

FALLON, CHURCHILL COUNTY
A Community with
Heritage, Vitality and Opportunity



Churchill Economic Development Authority

EXHIBIT B2 - LANDS
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FALLON, CHURCHILL COUNTY

A Community with Heritage, Vitality and Opportunity

"As an outsider looking in I see a sense of community. It is something Fallon, Churchill County has always had...a strong sense of pride in itself."
Leroy Goodman, Commissioner, Nevada Commission on Economic Development.

The Lahontan Valley is a great place to live. Residents and visitors alike are impressed with the quality of life enjoyed in the Lahontan Valley. It is called the "Oasis of Nevada" because it is a green oasis in the desert. Too small and isolated to be noticed by national surveys and ratings of "Best Places to Live", the locals are heard daily commenting on why they live here—ample proof that many residents consider our Valley "The Best". What makes it the best? What do we need to do to keep it the best? What needs to be done to make it even better?

Fallon, Churchill County is a community with heritage, vitality and opportunity. The Churchill Economic Development Authority (CEDA) with support from the Churchill County Planning Department has facilitated an effort to develop a "Vision for the Future". A series of public meetings entitled "Visioning for the Future of Fallon and Churchill County" have been held. Community leaders were invited to provide reports on quality of life factors, including data on where their organizations were at that point in time and their plans for the future. Participants were able to talk directly with our community leaders and give advice and to state concerns they wanted addressed in the final report. Community leaders presented information and written documents. Experts from the University of Nevada and various state agencies provided reports and information to the groups to use in developing reliable data. CEDA is pleased to present this first edition of what we hope will become a biennial report on the quality of life in the Lahontan Valley.



FIRST INHABITANTS

The Lahontan Valley has supported human habitation for a minimum of 11,000 years. When the first trappers and traders crossed the valley in the early 1900's they found several bands of Paiute people deriving sustenance, like their ancestors, from the natural resources of the Carson River's lowlands and surrounding mountain ranges.

Today, over 1,000 American Indians live in the Valley and the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe has become a dynamic spokesman for the Indian Nation and provides jobs and economic development in the community through its Fox Peak Development Corporation.

The Tribe carries on the agricultural heritage of the Valley through numerous agricultural enterprises on its Stillwater Reservation.

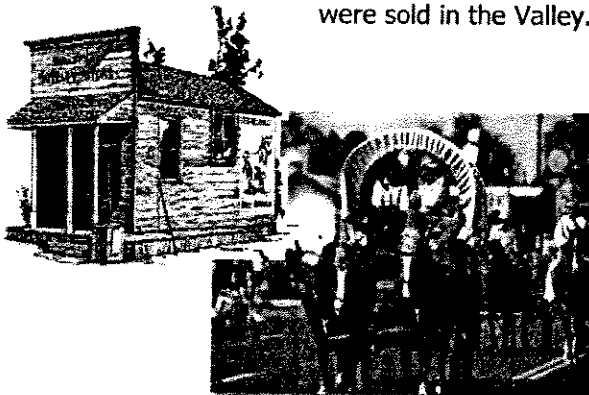
American Indians are found at work in government, private industry and the area's military-related industries. They bring a heritage of generations of living in the sometimes harsh conditions of our desert Valley and interacting successfully with the environment.



HERITAGE

EARLY SETTLERS

The presence of a dependable water source differentiates the Lahontan Valley from hundreds of similar basins in Nevada. Historically, the descent of the Carson River from its Sierra headwaters until it reached the vicinity of Ragtown where it divided into a series of sloughs, branches and marshes, created a welcome reprise from the surrounding desert for early pioneers crossing the Nevada desert. This key location and water created series of entrepreneurial activities supporting miners and travelers. Fresh goods, food, hay, livestock and other commodities were sold in the Valley.



The full potential for agriculture was realized with the growth of Virginia City. The Valley was settled beginning in the middle 1800's. Because of the limited and seasonal supply of water provided by the Carson River the number of ranches were limited.

In 1902 this was changed when the first reclamation project in the nation was designated in the Valley. This resulted in a settling pattern that was unique from any other settlement in Nevada. Rather than large ranches and commercial ventures, the Valley was flooded with families looking for cheap land and a better life. They settled on homestead lands provided at low cost by the Federal government. This resulted in the break up of land parcels throughout most of the Valley into 40 and 160 acre homesteads managed by a single family. Even today, both the demographics and the land use systems reflect this early settlement history.

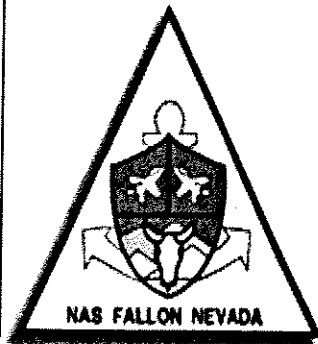
Agriculture has provided an economic base to our community for nearly 100 years. Its heritage also includes wide open green fields that are aesthetically pleasing and a system of canals and waterways creating abundant wildlife habitat. Irrigation replenishes the aquifers which are our source of residential and commercial water and provides a greenbelt that protects Valley residents from the harsh desert environment which surrounds our "desert oasis". The homestead heritage provides the valley with families who have traditions of hard work, family vision and focus—a belief system that supports individual achievement and overcoming obstacles.



HERITAGE

MILITARY HERITAGE

Fallon, Churchill County have always done its part in defending this great nation. Behind the City Hall is a small park dedicated to those people from this community who have fought and died for their country. The community is blessed with many military veterans from all branches of the service who continue to give their time, energy and expertise to the citizens of this Valley.



The Valley's special relationship with the U.S. military began in 1942 when the Civil Aviation Administration and Army Air Corps began construction of four airfields in the Nevada desert. They were intended to repel an expected Japanese attack on the west coast. Fallon joined Minden, Winnemucca and Lovelock as sites for this build-up. The U.S. Navy took over the Fallon site and Naval Auxiliary Air Station-Fallon was commissioned on June 10, 1944 to provide training, servicing and support to air groups deploying for combat training.

With the exception of five years inactive status between the end of World War II and the beginning of the Korean Conflict, the U. S. Navy has continued to grow and flourish, becoming a full Naval Air Station on January 01, 1972.

The military heritage of the Valley runs deeper than active duty personnel assigned to Fallon Naval Air Station. From the first young men assigned to the base in the early 40's to newly arriving sailors, thousands of citizens from all over the United States set foot in the dusty Nevada desert and ask "Why Fallon?" By the time the tour of duty has ended many of them have a different question, "How can I stay here?" This has resulted in a rich and diverse expansion of the population with retired sailors, pilots, naval commanders; people from all walks of life that have lived all over the world. They have a strong work ethic, are intensely patriotic, well educated and trained. They are loyal to their adopted community and participate in community activities and events. They sit on volunteer boards, are active in community organizations and vitalize community activities.

EDUCATION

The Lahontan Valley has a litany of education opportunities, including the Churchill County School District (CCSD), Western Nevada Community College (WNCC) and various other providers including a charter high school, several private schools and branches of major colleges located at WNCC and NAS Fallon.

VITALITY

HEALTH CARE

The Banner Churchill Community Hospital is a regional community health center that provides services to the Lahontan Valley and regional area. It is a critical community component for current and future residents of the Valley. The hospital provides the base for physicians and others in the medical community. It keeps health



service dollars in the local economy and is vital to growth as businesses will not locate in a community without a high-quality health care system. The hospital also provides a local base of employment in occupations with relatively high salary and training and education requirements. The community's well being, now and in the future is assured by provision of access to affordable high quality health services given by professionals who are well trained in the latest health care procedures.

LAND USE

Our community strives to maintain a well-balanced land use pattern that promotes wise use of resources, protects the environment and promotes sustainability. Land use planners are guided by comprehensive plans that encompass a balance between residential, agricultural, commercial uses, and public lands. Land use will be compatible with available and planned infrastructure, transportation patterns, water use and environmental concerns. The community will encourage growth and land use patterns that can be provided with cost effective public services and will not over burden our natural resources. The Navy is



consulted in this effort to provide needed buffers for safe operation of aircraft. Zoning will promote protection of the greenbelt by using cluster developments or other methods to keep green open space. Agriculture creates the "green oasis" and planners will promote and protect agriculture and water as that is what has brought people here and makes it a desirable place to live.

VITALITY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A vibrant economy is essential to the well being of any community. A diverse and balanced economy must weather the changing times, provide jobs to ensure families can be self-sufficient and ensure economic sustainability. Historically, the economic vitality of the Lahontan Valley has been tied to agricultural production, mining, the military presence and location adjacent to growing communities on the Eastern Sierra.

Travel and Tourism is an important component of the local economy and has the potential to increase significantly. Our marketing efforts to the nearby urban areas of Reno, Sparks and Carson City offer a menu of special events and attractions.

Our community has an abundant inventory of natural resources. The rehabilitation of the downtown area and the adaptation of the Oats Park School to a regional arts center and theater are drawing more visitors to our area. Tourists are attracted to communities that are visitor friendly, easily accessible, well advertised and signposted with an array of activities to choose from.

The importance of the United States Government to the economic vitality of the Valley cannot be overestimated. The US Navy is the primary source of jobs in the community and has tremendous economic impact on every sector of the economy. US Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) lands within the county add to the open space land base and recreational opportunities. Our businesses, retail and services, are a vital component to our community, contributing at least a third of the taxes to our governments. Fallon Naval Air Station, BLM, BOR, and USFWS (with payments in lieu of taxes), and the agricultural industries contribute the other two-thirds to our tax base.

Our community is bisected by two principal highways; Interstate 80 is accessible 25 miles away. The Union Pacific Railroad provides freight service to the center of Fallon. Within the community is an efficient network of streets and roads.

The city has completed construction of a new state of the art water treatment plant. The plant is fully operational and the water delivered to city residents now meets all primary standard of the Safe Drinking Water Act. The city has recently constructed a waste water treatment plant with the capacity to serve the city residents and consumers now and for approximately 20 years in the future according to the projected rate of expansion. The city also has a fully permitted municipal landfill which can accommodate the city's needs for a period of approximately 25 years.



COMMUNICATIONS

Churchill County enjoys a state of the art communications system managed by County owned CC Communications. The company, founded in 1889, has evolved into a full service communications company providing county residents with telephone, long distance, cellular, internet and television services, using the most up to date technologies available. The company returns profits to the County general fund which helps keep individual taxes very reasonable. CC Communications and its employees also donate time and resources to many civic endeavors within Fallon and Churchill County.

VITALITY

RECREATION

The agricultural heritage of the Valley has created a healthy environment with an exceptional quality of life. The canals, ditches and irrigated fields maintain a great environment for wildlife and recreation. They also recharge the aquifers from which we draw our water supply. The economic benefits derived from the Newlands project include agricultural production, hunting, fishing, birding and enhanced land values due to available water. Within the County are abundant public lands that provide for a variety of recreational opportunities. With increased pressure from upstream and downstream governments to remove water from previously irrigated lands comes new challenges to our community to prevent dust and weed problems. The community will act vigorously to protect the community's natural resources and maintain a healthy greenbelt.



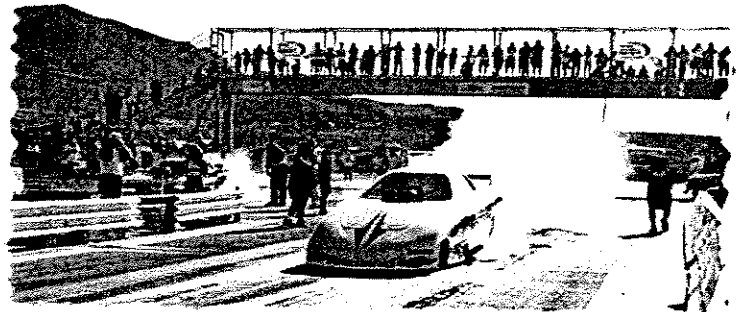
The County Regional Park, Newlands University Research Park and neighborhood parks in Fallon provide fields for organized sports, open field areas, gardens and landscaped areas, family and group picnic areas, playgrounds, facilities for tennis, basketball, volleyball and horseshoes, an indoor and outdoor pool as well as specialty facilities; a nationally known fairgrounds complex, accessible fishing pond and skate park. The City presently has Oats Park, Laura Mills Park, North Maine Park and two parks in process of construction – Venturacci Park and the Millennium Park located in downtown Fallon. The Valley currently has approximately two acres of developed park per 1000 residents. The shift from an agricultural to a more urbanized community will increase the need for more developed park areas. Increasing land values and less available suitable land will require plans to acquire land for parks and open space.

Fallon, Churchill County's climate and level terrain make it conducive to bicycle and pedestrian traffic. Churchill County has adopted a comprehensive trails master plan which will serve most of the County with an excellent trail system. Pedestrian and bicycle links to schools, parks and shopping areas are planned. This will support a healthy community and will have a positive impact on air quality as Fallon grows. Presently there is one half mile of trail and or route per thousand population. The planned trail system includes several equestrian trail heads that give horseback riding access to public lands and directional kiosks.

VITALITY



Churchill County has a wealth of outdoor recreation opportunities within a short drive of the community center. Hunting, fishing, boating, bird watching, archaeological sites, ghost towns and rock hounding are all easily accessible. The Lahontan Valley Wetlands, located entirely in Churchill County, is designated as a wetland of international importance. The major components of this wetland complex are the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge and Carson Lake. Smaller water units include the Canvasback Gun Club, privately owned wetlands managed primarily for wildlife recreation, Soda Lakes, Indian Lakes, and the Newlands Project, regulating reservoirs, also provide suitable habitat to waterfowl and shorebirds. The County is also home to mule deer, Pronghorn, Bighorn Sheep, Sage Grouse, Chuckar, wild turkeys, rabbits, beaver, muskrat, badger, coyotes, owls, hawks, waterfowl, and many species of birds, reptiles, bats, insects and fish. The Spring Wings and Wings Over the Valley Festivals celebrate our rich wildlife heritage. The many rodeos and horsemanship competitions, Cantaloupe Festival, Country Fair, 4-H and FFA boast a strong ranching and farming history.



Those more interested in motorized sports can find something to their liking at Top Gun Raceway, a state of the art drag strip; or Rattlesnake Speedway, a well known oval dirt track for stock car racing enthusiasts. Popular Sand Mountain provides dune buggy pleasure and Valley Off Road Racing Association holds annual cross country racing through Churchill County's open spaces.



Nearby Lahontan Reservoir holds the life giving water of the Valley. It is one of the most used facilities in the Nevada State Park System, providing water sport opportunities for Fallon and surrounding communities.

VITALITY



For artists there are ample photo opportunities and beautiful landscapes, sunrises and sunsets to paint. The Museum provides an important link to our past and is a valuable benefit both to the residents and tourists alike. Churchill County has an abundance of historic resources some of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and some are State Historic Markers, such as the Churchill Arts Council Oats Park School. Churchill County and the City of Fallon host a number of cultural activities that enhance our quality of life. The Arts Council is very active in bringing in international and national artists from all sectors of the performing arts.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ensuring the security and well being of all residents is paramount to a healthy economy and stable community. The primary agencies responsible for public safety in the Valley are the Churchill County Sheriff's Department, Fallon Police Department and the Fallon/Churchill Volunteer Fire Department, supplemented by Churchill County Search and Rescue volunteers and County and City Emergency Management personnel. The success of the volunteer fire department has resulted in an ISO rating of 1 which is the highest possible rating and was the first of any volunteer fire department in the nation to achieve this rating.



PUBLIC SAFETY, continued

The Churchill County Sheriff's Department offers full service law enforcement and public safety services to the community including a detention facility. High priority is placed upon employee training and the department actively pursues grant monies to supplement the annual budget. Involvement and interaction with other community organizations, entities and the public strengthens its efforts to further its Community Policing approach. Department-wide emphasis is placed on customer service in the pursuit of its mission.

D.A.R.E.



The Fallon Police Department continues to be an innovator as a law enforcement service provider and community partner working with citizens to improve the quality of life within our community. As an innovator and community partner, the Fallon Police Department has promoted or supported the following programs within our community: CHARACTER COUNTS!, Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence, Churchill Community Coalition, School Resource Officer, Boys and Girls Club, Police Explorer Post, and the creation of a Volunteer's in Policing program.

VITALITY

SOCIAL SERVICES

Social Services encourages and promotes self-sufficiency and the ability of community members to meet basic life needs and maintain a reasonable standard of living. The inability of families to meet basic life needs has a negative impact on the quality of life because it lowers the standard of living. Community members who are unable to contribute positively to the community and therefore unable to contribute positively begin a cycle of reacting to situations and become more and more dependent on the community to provide for their well being. A drop in the standard of living for some members of the community affects the entire community through decreases in the amount of money people spend on primary and discretionary products and increased pressure on tax supported welfare resources. Areas that warrant consideration for potential solutions to these issues include increase in the number of jobs, education and job training, practical living wages for community members, and weatherization and energy efficiency standards for homes.



OPPORTUNITY and ACTION

There is general agreement in the community that people choose to live in communities that offer affordable housing, good schools, reliable health care, shopping facilities, and various forms of indoor and outdoor recreation. For our community to flourish there must be adequate water and sewer facilities and infrastructure to transport goods and services to and from the area and a reliable labor force. Our community wants to maintain our excellent quality of life which requires a safe community with protection of the attributes that make us the "Oasis" in the desert. Following are the milestones that will be measured on a yearly basis and give us a basic framework for growth, vitality and opportunity.

LEADERSHIP

- Coordination and cooperation among local governments with an annual meeting and report to the public on key issues contained in this document—jointly with City and County.
- Publication of annual reports by City and County on key policy issues.

GROWTH

- Maintain an annual growth rate of 3—5%.
- Ensure that growth does not outpace natural resources.
- Ensure that growth is sustainable and pays for itself.

AGRICULTURE

- Maintain a minimum of 45,000 acres of irrigated farmland.
- Take positive governmental actions to preserve agriculture.



TOURISM

- Continue Kiosks placement in the community.
- Encourage number and size of special events.
- Develop facilities to attract events and tourists to the area.



OPPORTUNITY and ACTION

U.S. NAVY

- Expand and maintain the buffer zone around NAS Fallon.
- Maintain low density zoning adjacent to NAS Fallon.
- Maintain agricultural Foreign Object Danger (FOD) barriers around NAS Fallon.
- Discourage subdivisions and leave land in agriculture as it now exists.



TRANSPORTATION

- Develop an area wide transportation plan.
- Seek sources for funding of public transportation.
- Plan for major traffic routes and flow patterns based on anticipated growth.
- Plan and implement an upgrade of existing substandard county roads.
- City and County officials will continue to support timely widening of Highway 50 to Fernley.



RECREATION

- Maintain reasonable public access to open space.
- Develop safe, well marked public trails within the community.
- Provide for open space and parks in plans for new developments.
- Seek funding for maintenance and expansion of existing recreational facilities.
- Provide a wide range of recreational opportunities on appropriate public, city, and county lands.



PUBLIC SAFETY

- Consider increasing the number of man hours in community policing activities.
- Consider increasing the number of hours of training per year per employee.



OPPORTUNITY and ACTION

WATER AND SEWER

- Water and wastewater treatment facilities will be developed within the County.
- Future development within the County will include plans for water and wastewater treatment.
- The County will assure quality control by acquiring and operating some existing small water systems.
- The City and County will explore underground storage and injection wells to ensure adequate supply.
- Discourage individual wells and septic systems.
- Provide recharge areas protected by open space designated in an approved Open Space Plan.