mining equipment (see Figure 10).



SOURCE: Goldminetours.com

Figure 10—Mollie Kathleen Steel Head Frame

Drag Strip and Race tracks

The Good Time Drag Strip, Regional Speedway, and motocross track all represent opportunities for further outdoor recreation development. Although the strip and tracks are in good condition, stakeholders mentioned that these events are not very well publicized. These opportunities represent a good investment from which there could be immediate benefit.

The Good Time Drag Strip is operated by the Northern Nevada Racing Association, which conducts approximately six to eight

events on the strip each year. The regional speedway was renovated in 2014 and has an R/C Oval track under construction. The motocross track is well developed and is part of the BBMX series.

Rodeo/Outdoor Events Complex

The Rodeo and Outdoor event complex is funded through an ongoing room tax, which allows it to bring in and use dollars from outside guests staying in hotels and motels. The Events Complex is already a successful venue and hosts a number of regional events, including 4-H, Rodeos, meeting space, and fairs, to name a few. The County should continue to advertise and pursue events and activities in this venue, especially in industries and events that bring in visitors to the area.

INTERSTATE 11

The CANAMEX Trade Corridor was outlined in 1991 as part of the North America Free Trade Agreement. Congress initially made plans to have a four-lane route stretch between Canada and Mexico to connect all three partner countries together. While a north-south route already exists (via Interstate 15 and several highways), it is not four lanes all the way through and does not meet current shipping needs.

In 2012, Congress passed the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), which included a planned freeway between Phoenix and Las Vegas. The freeway was designated as Interstate 11. At the time of this writing, the first two phases of this freeway are already underway or completed, with plans to continue development in the coming years.

The planned freeway is proposed to continue northward from Las Vegas and will link to routes further north. This corridor has been named the “Intermountain West Corridor. After completion, the I-11 Intermountain West Corridor will become a continuous, four-lane highway between Canada and Mexico, fulfilling the CANAMEX corridor plan from 1991. Additionally, the corridor is intended to connect major markets in the west, with the State of Nevada placing a high priority on connecting the markets of Reno and Las Vegas.

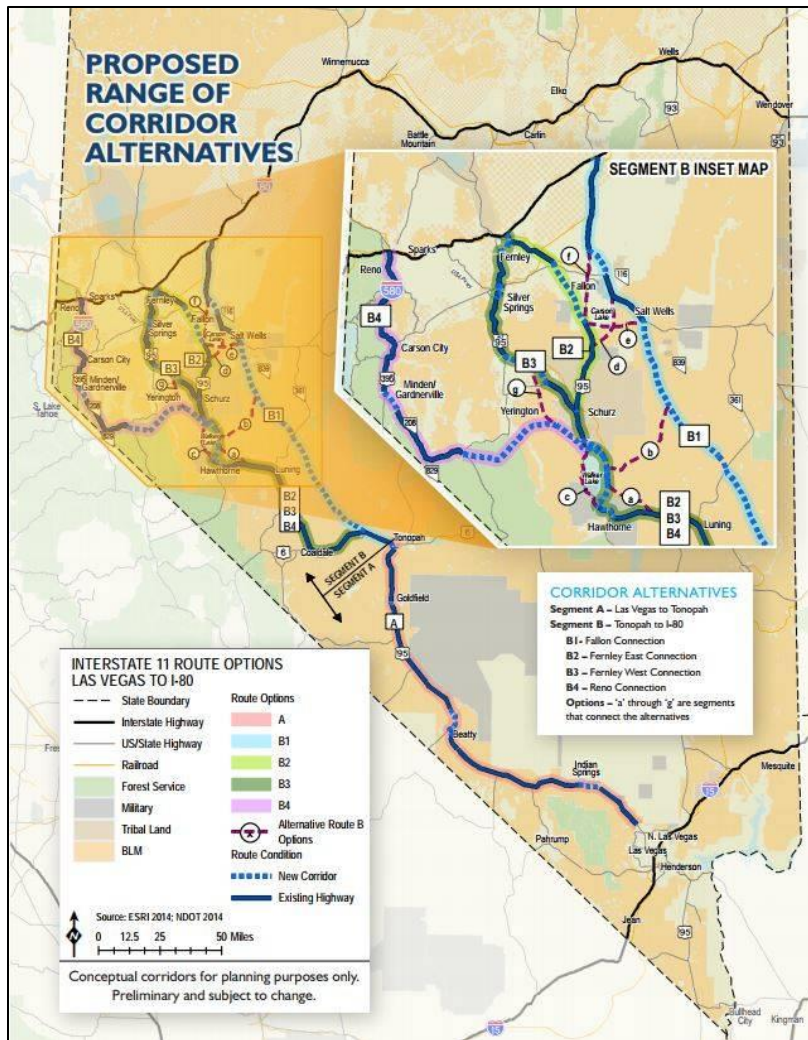
Humboldt County understands the importance of this north/south route to commerce. However, consideration must also be given to where the route will connect to important urban areas north of the Nevada border in locations like California, Oregon, and Idaho. Humboldt County supports a route to the northeast on I-80 to Winnemucca and the directly north to southwestern Idaho and eastern Oregon.

POSSIBLE ROUTES

Potential routes are shown in Figure 11. Depending on which alternative is chosen, Interstate 11 could continue northward from Winnemucca or continue northward from the Reno/Sparks area.

At the time of this writing, the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) currently favors the B2/B3 options, with the corridor meeting I-80 near Fernley. Humboldt County is supportive of this route since it will increase the likelihood of I-11 continuing northward from Winnemucca.

After the PEL process, a more in-depth National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) phase, which will require more specific route plans and right-of-way analysis. The County should continue to be involved in this and further processes to make sure that the interests of the County are being represented to NDOT and other key stakeholders.



SOURCE: Nevada Department of Transportation

Figure 11—Interstate 11 Nevada Alternatives

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Interstate 11's future is still uncertain. However, if the corridor were to go through the County, it would have a significant economic impact. Transportation corridors play a key role in economic development and can impact the region's economic outlook. Typically, development springs up to support the movement of goods, which in turn requires additional workers and support services. According to the Nevada Department of Employment, the Transportation and Warehousing industry has a jobs multiplier of 2.21.⁹ In other words, the creation of one job in transportation and warehousing creates at least two additional jobs in the community.

Winnemucca is a likely junction point for I-11 to break away from I-80 and head north, following U.S. Route 95. Due to its position as a junction, the ability of the City to capture shipping and other transportation-related businesses would increase dramatically. In addition, many travelers would stop in Winnemucca before continuing on through the rural parts of the County and into southern Oregon.

Interstate 11 would have just as great of an impact on the rural parts of the County as it would on the City. The number of travelers to the rural towns of McDermitt and Orovada would increase significantly, becoming places for gas, food, and lodging.

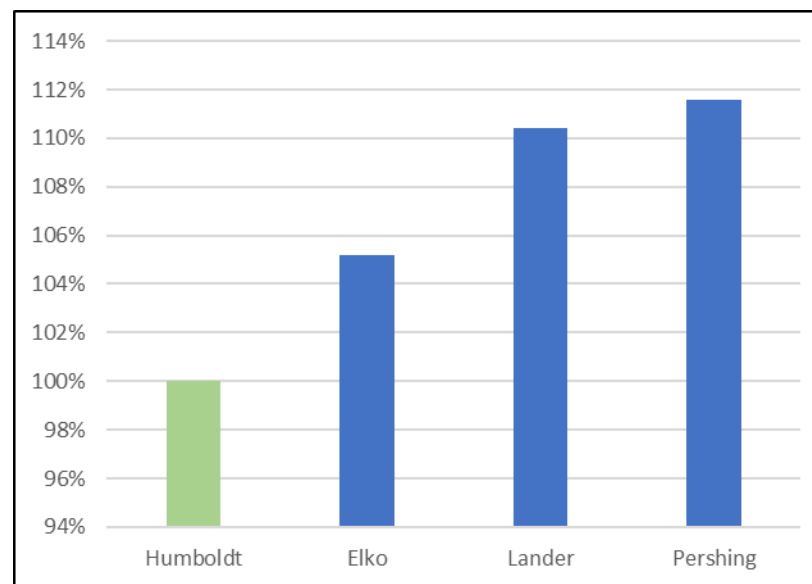
Fortunately, the planning and construction of the routes take many years, giving the County plenty of time to decide on its strategy and begin infrastructure improvements well ahead of the interstate's construction.

⁹ SOURCE: Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation. March 6, 2018.

SHIPPING

Winnemucca’s unique location, combined with its railroad and airport offerings, already makes it a good location for shipping and transit. Unfortunately, location alone doesn’t determine an area’s potential for the shipping industry. Infrastructure, amenities, and labor availability in the area all play a role in shipping costs. The marginal effects of these factors were beyond the scope of this analysis. However, to gauge how well Humboldt County currently competes in shipping rates, the UPS Time & Cost Quote Tool for less than full truckload (“LTL”) was used as a proxy for general logistics price competitiveness.

Figure 12 depicts estimated shipping costs using Humboldt County as the baseline.¹⁰ Humboldt County is very competitive for the region. It costs a firm 5% more to ship from Elko County, 10% more to ship from Lander County, and 12% more to ship from Pershing County.



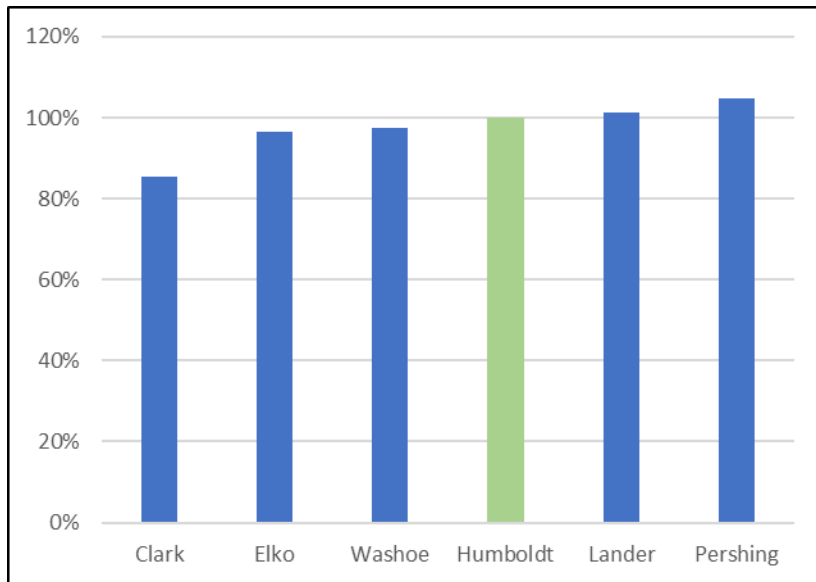
SOURCE: UPS Time & Cost Quote Tool

Figure 12—Regional Shipping Cost Comparison

Humboldt does well when shipping to regional destinations but has less of a competitive edge when the goods are destined for locations outside the region. The same methodology described in the previous analysis was used to estimate nationwide shipping rates.¹¹ The results show that Humboldt County is not as competitive for national shipping. As expected, Las Vegas has the lowest shipping cost at 85% of the cost in Humboldt. Reno (97% of the cost) and Elko (97%) also have a slight advantage over Humboldt County when shipping out of the region.

¹⁰ Freight costs were estimated by averaged the costs of shipping three different (500 lb.; 1,000 lb.; 5,000 lb.) less-than-truckload (LTL) palletized loads from each county seat. Six regional destinations were chosen: Reno, Boise, Salt Lake City, Sacramento, Denver, and Las Vegas.

¹¹ National destinations included both eastern and western US cities: Seattle, Las Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Miami, and New York.



SOURCE: UPS Time & Cost Quote Tool

Figure 13—National Shipping Cost Comparison

It is important to note that these estimates are before the introduction of I-11, which will likely lower the costs of shipping out of Humboldt County if the selected route heads northward along the path of US 95. If I-11 becomes a reality, the County will have a more viable opportunity to develop its shipping and warehousing industry. However, the County already has a competitive advantage in shipping regionally, so those types of businesses should be pursued first. As the industry develops and scale effects are achieved, the County can then expand into larger national markets.

DOWNTOWN (RE)DEVELOPMENT

The downtown corridor is one of the most important assets a city has. It represents the cultural and social heart of the community. It is the only neighborhood that belongs to and is shared by everyone in the region. It represents the historic past, dynamic present, and hopeful future of the community.

Downtowns are a very efficient land use form. They tend to capture a wide variety of functions, from retail and service businesses, housing options, and government functions to religious and civic organizations, cultural activities, and city events—all within a small, walkable area.

A downtown’s historic district often shows off the area’s distinct personality and history. Urban sprawl and post-war, cookie-cutter buildings tend to look the same, while historic buildings are unique and reveal the significant amount of time and effort that the City’s founders and leaders of the past spent to build the City and to attract settlers and families. The historic district thereby provides the City with a unique market identity.

Downtowns tend to attract local small businesses who care about and are active in the community. Due to the downtown’s significance to the area’s history and culture, downtown businesses are often more likely to participate in local events and initiatives.

Downtowns are also an important factor in the sustainability of the local governments balance sheet. The downtown Memphis Commission found in 2013 that a square mile of downtown property generated more than twice the county and city taxes as an average square mile in the city as a whole and more than three

times the same square mile would generate in the county.¹² Low-density neighborhoods are more expensive than their downtown counterparts, requiring the same amount of policing, fire, snow plowing, and utilities with much less tax revenue density.

Winnemucca's downtown needs "(re)development"—a term that describes the combination of reusing and revitalizing abandoned or blighted buildings and developing the empty spaces between the buildings to give it a truly downtown atmosphere.

DOWNTOWN CORRIDORS

Examples of good downtown corridors can be found across the country and in a variety of City sizes. However, most downtowns have a few key aspects which make them a successful economic asset:

Mixed Uses—A vibrant downtown needs to have a variety of offerings so that the streets will be busy at all hours of the day. This mixed-use area achieves an economic synergy that can't be replicated by single-use neighborhoods, which are busy for only a small part of the day. The downtown needs to be able to appeal to office workers during the day, families in the evening, and young adults and teens at night. This synergy will allow retail locations to stay open later by giving them a larger base of potential customers.

Activities and Events—Park City, Utah (see Figure 14) has events in its downtown at least four days out of the week. These events include movies in the park, free concerts, farmer's markets, festivals, parades, and speeches from recognized community members and leaders. This level of activity may not be sustainable

in Winnemucca initially, but serves as an example of the importance of creating consistent and high-quality activities to create vibrancy. A truly vibrant and active downtown usually doesn't occur on its own—rather, it is the result of careful, thoughtful planning and execution.

The City should create an organization (i.e. downtown alliance) that can create programming so there are new and exciting things happening every week in the downtown. This alliance would be made up of local business owners, active community members, the Winnemucca Visitors Center, the Humboldt County Museum, and city leaders with the purpose of bringing people to the downtown so they can walk the streets, shop at local stores, and get to know about Winnemucca and its culture.

Winnemucca already has some annual events (i.e. Runnamucca, Basque Festival, Wine Walk, etc.) but they are run independently and not organized or marketed for the purpose of adding vibrancy to the downtown on a year-round basis. Residents who participated in in the interview process reported that in recent years, attendance at these events has declined and that they and are becoming too niche to appeal to the community as a whole. A Downtown Alliance would be able to market each of these events through a steady channel and with broader messaging that would increase the likelihood of these events growing and finding better support from the community.

The creation of stable events throughout the year will help the downtown remarket itself as a walkable, livable space that the community will be proud of. In addition, the increase of

¹² Kitsinger, Andy. "A Healthy Downtown is Key to a Strong Community." *Planner's Web*. September 2013.

pedestrians will help local small businesses secure more customers and see greater sales.



Figure 14—Downtown Park City, Utah

In order for programming to be successful, it is critical that adequate institutional accountability and stewardship is established to foster growth, ensure appropriate tenancy, and for property/public space maintenance. This can be accomplished if property owners in the downtown choose to establish a Business Improvement District (BID). Without a governing body and passionate, engaged membership, the downtown may atrophy. Local business owners should be actively involved in championing and supporting economic and tourism development initiatives to ensure a strong economic base. There are many BIDs operating throughout the country, including the Downtown

Boulder BID in Boulder, CO; the Church Street Marketplace District in Burlington, VT; Madison Central BID in Madison, WI; Downtown Denver Partnership in Denver, CO; and Buffalo Place in Buffalo, NY.

Clustering—Clustering refers to how the downtown should have a critical mass of various types of product/services. This clustering is known as the rule of 10. According to this rule, the downtown should have ten of each of the following:

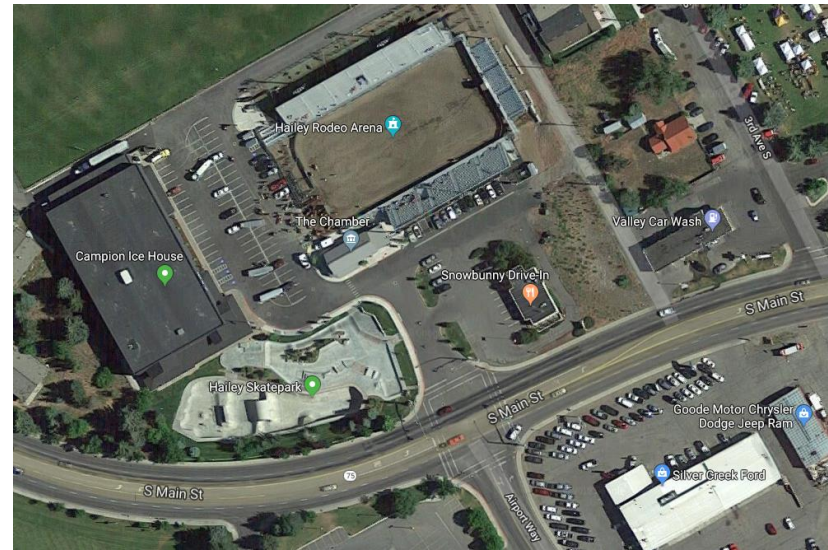
- 1) Dining destination: drink shop, coffee shop, café, themed restaurant, wine store, bakery, etc.
- 2) Retail shops: galleries, antiques, collectibles, books, outfitting, etc. which will draw people into the downtown
- 3) Entertainment offerings: a theater (movie or performing arts), bars & bistros with live music, specialty stores, laser tag arena, bowling alley, escape room, arcade, etc.

These clusters need to work with the downtown's atmosphere and culture while also providing options for different family types and interests. Winnemucca should keep track of how many offerings are in each cluster and where gaps may exist. The City can then recruit businesses downtown as needed to achieve a critical mass in all three.

Downtown Anchor—An anchor tenant is what will make the downtown alluring enough to get people there in the first place. One or two anchor tenants are vital to the success of the downtown because it is what leads a majority of the patronage into the downtown corridor. For example, people will go downtown for a specific reason (i.e. a performance or event) but decide to eat at a nearby restaurant before going in and then stop by the ice cream parlor afterward.

Winnemucca’s anchor tenants include the Winnemucca Sports Complex, Boys and Girls Club of Winnemucca, Park Cinemas, and some of the more popular casinos and restaurants spread throughout the City. Such a wide spread of anchors is confusing to visitors and prevents any clustering since one activity and investment is distal to another. It is recommended that anchor institutions be combined or centralized, where possible, so that pedestrians will travel downtown and then stay because of the wide variety of offerings.

Hailey, Idaho is a rural town of 8,000 which has done a remarkable job of developing its downtown with all of its anchors in close proximity to each other. The city’s skatepark, ice rink, and rodeo arena are all clustered together at the southern side of town, with some restaurants and hotels surrounding it. (see Map 5). This clustering concentrates activities and adds vibrancy to a robust and highly-occupied downtown corridor.



SOURCE: Google Maps

Map 5—Hailey, ID

Pedestrian Friendliness—The downtown should be inviting enough so that people are willing to park their cars and walk between shops. This means that there is adequate signage, narrow rights of way, traffic-calming measures such as angled parking, and a safe atmosphere. Winnemucca Boulevard would be the best corridor due to traffic volumes and access. However, Bridge Street already has a lot of these features, making it the low-hanging fruit of (re)development projects. The County should focus its efforts on increasing the pedestrian friendliness of three of the City’s main thoroughfares: Bridge Street, Winnemucca Boulevard, and Melarkey Street.

Ogden’s walkable downtown (shown in Figure 15) is similar to Winnemucca in that it’s commercial corridor, Washington Boulevard, is too long and too spread out to be truly walkable. Ogden focused its (re)development efforts on Historic 25th Street,

a more manageable corridor with unique, historic buildings. The corridor now includes spacious pathways with angled parking, trees, and other fixtures to make pedestrians feel safe from traffic.

Winnemucca should begin with (re)development of just one or two blocks to concentrate efforts and test the local market for responsiveness. Typically, success in one part of the downtown is a catalyst for success in other parts of the downtown.



SOURCE: Better City

Figure 15—Downtown Ogden, Utah

Residential Units—An often-overlooked, yet very important key to downtown vibrancy is the offering of residential units in the downtown. Often, this means the inclusion of units on the upper

floors of buildings, but it can also consist of horizontal mixed-use where the commercial and residential uses are in separate, though proximate buildings. The combination of residential and commercial uses means that the downtown will have a steady source of patronage, an additional source of income for investors, and regulars who go to the retail businesses and restaurants.

Units within the downtown area should be rented out units (rather than owned) so there is more movement in occupancy and new blood coming to the downtown. This keeps the patronage circulating and helps reinvigorate demand when new people move in.

As described in the Phase I section of this report, Winnemucca has a low number of rental units and a need for more income-based housing projects, so units offered below market value would do well to suit both those needs. In addition, higher-end, market-rate units should be added over time to increase the economic value and tax base of denser city blocks.

Visual Conformity—The downtown’s atmosphere should be consistent so pedestrians can easily tell where downtown begins and ends. This is achieved by upgrading the building façades so that they are consistent with one another. This is not to mean that the buildings have to look the exact same—doing so take away the character of the buildings themselves—conforming means that they are all similar enough to be conducive to the atmosphere and culture of the downtown.

Breckenridge’s downtown has a number of buildings from different decades, each with a different color and trim (see Figure 16). The buildings are each unique, with different roof types, number of levels, and architecture. However, the buildings are also conforming in that they feel like they belong to Main Street. Despite the uniqueness of each building, each contributes to a

welcoming, easily recognizable corridor which is conducive to the town’s atmosphere.

Winnemucca’s Bridge Street is well positioned to create an inviting, walkable downtown. Some of the City’s nonconforming buildings may need to be removed and replaced so they will conform better with existing historic buildings. In addition, buildings need to be added where parking lots disrupt the corridor and discourage walkability.



SOURCE: Library of Congress

Figure 16—Downtown Breckenridge, Colorado

MAIN STREET AMERICA PROGRAM

Main Street America is a program of the National Main Street Center. The program brings together partners at the local, state, and national level to revitalize older and historic commercial districts and to build vibrant neighborhoods and thriving economies.

The Main Street America program focuses on “Transformation Strategies.” A transformation strategy is “a focused, deliberate

path to revitalizing or strengthening a downtown or commercial district’s economy. These strategies are organized around the Four Points:

- 1) **Design**—Putting older and historic buildings into active use and creating an inviting, distinct atmosphere.
- 2) **Organization**—Building leadership and community engagement to ensure that there is a sustainable funding stream and enough support for revitalization efforts.
- 3) **Promotion**—Marketing the downtown to build awareness and branding
- 4) **Economic Vitality**—Combining a strong mix of businesses, cultural institutions, and housing to support the vision for the downtown.¹³

The Main Street America program has been successful for several decades in a wide variety of city sizes across the country. Because of its success rate, many states have dedicated funds to bolster up downtowns in the state.

Nevada Main Street Program

The Nevada Legislature approved the creation of the Nevada Main Street (NMS) program in 2017. This program follows the Main Street Four-Point Approach™ in addition to providing resources, education, training and services. The bill sets aside \$350,000 for operation of the program in local communities. There is a two-year start-up period, but communities are expected to operate the local Main Street organization indefinitely.

Through joining the program, NMS provides the following resources at no cost to NMS-designated communities:

¹³ SOURCE: <https://www.mainstreet.org/mainstreetamerica/theapproach>

- 1) **Organizational Development Services**—consulting services to advise communities on how to create and sustain their MainStreet organization.
- 2) **Board Member, Staff, and Committee Training**—training services for staff and volunteers to understand the Main Street Four-Point Approach™, their roles and responsibilities, and techniques and best practices for revitalizing downtown.
- 3) **Business Development Assistance**—consulting and training in understanding the downtown’s economic strengths and weaknesses, development of plans and strategies to improve the downtown business climate.
- 4) **Promotion and Marketing Assistance**—consulting and training services to help local Main Street organizations identify and implement effective marketing strategies, as well as individual downtown promotional events and activities.
- 5) **Planning Assistance**—consulting services to develop short-term action plans for the Main Street organization, as well as long-term plans that guide the development and revitalization of the Main Street district.
- 6) **On-Going Training for Staff and Volunteers**—seminars and workshops to inform local staff and volunteers of tools, trends, resources, and techniques to strengthen their local organization and Main Street district. NMS sponsors required trainings each year and offers other supplemental training sessions periodically; a small fee may apply to each training to cover the cost of participants’ refreshments and materials.
- 7) **Networking**—through regular gatherings, publications, and electronic communication, NMS facilitates idea-

sharing and problem-solving among its designated Main Street organizations.

- 8) **Membership**—Paid membership dues to the National Main Street Center for the first two years and up to three \$1200 scholarships for registration and travel to the National Main Street Center annual conference.¹⁴

Humboldt County’s participation in this program is highly recommended, especially given the success rate of the Four-Point Approach and the extended support from the State. The Main Street Board of Directors and Executive Director should be carefully considered so that the program gets off on the right foot and can begin making impacts to Winnemucca and the rest of the community. The board and executive director should be the ones taking charge of and leading the Community’s (re)development initiative.

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

National Certified Local Government (CLG) is a partnership-based program which works to “help communities save the irreplaceable historic character of places.”¹⁵ Communities must be certified through the program to have access to the benefits and to show a commitment to follow the required Federal and State requirements. The program is run at the State level through a State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) with support from the National Parks Service.

Nevada’s CLG program is administered by the Nevada SHPO. Becoming a CLG is important because it grants the local

¹⁴ SOURCE: Nevada Main Street Program Designated Application Packet

¹⁵ SOURCE: <https://www.nps.gov/clg/>

government access to funding, technical assistance, and sustainability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Bridge Street has already applied many of the aspects described above. For this reason, the Bridge Street corridor is one of the most walkable areas of the City. However, to further develop the downtown, two important aspects need to be addressed: establishing an anchor and adding residential units. The City should begin with these two aspects, leveraging them to work toward improving the other factors in subsequent years.

Establish an Anchor

Winnemucca needs an anchor in the downtown that will draw people into the corridor and get them walking between stores. This could include relocating current anchors into a downtown space or establishing a new anchor that will draw people in. It is recommended that a downtown feasibility study be conducted to gain an understanding of what kind of anchor(s) could be supported and what economic and community development tools could be used to perform this (re)development.

Establish Affordable Housing

The Phase I analysis of the housing market found that there is a shortage of rental units that are affordable for the lowest income tier (3.8% shortage for households earning less than \$10,000 per year).

The Nevada Rural Housing Authority (NRHA) and Humboldt Development Authority (HDA) are currently working on a housing plan, which will provide more in-depth recommendations and

analysis. However, it must be noted that including residential, for-rent units is vital for downtown (re)development. It is recommended that at least one affordable housing project be included in the downtown corridor.

VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURE

Agriculture production and food manufacturing remain a significant part of Nevada's economy. In 2015, there were 4,200 farm operations covering six million acres of land. The total value of the agricultural sector in that year was \$180 million.¹⁶ Agriculture plays a significant and key role in the County's current and future economy.

Value-added agriculture is used to refer to the processes and products in which a raw agriculture product undergoes a physical transformation to enhance the value of that product (i.e. wheat milled into flour). Value-added agriculture can increase the economic impact of the County's agricultural industry by adding jobs, increasing revenues, and creating products which can be exported to other counties or states.

The County's agriculture industry was analyzed to determine the feasibility of adding value-added agricultural products to boost revenues in more rural areas within Humboldt County.

OVERVIEW

The agriculture industry makes up a sizable portion of the County's GDP, generating \$132.5 million, or 5.5 percent, of total County economic output). According to the Nevada Department of

¹⁶ NDA 2017 Economic Analysis of the Food & Agriculture Sector.

Agriculture (NDA), the County is home to 359 farms, with farmland covering 13.3 percent of the County’s total land area, as shown in Table 4.

	Elko	Humboldt	Lander	Pershing
Total Farms	552	359	124	154
Land in Farms (Acres)	2,126,980	808,872	313,957	299,290
Land in County (Acres)	10,988,800	6,170,240	3,513,600	3,863,680
Percent Farmland	19%	13%	9%	8%
Average Size of Farm (Acres)	3,853	2,253	2,532	1,943

SOURCE: NDA 2017 Economic Analysis of the Food and Agriculture Sector in Nevada

Table 4—Number of Farms by County

Humboldt County has a fairly even distribution of smaller and larger farms (see Table 5). Value-added manufacturing will likely require the support and investment from larger farms which have the output and capital requirements for value-added manufacturing. Humboldt County has an estimated 61 farms that are between 500 and 999 acres and 76 farms that are 1,000 acres or more.

Farm by Size	Elko	Humboldt	Lander	Pershing
1 to 9 acres	16%	20%	20%	8%
10 to 49 acres	21%	16%	17%	21%
50 to 179 acres	19%	13%	9%	15%
180 to 499 acres	13%	13%	6%	18%
500 to 999 acres	6%	17%	25%	14%
1,000 or more	25%	21%	23%	23%

SOURCE: NDA 2017 Economic Analysis of the Food and Agriculture Sector in Nevada

Table 5—Percent of Farms in County by Size

According to the NDA, Humboldt County’s largest industries in agriculture production output value in 2015 were:

- 1) Beef cattle ranching and farming (\$47.5 million)
- 2) All other crop farming (\$47.2 million)
- 3) Dairy cattle and milk production (\$14.9 million)¹⁷

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is difficult to start value-added processing plants and infrastructure geared toward export-oriented products. Such plants require significant capital outlays, tight control of cost, and long payback periods. However, with the County’s support and grants from Federal sources, local producers can start adding elements of value-added production incrementally, which will help them to increase their bottom line and see greater economic value from their products.

Of course, the County must be wise in its use of value-added agriculture due to water rights and availability. The County will

¹⁷ NDA 2017 Economic Analysis of the Food and Agriculture Sector in Nevada.

need to use its water plan to determine how much can be allocated to adding value to this industry sector.

Microbrewery

Microbreweries have become popular in the U.S. because of their focus on quality, experimentation, and customer service. Microbreweries are a type of brewery which produces less than 15,000 barrels of beer per year and which sells more than three-quarters of its beer off site.

The microbrewery could use locally-grown grain and hops, adding demand for agricultural crops and creating a beer flavor unique to Humboldt County.

The microbrewery should include places to drink, gather, and socialize. The City is in need of an adult-oriented social option outside of the casinos and a microbrewery would do well to serve that need.



SOURCE: Flickr/Bernt Rostad

Figure 17—Microbrewery Concept

Industrial Hemp

The NDA defines industrial hemp as “a plant variety derived from the genus *Cannabis stiva* L. and among the same species as marijuana.” Industrial hemp differs from marijuana, although, because it contains less than 0.3 percent THC, meaning that it cannot be used as a drug. But the plant is beneficial in a number of other ways, such as textiles, fiber, forage, and cosmetics.

Senate Bills 305 (2014) and 396 (2017) paved the way for the growth and handling of industrial hemp and the production of agricultural hemp seed in the State. This agricultural product is therefore new to the market and is in its earliest stages of development. Humboldt County already has some first-mover advantages because of the Cannabis Science, Inc. development in Ft. McDermitt in 2016, providing experienced labor and the potential for clustering effects in the County.

Dairy Production

Dairy production has a lot of potential since Humboldt County produces the most hay in the region and has the largest acreage per farm devoted to hay production (see Table 6). The County can leverage this competitive advantage by increasing dairy production and adding value to its hay production by producing dairy within the County itself.

Hay and all haylage, grass silage, and greenchop	Elko	Humboldt	Lander	Pershing
Farmed Acres	101,359	102,485	37,336	42,710
Acres/Farm	487	633	566	485

SOURCE: NDA 2017 Economic Analysis of the Food and Agriculture Sector in Nevada

Table 6—Hay Production by County

A 2016 California emissions bill requires the livestock industry to cut methane emissions to 40 percent of 2013 levels by 2030. The dairy industry is strongly opposed to this bill and claims that it will be burdensome on livestock and dairy producers. While some dairy plants will be able to meet these standards, it seems likely that some may look to move to more friendly states like Nevada. Due to Humboldt County's location and production of hay products, it is in a good position to bring in these dairy producers if they choose to flee California due to these regulations.

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ENTREPRENEURIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

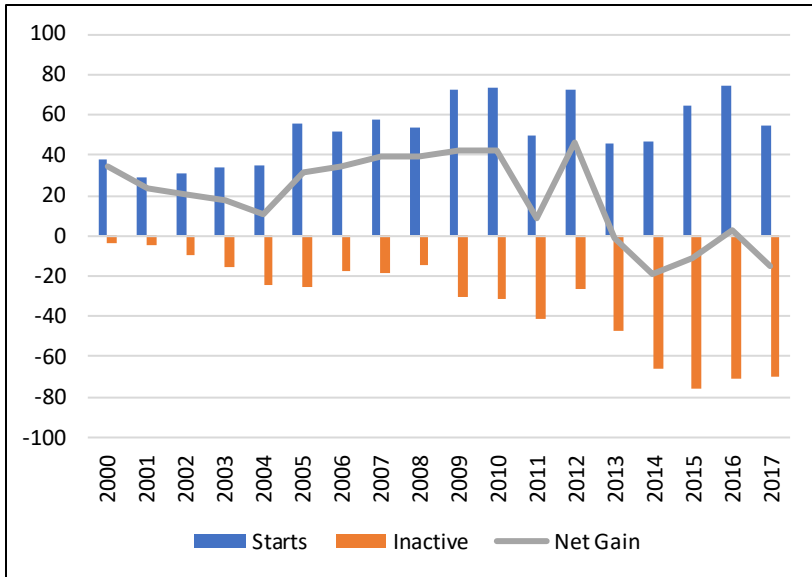
Entrepreneurship is an important aspect of economic development and sustainability. A healthy economy will produce new businesses because people feel optimistic about their economic conditions and are willing to take risks. However, the economy must likewise have enough absorption capacity, workers, and market demand to survive past the critical first three to five years of a startup business.

STARTS AND INACTIVITY

Humboldt County's entrepreneurial environment was analyzed to determine the state of new businesses in the County. As can be expected with a growing population, the number of new business starts has been increasing over time. Overall, 328 businesses have been added to the County's economy since 2000. The year with the highest numbers of new businesses was 2012, which yielded 46 net businesses.

Recent trends, however, show that the number of businesses which have gone inactive has outpaced new businesses, causing a net loss in four out of the last five years. Since 2013, a total of 62 businesses have left the County's economy. 2015 marked the year in which the greatest number of businesses were lost (76 businesses).

The net loss of businesses in recent years is concerning because of population growth within the County. Growth should add market demand and increase the total number of businesses in the County. However, this is not the case.

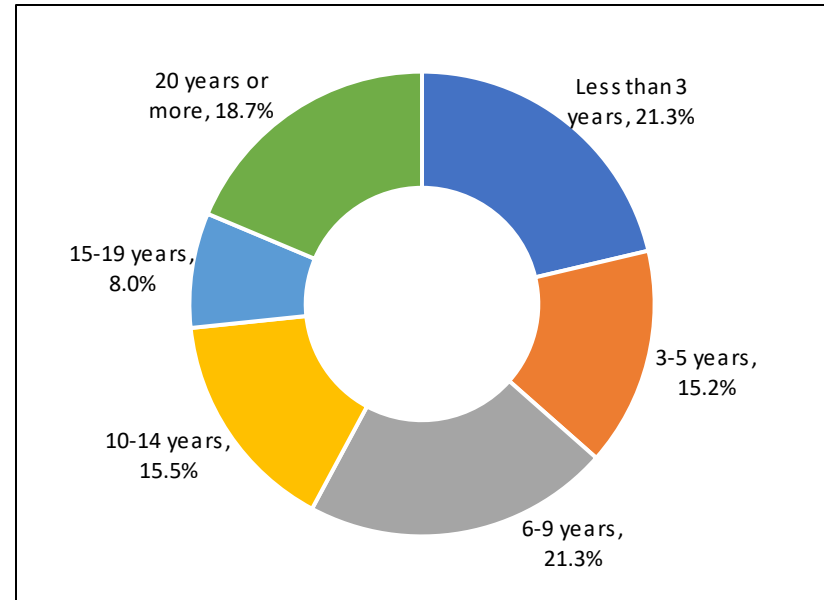


SOURCE: Nevada Secretary of State, Better City

Figure 18—Business Starts and Inactivity

COMPOSITION

Humboldt County has a broad mix of young and established businesses. 21.3 percent of establishments are less than three years old and 15.2 percent are between three and five years old. Therefore, approximately 36.5 percent of businesses in the County are in their startup years (see Figure 19).



SOURCE: Nevada Secretary of State, Better City

Figure 19—Business Mix by Age

Approximately two-thirds of the businesses started in the County are local, with the principal address being used as a proxy for locality. The other one-third are mostly located in other parts of Nevada, Colorado, and Utah. Of the businesses currently listed within Winnemucca City and Humboldt County, approximately 72 percent are still active (see Table 7).

	Local	Foreign	Total
Active*	459	321	780
Inactive*	258	43	301
Total	717	364	1081

SOURCE: Humboldt County Clerk, Winnemucca City Clerk

*As of 8/20/18

Table 7—Business Composition by locality/activity

BUSINESS SURVIVABILITY

The survivability of businesses within the County reveals trends in entrepreneurship and business success. Table 8 shows the survivability of businesses based on their start year. For example, in 2000, 38 businesses were established. After three years, 97 percent of the businesses were still active; after 10 years, only 50 percent of those businesses were still active.

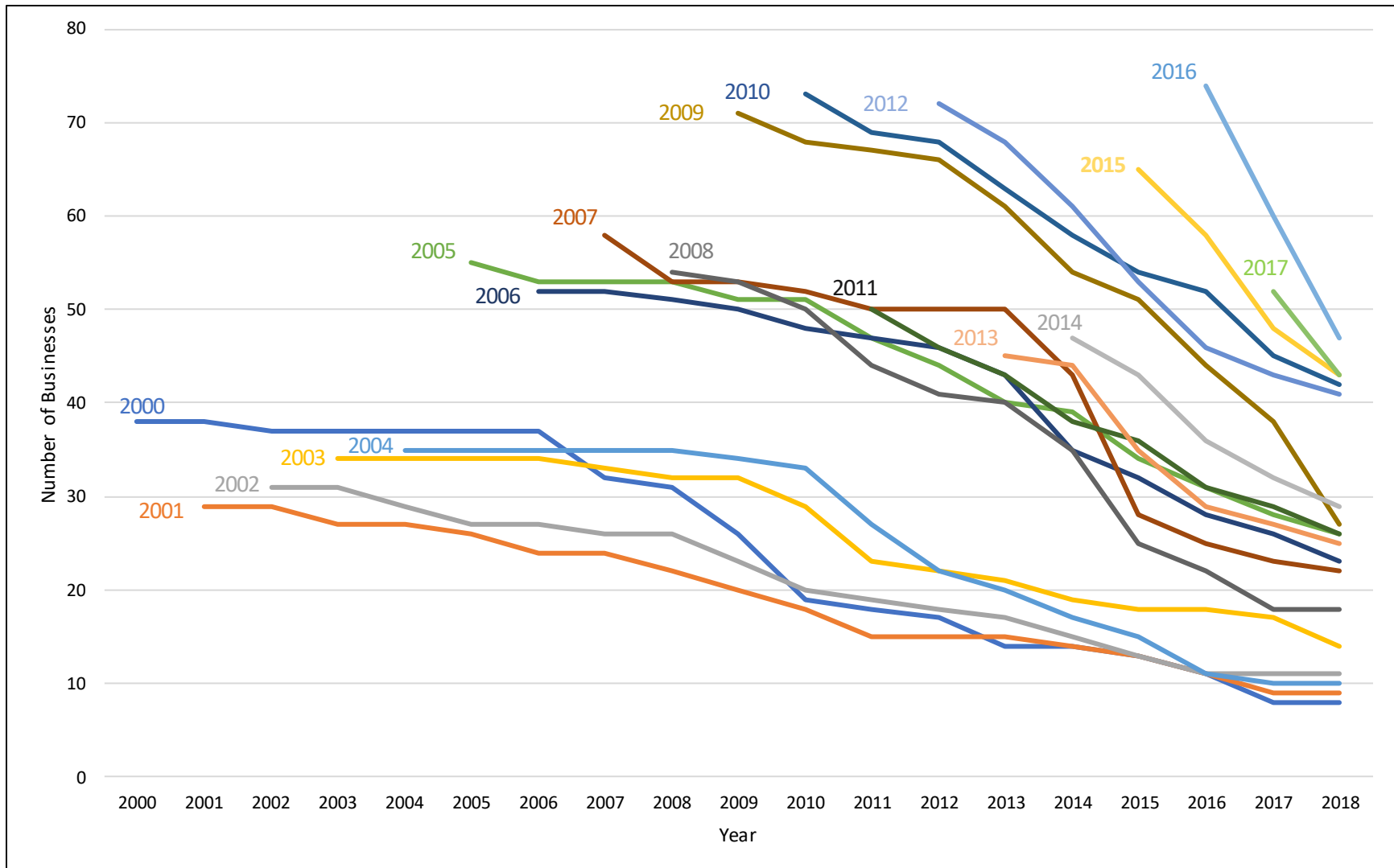
As shown in the table, survivability of businesses within the County has been decreasing over time. In 2000, 100 percent of the businesses made it through their first year. In 2017, only 83 percent of businesses made it through their first year.

Figure 20 shows the number of new businesses by cohort year and their survivability over time. Interestingly, there seems to be clustering for 2000-2004, 2005-2008, and 2015-2017. The earlier years tend to have high survivability, only losing large numbers of businesses during the Great Recession. More recent cohorts, in comparison, are losing businesses very quickly.

Start Year	# Starts	1 year	3 years	5 years	10 years
2000	38	100%	97%	97%	50%
2001	29	100%	93%	83%	52%
2002	31	100%	87%	84%	58%
2003	34	100%	100%	94%	62%
2004	35	100%	100%	97%	49%
2005	55	96%	96%	93%	62%
2006	52	100%	96%	90%	54%
2007	58	91%	90%	86%	40%
2008	54	98%	81%	74%	33%
2009	71	96%	93%	76%	
2010	73	95%	86%	74%	
2011	50	92%	76%	62%	
2012	72	94%	74%	60%	
2013	45	98%	64%	56%	
2014	47	91%	68%		
2015	65	89%	66%		
2016	74	81%			
2017	52	83%			
Average		95%	86%	80%	51%

SOURCE: Nevada Secretary of State, Better City

Table 8—Business Survivability Statistics



SOURCE: Nevada Secretary of State

Figure 20—Business Starts and Survivability, Zip Codes 89445 & 89446

Economic conditions and the entrepreneurial spirit are generating a fairly large number of business starts each year. However, there is a concerning trend that these businesses are not surviving as well as in the past, dropping from a 5-year survivability rate of 97 percent for businesses started in 2000 to 56 percent for those started in 2013.

According to an article released by *Small Business Trends*, the leading causes of small business failure are:

- Incompetence (46 percent)
- Unbalanced experience or lack of managerial experience (30 percent)
- Lack of experience in line of goods or services (11 percent)
- Other causes, including neglect, fraud, and disaster (13 percent)¹⁸

Fortunately, the top two causes of business failure, incompetence and lack of experience, are both things which can be helped by mentorship programs and training.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The County should focus its efforts on fostering and supporting new businesses. This should be done through an entrepreneurship center established in the downtown which will provide training, support, and space for new businesses. Additionally, the County should help businesses and shape the County's future economy by focusing on and encouraging a pivot to export-oriented businesses, professional services, and

technology-related companies. Preferably, those businesses that have low water-use demands.

Entrepreneurship Center

According to the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council, one-half of new businesses in the United States fail within the first five years; only about a third make it past the first 10.¹⁹ Despite excellent survivability in the past, Humboldt County's most recent years are reflecting this national statistic, with 56 percent and 33 percent making it past their first five and 10 years, respectively. In contrast to the national averages, businesses that are started in an incubator have a survival rate of 87 percent in the first five years. Additionally, 84 percent of the businesses that graduate from an incubator will stay in the community where they were incubated.²⁰

Having an entrepreneurship center (the "Center") in Winnemucca's downtown will provide support for existing new businesses, a space for start-ups, and education, mentorship, and financing connections to all businesses in the County. The Center will help reverse the trend of low new-business survivability and encourage more aspiring entrepreneurs who might have great business plans but are unsure or afraid to take the plunge into owning a business.

The Center's success will reach beyond the entrepreneurs and the businesses that are created out of the Center—it will also help the County establish an entrepreneurial and business-friendly ecosystem, which will contribute to the long-term goals of creating more business investment, more locally-sourced

¹⁸ Mansfield, Matt. *Small Business Trends*. "Startup Statistics—The Numbers You Need to Know." May 15, 2018.

¹⁹ Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council, "Facts & Data on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, 2017.

²⁰ Smith, Ned. *Business News Daily*. "Incubators Heat Up Chances of Small Business Survival." October 5, 2010.

products and jobs along with less economic volatility and business turnover.



SOURCE: Unsplash/Rawpixel

Figure 21—Business Incubator Concept

A business incubator is an organization that helps new companies by providing management training, networking, and/or office space. The Center creates value by leverage the knowledge and skills of successful entrepreneurs to help small businesses overcome the common hurdles of starting a business and making it profitable.

The Center will need to define a niche and create targeted programming around it to avoid becoming too broad. Some incubators tend to become a space with cheap rent if the niche isn't defined well enough and if programming isn't provided that

aligns with the defined niche. Having a defined niche ensures that the Center will attract talent and experts who can add value to the Community.

The Center can partner with Nevada SBDC to provide space and extra programming for local business owners and those interested in starting a business in Humboldt County. Both organizations should work together to define how to best aide businesses and grow the local economy.

The Center's niche will likely be mining-related but should not be mining-dependent. Due to the size of the mining industry in the County, most businesses will naturally gravitate toward some product/service that will be demanded by the mines. The product or service will also likely leverage similar worker skillsets as the mines in order to access an adequate labor pool. However, the companies cannot be entirely dependent on the mines or the economy risks becoming even more concentrated. The niche will need to be focused enough to serve the mining industry but broad enough to survive when the price of gold drops or if the mines choose to relocate.

Diamond Plastics is a good example of a company that straddles this line. The company produces PVC piping across the country for industrial and municipal users but is also able to serve the mining companies on an as-needed basis. Other ideas for companies that would straddle the line include: software development, business process outsourcing, and emerging technologies, such as augmented/virtual reality, software-defined security, etc.²¹ The Center could be funded in part by a redevelopment agency, or RDA.

²¹ See: Gartner Hype Cycle for Emerging Technologies

A number of Grants would be applicable for the Center from the USDA's Rural Business Development Grants, EDA loans (if qualifying with disaster relief), or the Small Business Administration.

Redevelopment Agency (RDA)

An RDA is a body which is created to encourage private investment in blighted areas or areas with a demonstrated need for economic development. Member of the City Council are usually the board, with the mayor serving as the executive director. The agency has power to define redevelopment areas which are then eligible for financial assistance provided by the RDA. The agency has the power to assist in purchasing land, providing tax incentives, and defining what areas of the community are in most need of investment. The City should create an RDA to incentivize investment in the blighted areas of the downtown, as well as to help recruit and establish downtown anchors, as described in the downtown (re)development section.

Export Retailers

Two trends are affecting the profits of local businesses and survivability of start-ups. First, as a rural community located just a few hours from a large market (i.e. Reno) Humboldt County is leaking retail activity because community members are willing to travel to specialty stores or services that cannot be offered or supported by the local market. Second, many businesses are struggling or failing due to the availability of internet retailers such as Amazon. The internet has made it possible to buy a wide selection of goods for a reasonable price with low- or priced-in shipping costs. Local retailers find it hard to compete because they have limited inventories, high inventory holding costs, and are too small in scale to absorb the same low profit margins as online retailers.

In order to expand its economy, the County should leverage its competitive advantages by encouraging existing local retailers and new businesses, if possible, to transition into export retailers. An export retailer is a company which serves the local market while also providing goods or services for larger markets. These companies have small store fronts but drive a large share of their sales online through retailing sites or their own websites.

Export retailers tend to produce specialty products which are valued highly enough to be sold in larger markets. Export retailers are able to simultaneously profit from their local market and from online sales, increasing survivability and expanding their potential client base. A good example of an export business is the Black Rock Mud Company in Gerlach, Nevada. The company began selling its products online and has since expanded to retailers in Fernley, Reno, and Las Vegas. The company was featured in the Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg, and Cosmopolitan. Black Rock Mud Company was able to leverage its unique assets to create a product that has demand from across the United States.



SOURCE: Black Rock Mud Company, Mark Hammon

Figure 22—Black Rock Mud

Humboldt County has assets that, like Gerlach, could support export-oriented business models. The County should foster businesses that can sell products online and should work with current retailers to see how they can add internet sales to their current revenue streams. This service should be incorporated into the business incubator/entrepreneurship center programming.

New Business Licenses

When collecting information for local businesses, it became apparent that neither the City nor the County collect NAICS industry code and the number of employees. Collecting these data points will help the County to more fully understand the makeup of its new businesses. These data can then be compared with data from other active businesses within the community and can help City and County leaders understand gaps in the marketplace and provide more proactive assistance for local businesses.

Business Surveys

Business survey of all businesses in the County should be conducted to get a sense of how businesses are doing, if they are adding or losing employees, and what they are investing in. A template of two different kinds of surveys is provided in Appendix III. These templates were created by Mo Collins, who created these surveys as part of a research study for the University of Northern Iowa EDA University Center Regional Entrepreneurship Project.

The first survey is a business intercept survey, meant to be used at networking events. The survey has 6 questions that can be used to capture basic demographic information, business vision and intentions, and current needs.

The second is a more in-depth, 17-question survey which can give the County a better understanding of the comparative and ongoing needs of the County's entrepreneurs.

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POPULATION GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

As people and business come to the area, the County's infrastructure and amenities will need to be improved and developed. This section of the report considers some topics which will become pertinent as the population grows or as industry clusters start to form.

HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS

As mentioned in the Phase I report, housing will be a very important aspect of the County's economic future. Housing constraints are already present, with the labor market unable to provide the labor pool needed to supply the market properly.

Having the right housing mix will be important moving forward, especially because of the County's focus on providing affordable housing options. Affordability is important because of the relatively high wages provided by the mining industry, which drives up the price of homes in the County. As the economy diversifies and includes a wider range of jobs and wages, prices will need to more accurately reflect the income of residents. The following recommendations are intended to provide more options in this affordable range (between \$150,000 and \$200,000).

Downtown

As discussed previously, the downtown corridor needs more housing options to encourage vibrancy and support local businesses. In the short term, renovating the second story of some of the existing buildings into apartment lofts is recommended. Zoning changes may be needed to allow for this use.

Additionally, a for-rent townhome development should be constructed downtown. This development will help add density

and liveliness to the downtown while providing citizens with additional housing options. This housing type will appeal to younger families and first-time home buyers.

Based on conversations with local stakeholders, 3-bedroom townhomes are recommended because they perform very well in the region. Townhomes have already been developed in the County and are reportedly in high demand. The Frontier Village development already features some townhome units (see Figure 23).



SOURCE: frontiervillagenv.com

Figure 23—Frontier Village Townhomes

Income-Restricted Properties

In economics, the “theory of the second best” is a theory which refers to a market in which one or more optimality conditions cannot be satisfied through market forces alone. This theory is useful because it states that when one factor is missing which removes the ability of the market to find an equilibrium itself, another alternative should be sought which would stand in as the “second best” alternative.

Labor shortages in Humboldt County are occurring for a number of reasons, but these shortages cannot be corrected for by increasing wages alone because that would in turn increase the price of new homes, defeating the affordability goal within the housing market. This creates a need for a “theory of the second best” policy.

One way to overcome this discrepancy is to have income-restricted housing options, which allow developers to pay higher wages to their contractors, get the requisite return, and still provide affordable housing options. Income-restricted homes are subsidized properties which are sold or rented at or below prices that will preserve the units as affordable housing. They will only be available to families whose incomes are less than or equal to a certain threshold (i.e. 80 percent of the County’s median income).

Assisted Living

As mentioned in the Phase I report, the City is losing a significant number of retirement-age individuals. To help retain this age group, the addition of assisted living options is recommended. One assisted living development is already in the community and another would likely do well if placed near Humboldt General Hospital.

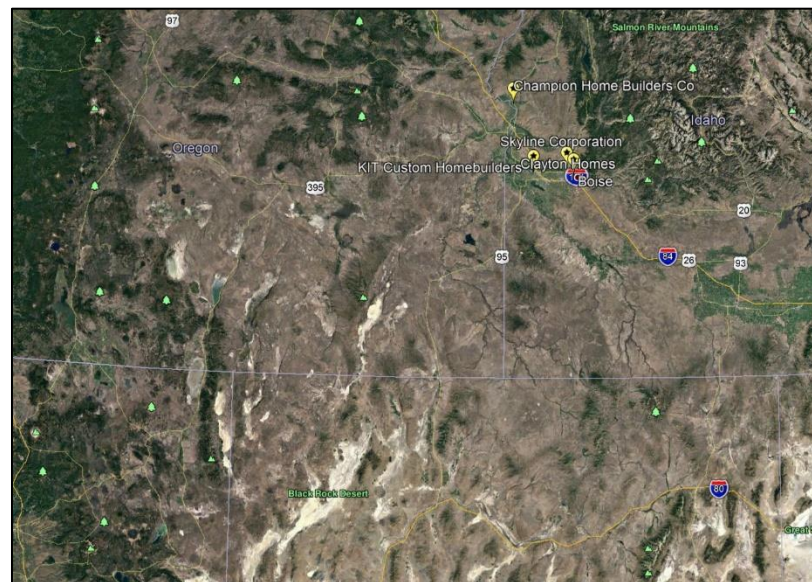
Traditional Development

Traditional development is also recommended in the County, likely on the outskirts of the City. These homes should be priced by the market and will be needed to ensure that future growth can be absorbed.

Manufactured Housing

Another option is modular/manufactured homes, which have done well in the Winnemucca market and are able to retain their

value well. The community is welcoming to this housing type, and the availability of modular home manufacturing companies in Idaho should decrease the acquisition cost (see Map 6).



SOURCE: Google Earth, Better City

Map 6—Manufactured Home Builders in Idaho

Housing Organization, Subsidies, and Programs

Income-restricted housing is only possible if alternative funding sources are available to developers to offset the foregone rents. Following is a short list of federal programs and funding sources which are used to offset deed-restricted housing projects.

Low-income Housing Tax Credit—Paid to the investor by State housing finance agencies as a dollar-for-dollar tax credit. The program only covers development costs. To be eligible, the project must have either: 1) At least 20% or more of the residential units in the development are rent restricted and occupied by

individuals whose income is 50% or less than the area median gross income, or 2) At least 40% or more of the residential units in the development are both rent restricted and occupied by individuals whose income is 60% or less than the area median gross income.

HOME Funds—Grants to states and units of general local government to implement local housing strategies designed to increase homeownership and affordable housing opportunities for low- and very low-income Americans. Can be used for tenant-based rental assistance, housing rehabilitation, assistance to homebuyers, and new construction.

Community Development Block Grants—A flexible national program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. The program’s main goal is to provide activities that benefit low- and moderate-income persons.

Housing Trust Funds—A program that complements other Federal and State programs to increase and preserve the supply of affordable housing for families with extremely low and very low incomes. These funds can be used for acquisition, new construction, reconstruction, and/or rehabilitation of non-luxury housing with suitable amenities.

Community Housing Development Organization

A Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) is a private nonprofit, community-based organization which helps to develop affordable housing for the community it serves. These organizations work mostly through the Federal HOME program. It is recommended that the County help the private sector in

establishing one of these organization to support the construction of affordable housing.

TRANSPORTATION

The City should encourage other types of transportation in the downtown so that the City is supporting a “complete street” approach. The complete street is a design approach which requires that streets are planned, designed, and maintained for users of all types and modes of transportation. This includes walking, cycling, automobiles, public transportation, and delivery of goods.

It is often difficult for rural communities to adopt a complete street approach because of the state- or county-owned roads, low density, constrained terrain, and funding trade-offs. However, adopting a complete street approach is important for rural communities, especially in the downtown corridor. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, despite only 19 percent of the population living in rural areas, 48 percent of all fatal crashes and 50 percent of traffic fatalities were recorded in rural regions.²² Safety should be a concern and priority when planning transportation improvements.

The Federal Highway Administration released a document in December 2016 entitled “Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks.” This document was designed to provide rural communities with complete street concepts that can be applied based on the community’s needs and would be very useful to Humboldt County because it provides quite a few case studies and examples which can be applied in Winnemucca (see Figure 24 for one of the case study examples).

²² NHTSA, April 2018. “2016 Rural/Urban Comparison of Traffic Fatalities.”



SOURCE: Google Earth

Figure 24—Los Molinos, CA (Pop. 2,037)

Complete street design concepts include bike lanes, shared-use paths, speed management, and multimodal main streets. The City should implement these elements, making Winnemucca's downtown friendlier to pedestrian and bicycle activities, reducing traffic speeds, and adding placemaking elements. Traffic estimates for major thoroughfares in Winnemucca from the previous five years are provided in Appendix IV.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

There are a few other dynamics at play which the County should consider. As the population grows and the economy becomes more diversified, community amenities should be added.

Rail Spur

The addition of a rail spur in the Winnemucca Industrial park, already planned for Phase II of the park, will play a significant role in the ability of the County to attract additional manufacturing and transportation companies. This key amenity should be added as soon as possible so the County can gain "clustering" advantages. A

cluster is an economic competitive advantage that means that Company B will be much more likely to move to the location if Company A, a complementary company, is already there. For example, the Stanford Industrial Park in California helped start Hewlett-Packard, which in turn brought in other successful companies like Eastman Kodak, General Electric, and Lockheed. The valley continued this clustering effect to bring in Adobe, Alphabet, Apple, eBay, Facebook, Intel, Netflix, Nvidia, Oracle, etc.

According to local officials, the rail spur will cost around \$2 Million. This should be a top investment priority if Interstate 11 will continue northward from I-80 at Winnemucca. This will greatly increase the chances that transportation-based industries will invest in the Industrial Park.

Community Swimming Pool

The community swimming pool is one of the City's highest priorities and will be a great quality of life asset to the community. The County should continue pursuing this project, along with the regional recreation complex, which will be a significant asset to the community since it will bring in people from around the region for events and competitions.

Lithium Mine

Humboldt County is home to the Thacker Pass deposit, which is one of the largest and highest-grade sedimentary lithium deposits in the United States.

The lithium mine is already in the preliminary phases and should, barring unexpected outside events, come online in the next few years. The "Thacker Pass Preliminary Feasibility Study" predicts that this project will introduce at least 800 high paying jobs during the 21-month construction phase, 292 permanent positions

during the 46-year operation, and several hundred indirect jobs to the region.²³

The County will need to act quickly to prepare for this influx of workers, who will need housing, entertainment, and other services. Housing will be the most critical piece and failure to provide housing will force workers to relocate to other parts of the region, a potential loss for the County.

Broadband/Internet Connection

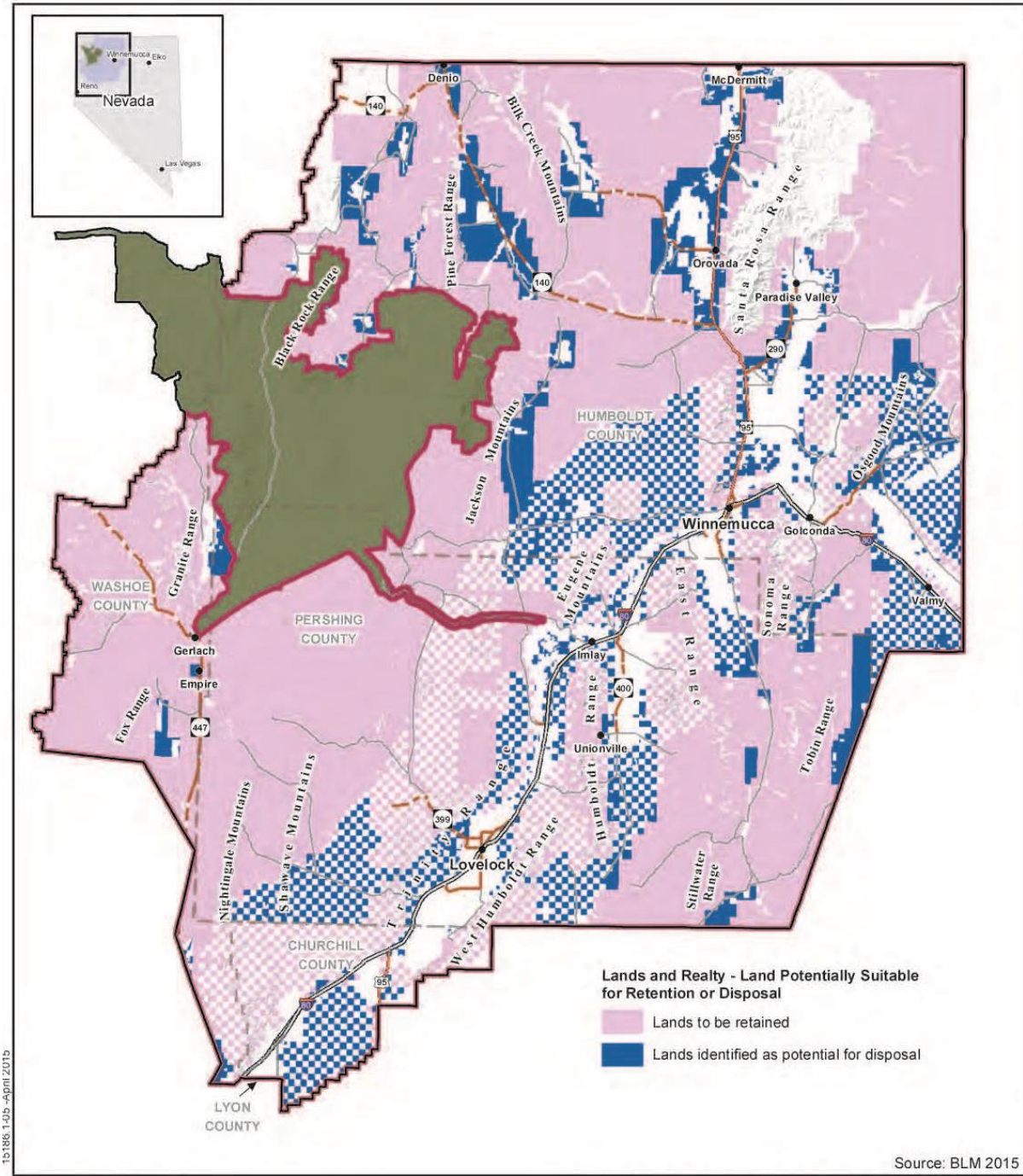
Humboldt County's internet infrastructure has become an important issue in Humboldt County. In just the last decade, a high-speed, reliable internet offering has become an expectation, rather than a luxury, for residents and businesses.

In July of 2018, Humboldt County experienced widespread internet outages due to a damage issue in the AT&T fiber line. This outage showed the lack of redundancy in the County's internet offering. Later, that year, the County conducted a county-wide survey of residents and business owners. The county is currently designing a plan to address this important issue.

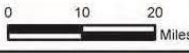
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²³ "Lithium Americas Announces Preliminary Feasibility Study Results for the Thacker Pass Project." *Globeswire*. June 21, 2018.

APPENDIX I—LAND POTENTIALLY SUITABLE FOR RETENTION OR DISPOSAL



No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data. Original data were compiled from various sources. This information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated without notification.



- Legend**
- BLM Winnemucca District Administrative Boundary
 - BLM Winnemucca RMP Boundary
 - Black Rock/High Rock NCA RMP Area
 - County Boundary
 - Towns
 - U.S. Highway
 - U.S. Interstate
 - County Road
 - State Highway

Winnemucca District RMP Lands and Realty



Figure 2-28

APPENDIX I—TOURISM TAX POLICY COMPARISON

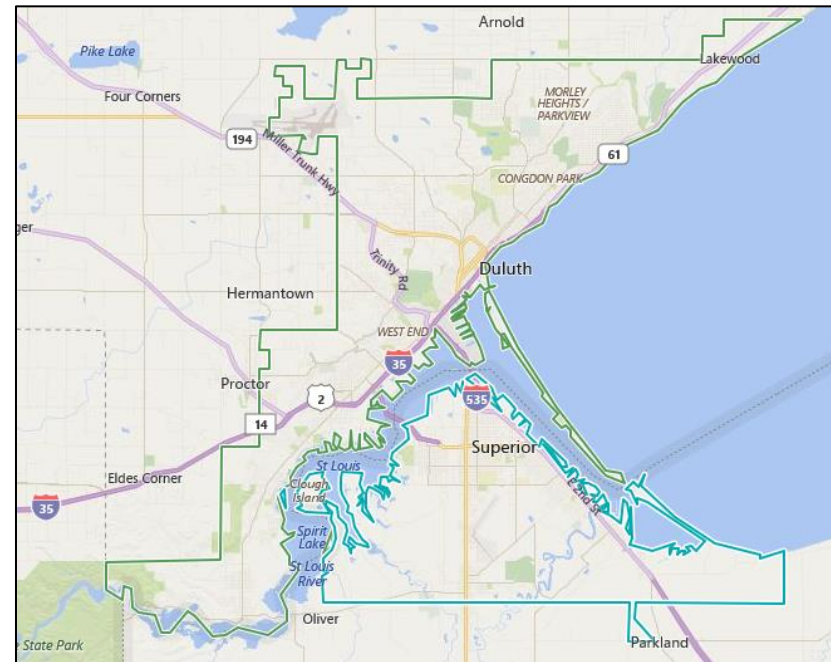
The community has already done well at investing in assets to afford better amenities and programs in the future. The 43-acre regional recreation complex and Boys and Girls club building serve as a great example of the community’s ability to invest in quality-of-life assets. Adding a wide variety of entertainment options in the downtown to create an entertainment district will require a similar amount of innovative policies and investment. The following study, comparing the lodging tax decisions of two different communities in the Midwest, shows how the entertainment district could be funded. Winnemucca should use similar policies to expand its tourism base and invest in quality of life assets for its citizens.

Better City conducted a lodging tax comparison study of Superior, Wisconsin and Duluth, Minnesota. These cities are two neighboring communities with the same economic base but have had disparate success in attracting and capturing the regional market and developing a tourism industry while providing quality of life amenities for their citizens (see Map 7).

Duluth has successfully developed a tourism cluster through the development of a ski resort and entertainment district comprised of a convention center, sports arena, aquarium, movie theaters, restaurants, and waterfront amenities. These projects were funded in large part by pledging lodging tax and food & beverage tax proceeds for bond issuances to fund capital costs for these projects.

Conversely, Superior has used its lodging tax to market the community, fund ongoing operational costs of museums, and to

provide support funding for various one-day or weekend events. Although the State of Wisconsin permits Milwaukee to impose a food and beverage tax to fund the development of a convention center, other communities are excluded from doing so and Superior has suffered from a lack of economic development tools available in the State of Wisconsin. In addition, Superior has had little success in developing a tourism base as their investments have done little to change the fundamental economics of their community.



SOURCE: Google Maps

Map 7—Duluth and Superior Locations

Although the State of Nevada does not permit communities to charge a food and beverage tax, the higher TLT rate that Nevada allows makes up for it.

LODGING TAX BACKGROUND

Duluth City Council had passed a 3.0% lodging tax, which was incorporated into Section 54(D) of the City Charter. As stipulated by the City Charter, revenues are to be allocated in the following manner:

- The greater of 5% or \$5,000 paid into the general fund to cover costs for administration;
- 65% paid into the general fund to be used for the support and maintenance of the arena-auditorium of Duluth;
- 35% to the advertising and publicity fund.

Subsequently, the State of Minnesota adopted Section 477A.01, Subdivision 18 which states that no county, city, town, or other taxing authority could increase a present tax or impose a new tax on sales or income. Duluth lobbied the State of Minnesota on multiple occasions and secured authority to impose a tax on lodging in addition to the 3.0% lodging tax the City had imposed and incorporated into their charter. The tax was not subject to voter referendum:

- **1980:** The State granted Duluth authority to pass a 1.0% sales tax on lodging, in addition to their existing 3.0% lodging tax per City Charter (Laws 1980, chapter 511, section 2). The proceeds were to be used to pay for activities conducted by the city or other organizations which promote tourism in the City of Duluth, and to subsidize the Duluth Arena-Auditorium and the Spirit Mountain recreation authority. The law provides the City

Council with the authority to exempt smaller establishments from this additional tax.

- **1998:** The additional lodging tax was temporarily increased by 0.5% to 1.5%. This increase was to be used to pay the debt service on bonds in a principal amount of \$8.0 million issued for capital improvements to the Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center (DECC). Once paid off, the rate would return to 1.0%. (Laws 1998, chapter 389, article 8, section 26). Uses of proceeds was expanded to include capital improvements of tourism facilities and pledging such tax revenues to pay principal of and interest on City of Duluth bonds issued to finance such tourism facilities.
- **2003:** Although the lodging tax rate of 1.5% remained the same, the use of proceeds for the 0.5% increase from 1.0% to 1.5% was expanded to include debt service on outstanding bonds originally issued in the principal amount of \$4.97 million to finance capital improvements to the Great Lakes Aquarium ("GLA"). Once this and the \$8.0 million DECC bond are paid off, the rate would return to 1.0%. (Laws 2003, First Special Session chapter 21, article 8, section 12).
- **2014:** The \$4.97 million and \$8.0 million bonds for the GLA and DECC, respectively, were paid off and the 0.5% lodging tax increase expired. However, the State approved an additional 0.5% to pay the debt service on bonds in the principal amount of no more than \$18.0 million, plus issuance and discount costs, to finance capital improvements to public facilities to support tourism and recreational activities in that portion of the city west of 34th Avenue West. The current lodging tax rate is at 5.5%.

ANALYSIS

Duluth used the proceeds of its lodging and food and beverage taxes to support bond issuances that funded \$71.2 million of capital costs for regional destination attractions including the DECC, the Spirit Mountain recreation authority (ski resort), and the GLA. These tax revenues are largely borne by tourists with proceeds used to develop projects that are not only destination attractions but also quality of life amenities for its citizens.

Over many decades of focused investment, tourist-derived revenues were used to develop an entertainment district that has catalyzed significant private investment including new hospitality, restaurants, and a large first-run movie theater. Duluth's hotel room base dwarfs Superior's because of the hotel room demand its regional destination attractions generate.

These large regional destination attractions spend considerable amounts of money on marketing to the surrounding region. Their success ultimately depends on their ability to bring in tourists and visitors from outside the community. For example, a planned destination attraction in the region has \$1.4 million budgeted annually on marketing. This is an order of magnitude larger than the few hundred thousand dollars spent by the municipality through its Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The added benefit of multiple destination attractions in Duluth is that each has its own sizeable marketing budget. These monies are spent on bringing visitors into the community who not only visit the destination attractions but also patronize hotels, restaurants, movie theaters, and other venues. The marketing benefit to the community and local small businesses is significant.

In addition, Duluth's projects developed quality of life amenities for City residents, which attracted and retained the City's

workforce, and ultimately defined the City as a community of choice. The worker base prefers to live in Duluth because of the amenities and quality of life the community offers.

Although lodging tax rates between the two communities have been comparable during this time, Superior's unfocused investment decisions with tourism tax revenue have impeded its economic growth. With little to offer its citizens, many workers for Superior-based employers live in Duluth or surrounding suburbs. This residential pattern has significant negative impacts to Superior's property tax base.

CONCLUSION

The takeaway is that the use of tourism-related tax revenue to make strategic focused investments in regional destination attractions are critical to the economic success of a community. Not only do these attractions develop a tourism cluster but they also provide quality of life to the local citizenry and capture and retain the local workforce.

By utilizing this strategic approach, the cost to develop quality of life assets within Duluth are being borne largely by tourists through tourism-related taxes. As the tourism base expands and a recreational and entertainment district is developed, a stable tax revenue base is created that can be used to develop additional destination venues and quality of life amenities for local residents.

APPENDIX II—SKI COOPER TOURISM ANALYSIS

Lake County Colorado's Ski Cooper is not the largest or flashiest ski area in Colorado, but it is one of the State's best bargains and has generated millions of dollars in tourism revenue for Lake County. Humboldt County should consider following the pattern of development as Lake County's Ski Cooper and its use of natural assets to provide additional funding sources and economic diversification.



SOURCE: Travel Advisor

Figure 25—Chicago Ridge on Ski Cooper

SKI COOPER BACKGROUND

Ski Cooper was started in the early years of World War II. Foreign invasion was a real threat, so the War Department decided to create a training site near Leadville on the slopes of 11,700-foot-high Cooper Hill. It was used as a training asset for the duration of the war but was then sold off as surplus property. The U.S. Forest

Service got the land back and Lake County's Recreational Board wisely saw it as a great recreation resource for the county and obtained a lease with the Forest Service. The County didn't intend to use it as a tourist destination, however, and it was simply used as a backyard ski area for Lake County residents. As a result, Ski Cooper barely made enough to stay in operations and didn't make any major improvements. Meanwhile, other ski areas like Aspen, Vail, and Breckenridge were making huge investments and attracting regional tourism revenue.

In 1981, the County's main revenue source, the Climax Mine, crashed and the company laid off almost 3,000 employees. The local economy was shaken to the core, and local government funding was suddenly in shambles. The County had to act quickly to pivot to a new funding source.

The recreational board saw Ski Cooper as an untapped economic resource for the County, one which could expand quickly and become a regional destination. In 1983, Ski Cooper applied for and was awarded an \$800,000 impact assistance grant from the State of Colorado. They started by installing a \$640,000 triple chair lift and expanding skiable terrain by 35 percent. The following year, the ski area was awarded a \$250,000 federal grant, which was enough to expand ski operations from five to seven days per week, six months out of the year.

By 1986, the ski area became financially self-sustaining and earned enough to pay down debts and invest in further upgrades and expansions. The ski area has continued to grow over time, seeing a six percent increase in visitation between the 2016/17 and 2017/18 seasons.

Ski Cooper's success comes mostly from its targeted marketing. The ski area is unable to—in fact doesn't want to—compete with the larger ski areas. It has positioned itself as a low-cost

alternative to the larger ski resorts. This has been a significant boon to the County. The County had an estimated \$16.9 Million of tourism spending in 2015, representing 13 percent of all gross sales.²⁴

ANALYSIS

Despite Ski Cooper’s inferior infrastructure and amenities, the resort is able to compete on value. Ski Cooper is 57% cheaper for a day pass and 45% cheaper for a season pass than the average of other nearby resorts (see Table 9). This is a big draw for budget-conscious families.

	Adult Full Day	Season Pass
Ski Cooper	\$ 56.00	\$ 349.00
Copper Mountain	\$ 98.00	\$ 479.00
Beaver Creek	\$ 130.00	\$ 669.00
Vail	\$ 130.00	\$ 669.00
Aspen	\$ 139.00	\$ 904.00
Winter Park	\$ 159.00	\$ 479.00

SOURCE: Better City

Table 9—Ski Pricing Comparison

Additionally, Ski Cooper focuses on its ability to provide free parking, less traffic, and uncrowded slopes. This appeals to domestic and international skiers alike.

While a ski resort such as Ski Cooper probably isn’t feasible in Humboldt County, there are other natural assets that warrant investment with the goal of incrementally building outdoor recreation and tourism.

CONCLUSION

Humboldt County doesn’t need to wait for a significant economic shock to begin investing in its natural assets and public lands. Through prudent investment, the right marketing mix, and good service, the County can invest in its assets to create a similarly powerful tourism industry.

²⁴ 2015 Lake County Lodging Tax receipts, Better City.

APPENDIX III—SURVEY EXAMPLES

SAMPLE INTERCEPT SURVEY

Thank you for attending _____. Please take a few moments to respond to this short survey so that we might serve you better and build a stronger ecosystem in _____.

1. Of the following descriptions, which best describes your stage of business activity? **(please select only one)**

- Pre-Startup (No revenue, but working on business approach and model)
- Startup Business (Opening day to three years old, with incoming revenue)
- Existing Business (More than 3 years old)
- Not an Entrepreneur? Please tell us why you came _____

2. Of the following descriptions, which best describes your PRIMARY intentions related to your business success? **(please select only one)**

- In business for reasons other than making money
- In business to support a particular lifestyle for myself in my community
- In business for the thrill of making money, getting out and probably doing it again!
- In business to create a global company that makes millions

3. Select an industry that most closely aligns with your business:

- Technology
- Wholesale
- Retail
- Agriculture
- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Professional Services

4. Have you benefitted from any of the following by attending _____ (insert name of event) one or more times including today? **(Please check all that apply)**

- Access to capital you may not have otherwise been able to access
- Business connections you may not otherwise have been able to make
- Publicity for your business
- Education about critical business issues
- Improved confidence in your own business skills
- Solutions to business problems
- Connections to like-minded people

5. Have you attended or participated in any of the following networking events or work space locations in the past 12 months?

- 1 Million Cups
- Pitch Event (for example Swimming with the Sharks or Pitch and Grow)
- First Friday Coffee
- Biz Brew/Tech Brew or Startup Drinks
- Hackathons or Startup Weekend
- Coworks or Jellie
- Coliving

6. Of the business needs listed below, please rank order in terms of importance their current value to you in operating your business right now. (1- most important, 7 least important)

- Access to capital (particularly grants)
- Business connections (peers, technical service providers, community leaders)
- Publicity for your business
- Education about critical business issues
- Improved confidence in your own business skills
- Solutions to specific business problems
- Connections to like-minded people

SAMPLE ONLINE SURVEY

Thank you for being a part of the _____ entrepreneurial ecosystem. We appreciate your time in helping us build a stronger ecosystem in _____.

1. Of the following descriptions, which best describes your stage of business activity? **(please select only one)**

- Pre-Startup (No revenue, but working on business approach and model)
- Startup Business (Opening day to three years old, with incoming revenue)
- Existing Business (More than 3 years old)
- Not an Entrepreneur (please continue to question 1a)

Question 1a) allows you to measure attendance from other, non-entrepreneur individuals participating in networking events. Most online survey tools will allow for limited 'jumping' to new questions, based upon responses from previous questions.

1a. Please identify your interest/involvement in Entrepreneurship from the list below:

- Investor
- Public or Private sector service provider
- Elected Official
- Community Organizer
- Other, please explain _____

1b. then skip to question #4

2. Of the following descriptions, which best describes your PRIMARY intentions related to your business success? **(please select only one)**

- In business for reasons other than making money
- In business to support a particular lifestyle for myself in my community
- In business for the thrill of making money, getting out and probably doing it again!
- In business to create a global company that makes millions

This question will help you to determine the intention of the business owner and thus determine the specific networking resources and services most needed by the majority of respondents.

3. Select an industry that **most closely** aligns with your business:

- Technology
- Wholesale
- Retail

- Agriculture
- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Professional Services

4. Have you attended or participated in any of the following networking events or work space locations in the past 12 months? **(check all that apply)**

- 1 Million Cups
- Pitch Event (for example Swimming with the Sharks or Pitch and Grow)
- First Friday Coffee
- Biz Brew/Tech Brew or Startup Drinks
- Hackathons or Startup Weekend
- Worked a Cowork location or attended a Jelly
- Coliving

Question #5 is tied to each of the events from question #4 and could result in up to seven new questions.

5. In thinking about the _____ (from the previous question) networking event you attended, please rank order in terms of value to you, the benefit(s) you received from participating in that networking activity (1- most valuable 7- least valuable)

- Access to capital you may not have otherwise been able to access
- Business connections you may not otherwise have been able to make
- Publicity for your business
- Education about critical business issues
- Improved confidence in your own business skills
- Solutions to business problems
- Connections to like-minded people
- No benefit

6. Are there business needs your company currently has that are not being met?

- yes
- no

If you answered yes, please identify those needs: _____

This question can alternatively be formulated as a 'closed ended' question, by listing a finite number of responses so that responses can be easily tallied. An 'open ended' question, as posted above, allows the capture of needs that you might not be aware of.

7. Of the business connections listed below, please rank order in terms of importance their current value to you in starting or growing your business. (1- most important, 4- least important)

- Connections to peers (other entrepreneurs who have been there, done that)
- Connections to professional service providers (accountants, attorneys, marketing professionals with expertise in your field of business)
- Connections to business leaders in your industry (CEO's, founders and C-Suite managers)
- Connections to community leadership (elected officials, heads of public institutions and civic leaders)

8. Given the current stage of your business, which of the following forms of pitch event would be the most appealing to you to participate in?

- A Pitch and Grow: to obtain feed-back from a small expert panel and peers in terms of your a) business growth strategy or, b) marketing strategy or c) your pitch presentation for investment
- A pitch contest: to compete for cash awards of \$500 to \$2,500 against a small number of other entrepreneurs in front of a celebrity judging panel and the public
- A pitch contest to compete for equity investment from a panel of angels (and perhaps a public audience) for funding in the range of \$20,000 and up
- A pitch event attended only by other entrepreneurs where you present a problem, idea or strategy and solicit advice and guidance from the entrepreneurial community (no competition)

The dollar amounts listed above are reflective of national programs popular in the United States. This question provides feedback on what kinds of financial needs might exist in your region that are not currently fulfilled by existing pitch events. The alternative intercept survey will provide feedback on current pitch events in your region.

9. How many of each of the following types of employees, **including yourself**, did your business add the in the most recent 12 months?

- Full time employees
- Part-time employees
- Sub-contracted workers

If you offer this survey on a biennial basis, please change the question to reflect the past 24 months.

10. Have you implemented any of the following kinds of business innovations in your business during the past year?

- Marketing innovation (example: new social media that you haven't used before such as Twitter, FB, LinkedIn)
- Product innovation (example: developed a new product for the market)
- Process innovation (example: adopted a new technology-driven process in your business that has improved your operations)

If any of these boxes are checked, jump to question 11) to understand if those innovations have had a positive economic impact on the business. Most online survey tools will allow for limited 'jumping' to new questions, based upon responses from previous questions.

11. Has the implementation of _____ (product, process or marketing) innovations in terms of marketing, product or processes in your business resulted in any of the following? **(check all that apply)**

- One or more new full or part time jobs (including sub-contract workers)
- Increased sales
- New capital acquisition (banks, revolving loan funds, investors etc.)

12. In which of the following age groups do you belong:

- 17 and under
- 18-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60 or above

13. Please indicate your gender:

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary

14. Would you like to receive a \$_____ gift card (fill in the amount) to _____ (fill in the vendors) as token of our appreciation for participating today, or would you prefer to remain anonymous?

- Yes, please send me a gift card (You will not receive any sales calls as a result of acceptance.)
- No, I wish to remain anonymous and forgo the incentive for participating.

15. If you answered yes, which type of gift card would you like to receive?

- Vendor
- Vendor
- Vendor

16. Please provide the following contact information to receive your gift card.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____
Zip Code _____
Phone _____

17. If you have any additional comments you would like to provide that didn't exactly fit into one of the questions asked today, please write them below. Thank you!

APPENDIX IV—WINNEMUCCA TRAFFIC COUNT ESTIMATES



SOURCE: Google Earth, Nevada Department of Transportation

Map 8—Annual Average Daily Traffic Estimates, 5-year Ave

Humboldt County

Implementation and Funding—Phase III



Better City
Solving Problems. Creating Opportunity.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Better City was hired by the Northern Nevada Regional Development Authority (NNRDA) and the Humboldt Development Authority (HDA) in early 2018 to create a comprehensive economic development assessment and strategic plan for Humboldt County (the “County”). The scope of work for the project includes identifying economic development projects that can attract private-sector investment, assessing economic and demographic trends, and creating a plan to make the County’s economy more robust. This document is the third phase of Better City’s assessment and is part of a broader community development initiative led by NNRDA and HDA. This project is meant to work in conjunction with the ongoing Winnemucca Futures Project.

The first phase of Better City’s process was to gather information and data relating to economic and demographic trends and to take an inventory of the community’s assets. The second phase reported on major topics brought up during stakeholder interviews, important events impacting the community in the near-term, and project recommendations based on community assets and strategic advantages. This, the third and final phase of the assessment, will describe an implementation plan, funding recommendation, and recommend local project champions.

Specific action steps are described to clearly define the roles that various partners/stakeholders will need to take in accomplishing the implementation efforts. The plan also includes a proposed budget, covering anticipated costs for the key projects and initiatives described in the Phase II report.

Included in the report is an approach section that details the specific, actionable steps to accomplish the initiatives. A

stewardship matrix was developed to easily outline which parties will be involved and what responsibilities they will have.

Additionally, a funding plan is provided for each initiative, outline various funding sources and potential uses which can be used for each of the proposed catalytic projects.

Finally, a methodology will be provided, outlining the way in which responsible parties can monitor plan implementation efficacy.

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COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE REPORT

A community open house was held on September 12, 2018 to present the strategic projects described in the Phase II report. The open house was held in the Humboldt County Courthouse and was led by the Better City team. Representatives from across the community attended and voiced their input through a live polling program and comment cards.

Better City used the feedback and ideas from the community to refine the strategic project concepts. Additional ideas, questions, and concerns were also considered and added to the final draft of the Phase II document. Specific feedback and ideas for each project can be found in Appendix 1.

The project concepts presented at the meeting were as follows:

- Downtown Winnemucca redevelopment
- Value-added Agriculture
- Outdoor Recreation
- Entrepreneurial Infrastructure
- Other considerations

Overall, each of the project ideas were supported by community members. The project concept which received the greatest amount of support was outdoor recreation; the one which received the most concern was downtown (re)development.

Due to the amount of discussion and support for additional investment in broadband capacity and sustainability, an additional section on broadband was added to the Phase II document.

COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

A Coordination and Implementation Matrix is a tool that helps stakeholders and leaders in the implementation phase of strategic planning. The matrix was created with input and feedback from local stakeholders. Due to this input, the projects detailed in the matrices do not align perfectly with the projects recommended in the Phase II document.

The implementation matrix tool shows the action steps, project coordinators, and participants needed to bring the projects to eventual realization in the County, thereby achieving the County's goals of economic diversification and development. The "coordinator" role is intended to be the one which will have the largest role in a given project or task. However, the coordinator is not expected to be the party which will perform the project itself; rather, the coordinator role is expected to transition to a stakeholder group/steering committee, once one has been established (explained in the action steps of each project). By transitioning the coordinator role from one party to a group, members from across the community will have input and participatory power in the initiatives with which they are assigned.

While the matrix for each project is intended to be comprehensive in nature, it should be viewed as a roadmap to completion. The action steps needed to complete each project are likely to change according to the needs and desires of stakeholders or the public; therefore, the project coordinators should take the matrix for each project as flexible and subject to change. Coordinators should also be aware that many of the recommended action steps need not be completed sequentially and may be done independently of previous steps.

MATRIX KEY AND EXPLANATION

The matrices on the following pages outline specific implementation steps for recommended projects described in the Phase II report. The task number is provided in the far-left. The tasks should be completed in order, as outlined in the matrix. The task description provides a concise description of what the task's goals are. It will be up to the Project Coordinator and Participants to go through the specifics of how to achieve the tasks. A check mark is provided for when a specific entity should be participating in a given task. Some tasks require multiple participants, while others require action from a single participant.

As mentioned before, flexibility may be required to complete the projects according to the needs of stakeholders. This matrix should be used as a guide to efficiently complete the steps required for project success. However, specific circumstances may require adjusting or altering the tasks to better serve the project. These inevitable and unforeseeable alterations should be anticipated by stakeholders and participants.

PROJECT TITLE								
Action Steps		Coordinator / Participant						
Task	Task Description	Chamber of Commerce	City Council/Mayor	City Manager	County Commissioners	County Manager	Private Sector	Property Owners
1.00			COORDINATOR					
1.01								
1.02								
1.03								
1.04								
1.05								

LODGING OPTIONS

Public Lands and Outdoor Recreation								
Action Steps		Project Coordinator or Participant						
Project	Task Description	Federal Agencies	NDOT and other State Agencies	County/WCVA*	Non-Profits and Youth Groups	Regional Planning	Property Owners	Small Business Owners/ Entrepreneurs
1.00	Lodging Options (Glamping, RV sites, VRBO, B&Bs, etc.)			Coordinator				
1.01	Work with existing groups or create a committee to define project scope and goals	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.02	Explore public / private ownership options and establish public / private partnerships, if needed	✓		✓				✓
1.03	Secure funding for infrastructure improvements, such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) or Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant, acquire land / easements from property owners; establish Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) to facilitate private sector participation, as needed	✓		✓			✓	✓
1.04	Develop site(s). This step may include smaller improvements such as signage to camping areas but may also include larger lodging infrastructure such as a septic tank to store grey water or permanent restroom in camping areas	✓		✓				✓

* WCVA intended to be project participant, not coordinator

WINNEMUCCA SAND DUNES

Public Lands and Outdoor Recreation								
Action Steps		Project Coordinator or Participant						
Project	Task Description	Federal Agencies	NDOT and other State Agencies	County/WCVA*	Non-Profits and Youth Groups	Regional Planning	Property Owners	Small Business Owners/ Entrepreneurs
2.00	Winnemucca Sand Dunes			Coordinator				
2.01	Work with existing groups or create a committee of stakeholders to define project scope and goals, build consensus among landowners	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
2.02	Create long-term stewardship and management plan for the Sand Dunes recreation area to protect and conserve, wayfind, promote, and ensure user safety	✓		✓				
2.03	Acquire land and/or secure easements for sections as deemed appropriate by the stakeholders to ameliorate use and access limitations due to checkerboard ownership pattern	✓		✓			✓	
2.04	Develop improvements, including road ingress and regress and signage to improve access and visibility; explore grant options			✓				
2.05	Recruit businesses that enhance visitorship and participation, such as bike or OHV sales and rentals			✓				✓

* WCVA intended to be project participant, not coordinator

TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

Public Lands and Outdoor Recreation								
Action Steps		Project Coordinator or Participant						
Project	Task Description	Federal Agencies	NDOT and other State Agencies	County/WCVA*	Non-Profits and Youth Groups	Regional Planning	Property Owners	Small Business Owners/ Entrepreneurs
3.00	Trail Development			Coordinator				
3.01	Work with existing groups or create committee of stakeholders; consider partnering with health providers to promote health and wellness in the community; define project scope and goals; create scope of work for the trails master plan; determine trail use by type (hiking, OHV, etc.)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.02	Develop trail master plan which outlines the proposed trail network, how stakeholders envision tourists and locals using the trail network; identify public and private landowners	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
3.03	Secure funding for infrastructure improvements, such as by applying for LWCF or RTP grants; acquire the land necessary to develop the trail network according to the outline in the master plan (if needed)	✓		✓				
3.04	Develop improvements to trails, amenities, and signage	✓		✓				

* WCVA intended to be project participant, not coordinator

OUTFITTERS AND OUTDOOR TOURS

Public Lands and Outdoor Recreation								
Action Steps		Project Coordinator or Participant						
Project	Task Description	Federal Agencies	NDOT and other State Agencies	County/WCVA*	Non-Profits and Youth Groups	Regional Planning	Property Owners	Small Business Owners/ Entrepreneurs
4.00	Outfitters and Outdoor Tours			Coordinator				
4.01	Work with existing groups or create a committee of stakeholders and define project scope and goals	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
4.02	Perform market study and research amenities in the County to determine best sites for tourism and recreation			✓				
4.03	Engage architectural firms with specialization in historic preservation and redevelopment (for historic sites), work with federal and state agencies to improve the site	✓		✓			✓	
4.04	Recruit outfitters / entrepreneurs to provide services, rental equipment, and to perform tours of local assets			✓				✓

* WCVA intended to be project participant, not coordinator

DOWNTOWN (RE)DEVELOPMENT

Downtown Redevelopment											
Action Steps		Project Coordinator or Participant									
Task	Task Description	Winnemucca or Unincorporated Towns	Regional Planning	RDA	County	Downtown Preservation Commission/ SHPO	Humboldt County Museum / Historical Society	Humboldt County School District	HDA / NNRDA	Nevada Main Street	Private Sector
1.00	Coordinate Local Stakeholders	Coordinator									
1.01	Form a steering committee involving community stakeholders to identify goals and objectives and build consensus regarding strategic initiatives and development projects; define boundaries of the downtown, if needed	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.02	Hold regular monthly or quarterly meetings, depending on community size	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.00	Develop a toolkit for Redevelopment	Coordinator									
2.01	Visit with the Nevada Rural Housing Authority (NRHA) to explore low-income housing tax credit and multifamily bond programs to determine requirements and identify potential redevelopment partners	✓	✓				✓				
2.02	Visit with USDA Rural Development to discuss downtown redevelopment goals and to inquire of programs that may be available to foster redevelopment, such as Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG), Rural Housing, and Community Facilities	✓	✓		✓		✓				
2.03	Establish and enhance the Main Street Program, leveraging available programming, funding, and best practices; promote and improve awareness	✓	✓				✓			✓	
2.04	Educate stakeholders regarding the establishment of a Redevelopment Agency and Redevelopment Area (RDA), consider adoption to facilitate redevelopment, as needed to balance project economics	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
2.05	Determine which buildings in the downtown corridor merit preservation and apply for the appropriate funding for the protection and rehabilitation of historic buildings		✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	
2.06	Update existing zoning ordinances and consider the use of Form Based Code to create appropriate redevelopment forms for the downtown district. Solicit the public to engage in the process	✓	✓				✓				

Downtown Redevelopment

Action Steps		Project Coordinator or Participant									
Task	Task Description	Winnemucca or Unincorporated Towns	Regional Planning	RDA	County	Downtown Preservation Commission/ SHPO	Humboldt County Museum / Historical Society	Humboldt County School District	HDA / NNRDA	Nevada Main Street	Private Sector
3.00	Conduct a downtown feasibility study			Coordinator							
3.01	Based on the projects identified by the Steering Committee, evaluate the feasibility of potential uses including specialty retail, office, business support, residential, etc.	✓	✓	✓			✓				
3.02	Develop a pro forma for the project to determine the financing gap created by the difference in redevelopment costs, construction costs, and the level of debt that can be serviced given achievable rental rates in the local market	✓		✓			✓				
3.03	Identify funding sources such as tax increment, grants, and tax credits to fill the project's financing gap and formulate a project capital stack	✓		✓			✓				
3.04	Develop a project schedule identifying milestones and deadlines for securing funding sources as well as phasing of project development	✓		✓			✓				
3.05	Develop a preliminary estimate of pre-development costs that can be anticipated based on the proposed project concept	✓		✓			✓				
4.00	Implement Strategic Initiatives			Coordinator							
4.01	Engage with the private development community to attract a third-party developer that will:	✓		✓							✓
4.02	- Undertake development in the corridor and assume ongoing operational risk of new facilities;	✓		✓							✓
4.03	- Provide equity and commercial debt to finance the private financing portion of the project;	✓		✓							✓
4.04	- Enter into a development agreement with the City for the development of the facility through a public private partnership (PPP)	✓		✓							✓
4.05	- Assist the City and third-party developer in securing financing sources for the project, including grants, tax increment financing, and below-market rate loans	✓		✓							✓
4.06	- Work with property owners to establish site control for strategic redevelopment projects through Letters of Intent (LOI), Memorandum of Understandings (MOU), purchase options, Purchase and Sale Agreements (PSA), and/or Operating Agreements	✓		✓							✓

VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURE

Value-Added Agriculture						
Action Steps		Project Coordinator or Participant				
Project	Task Description	County	City	HDA / NNRDA	Regional Planning	Private Sector
1.00	Facilitation and growth of Value-Added Production					Coordinator
1.01	Work with existing groups or create a committee of stakeholders and define project scope and goals	✓	✓	✓		✓
1.02	Identify assets the County has that would be attractive to local growers and industry stakeholders	✓		✓		✓
1.03	Coordinate with financing institutions to align incentives and funding sources, apply for applicable grants	✓		✓		✓
1.04	Recruit or nurture industries and the local workforce to facilitate value-added agriculture in the County	✓		✓		✓
1.05	Review availability of property and rezoning as appropriate to accommodate new projects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.06	Actively participate in grower's associations, research initiatives, events and conferences, and government lobbying to support and encourage value-added agriculture in the	✓		✓		✓
2.00	Define the Programming					Coordinator
2.01	Conduct a survey of entrepreneurs to determine what areas of support are needed	✓		✓		
2.02	service gaps based on the results of the survey	✓		✓		
2.03	Coordinate with the Nevada Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to determine ability to service entrepreneurs in the County. Determine whether SBA funding can be secured to support some level of operational programming	✓		✓		

BROADBAND

BROADBAND							
Action Steps		Project Coordinator or Participant					
Task	Task Description	Chamber of Commerce	City Council/Mayor	City Manager	County Commissioners	County Manager	Local Internet Providers/Tech Firms
1.00	Project Scope and Goals			Co-Coordinator		Co-Coordinator	
1.01	Work with existing groups or create a committee of stakeholders and define project scope and goals	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.02	Decide which broadband solution (fiber, fixed wireless, or a hybrid of fiber and fixed wireless) will best meet the needs and budget of the community	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.03	Decide how broadband will be owned (private service provider or public ownership)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.00	Feasibility Study, Business Recruitment			Co-Coordinator		Co-Coordinator	
2.01	Conduct a financial model to understand the direct and indirect costs of constructing broadband infrastructure		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.02	Conduct an environmental assessment, secure permits, and define the construction and operation budgets			✓		✓	✓
2.03	Begin recruitment of third-party service provider(s), if needed			✓		✓	✓
3.00	Funding and Construction			Co-Coordinator		Co-Coordinator	
3.01	Apply for federal and state grants, such as the E-rate program, Rural Healthcare Program, or Healthcare Connect Fund			✓		✓	
3.02	Send out RFPs to construction and engineering firms for design and engineering (if owned by City/County)			✓		✓	✓

HOUSING

Housing						
Action Steps		City	County	Regional Planning	HDA / NNRDA	Private Sector
1.00	Downtown	Coordinator				
1.01	Create downtown housing plan to support the development of apartment lofts, townhomes, and mixed uses	✓		✓		
1.02	Update existing zoning ordinance to accommodate redevelopment of second story into apartment lofts, if needed	✓		✓		
1.03	Leverage existing or create new RDA to fill financing gaps and incentivize builders to redevelop downtown corridor (see Downtown Matrix)	✓	✓			
1.04	Recruit developers with experience in downtown redevelopment projects				✓	✓
1.05	Support development of properties that conform to the downtown housing plan	✓				
2.00	Income-Restricted Properties	Co-Coordinator	Co-Coordinator			
2.01	Create an income-restricted housing plan which explores the unique, local challenges to low-income housing units and grant funds, and creates strategies to provide housing to this segment of the County's population	✓	✓	✓		
2.02	Work with NRHA to identify grant programs and funding sources for low-income housing	✓	✓			
2.03	Adopt zoning allowances for smaller lot sizes; create mixed-use areas for integrating housing and workplace throughout the County.	✓	✓	✓		
2.04	Weatherize and repair existing buildings, modify building to accommodate owner-occupied multifamily units	✓	✓			
2.05	Develop relationships with developers or other nonprofits specializing in low-income property development, facilitate and support projects that include LIHTC	✓	✓			✓

Housing

Action Steps		City	County	Regional Planning	HDA / NNRDA	Private Sector
3.00	Independent/Assisted Living	Coordinator				
3.01	Perform market study to determine the senior housing living gap and the viability of establishing new senior housing developments	✓				
3.02	Work with HGH to determine best site located near the hospital and for which senior housing options would be viable	✓				
3.03	Recruit developers with experience in senior housing initiatives	✓				✓
3.04	Secure sites, deferring to private-sector demand, if possible	✓				✓
3.05	Facilitate the development of senior housing projects that are in the project area	✓				
4.00	Traditional Development	Co-Coordinator	Co-Coordinator			
4.01	Perform an audit of building code and regulations to make sure that obtaining building permits and starting construction does not have unnecessary or redundant steps which impede or delay the development process	✓	✓	✓		
4.02	Designate land for future development, keeping in mind the sustainability of the development and the associated infrastructure, health, and safety requirements	✓	✓			
4.03	Develop strong relationships with local developers to assist in the development of additional housing in the County	✓	✓			✓
5.00	Manufactured Housing	Co-Coordinator	Co-Coordinator			
5.01	Review zoning code to ensure that manufactured homes are allowed in residential zones where manufactured housing is appropriate and desired	✓	✓	✓		
5.02	Create zoning restrictions that govern the use of materials, landscaping, and architecture to ensure manufactured homes contribute to Humboldt County's sense of place	✓	✓	✓		
5.03	Review current manufactured housing stock to find units that can be weatherized, improved, or redeveloped	✓	✓			
5.04	Develop relationships with manufacturing companies in Nevada and Idaho which create manufactured units	✓	✓			✓

INTERSTATE 11

Interstate 11										
Action Steps		Steward or Participant								
Task	Task Description	Chamber of Commerce	HDA / NNRDA	City Council/Mayor	City Manager	Regional Planning	County Commissioners	NDOT	County Manager / WCVA*	Local Businesses
1.00	Foster collaboration and cooperation between regional governments								Coordinator	
1.01	Create coalition of government entities likely to be located along the I-11; include and involve community/economic development directors; set up regular meetings between the communities				✓				✓	
1.02	Develop relationships with State and Federal representatives in Nevada, Idaho, Oregon, etc.; work with representatives in establishing the I-11 corridor				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
1.03	Develop economic and/or quality-of-life cases to support the I-11 corridor, this can be done with a Corridor Economic Development Plan or Economic Impact Study			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
1.04	Support and endorse feasibility and environmental studies along the corridor	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
2.00	Leverage and build on County's economic strengths								Coordinator	
2.01	Create committee to include political representatives, as well as representatives from City and County departments such as transportation, public works, infrastructure, and planning			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2.02	Develop growth and retention initiatives in industry clusters which will benefit from the I-II corridor, and solicit input from companies in the manufacturing, warehousing, transportation, support services, and tourism industries			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.03	Use or develop Corridor Economic Development Plan to guide zoning and development decisions along the corridor			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
2.04	Plan with local stakeholders across all communities (small and large), small businesses, and highway-dependent services for relocation and/or product offering transitions to mitigate negative effects of freeway bypass as well as positive impacts and opportunities	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

* WCVA intended to be project participant, not coordinator

Interstate 11

Action Steps		Steward or Participant								
Task	Task Description	Chamber of Commerce	HDA / NNRDA	City Council/Mayor	City Manager	Regional Planning	County Commissioners	NDOT	County Manager / WCVA*	Local Businesses
3.00	Coordinate initiatives which will create economic opportunity and create jobs		Coordinator							
3.01	Analyze economic and community data to understand mix of jobs and industry clusters in the region and County		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
3.02	Leverage cluster strengths to recruit additional industries and firms into the County		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
3.03	Pursue companies which are planning on expanding or relocating with tax incentives and community support initiatives; create expedited planning and permit approval processes		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
3.04	Analyze and understand areas where the county's economy will need to add jobs and clusters, especially in support industries like shopping, hotels, maintenance services, and restaurants		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
4.00	Develop Infrastructure and foster growth of supporting businesses				Co-Coordinator				Co-Coordinator	
4.01	Explore options for improving transportation infrastructure and signage to bring travelers into the downtown, improve downtown wayfinding to help travelers find services and entertainment offerings			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4.02	Adjust current housing plan to identify ways of improving the job-housing mix in the County, facilitate development of additional housing options			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
4.03	Perform traffic study and explore options for improving traffic flow and access along arterial roads in the community			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4.04	Work with City and rural communities for sustainable development along the corridor			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4.05	Foster growth of support businesses along the corridor, especially in rural areas where traffic flow will see significant increases	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

* WCVA intended to be project participant, not coordinator

PUBLIC SWIMMING POOL

Public Swimming Pool						
Action Steps						
Task	Task Description	City Council/Mayor	City Manager	County Commissioners	County Manager	Private Sector
1.00	Consultation and Feasibility Study		Coordinator			
1.01	Hire an engineering/construction firm that specializes in pool construction or repair		✓		✓	
1.02	Inspect the current pool and produce a report outlining the options for repairing the old pool or constructing a new one, including costs and potential revenues		✓		✓	
1.03	Conduct public outreach to evaluate the desire of the public and to understand which option will be most supported	✓	✓	✓	✓	
1.04	Select the best option based on input from the public and engineering/construction firm and notify the public	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2.00	Funding and Construction		Coordinator			
2.01	Secure funding by applying for grants or reaching out to organizations that support the construction or renovation of a public pool		✓		✓	
2.02	Seek out private donors who might be interested in contributing to the construction or the renovation of a public pool		✓		✓	✓
2.03	Hire an development firm to renovate the old pool or to begin construction of a new facility in the recreational complex		✓		✓	✓