



*Ritter Consulting Associates, Inc.*

February 22, 2013

To: Mayor Robert Crowell  
Board of Supervisors

From: Linda Ritter

RE: Issue Identification for February 28 Workshop

Honorable Mayor Crowell and Board Members,

In order to prepare for this year's Strategic Planning Session, senior City staff members and all elected officials were individually interviewed. They were later provided the written notes from the interview and asked to confirm that their thoughts were noted correctly. Our goal was to develop a list of core issues - the important issues that should be discussed as part of the workshop. The answers are attached to this memo. They have been sorted into general category so that you can see the "threads" of thoughts within the organization. I would like to provide a summary of the "majority" responses received during the interviews:

**Community strengths:**

Carson City is a small City - small enough to provide its residents a sense of community, yet large enough to be able to offer basic services. And with Reno nearby - it's perfect!

Carson City's proximity to Lake Tahoe and other outdoor recreation areas make it a great "launching" point for outdoor adventure. This not only offers opportunities for our visitors, it makes our community a great place for young families and active retirees to live.

Carson City's government structure provides efficient and streamlined services. There is no competition between government entities and agencies, only cooperation. Public officials are visible and accessible - your voice can be heard.

### **Community weaknesses:**

As we begin to travel down a probable slow road to economic recovery, there continues to be concern about the Carson City Economy - its components - manufacturing, retail, etc.. - and our ability to grow local business and/or entice new business to come to Carson City. We have limits on our ability to grow - there is little raw land available for new, modern developments. Remodels of existing facilities can be a hurdle for any start up business to have to jump. Our downtown suffers from too many public buildings interrupting the flow of retail shoppers and a business mix that is not ideal for attracting the boutique retail shopper.

Carson City is a conservative community steeped in tradition. While this can be a positive attribute, it can also get in the way of progress. Not having a clearly defined vision that embraces change can have unintended consequences. By sitting idly by and watching the community progress naturally, we allow certain aspects of the community to decline. Knowing who we are and what we will be in the future can be challenging. Often, implementing a positive vision for the future involves some risk. We don't have the ability to clearly see into the future - that can be a scary proposition. The community's aversion to risk keeps things from moving forward.

Residents and businesses are being impacted by crime - in particularly burglaries. Mental health issues are requiring public safety responses on a regular basis. What is the common factor? Drug and alcohol abuse. The Courts are filled with cases that have substance abuse as the root cause for the infraction. Families are being impacted by drugs and alcohol - we are now seeing "generational" abuse of certain substances. Use of drugs and alcohol are being passed on to the next generation by addicted parents. Children are being taught that using drugs and alcohol is an accepted practice. This is weakening families and placing more burden on schools and other social systems. Although the need is tremendous, there are not enough substance abuse treatment programs and facilities in Carson City. Where there are services available, those that need it are not aware of it - there is a disconnect between need and service.

### **Threats to a Successful Future**

Civil engagement is defined as, "Individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern." Getting the general public interested and involved in issues is difficult. As a representative form of government, how can our representatives know what an apathetic public wants? In many instances, only those most vocal are heard and it may appear (real or perceived) that policies are made based upon the opinions of the few. The old adage, "The squeaky wheel gets the grease" may be true in setting public policy. This issue is not unique to Carson City, it is a challenge faced by just about every level of government. There may be many reasons for the apathy we feel. Information is so abundant, residents may feel buried under its weight. How does one sift through the hundreds of emails, Facebook updates, television interviews, radio programs and general noise surrounding us and find out what is really happening and what is being proposed for their community? In Carson City, it can be particularly difficult to get the word out. Many people live here and work elsewhere, and vice versa. The news stories coming from our neighbors to the north may drown out our news, yet we share media sources. The diversity of our population can make it difficult. How can

we use digital media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to get the word to folks that feel, "Just too old to learn a new trick" and use a computer? How can we reach into the Latino community where language differences can present a challenge?

Our economy and the effect tax policy can have on funding for services is a concern going forward. Shifts in taxation policy that start impacting specific sectors of the economy could have an effect on the ability to grow that particular sector in Carson City. If that sector is a provider of good, stable and high paying jobs, the impact of businesses leaving the area due to tax policy could be great. Being able to grow our economy with little room to expand is a concern. In the past, growth has contributed to support of public services. How does a service organization like a County / City Government continue to support the human resources needed to carry out its mission without economic growth?

Also listed as a threat is the drug / alcohol abuse issues listed in the **Weaknesses** section.

### **Community Opportunities**

A strength that has also been indicated as an opportunity is our recreational assets, those within our City and those in the region. The ability to attract businesses, families, and visitors with our unique geographic location presents an opportunity. The question is, how can the community capitalize on it? Western Nevada College provides an opportunity for the community. It can provide job training for new businesses moving to the area, it can attract young people to the area, it can raise Carson City's reputation for quality educational opportunities.

Continuing to seek out methods for sharing services with our neighbors was cited as an opportunity. Although great progress has been made in this area, there may be more opportunities in the future.

### **Organizational Strengths**

Without a doubt, Carson City's employees were cited as the strength of the organization. Their work in working smarter and becoming more efficient during the economic downturn and multiple years of budget reductions is remarkable. Relationships among employees and management are positive. Retrenchment can either build an organization up or tear it apart. It appears that the financial challenges faced by Carson City have strengthened the organization.

Cooperation between departments; the absence of "silo" operations was a quick response to the question of organizational strength. Communication is strong between Departments, cooperation is witnessed on a regular basis. There are no barriers, no agendas - just work to be done, and much work that has been done. The City Manager has done an exceptional job of creating a highly effective management team.

The ability to forecast a reduction in operating revenues and to develop reductions and changes in operations to weather the economic storm is identified and known by City staff, however, it was noted many times that the public does not appear to understand and appreciate this.

### **Organizational Weaknesses**

Although the ability to manage through the economic downturn has been identified as an organizational strength, the stresses it has placed on staff has been presented as an organizational weakness. Temporary reductions in some areas are manageable, but keeping the pace and pressure high over time can lead to burn out. Employee moral can suffer, which will ultimately affect customer service.

There is deep concern regarding deferred maintenance and the financial inability to implement long term capital replacement plans for equipment and infrastructure. It was noted that funding such a plan would not be easy, but without it, facilities will continue to fall into disrepair. Also, the cost of repairing infrastructure due to catastrophic failure is much greater than attending to it as part of regular maintenance. The chance of service interruption and inconvenience to the public also looms.

Communication with the public and the issue of the adequacy of civil engagement is a concern. Is the organizations inability to get information to the public impacting the ability for the Board to know the desires of all they represent?

### **Threats to the Carson City Organization**

The issue of deferred maintenance / investment and the effect on infrastructure is on everyone's mind. The dollars that may be necessary to implement a long term capital improvement / infrastructure replacement program will undoubtedly be high. This is the result of managing through an economic slowdown and minimizing fiscal impacts on residents by deferring maintenance. Everything that is utilized wears out in time - replacement is inevitable.

The Baby Boomer generation is reaching retirement age. There will be many that will leave City service in the next few years - many are management level positions. The "silver tsunami" is just around the corner. Leaving along with long term employees will be years of institutional knowledge - systems, history - that knowledge will leave a vacuum. In time, younger employees will be able to step in, but the time period immediately following the exodus of long term employees could present problems in continuity of operations. Planning for replacement of key positions is needed in order to make the transition to the next generation a seamless one.

Finances are still a concern. While we may be seeing some recovery in the economy, we believe it will be slow and it will take many years to catch up to the revenue level that existed when the trends initially started their downward descent.

### **Opportunities for Carson City Governments future**

There were fewer responses to the question about opportunities than any other part of the interview. Looking for opportunities has been the mode of operations for the past 10 years. Ideas that could be implemented without cost have been put into place. Many of the current suggestions regarding opportunities for Carson City Government revolve around economic development. Discussion about

economic development, the Master Plan (Envision 2006) and downtown development may offer ideas for future opportunities.

### **Wrap Up Questions**

The last two questions asked as part of the interview were:

- What is the biggest single issue facing this organization / community?
- If you were king, what direction would you take this City?

After discussing the broad aspects of the community and the organization, participants were asked to hone in on their real issues. Then think about what they would do if they controlled everything. This provides a picture of what things are of most importance to the leaders of the organization.

Discussions surrounding strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats often referred to civil engagement, having a future vision, planning for public facilities, and the importance of a well thought out economic development plan that will provide a sustainable economy that will adequately support public services. That seemed to be the core issue. When examining the "if I were King" answers, creating a common vision that all residents could support was a very popular wish. Being proactive and thinking long term is something that City staff does regularly. Being prepared for the future and insuring that residents have the services they need is second nature. But engaging the public in those discussions can be difficult. Yet if the public is not engaged and does not support the vision, the change that's needed for implementation may not happen. Public discourse may go down a negative path and the sound reasons that were identified during the planning process are not brought into the discussion. This will push the organization into reacting to issues rather than planning for them.

I provide these summaries of issues only to start the discussion. Because something is not included in this memo or in the attached responses does not mean it can't be discussed at the workshop.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Linda Ritter  
Ritter Consulting Associates, Inc.

| What does Carson City have to offer that other communities can't?                         |                                                                                                          |                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| A Small City                                                                              | Outdoor Recreation Everywhere                                                                            | Great Governance                                              |
| Small land mass - compact                                                                 | Proximity to outdoor activities - open space and trails.                                                 | Government officials are accessible.                          |
| A great size - provides a sense of community.                                             | Has something for everyone.<br>- Activities<br>- Resources                                               | Good relations between governments (County / School District) |
| Small in size, but close to services.                                                     | Developed recreational opportunities, ie, trails, parks, etc..                                           | Consolidated government structure - efficient and streamlined |
| Small town with all the amenities.                                                        | Parks and outdoor recreation opportunities.                                                              | A consolidated form of Government.                            |
| Small town environment, but with large City services nearby.                              | Proximity to Lake Tahoe and other outdoor recreation areas.                                              | Consolidated government                                       |
| Geographically compact community surrounded by public open space.                         | Great outdoor recreation opportunities due to proximity to Lake Tahoe and other great recreation venues. | A governing system where your voice can be heard.             |
| Small town, feel - a community. This has benefits to schools - we see teachers regularly. | Proximity to Lake Tahoe.                                                                                 | Social infrastructure that supports all demographics.         |
| Sense of community.                                                                       | Parks and recreation programs are excellent.                                                             | Accessibility to elected officials.                           |
| Small enough to get to know people - a community.                                         | Proximity to outdoor recreation.                                                                         | Unique governance structure.                                  |
| Small and compact, but with plenty to offer.                                              | Great open space.                                                                                        |                                                               |
| Have everything a larger city has, ie arts and culture, but in a small town.              | Proximity to Lake Tahoe and Reno.                                                                        |                                                               |
| Still a small town - you get to know people here.                                         | Our location                                                                                             |                                                               |
| Qualities of a City - but small.                                                          | Our proximity to everything - recreational, history, etc..                                               |                                                               |
| A small town with a sense of community - people know one another.                         | Great recreation programs for youth along with great parks.                                              |                                                               |
| A real sense of community - a sense of belonging.                                         | Proximity to Lake Tahoe for recreation and Reno for bigger city services.                                |                                                               |
| Proximity to Lake Tahoe for recreation and Reno for bigger city services.                 |                                                                                                          |                                                               |
| Not a suburban community, but a real City.                                                |                                                                                                          |                                                               |
| A friendly community.                                                                     |                                                                                                          |                                                               |

| What does Carson City have to offer that other communities can't?                            |                                                                                      |                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Diverse Demographics                                                                         | A Diverse Economy                                                                    | Other                                                                |
| Affluent retirees that move here - have an sufficient income stream and do not use services. | A successful Auto Row on South Carson Street                                         | Strong understanding, appreciation and support of public lands.      |
| Citizens with talent and vision and a passion for moving the community forward.              | State Government and the stability it can bring to our economy.                      | An attractive downtown - its history, the capital grounds.           |
| The breadth and depth of retirees in the community willing to volunteer.                     | An economy that is not dependent upon resources industries like mining and ranching. | A great place to have a business, live and raise kids.               |
| A good balance of demographics.                                                              | Great healthcare infrastructure.                                                     | Has a relaxed atmosphere where personal freedom is valued.           |
| Has a diverse population.                                                                    |                                                                                      | An good and effectively run general aviation Airport.                |
| <b>Great Education</b>                                                                       |                                                                                      | Great / modern library services - library staff is very progressive. |
| A complete education system.                                                                 |                                                                                      | A "real" downtown.                                                   |
| Good schools - I have children that attended Carson City schools that prove it.              |                                                                                      | Family oriented environment.                                         |
| Good schools.                                                                                |                                                                                      | Still have agriculture within our borders.                           |
| Have Western Nevada College.                                                                 |                                                                                      | The priority that has been placed on open space.                     |
| Have good schools, yet perception does not reflect that.                                     |                                                                                      | It's easy to set down roots here.                                    |
| Platform for great education.                                                                |                                                                                      | Arts and cultural opportunities.                                     |
|                                                                                              |                                                                                      | Great local events.                                                  |
|                                                                                              |                                                                                      | State Capital                                                        |
|                                                                                              |                                                                                      | Safe                                                                 |

## Where is this community's weakness. Where do we fall short?

| <b>Our Economy</b>                                                                                                                                            | <b>Identity and Vision for the Future</b>                                                               | <b>Social Service Programs</b>                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Clusters of industry that offer high paying jobs.                                                                                                             | Not looking for better ways. No willingness to look beyond our own borders.                             | Connecting community resources and activities with the people that need or want them.                  |
| Our gaming industry attract locals but not necessarily out of town visitors.                                                                                  | No real identity - what we are known for, or what we want to be known for.                              | No organized means to help people achieve their own goals - to start down the path to a solution.      |
| Lack good meeting and convention facilities.                                                                                                                  | An unwillingness to be bold and do what is necessary for the community to thrive - choosing mediocrity. | Haven't adequately addressed the homeless issue.                                                       |
| A functional commercial corridor that allows for a compact, walk-able design. Currently, government buildings break the flow of commercial development.       | No real sense of who we are - no theme - no vision                                                      | Acting as the service hub for the region - social, recreation, etc.                                    |
| A non-cohesive business mix downtown.                                                                                                                         | No vision for the future - we are still living in the industrial age.                                   | No United Way presence in the community, which eliminates one fund raising source for local charities. |
| Lack of developable area for new / modern developments and an expanded tax base.                                                                              | No future vision or foresight.                                                                          | Lack of parental involvement.                                                                          |
| Lack of boutique retail.                                                                                                                                      | Shortsightedness - no vision.                                                                           | Lack of alcohol and drug treatment and prevention program space.                                       |
| Lack of synergy in retail in Downtown.                                                                                                                        | Avoids risk - this keeps positive change from happening.                                                | Lack of enough drug / alcohol treatment programs                                                       |
| Vacancies in commercial buildings.                                                                                                                            | General reluctance to change.                                                                           |                                                                                                        |
| <b>Public Process</b>                                                                                                                                         | <b>Education</b>                                                                                        | <b>Demographics</b>                                                                                    |
| Residents love a conspiracy - have an anti-government attitude.                                                                                               | Ability to keep kids here as a result of the education system.                                          | Outmigration of the workforce to other communities. They work here but don't live here.                |
| Citizens happy with the direction the Board is taking do not come to meetings. Only those opposed show up - this appears sometimes to drive policy decisions. | Geographic division in schools and school quality - east vs west sides.                                 | Lack of young families wishing to live here.                                                           |
| Small groups of outspoken citizens that may get more attention than the whole.                                                                                | Our K-12 education system and the lack of acknowledgement that the system is failing.                   | Lack of professionals wanting to live here - they prefer South Reno                                    |
| Lack of engagement by residents.                                                                                                                              | Lack of support of the public education system.                                                         |                                                                                                        |



| What is this community's weakness. Where do we fall short?                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                           |
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| Land and Property                                                                                                                                        | Activities for Children                                                                                                          | Other                                                                                                     |
| Not much visible evidence of pride in appearance.                                                                                                        | Gap in activities for "tweens".<br>Example: Soccer                                                                               | Lack of coordination of arts and culture events in the community.                                         |
| Developments and projects are not always done as well as they could be. Economics rather than aesthetics and function takes a first seat in development. | Not enough emphasis on the youth, from a lack of pre-school programs, activities for teens and promotion of secondary education. | No long term funding of infrastructure.                                                                   |
| Perceived inability to finish projects, or finish them well.                                                                                             | Lack of things for kids to do if they aren't interested in sports.                                                               | Public infrastructure is wearing out - schools, streets, public buildings, etc.                           |
| Land owners not willing to improve their property.                                                                                                       | Lack of coordination of arts and culture events in the community.                                                                | Too much affordable housing - to concentrated in Carson City as compared to other counties in the region. |
| Lack of ability and/or willingness to finish projects.                                                                                                   | Not enough amenities for the youth.                                                                                              | Housing mix, especially on the east side of the City.                                                     |
| Aging housing stock.                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                  | State lands and the lack of consideration given to Carson City by the State.                              |
|                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                  | The attributes of our community are not adequately communicated.                                          |

## Is there anything that threatens the success of Carson City as a community?

| The Local Economy                                                                                                                                                                            | Civic Engagement                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Strength of Families                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Not enough business to support a sustainable revenue base for services.                                                                                                                      | Lack of community involvement by residents.                                                                                                                                                                              | Lack of engaged parents. This leads to failure of students which harms our ability to attract new business. |
| The state of the economy and its effects on government revenues. Furloughs of State workers does impact the Carson City economy.                                                             | Vocal, possibly minority, groups of citizens that criticize actions taken to address issues but won't help to identify solutions.                                                                                        | Lack of parental involvement.                                                                               |
| Too much emphasis on low taxes, ie, being the cheapest place to do business, rather than on the great quality of life we have. This approach may not attract the higher paying jobs we need. | Disparity in age and income levels - elderly retired / young families; the very rich / very poor. The resulting disparity of view can make it difficult to bring about consensus in overall direction for the community. | Lack of strength of the family unit and the issues that creates, which increases service costs.             |
| Gaming and its effect on our local population - transfers wealth from our citizens to outside corporations.                                                                                  | An aging population that often does not support future public infrastructure that may support future generations.                                                                                                        | Lack of focus on children which may represent the future.                                                   |
| Tax base not robust enough to support services.                                                                                                                                              | "Quiet" citizens that may support initiatives and projects but don't visibly show that support.                                                                                                                          | Demographics                                                                                                |
| No growth to fuel infrastructure development.                                                                                                                                                | Residents that do not trust or have any faith in their local government.                                                                                                                                                 | Attracting retirees rather than young families.                                                             |
| Vacant buildings.                                                                                                                                                                            | Citizens that want to criticize direction taken by the City but are not willing to offer solutions.                                                                                                                      | Seniors without resources and the magnitude of services that may require as they age.                       |
| Crime                                                                                                                                                                                        | Low citizen engagement - the majority view doesn't show up.                                                                                                                                                              | Too much focus on retirees.                                                                                 |
| Increase in serious crime brought about by drugs and alcohol.                                                                                                                                | Lack of a commonly held holistic vision.                                                                                                                                                                                 | Demographic shift in the population - fewer professionals and younger families living here.                 |
| Crime brought about by drugs, hopelessness, etc.                                                                                                                                             | A vocal minority and the influence they appear to have.                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                             |
| The drug "culture", especially where multiple generations are abusing substances.                                                                                                            | General apathy of residents.                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                             |
| Mental health issues. We are using the jail as a mental health hold facility.                                                                                                                | Citizens that don't like change and use fear of risk to keep projects from happening. Proposed change is colored to look like a high risk venture.                                                                       |                                                                                                             |
| Drug and alcohol abuse.                                                                                                                                                                      | Not accepting, and embracing, change in the world.                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                             |
| Drug use.                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                             |

## Is there anything that threatens the success of Carson City as a community?

| Infrastructure                                                            | Other                                                                                                                                          |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Infrastructure decline and not looking at long term possibilities.        | Bridging cultural differences - getting rid of the "us" versus "them" attitude in the community.                                               |  |
| No support of public infrastructure, ie, schools, public facilities, etc. | Legislature not dealing with tax reform - not matching revenue sources with the economy, ie, too much dependence on retail.                    |  |
| Lack of social, educational and technical infrastructure.                 | Natural Disaster - Earthquake. We can prepare for it, but an event like this will provide vast challenges for this community.                  |  |
| Aging infrastructure                                                      | Not enough higher end, attractive housing stock.                                                                                               |  |
| Long term viability of infrastructure - above ground and underground.     | Must insure that we keep access to our public lands. As development takes place, we must insure that there is a means of access to open space. |  |
| Unfinished freeway.                                                       |                                                                                                                                                |  |

| What kind of opportunities do you see that this community has not taken advantage of?                     |                                                                                                       |                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Our Vast Recreational Opportunities                                                                       | Western Nevada College                                                                                | Regional Cooperation                                                         |
| Making trails known to prospective users.                                                                 | Use of Western Nevada College as a way to attract young people from out of the area to our community. | Examine regionalization of every service to determine possible efficiencies. |
| Take advantage of our proximity to Reno and Lake Tahoe.                                                   | Western Nevada College - but need to push for more 4 year degree programs.                            | Further regionalization of services, ie, water and sewer.                    |
| Marketing out regional outdoor recreational assets.                                                       | Create a community reputation of educational excellence.                                              | Looking into future opportunities to selling effluent.                       |
| "Selling" Carson City as an outdoor recreation destination                                                | Utilizing Western Nevada College better.                                                              | Regionalizing infrastructure - Wastewater and further on water.              |
| Creating a coordinated effort to publicize Carson City as a destination.                                  | Public Infrastructure                                                                                 |                                                                              |
| Making Carson City a mecca for sports tournaments. This community is a great place for visiting families. | Expansion of the Brewery Arts Center as a hub for culture and the arts.                               |                                                                              |
| Marketing Carson City and our assets not only regionally but nationally and internationally.              | Getting the Ormsby House open.                                                                        |                                                                              |
| Market outdoor recreation opportunities.                                                                  | Investment in public infrastructure - the Library project                                             |                                                                              |
| Creating more outdoor recreation opportunities for the youth ex: motocross track                          | Making downtown something special and unique. A catalyst for positive development is needed.          |                                                                              |
| Attract business related to outdoor activities.                                                           | The Library project.                                                                                  |                                                                              |
|                                                                                                           | Pursue a multi-use public meeting place / facility.                                                   |                                                                              |
|                                                                                                           | The Airport for private aviation ventures.                                                            |                                                                              |
|                                                                                                           | Missed cooperative development opportunities such as the BLM Fire Fighting facility.                  |                                                                              |
|                                                                                                           |                                                                                                       |                                                                              |

| What kind of opportunities do you see that this community has not taken advantage of?                                                  |                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Other                                                                                                                                  | Other                                                                                                                                 | Other                                                                                   |
| Marketing the I580 freeway as a way to live in a small town but be near all of the amenities of a city.                                | Having the Nevada State Fair in Carson City.                                                                                          | Creating a synergistic business mix in Downtown Carson City.                            |
| Creating a "portal" website where all things "Carson City" could be listed. Makes finding information about our community much easier. | Creating a "portal" website where all things "Carson City" could be listed. Makes finding information about our community much easier | Allowing building in the mountains - with very strict restrictions on view shed impact. |
| Being part of the bid for the Winter Olympics. Such an event would bring infrastructure as well as notoriety to Carson City.           | Attract business related to the health care industry.                                                                                 | Engaging citizens and encouraging them to pursue their passions.                        |
| Little used programs such as 4-H.                                                                                                      | Advancing our thriving arts and culture community.                                                                                    |                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                         |

## What is Carson City government particularly good at?

| Cooperation among all departments                                                       | Proactive financial management                                                                                      | Great employees                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cooperation between departments. There are no silo's.                                   | Great financial management through the economic downturn.                                                           | Employees are hard working and dedicated.                                              |
| Cooperation between within the organization - between departments.                      | Financial planning takes a long view and generally conservative approach.                                           | City employees have a genuine interest in the welfare of the community.                |
| Internal cooperation between departments.                                               | Sound financial planning - our ability to get through the downturn "quietly".                                       | Trust between employees and management                                                 |
| Management promotes a culture of cooperation.                                           | Managed through the economic downturn - maintained critical services.                                               | Staff works efficiently and gets the best results out of the resources they are given. |
| All Departments work well together.                                                     | Lean and effective government.                                                                                      | Good, competent managers                                                               |
| Ability to work together - Board and Staff - to create solutions.                       | Good financial management - we anticipated financial issues before they happened.                                   | There is very good leadership in every Department.                                     |
| Departments cooperate well with each other.                                             | Carson City services are a good value for the money appropriated.                                                   | City employees are hard working and dedicated.                                         |
| Coordination and cooperation between departments. Budget reductions have improved this. | Financial management through the economic downturn, ie, budget retraction without visible service level reductions. | Public services are provided efficiently and effectively.                              |
| Cooperation and communication among Departments.                                        | Keep the cost of services down even though the demand for them go up.                                               | Providing excellent services.                                                          |
| Communications among departments.                                                       |                                                                                                                     | Operates efficiently with little waste.                                                |
| A common direction by all departments.                                                  | Always looking for ways to improve operations and service delivery.                                                 | Good, strong team throughout the organization.                                         |
| Great communication between departments.                                                | No fear of change - welcome innovation.                                                                             | Trust among staff at all levels.                                                       |
|                                                                                         | A visionary Board.                                                                                                  | Good management team.                                                                  |
|                                                                                         | Management is proactive.                                                                                            | Good and enthusiastic workforce.                                                       |
|                                                                                         | Board of Supervisors has vision - not happy with the status quo.                                                    | Incredibly efficient in the provision of services.                                     |
|                                                                                         | Proactive - looking for solutions ahead of crisis.                                                                  | Strong management team - upper and mid-management.                                     |
|                                                                                         |                                                                                                                     | Dedicated employees.                                                                   |
|                                                                                         |                                                                                                                     | Deliver efficient, cost effective services.                                            |
|                                                                                         |                                                                                                                     | Hard working and dedicated employees.                                                  |
|                                                                                         |                                                                                                                     | Positive relationship between the Courts and City Departments.                         |

## What is Carson City government particularly good at?

| Other                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Responsive and transparent                                                                    | Think regionally                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Consolidated - one local government serving all.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Responsive to issues and problems.                                                            | A willingness to reach out regionally.                                                                                        |
| Manageable geographic size for a County - no vast rural areas.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | A willingness to listen to the people.                                                        | Always looking for opportunities for shared services in the region or with other entities within Carson City.                 |
| Performance system tied to budget.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Actions taken are in the best interest of the community.                                      | Identifying the implementing opportunities for shared / regional services.                                                    |
| Using open space to advance recreation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Transparent operations.                                                                       | Foster and maintain partnerships that allow us to provide services and facilities to the community that we couldn't do alone. |
| Working towards being bicycle friendly.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Conducting public meetings in an open and accessible manner; encourage citizen participation. | Identifying and implementing regional approaches to service delivery.                                                         |
| Law enforcement does an excellent job.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | A culture of good public services.                                                            |                                                                                                                               |
| Great parks and open space                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                               |
| We have a desire to get the word out, although it is difficult to do.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                               |
| Efficient use of limited recreational facilities and how we maintain them.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                               |
| Specific examples of what we do well:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health Department and their immunization program.</li> <li>- Fire emergency services and the Emergency Management program.</li> <li>- Progressive Open Space program.</li> <li>- Public Works water programs - Minden water agreement.</li> </ul> |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                               |

| Do you see any organizational weaknesses?                                                               |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Staffing levels too low                                                                                 | Infrastructure and capital replacement planning                                                 | Public process in policy making                                                                                                                                                      |
| Insufficient staff for a growing workload.                                                              | Maintaining existing facilities.                                                                | The message of what may be a vocal minority often gets too much emphasis.                                                                                                            |
| Service level expectations don't meet realities of the budget.                                          | Lack of known solid plan for budget and spending.                                               | Board of Supervisors seems to "run and take cover" when confronted by a vocal minority. This encourages staff to do the same.<br>Lack of political will of the Board of Supervisors. |
| Employee moral as a result of budget cuts and citizen perception of city employees.                     | Traditionally conservative approach to taxes and finances has resulted in constricted revenues. |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Employee moral due to limits in City revenues and lack of support of good ideas by the Board.           | No funding mechanism to fund deferred maintenance on city infrastructure.                       | Political agenda's pushed by special interest groups.                                                                                                                                |
| City Manager is understaffed - need personnel to focus on citizen complaints / operations.              | Resources for infrastructure and infrastructure maintenance.                                    | Citizens allowed to use Board meetings to air their grievances against others - a forum for community fights.                                                                        |
| A steady and sustainable revenue stream to fund services.                                               | Ability to replace infrastructure.                                                              | External Communication                                                                                                                                                               |
| Moral brought about by staffing shortages.                                                              | Having an implemented infrastructure and capital replacement plan.                              | Ability to communicate the truth surrounding City issues and projects.                                                                                                               |
| Staffing cuts have added stress to the workforce. Many are overloaded.                                  | Lack of a funded capital equipment replacement program.                                         | Reaching out to the Hispanic community.                                                                                                                                              |
| Close to the bottom of service levels.                                                                  | Lack of an infrastructure replacement program.                                                  | Getting the message out effectively.                                                                                                                                                 |
| Sheriff is too low in staffing - need more to deal with current criminal activities such as burglaries. | Don't look far enough into the future, example: Capital Improvement Funding                     | Communication - keeping the message out there and insuring that it moves horizontally through the community - between entities, organizations and groups.                            |
| Staff levels are too low - employees are burning out. Haven't had raises                                | Aging IT infrastructure - this effect efficiency.                                               | Communication with the public.                                                                                                                                                       |
| May get too dependent upon grants for general operations.                                               |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Need more employee recognition.                                                                         |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Limits in City revenues which limits the ability to provide public services.                            |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Lack of custodial attention in facilities due to budget cut.                                            |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                      |



| Do you see any organizational weaknesses?                                                                                                         |                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Master Plan implementation                                                                                                                        | Training                                                                             | Other                                                                                                                                                     |
| Keeping implementation of the Master Plan out in front.                                                                                           | Lack of training and investment in our people.                                       | Equitable distribution of City Services to all areas of the City.                                                                                         |
| Too little reference given to the Master Plan - are we following implementation steps? Do they need to change? Is the Master Plan still relevant? | No defined pathway for employees to qualify for promotions in the future.            | Too many departments doing their "own thing" related to purchasing, IT, contract services. We could benefit from better coordination in those areas.      |
| Lack of accountability for following adopted plans.                                                                                               | Understanding what benefits training will bring to operations.                       | Lack of robust software programs to support operations.                                                                                                   |
| Internal Communication                                                                                                                            | Lack of succession planning.                                                         |                                                                                                                                                           |
| Lack of transparency in the decision making process.                                                                                              | New Board members, inexperience. Not understanding the realities of City operations. | Have not fostered sufficient cooperative relationships with the State - especially with regard to State Lands                                             |
| Internal communication in general                                                                                                                 | Lack of succession planning.                                                         | Lack of adequate, easy to understand information in agenda back up material.                                                                              |
| The decision making process is not a transparent.                                                                                                 | No succession planning. At risk of losing good managers because of burn out.         | Producing budgets where expenses fall within annual revenue - not using fund balances for operations.                                                     |
| Lack of transparency in decision making processes.                                                                                                |                                                                                      | The City Manager and Redevelopment Manager do not live within the City. Perception that they are not a part of the community they serve.                  |
| Tend to work in silo's when it comes to large projects - don't always use the expertise of other departments.                                     |                                                                                      | Need an enhanced document retrieval system available to the public.                                                                                       |
|                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                      | A few quirks in organizational responsibilities, ie parks runs facilities, sheriff runs dispatch - specific service departments provide central services. |
|                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                      | Undefined relationship between the Board and staff and between Board members.                                                                             |
|                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                      | Lack of adequate security infrastructure in the Public Safety Building.                                                                                   |

## What is the greatest single threat to this organization?

| Infrastructure                                                                | Succession Planning                                                                                 | Finances                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Failure in infrastructure - systems, equipment and facilities.                | Loss of institutional knowledge brought about by upcoming retirements.                              | Lack of revenue to fund essential services.                                                                   |
| No funding mechanism to fund deferred maintenance on city infrastructure.     | Good people unwilling to step into management positions, example: City Manager                      | The Legislature.                                                                                              |
| Infrastructure is wearing out and there is no financial plan for replacement. | Continuity in leadership that may be disrupted due to upcoming retirements.                         | NRS 288 and the cost of contractual obligations for long term employee benefits.                              |
| Years of deferred maintenance.                                                | Lack of adequate succession planning                                                                | The economy                                                                                                   |
| Cost of infrastructure replacement requirements in the future.                | Number of people in management positions that will be retiring - could happen at one time.          | Unfunded mandates pertaining to courts and health.                                                            |
| Infrastructure replacement.                                                   | Upcoming retirement of management staff - much institutional knowledge will leave the organization. | Going back to "business as usual" when revenues come back - automatically going back to 2008 staffing levels. |
| Not looking for long term solutions.                                          | Retirement of many long-term employees without a good succession plan.                              | Legislature / State Budget - Mandates                                                                         |
| Lack of investment into our human resources.                                  | Consistency in leadership in department operated by Elected Officials.                              | Federal budget and reductions in available grants                                                             |
| No time and structure to be innovative - too busy putting out fires.          | Sustainability of central operations beyond the terms of elected officials. One example - Dispatch  | Dependence upon grants to provide critical services.                                                          |
|                                                                               |                                                                                                     | Lack of a defined course for our financial future.                                                            |
|                                                                               |                                                                                                     | The cost of people over time.                                                                                 |
|                                                                               |                                                                                                     | Economy                                                                                                       |
|                                                                               |                                                                                                     |                                                                                                               |

## What is the greatest single threat to this organization?

| Other                                                                                                                                                                     | Public Process                                                                                                                 |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Weakness in communication between the Board and staff.                                                                                                                    | Open meeting law and its impacts on thorough deliberation and discussion of issues and solutions.                              |  |
| Employees don't live here, so we miss an opportunity for casual communications to happen between City employee and resident.                                              | Governing via petitions and ballot questions. Only vocal groups may be heard and placing issues on a ballot is very expensive. |  |
| Costs of law enforcement and courts systems - brought about by the social ills in our community.                                                                          | Attention given to vocal citizens, perhaps without regard to what the rest of the population desires                           |  |
| Staffing levels are critically low.                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                |  |
| IT Security - threats to systems and information.                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                |  |
| IT security.                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                |  |
| Building security.                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                |  |
| Not insuring that the organization is business friendly.                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                |  |
| Building and development services not a streamlined and friendly service                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                |  |
| Courts have made significant strides in improving efficiencies, and maximizing resources. Future cuts would be detrimental to the service they perform for the community. |                                                                                                                                |  |

## Do you see opportunities that we are letting slip by?

| <b>Economic Development</b>                                                                                             | <b>Communication</b>                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Organizational</b>                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Business Improvement Districts                                                                                          | Keeping the master plan out in front.                                                                                                                                    | Intense orientation for new Board members.                                                                                     |
| Creating the right business mix downtown in order to attract more businesses suitable to the area.                      | We need to boast about the services we provide.                                                                                                                          | Involve middle managers in the decisions making process. Could use those collective years of experience to our advantage.      |
| Comprehensive and inclusive discussion about economic development and how we will pursue it in the future.              | Focus on customer services - that drives support on many different levels.                                                                                               | By policy, have the Mayor ask one Board member to attend meetings with him - allows other Board members to become for engaged. |
| Adopt a downtown architectural code and a good business mix.                                                            | Using Town Hall meetings or other means to inform the public about the reductions the City has implemented over the last 10 years.                                       | Absorb the CCCVB into the City organization in order to save overhead costs.                                                   |
| Incentives to fill vacant buildings.                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                          | District Attorney should serve as legal counsel to the Airport Authority - could save \$\$.                                    |
| Need to look at ways to streamline the process for opening a new business.                                              | Introducing communications infrastructure such as fiber optics, as a utility.                                                                                            | <b>Facility Planning</b>                                                                                                       |
| Examine all permit requirements in order to determine if they are really necessary or if they can be made less onerous. | Long term planning for infrastructure replacement.                                                                                                                       | Need to have a space utilization study of the Courthouse done to insure that space is utilized efficiently.                    |
| Marketing Carson City as a launching point for outdoor recreation areas.                                                | Looking for grants for infrastructure and other improvements.                                                                                                            | Underutilizing the theater; making sure all facilities are being used for their highest and best use.                          |
| <b>Regionalization</b>                                                                                                  | <b>Other</b>                                                                                                                                                             | Review facility utilization in order to provide the best advantage for the community.                                          |
| Regionalization of more services.                                                                                       | Need to do more to monitor the Legislature.                                                                                                                              | Long term facility planning.                                                                                                   |
| Further explore regionalization of services.                                                                            | Look for grants that allow us to take advantage of our property and facilities. Example - expanding Centennial Park for tournaments by reducing the Golf Course.         |                                                                                                                                |
|                                                                                                                         | Coordination of community events.                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                |
|                                                                                                                         | Looking at the State for resources. One example - a new grants management office in the Department of Administration that provides training in administration of grants. |                                                                                                                                |

| <b>What is the biggest single issue facing this organization / community?</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Financial</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Having a stable and sustainable revenue base to fund public services.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Budgets and the ability to provide services in the long run due to impacts from mandates from outside the organization.                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Strengthening the revenue stream; looking at ways to use our assets to create revenue, ie, Landfill.                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Infrastructure</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Creating and implementing an infrastructure replacement plan.                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Infrastructure replacement.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Infrastructure replacement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Infrastructure maintenance and replacement - all building, facilities and systems.                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Replacement / upgrade of the Wastewater Treatment Plant.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Capital replacement.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| The community's physical appearance, business mix and adequacy of public infrastructure.                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>The Economy</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Attracting the right type of business - sustainable businesses that offer high paying jobs that ultimately enhance the tax base.                                                                                                                                                        |
| Creating a plan for the future that takes advantage of a growing economy and the completion of the freeway - then sticking with it, ie, having the courage to move forward.                                                                                                             |
| Keeping the focus on our downtown - A healthy downtown has multiple benefits - improvement that starts in the center moves in all directions, an attractive and functional downtown attracts visitors and, more importantly, qualified workers that can feed new and emerging business. |
| Property values and the economy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Developing a strategy to make Carson City a place that people want to both live and work in.                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Growing our economy - which makes everything possible.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Social Issues</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| The aging of our community and the ability to provide the support system necessary for people that have run out of money and need continual care.                                                                                                                                       |
| Lack of intervention programs for people in short term crisis, ie, temporary job loss. Just a little help could keep these people out of our support systems and jails.                                                                                                                 |
| Drug and alcohol abuse and the crime it produces.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Organizational</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Succession planning                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Adequacy of staffing levels.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Lack of future focus.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Taking care of our employees. Adequately compensate them, don't burn them out and plan for succession.                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Allowing staffing to keep up with an increasing work load.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Lack of accountability for following adopted plans.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Civil Engagement and Policy Making</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| When making decisions, focusing on the overall good of the community at all times rather than any special interests.                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Negativity in public discourse; the dominance of one vocal group and their ability to change policy. Need to adopt a policy that directs attention to the entire population, not just those that are most vocal.                                                                        |
| Community vision and direction - what the community wants to be in the future. What should our reputation be - what do we want people to think of when they think of Carson City.                                                                                                       |

## If you were king, what direction would you take this City?

### Create and implement a vision.

Create a vision for the future along with specific steps to achieve that vision. The vision should identify the one thing that brings about community pride. The specific steps should be identified, publicized and followed.

Develop a common vision for Carson City, one that everyone can support, whether living on the east side or west side, whether young or old. Bring about unity.

Have all the landowners work together to create and implement a common plan / vision to make Carson City a huge economic success.

Attract young people and families to make Carson City their home.

Create a healthy and vibrant community where all generations feel secure.

Find out first what the silent majority wants, then make changes that address those needs.

Hold a visioning session involving everyone and defining what Carson City is, what it wants to be, how we will get there, who's going to pay for it, who it going to manage it once completed. Would push change, not wait for it to happen naturally.

### Infrastructure planning and replacement

Develop a financial plan that insures capital and infrastructure replacement. Levy taxes as needed to insure we have the funds necessary to implement the plan.

Identify "out of the box" funding mechanisms for government. Break the old financing molds; be willing to take risks as long as those risks can be mitigated.

An infrastructure replacement plan that includes implemented funding and include ALL public infrastructure.

Create and implement a long term infrastructure replacement plan.

Create a facility plan and implement it.

### New Facilities

Build a combination Recreation Center and Library in the center of town.

Build a facility sufficient to host robust arts and culture events, programs and performances.

Add another courtroom for small claims and TPO hearings. The Jury Room is being used and it is not safe.

### Operations

Look for more ways to consolidate services.

Change to a genuine Council/Manager form of government, or something closer than we have now. There's currently a high degree of cooperation among the elected officials and with the City Manager & his staff. But the current elected officials and senior management won't always be there.

Grant Home Rule to Carson City so we can govern as we wish.

### Communications

Create a robust communication system that provides information internally and externally regarding how the City works, what it has achieved, and how much is has done to weather the recession.

### Programs and Services

Expand crime prevention and public safety infrastructure.

More law enforcement

Expand parks

Expand and promote sports tournaments / tourism.

## **If you were king, what direction would you take this City?**

### **Economic Development**

Make it less onerous for a person to start a business - support the entrepreneurial spirit.

Review permit and licensing requirements to include that they are not onerous.

Create more jobs

Get rid of tax systems that have a high cost of administration for the business - ex: Personal Property Tax

Minimize gaming as part of our economy.

Insure that there is fairness with regard to internet sales and sales tax collections. Protect brick and mortar retail by making sure sales taxes are paid on internet sales.

Destination retail

Make Downtown Carson City historically correct, full of retail and full of activity.

Attractive corridors throughout the City.

Make improving your property in Carson City easy - take a critical look at what permits are required and for what purpose, take away permit fees so that improvements are encouraged, create a seamless, easy and friendly process for citizens to improve their property or open a business.

Give Carson City a WOW factor - a downtown plaza that serves as an anchor with pedestrian walkways, a great business mix ie, fully implement the Master Plan.

Add more manufacturing and upgrade the airport.

### **Social Programs**

Promote affordable housing that allows for future ownership. But be mindful of service demands that these types of development can create.

Create a culture where education is valued - where all residents seek out the best.

Get rid of all gangs.

Adequate drug and alcohol treatment facilities.

### **Community Generosity**

Create a "pay it forward" program that motivates everyone in the community to perform random acts of kindness regularly.