

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS**

**Seventy-Fourth Session
February 8, 2007**

The Committee on Government Affairs was called to order by Chair Marilyn K. Kirkpatrick at 8:00 a.m., on Thursday, February 8, 2007, in Room 3143 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4406 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda ([Exhibit A](#)), the Attendance Roster ([Exhibit B](#)), and other substantive exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at www.leg.state.nv.us/74th/committees/. In addition, copies of the audio record may be purchased through the Legislative Counsel Bureau's Publications Office (email: publications@lcb.state.nv.us; telephone: 775-684-6835).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Marilyn Kirkpatrick, Chair
Assemblywoman Peggy Pierce, Vice Chair
Assemblyman Kelvin Atkinson
Assemblyman Bob Beers
Assemblyman Chad Christensen
Assemblyman Pete Goicoechea
Assemblyman Ruben Kihuen
Assemblyman Harvey J. Munford
Assemblyman James Settlemeyer
Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart
Assemblywoman RoseMary Womack

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Amber Joiner, Committee Policy Analyst
Scott McKenna, Committee Counsel
Mary Kay Doherty, Committee Secretary



OTHERS PRESENT:

Kim R. Wallin, State Controller, State of Nevada

Ted J. Olivas, City of Las Vegas, Nevada, Legislative Lobbying Team

Douglas A. Selby, City Manager, City of Las Vegas, Nevada

Kimberly J. McDonald, State Legislative Affairs Officer, City of North Las Vegas, Nevada

Gregory E. Rose, City Manager, City of North Las Vegas, Nevada

Randy Robison Representing City of Mesquite, Nevada

Allen Bell, Representing the City of Mesquite, Nevada

Lisa Foster, Representing City of Boulder City, Nevada

Bob Ferraro, Mayor, Boulder City, Nevada

Sabra Smith-Newby, Director, Intergovernmental Relations, Clark County, Nevada

Virginia Valentine, County Manager, Office of the County Manager, Clark County, Nevada

Chair Kirkpatrick:

The Assembly Committee on Government Affairs will come to order. We have ten members present. There is a quorum.

Today, I would like to welcome the audience members on the internet, and down south at the Sawyer Building. We will be videoconferencing, so that will be available for those in Las Vegas.

Our first presentation is from our Nevada State Controller, Kim Wallin. We would like to welcome you to Government Affairs and let you proceed with your presentation.

Kim Wallin, State Controller, State of Nevada:

I would like to introduce some of my staff. I have a very, very, professional, highly motivated, enthusiastic staff. Some key players are with me today in the audience. I would like them to stand. First is Bill Reinhard, Chief Deputy Controller; Mark Taylor, my Assistant Controller; and Alex Echo, who is in charge of Information Technology [IT].

Brenda Laird is in charge of our Financial Reporting. Under her leadership and direction, our Comprehensive Annual Financial Report [CAFR] and the Popular Annual Financial Report [PAFR] have received awards of excellence. She is to be commended. Also, I would also like to welcome Karen Hoppe who is in charge of our Operations. Thank you very much.

Some others who are not here today, who are working or down in Las Vegas, are Michelle Ene, my Executive Assistant; Kristi Thompson who is in charge of Debt Collection; and Judy Heatherington, out of Las Vegas.

There are about 45 people on my staff. I have eight professional staff who are CPAs [Certified Public Accountants]. I have an excellent staff.

When I came into this office, a friend of mine from the Federal Government from Audit States, called me up to congratulate me and also to tell me that the State of Nevada is actually a low-risk state for audits because of the excellence in their financial reporting. So, just to let you know, the office is in good shape.

I want to tell you a little bit about myself. I have been an accountant for 29 years, working in the public accounting sector. During that time I have spent most of my time acting as a controller for a lot of my small business clients helping them to make good financial decisions and to be successful. I want to take those same skills and bring them to the state level.

In addition to being a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), I am also a Certified Management Accountant (CMA), and a Certified Financial Manager (CFM). In 2003-2004, I was Chair of The Institute of Management Accountants. I have been very active in my profession since I started as a student.

Additionally, in 2003, Accounting Today recognized me as being one of the top 100 most influential people in the county and the country. Just last year, the Women's Society of CPAs, named me Women's CPA of the Year. That is a little bit about my background.

What does the Controller do? The Controller is the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State. "We" administer the payroll, oversee the payroll, and cut the checks. Yesterday, you learned that there are two signatures on the check. I am the other signature on the check. We also make sure that all debts are paid to the State. And, in addition, the Controller also administers the State's accounting system. That is also referred to as the Integrated Financial System, (IFS). The IFS System is under the control of the Controller by *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) 227.120 and 242.131.

The reason the Controller's office has its own system, separate from the rest of the state, is because of the critical nature of it. If the Controller's Office went down, the State would be out of business. I will tell you a little bit more about what would happen if we went out of business.

The Controller is also supposed to look for waste and inefficiency in government. We are going to start doing that. I plan to utilize my staff to work with agencies in developing useful, meaningful, objective, measurable performance measures. This will drive the agencies to get the performance results that we want.

We have performance measures, but I have looked at some of them and wonder what we were trying to accomplish. I am going to utilize my professional staff to work with the agencies.

In the past, we have neither reviewed the results nor sat down with the agencies to talk about how we can improve, and how we might meet these measures. We are going to do that. We are going to step it up and bring it from just performance measures into performance management.

The major issue facing our office is the lack of an adequate Back-up Disaster Recovery Plan. Currently, we electronically transmit our data to a location only 1.2 miles from our office. If something happened here, in Carson City, the State would be out of business. We would not be able to cut payroll checks, pay our bills, or transmit money to the schools. The Treasurer's Office would not be able to invest money.

In corporate America, and what all Information Technology, (IT) businesses say, companies need a disaster recovery system, away from their main operation, strategically placed at least 400 miles away. The Comptroller General recommends 400 to 800 miles away.

My staff has come up with a solution to this problem that is very cost effective. We know that it will work and we can be up and running within three months of getting the funding.

The solution is to put a computer into a building in Las Vegas. It is the Federal Arterial State Transportation System (FAST) Building Transportation System. It is operated by the Highway Patrol and Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) and it is in a very secure location. We would put a computer and printer there to mirror our operations here. Then, if something did happen here, we could be up and running in less than an hour, and not be out of business.

The Department of Administration, along with the Department of Information Technology (DoIT), is proposing a back-up disaster recovery plan for the Controller's office as well as Personnel, NDOT and Administration. These are not a part of our IFS system. Their system will not be up and running until the

latter part of 2009. Also, their plan is more expensive and we do not know if our Advantage Accounting System will work on it because it is a different platform.

Another thing I want to do in my office is to work towards making our accounting and financial reporting system more transparent.

A technology we might be able to use is called Extensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL). It allows different systems to communicate with one another and allows the users of that financial data, after it is reported, to drill down and manipulate it, and come up with their own conclusions. It is a very transparent system. Internationally, it is taking off. Quite a few countries are demanding it in their governments.

The United States has been slow to use it, even though it started here in the late 1990s, to early 2000s. However, the federal government is starting to use it. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, (FDIC) and the Security and Exchange Commission, (SEC) are now having their companies use it for financial reporting, and is something I will look into.

States have been slow to take on this project, but there are some pilots that are being started, and I am looking for a pilot for us to look at our contracts and put performance measures on the contracts using XBRL. It would be a good way to see if we are getting what we are supposed to be getting.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Now I would like to open it up for questions.

Assemblyman Settlemeyer:

I know that previously, the Office of State Controller was left a little bit chaotic. I know the previous person hired before you had a little bit of fun to straighten it out. I was just curious if everything is good to go or do you still have some issues that need to be resolved?

Kim Wallin:

Actually the staff was doing a good job. They have kept the office up and floating and running. My predecessor, Steve Martin, when he came in, discovered the back-up disaster recovery problem. And, that was probably the only critical thing that was happening. The financial reporting was fine. Everything else was fine. We are up and running.

Assemblyman Stewart:

How soon do you expect to have any backup plan in effect, in Las Vegas?

Kim Wallin:

We have to get the funding from the Legislature. If we get the funding we can have it up and running within three months. We have added to our budget a request to do it. The total cost is \$593,000. The Department of Administration and DoIT have requested \$1 million to do their program. If we can do ours, we would be up and running within three months of getting the funding.

Assemblyman Bobzien:

I want to congratulate you on bringing this issue of the disaster recovery plan(s) to the table. As someone who works in information technology, I can tell you that those of us in the field are often paranoid about backup data, and when I heard that it was only miles away where we were keeping the data, I shuttered. Congratulations to you for bringing it up.

I want to learn a little more about the performance measures. I think that one of the challenges we always have in government is not necessarily having a profit motive. We are responsible for delivery of services. Often times, we are measuring the production of widgets. The challenge, I think, is coming up with measures that speak to the effectiveness of the services, not just cranking out x number of things, or forms that we process, or whatever. Could you talk a little bit about that challenge and how you see your effort in coming up with more meaningful performance standards?

Kim Wallin:

When I was looking at the present performance measures, I found that most of them were quantitative rather than qualitative. With the type of services that we provide, you need to have more qualitative measures. Yes, they are a little bit "touchy-feely", but this is what we need to work on. I am going to train my staff to be able to develop those qualitative measures. When you do performance measures and management in government, it is a very good way to monitor the use of your resources and the adequacy of the services you are providing.

The difficulty is going to be in getting people comfortable with these qualitative performance measures. Plus, it will be difficult to get agencies to want to work with the Controller's office. Even in corporate America they have a hard time with it, but the good companies have evolved to that point.

However, one of the senators, in one of the hearings last week or the week before, was upset by the performance measures that this one agency came to the table with. The Senate said to call Kim Wallin, and get some help, and the

agency did that. I sat down with them this week and, found their performance measures did not make sense. However, we actually came up with measures that would make sense for their program.

Assemblyman Bobzien:

Of course the challenge is having both you and the Executive Branch work with these other agencies. Are there models you are looking to in other states which have gone through successful measurement efforts? The other part of this is, being able to communicate effective measurements and the results to the legislature. What do you see is the legislator's role in such an effort?

Kim Wallin:

Well, actually, I believe that there is a bill, Senate Bill 297. It is a bill seeking performance measures and performance management by utilizing the Controller's office to help in the effort to put some emphasis to encourage the agencies to work with the Controller's office. Those who do not will get reported back.

The big difference with qualitative performance measures is the necessity to look at them every year rather than every two years. If you are going to do performance management, it cannot have a two-year cycle.

Assemblyman Beers:

As part of this performance upgrade, will you also be working to improve the communication with other agencies?

Kim Wallin:

Yes, we will be trying to improve communication with other agencies. Coming from private industry, I am finding there are a lot of silos in government that lead to a lot of inefficiencies. We are going to work to change that mentality. We are all here to do what is best for Nevada and provide the citizens the best services possible, and use their taxpayer dollars in the most efficient manner. We will not be able to do that if we do not start talking to one another and break down those silos.

One thing that will help is my staff accountants are already liaisons to the different agencies. So they already talk to each other.

Assemblyman Beers:

In the past some of the programs: the data storage, the record keeping and the networks within the agencies, could not interface with programs used by the others. Will this also be addressed?

Kim Wallin:

That is one of the beautiful things about the XBRL. It allows different systems to talk to one another. The federal government had a problem getting all their systems to talk to one another. There were these silos, people not wanting to change what they were used to doing. The XBRL is actually an overlay and can grab any data and allow it to communicate with others. People will not have to give up what they know and what works for them. The technology is coming where we can actually do that.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Ms. Wallin, we look forward to working with you in the future.

Kim Wallin:

My office is always available if any of you have questions about your financial statements.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

At this time we would invite the City of Las Vegas to come up.

Ted J. Olivas, Director of Government and Community Affairs, City of Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am joined today by Dr. Douglas A. Selby, our City Manager. I would also like to introduce Liane Lee, who is in the audience, and Seth Floyd who are part of the city's lobbying team; as well as Misty Grimmer, one of our contract lobbyists. We are the faces that you are going to see throughout the session. We would like to thank you for giving us this opportunity to say a few words about our city.

In the package that we have provided ([Exhibit C](#)), there are a number of documents we will reference during the presentation. I will hold them up so you will know where we are, as Dr. Selby goes through them. I know there are a lot of them. These documents are intended to be reference material for your review later. We are going to go through them fairly quickly because of the time we have available today. With that I will turn it over to Dr. Selby.

Douglas A. Selby, City Manager, City of Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am entering my fifth year as City Manager and I am honored to be here today to share a little bit with you about the City of Las Vegas. I will touch on some highlights, by no means trying to go into depth on any item, but we are prepared to answer all of your questions. We look forward to working with you throughout the Legislative Session and supporting your needs throughout our stay here in Carson City.

We have a packet, ([Exhibit C](#)), as Ted mentioned, which has a variety of materials, a lot of detail and a lot of statistics. We will just use those and highlight some of the items from each of them. With the assistance of Ted, who will hold the items up, I will start going through those items.

First, we have a map that shows the Assembly districts. It gives you an orientation to the City of Las Vegas. We have an area of about 130 square miles, bounded by the City of North Las Vegas on our north and east, and townships in Clark County on our southern and western boundaries. As a result, Las Vegas's growth area is primarily towards the northwest, along the US 95 corridor. The city of Las Vegas' boundaries, with recent annexations, goes about one mile past the Snow Mountain Paiute Indian Reservation.

Another item we have for you is a map of downtown projects. We compiled this, and I might add that all of these materials are things that we regularly use to communicate to the public about what is happening in the City. But, this map is focused on downtown where we have seen tremendous activity. This is also our redevelopment area. We operate a redevelopment agency under NRS, and I call to your attention some projects that we are fairly proud of.

A project called Soho Lofts, a downtown high rise, luxury condominium project is now open, and has residents living in it. Another project, Newport Lofts, is topped off. Another condominium project, Streamlined Towers, is about one-third finished. It is a condominium project very close to City Hall. There is a project called *juhl*. It is a mid-rise condominium project, and is about one-third completed. It is unique in that it is a little more affordable. It is a 15-story project with first floor live/work accommodations.

I call your attention to Union Park. It had been called The 61 Acres. It has officially been designated Union Park now. It is the site of a number of projects. That whole district was a former railroad yard. It now includes the Clark County Government Center and the Chelsea Simon Outlet Mall, which is now the highest grossing outlet mall in the United States, per square foot. The World Market Center is going great guns, and is rapidly capturing the furniture market in the United States. The Ruvo Brain Institute breaks ground this Friday, and it is located on Union Park. Another project that is very exciting for us is the Jewelry Mart, which is now being developed by a proponent for that project, to bring the international jewelry industry to downtown Las Vegas. Right now, in downtown, we have about \$1 billion in active construction. There is about \$10 billion that has been entitled for projects in the pipeline, probably over the next five to ten years.

I might also add that the downtown will be hosting the Vegas Grand Prix this April. It is a champion car event, an internationally televised car race. We invite all of you down for that if you can accommodate that time.

Another item we have, ([Exhibit C](#)) is just some statistics on Las Vegas. In short, we are now approaching 600,000 people. We are one of the top 20 cities in population growth in the United States. We have to start thinking of ourselves as a large city. We have a work force of about 3,200 employees, located in 19 different departments providing services to our residents. Many of these employees are represented by collective bargaining units. I am happy to say we generally enjoy good relationships, at this time, with our bargaining units.

Another item we have is a booklet, which we use for business, development. It is a comprehensive document that we issue every year, providing statistics and information that may be of interest to businesses who are interested in locating in Las Vegas. It is a document that we are routinely handing out at trade shows and other venues.

We have compiled a document called *The Budget in Brief*, which is a consumer document. It is oriented toward the public to provide a summary of a more extensive budget that we file with the State every year. We have adopted fiscal policies that are adhered to by the City Council, including a review of our budget by a citizen panel; a citizen priority advisory committee that is appointed by the Council.

Our budget this year is \$1.5 billion and includes our Capital Project Programs for parks, roads, fire stations, flood control and wastewater. You will notice a significant amount of our capital funding comes from regional agencies, including the Regional Flood Control District and the Regional Transportation Commission. Some of it comes from federal funds from the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Pact. Our operational budget, the money we spend day-to-day to keep the city operating, is about \$540 million. The bulk of this funding, about \$387 million, goes to public safety and \$130 million of that is our share of the metropolitan police departments. Public safety is a large part of our operating budget, roughly 60 percent of it. Our sources of funding for our general fund primarily, like other local governments, include consolidated taxes, which is about 54 percent of the budget; property tax at about 19 percent; and the balance made up by license fees, permits, and charges for service.

We have a series of three documents that we have prepared called *Making Sense of Your Dollars and Cents* ([Exhibit C](#)), again to try to communicate to the

public how their tax dollars are spent in the City of Las Vegas. In these documents, we have also pointed out that when you look at large cities in each state in the United States, Las Vegas has a lower property tax payment than 28 percent of those cities, and a lower sales tax rate than 35 percent of those cities, to convey to our residents how favorable the climate is in Las Vegas.

We have a document that we call *Snapshot of Las Vegas*. Again it contains some summary statistics, but, I will call to your attention that it touches on an issue of sustainability. The City Council has adopted a sustainability resolution that includes support for residential green housing programs, a mandate that city buildings be constructed to an elite certifiable standard of silver, and a requirement that we start to set aside a portion of our growth and franchise fees to support our sustainability initiative.

We have a series of documents produced ward by ward. They demonstrate the diversity in our population and the diversity in the different wards in the City of Las Vegas. Overall, we are approximately 23.06 percent Hispanic; 10.01 percent African American, 4.07 percent Asian, and .05 percent American Indian, with the balance being Caucasian. With the diversity of our community and our work force increasing, we have actually created a diversity initiative within the City of Las Vegas to better engage both our own work force and our population, so that we are serving our population as it gets more diverse and understanding their needs and their priorities.

Our Neighborhood Services Department has grown from a department that used to respond to neighborhood issues regarding code enforcement, rapid response, the kinds of issues that people call up and need a quick answer to; they have a pot hole, they have a neighbor who has junked cars in the yard. It has grown from that to a program that encompasses things like homelessness, affordable housing, and job and work force training.

I will touch quickly on our 10-year plan to end homelessness. This was adopted by the City Council in response to the Presidential directive that cities prepare these documents. Its goal is that at the end of 10 years homelessness will end by providing housing for people. We have a big challenge in southern Nevada. We estimate there are 14,500 homeless people in southern Nevada; a majority of those are in the City of Las Vegas, primarily because the City of Las Vegas hosts most of the services that provide support to the homeless population.

Another item we are working on is affordable housing, which ties to homelessness, but we use community development block grants, federal home funds, Brownfield's Redevelopment money, and money that comes from our economic redevelopment activity in the redevelopment area. Eighteen percent

of the redevelopment tax increment is set aside exclusively for affordable housing. As downtown prospers in the redevelopment area, we are actually getting more revenue to dedicate to affordable housing. It helps us a great deal. We are still challenged in that the median price of a home is above the median affordable income for a resident in Las Vegas. We continue to work on that. It is a big challenge for us and other cities throughout the country.

Another program we are particularly proud of is what we call "Evolve." It is a job training program. It is designed to get ex-offenders out of that cycle of getting out of jail and going back to jail, a process we call recidivism. About 43 percent of people who get out of jail without any intervention end up back in jail. We are happy to say that in the three years of the Evolve Program we have dropped that down to about 10 percent. Now, one of the other benefits of the Evolve Program is that when those people go through that cycle, we estimate that each of those clients, as we call them, consumes about \$24,000 per year in taxpayer money. With the Evolve Program we are investing about \$4,500 to \$5,000 a year per client. So, it is economical as well.

The last thing I want to touch on is Floyd Lamb Park. The Legislature and the City of Las Vegas had reached an agreement about two years ago, under which the Floyd Lamb Park would be transferred back to the City of Las Vegas. You may recall many years ago it was a City park. It was transferred to the State and now it is coming back to the City.

We have developed a plan with the extensive input of residents in the area. We believe that we accommodated all the concerns and the issues, as well as complied with the requirements of the Legislature in maintaining the features of the park, the historic character, and the passive uses of the park. We are looking forward to additional investment in the park to preserve historic buildings that are there, to expand the passive recreational opportunities, and to create a park that will enhance the life style and quality of life for all residents of Las Vegas.

That very quickly hits on a number of highlights, and we are certainly very happy to answer any questions we can about these or other topics.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Thank you, Mr. Selby. We will start with some questions.

Assemblyman Munford:

I want to ask what the status is of widening Martin Luther King Boulevard. It seems it has been on the table a long time. Ever since I was elected, two, almost three years ago, it was one of the concerns and vital things that my

constituents discussed and talked about. They felt it would be a type of thing that would really impact the community in terms of possibly bringing in economic development. Plus, it would produce some amenities; because they were going to put such things as palm trees down the middle, giving us a little spike in that area. What is the status?

Douglas Selby:

I would be happy to respond to that. The Martin Luther King (MLK) widening project was challenged probably by indecisiveness on our part on how to widen it, which side of the road to go on, and whether to approach commercial property owners or residential property owners in the area of Bonanza Village. We have resolved that. We have designed the project now and are in the final stages of property acquisition. I am hopeful that we will get this out to bid for construction this year, by perhaps the middle of this calendar year. We incorporated enhancements for median landscaping so it will resemble what North Las Vegas has done to ensure some continuity in that whole corridor. Like you, we believe it will create a substantial interest and economic development along the corridor that does not exist today.

Assemblyman Beers:

My question regards the considerable development going along Eastern Boulevard, near the Henderson/Las Vegas border. How is that coming along?

Douglas Selby:

I guess I am kind of struggling because we do not have a contiguous border with Henderson.

Assemblyman Beers:

Yes, it is kind of amorphous.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Assemblyman Beers, can you show them on the map where it might be? Because the rest of us, also are trying to think where that boundary might be.

Assemblyman Beers:

Since we are short of time, what I can do is talk to them in my office later to give them some specifics.

Assemblyman Stewart:

I have two quick questions. Does the 14,500 homeless reflect the recent count done last week? And, then secondly, can you comment on the development of East Fremont Street? What are the plans there?

Douglas Selby:

No, that 14,500 is the best estimate prior to the count. I do not have numbers on the recent count. Perhaps Clark County will have those numbers. The East Fremont project has broken ground and is under active construction. That is a project to create an entertainment district within three blocks of Fremont Street. There are clubs already opened there and more on the way. We hope to have that project completed by August 2007.

Assemblyman Settlemeyer:

In reference to the ten-year homeless plan, has it been instituted, and have you seen any results?

Douglas Selby:

The ten-year plan was approved by the council last year. I am not sure we have seen tangible results. One thing that seems to happen in southern Nevada is that we solve some of the homeless problems and the population continues to grow. I am not sure that we have a good baseline from which to launch an assessment of how well we have done within one year.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Does anyone else have any questions? I would like to compliment you on the Floyd Lamb Park situation. For those of you who do not know; last Session it was very contentious here in Government Affairs, as well as Natural Resources, on the Floyd Lamb Park. And I was opposing it. For the record, I was opposing and fighting it the whole way. But, I have attended every single meeting and been part of the process. Well over 200 community members have been part of the process. The plan that is in here (in folder) is hand-picked by the community. So, I applaud that because that is very hard to do: making everybody happy and coming out with a good project that we can afford to build. So I want to say thank you.

Are there any other questions or comments?

Chair Kirkpatrick:

The next presentation will be from the City of North Las Vegas.

Kimberly McDonald, State Legislative Affairs Officer for the City of North Las Vegas, Nevada:

It is our pleasure to be here with you. Our other team member is Mary Henderson, who is also our contract lobbyist. It is my pleasure to introduce our City Manager, Gregory Rose, who will give today's presentation.

Gregory E. Rose, City Manager, City of North Las Vegas, Nevada:

It is certainly a pleasure for me to be able to be here with you this morning. Many of you I know because of where you live. I am pleased and want to also congratulate the Chair. We have had an opportunity to work together when you were on our Planning Commission and I am excited about having the opportunity to work with you in your new capacity.

We will start today with one of our videos ([Exhibit D](#)) that will give a quick overview of some of the activity that is occurring in North Las Vegas. [Video]

For those of you who are not familiar with North Las Vegas, we are about 82 square miles. Our demographics are roughly 19 percent African American, 38 percent Hispanic, and the remainder, Caucasian and other.

Two years ago, roughly May, 2005, the City Council adopted the Vision 2025. It is a strategic plan for North Las Vegas. It is important to note, though, that it is not just a plan developed by the City staff or by the City Council, but actually a citizen-driven plan. That process consisted of eighteen months of really hard work by members of our community. Everything we do from that point forward is really an offshoot of our strategic plan. I believe Kimberly has provided you with a couple of handouts. One of those handouts includes the priorities for the City. I want to just highlight a couple of them.

One thing that is extremely important to us is that we are perceived as being a safe community. The reason is that we can have the best parks and libraries but if we are not perceived as being a safe community, no one will attend those parks or visit those libraries.

To advance those efforts we have added more police officers. Thanks to the legislation that was passed at the last Session, over the course of the next three years we will add roughly 150 officers. Public Safety does not simply stop with the addition of police officers. You have to have firefighters, as well. When someone calls 911 and that clock is ticking, they know that someone will show up.

Also, we are making a real effort to clean up the city. That means we have to have more employees that focus on removing graffiti, and code enforcement. We are encouraging our citizens to comply with our laws. We have had good success. Over the past three years our crime rate has dropped. Homicides have dropped by about 15 percent over the course of the last three years. We intend to continue our efforts and make North Las Vegas a perceived safe community.

Another priority identified in our Vision 2025 strategy is a well-planned community. El Dorado and Aliante, the first two master-planned communities in our city, really changed the quality of housing that is provided in North Las Vegas, Aliante especially. If you purchased a home in North Las Vegas five years ago, the most you would pay was about \$300,000. Today you would be fortunate if you could find the low end of our market around \$300,000.

We have changed dramatically over the past five years. We have added Aliante, an executive level housing project, which is in excess of \$800,000. Some of you may be familiar with Club Aliante. You can purchase a home there with add-ons for roughly \$1 million. We are extremely excited about what is going on in our community in the housing area.

Park Highlands will be our third master planned community. Olympia Group, back in 2005, purchased roughly 2,600 acres. They paid \$639 million for that property, which is just remarkable considering where we were five years ago. The total investment they intend to make for Park Highlands is going to be in excess of \$1 billion. Where Aliante, added the Executive-level homes, Park Highlands will add custom lot development. If you are fortunate, you will be able to find homes in that area ranging in excess of \$500,000.

If you look at our history from where we will be in roughly two or three years, and you compare it to where we were five years ago, I think that you can see that we are making great strides in advancing our community to become a great city.

One of the things that I also want to talk briefly about is our efforts in our Cheyenne Technology Corridor. We have had very good success in recruiting high-tech businesses. We have been very advanced in trying to lay out fiber optics through our city, to ensure we are competitive in that market.

We have placed a greater focus on recreation and the arts. We are renovating many of the mature parks which will cost in excess of \$2 million, just in this year alone. We are making an effort to preserve Kiel Ranch. It is a part of our history and has been somewhat controversial. But, we recognize that it is on the Historic Registry and is an important asset to the community, and something that we should preserve.

I talked briefly about Aliante and the housing that it added. Another thing it also added is to set a new standard for parks in our area.

If you have an opportunity to visit North Las Vegas, I would encourage you to go to Discovery Park. That is the technical name, but the layman's name is

Dinosaur Park. It is really a wonderful open space that gives children an opportunity, not only to play, but to learn. They set a new standard in the development of that park. Park Highlands, the master-planned community, will continue that theme, especially with the conservation transfer area, where we will provide children an opportunity and an experience in the nature area, it will encompass.

For forty years, the City of North Las Vegas had one library. In 2006, we were fortunate enough to open our second library in Aliante. We have plans for our third library, which will be at Alexander and Martin Luther King Boulevard. We have plans, also in the Highland Park community, for our fourth library. We are putting a real emphasis on that. I am passionate about the library issue because of the advantages it can provide to the disadvantaged. Children who are disadvantaged and do not have a library in close proximity to them, are not only disadvantaged by not having information readily accessible, they are also disadvantaged because they do not have access to the internet. I will not go into the subject of how small we are becoming as a world, but certainly the internet has made us a very small world.

Sound fiscal policy is also a top priority for us. We have been very fortunate for the past three years, to win awards for our budget, from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). It has been recognized not only as a policy document but also as a communication document. This is important because we think that government should be open and transparent.

There are a few other projects I want to briefly highlight. We are in the early stages of designing and constructing a new city hall. The existing city hall was built in 1963 when we had about 300 employees. Today, we have in excess of 2,000 employees. It is easy to see that 2,000 will not fit into the same space that 300 would, so we are moving and advancing that.

We intend to spend roughly \$135 million on the new city hall. It will be located in our mature area. Also, we were fortunate to receive federal funding to convert the existing Craig Ranch Golf Course, which is 132 acres, into a park. I am not sure how many of you have ever visited there. I will not be critical of it as a golf course, but it could be better. It will be a wonderful park with all of the mature trees and the open space that exists out there.

This year we had our inaugural launching of BalloonaPalooza. It is a three day hot-air balloon festival that was famous ten years ago in North Las Vegas. We brought that back. We anticipated that over the course of that weekend, we would get about 10,000 people to participate and take rides in balloons. We were successful in getting over 30,000 people to attend. It has been a

tremendous success, and has been warmly embraced by our citizens. We are very fortunate to sponsor that.

That will conclude my presentation, with the exception of saying that we are continuing to make every effort to improve the quality of housing and to provide housing, especially for all citizens, no matter their economic makeup. Also, we want to ensure that when you are in our community, you have access to restaurants and retail, and, primarily, you feel safe in North Las Vegas, and that we continue to be your community of choice.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Are there any questions?

Assemblyman Kihuen:

I would like to praise you and the City Council for what you have done in Aliante, El Dorado, and Highland Park. What I am wondering, and it is incumbent on me to bring it up, what are you doing with the mature parts of North Las Vegas? A portion of my district covers the old North Las Vegas, and I wonder what the top priorities are there, or with some of the parks that may need a little remodeling.

Gregory Rose:

Many of the parks that we are restoring are in the mature area. In fact, the development community constructs or builds many of our new parks in what we consider the new growth area, which is typically north of Craig Road. There are a few things that are going on in the mature area of town. One is the city hall. We will invest in excess of \$135 million. Also, we are trying to create a downtown. What I mean by that is, if you look at what we define as downtown in North Las Vegas, it is really just a large residential area with some strip mall types of development. We intend to have more of a true downtown type of feel. That was one of the reasons that the City Council was committed to leaving the city hall in that area. We will, in a couple of weeks, present to our redevelopment agency, a master plan for the downtown area. We have been working with several businesses to renovate as well as trying to recruit new business in the downtown area. We are going to start where City Hall sits today. The Silver Nugget has committed to restoring and expanding that facility. There is other development that will occur around there. We have a retail grocery store development at Civic Center and Cheyenne. It will provide needed services to that community.

Assemblyman Kihuen:

Thank you, Mr. Rose. I actually grew up around that area. Now, I am living in the Las Vegas side, but most of the time I grew up, I attended Judy Smith

Middle School. Will there be any remodeling in that park in the next couple of years? It is the park next to Judy Smith Middle School.

Gregory Rose:

I will need to look at our capital improvement plan, but all of the parks within the mature area have either been remodeled or scheduled for renovation.

Assemblyman Atkinson:

I have two questions. This 2025 Plan that you consistently talk about, with citizens on it, can you explain to me how they were chosen and who is on it?

Gregory Rose:

Let me start with the first question, which is how the citizens were chosen. We submitted notices in the newspapers asking for participation. The City Council decided who actually would be on the committee, from the applications submitted. We wanted to have a very diverse committee and it ended up being very large. The core committee is roughly 15 people, but that was simply to enable us to go out to the various areas in our community, and for citizens to talk to citizens, not to elected officials and not to city staff. That process worked very well for us.

It took some extra effort in some parts of our community in order to get participation, and that is why the process took 18 months. We wanted to ensure that everyone had an opportunity to participate. I cannot tell you exactly who is on the committee today. Dane Leavitt was co-chair of that committee. I simply cannot recall the other co-chair. But, it was a broad-based representation of our community.

Assemblyman Atkinson:

You are saying broad-based, and the City Council chose the people out of a field of many people. Do you know how many?

Gregory Rose:

That process occurred probably three and a half or four years ago. But we can certainly get you the information about it.

Assemblyman Atkinson:

OK. I need that.

I do have one other question. I have just recently heard a talk show talk about it too; I need to know the history of why Martin Luther King Boulevard [MLK] turns into Camino El Norte once the neighborhood gets good. In the spirit of Black History month, I am asking that question, and I would really like to know

why it happened. What could happen to make MLK go straight through, as opposed to changing the name the way that it does? I think it is really, really, disrespectful. I know you were not around when it happened, but maybe there is some history for it.

Gregory Rose:

We can certainly get the information about the reason that it goes from MLK to Camino El Norte. But, one thing I do want to note is that our intention is to ensure that all of North Las Vegas is a good community. Some areas will require a different type of attention from others. It is just the nature. If you have an area that is new growth you probably will not have to worry about street overlays the way you would in a mature area. So, each one has its own particular needs and we try to focus on those needs. At the end of the day the idea and the goal is to make sure that people feel comfortable, pleased, and proud to live in any portion of our community. I will provide that information to you.

Assemblyman Atkinson:

I will be proud if it is MLK all the way.

Assemblywoman Parnell:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like a follow-up from a bill last session. You probably both remember that I was fairly passionate about the land that had been dedicated by the Becker Family for a library. Could you give a status update on what has happened with that land?

Gregory Rose:

Yes. We are in the design phase for a library at MLK and Alexander. In fact, it will be greater than just a library. We are also going to have a two-and-one-half-acre park there. I believe it sits on roughly five acres total. It is more than what we need for the library so we intend to have a park. I believe the opening is slated for the latter part of 2009. We are designing it this year and will be in construction next year.

Assemblywoman Parnell:

I really appreciate that. When that opens I would like to be there for it.

Assemblyman Munford:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I would just like to welcome you here, Gregory. It is good to see you again. Actually 10 percent or almost 20 percent of my constituency is in North Las Vegas. So, I have a very strong, warm feeling for North Las Vegas. I would like to extend to you, my appreciation. During the interim, you opened your doors to me and invited me in on a lot of the projects,

and the things you have planned. I know that things will be just great and work out well.

Assemblywoman Womack:

Welcome, North Las Vegas. Lake Mead Hospital is such a fine hospital in the downtown area. Are there plans to expand the beds in that facility and the hospital in the Aliante northwest area?

Gregory Rose:

The Lake Mead Hospital in North Vista would love to expand, but they are somewhat land-locked. Our intention is to move the police headquarters; we have to find a funding source that will enable us to do that, and then open that property up for bids and sell it. I would guess that Lake Mead or North Vista will be very competitive in pursuing that property. They will, at some point, have the ability to expand the hospital, and we are going to work very closely with them in those efforts.

North Las Vegas's population today is roughly 202,000 people. We have only one hospital, so we need more. North Vista has purchased property in the northern part of our city; I believe around Craig and Allen. They intend to construct a hospital in that area, as well.

Assemblyman Beers:

I read a recent article that you had expanded the street sweeping schedule. I thought that was a good move, a good use of your resources. It gives an additional bit of pride to some of those older neighborhoods. Have you begun getting any feedback in that regard?

Gregory Rose:

We survey the North Las Vegas citizens every two years. They expressed that they are pleased with the direction that the city is headed, especially as it relates to cleaning up. One of the reasons is that it is all connected from the standpoint of trying to ensure that we are a safe community. I really believe strongly in the broken window theory; that if you have a clean community, people are less likely to commit crime in your community. A good analogy is if you have a pristine street, and that is why street sweeping is so important. If there is no paper on that street, you are going to be less likely to drop paper. So, we want to make sure for all of our community, that people see it as being pristine.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Anyone else have any questions?

Kimberly McDonald:

I want to draw your attention to our Legislative Platform Media Kit ([Exhibit D](#)) in your packet. All the information our City Manager has provided for you today, is in this kit. It has our 2007 legislative platform, our three bill draft requests for this session, our citizen surveys, as stated by our city manager; our recent State of the City video; our community report; our adopted budget, our parks and recreation master plan, our Vision 2025 strategic plan, and our 2007 through 2011 capital improvement plan as well as our comprehensive plan. We are, as our City Manager states, trying to be a very open and transparent government. We want to provide any information that you would request.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

I am going to have my secretary print one, because I like to take it with me when I walk. I have some questions. First of all, I have lived in North Las Vegas for 14 plus years, when there were very few of us and Craig Road was a dirt road. Now, my husband wishes we would have moved a little further out! Since I was on a planning commission, I am aware that we have made great strides. We are coming from a time when nobody would come to North Las Vegas, to having people waiting to be in North Las Vegas. I applaud all those efforts.

I am hoping my vision is correct and that the hospital is a little further down on Craig; that it is just adjacent to Craig Ranch, because that is one of the things we believed, as planning commissioners, would be soothing for people who have to spend a day at the hospital. They could go to our nice big park and relax. Craig and Allen is a little bit closer.

One of the things really important to me, for North Las Vegas, is re-development. I think North Law Vegas could have the greatest downtown. It is about 62 acres. We just had to get it rolling. Now it is rolling and everybody wants to be part of it. I would personally be very interested in anything that comes with the re-development when you go before the agency.

On this land use map ([Exhibit D](#)) that you have, there is a redevelopment area, and I am wondering why it is at the number I-215 on the map. Do we have a redevelopment area in the new area? If the industrial park is going to generate money to be used in downtown, it is absolutely fine with me. But, it seems crazy that Craig Road Speedway is in the redevelopment area.

Gregory Rose:

We will have to provide you with a better map than what we have. Our redevelopment area is primarily in the mature area of the city and extends only slightly past Cheyenne Boulevard. It has been very controversial.

One of the things that we wanted to assure was that we not only meet the letter of the law, but the intent of the law as it relates to redevelopment in those areas, and where we wanted to use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to renovate. We indeed meet the intended blighted definition. We will provide you with a better map that clearly identifies where our redevelopment area is.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Thank you. On this map, it looks as if it is at the speedway, and that is pretty interesting.

Gregory Rose:

I can certainly assure you that the speedway is not included in our redevelopment area.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

A lot of times you have to give incentives, and Senator Horsford worked specifically for North Las Vegas within the redevelopment area. I would be more than grateful if you could get me a copy of that map and if you could keep me in the loop.

Assemblyman Kihuen:

Mr. Rose, what is the total Hispanic population of North Las Vegas?

Gregory Rose:

It is roughly 38 percent. Our total population today is 202,000 citizens.

Assemblyman Kihuen:

Thirty eight percent of the 202,000 is Hispanic. What I would like to see in the North Las Vegas Planning Commission, or maybe even the City Council later on, is to have a little more Hispanic representation. I know that every time I have gone to the meetings, I have looked forward to seeing a Hispanic face up there to represent that 38 percent. If you could just pass on that message to the City Council I would appreciate it.

Gregory Rose:

I will certainly pass that message on. We are continually reaching out to the community, trying to solicit volunteers. I would ask, if you know someone interested, please pass the information on to me, or directly to the City Council.

Assemblyman Kihuen:

You can definitely count on my support for that. I will be referring some names to you. Not only that, also for the Citizens Advisory Committee, which I served on for two years. I was the only Hispanic face there and only 24 years old, but no matter what the age is, I would like to see someone there who understands that part of the population. Thank you.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Mr. Rose, Ms. MacDonald, thank you very much for coming to Government Affairs. We look forward to working with you in the future.

Kimberly MacDonald:

We will get all the requested materials to you.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

I would like to call the City of Mesquite. We very much appreciate Mr. Allen driving the hour and a half to Las Vegas and waiting to be heard. Mr. Robinson, please introduce yourself and then we will go down to Clark County.

Mr. Randy Robison, Representing the City of Mesquite, Nevada:

Thank you, Madam Chair. With us, in Las Vegas, this morning, is Allen Bell, Director of Engineering and Economic Development. Unfortunately, our Mayor had a conflict and our City Manager, who is new to the City, is terribly ill. However, we are in good hands. Allen Bell who is in Las Vegas, has, at various times over his 13 years with the City of Mesquite, served as 'Acting' City Manager, as the City has searched for a new full time City Manager.

He has been there since about 1994, seeing the city grow tremendously over that period of time. He has been intimately involved with Mesquite's growth, from an engineering perspective, public works perspective, and economic development perspective. Without any further ado, I will turn it over to Mr. Bell.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Thank you, Mr. Robison. Mr. Bell, go right ahead.

Mr. Allen Bell, City of Mesquite, Nevada:

For those of you who do not know where Mesquite is, it is bounded on the east by Arizona, on the north by Lincoln County, on the south by the Virgin River and the Bunkerville Township in Clark County. It is in the very northeastern corner of Clark County.

We have been a rapidly growing city for a number of years. One of your handouts ([Exhibit E](#)) shows the Mesquite population growth. The 2005 certified population was 16,600. When I moved there in 1994, there were about 2,500 people.

We have had a lot of challenges, and I think we have successfully met most of them. In 2004, we opened a new hospital. We got our first Wal-Mart last year and we have a very good system of roads. When I moved here we had one east-west street and one north-south street. We have several arterials now that accomplish a level of service on the roadway, which is very good.

Another indicator of our rapid growth is the number of business licenses. There is a handout in your packet ([Exhibit E](#)) for that. We have about 1,700 active business licenses as of today. It is up from about 1,100 in 2002, and we are issuing about 35 new licenses a month. Those are not renewals, they are new licenses. It keeps our business license clerk very busy.

Also, an indicator of our growth is building permits. You can see from the handout the growth rate went from 649 in 2002, to 1,298 in 2005. In 2006 we had 979 commercial permits. I think everybody is experiencing a slight downturn in building permits. This current year our residential permits are down about 50 percent over previous years, but, interestingly enough, our commercial permits have not suffered quite so much a loss. We have not had the huge downturn we anticipated.

We have a number of planned developments in the community. The very first commenced in 1994, as Mesquite Vistas, comprising about 1,800 acres and about 3,600 homes. Today, we have in the neighborhood of 12,000 homes on the drawing boards, in one form or another; from conceptual master plan through tentative map and final mapping. The handout ([Exhibit E](#)) will show you the locations. Canyon Crest, 330 acres, with 990 residential units; Mesquite Estates, surrounding that to the north and butting up to Lincoln County with 767 acres, and 2,300 residential units; Anthem at Mesquite, our newest planned development which has approximately 2,100 acres and, potentially, will ultimately have over 6,000 homes.

We are also working in a public-private partnership with a development firm from the East Coast, on the Riverside Development, 1,400 acres. That has not commenced yet. We anticipate the detailed master planning; the City has completed its master plan on the area, but the detailed master plan by the developer will probably commence this year.

In addition to that we have a planned mixed-use resort, retail, casino, residential operation called Barcelona. It is on 132 acres of land that once belonged to the City plus an additional 40 acres or so, of private land surrounding that. We anticipate they will break ground later this year on that project. We also have a number of new parks in process and are working with the Anthem folks to develop a regional park adjacent to their project, which will host the annual World Long Drive competition, which many of you may have seen over the Christmas Holidays.

Mesquite is a Community Office for Resource Efficiency (CORE) Community. Even though we are small, we are the employment and shopping center for areas such as Beaver Dam, Littlefield, and scenic Bunkerville. We also get some shopping, and our hospital hosts folks from the Overton-Logandale area, about 35 or 40 miles to the south and west.

With that, we have also been working with Lincoln County since the year 2000, on the 13,500 acres of land that was privatized; working with them to insure that the projects will be compatible and, more recently, the last two years, working with the multiple buyers of the property.

We are also working on a planned relocation of our airport. Our airport sits right between two golf courses; the Canyon's Golf Course, which is part of the Oasis Complex, and the Wolf Creek Golf Course; which in today's RJ, (Las Vegas Review Journal) was noted as the 31st most difficult course in the country. It draws a lot of people to our community.

I believe that many of you know we are a destination resort, an escape from Las Vegas. People come up to golf, spa, and enjoy the scenery in that area. We are working with various state agencies and federal agencies to accomplish some of our future needs, which will include interstate exits at mile post 118 and 108; 108 being near the new airport location. We are developing major arterials in conjunction with the Clark County Regional Transportation Commission. We are currently working on some significant water reuse/flood control facilities, which we were successful in getting through the Corps of Engineers, through the federal government.

We are hoping to find a way to create, in conjunction with the Long Drive Park, a more comprehensive regional park which would fulfill some of the other expectations of our visitors.

We have about 3,000 hotel rooms, so in any given day there are as many 5,000 people in town for those events. We appreciate North Las Vegas's speedway because it fills our hotels every time they have an event.

The existing airport is somewhat land locked. It is 5,100 square feet, and we do not have the ability to expand it. We are trying to relocate it to an area west of town, on the Mormon Mesa. We will actually be able to create a 7,500 foot, football runway, with the ability to expand it or parallel it should the need arise. We are in pretty good shape with water in the short term. We have a quasi-municipal agency, the Virgin Valley Water District, which handles that for us. We are very proud to be a zero discharge community where we re-use all of our effluent on parks, golf courses, and construction activities.

One of our significant problems for the last few years has been our land sales. We have been fortunate in being able to acquire land from the federal government, which is one of the reasons we have been able to keep up with our capital projects. When we sell that land it is not something that we can put into our budget for recurring uses because it is a one-time thing. Because we had the land, however, it has helped us to build roads, streets, and a new city hall. Also, it helped facilitate the development of the hospital. Over the last couple of years we have spent \$70 or 80 thousand more than anticipated, simply getting appraisals. We have approximately 300 acres in City ownership, and this is a major asset for us, which allows us to grow and keep up with the pace of growth. We would like some assistance in that area, through the Session.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Do we have any questions?

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

This question is for either Randy or the gentleman down south. I know it is extremely cumbersome from where you are to go into Lincoln County. I assume at some point you will have to annex those portions of Lincoln County into the City of Mesquite or create a Mesquite North. What are your thoughts on that?

Allen Bell:

We have been working closely with Lincoln County since 2000 to help them develop master planning documents and zoning uses. They are a very rural community or county, as you know. In terms of annexation, I do not know that we can answer that at this time. There are a lot of issues and a lot of education that needs to go forward yet to understand the impact of the distribution of the tax dollars. Lincoln County has adopted Clark County Regional Flood Control District's drainage design manual, and Clark County Regional Transportation Commission's design standards for streets, which ensures that at least those fiscal improvements will be compatible with each other. We are working with them, meeting monthly to try to develop a transportation plan that will not overload the city streets and overburden the developers in the county, too. In terms of how that will finally shake out, you

may be correct that there might be an annexation issue. But, I think it is much too early to address that yet.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

I just have one question.

Your population is 16,000, however; if you have ever been there in the winter your population is really closer to 40,000, because you have a huge snowbird group that comes. They are very active. I would be curious to know what the impact is on the services, such as your senior citizen's center and your different fire, police, and all that during high season. In the future, could you get that to me?

Randy Robison:

Yes, Madam Chair. I would be happy to do that.

Allen Bell:

I can take a stab at answering that. It affects us because, as you know, some of the revenues we rely upon are based on population and assessed valuation.

The demographer, unfortunately, chose June as a month to do the vacancy survey. I believe you are correct. We have a much higher population in the winter. It has not been a huge burden, but it is certainly something that we have to consider. Our Senior Center also services the outlying communities of Bunkerville and Littlefield; as does our library and our parks.

As I said, we are a CORE community that serves a lot of other communities, and we do not get a lot of revenue from them. That has always been a challenge.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Next, we would like to invite Boulder City to the table.

Lisa Foster, Representing the City of Boulder City, Nevada:

I will be talking to you about Boulder City this Session, along with Carrissa Monfalcone. I would like to introduce our special guest today, Mayor Bob Ferraro, who will be giving you a presentation. Thank you so much for having us.

Mr. Bob Ferraro, Mayor of Boulder City, Nevada:

Thank you very much. It is a privilege to be here with you today because I always appreciate the opportunity of representing Boulder City. I think that

Boulder City is the favorite place in the United States. Am I prejudiced? Of course I am prejudiced.

I have lived in Boulder City for 37 years and, for 31 of those years, I have been involved in city government. I am completing my sixth term as Mayor in Boulder City. In fact I have about five months left before I will retire, and, look forward to doing some of the things I have always wanted to do.

Boulder City was incorporated in 1959 after it served as a construction camp for many years. That is when Boulder City came into existence. Boulder City is special because it offers a lot of opportunities for many people in southern Nevada.

We are only, as you will note from the map in your packet, ([Exhibit F](#)), approximately 25 miles south of Las Vegas. We are just seven miles from Hoover Dam. Boulder City is right in the midst of a major recreational area. In fact, the new theme for Boulder City is "A World Away for A Day." Why is this? We want to capitalize on the approximately two million people that live in the greater Las Vegas Valley. We would like these people to come to Boulder City so we may share what we have in Boulder City and what we are so proud of.

What do they do if they do come out and spend a day with us? We have many attractions. We have two municipal golf courses, both doing very well. We have the world premier mountain bike trail system in the world. There are thirty-eight miles of trails, all created and hand crafted by one individual, Brent Thompson. We have people coming in from all over the world with their bicycles to ride those trails. What do they do when they come? They spend a couple of days with us and that is wonderful.

But, let us go back and talk about the basic portion of Boulder City. We are a community of approximately 15,000 people. We are a community that has the only growth control ordinance in the State of Nevada. That growth control ordinance limits our growth to about one percent per year. This is diametrically opposite from our adjacent communities. We support those communities in all their efforts. They have been very supportive of us in our efforts.

Boulder City wants to remain small, we want to remain friendly, and we want to let the visitor know that they are always welcome in Boulder City. There is plenty to do.

Incidentally, we are opening a brew pub in Boulder City this coming week, the first one there. A wine bar located right in the midst of the downtown area has

become a real hub and is the center of Boulder City. It is surprising to learn how much is going on in that one little area of land, on any day of the week. I believe the brew pub is going to create that same type of an atmosphere. We will find that people are going to cherish that spot too, and be very glad that it is a part of our community.

We are also noted for being the capital of green energy for the state of Nevada. We started with Hoover Dam and that was a major success story for southern Nevada. Now we are going to open our first solar field, which will generate approximately sixty mega watts of power. It will open within the next two months, and will be the largest solar field developed anywhere in the world within the last ten years. There will be guided tours for those who have questions about solar energy or just want to learn about solar energy. We like it from that standpoint, too.

The El Dorado Valley was acquired by Boulder City in 1995. It is approximately 170 square miles. The original town site, which was acquired in 1959 from the federal government when the city was incorporated, consisted of 31 square miles. It was given to Boulder City by the federal government because Hoover Dam was a construction community under the auspices of the government at that time. When it became a city within the state of Nevada, the government gave the land to Boulder City, asking them to administer and care for it.

With the addition of these 130 square miles, Boulder City is now approximately 200 square miles of property. So that you understand what that means, we are the fifth largest city geographically, in the United States, and the largest in the state of Nevada.

We have heard today about the growth in Las Vegas, in Henderson, and in North Las Vegas. This growth is allowed because there is a way to off-set the notable species habitat situation that we have in the state of Nevada. Because Boulder City has 90,000 acres set aside for tortoise preservation, other communities can go ahead and grow. That is how we support the growth.

We have a dry lake that serves as a tremendous recreational area for all of southern Nevada. As I already mentioned, we have the desert tortoise preserve, but we also have an area set aside for power generation. Several years ago, we were able to locate El Dorado Energy there. It has the greatest technology for a gas generation power plant. That plant has to meet the same air quality standards as those by the Colorado River. The El Dorado Energy standards are tougher than those imposed by Clark County. El Dorado Energy has not had an exceedance day since they went into operation. That is an exceptional piece of testimony to how clean that industry is.

We are looking at a possibility of having another gas fired power plant, located in El Dorado Valley this coming year. That would give us another source of energy besides solar.

As I mention solar, it comes to mind that we have a group of people we are working with right now. The City Manager and I sat down with them just this last week. They are interested in bringing in a solar facility as large as Solargenix. This could be a boon to southern Nevada.

What does Boulder City get from all of this? We get the lease money from the land. Our leases are generating in excess of \$2 million a year for Boulder City. We were approached by the MGM Hotel in Las Vegas about possibly selling or leasing them land for a new golf course. We told them we would not sell land but we will talk to you about leasing. We were able to negotiate a 70-year lease which has an escalation clause for each year. That lease generates just close to \$1 million a year for Boulder City.

If any of you have gone to the Cascata Golf Course, you realize it is a major golf course. It is rated as number 10 within the United States. It was built by the MGM to compete with Steve Wynn's Shadow Creek. They said it was going to be better than Shadow Creek and have spent more than \$60 million on it. That gives you an idea of the type of money going into the golfing industry in southern Nevada.

Boulder City is also home to Region 3 of the Bureau of Reclamation and the National Park Service has headquarters in Boulder City for the Lake Mead National Recreation area. They are two major contributors to the economy of Boulder City and great employers for the people in Boulder City. I have worked with both of those agencies over the years and they have always been good corporate citizens.

Another facility in Boulder City is the Desert Research Institute, an arm of the University of Nevada. It had located in Boulder City a number of years ago but fell on hard times because it did not have the financing to keep going. Now it has been resurrected and is going to open a new facility in Boulder City. They will be look at the importance of conserving moisture as it relates to the desert climate we live in. It will allow an opportunity to learn how to conserve even more water than that conserved these past years.

I moved to Boulder City in 1970. In 1976, I was approached by a group of citizens to consider running for the City Council. I did become a member of the City Council, 31 years ago, and am dedicated to seeing Boulder City continue to prosper and be a viable community for the state of Nevada.

[Chair Kirkpatrick stepped out of the room.]

Vice Chair Pierce:

Are there any questions?

Assemblyman Stewart:

I do not have a question. I have a little statement.

Mayor Ferraro, like you I came to Boulder City as a high school teacher in 1970. I never lived there but I spent my days there for about thirty years. I would like to congratulate you on the excellent job you have done over the 30-plus years you have served the community of Boulder City. I commend you for your service and for your dedication. You have helped make it a great place.

Let me say that I am a little concerned about the future of Boulder City. Two of my former students are running for mayor, to take your place, Mr. Pacini and Mr. Tobler. After having them in class, I am a little concerned about what they will do. So, I would give you a challenge, please, not only monitor them but also mentor them over the next few years, if either of them should get elected so that Boulder City will continue to go forward. Again, thank you for your great service.

Bob Ferraro:

Thank you. I appreciate the comments.

Assemblyman Bobzien:

Mayor Ferraro, thank you very much for coming today. I applaud you on your efforts with renewable energy and for all that you and the City do. I think that it is very important that elected officials, representing different localities, actually come and join us or, certainly, with the technology we have connecting the north and the south, using teleconferencing. Thank you very much.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

Mayor Ferraro, just a couple of questions. What is the total size of the land mass under your 60 megawatts of solar generation?

Bob Ferraro:

There are approximately 340 acres.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

Thank you. The other question, because I assume your gas fire generation is hybrid water air, how much water has been dedicated to that?

Bob Ferraro:

This first plant is primarily air-cooled. The next one will, unfortunately, be water-cooled.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

It will be hybrid water cooled and about 10-thousand gallons then?

Bob Ferraro:

Yes, at least that much.

Assemblywoman Womack:

We have worked together a lot during the last ten or fifteen years. I have really appreciated your opinions and your honesty with me. We have done a lot of work with the Senior Center and the connection between Henderson and Boulder City. I am sorry to see you leave as Mayor, but I congratulate you on your retirement and am happy you are going to be around for awhile.

Vice Chair Pierce:

Are there any other questions?

Assemblywoman Parnell:

Mr. Mayor, I want to applaud Boulder City for considering a population growth cap. Actually, Carson City did also, quite a number of years ago. We have had three percent growth, and it allows us to grow responsibly and continue to provide the services our community needs. I think you have certainly been a model community for the State. I applaud you and that effort. Thank you.

Vice Chair Pierce:

Are there any other questions for Mayor Ferraro? Thank you very much, sir.

[Chair Kirkpatrick returned.]

Chair Kirkpatrick:

This time we would like invite Clark County up to testify. Ms. Valentine, we appreciate your coming today. Welcome to Government Affairs.

Sabra Smith-Newby, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, Clark County, Nevada:

Thank you, Madam Chair. With me, as you mentioned, is Virginia Valentine, our County Manager. Also in the audience is Dan Musgrove, who covers the University Medical Center (UMC) issues; Tim Crowley, Josh Griffin, and Mike Alastuey, who cover county and hospital issues.

Virginia Valentine, County Manager, Office of the Clark County Manager, Nevada:

Clark County, unlike the cities, does not operate by charter, as you know. We are very dependent upon the State Legislature and this committee, in particular, to enable us to do a lot of the activities we undertake. Additionally, because we provide so many regional services, we are really partnered with the State in delivering those services. This is a very important opportunity for us.

As you may have heard, and I think that you can probably tell by listening to the presentation of the cities, Clark County is still one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. As of last July it is home to over 1.9 million residents. We know we are going to hit 2 million sometime this spring. If you add to that, the estimate of our average daily visitor population of about 250,000, you can see we deal with providing both regional and local services to a very large population on a daily basis.

Clark County is a little less than 8,000 square miles, so we are about the size of the State of New Jersey. In addition to The Strip, which you are all familiar with, and the explosion of vertical development there, Clark County is also home to the cities of Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Henderson, Boulder City and Mesquite. We also have over 30 unincorporated areas. So, we also provide services to rural towns, and we work with about 19 different town advisories and town boards, who help us in making land use decisions.

If Clark County was incorporated like a municipality, we would be the largest city in the state with over 825,000 residents. We have 38 departments, generally organized around the judiciary system, community and social services, and development. We provide the same municipal services as the city in that unincorporated area we talked about. I want to call your attention to one of our handouts, ([Exhibit G](#)). It gives you an idea of the municipal services we provide, and also the regional services we provide throughout the county.

In your packet ([Exhibit G](#)) you have some information on our fiscal framework, including our tax rates. Again, we want to demonstrate to you how important the role the legislature plays in our fiscal survival.

Our General Fund Budget, which does not include UMC, the airport, social services, and other special fund revenue, is about \$1.4 billion. About one-third of that is from property tax, one-third from Consolidated Tax, and the last one-third comes from fees for services, franchise fees, and other fees of that nature.

I would like to quote a former city manager, Larry Barton, who was not only city manager for the City of Las Vegas but an Air Force Colonel. He recently passed

away. Larry was fond of saying "the target-rich environment." I think that describes the environment in local government. You are all aware that we are dealing with some extremely challenging issues.

Among those are child welfare, indigent care, and detention services. No doubt, you have read, in Sabra's log, about these issues in the past couple of months. I want to start with child welfare because there is nothing more important to us in the county. I speak for the county commissioners, too, when I tell you that is the forefront of our agenda. It is something of great concern to us. It is a task that the commissioners take very seriously.

Some of you were around when child welfare integration was passed by the State, and at that time the foster care adoption, the permanency part of child welfare was passed to the county, combining with our child protective services, which was already a county function. We took two very large groups and combined them over a short period of time. The last step of integration occurred late in 2004. We are still suffering through the challenges of fully integrating those services.

A couple of months ago, we created 121 new positions in child welfare. I want to point that out because it emphasizes how critically important it is. One of the compliments of those 121 positions is a 24/7 assessment team. When police arrive at a site we are able to provide trained social workers to make decisions on either the removal or placement of the child. Obviously, we never want to remove a child unless we have to. We recognize that police are not trained to make those decisions, and that is an area in which we need to increase our role. We think that it will benefit children also.

It has been rocky and painful for all of us involved. We are very committed to the outcome, and I know Speaker Buckley is going to propose some legislation to improve the transparency in some of the case management. We will support that. We would like to make that transparency as available as we can while, of course, protecting the privacy of children.

Clark County Social Services' expenditures for indigent care continue to rise. Our expenditures include direct assistance, medical care, and nursing home care. In Fiscal Year 2005-2006, Clark County Social Services provided financial assistance to over 17,000 clients. As we grow and our demographics change we know that those costs are going to increase as well.

I also want to talk to you about UMC, another area that has been in the news recently. UMC is a very fine institution and I want to start by saying that I ask you to please not confuse the financial condition of the hospital with the patient

care provided at the hospital. We operate the only level-one trauma center, the burn care unit, and the neo-natal unit. It has 4,000 hardworking employees who are there on a daily basis delivering quality patient care. As you know, it is the only public hospital in the State.

Recently, it was in the news that UMC was anticipating about a \$34 million loss. I think "loss" may be a slight mischaracterization. I would call it an operating subsidy. We did not lose any money. We did provide services for which we were not compensated. That is a challenge. I think there are 46 million uninsured people in the country, and sometimes it feels like they all come to UMC. We are going to continue having transparencies used there, as well. Again, we want to make that information as available to the public as we can, under the law.

Detention is another area of concern. I know the State is challenged with the same issues. Overcrowded jails are not safe, for either the inmates or people who have to work in those environments.

Tuesday the county took the next step toward approving a 1,000-bed, low-level offender facility. We committed to creating 40 new correction officer positions, which will go in part, toward staffing that facility. The operation and maintenance cost on an annual basis, including the labor for just those 1,000 beds, is about \$46 million. The capital cost is about \$63 million. The capital cost sometimes is really the cheap part of the deal. That \$46 million cost will, of course, increase and be a re-occurring cost for us.

I want to talk to you about development. As you know, "The Strip" continues to experience a lot of growth. I have been here 26 years hearing people say "Do you live on The Strip?" It was a joke with the locals because we say, "No we have churches, suburbs; we are like everybody else." But, guess what? We may have people living on "The Strip". That will be a big change as a part of Las Vegas continues to re-invent itself. I think that development on "The Strip" is expected. I think we will see the development of some of those rural areas that we talked about. We do know that we have an increase in demand for services; everything from fire, to building permits, to social services in those rural areas, which are, in essence, small communities in their own right.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Thank you Ms. Valentine. Are there any questions?

Assemblywoman Womack:

This 1,000-bed facility, where is it proposed to be?

Virginia Valentine:

We undertook a site selection process. We needed to consider a reasonable distance to transport, having utilities access, availability of land, and, also, the entire process of zoning. One of the sites we are looking at is near Nellis Air Force Base. One of the most likely sites is between a tank farm and the Veteran's Hospital. In terms of being adjacent to residential development, we think it is a pretty good site. We are also looking at some long term sites that are further out.

Assemblywoman Womack:

I know one of the problems in the prison system is we now have women inmates, not in the same area but at their facility. How do you propose to change that?

Virginia Valentine:

This is an immediate plan. We know we will have to have a mid-range and long-term plan because the population continues to increase. I think that Chief Kirkiguard said Tuesday that we have 300 inmates on cots in the current detention center. Probably for low-level offenders, a brick-and-mortar type facility will not be chosen. We will look for some kind of alternative building system that lends itself to being implemented in modular phases.

At some point, when we get ready for that next increment, it is possible that this low-level offender facility could be converted to an all female center. Of course these, and how we manage those facilities, are important issues for us. However, every time you start to get a separate facility you are also creating separate cafeteria services, food services, and medical services. To the extent that we can build large phases, there is some incremental efficiency. At some point, I think, we will have to look at other sites to provide us with the operational ability to separate by gender.

Assemblyman Stewart:

My question concerns the new justice center. We had a lot of trouble getting it built. How is it functioning now? What are the current plans for the old Clark County Courthouse?

Virginia Valentine:

We moved into the Regional Justice Center about a year ago. However, maybe two years ago, the County Commissioners actually terminated the contract with the contractor, and we wound up finishing that building with a combination of county staff, contractors, and Bechtel and Lockwood Aviation also helped us complete that building.

When you have a building that takes four years to construct, you have mechanical systems that are not exercised. There were systems that were already suffering from no maintenance when we assumed the construction of the building. There was a shakedown period and we have made things work. Things are now fully operational and seem to be working very well. It is a beautiful facility, if you have not been in it.

The old court house is presently owned by the county. We have been discussing, in terms of our brick-and-mortar facilities, where a new detention facility or a metro-complex facility might be. The administrative functions of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department are now spread throughout the buildings and lease space all over the city. We have reserved that site for right now and we have not made a final decision. It will be something else along the lines of either the Metropolitan Police Department, Judicial Committee, District Attorney or Public Defender. We are already out of space at the new Regional Justice Center. We are going to have to expand the courts at some point. It will be something along the lines of law enforcement or judicial.

Assemblyman Settlemeyer:

I understand that you are having problems with the separation of children of different age groups. Is your BDR going to be specific to the larger metropolis or will it affect all?

Virginia Valentine:

Could you start over with the beginning of that question?

Assemblyman Settlemeyer:

When you have to take children away from their families and put them in different homes and situations is your BDR specifically crafted for the larger metropolis or not? In some of the rural areas, we would be lucky to have one place to send a child. If, we have to find a way to separate age groups, it could be problematic.

Virginia Valentine:

I am not sure I know what BDR you are referring to. We have talked about what we could do to remove children six-years old and under out of Child Haven. As much as Child Haven is a very nice facility, it is just not a good place for young children.

What we want to do by reducing the number of police removals and having social workers at the site if those events occur, is immediately place a child with a family relative, or an emergency foster care, and never admit them into Child Haven.

One of the challenges we face in meeting the requirement to keep sibling groups together, placing young children who have special requirements, or if we are constrained by the number of children under a certain age placed in a family, is the need for many more foster homes than we have currently.

One of the things we have been working on is foster care recruitment and training for foster families. If we can avoid ever admitting children to Child Haven, that is what we would like to do. But that requires a place to take them when we need to remove them. For obvious reasons we would still like the child to have visitation and a relationship with the natural parents; particularly if the goal is reunification and returning the child to the parents.

Sabra Smith-Newby:

The BDR that he was speaking of actually came out of A.B. No. 580 of the 73rd Session. While Clark County supports them, they are not necessarily our BDRs. I have not seen any language, but my understanding is that they would apply statewide.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

That is the question I was going to ask. I think Assemblyman Settlemeyer was trying to find out if it was based in Clark County only or if it was going to be statewide. We will all see when the language comes.

Assemblyman Beers:

Correct me if this is outside the Clark County sphere of influence. Assemblywoman Womack mentioned the problem with the crowding and the placing of female prisoners within a facility that also houses male population. There is a facility at Jean. Are there any plans to expand that or make use of those facilities in this regard?

Virginia Valentine:

Yes, in the study I mentioned, we hired a firm to do a site selection for us. And we did identify two other sites that are larger, 100 acres or more, that would potentially serve when we go with the next 1,000 or 2,000 units, and one of those is the site at Jean. It will take and it is expensive to develop because of the lack of utilities at that site. We will basically have to bring everything out and it will involve more travel time for officers, visitation, and transport. The Jean site is definitely on our radar and it is part of the long-term solution rather than the immediate action plan.

Assemblyman Beers:

Near my district and the airport, there is a large development in the works on Eastern Boulevard. It has been vacant land for quite awhile with just the development signs up. Is there any news on that project?

Virginia Valentine:

Can you give me a cross street?

Assemblyman Beers:

Near Eastern and Sunset.

Virginia Valentine:

Can we do some research on that and get back to you? I am not familiar with that project. You want to know what the timing of the project is and what the project elements are. We would be happy to provide that to you.

Assemblyman Beers:

I would appreciate that.

Assemblyman Atkinson:

In reference to the tax distribution from the assessors office, which tells us what we are paying for, is there a history by which certain taxes are being charged for certain things, like regional flood? Is there a way to re-allocate some of those dollars to take care of other projects?

Virginia Valentine:

There is always a way, but anything the voters approved, such as elements of the sales tax, the amount that goes to the Regional Transportation Commission, flood, and the quarter, soon to be a half, that goes for the metropolitan police override, only the voters may take out. I am not sure that we could re-program those monies. Anything that has a discretionary component or complement that we can put back to the voters, of course, we could reconsider. It is a possibility but it would be a cumbersome process.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Thank you for coming before Government Affairs. [Meeting adjourned at 10:13 a.m.]

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Mary Kay Doherty
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman Marilyn K. Kirkpatrick, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

Committee Name: Committee on Government Affairs

Date: February 8, 2007

Time of Meeting: 8:00 a.m.

Bill	Exhibit	Witness / Agency	Description
	A		Agenda
	B		Attendance Roster
	C	City of Las Vegas	Folder
	D	City of North Las Vegas	Folder, CD
	E	City of Mesquite	Pamphlet
	F	City of Boulder	Map, Brochure
	G	Clark County	Pamphlet