

State of Nevada

Nevada Vision Stakeholder Group

Quality-of-Life Indicators, Group 2

Discussion Notes

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Prepared for:

State of Nevada

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Child Welfare

Nevada is about average in the number of **child abuse and neglect** cases per 1,000 children reported each year. But the state is significantly better in the number of **children determined to be victims**. Between 1996 and 2006, the number of cases reported rose substantially but at a slower pace than the population of children. As a result, the number of cases per 1,000 children showed a marked improvement.

In 2008, the **juvenile arrest rate** exceeded the national average in all categories: violent crime, property crime, drug abuse and weapons.

Energy and Water

Nevada ranks fairly well in the level of **emissions from power generation**. Part of the reason is the size of the energy market utilities face is relatively small and efficient, and partly because the generation process is geared toward hydroelectric and natural gas and not to coal. This accounts for the low rate of sulfur dioxide emissions. Nevada is in the lower one-third of states in the amount of **energy used per capita**. It also ranks relatively low in **energy consumption per unit of GDP**. (In this case, low rankings are good.)

One factor that induces conservation is that overall energy is quite **expensive** in the state, with the 11th highest cost per BTU. But with the efficient use, **per capita expenditures on energy** are about average.

Nevada is about average in the amount of **renewable energy** produced in the state. But that means that on a per capita basis, Nevada fares quite well. The state is well-positioned for increasing alternative energy, particularly in the areas of wind, solar and geothermal.

There are **water quality** problems in all areas of the state. The largest single problem is with water temperature, but there are also metals and other minerals in our water. Zinc, iron and phosphorous are the most common. Ag runoff seems to be relatively minor, especially from hay production, especially as alfalfa is a nitrogen fixing plant and application of nitrogen fertilizer is unnecessary to that crop, which is the largest in the state. There are some instances of pollution from animal production or waste water. Cases of E. coli and fecal coliform exist, but are not widespread.

Nevada is one of the most **water-intensive** states.

Crime

Crime rates are comparatively high in the state. Nevada exceeds the average per 100,000 persons in all categories of violent crime and in overall property crime rates. The category that the state exceeds the national average by the most is motor vehicle theft.

Transportation

One indication of the health of infrastructure is the shape of the state's **bridges**. The state's bridges are in much better shape than most states' with relatively few structural deficiencies and lower than average obsolescence.

Data indicate that the road system of Las Vegas is overtaxed. It is among the top cities in terms of **daily vehicle miles travelled per lane mile**. This causes substantial delays and contributes to fuel wasted.

A slightly higher than average proportion of Nevada **commuters** drive to work alone, but the state also boasts a higher rate of people that carpool. However the percentage of commuters that use public transportation, walk or use other means is lower than the national rate.

Public transit is used quite extensively in Las Vegas, even though it is largely limited to bus lines as the area has no passenger rail lines. The proportion of ridership on bus lines is well above the proportion at the national level. In terms of transit trips per capita Las Vegas is the 10th highest of major metro areas. This does not mesh with the low rate of public transit used by commuters. There are two reasons. First, public transit use measures all trips and not just those to work. But likely more important for Las Vegas is the bus system can be a convenient method for tourists to get around town, boosting the number of riders substantially. This suggests that public transportation is important for Nevada's cities.